ISSN 0189-806X

THE NIGERIAN JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

JOURNAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, LAGOS: NIGERIA.

1983

VOL. 3, Nos 1 & 2

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vol. 3, no. 1

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WHAT IS GOD?

A CRITICAL INQUIRY

Dr. J. I. Omoregbe

I do not intend in this paper to discuss the question of the existence of God, but rather the question of the meaning of God. What do we mean by the term God? In other words, when we talk or think of God what are we referring to? This is a more basic question than the question of the existence of God. For whether we believe or not that God exists depends on what we mean by God. Hence when asked if he believed in the existence of God, Albert Enstein is said to have replied: "First of all, define God, then I shall tell you whether or not I believe in his existence". Thus, whether or not a person believes in the existence of God depends on what he means by the term God.

(i) The Problem of God

Why is man continually preoccupied with the question of God? Miguel De Unamuno rightly points out that man is preoccupied about the question of God because he is preoccupied about himself, about his own existence, the meaning of his life, and especially what will happen to him hereafter.[1] It is the problem of man that leads to the problem of God. This is brought out clearly in anthropocentric theology in which God is seen and studied only in relation to man's salvation. Thus, the problem of God is basically the problem of man, the problem of human life, its meaning, its origin and its ultimate destiny. No sooner do we start reflecting on human life than the problem of God arises in one form or another. The question "What is man?" leads ultimately to the question "What is God?" This explains why the question of God has in one form or another always been a central question in both Western and Eastern philosophies. The view of Miguel De Unamuno that the history of philosophy "is strictly speaking a history of religion"[2] may be an exaggeration, but the fact remains that the question of God has been central to Western philosophy, from Thales to Sartre. The question is no less central to the philosophies of the Eastern world, where the line of demarcation between philosophy and theology is more difficult to draw.

Albert Camus rightly remarks that the central problem of philosophy is the problem of man, that is, the problem of the meaning of human life. "There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy."[3] According to Unamuno, the problem of man is basically the problem of his self-preservation. All the sciences are employed "in the service of the necessity of life and primarily in the service of the instinct of personal preservation."[4] Knowledge is primarily at the service of the instinct of self-preservation and this is the root-cause of all scientific investigations. Man investigates the world because he finds himself in it and he wants to improve the quality of his life in it. This same instinct of self-preservation leads man to ask disturbing questions about himself, his nature, his origin, his future or ultimate destiny. The most urgent and most disturbing of these questions is, of course, that about man's destiny. It is this that leads to other questions about man. We want to know about our origin and our nature because we want to know about our ultimate destiny. "We wish to know whence we came only in order the better to be able to ascertain whither we are going.... This universal longing of all human souls ...consists in the effort to persist eternally and without a break in the continuity of consciousness".[5] In other words, man's natural thirst for immortality is rooted in man's instinct of self-preservation, and this is what leads to the problem of God. The search for personal immortality is basic to man's search for God. This search manifests itself in various forms, and it is perceived and described differently by different people. St. Augustine perceived it as man's restlessness by nature. Addressing God in his *Confessions* Augustine says: "You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you". Augustine thus sees man's innate restlessness as a manifestation of man's search for God. Sartre, on the other hand, perceives it as man's natural desire to fill the emptiness which he carries at the heart of his being. For man, according to Sartre, carries a vacuum at the core of his being. Consequently, man experiences himself as "empty" within him, and all his life-endeavour is an attempt to fill this vacuum within his being. This vacuum makes man realize that he has no foundation, no solidity, and this impels man to seek restlessly a foundation or solidity for his being. Sartre sees this as man seeking to become God.

> "Every human reality is a passion in that it projects loosing itself so as to found being and by the same stroke to constitute the in-itself which escapes contingency by being its own foundation, the Ens Causa Sui which religions call God".6.

But since, according to Sartre, God does not and cannot exist because the very idea of God involves a contradiction, man is seeking the impossible. Yet this is man's basic passion in which his whole being is involved. "Man is a useless passion", Sartre concludes.[7].

The question of God is not an abstract question. Man does not see it as an abstract question because it arises from disturbing, existential questions about himself, his being, his origin, the meaning, purpose and value of his life, and his ultimate destiny. It is these fundamental questions about himself that lead him to the question of God. The question of God is basically and essentially the question as to the kind of being God is. What kind of being is God? Is he the antropomorphic deity of Religion, as he is portrayed, for example, in the Old Testament of the Bible? Is he, on the contrary, the eternal, immutable, impassible, self-subsisting, self-sufficient, perfect being "than which no greater can be thought", of classical philosophy? Is he the Brahman of Hinduism, the Tao of Taoism, the Logos of the Stoics, the Nature of Spinoza, the Being of beings of Heidegger, or the Absolute of Hegel? Is he the suffering, evolving, developing being of Procees philosophy?

(ii) Culture and Conceptualization of God

Culture is epistemologically determinant, for it is the framework within which a people live their lives and interpret their life-experiences. It colours, shapes and limits a people's view of reality, for it serves as the lenses through which people see and interpret reality. This explains why it is impossible for the people of one culture to have identical world-view and values as those of peoples of other cultures. This also explains why different cultures have different conceptions of God, each according to its view of reality. In other words, a people's culturally conditioned view of reality determines its conception of God. Cultures do not only differ geographically, from one part of the globe to another, but also historically, from one epoch to another. The twentieth century European culture, for example, is different from the pre-medieval or medieval European culture. A man of one culture can therefore understandably find it impossible to accept the conception of God by another culture. Not belonging to that culture, he does not and cannot see or interpret reality within the framework of that culture. This explains why a growing number of Western men and women today find it impossible to accept the Judeo-christian conception of God which orignated from Jewish and Hellenistic cultures, reflecting, as it does, the world-views and life-experiences of the peoples of these cultures. "Of course", says R. C. Zaehner, "nobody who had imbibed the contemporary scientific atmosphere, the life-breath of which was evolution, could any longer take seriously the Judeo-protestant God 'up there' and 'out there'".[8]

In his book, *The Way of Transcendence*, Alistair Kee argues that increasing number of people in the Western world today no longer believe in God, not because they chose not to believe in God but because they find it impossible to do so. It is simply impossible for them to believe in God.

"Belief in God is not only impossible for the vast majority of people today, it is also found to be impossible for a growing number of christians..."[9].

Alistair Kee argues that this impossibility of a growing number of people to believe in God today is not due to an inadequate conception of God "but the inability to identify at all anything in experience which could legitimately be called God"[10]. But Alistair Kee fails to realise that whether or not a person thinks he experiences God depends on his conception of God, which in turn is determined by his world-view and interpretation of reality. Alistair Kee himself rightly points out that strictly speaking there is no such thing as a "religious" experience.[11]. In other words, no experience is intrincically religious. What is called a religious experience is an experience that is given a *religious interpretation.* But to interpret an experience as a religious experience, as an experience of God for example, pressupposes a certain conception of God which in turn is determined by one's world-view and interpretation of reality. Is God the kind of being that can be perceived in one's experience? What is God? What kind of being is it?

(iii) The God of Religion

The God of religion is inevitably an anthropomorphic deity, a deity conceived in the image and likeness of man, with all human attributes. He has eyes, ears, mouth, hands, legs, etc. He sees, hears, speaks; he is subject to emotions like human beings - he can be angry, jealous, can be merciful compassionate, he can love, can hate, can be moved with sympathy, etc. In fact the difference between the God of religion and human beings seems to be a difference *in degree* and not a difference in kind.

(a) The Yahweh of the Jews

Like all primitive peoples the Jews were very religious. Their world-view was a religious world-view and they gave a religious interpretation to everything that happened to them. Again, like all primitive peoples, the Jews worshipped a tribal god, called Yahweh. He was their ancestral god, the god of their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. When Yahweh appeared to Moses in the wilderness, the introduced himself as the ancestral god of the people of Israel, that is, the god of their ancestors ("I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" - Exod 3: 6, 15). The Jews attributed all their life-experiences, their successes and failures, their fortunes and misfortunes to this tribal god of theirs, Yahweh. This god hated all other tribes and peoples except his own people, and he was prepared to destroy other reaces (the Canaanites, the Amorites,

the Jebusites, the Hitites, the Philistines and others) and wipe them out of the face of the earth in order to give their lands to his people, the Jews. These other people were not his people and he was prepared to destroy them in order to give their lands to his people. Like all tribal gods, Yahweh was a god made in the image and likeness of his people. Thus, his sense of morality was as low as that of his people since his morality was a reflection of the crude and primitive morality of his people. Apart from seeing nothing wrong in wanting to destroy other people in order to take their land from them and give it to his own people, this god also occasionally ordered the Jews to do immoral and barbaric things, such as stealing (from the Egyptians on the eve of their departure from Egypt) and slaughtering innocent babies, old men and women found in a captured city - "Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, infant and suckling. "(I Sam. 15:3). That such cruelty should be ordered by a tribal god is hardly surprising since he is an anthropomorphic deity, made in the image and likeness of his people.

Yahweh was a very emotional deity, subject to anger, jealousy, love, hate, sympathy, mercy, compassion, etc. In fact, he was a very irascible deity who was easily and frequently provoked to anger. When his people committed an offence in the wilderness, he was so angry that he threatened to kill all of them there in the wilderness - "Let me alone that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them" (Exod 32:10). Moses, however, succeeded in persuading him to refrain from carrying out his threat. Moses succeeded in making this deity see why it would be unwise to do such a thing. He asked him to consider what the Egyptians would say if they heard that he had destroyed all his people in the wilderness. They would say that he brought them out of Egypt with the evil intention of killing them in the wilderness. Yahweh saw Moses' point, his anger cooled down, he relented, changed his mind, and allowed the people to continue their journey. When the people were frightened and discouraged by the report of the spies (sent to go and survey the land they were going to), Yahweh was again blazing with anger and threatened again to kill all the people there in the wilderness. Moses had to intervene again to save the people, and he succeeded again in persuading Yahweh to refrain from such an act. He tried to make Yahweh see why he should not do such a thing — "Now if thou dost kill this people as one man, then the nations who have heard thy name will say, 'Because the Lord was unable to bring this people into the land he swore to give to them, therefore he has slain them in the wilderness" (Number 14:15). His anger again cooled down and he relented. But when Moses himself committed an offence (by striking the rock twice to get water out of it, instead of simply speaking to the rock as he was ordered to do) Yahweh was, as usual blazing with anger. He was so angry that he told Moses he would not allow him to enter the promised land to which he had been leading the people for decades.

He would only allow Moses to look at the promised land from a distance and see it with his eyes, but he would not step into it. Rather, he would die at the outskirts of the promised land. There was nobody to persuade Yahweh this time, and so he carried out his threat against Moses. More disgusting was the killing of Uzzah by Yahweh out of his usual fit of anger. Uzzah was only trying to prevent the "Ark of God" from falling down when the oxen carrying it stumbled. Uzzah quickly stretched out his hands to protect the Ark and prevent it from falling. But Yahweh was so angry with Uzzah for daring to touch the Ark that he struck him dead immediately – "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there because he put forth his hand to the ark and he died there beside the ark of God" (2 Sam: 6: 6-7).

On the whole, Moses seems to have been more humane, and more rationally calculating than this irascible deity. Besides, this god had no foreknowledge of things that would happen in the future, nor did he foresee the future consequences of his actions. He sometimes regretted having done certain things because the consequences had turned out to be contrary to his expectations. In other words, this god, Yahweh, was not above mistakes, he sometimes made mistakes and he regretted later. Thus, for example, he made the mistake of creating man on earth. He realized later that it was a mistake on his part, and he regretted it. He then decided to wipe man out of the face of the earth. When he created man he did not know that man would turn out to be wicked – "Yahweh saw that the wickedness of man was great on earth, and that the thought of his heart fashioned nothing but wickedness all day long. Yahweh regretted having made man on earth and his heart grieved. "I will rid the earth's face of man, my own creation" (Gen 6: 5-7). Similarly, when he made Saul king of Israel, he had no idea that Saul would later turn out to be disobedient to him, and defy his orders. He again realized he had made a mistake in making Saul a king. He regretted his mistake and decided to depose Saul – "I regret having made Saul king for he has turned away from me and has not carried out my order" (I Sam 15: 10-11). The order he gave Saul which the latter did not carry out properly was to go to the city of Amalek and destroy everybody and everything he found there, both human beings and animals, including innocent babies. He was ordered to destroy all completely!

Yahweh was a corporeal being, he had a body, for Moses saw his back though he could not see his face because Yahweh covered Moses' face with his (Yahweh's) hand while he (Yahweh) was passing, so that Moses might not see his face – "I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by: then I will take away my hand and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen" (Exod 33: 22-23).

Now the question arises, is this Yahweh of the Jews what we mean by the term God? The answer is in the question itself. The Israelites obviously had no difficulty in seeing this deity as God, but it is impossible for increasing number of people today to see it as anything more than an ancestral deity, a tribal god like those of other primitive peoples.

(b) The Christian God

The concept of God was considerably refined in the New Testament of the Bible. But it still remained an anthropomorphic deity, typical of the God of religion. The christian God is first and foremost a Father (which by implication means that he is male). He is in the first place the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The idea of God having a Son who is himself a divine being is not peculiar to the christian religion. It is found in very many religions, including African Traditional Religion in which the Archdivinity (called Olokun in Edo, Orisa-nla in Yoruba and Ala in Igbo) is the Son of God. The christian God is a loving Father, the Father of all men who takes fatherly care of all men, for he is primarily a God of love. Even the very hair of everyman's head is numbered by him. But beautiful and consoling as this conception of God is, it is impossible to reconcile with the stark reality of so much evil, misery, and suffering afflicting men all over the world - tragic accidents, flood disasters, earthquakes, starvation, dreadful diseases, etc. What then is the meaning of "love" in the sense in which God is said to be a loving Father? What even is the meaning of the word "father" in the sense in which God is said to be the Father of all men, a loving father who looks on while his children are afflicted with so much evil, misery and suffering? To say, as theologians do, that God is not responsible for evil but that he only allows it in order to bring greater good out of it in the end, implies that he does not have full control over nature and that the only way he can bring about the desired good is by allowing evil to afflict men. This would imply that his powers are limited, that he is not the Omnipotent Deity he is believed to be.[12]. Thus the concept of God as an Omnipotent, loving Father of all men is irreconciliable with the stark reality of evil in the world. Nor is the problem solved by trying to deny the reality of evil or by saying, as Plotinus, St. Augustine, Aquinas, and others have done, that evil is not a positive entity, not a being, but simply the negation of being. The reality of evil in the world is simply undeniable.

One of the main distinguishing characteristics of the christian God is that it is a Triune God. This means that there are Three co-eternal and co-equal Persons in one God. The idea of three persons constituting one God involves so much problem that it cannot be discussed here in any detail. The crux of the problem is the concept of "person" implied in this doctrine.

If by "person" one means an individual substance of a rational nature, as it is understood in classical philosophy, then to talk of three persons in one being is like talking of three beings in one being, which obviously involves self-contradiction. To say that there are three ontologically distinct beings in one being is to involve oneself in self-contradiction. The fact that one of these persons is said to be the Son of the other generated by him, and was sent by him on a mission to the world seems to confirm the view that here we are dealing with three ontologically distinct beings constituting one being. Besides, if, as we are told, the Son was generated by the Father by the act of "eternal generation", how could they be co-eternal since to generate presupposes that that which generates is prior to that which is generated? The two cannot be co-eternal.

The concept of God implied in the christian doctrine of the Fall and Redemption of man raises serious questions about God's foreknowledge and his ability to prevent a foreseen evil. Did God not foresee the Fall of man? When he was creating man did he not foresee that man would later do evil? Could he have prevented it? Would it not have been better to prevent the evil from taking place at all, rather than allow it to take place and then provide a remedy for it later by way of Redemption? "God so loves the world that he sent his only begotten Son" to redeem it and save it from the adverse consequences of evil. But is prevention not better than cure? Even if the fault be a happy one ("felix culpa"). it still remains a fault and as such it would have been better prevented. Would it not have been better to create man who would not do evil, than to create the man who would do evil and then be redeemed later? The argument that God could not have created man free and at the same time prevent him from doing evil is based on the erroneous premise that freedom is synonymous with the propensity or the ability to do evil. A free being without the propensity to do evil is quite conceivable and involves no contradiction since freedom is not synonymous with the propensity to do evil. God could have prevented even the very idea of evil from ever coming to man's mind so that the idea of evil would not even occur to him. Thus, God could have prevented man's Fall by preventing evil ideas from coming to his mind in the first place. That would have saved mankind so much misfortune, and it would have saved Christ the trouble of having to come to the world, to suffer and die in order to save man (assuming too that the only way or the best way God could have saved mankind was by sending his Son to the world, to suffer and die for our sins). "Epicurus' old questions are still unanswered. Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is impotent. Is he able but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing? Whence then is evil?"[13]. Thus, the concept of God as an Omnipotent loving Father is irreconciliable with the stark reality of evil in the world.

THE ALLAH OF ISLAM

Islam strongly rejects the idea that Allah is a father, that He has or could have a son – "Allah forbid that He Himself should beget a son... Those who say: 'The lord of Mercy has begotten a Son' preach a monstrous falsehood"... (Koran 19:29, 88). It also rejects the idea of God being a Trinity Allah is one and unique (Koran 5'70). Nevertheless, Allah remains an anthropomorphic deity, with hands, eyes, ears, mouth, etc. He speaks, sees, hears, and knows all things. He is merciful, compassionate and forgiving. He sits on his throne. He is no less authropomorphic than the Yahweh of the Jews. In fact the Allah of Islam is identical with the Yahweh of the Jews. It is that semitic anthropomorphic deity called Yahweh by the Jews, and Allah by Islam, who asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son to Him, just to test his faith. Muslims celebrate this event annually by killing rams to commemorate the killing of a ram by Abraham in lieu of the killing of his son. Satisfied that Abraham really had faith in him, Allah asks Abraham to kill and sacrifice a ram in lieu of his son. But the very idea of testing Abraham in order to know whether or not Abraham really had faith in him implies that Allah did not know in advance that Abraham had unshakeable faith. But an omniscient deity does not need to carry out a test before he knows anything. If he were omniscient he would have known in advance that Abraham had such faith in Him and He would not need to test him in order to know it.

The Islamic philosopher – Theologian Gaafar Sheikh Idris discusses the anthropomorphic implications of the Koranic concept of God (See G.S. Idris "The Attributes of God: An Islamic point of View" in *God: The Contemporary Discussion* edited by F. Sontag and M.D. Bryent, New York, The Rose of Sharon Press, INC, 1982, pp. 279–292). According to Idris there are three main views, among the Muslims, concerning the nature of God. These are the views of the anthropomorphists, the negators and the affirmers.

(i) The anthropomorphists are those who conceive God as a huge human being who hears, sees, speaks, loves, hates, has mercy, as human beings. He has eyes, ears, hands, mouth etc. as human beings. The difference between God and human beings according to this view, is a difference in degree not a difference in kind. The reasoning underlying this anthropomophic concept of God according to Idris is that only physical things exist, and since God exists, then he must be physical and must have attributes proper to physical beings.

(ii) The negators however, are those who refuse to apply all these human traits to God. They maintain that God is not physical and no attribute can be predicated of him because all the attributes which can be expre-

ssed in human language can only be predicated of physical beings. In other words, nothing can be predicated of God; we cannot know or say what God is. We can only know what he is not, but not what he is. This view was not known until the third century of Islam and it eventually became popular among Islamic theologians and educated muslims (Ibid. p. 284). When God in the Koran speaks of himself as loving, being angry, seeing, hearing, speaking, as having hands or eyes he is only trying to speak, according to the negators, in the only language man understands. He is not using these words in the real sense i.e. he does not really mean that he sees, hears, speaks, or that he has eyes, ears, hands etc in the real sense of these words. He is only using these words in a metaphorical sense, and not in the real sense. In other words these anthropomorphic expressionstell us nothing about the nature of God; and we can never know what he is.

(iii) The affirmers are somewhere in between the anthropomorphists and the negators. They maintain that when God speaks of himself as seeing, hearing, speaking or as having mouth, eyes, ears, hands, etc. he means what he says and he is using these words in the real sense. However, although he really sees, hears, speaks etc yet he does so in a way different from the human way of doing these things. His attributes, though real, are different from those of creatures. "This is the view of the early generations of Muslims and of all the great sunnite "Ulama (learned men) who followed on their footsteps. It is, I believe the views of all believers in their hours of worships" (Ibid. p. 284). The affirmers argue that the position of the negators amounts to saying that God does not exist because if one can say nothing positive about him, it means he does not exist.

The negators on the other hand hold that since God is a reality completely different from everything we know, we do not have the language with which we can speak about him because human language derives from human experience and can only be meaningfully applied to things that are objects of human experience. This means that we cannot know or say anything positive about God. When in the Koran, God attributes to himself things like hearing seeing, creating, knowing, acting, speaking, He is only using our own language the only language we can understand, to give us a glimse of something beyond our comprehension (Ibid. p. 286). It doesn't mean that he really sees, hears, speaks, smells, or that he has eyes, mouth etc. G. S. Idris however argues that no one who really believes in God could think that God would be using our language and expression to speak about himself if such words and expressions cannot be predicated of him, or do not in any way apply to him and can convey nothing to us about him. If on the other hand such words and express-

sions convey to us something about God then there must be some kind of relationship between them and the attributes of God. For example when God is described as merciful, loving, and sometimes angry, if his mercy, anger, love hate are not like human mercy, love anger and hate, at least there must be a relationship between these things and what God does or what he is. Otherwise there would be no point in God using these words to speak to us about himself.

The position of Idris is that the words with which we speak about God or with which God speaks about himself in the holy books apply to God in the real sense and not in a metaphorical sense. Thus God loves in the real sense, he hates in the real sense, knows, hears, sees, speaks etc. in the real sense. That does not mean of course that God does these things in the same way as human beings do them, yet he does them in the real sense. To say that he does them exactly as human beings do them would amount to anthropomorphism.

The affirmers maintain that God exists objectively and this, according to them, means that he exists in a particular 'place' and can therefore not be everywhere 'because to be everywhere is to fail to be distinguished from other existents and thus not to have a special identity'. (Ibid p. 289).

Moreover if God was everywhere before he created anything "then where did He create His creatures?" (Loc. Cit). If he was everywhere before he created things, then creatures must be either inside him or outside him. To say that he created things inside himself would mean that we are all inside him. This would mean that we have no objective existence, we are only existing in the mind of God. On the other hand, to say that he created things outside himself, i.e. that creatures are outside him would amount to saying that God is not everywhere. For if anything can be outside him, then he is not everywhere. If God is in a particular place and not everywhere it means he is limited in person, but that does not mean that his power, knowledge and other attributes are limited. "God is in heaven but His power and knowledge are everywhere "(Ibid. p. 290).

The affirmers also hold that God is, in principle, visible, he is not, in principle, invisible or imperceptible because 'a thing which cannot be observed by any of the senses is nothing, (Ibid. p. 290). Thus if God is a reality he must exist objectively outside the human mind, and if he exists objectively, he must exist in a particular place and must in principle be observable with the senses. The reason why we cannot see him or perceive him with any of our senses now is "rather because of our present nature". But later in heaven the nature of believers will change and they will see him.

Summing up his position, G.S. Idris says: "As an existent then, God must exist outside our minds i.e. He cannot be a mere idea or an abstract concept. Secondly, He must have some defining qualities. Thirdly, He must exist in a 'place' that is distinct from places occupied by other existents. Otherwise He would be one with them and hence could not be anything in His own right. Fourthly, He must be in principle observable "(Ibid. 290).

G. S. Idris and his colleagues in the affirmers school must admit being anthropomorphists. For, to say that God actually has eyes, ears, mouth, hands etc. and that he actually see, hears, speaks, loves, can be angry, merciful, compassionate etc. is shere anthropomorphism. To say that the way God sees, hears, speaks, etc. is different from the way human beings do these things does not subtract from the anthropomorphic nature of such a concept of God. To say that God is an "existent", existing in a "Place' and observable in principle with the senses is to conceive God as a physical being, for only a physical entity can occupy space and exist in a "place". So the affirmers are also anthropomorphists - including G. S. Idris himself. The concept of God in the Holy Books is of course anthropomorphic, for the God of religion is essentially an anthropomorphic God. Every religion presupposes an anthropomorphic concept of God. Indeed it would be impossible to practice any religion without such anthropomorphism. Praying and singing, for example presuppose that God listens and hears. The God of religion is a God made in man's image and likeness, a God who sees, who hears, who speaks, who smells and enjoys the fragrance of incense, a God who is a 'father' (Implying that he is male), a God who can be angry, can be jealous, can be merciful, compassionate, can love, hate etc. These are all human traits which religions attribute to God. But if God really possesses these traits, then he would also have human limitations implied by these traits. In that case God could not be infinite or perfect. Thus there is an inherent contradiction in the God of religion, conceived both as an anthropomorphic deity and at the same time as infinite and perfect — which is a contradiction.

(iv) The God of Classical Philosophy

Beginning with the fathers of the church who were mostly neo-platonic philosophers, christian philosophers formed a conception of God quite different from the biblical anthropomorphic deity. The christian philosophers tried to remove anthropomorphism from their conception of God and came up with a concept of God that is quite different from the God of religion. Indeed, it is not easy for philosophers to accept the God of religion because of the glaring anthropomorphism it involves. The religious man does not, of course, notice the anthropomorphism. For him God is a father (and by implication, he is male); he has eyes, ears, mouth, hands feet, etc. He sees, hears, and speaks. He has a voice which can be heard. Indeed, many reli-

gions claim to have recorded God's words in their sacred books. For the religious man, God has passions and emotional feelings like human beings. He can love, he can hate, he can be offended and become angry. But he can also have sympathy, mercy, compassion, and he can forgive when appealed to for forgiveness. The religious man sees no difficulty in conceiving God this way, nor does he notice any anthropomorphism in it since this is the only way he can conceive God as an existing, living reality.

But such a claring anthropomorphism cannot escape the critical mind of the philosopher, nor can he swallow it without noticing it. Is God a spiritual or a physical being? In other words, is he a material, corporeal being or an immaterial being? If he were a physical, material being with a body he would be an object of sense-perception, but he is not. For God is invisible and intangible. If then he is a spiritual, immaterial being without a material body how can he be said to have eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, etc.? How can we talk of him as seeing, hearing, speaking, etc? How can he be subject to passions and emotional feelings?[14]. Thus the concept of God in classical philosophy eliminates these traits of anthropomorphism. The God of classical philosophy is not an anthropomorphic deity.

This concept of God is based on the metaphysics of the Ancient Greek philosophers, especially those of Heraclitus, Parmenides and Plato. While Heraclitus held that change was the law of nature and that everything was in the state of flux, Parmenides held that change was simply an illusion of the senses, that reality was in fact unchanging. There is no change, no becoming; being is eternal and unchanging. Subsequent philosophers — including Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Plato and Aristotle — tried to reconcile the conflicting views of these two philosophers. Plato tried to reconcile them by proposing two worlds, namely, the transcendental, unchanging world and the changing world of the senses. The former is the real world, an immaterial world, which can only be perceived by reason while the latter is the physical world of the senses. It is not the real world but only an imperfect reflection of the ideal world. The changing world of the senses is inferior to the eternal, unchanging world and everything in the unchanging world is superior to those of the changing world. Immutable things are superior to things that change. Change therefore connotes inferiority while immutability connotes superiority. Only imperfect things are subject to change; perfect things are immutable

It was against this background that Plato's pupil, Aristotle, propounded his hylemorphic theory. For Aristotle too, as for Plato, change connotes inferiority and imperfection. Consequently it is only imperfect beings that are subject to change, and they are all composed of two elements or principles, namely, potency and act. Potency is the inherent possibility, or rather, capacity for change which all finite beings have. In other words, all finite beings, because they are imperfect, are subject to change and are consequently composed of potency and act, the former being the innate capacity for

change. Act on the other hand is the state of affairs arrived at when the change has taken place. It is the terminus ad quem of change. Since change implies imperfection an absolutely perfect being cannot be subject to change. Consequently, God is not and cannot be subject to change. He is immutable. Nor is he composed of act and potency like the imperfect beings. Rather, God is Pure Act without potency. He is absolutely perfect, eternal, immutable, self-subsisting and self-sufficient. In order to protect God's perfection Aristotle denied that God could have any relation with the imperfect world since such a relation would mar his absolute perfection. He cannot have any relation with anything imperfect, not even cognitive relation. Hence, God, according to Aristotle, does not know the world, nor does he think of it. He is a self-thinking being, a self-thinking thought. Since he is the only absolutely perfect being, nothing but himself alone can be the object of his thought and knowledge. Consequently, Aristotle denied divine creation of the world, divine knowledge of the world as well as divine providence. As a self-subsisting and self-sufficient being, nothing external to him can affect or influence him.

Against this background of Greek metaphysics, the early christian thinkers, the Fathers of the church, formed a conception of God which is quite different from the Biblical anthropomorphic deity. God, for these founders of christian philosophy, is absolutely perfect, eternal and immutable. Immutability of course implies impassibility. Change, for the Fathers of the church, following the Greek philosophers, connotes imperfection. It must therefore be excluded from the concept of God. God does not and cannot change since he is an absolutely perfect being. The was what led Origen to argue that the world was created from eternity and not in time, because if it were created in time it would imply a change in God. Since immutability implies impassibility, God must be impassible. This means that God cannot be subject to emotions – such as anger, jealousy, love, mercy, compassion, sympathy, etc. God, says Athanagoras, is "uncreated, eternal, impassible, incomprehensible, uncontainable", [15]. while Theophilus syas "he is unchangeable because he is immortal".[16]. According to Methodius, God is "impassible and unalterable"; the act of creation "involved no change in the being of God".[17]. Clement of Alexandria also says that God is "impassible without anger and without desire".[18]. The implication of all these is that emotions - anger, love, mercy, compassion, jealousy, sympathy, etc. cannot be predicated of God because they imply change and imperfection. The transcendental world, says St. Augustine, is not a world of change but an immutable, motionless world. Addressing God in his *Confessions*, Augustine says: "No time is co-eternal with you because you never change".[19]. The possibility of any new idea, new state of mind or change of mind is excluded from the concept of God. There can be no "new motion

stiring in him".[20]. He is "immutable and invariable in his being, and always in the same identical mode of existence, admitting neither progress nor diminution".[21].

The scholastics followed closely in the footstep of the Fathers of the church. The conception of God in scholastic philosophy is basically the same as that of the Fathers of the church. They both have their common background in Greek metaphysics. St. Thomas Aquinas, the greatest scholastic philosopher was an Aristotelian. For him too, as for Aristotle, change is a mark of imperfection, and since God is absolutely perfect he cannot be subject to change. He is immutable, self-subsisting and self-sufficient. He does not stand in need of anything outside him, and nothing external to him can affect or influence him in any way. He had nothing to gain from creation, nor was he necessitated to create. Creation was a free act of God, which he did, not in order to derive anything from it, but in order to communicate his goodness to other beings. In other words, he created only because he wanted other beings to share in his goodness. He lacks nothing and needs nothing because he is self-subsisting and self-sufficient. Like Aristotle Aquinas also maintains that the only object of God's knowledge is God himself since he alone is absolutely perfect. Aquinas however did not go along with Aristotle to say that God does not know the world. For, Aquinas maintains that in knowing himself, God thereby knows all things since all things are contained in him as their cause. God is an immaterial being, simple (that is, not composed or made up of parts), eternal, immutable, absolutely perfect, Pure Act without potency. All his attributes are identical with his essence, for there can be no distinction between God's essence and his attributes. But at the same time Aquinas also maintains that we can never know the essence of God. In other words, we do not and cannot know what precisely God is; we can only know what he is not.[22]. Whatever we predicate of him in a positive way, we do so only by way of analogy.

The primary and basic attribute of the God of classical philosophy is his aseity , that is, the fact of his being an Ens Causa Sui, a self-subsisting being. All his other attributes derive from his aseity. Because he is a self subsisting being, he is therefore a Necessary Being who cannot but exist, as opposed to contingent beings who may or may not exist. His essence involves existence, meaning that to exist is his very nature. From his aseity it also follows that he is an Absolute Being. It follows too that he is infinite and since his attributes are identical with his essence the former are also infinite. Thus he is infinitely perfect. To say that God is infinitely perfect means two things: first that he lacks no perfection - he is all-perfect; secondly, all his perfections are in the highest possible degree. His unicity also derives from his aseity. Since, as a Necessary Being, his essence is identical with his existence, it follows that there cannot be more than one God because if there

were, their common divine essence (nature) would be distinct from their individual existence, in which case they would not be self-subsisting or Necessary Beings - hence, not Gods. His aseity also implies his simplicity. For since he is self-subsisting he cannot be composed or made up of parts. If he were, another being external to him would have to be responsible for the composition, in which case he would not be self-subsisting, not a Necessary Being, not God. And since he is not composed, it follows that he is simple, immaterial or spiritual. This means that he is not a physical being. It also follows from his aseity that he is eternal, immutable, and self-sufficient Thus all God's attributes are deducible from his aseity which is his basic attribute.

Now certain crucial questions arise from what we have said about the God of classical philosophy: Does God need man's worship? Since he is self-sufficient and needs nothing outside him, he obviously does not need man's worship. Since he is immutable and cannot be influenced by anything external to him, does it make any difference to him whether or not man worships him? Does whatever we do make any difference to God since nothing outside him can have any influence on him? Since he is eternal and immutable can man hope to influence him or induce him to do anything by prayers? In other words, can man's prayer influence God and make him do what he would otherwise not have done? Can the eternal and immutable God change his mind about anything as a result of man's prayer? Can the eternal and immutable God be induced to change his mind, his eternal design or plan as a result of man's prayer? Since he is immutable and impassible (that is, not subject to emotions) does it not follow that there can be no question of God loving, having mercy, compassion, being offended or forgiving? The answers to these questions are obvious, and they show clearly that the God of classical philosophy is quite different from the God of religion.

(v) The God of Pantheism

Is God the totality of beings, the sum-total of all that exist? Is there any distinction between God and the universe or is the universe and everything in it part of God, a manifestation of God or self-projection of God? Hinduism, Taoism, Stoicism, and the philosophical systems of John Scotus Eriugena and Spinoza portray God as the all-embracing reality, the sum-total of all things. The universe, according to them, is part of God or a manifestation of God who is the ultimate reality.

Hinduism conceives God (which it calls Brahman) as the only reality that there is. All the things we perceive in the universe-including human beings-are manifestations of God. God is therefore not something external to us or different from us. On the contrary, God is our deepest self, out ultimate self. God is not the "wholly Other" of Rudolf Otto, conceived as

a reality distinct from and external to man, but man's innermost self, and the only ultimate reality. It is the universal consciousness of which man's individual consciousness is a part. All things are manifestations of this hidden and all-embracing reality, and as such they are only appearances, not realities since God, the universal being, is the only reality. "We may conclude that universal consciousness is God or Godhead; in the last analysis it is the ultimate and only reality. The finite self and other finite beings are limitations or appearances of the universal. The real self is identical with universal consciousness or with God. The empirical self or ego is a partial embodiment or limitation of that Ultimate Self'.[23]

The God of Stoicism is essentially identical with the Brahman of Hinduism. In both cases God is the Universal Consciousness of which our individual, human consciousness is part. God, according to the Stoics, is the Logos, that is, the Universal Intelligence or the Universal Soul of which the individual human intelligence is a participation. God and the universe are not separate entities but only one reality, one inseparable reality. While God is the Soul of the universe, the universe itself is the Body of God. Thus, God and the universe are like the soul and the body, the spiritual and the physical aspects of the same being, the same and only reality. All things are therefore participations of God and parts of God.

Like Hinduism and Stoicism, Taoism also conceives God (Tao) as the all-embracing, all-pervading reality which manifests itself in all things. It is God, the all-pervading reality, that has diffused itself in all things and is therefore the underlying unity of all things. God is the sum-total of all things the *Whole* of which all things are parts, the ultimate reality, silent, eternal, unchanging, inexhaustible, unfathomable, inefable, invisible, and all-pervading "Its name is unknown, I simply call it Tao... The unnamable is the source of the universe... Tao is real, yet unamable. It is original, non-differentiation and invisible .... The magnificient Tao is all-pervading... All creatures abide with it and grow, none is excluded from it".[24]

The God portrayed in John Scotus Eriugenna's *On the Division of Nature* is identical with nature and with all things, "for he alone truly is and everything which is truly said to be in those things which are, is God alone". God and the universe are not two separate entities, for it is God that *creates itself* in things and manifests itself in them just as the intellect manifests itself in thought. God is therefore the *essence of all things*, the invisible reality which makes itself visible in things, the all-pervading reality. Thus, all the things in the universe are the visible manifestations of the invisible hidden God, the comprehension of the incomprehensible, the appearances of the hidden, the body of the incorporeal and the form of the formless. In things therefore, we see God in visible forms, since he is the essence of all things who manifests himself in all things.

In his *Ethics,* Spinozza portays God in essentially the same way as in John Scotus Eriugenna's *On the Division of Nature.* In both cases God is identical with nature. Spinoza tells us that there is only one substance in reality (following his definition of substance). This substance can be called either God or Nature. It is infinite, eternal and divine. All creatures are its modifications, and they proceed from it by the necessity of its nature. It presents itself as both spirit and matter (thought and extension) and it is only under these two aspects that it can be known. God is therefore the Universal nature of which all things (including human beings) are parts or modifications. As it is in itself, God is the *Natura Naturans* (the Naturing Nature) and as it presents itself in creatures - which are its modifications - it is *Natura Naturata* (the Natured Nature). It is the only ultimate reality.

The God of pantheism is thus different from the God of religion as well as from the God of classical philosophy. The pantheistic concept of God eliminates the duality or dichotomy between God and man or, in other words, between God and creatures. But if human, individual consciousness is a participation (or manifestation) of the Universal consciousness which God is, one wonders why the individual man's consciousness is itself not conscious of this fact. If the thesis of pantheism were true, the individual consciousness would be conscious of itself as part of a universal consciousness, which is, however, not the case. On the contrary the individual is conscious of himself as an individual, separate entity. This is a serious challenge to the thesis of pantheism. Why is it that the individual consiousness is unconscious of itself as part of Universal consciousness?

(vi) God as the Being of beings

At the beginning of his *Being and Time,* Heidegger says his main preoccupation is the problem of the nature of being. He complains that the question of the nature of being had been virtually abandoned by philosophers since the time of the ancient Greeks. He feels there is need to go back to the question and investigate it. What is being? Heidegger points out that he is not talking of particular beings, but Being. It is not a being but simply *Being* from which particular beings derive their being. It is the Ground of being, or in other words, the Source of being. What is this Being which Heidegger is talking about? He however does not identify it with God, but Paul Tillich and John Macquarrie see in this Heideggerian concept of being a new conception of God.

Paul Tiliich therefore identifies Heidegger's Being with God. Tillich consequently speaks of God as Being, not a being, but simply Being. "If God is a being" Tillich contends, "he is subject to the categories of finitude especially to space and substance."[25] God cannot even be called the highest being, for that would simply mean that he is a being, whereas he is not a

being but the Ground of being, "the power of being in everything and above everything".[26] Since God is not a being, then he cannot be said to exist because he is above the category of existence. To say that he exists is to reduce him to the level of a being. God is above the categories of both essence and existence. "For this reason it is wrong to speak of God as the universal essence as it is to speak of him as existing."[27] Tillich thinks that to say that God exists amounts to saying that there is no God because the Ground of being, the Being of being, is above existence. "It is as atheistice to affirm the existence of God as it is to deny it. God is being itself, not a being."[28] God is the infinite power of being in which all things participate. "In calling it creative we point to the fact that everything participates in the infinite power of being."

John Maquarrie follows Paul Tillich in identifying God with Heidegger's Being. God is, for John Macquarrie, as for Paul Tillich, the Ground of being the Being of being, or simply, Being itself.

Individual beings are beings only "in virtue of their participation in being."[29] Being discloses itself to us and it is only on the basis of this self-disclure that we can know it. "God" says Macquarrie "is synonymous with holy being".[30]

It can be seen at once that this Being of Paul Tillich and John Macquarrie is different from the God of religion. It is by no means certain that this Being is personal or that it possesses personality or even consciousness as one of its attributes.

(vii) The Suffering God

Within the framework of the metaphysics of Hegel and Whitehead a new concept of God as an evolving, developing and suffering diety was born. This diety is the God of process philosophy. It is not the absolutely perfect diety of classical philosophy.

On the contrary, the God of process philosophy is yet an imperfect being which is developing, evolving, suffering as it gradually progresses towards its goal of self-completeness, self-perfection and full self-consciousness. Its development is part of the cosmic process. It is God who develops himself through the historical, cosmic process. The development of the universe is the development of God and the evolution of the universe is the evolution of God. "As the eminent Self, God's sphere of interaction or body is the whole universe of nondivine beings, with each one of which his relation is unsurpassably immediate and direct He too is understood to be continually in process of self-creation, synthesizing in each new moment of his experience the whole of achieved actuality with the plenitude of possibility as yet unrealized."[31] God is not immutable, not infinite, not almighty, not impassible as we are told in classical

philosophy. On the contrary he changes along with the historico-cosmic process and he suffers along with mankind. For he is a changing and suffering God. "We can say that suffereing is the way that God has his deity; that is, God's way of suffering is his deity."[32] The suffering and struggle of God are seen in those of mankind, for it is he who suffers in man. "In God everything lives, and in His suffering everything suffers, and in loving God we love His creatures in Him, just as in loving and pitying His creatures we love and pity God in them. God is revealed to us because He suffers and because we suffer; because He suffers He demands our love and because we suffer He gives us His love."[33] Miguel De Unamuno disagrees sharply with the Fathers of the church and the scholastics on the question of God's impassibility. God cannot be impassible, he contends, because if God were impassible (that is without passions or emotions) he would be insensitive to human suffering. If he had no capacity to suffer and not subject to emotions, he would lack the capacity for pity, sympathy, compassion or mercy. Since God is the Universal consciousness he must have the capacity to suffer because "suffering is the path of consciousness". Because God suffers in us and with us he is able to pity us and to love us because "there is no true love save in suffering".[34]

> It may perhaps appear blasphemous to say that God suffers, for suffeirng implies limitation. Nevertheless, God, the consciousness of the universe, is limited by the brute matter in which He lives by the unconscious from which He seeks to liberate Himself and to liberate us. . . God suffers in each and all of us, each and all of the consciousness imprisoned in transitory matter, and we suffer in Him.[35]

Whitehead describes God as "the great companion, the fellow-sufferer who understands."[36]

The God of process philosophy, the suffering, evolving and struggling deity seems to be the "Elan Vital" of Henri Bergson's Creative Evolution, or the "Absolute" of the German idealists, the Absolute Ego of Fichte, the Absolute of Schelling, the Reason/Spirit/Absolute of Hegel and the "Will" of Schopenhauer. What they all have in common with the God of process philosophy is that they all refer to a being, a hidden being who is struggling to free itself from matter and in that process is evolving, developing towards its goal of complete freedom and perfection. The God of process philosophy is the God of panentheism (distinct from pantheism). According to panentheism, the universe is part of God and is within God. The development of the parts means the development of the whole. God transcends the universe as the whole transcends its parts, and God is affected by what happens to the universe as the whole is affected by what happens to its parts. Hence

God evolves and develops along with cosmic evolution and development and suffers in and with the suffering humanity.

The concept of God in process philosophy solves two major problems arising from the concept of God in classical philosophy. The first is how an immaterial, spiritual being can be the source of matter. Gregory of Nyssa (died in 395) had tried to solve this problem by saying that matter did not come directly from God, that matter is the outcome of the union of immaterial qualities such as weight, colour, solidity and quantity. These are what came directly from God, according to Gregory, and they are immaterial. But their union produces matter. Process philosophy offers a more plausible explanation by making matter an integral part of the divine process of which the cosmic process is an integral part. The second problem is the problem of evil. Process philosophy solves this problem by making God man's companion in suffering and struggling against evil. The conception of God in classical philosophy leaves a disturbing question in the mind as to why an all-powerful and infinitely good God refuses or fails to remove evil from the world. His apparent indifference to human suffering leaves a disturbing question in the mind. But process philosophy solves this problem first by presenting God as limited (not all-powerful) and as suffering and struggling along with mankind.

This concept of God however is not without its own inherent difficulties. The thought of an impotent deity, labouring and suffeing under the weight of matter can hardly inspire confidence and hope in man. That kind of being, Cyril Richard objects, is not really God, for it "is part of a process greater than he is, and which may eventually be victorious over him."[37] "He is apparently so weak", Madden also objects, "that he cannot guarantee his own welfare. If he is that weak, obviously he is not able as a theistic God should, to insure . . . ultimate thriumph."[38] Thus, the concept of God in process philosophy is far from being satisfactory even though it succeeds to a large extent in solving some of the problems involved in the concept of God in classical philosophy.

CONCLUSION

Each of the conceptions of God discussed in this essay claims to be an answer to our question, "What is God?" But as an answer to the question, each of them is, as we have seen, inadequate and unsatisfactory. The God of religion is too anthropomorphic to satisfy the mind. It may be the God of the heart, but not of the intelllect, for it is too tainted and distorted with anthropomorphism to satisfy the intellect. The Yahweh of Judaism, the Loving Father of christianity who sent his only begotten Son into the world to suffer and die in order to save the world, may satisfy

the heart but not the mind. The same applies to the Allah of Islam which is identical with the Yahweh of Judaism, the God of Abraham who is the common ancestral father of both the Jews and the Arabs. The Allah of Islam is that same anthropomorphic deity, Yahweh, who (we are told) ordered Abraham to offer human sacrifice to him with his son. The anthropomorphism of the God of religion renders it unsatisfactory to the critical mind.

On the other hand, the transcendent, eternal, absolutely perfect and immutable God of classical philosophy, impressive as it appears, is too remote from man and too indifferent to the human predicament to be satisfactory to the human heart. That may be the God of the intellect but not of the heart. Such a God would be indifferent to human behaviour, and could have no real relation with man.

The pantheistic conception of God too has its own inherent problem, as we have seen. Why is it that individual consciousness is itself unconscious of itself as part of Universal consciousness? On the other hand, Paul Tillich's Being hardly portrays God as personal and conscious, nor can such God relate to man. We have seen too that the suffering, struggling and evolving deity of process philosophy, caught as he is, in a cosmic process which seems to be crushing him, appears too weak to satisfy either the mind or the heart.

The fact that none of these different conceptions of God is adequate and satisfactory does not mean that they are all false. In fact it is not a question of truth or falsity but a question of which appeals more to whom. Some appeal more to religious practitioners while others appeal more to philosophers, and the question as to which of them appeals more to which philosopher depends on the school of philosophy of the philosopher in question. God, being the incomprehensible mystery cannot be fully or adequately conceptualized by the human mind. A mystery by its very nature is incomprehensible and unconceptualizable. Here Gabriel Marcel's distinction between a problem and a mystery is helpful. A problem, according to Gabriel Marcel, is something objective and external to me. It is before me, confronting me. I am not part of it, I am not involved in it. It is there, before me and I can objectify it and study it. But a mystery is something different. It is not something placed before me, confronting me, Rather it is something in which I am personally involved, and as such I cannot objectify it because I am part of it. I cannot place it in front of me as an object of study because I am involved in it. "A problem is something which one runs up against, which bars the way. It is before me in its entirety. A mystery, on the other hand, is something in which I find myself involved, whose essence is therefore not to be before me in its entirety. It is as though in this province the distinction between in me and before me loses its meaning."[39] Every conception of God is therefore inevitably partial and

inadequate. "In order to form a mental image adequate to the representation of Divinity", says Lord Northbourne, "man would have to be greater than God. If we insist on forming a mental image which we can regard as adequate and exclusive, then the object of that image is not God but merely some figment of our imagination."[40] God then is a mystery, and as such is beyond human comprehension and conceptualization. Perhaps the best way to answer our question is that God is the profound mystery in which our very being and existence are involved.

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31. S. M. Ogden, **The Reality of God and other essays,** London S.C.M. Press, 1967, pp. 60, 59, quoted by Alistair Kee, op. cit. pp. 42, 43.
32. B.Z. Cooper, op. cit. p. 111.
33. Miduel De Unamuno, Tragic Sense of Life, pp. 209, 204
34. Ibid. p. 207.
35. Loc. Cit.
36. Alfred Noth Whitehead, Process and Reality , New York. Macmillan, 1929, p. 532, quoted by D.Z. Cooper, op. cit. p. 111.
37. Cyril Richardson, "The Ontological Trinity; Father and Son" in Religion in Life , Vol. xxviii, p. 15, quoted by Cooper, p.96
38. Madden "Evil and Unlimited Power" in Review of Metaphysics, Vol. xx, 2, 1966, p. 288, quoted by Cooper , op cit. p. 105.
39. Gabriel Marcel, Metaphysical Journal, Chicago, Henry Regnery Co. 1952, p. 100.
40. Lord Northbourne, **Religion in the Modern World,** London, J.D. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1963, p. 26.

IN DEFENCE OF A THEORY OF INDUCTIVE LOGIC: JOHN STUART MILL'S STRATEGY *

By

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Our discussion in this paper is based on some fundamental issues which I consider to be very important in our understanding of Mill, particularly his defence of a system of inductive logic. Although, for one reason or the other, Mill's theory of Inductive Logic may be difficult to defend, at least, from the point of view of the claims of formal logicians, there seems to me some important ways in which a good defence can be made of Mill's position on logic as well as mathematics. One of such ways is to show that the usual attack on Mill's Theory of Inductive Logic as contained in Book III of his Logic is not only grossly unfair but also misdirected. In this connection I lay claim to the fact that a proper understanding of Mill's position on Inductive Logic is to be found *not* in Book III which is often criticized, but in Books I and II which are often ignored by many logicians opposed to Mill's kind of logic. The result is such that many of the criticisms against Mill's logic of induction appear to be misplaced, since Mill's own arguments against formal logic appear to be misplaced, since Mill's own arguments against formal logic seem to have taken care of such criticisms even before they were raised. Consequently, to attack his theory of induction logic without first getting rid of a theory of logic that leads to it is like putting the cart before horse, or like trying to treat an effect before finding out its cause. Accordingly, Mill's strategy, when clearly understood, seems to have paved the way for most of what he had to say in Book III of his Logic. And I dare say that Mill's views on Inductive Logic is quite consistent with his criticism of formal logic.[1]

Every dispute about the kind of logic that is presupposed in scientific method must rest on a further dispute about what, in its proper sense, logic really is. This is a problem of definition. Because of this I think it makes perfect sense to suggest that the central issue in any discussion on logic, deductive or inductive, or whatever name we may give to it, is how logic itself is to be defined or characterized. That is, what, in the first place, it logic? What is it all about, and of what use, if any, is it? Finally, if science must be useful (as indeed it is, although some would argue against the utility of scientific knowledge)[2] what kind of logic does its method and practice presuppose? All these are pertinent questions for any philosopher who is

* The original version of this paper was presented at the Annual Congress of The canadian Philosophical Association in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, 28 — 31 May, 1981.

interested in logic and scientific methods. On further reflection it would turn out that all questions as to the validity or nonvalidity of a logic of science depend largely on what we mean by logic and what we are prepared to consider as a valid principle of scientific inference. In the case of John Stuart Mill, it would appear that a theory of logic that must be consistent with total empiricism cannot but have effect on the foundations of logic and mathematics and the alleged *a priori* character of the propositions of these disciplines.

Mill quite correctly sees the problem of the logic of science as resting squarely on the definition, nature and scope of logic itself. Thus, at the very beginning of his discussion on the nature and definition of logic Mill's first strategy was to disarm all possible criticisms against his own attempted conception of logic by quickly and correctly pointing out to his would–be critics, in the Introduction to his *Logic*, that there are different definitions of logic, and that it is not expected that there should be an agreement about the definition of any thing until there is an agreement about the thing itself.[3] Because logic is a No–Man's land in this respect,[4] Mill seized the opportunity to advance his own definition as his contribution to the continuation of the debate on the subject. According to him a definition, though in general is imperfect, must be placed at the beginning of an inquiry and should define the scope of such inquiry. Hence, "the definition which I am about to offer of the science of logic pretends to say nothing more than to be a statement of the question which I have put to myself and which this book is an attempt to resolve."[5] And in an anticipation of objections to his views on logic, Mill adds: "the reader is at liberty to object to it as a definition of logic; but it is at all events a correct definition of the subject of these volumes."[6]

Reasoning, according to Mill, is used in two ways. First, deductive or syllogizing, i.e., that of concluding from generals to particulars. In another sense, "to reason is simply to infer an assertion from assertions already admitted and in this sense induction is as much entitled to be called reasoning as the demonstrations of geometry."[7] He notices that writers on logic have generally preferred the former conception of it, i.e., formal or deductive, to the latter, "material" or inductive, logic. But with great emphasis he declares, "the latter and more extensive signification is that in which I mean to use it,"[8] and he does so "by virtue of the right I claim for every author to give whatever provisional definition he pleases of his own subject,"[9] more so that Mill himself has realized that nobody has succeeded in giving a satisfactory definition of logic itself.

From the foregoing as preliminary discussion, we shall review the essenitial aspects of Books I and II of Mill's *Logic*. From this, his theory and defence of Inductive Logic in Book III would be seen as quite consistent with his own views about the nature and scope of logic as discussed in these

earlier books. His logic of induction could then be seen as a necessary consequence of a careful analysis of his conception of logic where, I believe, the decisive shorts have been fired.

In Book I of his *Logic* Mill treats of the logic of terms or names and the logic of propositions, and it consists of his criticism of formal logic and the process of deduction. This Book is therefore given as a preliminary to his theory of inference or reasoning in general, as well as his celebrated theory of the Syllogism and his rejection of geometrical axioms and mathematics as necessary truths. By far what are important in these two Books are Mill's criticisms of formal logic and the necessity attached to both the propositions of formal logic and mathematics, all of which are direct consequence of his theories of names and propositions and his criticism of one of the major strongholds of the *a priori* or intuitionist school which maintains that truth is in kind and not in degree. His criticism of formal logic is dealt with not only in the *Logic*, but also extensively in his *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* (Chapter XVII – XXIII in general, but more specially in Chapter XIX – XXI), while his criticism of the necessary character of mathematical axioms is dealt with at length in Book II of his *Logic*.

In both his *Logic* and *Examination*, Mill defines and treats of "things" and criticises logical doctrines from that point of view, while at the same time he expounds a logical theory of his own. In Book I of his *Logic* he treats of things or phenomena of facts and their relations. There, his doctrine of terms or names show that names stand for things themselves.[10] Also, the doctrine of proposition, especially of real proposition, shows that propositions stand for relation of things, so that reasoning or argument deals essentially with the relation between things.[11] It is also from this point of view that he finds in Book II the syllogism to be guilty of petitio principii, and immediate (deductive or formal) inference to be no inference at all.[12] It would appear that for Mill the old theory of syllogism, considered formally, involves a petitio principii and is an apparent inference. But materially, i.e., in its relation to things, it does not involve a petitio, according to his doctrine which I have called "an inductive theory of the syllogism" somewhere else.[13] In the *Examination*, however, Mill talks of concepts and judgement instead of names and propositions of the *Logic*, and of reasoning instead of syllogism, but all the same he requires that all this should conform to objects of reality in order to be true or valid.[14] From his *Logic* and *Examination* he did not hide his contempt for any conception of logic as dealing mainly with "forms" to the exclusion of "matter". It is this crucial issue of form and matter of logic and mathematics that Mill discusses in detail in Books I and II of his *Logic* and the relevant chapters of his *Examination* as indicated above.

According to Hamilton who represented the School of formal logicians during Mill's time, pure or formal logic has to do only with the form of propositions and arguments. According to this view, whether the matter

or contents of propositions are really true or conform to fact is not the business of logic proper but of experience or the "special sciences". In other words, the scope and business of logic are delimited to logical forms of thought.[15] This is a position represented by formal logicians, past and present.[16] However, Mill has a great desire to widen the restricted scope of logic and extend logical method to the testing of the material truth of propositions. This method, a direct consequence of his well stated and argued position in Books I and II as well as in the *Examination*, is what he calls "the experimental method" or "the method of inductive inquiry" in Book III of his *Logic*. Mill's strategy for his defence of a system of inductive logic was based on his awareness of the controversy over a proper definition of logic and his own conviction that logic, if it must be of any use, must not be confined to the narrow conception of it as formal, pure and simple. Logic is not, without remainder, formal logic. In other words, Mill's conception of logic is to reverse the general scope of logic from the purely formal conception to the view accepted by many of his contemporaries that logic has to do primarily with the matter of propositions and arguments, since it is the matter and not the form that can conform to fact or experience. As the form may or may not so conform, even though it is formally consistent, formal logic plays no discernable role in the ascertainment of truth. This is a generally accepted view among formal logicians, especially in their agreement that formal validity has nothing to do with truth. The present writer has defended Mill's position in this connection in a different paper which clearly showed that our refusal to consider Mill's argument against formal logic leads to one kind of paradox or the other when we critically consider the so–called principles of formal logic.[17]

In his *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* Mill points out that "one of the cardinal points of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy of Logic is the claim that logic is conversant with the form of thought to the exclusion of the matter."[18] He goes on to explain this as meaning that "logic is not concerned with the actual contents of our knowledge, such as particular objects or thruths known to us, but only with our mode of knowing them, or with what the mind does when it knows, or thinks, irrespectively of the particular things which it thinks about to the extent that logic is at last fully and finally defined as 'the science of the necessary forms of thought".[19] But what are thoughts about? Mill's answer to this crucial question is that certainly thoughts are not about thoughts or concepts because all our thoughts are not about the thinking act, but rather of something – an objective presentation in experience.[20] Therefore, while the formal logicians recognise only one level of valid thinking or reasoning, i.e., formal reasoning, Mill recognises two levels, formal and material or inductive, with greater emphasis on the latter because, as he argues, the end of thinking is the attainment of truth, and at all events the first and most essential constituent of valid thought is that its result is true.[21]

Mill's philosophy of experience is the philosophy of evidence. In fact, while the laws of his logic might be said to be laws of evidence, the laws of formal logic are what I have called the laws of "excluded evidence."[22] His logic of experience is therefore meant to provide a theory of evidence or experimental method whose justification or validation is, according to formal logicians, logically impossible. But for Mill, if by logic is meant formal deductive logic whose arguments are only formally valid, as opposed to inductive logic, then so much the worse for formal logic. This is so because "if any general theory of the sufficiency of evidence and the legitimacy of generalizations is possible," argues Mill, "this must be logic 'in the real and fuller sense,' and anything else called by the name can only be ancilliary to it."[23] With strong emphasis he thus reaffirms his own conception of logic as against the opposing school, and while not discarding with formal logic altogether, he retains it only as the logic of consistency insofar as it is recognized to be a part of, and subordinate to, the "Larger Logic", i.e., material or inductive logic. To think that formal logic is the only logic is to think that "all the rest of philosophy and evidence were merely an adaptation of this to something else" which, in Mill's opinion, "is to ignore the end to which all rules laid down for our thinking operations are meant to be subservient" when, as a matter of fact, "the purpose of them all is to enable us to decide whether anything, and what, is proved true."[24]

It is therefore important to note that Mill's criticism of formal logic is not a total denunciation of it. He does not ignore its importance, especially for deduction. But he subsumes formal logic, the "Smaller Logic", under inductive ligic, the "Larger Logic". His acceptance of formal logic as a logic of consistency is only a means to an end. Although he does not find it directly useful, being a logic of consistency only, he finds it indirectly conductive to the end of inductive logic "by enabling us to perceive, either that the process which has been performed is one which will prove something to be true, unless the premises happen to be false."[25] And for Mill, the indirect aid of formal logic is of the greatest importance only "because the end, the ascertainment of truth, is important: and it is important only as complementary to a still more fundamental part of the operation in which formal logic affords no help."[26] Because of this, he does not deny the scientific convenience of considering a limited portion of logic like formal, deductive logic apart from the rest, or the doctrine of syllogism, for instance, apart from the theory of induction. Although he gives that much concession to formal or deductive logic,he is by no means ambiguous about his preference for what he now calls the "larger" or "greater" logic (material or inductive logic), embracing all the general conditions of the ascertainment of truth, over the "smaller" logic which concerns itself with the conditions of consistency only. But the 'smaller' logic ought to be, at least, finally studied

as part of the 'greater' logic as a portion of the means to the same end, and its relation to the other parts and other means should be distinctly displayed. This seems to have provided a good reason for Mill to have devoted the first two books of his *Logic* to his discussion on formal logic as he conceives and criticises it, and its relation and subsidiary role to the logic of induction as it is finally treated in Book III.[27]

From the foregoing, it is clear that, in order to relly understand Mill's theory of inductive logic one needs to understand his theory of formal logic. It will appear to us that what Mill means by formal logic or deduction is very different from the usual meaning attached to it by formal logicians. If by deduction is meant the sense in which formal logicians use the words, then we have misunderstood what Mill means by deduction. Whereas the formal logician admires deduction because a deductively valid conclusion is valid no matter what, and hence is completely independent of experience, Mill always holds the view of deduction as depending on induction or experience, because of his strong belief that general propositions are only known to us through the facts and not through general principles.

When Mill's position on logic is related to science, we find a blurring of the traditional distinction made since Hume between logic and empirical sciences, as between the propositions of logic and mathematics and those of the natural sciences. Although this distinction has raised a problem of relation between the so–called "exact sciences" and natural sciences, some philosophers have come to different conclusions by expressing a view similar to Mill, that logic and mathematics do tell us something about reality because there is always a synthetic element (an element derived from experience) in them.[28] Even if one were to accept J. L. Mackie's view that logic and mathematics do not tell us anything about the world only because "they do not tell us about the world as it contingently is,"[29] one can still argue that either they tell us something about the world or they don't. Surely, if they fail to tell us something about the world as it contingently is, then they tell us nothing about the world of experience. Perhaps they tell us something about the world outside our experience, which is metaphysical. But the relation of logic and mathematics to science seems to compel the issue that both of them should reflect somwthing about the nature of the world of experience, i.e., the world as it contingently is, no more, no less. This is to say that for Mill the sharp distinction often made between empirical propositions and those of logic and mathematics or between synthetic and analytic propositions is untenable. IN the final analysis it would appear that while some philosophers adhere strictly to the thesis that an adequate theory of knowledge and scientific method must exclude the 'material' from the form of knowledge if science is to be logically defensible, Mill has shown that this need not be the case both in his elaborate criticism of formal logic and what Reginald Jackson aptly described as Mill's "epistemological empiricism."[30] And it is important to know that by far the most

important factor in Mill's criticism of the formal sciences -- formal logic and mathematics -- as contained in Books I and II of his *Logic* - derives essentially from his great desire to hear "less about concepts and more about things, less about forms of thought and more about grounds of knowledge."[31]

In concluding our review of Mill's strategy for a defence of a system of Inductive Logic we now point out that in Books I and II of his *Logic Mill* claims that his definition of logic is definitive and final. In his *Examination* he claims a unique position for his logic of induction. And his overall discussion which rests upon his criticism and rejection of formal logic as the exclusive logic naturally leads him to his inevitable conclusion about inductive logic as elaborately discussed in Book III which virtually all philosophers have regarded as the most important part of his *Logic.* Henceforth, inductive logic, as Mill conceives it in his *Logic,* should supply "rules and models (such as the syllogism and its rules are for ratiocination) to which if inductive arguments conform, those arguments are conclusive and not otherwise." Conclusiveness might be what Mill means by "validity" in the context of inductive logic. As Professor Gerd Buchdahl recently pointed out to me in a correspondence, "valid" does not mean logically valid in the context of induction, so that "invalid" cannot be treated as logically invalid. Incidentally, Buchdahl gave the same explanation of Mill's position on the validity of inductive inferences to Gilbert Ryle when he (Buchdahl) gave a paper to the Oxford Philosophical Society in 1954. Mill says: "While inductive inference is valid, it is always fallible, though fallible to many degrees."[32] From all this it should be clear enough that the kind of certainty Mill seems to have attached to the results of induction or experimental methods is tantamount to a possible claim that there can be no escape from the certainty of inductive conclusions any more than we can help gravitating in accordance with the Newtonian Law of Gravitation.

From the point of view of our discussion so far in this paper it seems clear to us that Mill's strategy rests on his radical approach to the problem of the definition of logic and his subsequent attack on logical principles. This is to say that you cannot attempt any meaningful criticism of logic without starting your criticism from the point of view of definition and principles of logic itself. Concerning the central issue about the concept of inductive logic, Mill is the first philosopher who has applied this kind of method, irrespective of whether or not his criticisms of formal logic were acceptable to many logicians, especially to Popper who is a good example of one of the severest critics of the logic of induction or inductive logic.[33] Although non-inductive logicians of the Popperian stamp may find it easy to dismiss Mill's conception of inductive logic by vigorously contrasting the rules of deduction to the rules of induction in a way Popper himself pointed out to me, it stands to reason that such dismissal can only stand if you

strongly believe, and it is indeed the case, that logic is purely formal. But from our discussion here and more especially as it was discussed somewhere else,[34] the conception of logicic as purely formal, or the idea that formal logic is all the logic there is, remains as controversial as ever. And until this controversy is completely resolved in the favour of formal logic, if this is at all possible, Mill's position on logic and mathematics cannot be shrugged off quite easily or confortably. What is more, his influence persists, while his logical doctrine enjoys a great deal of academic respectability.[35] In this respect, if we carefully assess Mill on the grounds he stood, his approach to the problem of the logic of induction appears to me a more defensible type than say Carnap's.[36] I say this because it will be unjust to keep on accusing Mill of trying to validate some principles which, compared to the principles of formal reasoning, are recognized by formal logicians to be invalid, without attempting to read Mill's own criticism of formal reasoning. Simply put, he does not admit that the principles of formal logic are valid principles in the sense in which such validity is completely devoid of "matter" or factual content. His claim is that if our deduction is valid at all, it is so only by virtue of its ground – induction. The problem that is not usually highlighted in this connection is that of finding other acceptable grounds for formal logical principles. To say that such grounds are abstract principles is not saying much for a radical empiricist of Mill's stamp. Rather, he would dismiss such grounds as metaphysical ones, in which case they are irrefutable or unconfirmable by experience. Mill actually regards the formal principles of logic as metaphysical, and I have myself agreed with him.[37]

For Mil, the acceptance of logical principles as completely devoid of experience is an acceptance of *a priorism* and consequently of a total distinction between analytic and synthetic statements. We may, in this connection, suggest that one important problem raised concerns the nature and ground of necessary truths and analytic and synthetic propositions, so that we are face to face with the question of ultimate or first principles (e.g., principles of formal logic); whether such principles, if analytic and certain, are ultimately dependent on experience or not. To say that they are not ultimately dependent on experience is, for Mill, an acceptance of *a priorism*. His rejection of the *a priori* therefore seems to deal a rude blow to the "empiricist dogma." Simply put, it means that contrary to the thesis "carved" out of *a priorism* there may be no *a priori* or necessary truth after all, and therefore no significant theoretical certainty.[38] Since Mill also rejects all forms of *priorism* as well as the usual distinction between analytic and synthetic statements (his recognition of verbal and real propositions is only to emphasize the trifleness of the former) he has good reasons to disbelieve the sharp distinction made between deduction and induction. But unlike Mill, other so–called inductive logicians accept these distinctions together with the conception of logic as purely formal. Thus, while they hold on

to this formal conception of logic and recognize that induction is *not* deduction, they are faced with the so–called logical problem of induction and the corresponding problem of finding a precise definition of inductive logic or what, from the point of view of formal logic, it really means, even to the extent in which some philosophers argue that no inductive logician really knows what is to be called inductive logic.[39]

Propper, as one of the greatest critics of Mill's logic of induction, thinks that Carnap was trying to do what Mill did in his *Logic* by attempting to bridge the gap (which he thinks must not be bridged) between deduction and induction. However, Popper believes that Carnap's attempt was a more intellectually sophisticated defence of a false theory.[40] But Carnap seems to have denied this.[41] Since Popper's attack on Carnap's system of inductive logic rests on his own position, i.e., that "there are rules of deduction but no corresponding rules of induction," and that the concept of inductive logic is self–contradictory, any attempt to fit inductive logic into deductive mold is, according to Popper, doomed to failure.[42] This so because we cannot fit the formal logician's term "validity" into any system of inductive logic without contradicting the term as it is used in formal deductive logic. From the point of view of formal logic, Popper's objection against Carnap and the inductive logicians is not only defensible, but quite just, insofar as these so–called inductive logicians do recognize and accept, as Popper himself does, the analytic–synthetic distinction as well as the fundamental distinction between deduction and induction and the logical implication of such distinction. Yet Carnap does not think that the concept of inductive logic is self–contraditory or should be rejected simply because it does not satisfy the deductive standard. In fact, for Carnap, there is an "analogy" between deduction and induction. For this reason, one would sympathize with Popper's criticism of Carnap's attempt to effect a rigorous analogy between inductive and deductive logic in the sense in which one presupposes the other.[43] But against Mill, Popper's objection does not have the same force as it does against Carnap who, unlike Mill, has nothing against logic defined as purely formal. Therefore, if Popper were to asses Mill from his own position on logic, and not from his own (Popper's) position and from the point of view of those who, like Carnap, subscribe to the doctrine of formal logicians, Mill would have been spared of unjust attack.[44] This is to say that Mill's system of inductive logic is quite consistent with his own position on logic and should not be unduly criticized without paying attention to, and acknowledging his criticism of, formal logic. Therefore, in order to effectively criticise Mill's position on inductive logic, one has to successfully get rid of his criticism of formal logic. And until this is done, all criticisms against his logic of induction will forever be like putting the cart before the horse.

Our inevitable conclusion is that once Mill's straightforward posit-

ion on the nature and scope of logic is established, whether rightly or wrongly, his empirical theories of logic and mathematics and the whole of his arguments for a system of empirical or inductive logic naturally falls into place. But by this Mill does not reject deductive logic. Rather, it is subsumed under inductive logic for the purpose of finding a suitable ground for it, and stripped of its exclusive and purely formal character or, if you like, of its abstract, logical limbo. This task completed logic, in Mill's proper sense of the word, would be applicable to all kinds of problems and subject matter as he later showed in Book III of his *Logic* and only to be further highlighted in Book VI dealing with *The Logic of the Morai Sciences.*

SUMMARY

The central theme of this paper has been that aspect of Mill's strategy for his system of inductive logic and scientific method as contained in Books I and II of his *Logic*. In this connection our method of approach to his logic of induction is quite different from previous ones. It is quite usual for Mill's critics to concentrate their unbridled attacks on Book III simply because it is the book in which he states his celebrated theory of inductive logic. But on careful examination we do find such approach to be wrong. This is because Mill's theory of inductive logic is argued and defended *not* in Book III, but in Books I and II of his *System of Logic* as well as the relevant portions of his *Examination of Sir Williams Hamilton's Philosophy.* We therefore maintain that it is unfair and misleading for critics or commentators to ignore these crucial chapters in Mill's *Logic* where he actually lays all his cards on the table, and without which a correct assessment or sympathetic understanding of his theory of inductive logic would be a difficult task. But once his own definition and scope of logic together with his criticisms of formal logic are understood, critics of Mill would be more sympathetic towards him. What is more, his statements about inductive logic would be seen to be no longer puzzling, and his logic of science as easy to swallow, predigested system.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See M. A. Makinde: "Formal Logic and the Paradox of Excluded Middle," in **International Logic Review,** No. 15, June 1977, pp. 49 – 52. My criticism of formal logic and the invention of a paradox of excluded middle followed from Mill's criticism of the subject.

2. Michael Polanyi: **The Logic of Liberty: Reflection and Rejoinders,** Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1951. Polanyi's position in this work is essentially Socratic – knowledge for

knowledge's sake.

3. J. S. Mill: **A System of Logic: Ratiocinative and Inductive, 8th Ed.** London: Longman, 1970, p. 1. (Henceforth referred to as Logic.) MIll's claim has often been restated and supported by some modern logicians. See for instance I. M. Copi and J. A. Gould (eds.): **Readings on Logic.** New York: Macmillan Co., 1966, p. 1, and John Dewey, also in the same book, p. 73.

4. The phase "No–Man's Land" was used by Bertrand Russell to describe the nature of philosophy for which there is no proper definition. It is for much the same reason that I find it useful to treat logic the same way. For Russel's view see his **His tory of Western Philosophy.** London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 18th edition, 1962, p. 13.

5. J.S. Mill, **Ibid.**

6. **Ibid.**

7. **Op. cit., p. 2.**

8. **Ibid.**

9. **Ibid.**

10. Mill: **Logic** Book I, Chs. II – V and VIII, particularly Ch. III, Sections I – 8.

11. **Op. cit.**, Ch. III, Secs. 10 – 15.

12. **Op. cit.**, Book II, Ch. 1, Secs. 2 – 3 and Ch. III, Secs. 1 – 6.

13. M. A. Makinde: "John Stuart Mill's Theory of Logic and Scientific method as a Rejection of Hume's Scepticism with Regards to the Validity of Inductive Reasoning," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1974, Part II, Ch. 3, Section V(b). In the development of the above Thesis I had profited a great deal first from my teachers, Professor F. F. Wilson of Toronto and Henry Kyburg, Jr., visiting Professor at the University of Western Ontario, 1969 – 70, and from my various discussions with my academic supervisor, Prof. R. F. McRae, and Advisor, T. A. Goudge, and from J. L. Mackie, Alan Ryan, A.C. Crombie, and H.L.A. Hart at Oxford; Professors R. B. Braithwaite (an old teacher of mine at the University of Western Ontario) and Gerd Buchdahl at Cambridge; Prof. Peter Alexander at Bristol, and above all, Sir Karl Popper at Buckinghamshire, England, during the winter of 1972. I must say however, that I owe my greatest debt to Sir Karl Popper whose violent criticism of Mill's logic actually helped me to understand, as well as sympathize with, Mill's logic of induction and scientific method more than I ever anticipated.

14. Mill: An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy, 4th edition. London: Longmans Green, Reader and Dyer, 1872 (Henceforth referred to as Examination) Chas. XVII–XX.
15. Sir William Hamilton: Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic. Posthumus edition by Henery L. Mansel and John Veitch (in 4 volumes) London: Blackwood & Sons, 1859–1860, and Chapters in Logic. Toronto: The Wesleyan Methodist Bookroom, 18
16. For instance, "the conception of logic as essentially formal," resulting in "the identity of pure logic and abstract mathematics" is the conception that underlies the views of modern symbolic logicians. See for instance L. Susan Stebbing: A Modern Introduction to Logic. London: Methuen & Co., 1930; A. Whitehead and B. Russell: Principia Mathematica, and many other writers on logic. However, some modern logicians like Charles Pierce and more especially John Dewey have contended, along with Mill, that logic is not purely formal. See for instance my paper "Formal Logic and the Paradox of Excluded Middle" in International Logic Review June 1977, pp. 49–50 and I. M. Copi and J. A. Gould: Readings on Logic, New York, Macmillan Company, 1966, pp. 73–74.
17. See M. A. Makinde: "Formal Logic and the Paradox of Excluded Middle" above especially pp. 45–52.
18. Mill: Examination p. 454.
19. Op. cit. p. 457–458.
20. Op. cit., p. 468.
21. Op. cit., p. 470.
22. See M. A. Makinde, op. cit., p. 52.
23. Mill: Op. cit., p. 473. The original expression "in the real and fuller sense" is in Greek in Mill's text. I am indebted to Prof. R. E. Allen, formerly of the Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto, for this translation.
24. Op. cit., p. 476.
25. Ibid.
26. Op. cit., pp. 446–447.
27. For Mill's discussion on the relation of induction to deduction, and of formal logic to the logic of truth, see Logic Book II, Ch. III, especially secs. 7–9 and that all deductive sciences are inductive, Book II, Ch. IV.

28. Richard Schlegel: Completeness in Science. New York: Appleton–Century Crofts, 1967, pp. 74, 77. See also Louis O. Katsoff: A Philosophy of Mathematics. Ames: Iowa State College Press, 1948, pp. 194–195, as referred to by Schlegel in the above, p. 76.

29. I am indebted to Professor J. L. Mackie for this particular expression which came out in one of our discussions at Oxford in December 1972

30. Reginald Jackson: An Examination of the Deductive Logic of John Stuart Mill. London, Oxford University Press, 1941, Ch. 7.

31. J. S. Mill: Examination, p. 622.

32. Gerd Buchdahl: Correspondence from Cambridge University, England, 12 March, 1984. See also Buchdahl's paper: "Inductivist versus Deductivist Approaches and Mill," Monist, Vol. 55 July 1971, pp. 356–357.

33. However, in his comment on the earlier version of my paper, Professor Proper confessed his admiration for Mill's Logic, much of which "is excellent" but especially his "Logic of Moral Sciences." "But I admire his On Liberty more than the Logic." But he goes on to say: "Of course, my admiration for Mill does not prevent me from being often of a different opinion. I am not a formalist, and I am quite prepared to accept Mill's definition of logic; but this doesn't make his inductive methods valid ..." (Popper's correspondence from Buckinghamshire, 16 December, 1981) In spite of Popper's denial of being a formalist, I have lately criticized his complete scepticism about induction, from the point of view of formal logic, in a paper entitled: "The Logical Problem of Induction: A Red Herring?", delivered at the Philosophy Colloquim, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, U.S.A. January 12, 1984, and also at the Annual Conference of the Ohio Philosophical Association at Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, Ohio, 7 April, 1984. The paper has since been published in the Proceedings of the Ohio Philosophical Association 1984, pp. 103 – 122. This paper was promoted by Popper's most recent article, jointly written with Professor David Miller, on "A Proof of the Impossibility of Inductive Probability" in Nature, 21 April, 1983, a copy of which Popper sent to me in June, 1983.

34. M. A. Makinde: "Formal Logic and the Paradox of Excluded Middle" above.

35. Because of its importance, many textbooks on logic are incomplete without a discussion on Mill's logic. Even J. M. Keynes, who has some influence on Carnap, acknowledges the permanent contribution of Mill in any discussion on Inductive Logic. See J. M. Keynes: A Treatise on Probability. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1921. There are other sympathetic views of Mill's Logic such as those of Allan Ryan and J. L. Mackie at Oxford, Prof. R. McRae and J. M. Robson of Toronto and many others. Already the University of Toronto Press, Canada, has completed the editions of a large number of Mill's works, including his Logic. The reader is also invited to the incredible support got from Mill's contemporaries against Jevon's attack. Spearheaded by G. C. Robertson, the editor of Mind and a colleague of Jevons at the University of London, the editorial comment "J. S. Mill's Philosophy Tested by Prof. Jevons" in Mind, Vol. 3, 1978, pp. 141–144, was followed by a large support of Mill against Jevons in various articles, after Roberson's, by Robert Adamson (pp. 415–417) and Arthur Strachey (pp. 283–284) among others, and the editor's final reply to Jevons (pp. 285–289) of the same volume. It is therefore interesting to note that Jevon's Elementary Lessons in Logic which he wrote and he himself used as an introductory course on Mill's Logic while teaching the subject at the University of London was, and is still, the most popular of his books, and the only one still in print. Since its publication in 1870, it has been reprinted twenty times in the 19th century, and seventeen times in this century, the most recent to my knowledge being the 1965 (Macmillan) edition. Jevons' other works, The Principles of Science and Pure Logic and other Minor Works in which Mill was severely criticized, are out of print while practically all of Mill's works are still in print and in wide circulation. These observations, to me, are very significant.

36. R. Carnap: Logical Foundations of Probability, 2nd edition, Chicago, University of Chciago Press, 1982. See Ch. IV, especially sections 43–46.

37. See my paper above. Since its publication, attempts have been made to evaluate my criticism of formal logic as purely formal. See for instance, Katalin G. Havas "On 'Pure' Forms in Formal Logic" in the same Journal, International Logic Review, December 1979, pp. 65–77.

38. For this view which is similar to Mill's, see William Ernest Hocking: "Action and Certainty" in Journal of Philosophy, Vol. XXVI,, April 1930, pp. 225–238.

39. See for instance Henry Kyburg Jr. 'Recent work in Inductive Logic" in American Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 1, 1964, p.249. Also see his Probability and Inductive Logic, New York: Macmillan, 1970, Ch. 13.

40. From one of my discussions with Sir Karl Popper in his home in Fallowfield, Buchinghamshire, England, on December 13, 1972.

41. See Carnap's Logical Foundations of Probability, p. 193.

42. From the same discussion with Popper. It was one of his contentions, during an argument, that neither Mill nor Carnap nor indeed any logician, dead or alive, could provide such rules of inductive logic that would correspond to those of deductive logic. "Nobody has done it, and nobody would ever succeed in doing it," he concluded. All this is a strong restatement of his position in his Logic of Scientific Discovery, Conjectures and Refutations, Objective Knowledge, and some of his other papers.

43. Carnap. Logical Foundations of Probability. Sec. 43, pp. 192 – 202.

44. For Mill's conception of logic as the logic of truth rather than of mere consistency see his Logic, Introduction, and Book II, Ch. 3, especially Sec. 9, and Chs. 5 and 7. For his criticism of the Humean conception of relation of ideas, see Book I, Ch. 5, Section 1, together with his criticism of formal logic in general, in his Examination, Chs. XX and XXI, pp. 446–595.

GOD IS NOT IN NEED OF EXISTENCE

By

DR. C. S. MOMOH

Spinoza's problem at the onset of his metaphysical meditations can be formulated thus; "In the scheme of things there is an X we can refer to as 'God' and he exists. It is my task to prove his existence". Proof of the existence of God was a burning issue during the medieval period and in thus deliberating Spinoza was only preparing himself to apply his philosophical skill to a very important question of the day. He was not a pioneer either. St Anselm, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Descartes, all before him, have addressed themselves to this important question. Now the first problem of Spinoza that there is an X who is God, and he exists has, to my knowledge, largely been neglected by philosophers. What philosophers have mostly directed their searchlight on is the success or otherwise of Spinoza's purported claim to have proved the existence of God.[1] This paper will also concern itself with this (in fact this is its chief concern) but a reconstruction of the proof of God's reality will be proffered which will go back to Spinoza's first problem.

Spinoza himself will not think this procedure unwarranted. For in the *Short Treatise* he agreed with St. Thomas Aquinas that there is an X who is God in the scheme of things and he exists, but only disagreed with the a posteriori methods Aquinas used to go about proving this existence.[2] In *Principia Philosophiae Cartesiana (Principles of the Philosophy of Descartes)* Spinoza not only agreed with Descartes that God exists, but reproduced Descartes' arguments for the existence of God.[3]

And in Parts I of both the *Short Treatise* and the *Ethics* it appears that Spinoza makes use of the salient features of Descartes' arguments by torturing them into a mathematical mold.

The main thrust of Thomas Aquinas' five proofs of God's existence is the "undesirability of infinite regress argument". The first proof utilizes the Aristotelian notion of the first mover to the effect that whatever is moved is moved by another, but since altegedly this cannot go on to infinity, there must be a first mover, and this first mover is God. The same reasoning goes for the second and third proofs which argue, respectively, that there must be a first efficient cause and a necessary being to give existence to contingent beings.[4] This way of proving the existence of God is a posteriori because it proceeds from consequences to conditions, from effects to causes. While not entirely averse to this method, Spinoza prefers the a priori method which proceeds from causes to effects; from the definition of God to the implications of such a definition. Spinoza, who subscribes to the Cartesian dictum that "what we clearly and distinctly perceive is true". I dismissed

Aquinas' method as of no consequence because it will not help us to see that God "is the cause of all things, and also the cause of himself *(cause sui)* who makes himself known through himself".

In Meditations III and V Descartes offers various arguments to prove the existence of God. In Meditation III Descartes lays down the general rule (on which he will peg the validity of most of his arguments) that "Whatever I perceive very clearly and distinctly is true"[6]

Descartes argues that of all the knowledge that he possesses and could acquire the most doubtful and least reliable sort is the one got through the senses; for of all the ideas which one has, viz. ideas representing "inanimate corporal objects, angels, animals, and finally other men like myself" can be authored, can originate, from the individual. The only one that cannot originate from the individual is the idea of God; and by God Descartes means "a substance that is infinite, independent, supremely intelligent, supremely powerful, and the creator of myself and anything that may exist. The more I consider these attributes, the less it seems possible for them to have originated from myself. So by what I said above it must be inferred that God exists."[7]

The individual is a finite substance according to Descartes; and so whatever idea he may have of a substance must be of a finite substance. Since, however, he has the idea of an infinite substance, this idea must have been implanted in his mind by the infinite substance. And of all the ideas the individual has, the idea of God is supremely clear and distinct and representatively more real than any other. "My idea of God has the highest degree of truth, and is the most clear and distinct, of all my ideas."[8]

An individual's continued existence cannot be anchored on the fact that he exists now. As a purely conscious being (*res cogitans*) the individual has not got the power to guarantee his future existence and so his future existence must depend on some being other than himself. An infinite regress here again is not allowable and so we must stop at Being called God.

An individual exists, he cannot guarantee his own existence. Somebody who can and does is God. An individual is a finite substance but he has an idea of an infinite substance; since an idea of the infinite cannot be generated by the finite, it must be generated by the infinite. What is more, this idea of the infinite Substance (God) has been there from birth. It is innate.

These so-called proofs are more or less in the Aquinian (cosmological) tradition; from what we know and see to what we do not know and do not see, but with the important Cartesian variation of arguing from the individual (instead of the universe) to the creator and from the consciousness of a finite being to the consciousness of an infinite Being. But Descartes has another argument, the ontological argument, in which he recognises the traditional distinction between essence and existence but insists that these two are collapsible only in the case of God.

The ontological argument is also Spinoza's first proof of God's existence in the *Ethics* although unlike Descartes Spinoza holds existence to pertain to the essence of God more in the idea of self-causality than in the idea of perfection. In Meditation V Descartes argues the central point of the ontological argument that only in God and God alone can we be permitted to move from essence to existence. For, says Descartes, "On more careful consideration it becomes obvious that existence can no more be taken away from the divine essence than the magnitude of its three angles together (that is, their being equal to two right angles) can be taken away from the essence of a triangle, or the idea of a valley can be taken away from the idea of a hill. So it is no less absurd to think of God (that is, a supremely perfect being) lacking existence (that is, lacking a certain perfection) than to think of a hill without a valley".[9]

The main contention of the ontological argument is that in God existence and essence are the same. This is arguable. On the other hand, too, the Cartesian version that existence is a perfection and that therefore the supremely perfect being exists, is also disputable. And no less disputable is the Spinozian variant that God is a substance that does not depend on any other thing for existence, so it is *causa sui* and therefore must exist.

In Spinoza's metaphysics this last contention is very fundamental. On it depends the success of a most celebrated proof of God's existence. In Prop XI of the first part of the *Ethics*, Spinoza implies that what is true of substance is true of God and that therefore whatever he has proved of substance he has proved of God. And so the first demonstration of Prop. XI depends crucially on Prop. VII where Spinoza claims to have proved the existence of substance. But if it turns out that the purported proof of Prop. VII is not cogent then Prop. XI will be no more cogent. But before "an excessive haste to criticize" Spinoza is displayed[10] it will be worthwhile to capture as far as possible the nature of Spinoza's proofs of God's existence.

Prop. XI states that "God, or substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence necessarily exists" (Wild, p. 103) . The major premise in this proof is that everything whose essence involves existence necessarily exists while the minor premise is that God's essence involves existence.

The conclusion that God necessarily exists is arrived at by attempting to prove the absurdity of the contrary. God must exist because God is an infinite substance and an infinite substance is self-caused. This is based on Prop. VII which states that "It pertains to the nature of substance to exist", (Wild, p. 98). Whatever is proved of substance is proved of God. There is nothing by which substance (God) can be produced (corcl, props. VI). Since substance is self-producing, its essence necessarily (must) involve existence. Substance must exist because it "is necessarily infinite". (Prop. VII). Substance cannot exist as finite because this would mean its being

limited by another substance of the same nature and this would imply that there are two substances of the same nature and this would render Prop.V. which states that "In nature there cannot be two or more substances of the same nature or attribute", absurd. Prop. VII, according to Spinoza, is axiomatic if we understand substance as that "which is in itself and is conceived through itself, or in other words, that the knowledge of which does not need the knowledge of another thing" (Wild, p. 99). In Letter XXI (Wild, p. 429) Spinoza restates the gist of this first proof with echoes of Cartesianism when he says that "If the nature of God is known to us, then the assertion that God exists follows as necessarily from our nature as it follows necessarily from the nature of a triangle that its three angles are equal to two right angles".

The second proof is based on the belief that there must be a cause for both existence and non-existence. If X exists, the reason (cause) for its existence must lie either in the nature of X (internal to or in a factor) external to X itself. A substance exists because its nature cannot but involve existence. If nothing can hinder a thing from existing, that thing necessarily exists and since there is "no reason nor cause which hinders God from existing, or which negates this existence, we must conclude absolute that he necessarily exists". (Wild, p. 104). If we say that the reason for God's non-existence lay within God's nature, then the nature of the perfect being would contain a self-contradiction, and this is absurd. But the reason for a supposed non-existence of God cannot be outside the divine nature for outside God or substance there can be nothing. There can therefore be no cause for the non-existence of God and consequently God exists.

Spinoza's third and fourth proof take their cue from Descartes' second proof in Meditation III.[12] If we take power as applicable to our idea of God, then proof can be constructed on the basis of the attribute of power: ability to exist is power, and if we insist that only finite beings exist, it means that things finite are more powerful than the absolutely infinite being, which will be ridiculous. If anything exists, then the more so a being absolutely infinite.

In the last demonstration, which is also the fourth proof, Spinoza offers an a priori proof to make for easy understanding. If the third proof is accepted to the effect that ability to exist is power and that therefore God must exist, we will also have to accept that a thing derives a greater power of existence from itself, the more reality it possesses in its nature. It follows then that God who "has from Himself an absolutely infinite power of existence, necessarily exists"[13] Substance is not acted upon by any external cause whether in its perfection or reality and, therefore, its existence, which is nothing else than its essence, must follow from its nature. Imperfection is alien to God by virtue of His essence, so God must exist because imperfection hinders existence.

The various proofs of God's existence (ontological or consmological, Aquinian, Cartescan or Spinozian) are all inadequate on broadly two grounds: an arbitrary refusal to follow the argument through (the undersirability of infinite regress argument) and a readiness to make use of unexamined premises which are merely offered as self-evident. The problem, of course, is much more severe with Spinoza whose geometrical method should have been expected to lead to incontrovertible conclusions. In spite of his conclusions, the issues he discussed are still as controversial as ever. It is either then that his method was unsuited to his subject-matter or his arguments simply are not convincing and compelling, It could even be both, Or alternatively, the issues involved in the debate are such that agreement simply is not possible.

Spinoza conceives God (as a result of his epistemology) to be an object of direct knowledge for God is known to us as an intuition — a clear and distinct idea which is adequate and true: "That existence belongs to the essence of God we can clearly and distinctly understand". The existence of God should be self-evident as an immediate fact of knowledge. But if this is true then why bother to prove God's existence? What this proof does is offer a dogmatic assertion that God is existent and that we should be able to see and grasp this as an immediate fact of our knowledge. Assent to such a proof then is more psychological than anything else. There is no logic in it and it is not based on empirical knowledge. Therefore a positive assent is as legitimate as a negative one.

It is clear that Spinoza's definitions are not properly pruned. They are believed to be brief restatements of generally accepted and well-known medieval concepts. [15] It would appear that Spinoza generously granted the medieval world its normal usage of these concepts but went on the extract conclusions which are supposed to be deductive but which remain tainted with imprecision, illogicality and emotion characteristic of popular usage. Take for instance Spinoza's characterization of substance. One interpretation can infer that Spinoza's substance is nothing but a name for all of the attributes. Substance consists of attributes *(Ethics 1, Def. 6, Prop XI and XII).* Attribute is defined like substance as that which must be conceived through itself (Prop. X and Letter II.). Then in Prop. IV and the Corollary to Prop. XII, we are told that nothing exists save substance and its modes. It must be admitted that such an inference that substance is nothing but a "sum" of its attributes will be largely overshadowed by other passages in the *Ethics* but what about Spinoza's contention that substance cannot be produced by an external cause and therefore must be self-caused, If he had not appropriated the prevalent medieval concept of "self-cause" he would have saved us the trouble of grappling with something that is self-caused. For we can see that sensibly inherent in cause is a two-way traffic obtaining between two separate and distinct objects. To talk therefore of a self-caused

thing is both an abuse and misuse of language. Surely Spinoza has the right to adopt the Humpty-Dumpty view of word usage but we can remind him that his usage must at least keep close to what is sensible.

It is the willingness of Spinoza to utilize what antecedent philosopherss have meant by "substance" that dogs his first ontological proof of God's existence. This proof (Dem. Prop XI) depends on Axiom VII and Prop. VII which state respectively that "the essence of that thing which can be conceived as not existing does not involve existence", and "It pertains to the nature of substance to exist". Spinoza takes Proposition VII to be true because "there is nothing by which substance can be produced. It will be the cause of itself" and by Def. 1 a thing is cause of itself if its essence involves existence. Spinoza's substance can be conceived by human beings under the attribute of Extension and under the attribute of thought. If we accept the fact that our mode of cognising the Extensional attribute of substance is through our normal perceptual faculty, then it is difficult to see that there is nothing by which substance can be produced. And if we also accept the fact that our mode of cognising the thought attribute is through our mental activity it would be discovered that there is no criterion by which that faculty can choose between Spinoza's characterization of substance and a counter-formulation to the effect that "There is something by which substance can be produced". The first ontological proof, then, because it is based on Spinoza's strange notion of substance, is not cogent.

In much of his proofs Spinoza seems to reinforce his point by using the analogy of a triangle. The analogy is useful only in so far as it serves as a reminder that Spinoza gives his proof a geometrical dressing. Further than this the respect in which the concept of a triangle is assimilable to the concept of God is obscure. God, to Spinoza, is not a substance in the ordinary sense of the word. God is a being absolutely infinite. "a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses an eternal and infinite essence" (Def. IV). God is *causa sui* , self-dependent, self-caused, self-subsistent, the being on whom all reality falls. In contrast when we say that the two right angles of a triangle are equal to its three angles, there is not much left to say. How can we use such an inconsequential and non-universal conception to drive home the conception and proof of God's existence? It is analogies of this sort that make it difficult to see what he is getting at. Spinoza also says that the nature of a square circle is enough reason why it cannot exist by which he means to make the point that the nature of God is enough reason why God should exist. But it is obvious that "nature" as applied to square circle and "nature" as applied to God do not carry the same meaning. A square circle does not exist because of the definition of the word "square" and the word "circle". The two words have been so defined such that they cannot be juxtaposed unless to jar at each other. The nature of "God" and the nature of "existence", on the other hand, are not matters of mere definition.

They are matters of deep personal involvement and profound metaphysical meditation. The fact then that the nature of a "square" and a "circle" guarantees the non-existence of a square circle does not argue for the fact that the nature of "God" and "existence" guarantees God's existence.

Spinoza's third proof argues from the impotance of the finite being. If the finite being who is relatively impotence exists, then the infinite being who is so much more powerful must exist. The premise that ability to exist is power, is not self-evident as claimed by Spinoza. Inability to exist may not be a weakness if a need to exist is unncessary or at any rate is rendered redundant by the rules of the game or the logic of the situation. This point will be clearer with the heldp of an analogy. A basketball coach knows all the rules of the game, he coaches (brings into existence, creates) members of the team but he himself is not a player (that is, does not exist as a member of the team). God indeed is a basketball coach. Inasmuch as he created the world, he is part of the world but as far as the existence of the world as a "team" goes, God is a spectator. This analogy proves simply that the talk of an inability to exist can be construed as a needlessness to exist which, far from being a weakness, can just be as a result of the nature of the system.

Existence is the most important possession of any being, both finite and infinite. And this is precisely why all attempts have been made to prove even God's existence. In God existence and essence merge, they are the same. But if the common denominator of all beings is existence, it follows that both mode and substance and in fact God partake of the same hypostasis without which they will all be nonentities. For the Spinozistic system will certainly not permit (in view of the omipotence of God) that whatever, the lack of which can reduce a finite being to nonentity, should also be capable of reducing infinite being to nonentity.

But this is what we are committed to if we put God and man on a parity in relation to existence. If God and man are equal on a fundamental issue like existence, it means that the much talked about existence of God is a pollution of God's essence and omnipotence. The consequence of this is that philosophers and theologians like St. Anselm, St. Thomas Aquinas, Descartes and now Spinoza, who bend themselves fowwards and backwards trying to prove the existence of God, are in fact portraying God as an octogenarian who seeks to prove the truth of his old age by flaunting a collection of new toys. Yet it is a child who should flaunt toys and not an octogenarian.

The question then reduces not to whether ability to exist is power, or inability to exist is weakness but that existence on the part of God is a degradation, a humiliation. This line of reasoning is not alien to one famous proof of God's existence. For we should remember that Aristotle's first mo-

ver cannot itself be in motion. In this sense God generates existence without the question of his own existence coming to the fore, and this is in fact how the real world operates.

Consider the set of all people who drive automobiles; their skill and expertise control the motion of the automobile without the needless question whether they themselves do the running or whether they are themselves the automobile. Consider the set of all people who are professors: they keep the same class hours with their students, grind through the same material, and see the students through their studies without the needless question arising whether they are themselves students. Examples are legion to uphold the logic of the analogy that, even though the first mover imparts motion, it is itself not in motion. Translated into the language of existence, this means, that, even though God imparts existence, he is himself not in existence. The logic involved in this is more analogically comprehensive than the one which sees God only as a first mover while ignoring the fact that the first mover is not itself in motion.

What we have now is not that God's existence is self-caused, selfdependent, but that the existence of God is not a salient feature of the whole proceedings because God, as an imparter and creator of existence, is not himself in need of existence. It is impossible then to deprive God of existence for one can only be deprived of what he has or has need of or for. While a finite being can be deprived of existence God, the infinite being, cannot be so deprived. It could, of course, be argued that God is not in need of existence because with him existence is inexhaustible. This line of argumentation is consistent with the possition taken in this paper if the idea is one of the existence of an inexhaustible pool of existence fromandinto which God dips to give existence to finite modes. This would mean that the inexhaustible pool of existence is itself created by, and is external to God. But if the idea is that God is one massive inexhaustible pool of existence, in which case the inexhaustibility of existence is internal to God, the contention that God is not in need of existence can still stand on this count. But the reason given, which is to the effect that God is not in need of existence because to taint him with such an attribute, which is so basic to finite things and the lack of which nullify them, is a humiliation and a deprivation, stands severly challenged.

FOOTNOTES

1. I will provide textual evidence for only five of such philosophers.
   (i) Henry Wolfson, The Philosophy of Spinoza Vol 1, (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 160
   (ii) Harold Joachim, A Study of the Ethics of Spinoza (New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1964), p. 52.
   (iii) Richard Mckeon, The Philosophy of Spinoza (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1928), p. 161.
   (iv) George Sturt Fullerton, The Philosophy of Spinoza (New York: Nenry Holt and Company, 1894), p. 271.
   (v) Ruth Lydia Saw, The Vindication of Metaphysics (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1951), p. 66.
2. Spinoza's Short Treatise on God, Man and His Well-Being, A Wolf, trans. and ed., (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), p. 20
3. Wolfson, Vol. 1, p. 181.
4. A. K. Biermann and James Gould, eds., Philosophy for New Generation (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1973), pp. 639 – 641.
5. Wolf, p. 20
6. Descartes Philosophical Writings, Elizabeth Anscombe and Peter Geach, trans. and ed. (Nelson 1954) p. 76.
7. Ibid., Med. III, p. 85
8. Ibid., p. 89
9. Ibid., Med. V, p. 103
10. S. Paul Kashap, ed., Studies in Spinoza: Critical and Interpretative Essays (Berkeley; Univer. of California Press, 1972), p. 17.
11. Direct quotations from Spinoza's works are from Spinoza Selections, John Wild, ed (New York'Scribner's Sons, 1958).
12. Wolfson, p. 200
13. Wolf, p. 15.
14. Wolfson, p. 133
15. Biermann and Gould, p. 639.

PRESUPPOSITIONS OF AFRICAN SOCIALISM

Dr. K. C. Anyanwu

INTRODUCTION:

Liberalism, scientific socialism and African Socialism are ideologies in the sense that they are social doctrines which define the ends of social action. "An ideology is a theory defining the end or aim of social action; in other words, it is a theory designating the kind of society at which we should aim"[1]. Since political philosophy reflects the history, the culture and the values of a people, it may be appropriate to say that ideological conflicts stem from the differences of the normative theories of cultures and that political ideology cannot be adequately understood except within the historical and cultural context. According to Professor Iyer, "political concepts need to be considered historically as well as analytically if their deceptive ambiguity and shifting meanings are to be appreciated"[2]. What I wish to do in this paper is to point out the basic assumptions about the nature of man, society, good, property, etc. underlying African socialism, analyze such assumptions within the context of the African mode of knowing and thereby show why liberalism and scientific socialism are rejected as inappropriate socio-political ideologies for the African people.

It is essential to make explicit the basic assumptions about man and nature which underlie any ideology because, as Professor Iyer points out, "our acceptance of Marxism, in its simpler or maturer formulation, depends not on the truth or falsity of its so-called scientific propositions but on whether we regard Marx's picture of historical and social process as plausible and, ultimately, on whether we share his presuppositions about man and nature"[3].

IDEOLOGICAL QUESTION.

What is the relationship between the individual and society, and both to property? This may be regarded as the common question facing an African socialist, a Western Liberalist and a Marxist. The manner in which this question is resolved will therefore determine the political and economic doctrines of a given culture. It seems that if the individual disowns society, the basis of tradition, anarchy may ensure. On the other hand, society cannot abolish or suppress the individual without becoming tyrannical. "How can we combine that degree of individual initiative which is necessary for progress with the degree of social cohesion that is necessary for survival?[4]. Definitely

the political and economic question, if fully analysed and pursued, will necessarily lead to moral questions. In other words, capitalism and socialism, for example, cannot merely be considered as opposing economic and political systems because "It is in their opposing concepts of the nature of man and of his proper relationship to other men-in that which each side holds to be the good, the right, the moral that the heart of the conflict between capitalism and socialism exists"[5].

AFRICAN SOCIALISM: ITS BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

I will assume that epistemology provides the major premise with which other problems of philosophy can be approached. In other word if we know the basic assumptions about nature and the method which the mind follows in arriving at what is considered as a trustworthy knowledge of reality, we can deduce the political, economic, religious, ethical and moral doctrines of that philosophy.

The African assumes that everything that exists is a force. And in the universe of force, no isolated force exists. Rather, every force is related to every other force; and forces interpenetrate each other. "Materical objects" which the Europeans considere as "lifeless" things or inert are, from the African philosophical assumption, "living forces". "From the beginning of the world", it is assumed, "there has existed a.... life-force, created by one God, which is always active, spread throughout the universe, dispensed to all animate life-forces, man, animals and plants, sometimes communicated to things which we consider inanimate.....[6]. Life-force manifests itself in a hierarchical form and God is the "Great, Life-Force". It is possessed by a whole pantheon or mythical forces (ancestors, water spirits, divinities) that are bound up with the everyday life of the African. Each person possesses this life-force which varies quantitatively and qualitatively as exemplified by physical and mental growth. God, divinities, ancestors, man, animals, plants, words, knowledge, etc. are life-forces through each possesses certain characteristics peculiar to its nature in the order of hierarchy.

All forces are interrelated and constantly interacting. Because everything is filled with force or dominated by it, the African arrives at an awareness that all things are similar and share the same nature in spite of apparent differences. In the universe of forces, a universe of metamorphosis, secret forces intervene in the course of events so that the course of natural events cannot be predicted with certainty. Because everything figures in everything else and is conditioned by it, there is nothing static in the universe of forces.

Man, a life-froce with soul, is a part of the life-force in the universe and is created by God, the "Great, life-force". As an active life-force, man has intelligence, thought, idea, feelings, emotions. "Man is not a passive element

in the rhythm of nature. He participates in the mysterious force which keeps the universe going"[7]. It is the soul of man, "the inner man" or "the little man", that determines the character, personality and moral power of a man.

The life-force of such things like stones, iron, copper, etc. has no intelligence. Man possesses intelligence and this is divided into "habitaual intelligence"[8]. (ability, understanding of relationships, wisdom) and "practical intelligence" (slyness, cunning, intellectual grasp or cleverness). Man's greatest power is the power of words. By virtue of this power, he is capable of creating meaning and value, of transforming the world and himself, and of giving meaningful direction to material events. What the Eueropeans regard as magic in a derogatory sense (incantation, interdiction) is nothing but the art of speech, the art of naming and controlling things hence the principle of creativity. "..... Since man has power over word, it is he who directs the life-force. Through the word he receives it, shares it with other life-forces, and so fulfils the meaning of life"[9]. Furthermore, "all activities of men, and all the movement in nature, rest on the word, on the productive power of the word, which is.... life-force itself. The word frees the 'frozen' forces of minerals,....and so guides things to meaningful behaviour"[10].

The power of word is not possessed solely by the living men but by the "living-dead" and God. Those who possess the power of words (and this comes through age and experience) are admired and, at the same time, feared; because words have consequences. Through the power of words, they have control over things, men and even gods. Words have the power to define and to compel. As a result, it is the vehicle of order, the principle of creativity and destruction. Word, for the African, has therefore divine qualities. Name-giving and law-giving are related means of creating meaning, order and value. Man is ontologically Ilnked with every other man and with the universe around him. Before considering the implications of African mental attitude toward nature and man, let us examine his mode of knowing.

THE AFRICAN MODE OF KNOWING.

"... Consider the attitude of the Negro African towards the object to be known, towards the Other: God, Man, animal, tree or peeble, natural fact or social fact", Senghor wrote. "Contrary to the classical European, the Negro African makes no distinction between himself and the object; he does not hold it away from himself to be examined or anaylsed; or rather, after having examined it if not actually analysed it, he takes it in his hands, alive as it is, careful not to kill it.... We see him *excited*, moving centrifugally from subject to object on the waves of the Other.... We see the Negro African *sympathising*, leaving his ego to identify himself with the Other...

He does not absorb, he is absorbed. He lives a common life with the Other, he lives in symbiosis.... The Negro--African could say: I sense the Other, I dance the Other; I am"[11].

We are dealing here with an intuitive form of knowledge that differs profoundly from analytic knowledge. Cross regards intuition as an act of expression where "the distinction between the inner world of the spirit and the outer world of reality is non-existent for the aesthetic experience"[12]. How did the African arrive at this mode of knowing? The duality of the self and the world (subject and object) constitutes the basic factor of human experience. The analysis of this factor would reveal contradictions inherent in human experience. For example, the self or the ego lives in the world, but it does not live in the world like stones, trees and animals. Therefore, the self is a part of the world and not a part of it inasmuch as it is not a material thing. The self belongs to the world and transcends the world or does not belong to the world. The self is dependent on the world and independent of it. But this seems to be a contradiction. Man must face life and the world as a whole, and any split in his experience would endanger the unity of self-hold. Let us try to resolve this contradiction by making the body a part of the world. What then could the haman mind, spirit or soul be? The mind needs the body to exist in this world and the body is a part of the world. Does it follow too that the mind is a material thing? The contradiction between the self and the world seems to have resulted, upon analysis, into another contradiction between the body and the spirit (the ego and itself). It may be appropriate to conclude that all contradictions, for example, the contradictions between One and Many, Time and Eternity, Individuality and Universality, Freedom and Necessity, Reason and Sentiment, stem from the self-contradition between the ego and the world.

In the modern Western philosophy, the West reduces the duality of experience to a dualism, that is, to two incompatible views of reality. The world is said to exist independent of the ego on the one hand and the ego, independent of the world on the other. In other words, the ego and the world are two separate realities, and this assumption leads to the "subjective" and "objective" divisions of reality. In order to know the world objectively, the ego is treated as if it were absent in the world. Fortunately, the Relativity and the Quantum theories have closed the artificial gap between man and nature. It seems that the dualism inherent in the western epistemological attitude makes it quite difficult to resolve the conflicts between mind and matter, freedom and necessity, individuality and universality, etc.

The African makes no "clear-cut" or "sharp" distinction between the ego and the world (man and nature). Since nature is a life-force and man is also a life-force, we have man-nature as a field of aesthetic continuum. Becuase there exists an order of hierarchy in the universe of force, man occupies a higher level of that hierarchical order than life-forces without soul and

intelligence. In the conflict between the self and world, the African makes the self the centre of the world. Because the world is centered on the self, the self "animates" the world. And the world which is centred on the self is a personal, inter-personal and supra-personal world and is alive. It follows therefore the world-order and the self-order are identical. A world which has no reference to the self, a world that is not organised or shaped by the power of words, has no meaning. I would refer to this mode of though as a product of artistic solution to the duality of experience, and the greatest art is the art or intergration, association and relationship. As late Kwame Nkrumah put it, "the dialectical contradiction between 'inside' and 'outside' world was reduced by making the visible world continuous with the invisible"[13]. And according to Odajnyk, "the visible world is sumbolized or manifested by these visible and concrete phenomena and objects of experience. The invisible world presses hard on the visible: one speaks of the other, and the African people 'see' that invisible universe when they look at, hear or feel the visible and the tangible world. This is one of the most fundamental religious heritage of African peoples"[14].

Intuitive knowledge is not very much valued by the west because it is assumed to be "subjective", "vague" or lacks "clarity" and "precise" definition. Leopold Senghor explains that love is a principle of participation, the craving to be closely associated with others, to be part of others' thoughts feelings and thereby participate in their basic personality. He concluded that love is at the basis of intuitive knowledge. It can also be explained that the union of the self and the world, visible and invisible world, the interaction of all life forces is an aesthetic experience in which we have a balance of fusion, of analysis and intuition, of quality and relations. The increase of fusion, intuition and quality leads to the decrease of analysis, discriminations and relations. When attention is relaxed on fusion one perceives details to events, discrimination emerges, and relations become quite apparent. But in a balanced perception, the presence of analysis and intuition seems obvious. The African mode of thought can be described as what Jung defined as The Principle of Synchronicity'. . . which took full account of that peculiar interdependence of objective events among themselves as well as with the objective (psychic) states of the observer or observers".[15]

IMPLICATIONS OF AFRICAN VIEW OF MAN AND NATURE

It can be said that there is no philosophy in Africa except ethical philosophy. All concepts and theories in this philosophy rise from self, social and historical experiences and are interpreted to apply to them. This philosophy sets out to discover the ways of ordering the world, of understanding it,

of bettering it for human life, of eliminating evil and suffering. Due to the spirit of practical motive underlying this philosophy, the African is deeply engrossed in the problems of human institutions relations and conduct. His thought never carries him away from society and life. Humanistic concern animates his activities; from birth to bethrotal and burial. The impulse to promote general good in every individual and community summarises his philosophical endeavour. He argues that if he knows reality, that is his relation to it, (God, man, nature, society) he would then possess true knowledge ("habitual knowledge") which would rectify the mind, improve on individual and communal character, lead to the well ordering of family, the well--governing of the community and then to peace and harmony.

From the brief exposition of the African view of man and nature, the following conclusions can be drawn. (1) Since there are no isolated life--force in the universe, there can be no isolated individual person. (2) Society is the manifestation of the order in the universe. (3) All relationships between all life--forces ought to be strenghtened and not weakened. (4) There is no dissociation of sensibility in the African culture. The duality of experience should not harden into a dualism. Politics, therefore, cannot be discussed as if it were separated from relition, or relition as if separated from ethics and morals or both as if separated from all practical activities. Let us now examine these principles in the context of African political ideology.

MAN AND SOCIETY

It is a Bantu saying that "a man is a man because of other men".[16] This statement emphasizes the inter- relationship between man and man. It also leads to the awareness that man cannot live in isolation but in the company of others. Therefore, it denies the liberal idea that man must be free (free from man, nature, society and even God) in order to develop himself. If this were possible, such an individual cannot develop himself. The statement also "gives expression to the whole idea of communal responsibility and interdependence: a concept which is the basis of the whole structure of the Africa's cultural life".[17]

It is not even possible to speak about "man" as an "individual" in the African context except within the general background of his existence. In other words, the emphasis placed on the whole instead of on particular, isolated facts is a basic characteristic of the African mode of thought. To exist means, for the African, to exist with others. Society is therefore a communal environment for communal existence. It can be said therefore that man exists by nature in a society. Society, in this sense, is not produced by co ordinating individual interests. It is not even created by politics. Rather, it is a spritual environment which cannot be abolished without aboli-

shing life itself. Empirically speaking, we can analyse society as an amalgam of individual personalities. One's individuality would determine one's social sense and the corporate activities of the larger community would be regarded as the products of individual efforts. This mode of analysis, however, would not bring out the strong corporate personality which the African attributes to society. First, nature is a part of society. Second, society itself consists of (a) ancestors and heroes, (b) the present generation, (c) the next generation. All of them are regarded as forming one unit called society. Society, in this context, is not an entity existing outside of man but a web of relations and interrelations between man and God, man and man, and nature. Since every man is by nature born into society, he has the duty and obligation to manifest the spirit of society in him or her by sharing from collective works.

It is a moral obligation to work in order to strengthen both the individual and the communal life which the society represents. Because the past and the future generations have claims on the present generation property is defined in terms of family and village, not in terms of individual ownership. Thus, the African understands "social good", "social interests" and "well-being" to mean the good, the interests and well-being of the past, the present and future generations. Even though emphasis is laid on the whole instead of an isolated individual, the individuality of the African is neither suppressed nor granted the liberty to live outside the context of a corporate life. In other words, the indivudual African is neither completely free nor completely enslaved by the society. He cannot be "free" from those vital relationships between him and God, ancestors, present and future generations As a result, he cannot make a sharp distinction between the inborn qualities of his individuality and what the community has endowed him. Only moral lapses could create a rift between him, society, ancesstors and God.

Man as a unique individual does not seem as important as man considered as a link in the chain of generation. Group life passes through him rather than belonging to him as his own. "Each individual ... is not the centre of the world. The African man sees himself more modestly as part of the great stream of life that transcends his own self".[18] Because the individual finds social reality in the sphere of collective bliefs, "no African society ... is lacking in Kingship groups or regards them as unimportant."[19] These also explain why "everywhere the African is defined by reference to his ancestor. This is why lineage and its solidarity constitute an important content of Africanity".[20] And finally, the African philosophy of participation in the total life of the world, the insistence that the individual should be seen in the light of the whole, "the constant attempt to increase power, the awareness of the primary of the group over the individual, all constitute one more aspect of Africanity".[21]

The African view of man, society, social good, rights, oblitations, laws authority, can be deduced from the basic assumptions of his philosophy. And from what society means to the African, one can see that society is not merely a fact or an event in the external world. Even though it possesses externality as one of its characteristics, it is a little world "illuminated with meaning from within by the human beings who continually create and bear it as the mode and condition of their self–realization".[22] Through collective beliefs and symbols, the individual mind is integrated with the social mind, and both are elevated to the realm of ideals that are even beyond conscious understanding. This is, for example, the socio–political function of the symbol – ancestor. This symbol illuminates the meaning of society, establishes its internal structure, defines power and authority, rights and duties between its members or groups of members. "The self- illumination of society through symbols is an integral part of social reality ... and one may even say, its essential part".[23] As Professor Iyer remarks: "If every man has some innate recognition of the true nature and of the good, enriched ny active participation in a theater of political interaction, then a community of citizens is a moral community. It necessarily rests upon and reinforces social sympathy born of self- arareness of 'the species nature', the common humanity and essential similarity of individuals in diverse roles and situations".[24]

From the African philosophical standpoing, liberalism and scientific socialism do not offer a unitary view of man and society, and the ideal societies they wish to build have no room for the development of the whole man. Let us consider the basic assumptions and doctrines of these ideologies.

LIBERAL VIEW OF MAN

Liberal ideology with its capitalist economy can be understood within the science of Galileo and Newton, and its attendant philosophy of John Locke. I think also that the understanding of the Aristotelian concept of man will bring out clearly the nature of man in Locke's philosophy.

In Aristotle's philosophy, man's individual nature is a social nature. Man is viewed as a part of a hierarchical order of species and genera, and his form or soul is related organically to the Final Causes of all other living things. Since a person is organically related to other persons expressed in society, a man cannot be an indivudual man except as part of social organization. This concept of man is very similar to that of African.

The concept of man as an isolated individual is a modern phenomenon. "... The Lockean philosophy which defined the economic and political ideology of classical Anglo–American culture was not merely a philosophy of economic science and politics but also the philosophy to which Galilean and Newtonian physics first forced modern philosophycal thought".[25] In his philosophy "Locke had no alternative ... but to identify the human soul

or personality in religious discussion and the political person in legal theory and the state with ... the mental substance ..."[26] And furthermore, "in this Lockean theory of the nature of the person, there are no imaginable relations whatever between one person or mental substance and another. Mental substances are not related spatially. ... It is this lack of any intrinsic social relations between person which is the Lockean modern foundation of the political philosophy expressed in the Amrical Declaration of independence to the effect that there is no basis for government, no normative social theory, apart from a social convention".[27] Locke's concept of man completely violates the African view of man. It destroys the vital relationships between the past, the present and the future generations, and even negates the existence of society as a natural order. If there are no relations between "mental substances" there can be no philosophically "grounded relations to be used in defining political theory. Consequently, Lockean and classical Anglo-American modern political theory has no alternative but to ground government in nothing more than a convention, that is, in the consent of the governed".[28]

"Freedom", "liberty" and "equality" in the liberal atmosphere are expressions of the spirit of individualism in its resistance against authority. If all men are equal by nature, the strongest ones win the economic battle since all men are not equally strong. If man is "free" (free from others, from society, from traditions and even from God), then he is free to use property to create his own personal trust. Capitalism is therefore the logical consequence of the spirit of individualism. But "fraternity" cannot co-exist with "liberty" and "equality". Fraternity demands among other things sympathy, love, self-surrender, etc; but the "mental substances" or isolated egos" are not related to one another.

"The end which capitalism serves is the achievement of profit a private, personal selfish profit – by every man. ... Capitalism is not aimed at what its opponents call 'the service of the public good'.[29] Since liberal ideology makes the isolated individual the basis of value judgement, it is concerned "exclusively with the private good of individual citizens, and holds that the good is to be achieved by those citizens, and holds that the good is to be achieved by those citizens as individuals".[30] Finally, capitalism "recognizes that all good inheres only in individual men, and that there is no moral reason why one man should be forced to accept, as the goal of his work and his life, the achievement of the good of another".[31] Liberal ideology and its capitalist economy have no conceptions of "general good", corporate life", "general interests" and sympathy. Both have no moral view of man as a spiritual being who lives, by nature, in the community with others. As a result, these doctrines are rejected by the African people.

SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

"Socialism arose out of the failure of liberalism to live up to its own most optimistic promises of economic welfare".[32] Liberalism assumed that if everybody pursued his own interests unimpeded, everybody would benefit from this free enterprise. It then invited all men to freedom but denied the majority the means to be free.

According to Marx, the individual person or human nature has no meaning apart from the organic structure of society. The organic social structure, in turn, is inconceivable apart from a particular stage of historical process. However the basic principle that governs the understanding of man's nature as well as any stage of historical process is economics in "a materialistic, thermodynamically physiological sense".[33] The African would accept that man has meaning only as a member of an organic society but would reject Marx's interpretation of society solely in economic terms. The liberal democrates consider the proper function of government as that of an arbiter charged with the task of protecting the rights and property of the individual citizens. Thus, freedom here means "freedom from the coercive power of the state-- and nothing more"[34]. But political freedom does not also mean freedom from the Landlord, the employer or the laws of nature. Therefore, freedom does not imply automatic prosperity.

From the Marxist view-point, "a government is and has to be the agent of the economic interests of some class or another, and that the sole political issue is: which class will seize control of the government to force its own interests on all other groups or classes"[359]. This view of government is a logical consequence of liberalism. The government is made up of men with personal interests. Even if it is to carry out its duty ideally speaking, it can only protect the rights and property of those who possess property. Nothing prevents those who have property to form a government charged with the protection of property, that is, their own property and interests. Those who have no property would have no rights, and political rights without economic rights would be meaningless. It is also possible for the governing class to equate its own interests with national interests. Consequently, class conflicts are inevitable as each class strives to safeguard and promote its own interests.

The African socialist will accept this Marxian conception of government in the capitalist economy. Since such a government does not serve the interest of the whole society in the African sense, it is not a "good" government. But the African realizes that "one of the basic facts which characterizes the nature of human association is the existence of rank differences between individuals and groups..."[36]. Class differences or class factors exist in almost every aspect of life in African societies. For example, age group distinction and rank differentiation play important roles in determi-

ning the nature of work to be performed by certain groups of people as well as the rights they can enjoy. But there are no "classes" in the economic and moral sense, that is, groups of individuals whose interests and moral codes differ from those of other groups or from those of the whole members of society. There are no classes struggling with other classes for political and economic ascendency. Differences of wealth, knowledge, wisdom and even health exist in African societies, but the interests, the well-being and the good of the whole society are the ultimate goals to which every member of the society aspires. Furthermore, the African people realise that if society is to function effectively, there must be some individuals whose function is to coordinate and integrate the efforts of the members of society. Such individuals assume the responsibilities of leadership, guidance and control. But the African does not look upon such rulers or leaders as a class of people whose interests are pernicious to his own well-being and that of the entire society. As a result, he rejects Marx's view of "class" and "class struggle".

African socialism maintains that man exists in the community of others Therefore, to say that man belongs to a class (and this seems to be what class consciousness in the Marxist sense implies) is not to say that he exists in a community. Whereas the "class man" may have no loyalty except to his own class, the "community man" has loyalty to the whole community. Just as the African rejects the view that society is made up of classes of people without common interests, he also rejects the idea of "the greatest good for the greatest number". This seems to be a vicious principle because it has no specific and concrete meaning. What is good in this context is what is good for the greatest number. Who decides on what is good? Definitely it is the greatest number, and it makes such a decision solely because it is the greatest number. "Good" cannot be determined merely by counting numbers. And what will the majority do with the recalcitrant minority? Will the interests of the minority be sacrificed to please the greatest number? "Capitalism", as Ayn Rand notes, "certainly cannot work on the principle of selfless service and sacrifice"[36]. But he goes on to say that "peace, security, prosperity, co-operation and goodwill among men, all those things considered socially desirable, are possible only under a system of individualism, where each man is safe in the exercise of his individual rights and in the knowledge that society is there to protect his rights, not to destroy them"[37]. These assertions are contradicted by the principle of "the greatest good for the greatest number because there are in principle a minority that has no access to the greatest good of the greatest number. The authors of liberalism supposed that there was a natural harmony of interests among all members of a society, that "If each man pursued his own interests, society as a whole would benefit. The 'invisible' hand of nature ensured a basic harmony. Conflicts of interests were regarded as aberrations, departure from relationality on the part of the dissenters".[38] The African would

reject the liberal idea of harmony because it is derived from the "impersonal" nature and not from man's spiritual insight and vision.

CRITICISM OF MARX

The African would accept Iyer's view of Marx that he was "a moralist rather than a moral philosopher"[39] There is no doubt that humanistic concern is at the core of Marx's thought.

It can be said that "humanistic sympathy, not personal experience, was what led them", Marx and Engles, "to devote their lives to the cause of the working class".[40] Marx "systematized and furthered the new understanding of society, not as an inevitable harmonious organism, but as a collection of competing, often hostile, interests, each seeking its own advantage rather than the "good of the whole' ".[41]

Marx seemed to have realised that "what socialism needed ... was a truly scientific theory which would prove that the destruction of the existing social order was not only desirable but also inevitable. To create a theory of this sort was his life ambition"[42] From the view-point of African socialism, Marx was not faithful to the full implications of the principles he upheld. He distorted the dialectical method. Marx was concerned with the development of man in the world hence he revolted against the anarchy of individualistic capitalism. His view of historical process destroyed the illusions of capitalism. In other words, he used the concept of material necessity to destroy spurious idealism. But how would historical evolution lead inevitably to successful revolutionary action? This seems to be the basic methodological question of scientific socialism. Marx seemed to have found an answer in the dialectical method. "Dialectical" is a technical vocabulary of philosophy which originally refers to "the process whereby ideas are formed and clarified in the course of intellectual debate. A proposition, or thesis, is first advanced, and then challenged by a counter-proposition, or antithesis. Since both are apt to be partly true, the normal outcome of the ensuing discussion is a revised proposition, or synthesis, which combines the valid elements of each"[43]. Dialectical materialism is an attempt to show that the historical development of social institutions follows the dialectical pattern According to Marx, therefore, the driving force in human life is the economic motive or the desire for material welfare. The essential purpose of all ideas and institutions in his view is to safeguard economic interests. At any stage of economic development, according to Marx, we see a ruling class which monopolizes power, that is, ownership of land factories and other sources of wealth. As a result, that ruling class is in a position to dominate the whole soeiety. However, the power of the ruling class is unstable. With time new sources of wealth emerge requiring or giving rise to new forms of economic organization. These would also produce new classes that challenge the old

order. Therefore, in Marx's philosophy, the old class constitutes a thesis while the new, revolutionary class is the antithesis. And in the revolutionary crisis, the new class (now stronger than the old class) overthrows the old rulers and organizes society in its own interests. Thus, Marx views history as a dialectical process and dialectical materialism is the description of the inexorable course of development on the basis of which Marx made his prophecies.

"Marxist necessity was one-sided, and lacked the comprehensiveness essential to any universal doctrine. Marxism distorted process thought by forcing it to provide a gospel for militant socialism"[44]. In other words, Marx forced the method to fit the aspect of the contemporary historical situation in which the proletariats are at war with the bourgeoisie. Marx knew that this class-war was not a universal conception of man and history. He also knew that it was only the interpretation of the one phase in the development of a particular culture or civilization. For example, "The Communist Manifesto of 1848... states explicitly: the theoretical propositions of the communists in no way rest on ideas or principles that have been invented or discovered by this or that would-be universal reformer. They are merely the expression, in general terms, of the actual conditions of an existing class struggle, of a historical movement going on under our very eyes"[45]. It is appropriate to conclude that Marxism, as a general philosophy of the history of a man or universal view of man, is inadequate.

Dialectical thought was not only applied to a social environment charged with anger, frustration and emotion, it also did not fully parallel with reality, and Marx recognized it. "The concept of a thing and its reality run side by side like two asymptotes, always approaching each other but never meeting. This difference prevents the concept from being directly and immediately reality, and reality from being immediately its own concept"[46]. Here we have the dualism of concept and reality, a misfortune that prevented analytic thought from achieving a unitary mode of thought. From the phase of history which Marx discussed, such concepts as "the proletariat", "the class war", the "productive relations", "the economic structure", were treated as absolutes. These concepts seem to beg the question "by assuming that the classes retain their separate and characteristic identity, and that economic production is a separable and permanently dominant element in society"[47]. Again, Marx and Engels knew that the productive relations constituted only one component of a total system in the process of transformation, a system in which everything influenced everything else. Marx did not develop dialectical materialism in a consist manner or as a general method of thought. If he had done so, Marxism would have been robbed of its dogmatic authority and the interpretation of history would not have been Marxist at all. "True dialectical thought..... cannot provide either the dualism of right or wrong or the economic emphasis which are essential to Marxism as a

fighting doctrine".[48] Because Marx saw the proletariat as the force necessary for the moral redemption of humanity, he distorted the tension inherent in the processes into an absolute dualism of good and evil. This was what gave militant socialism its seemingly logical foundation. Because Marx had identified himself with the struggles of the poor, his philosophy was thereby determined. "The dialectical process of history ceased to be an objective vision of a natural development; it was the story of the mission of the proletariat against the exploiting capitalist class".[49]

As a result, Marx seemed to have fallen into the errors of the idealists or idealism. He treated one aspect or component in man or history as right and the other as wrong. In the end, he wants us to measure the future of man's development and well-being by the standards of "a dissociated past". "To read Marxist literature is to be torn asunder between the brilliance of the general method of thought and the inadequacy of its conclusions as regards either man in general or society as we know it today".[50] Marx might have aided the development of one aspect of man - the economic man; but Marxism could not thereby claim the monopoly of true historical thought. Marx transformed the Hegelian subjectivity to his own objective state. Thus, Hegel's dialectics of mind became the dialetics of matter. There is no indication that this inversion has a legitimate status because the formal structures of the mental and material factors of process are quite different. The mind is a formative factor while matter cannot claim such a function". Marx regarded matter as the name of that objective reality in dialectical transformation. This might have been a good intention. However, he did not identify the formative principle necessary for emancipating matter from its static and mechanical determinism. Consequently, he did not assign the mind its proper role in history. It seems also that Marxist concepts are dogmatically static in spite of the dialectic method. However, if Marx is seen within the context of classical science (the science of Newton, that is, mechanism, materialism and determinism), his views become more understandable since they arose from the scientific paradigm of his period. Though Karl Popper found the historical-mind-endness of Marx quite repugnant, Marx's ideas seem to be a logical extension of the concept of evolution but on a higher level. Marxism is quite polemic perhaps due to Marx's conception of philosophy, not as merely an academic theory but as an intellectual movement necessary for the liberation of man from the capitalist oppression. As Professor Iyer states "the cost of commitment to dialogue is the surrender of methodological imperialims, the cultivation of doctrinal tolerance and linguistic civility".[51] But Marxism seems to ignore this condition for dialogue due to its polemic nature. It is polemical precisely because it is a militant reply to attacks, in the form of reasoned arguments, on a position which Marx thought worthy of defense. And as a polemic, it may be mild or muted in tone. It may also be harsh and vigorous. But the gist of the matter seems

is be the most decisive issue. This is why "Marxism candidly avows that in philosophy it aligns itself with materialism, in logic with dialectics, in politics with revolutionary change, and in sociology and economics with the standpoint of the working class in its anti-capitalist struggles"[52].

CLASS STRUGGLE.

Marxian political philosophy systematizes the social and political attitude of the proletarian class. Though the concept of class struggle is questionable "it is a fact that Marxian socialism is a true enough interpretation of what the individual worker feels about society and history"[53]. Undoubtedly "the industrial worker has little confidence in the morality of men"[54]. This is why Marxism sees democratic state as the instrument of the bourgeoisie for the oppression of workers, and why Trotsky thinks that it is hopeless to expect the proletariats to arrive to power through peaceful means as long as the bourgeoisie retains all the apparatus of power. According to Lenin, "freedom in capitalist society always remains more or less the same as it was in the ancient Greek Republics, that is, freedom for a slave-owners"[55].

In Marxist's philosophy class loyalty seems to be the loftiest form of altruism. According to Nieburhr, class loyalty destroys national loyalty. This interpretation does not seem appropriate when one considers that in a class less society, everybody belongs to the same system called society or nation. In fact, it appears that the capitalists have a poorer concept of national loyalty than the socialists because, for the former, the individual is the basis of all value judgements. Furthermore, national loyalty entails self sacrifice, something which capitalism abhors because "common good" means solely the sum total of the good of the greatest number. According to Mill, "common good" is the "interest of both labourers and employers that business should prosper and that the returns of labour and capital should be large. But to say that they have the same interest as to the division is to say that it is the same thing to a person's interest whether a sum of money belongs to him to somebody else."[56] Definitely this does not follow. Therefore, the concept of "common good" refers solely to the "good" of particular classes. There are certain elements of utopianism in Marx's concept of class. First, Marx seems to imply that "there is an inexorable logic of nature of in human history that will transform weakness to strength. ... The Marxian imagines that he has a philosophy or even a science of history. What he has is really an apocalyptic vision."[57] Because the capitalists have undermined the significance and meaning of man in the proletarian sense, the proletariats establish themselves as "the most significant class for the future of history."[58] As a result, Marxism deifies class struggle and the victory of the poor.

But the proletariats and the ruling class are both alienated. "While the

former is smug in its self–alienation and apprehends it as its own proper power, the latter feels crused in its alienation and sees in it its own importance".[59] Man as a citizen who is alienated from the state is an important thesis in Marx's political social thought. The theory of social contract held that the individual, in an organized society, must forgo a number of his individual rights to the State which was the representative of the collective interests of the people. Hegel developed this idea which later became the foundation of the philosophy of individual right. Marx maintained that the State did not represent collective interests but solely the interests of property owners. Socialism, therefore, wishes to introduce the "rule of reason" in all human activities in order to "eradicate the sources of alienation by bringing under conscious control all those hitherto unmanageable forces which have crippled mankind, frustrated its deepest aspirations, and thwarted its full and free development in any desired direction."[60] Marxism sees man's alienation as the products of man's ignorance of the laws governing natural forces, the capitalist system which disposesses the working class or masses from the means of production and the consequences of wage labour. Alienation is therefore not solely the product of class society and capitalist exploitation and the abolishing of private property would not necessarily solve the problem of alienation. The Marxists do not see it as "an inescapable and irremediable curse of mankind. Alienation is the outgrowth of specific historical conditions which have been brought into existence by man's unwitting activity and which can be changed at a higher stage of economic social development by man's conscious and collective action."[61]

The revolution of the proletariats according to the Marxists is the final revolution, "a final and decisive achievement." In other words, the destruction of capitalism will produce a perfect classless society in which the State and its coercive power will disappear because all issues will be settled rationally. This utopian idea arises from Marx's thesis that economic interest is the only cause of social conflict. It is questionable that only the capitalists have special interests or that the interests of the proletariats coincide with those of other members of the society. Definitely it is unscientific to say or assume that the large population will identify themselves, sooner or later, with the proletariats. It is also doubtful that all workers will develop a common class consciousness because of their experience of economic exploitation. Surely the idea of classless society is more appealing than that of free competion. Will the revolution wait for all the working classes to acquire the consciousness of their alienation or will a small minority establish a socialist government in the name of all? This is a moral dilemma for socialism. "From each according to his ability and to each according to his needs",[62] the moral maxim of socialism, is as inconsistent in application as the liberal maxim of "the greatest good of the greatest number" due to the complexity of society. "Pity for poverty", W. L. Liebknecht declares, "enthusiasm for equality and

freedom, recognition of social injustice and the desire to remove it, is not socialism. Condemnation for wealth and respect for poverty as we find it in Christianity and other relitions is not socialism. ... Modern socialism is the child of capitalist society and its class antagonisms. Without these it could not be."[63] Communism has advanced according to Laski, not due to its realism and materialistic prospects but due to its idealism and spiritual promise. Liberalism and capitalism have no relevant ideas today because the basic problem of majority of people is not political right but economic issues. Democracy invites all people to freedom but denies them the means to be free. The proletariats recognize the truth that "all men have power ought to be distrusted" as James Madison indicated. The capitalist moralists do not seem to recognize it. It is not a scientific truth but a religious over-belief if Marxism claims to be an absolute and authoritative philosophy of history with absolutely valid method of social change. The basic problem is how to eliminate social injustice without destroying what is worth preserving in society. And on this issue, African socialism rejects the basic assumptions of capitalism and scientific socialism.

CONCLUSION

African socialism rejects both liberalism and Marxism because they have inadequate ideas of man and society. Liberalism is in a worse position due to its individualistic morality. The African would share Marx's concern for the development of man as a moral being. But Marx's ideas for the redemption of the oppressed are violent and ultimately inhuman. The African views of both ideologies are consistent with his own beliefs about the nature of man, society, good and evil.

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THE NIGERIAN JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

JOURNAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, LAGOS, NIGERIA.

vol. 3, no. 2

AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY: SOME COMMENTS:

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INTRODUCTION

> Philosophy is, indeed, a well established subject, but its issues are so riddled with controversy that there is hardly any single question to which there can be said to be an established answer. Not even on the question of what Philosophy is is there agreement ... (a little reflection) will reveal ... that a Philosopher's attitude to particular questions very often reflect his general conception of the nature of Philosophy ...[1]

I believe that very few philosphers would disagree with what Professor Wiredu said in that passage, at least in its overall signification. The point I intended the quotation to make is that my account of the nature of Philosophy and my comments on the-going controversy about (an) African Philosphy is bound to be open to debate. But I shall not for that reason be deterred.

Some philosophers have not concerned themselves with the (meta) philosophical issue of the nature of philosophy, but have instead attempted to make clear the nature of philosophy through their philosophical protestations. And some have directly attempted to settle the issue before or as part of their task of philosophising. Ancient examples of both approaches abound in Pythagoras and Socrates.[2]

In the first section of this paper I survey various conceptions of Philosophy and attempt a rough statement of my own understanding of the nature of Philosophy. The second section is devoted to the discussion of an appropriate method of pursuing African Philosophy. This section is divided into three parts: the first considers the protracted controversy over the genuineness of African Philosophy; the second states the method after a survey of some prior approaches that have been recommended with good intentions, from some quarters; and the third corrects the erroneous impression that may have been created that African Philosophy can be studied like history, geography, anthropology, political science or even sociology, Philosophy should be done, it is not classics or history of ideas. The third and final section of the paper will attempt to apply the method proffered to some issues of fundamental importance to Africa particularly and humanity generally by way of conclusion.

I. THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy has had a most chequered history; beginning with ancient Pythagoras who first called himself a philosopher. Pythagoras used the analogy of festal games and life. At the olympic which is just like life, there are gathered three categories of people; three because of their motives:

(i) the competitors who go after glory, fame, laurels and recognition,
(ii) the vendors of commodities who go to ply their waves and make pecuniary gains, and
(iii) the spectators, who spurn both fame, laurels and monentary profit for the contemplation of nature.[3]

This last group are the lovers of wisdom. They are the philosophers.[4]

That the nature of Philosophy consists in the contemplation of nature and love of wisdom is very close to the etymology of the word 'Philosophy.'[5] Conford accurately described this conception of Philosophy when he said:

> The word 'philosophy' originally meant curiosity, the desire for fresh experience ... or the intellectual culture.[6]

To the Ionian philosophers, philosophy is the greatest science, contemplating the nature of reality in its entirety. They made no distinction between various areas of intellectual enterprise. The sciences – theoretical (pure) and natural (physical) – the social sciences and the humanities were all under the broad ambit of philosophy. Science then had not come to mean the experimental search for the laws of nature;[7] it had not been separated from its Greek root 'scire' (knowledge of) as 'knowledge of things.' It was the name for organised body of knowledge.[8]

Upon this understanding of the nature of philosophy it came to be believed that reason and detached, disinterested and dispassionate contemplative speculation could reveal all, and everything there is to be known about the universe. This has resulted in grandiose system building in philosophy. Apart from Socrates, most notable thinkers throughout the length and breadth of philosophy's history have succumbed to this view. Examples are Parmenides, Haraclitus, Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Hegel, Kant, Whitehead, Mc Taggart to mention but few.

This classical tradition in philosophy developed from an accentuated naive faith of the ancients in the omnipotence of reasoning. The discovery of geometry had intoxicated them and its 'a priori' deductive method appeared capable of unlimited universal application. They would prove, for instance, but rather in terms of examined and critically considered explanations.

that all reality is one; that there is no such thing as change; that motion is impossible; that the world of sense is a world of mere illusion; and the strangeness of their results gave them no qualms because they believed in the impeccability of their reasoning.

Certainly the claims of philosophy and philosophers are less ambitious now than what it used to be, thanks to the linguistic analytic school that rightly cautioned against such programmes. As a result the system building penchant has been on the wane.[9] Though still a continuous quest for knowledge, philosophy has gone a long way from the simplistic and abstract area where only people with 'special' ingenuity dare thread, given credence to Karl Jaspers' assertion that man can not help philosophising. It is now, as it was with Socrates, both a theoretical speculative and praxical discipline engaged in by all those who have the reflective bent of mind.

I have made allusions to Socrates above. Another conception of philosophy took its origin from his practice. This is what Professor R. S. Peters had in mind when he said that Philosophy is a process of asking questions. It consists in systematic and persistent questioning of received opinions, beliefs, ideas and convictions. This process started when in ancient Greece explanations ceased to be in terms of avaricious gods whose whims often resulted in quarrels that made or marred the fortunes of the Greeks,

That this process can and has often led to re—examination of assumptions and better formulation of one's position is exemplified in many Socratic dialogues. But questioning is an instrument or method which is essential to philosophy and its growth when contructive; degenerate questioning can be counter – productive.[10]

I think it is such pursuance of degenerate questioning which has accounted for a construal of philosophy in terms of a response to scepticism.[11] Such conception of philosophy shows an inattention to philosophy's preoccupation with the solution of profound and often shattering enigmas of daily life and the desire for comprehensive knowledge which transcends ordinary levels of insight and intuitions both in scope and depth.

A third account, which in a sense is as old as philosophy, takes root in Socrates' practice of critical analysis of concepts with the express purpose of clarifying their meaning, use, and application. This higher purpose for which the analysis arose however have been apparently forgotten in pursuit of analysis as an end in itself. This tradition which originated in the main with the Vienna Circle had expression in the various strands of Logical Positivism. In the words of Rudolf Carnap

> that part of the work of philosophers which may be held to be scientific in its nature ... consists in logical analysis (of concepts, sentences and propositions)[12]

A great deal of commentary has occasioned the formulations and reformulations of the Positivist articles of faith. It is clear that any attempt to reduce philosophy to mere word deciphering, sentence indexing or unnecessary hairsplitting is confused and misunderstands the true nature of philosophy For better communication and effective philosophising it is necessary for a philosopher to clarify the meaning of his concepts. Such analysis, like questioning, is a tool and does not approximate the whole of philosophy and the task of the philosopher.

There are other accounts that we have not considered here. Two of these are, one, the evolutionary approach of Professor Popper and his conjectures and refutations methodology. There is much to be learned from his method, but useful as it is it could degenerate into an uncritical glorification of science and its apparent way of making progress. Another approach is the historical cum dialectical one. This account of philosophy has the unintended tendency to reduce philosophy into a historical science, but as it is clear, a history of idea is of interest not for itself but for a higher goal of learning from and transcending it.

Philosophy, in spite of the various conceptions, has retained its critical, theoretical, and analytical and practical concern. And contrary to the detached "spectator of all times and all existence" conception it has grown even more sensitive to the harrowing and at times exhilarating demands of humanity. These pervading commonalities annotate the true nature of philosophy more than anything else.

Philosophy remains love of wisdom, a search for truth and a continuous and relentless working towards the attainment of greater knowledge. The insight which the spectator allegory provides is the disinterestedness and dispassionateness of the philosopher's contemplation of issues. He, qua philosopher, does not allow emotional considerations to becloud or taint his view points. He considers things, not without commitment, which the 'lay-man' does not always concern himself with; but his commitment is to truth.[13]

In his search for truth his tool 'per excellence' remains reason. While not oblivious to developments in other areas of intellectual discourse his procedure differs from them. Because of this there are no unquestionable authorities in philosophy. No philosopher, contra-dogmatist, supposes he has said the last word about anything. That is why almost all issues in philosophy are controversial.[14] The process of questioning often leads to better understanding of issues, new ways of approaching old problems and progress. Thirdly philosophy uses the tool of concept analysis to light dark alleys, clear muddles in thought and delineate the logical geography of problems. This has led to the solution of many paradoxes in philosophy – see Zeno's paradox about 'motion', the paradox about 'going round', etc. The

man who succeeds in identifying the structure and components of his conceptual system is thereby released from bondage to it.

The end result of all these tools and efforts is the normative nature of the philosophical enterprise. It is the reason why the pronouncement of the philosopher – even though not from the crown's throne, the politicians daise, or the theologians pulpit – cannot but be committed.

However there remains another sense in which philosophy have been used to be mentioned. This is the first–order level of folk thought system. It consists in the general body of beliefs and sentiments which the individual in a culture holds in common with other members of his society. In this sense the general intellectual temper of a culture – its characteristic mode of thought, its pervasive world outlook, its unquestioned assumptions – constitute its philosophy. These assumptions, beliefs and sentiments do not always rise to the level of consciousness and they may not be formulated explicity, but they never–the–less exercise considerable influence in a culture. For, they make it possible for members of the society to communicate and exchange ideas and live in some agreement and common expectation of what is good and right or bad and wrong.[15]

The second level which we have been discussing, arises when some members of a culture attempt to give a systematic expression to its world–view, its beliefs, sentiments, fears; or analyse and modify through questioning and criticism, the whole or some aspects of it. This deliberate but often spontaneous analysis, criticism, questioning and modification or overhauling is called philosophy.

By way of synthesis philosophy consists essentially in contemplation, critical questioning, analysis, deliberate or sponteaneous rational attempt to modify, restructure, reorganise or even change an existing corpurs of knowledge or formulate a novel one. Knowledge and ideas about all aspects of human life – ranging from mortality to law, from social to political, from science to technology, from history to phychology and from superstition to religion.

II. AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY: A Simmering Controversy

I do not wish to be embroiled in the controversy about the genuineness or otherwise of African Philosophy as an existing area of intellectual enterprise, but I intend to remark on some tendencies which can only be of negative utility however one embraces them. The tendencies arose from the errorneous perception of what constitutes philosophy.

As we noted above, philosophy could be regarded as the folk thought of a people (whether recorded or not), or as a guide to the living of life on a broader level, or very narrowly as a theoretical discipline devoted to detailed

and complicated argument. Any of these could be essentially written or unwritten; but it would be no less philosophical because of being codified on paper or otherwise. The only problem is the limited changes and growth possible in unwritten thought systems.

One must always bear in mind that the process through which world–views are formulated is by (often arbitrary) selection of dominant opinions prevalent in the various societies. Alternative views exist but rarely survive unless they conform to established views or are self – evidently true and thereby irrepressible. An advantage which the written word gains over the oral is enduring accuracy with its accessability to criticism and change in a way not easily possible with oral traditions.

It is in this perspective that one must seriously ponder on some views about what constitute African Philosophy. In a sense the disadvantage attending oral traditions must be fully acknowledged as having encumbered a development of discoursive or dialectical philosophy in preliterate African societies, like all preliterate societies of the world. Whatever ingenuity went into the formulation of the oral traditions cannot be fully appreciated because its origin and shaping have been mostly lost in the millieu of unrecorded history. It is hard not to sound apologetic, but rather than accentuate an impiously conceived irrationality or prelogicality all it shows is nothing more than an absence of the art of formal recording. If this art is accepted as the ultimate standard (by all) of advancement then, and only then could the preliterate societies be tagged backward.[16]

Professor Wiredu's segmentation into African Traditional Philosophy and African Philosophy cannot survive serious consideration when one bears in mind the continuity of the development of ideas through history.[17] It could be of great importance from historical and chronological perspective to delimit the events of the various epochs in the history of ideas in terms of scientific and prescientific thoughts but such enterprises carried too far could have negative and anarchronistic bearings.

One may very much wish for an authentic African philosophy comparable to occidental analytical philosophy, the oriental intuitionism or American pragmatism when one considers abstract philosophising, particularly in the areas of logic, epistemology and metaphysics. Here in lies the almost irresistible temptation to reify the folk ideas of a coglomeration of African societies as African Philosophy. But shorn of intellectual smuggling bred out of inordinate but unnecessary ambition to prove the African an equal of other peoples such endeavours are doomed to fail 'ab inito'. It is therefore clear that many things that have been held forth as African Philosophy cannot be so regarded. A piece of anthropological or sociological fact cannot be philosophical in its purely descriptive form. An African philosophical in its purely descriptive form. An African philosophical

–ism' is not to be found by a process of taking the 'babalawo' as an equal by the academic philosopher. As a repertoir of folk wisdom such people could be useful in providing the necessary rudiments for critical philosophy on the African continent.

However the pipedream of a unique African philosophical '–ism' is bound to be unrealized.[18] Moreso that Africans cannot live in cultural, intellectual and scientific isolation from other peoples of the globe. All participants in the development of philosophy on any part of the globe, Africa inclusive, must be regarded as workers in the vineyard of knowledge – regardless of colour, race and continental affiliation.

For these considerations the usefulness of the works of such scholars as Professor Mbiti, Wiredu, Oruka, Sodipo, Amoo, etc., on the one hand statesmen such as Presidents Senghor, Nyerere, and Awolowo cannot be over estimated. Philosophy is an ongoing and neverending enterprise which can not be spatiotemporally circumscribed. But out of the whole web of ideas originating from the continent and elsewhere the reflective individual has to find his equilibrium; sifting, embracing, rejecting, modifying, synthesising and contributing his own. A philosopher is a product of his whole environment; and the issues which he perceives as most urgently in need of attention arise from his circumstances within that existential millieu.

In consequence the question Is there (an) African Philosophy? is a superfluous, incoherent and inane, if what it requests for is for contemporary Africans to start digging in the folk thoughts of Africans for a purely descriptive accounts of corresponding beliefs on such issues as the existence of God, evil, immortality, Freedom and Determinism, Knowledge and Belief etc. No matter how flamboyantly disguised in highsounding diction such products may be they cannot survive critical examination. In this regard the texture of one's skin and the affliation to a philosophy department is no guarantee of philosophical ingenuity rather than dogmatism and demagoguery.

African Philosophy may take a unique expression and acquire a name(s) as it evolves but one must be aware of the fact that philosophy is an activity which has to be done and not 'learnt'. It attempts to confront concrete life issues in all its ramifications.

On this score one must comment on some of the approaches that some contemporary African scholars have endorsed for African Philosophy.

The first approach which is most inappropriate for the 'study' of African Philosophy, and any other philosophy for that matter, is the historic – anthropological descriptive one. It is obvious that historical and anthropologic facts have values that are immense by right, but, as we have said, much facts do not amount to philosophy. Those who have elicited traditional African beliefs about death, immortality, morality, causality, freedom and determinism, human personality, God morality etc. in a purely journal-

istic fashion of reportage cannot be said to have performed any philosophical feat; at least not until they start considering such issues and the traditional beliefs about them not as ends in themselves but as means to ends. It may be that such scholars may agree with the beliefs in their entirety, as one may be a Platonist, a Hegelian or even a Marxist, but this has to be rationally grounded. For as W.A. Hart correctly said:

> The philosopher for his part is interested in a way of thought as something which may enlarge the scope of his own thing. Social anthropology ethnography (and history) ... is concerned with human life (and its history) in society.[19]

Philosophy and the philosopher would be absconding the responsibility of contributing to knowledge and the realization of the good society if it is errorueously acceded that such first order products constitute some authentic African philosophy. The contemporary thinker cannot hope of glorify the past anarchronictically, no matter the degree of his disenchartment with the mendacity and superficiallity of contemporary thinking on same issues.

A second approach which cannot be productive unless it is regarded, as we have said in the first part of this essay, as means to greater understanding, communication and clarification of thought is conceptual analysis. This approach would enjoin that attention be focused on the analysis of concepts, words, terms, expressions, etc. as ends in themselves. But this approach will mask the substantive issues while focusing attention at the peripheral ones, all in the name of philosophy.[20]

The analysis of concepts such as 'ori', 'eniyan', 'imo', 'ighagbo', 'chi', etc. will probably throw lights on previous problems such as the freedom – determinism controversy, mind–body problem, knowledge – belief dichotomy, and others if now regarded as ends; that is if the synthetic nature of human knowledge is accepted.[21]

There have also been the 'phenomenological' or 'cultural thematics' approach which is, I believe a refinement of the first approach that we have elicited above. As the proponent of this approach in self–criticism have acknowledged, the method is more easy to formulate than to apply. The merits of the approach however consists in its realisation of the potentialities of the various specialists in traditional societies.[22] It is also to be radically contrasted to the approach which presupposes the prelogicality and irrationality of beliefs that does not allign which those with which one (as an outsider) is familiar in one's culture. Levy Bruhl's much attenuated primitive mentality and Senghor's prevarications are too popular (or are they unpopular?) to need more comments.[23]

III. SOME INFERENCES

What approach or method can one commend to the practice of African Philosophy in the face of the foregoing discussions? Those inclined to history of ideas could study the philosophies of Amoo, St. Augusting of Hippo, Senghor, K. Nkrumah, J. Nyerere, O. Awolowo and others. Such a study will be beneficial as a study of Greek Philosophy, history of European Philosophy, etc. would be to the student.

But African Philosophy has to be a dynamic enterprise, a philosophical consideration of issues generated by antagonistic contradictions that constantly spring forth as humanity attempts to make progress — especially the arduous task of Africa to arrive. Philosophy has to be done.

This brings us to the approach which many African scholars have overtly or cevertly embraced. The armchair approach which attempts to pontificate on African beliefs and issues purely because one's major qualification is the texture of the skin, place of birth and the benefit of literacy. The consequence of this approach have been distortions and hasty generalizations in the reportage of the facts and beliefs of Africans. The much advertised mistakes of Professors Mbiti, Idowu and Wiredu are instructive on this. Mbiti generalized on African concepts of time, history, mortality; Idowu drew non–existent analogies about the attributes of God in Africa at par with Judeo–Christian concept of God; while Wiredu spoke of truth as opinion in Ghana as if the heterogenuity of views on the issue in Ghana are not real.

African Philosophy should be approached with the spirit of openness, from a presuppositionless standpoint. This will save one from ignorant, stupidly blind and obnoxious mistakes such as Dean Farrar's; who concluded in 1865 that the features of Africans are "invariable and expressionless", their minds "characterized by a dead and blank uniformity", who had "not established a single institution ... not hit upon a single invention",[24] not minding to even explain how a people could survive the turbulence and vagueries of nature under such conditions.

The African philosopher must bear in mind that philosophy is reflective and critical thinking about concepts and principles we use to organise our experience in morals, religion, history, social and political life, law, psychology and in the nature sciences among others. For this critical relective thinking to lead to wisdom one must develop the cast of mind capable of proceessing multifarious facts and extracting their significance for human life; participate in the affairs of society imbued with a desire to bring ones intellect to bear upon human problems to enhance, liberalize, democratise, humanise life.

The spirit of openness and presuppositionlessness I envisage allows the African philosopher to acquaint himself with philosophical activities, past and present from all parts of the globe, not to be encyclopedic or eclectic but to discern how issues and concepts of universal validity can be disentangled from their cultural exigencies and contingencies, and annexed from the benefit of Africans and humanity. It is herein that the ultimate utility of philosophy lies for the living of life. Contrary to Ruch, therefore no culture can be said to have passed the stage of youth and growth, and consequently of development.[25] All cultures are always changing and the philosophical postulations that grow with it.[26]

Perhaps a distinctive African philosophy may come out of a greater apprehension of the unity of man as a whole self, of man at one with his fellow man, of man at one with nature and God. Western philosophy has created artificial dichotomies between man the knower the known and man the doer, between the subject and the object, between the freedom of the individual and the demands of the common good of society, between the technology dominated welfare of man and the respect for and harmony with nature.

It is a good thing that more people are increasingly falling in love with philosophy on the African continent than before. Young men and women now enter our institutions of higher learning on the platform of philosophy, but it is still depressing that on discovery of the difference between the discipline, in terms of rigour, analytical, critical and intellectual demands, and other courses they either change or combine with other courses, leaving few single honours; moreso that the values of the course in terms of immediate job opportunities are not apparent. Who would blame them? I attended a scholaship interview with a state scholarship board sometime ago and somebody on the panel wondered who wrote to invite me in the first place; he could not fathom what a philosopher has to offer. I had to embark on an impromptu lecture on what philosophy is all about and roles that philosophers played throughout human history.

It is high time we be concerned not only with 'bread' but also with bliss; one cannot survive by bread alone.

Let us conclude this paper by taking some issues of interest for consideration by way of poscript. The sensational headling "Death" appeared on the back page of Lagos Weekend in 1980.[27] Under this was the subheading "Thrice from grage he killed children, why? Wife did not give last minute six". The writer, one Sam Dimawoh related the story of a man on a sick bed on the verge of death still demanding carnal knowledge of his wife before his death and the wife afraid of catalysing the death of his man refused. Good intentions and old age apart the wife want to do what she believed would restore the health of her husband. For refusing however the dying husband vowed to teach the wife a lesson if she dared meet another

man. After the death of the husband various events occured. Very grave and sad ones too. Death entered the house, misfortunes and calamities struck.

Why? asked the relatives. The wife confessed her innocent offence as the reason why she has been long suffering since. The issues raised by this story are of philosophical interest.

The first regards the fidelity and its abuse between partners in marriage. Contrary to Mbiti most Africans, and the dead man inclusive, know that infidelity is wrong. Punishement is not what makes it wrong, but because of its wrongness. The second issue concerns causal explanation of the death of the children of the widow. Even science still cannot explain why many events occur as they do; this is not saying that science cannot explain this particular one, but cautioning against doctrinaire acceptance of science.

The third issue revolves around the issue of life after death or immortality, which is still a live issue in metaphysics and philosophy of religion. Many beliefs and religious actions presuppose it, and it merits the philosophers examination.

The mention of metaphysics above brings to mind a current issue in the media. This concerns the claims of certain parapsychologists to the high-sounding title of metaphysician. It would be wrong to call such breed of people metaphysicians in the philosophical sense. They could be occultists, parapsychologists, witch–doctors etc. but not philosophers.

The tools of critical, reflective, analytic and discusive philosophy will have to be applied to issues of fundamental importance to humanity, instead of compliance or resignation to fate or the dogmatic pontifications of fanatic theologians, politicians, occultist, etc. That is the essence of philosophy universally.

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28. My gratitude goes to the M. A. African Philosophy Seminar group of 1980 – 1981 Session whose comments have helped in shaping this final form of the paper. I am especially indebted to Professor J. O. Sodipo (coodinator of the course) whose wealth of experience have been a good help in developing the issues raised over the years. They are however not responsible for the flaws that may remain in the paper.

THE CONCEPT OF INTENTIONALITY TOWARDS ADEFINITION OF THE MENTAL' 'THE MENTAL'

Dr. T. D. P. BAH

The concept of internationality is one of the various mental concepts which philosophers through the ages have used in the process of seeking a solution to the fundamental problem of philosophy, i.e. the relationship between body and mind or matter and consciousness.

From a historical point of view, the notion of internationality dates back to the Scholastics of the Middle Ages (and even to Aristotle) but its later interpretations and subsequent developments by the phenomenological and existentialist movements (led by Edmund Husserl and Jean Paul Sarte, respectively) were, to a large extent, the outcome of the outstanding work of the German psychologist and philosopher FRANZ BRENTANO. Not only did this philosopher go deeper than the medieval philosophers but he made an almost untractable issue in seeking a solution to the old fundamental problem of philosophy. The rediscovery of the concept came as a result of a desperate effort to find a *principle* by which he could describe mental phenomena and yet could not use the same language to describe physical phenomena[1]. It is in the light of Brentano's efforts that we shall examine the concept of intentionality by focussing attention on its metaphysical foundation.

The main theme of this article is that 'intentionality' does not and indeed cannot define sufficiently the 'mental'. This will be shown in the objections against the idea that "directedness towards" defines internationality. In other words, it will be shown that intentionality may be necessary but it cannot be sufficient in defining 'the mental'.

THE SCHOLASTIC BACKGROUND OF THE CONCEPT

In their works, *Intention and Internationality: Brentano and Husserl*, and *Scholastic Roots of Brentanto's Concept of Intntionality*, Spiegelberg and Marras, respectively, give us a historical analysis of the concept of intentionality.

In scholastic philosophy, Spiegelberg identifies two meanings of intention:

(a) the practical meaning which is the original meaning of 'intention' which simply signifies 'an intention to do something or a purpose'

(b) the extra–practical meaning is more theoretical and derives from medieval philosophy where it signified 'theoretical entities'.

With Thomas Aquinas the distinction is not clear for there the practical

meaning is the 'actus voluntatis' just as the intention is "a striving towards something'. Historically the extra–practical meaning will be neglected until Brentano and Husserl will give it a new dimension "in the theory of acts and meanings, in logic and ontology, psychology and phenomenology".[2]

Spiegelberg notes that unfortunately we lack knowledge about the origin and historical development of the meaning of the extra–practical intention. This historical mishap may be the reason why it cannot be decided as to whether the present meaning is *merely* taken from the scholastics, and *who*, between Brentano and Husserl, is the real discoverer of intentionality.[3]

The scholastic 'intention' is one of the most problematic terms. Throughout that period philosophers like Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Ockam, Natalis, tried desperately to establish a meaning for the term varying from an 'object of an act,' a 'mental act', an 'image or picture', to a 'relation'. One may conclude then, without going into the details of the various interpretations, that the picture of the extra–practical intention in the history of philosophy is extremely complex, and confusing at times.

Spiegelberg does not go unchallenged on his interpretation. Marras argues that he went wrong because he interpreted 'intentional existence' as to mean that the intending subject has 'an intentio' within himself. This is a Thomistic conception which Brentano *did not* integrate into his thesis, contrary to Spiegelberg's claim. Brentanto originated 'reference to a content' and Marras believes that it did not come from the Scholastics.[4] But he admists that the Scholastic conception of intentionality and that of Brentano are closely linked because the idea of reference to an object is not incompatible with the Scholastic conception of intentional inexistence, for indeed the former is part of the latter.

Marras' criticism amounts to the opinion that it did not occur to Spiegelberg that a conception of the epistemic object does not conflict with that of intentional inexistence insofar as it does not commit itself to the existence of the epistemic object as real neither in nor outside the mind.

The fact that the epistemic object, whether called 'intentio', 'species' or 'form' cannot be directly known leads to immanentism. But the immanentistic character of the epistemic object (i.e. the claim that it exists within the epistemic subject) raises two issues:

(1) Does the epistemic object acquire 'concreteness?'

(2) How logical are we if we infer an object from the simple belief in the existence of the 'form'?

Finally Marras' objection amounts to a rejection of the belief that the Scholastics held that objects are immanent within the epistemic subject. This immanentistic doctrine is also rejected by Brentano who believed that scholastic entities (whether real or unreal) could not hinder any realistic epistemology.[5]

BRENTANO ON INTENTIONALITY

In his edited work (by Chisholm) *Realism and The Background of Phenomenology*, Brentano wrote:

> The data of our consciousness make up a world which, taken in its entirety, falls into two great classes, the class of *physical* and the class of mental phenomena ... already ... physical phenomena which appear in the imagination have been taken to be mental.[6]

The distinction between mental and physical phenomena is further established by what he calls "presentation" and by this he means not that which is presented, but the act of presentation. In other words, it is the act performed by the subject that is mental. Under this category fall all acts of sensing and thinking in general; whereas the physical is examplified in color, form, sound, smell, heat, "as well as comparable images which appears to me in the imagination."[7] We may note that if Brentano believes that images of the imagination are physical like images derived from the senses, it follows from the fact that he really wants to emphasize that it is the act itself and *not* the object of presentation which makes the phenomena mental. Given this thesis that mental phenomena are presentations or are based on presentations, Brentano will have to meet some objections. Thus a conflict arises between him and J. B. Meyer (and others whose views are similar to Meyer's) in as much as the concept of presentation is narrowed, or misunderstood, such that it is not seen that any form of feeling (no matter how primitive or primary) implies something which is the object of that feeling (i.e. an object is presented).[8] One may also note that it is the same importance attached to the act of presentation which alone makes the phenomena mental that could justify Brentano in putting under physical all the qualities of the empiricist tradition (i.e. primary and secondary qualities: shape, color, odor, heat, images of the imagination).

Since the first distinction is not agreed upon, Brentano looks into the negative definition of mental phenomena which, with its Cartesian or Spinozistic tone, consists in saying that, unlike the physical, the mental is *not extended.* But he observes that unfortunately again there is no agreement among psychologists as to the meaning and implications of that thesis. On the one hand, there are those who hold that many physical phenomena, like the mental ones, do not show extension — this view is shared by Berkeley, Herbert, the two Mills, Spencer, etc., while on the other hand, there are those (e.g. Aristotle and some modern psychologists and physiologists) who hold that certain mental phenomena can be regarded as extended. However, for Brentano both views are erroneous; especially the so—called extension of mental phenomena is false because it rests on a confusion between the two categories of phenomena.[9]

If a reason for the unsatisfactory nature of the definition is sought, it may be argued that it is because the definition is negative. But then if "mental phenomena" is defined positively we are falling back to the same issue because there again "physical phenomena" is negatively defined when it is said: "This intentional inexistence is exclusively characteristic of mental phenomena. No physical phenomena manifest anything similar".[10]

As he argued in the first definition of mental phenomena (as presentations or as founded on presentations), Brentanto can argue against all objections — even in the case of Hamilton's Phenomena of Feeling — that no matter what types of feeling or how they occur there always is reference to something that is felt. It might be argued against Brentano that in the case of pain or sorrow, he is referring to the cause of pain or sorrow and not to any objectified inexistent. But surely Brentano can still argue that there is reference to something which is intentional, i.e. he who feels anything at all has his mind directed towards something, even though that something may not be an external object at all.[11]

On the characteristics of mental phenomena, Brentano argues that they are perceived only in inner consciousness, in contrast to physical phenomena which occur in outer perception. And inner perception makes mental phenomena immediate and evident. He even goes further to maintain that only inner perception is possible; and that outer perception cannot be true and real. Thus from an ontological point, whereas mental phenomena (like "knowledge, joy, desire") have both intentional and actual existence, physical phenomena (like 'color, sound, heat') exist only phenomenally and intentionally.[12] Brentano disagrees with Bain who believes that it's a contradiction to maintain that a physical object (e.g. a tree) exists apart from any perception. As he put it: "As certain as it is that a color only appears to us when it is an object of our presentation ... it is nevertheless not to be inferred from this that a color could not exist without being presented".[13]

The contradiction would arise only if "being presented" represented a factor included in the color, and if thinking consisted only in perception as well as if only one mind existed to which actual existence would belong. It would seem to us that a disagreement need not arise between Bain and Brentano for the latter appears to object to Bain's Berkeleyan line of thought. However, it is to be remembered that Berkeley did not deny the existence of physical objects but physical phenomena (in Brentano's terminology) or ideas (in Berkeley's terminology) could be said to exist only through minds. And ontologically speaking Brentano's conception of physical phenomena makes "being presented" — (being perceived' in Berkeley and Bain) — a factor to be included in the phenomenon; were it not so, it seems that Brentano could not have come to "deny to physical phenomena any existence other than intentional existence".[14]

Still in this ontological examination, Brentano is of the opinion, unlike other philosophers, that while several mental phenomena are present, only one physical phenomenon (at a time) appears in consciousness, the unity of which is established only by mental phenomena.[15] It would seem to us however that it is not the case that several physical phenomena do not present themselves to consciousness but rather that the mind can concentrate on only one at a time, e.g. I can concentrate only on either the red or green pen I have in front of me. But I can see, hear and touch at the same time, e.g., when I tune in my radio, I perform the three acts together. The unity of consciousness is assumed on the grounds that it is the same person who performs all the mental acts; so that even if the mind is identified with the brain, the unity is established at the level of the central nervous system.

Finally on the ontological status of objects of mental phenomena, Brentano argues that presentation (as defined above) and judgement are two entirely different ways of being conscious (or to have mental acts), for judgement presupposes presentation. Yet despite that fact, in terms of the content of the mental phenomena, it is not a defensible argument that a presentation is a simple, and a judgement a compound idea; there is no difference in the content of thought: "One who affirms, one who denies and one who uncertainly questions, all have the same object in consciousness ... And every object which is the content of a presentation can also become, under certain circumstances, the content of a judgement."[16]

As we shall see later one needs to understand what Brentano means by "object in consciousness." Perhaps the best way to accept that the intentional object exists in any mental act is to bear in mind that Brentano's object is only a means by which he wishes to express the fact that a mental act is taking place and that consequently that mental act cannot take place without any object of reference even though that object is not tangibly existent. So that one may agree with Brentano on these grounds that in any mental phenomenon there is the same object of consciousness, and certainly it owes that "sameness" to the fact that it is an intentional object in all cases of mental acts. Or to put it otherwise, the "sameness" of the object derives from the fact that, as McAlister wrote, mental phenomena are "those phenomena which contain an object intentionally within themselves."[17] As we tried to show above, the philosophical problem that arises is how to make explicitly clear what is meant by 'intentionally containing an object within.' The philosophical schools of thoutht, phenomenology and existentialism, that developed from Brentano's thesis differed in their interpretation of intentionality and intentional objects.

As it stands then, in Brenanto's conception of intentionality, just like in the Scholastic or Thomistic conception of the 'intentio' (defined in terms of 'form' or 'species') the intentional object is regarded as an immenent object in contradistinction to a transcendent one. When according to

Oskar Kraus held that in later years Brentano gave up this idea 'immanent objectivity' in favour of 'reference to a content', the philo- this is whether one cannot be explained in terms of the other they can amount to the same thing. One may tentatively, for explain why Brentano might have made such a change. Given problem involved in his attempt to make a distinction between 'analo- and 'identical' and given also the difficult task of explaining how, for an imagined object can be immanent, then we may conclude that found it more suitable to take 'reference to something' as a logical for explaining the ontological status of the object because 'refer- to something' not only establishes the intentionality (i.e. 'the directed- but consequently it gives us the advantage of not committing to the assertion of the factual existence or non–existence of 'something' which is 'referred to.'

In our defence of Brentano's stand is still challenged by Spiegelberg accuses him of not making a clear conceptual distinction between 'immanent objectivity' and 'reference to a content' or 'directedness towards a real object' because he combined them under 'intentional inexistence'; this is apparent in the passage in *Psychology From an Empirical*[18] Indeed Spiegelberg should have seen that Brentano's move rather advantageous had he accepted that 'immanent object' is not to be taken literally, for as Spiegelberg himself saw, this allowed Brentano to take 'intentional' to cover what is purely phenomenal so that intentional being is attributed to physical phenomena.[19] As to the accusation that Brentano was not aware of the distinction between 'immanent objectivity' and 'reference to a content', it would seem to us that what is important to consider is the fact that the two are not mutually exclusive in the sense that 'reference to content' implies an 'object' which is the content or that 'immanent objectivity' by definition implies that something is contained (or is the content). It does rather seem that Brentano saw no need of such a distinction so long as object and content are understood so as not to take them literally for 'tangibly located things in the mind.'

In actual fact Brentano must have been aware of a distinction rather more important, that is, the distinction between 'immanent objectivity' (in his terminology) and 'mere objectivity' (in the scholastic sense) which meant 'lack of real existence'. May be what Spiegelberg did not understand in Brentano's argument is the distinction between genuine and fictitious objects. As his (Brentano) argument runs, it should be born in mind that "all mental reference refers to things. In many cases, the things to which we refer do not exist, but we are accustomed to saying that they then have 'being' as objects. This is a loose use of the word "to be" which we permit with impunity for the sake of convenience".[20] Clearly enough, it is this loose sense of "to be" which may easily lead us astray. When, for example we say that "the

book *is* in the box" how is the "is" different from the "is" in 'the idea of God *is* in my mind"? In both cases, there is an object; but in the latter case, the object is God. As Brentano succintly put it about the judgement: "A centaur does not exist" (in which case the object is a centaur):

> if it is said that this content has its being in the active subject, then once again the word "to be" is being used in a loose and and improper sense and means nothing different from what is expressed by the use of "to be" in its proper sense, in the words "A mentally active subject is denying a centaur in the Modus praesens".21

This will be clearly stated when Brentano tells us later why he allowed himself the term "immanent object."

INTERPRETATIONS OF BRENTANO'S THESIS

Various philosophers have interpreted Brentano. Among others, the most notable are Chisholm, McAlister, Aguila. For space and brevity let us examine only Aguila's arguments on Brentano and other interpretations.

In his *Intentionality: A Study of Mental Acts,* while comparing the Humean conception of awareness with that of Brentano, Aguila observes that the latter rejected the classical theory of awareness which maintains that "the objects of mental acts are themselves regarded as the contents of those acts".[22] Typically he rejected the Humean theory which, though it does not equate awareness with its objects, holds that those objects are embedded in and are the very constituents of that awareness. From an ontological point of view, the objects of awareness are conceived to be within the perceiver who is aware of them according to the Humean theory, while in Brentano the very fact that by definition awareness means directedness toward something, that "something", in one sense, must be outside the subject who is aware (despite his so–called 'immanent objectivity').

Yet one is not sure whether the above remark holds with regards to other interpretations of inner perception. It seems that McAlister, for example, would disagree with Aguila over the meaning of intentionality in Brentano. But to be fair to Hume, the embeddedness of objects "in awareness" itself – we do not say "in mind" because Hume rejected a substance theory of mind – must be explained in terms of Humean logic of perception. From an epistemological point of view Hume found no justification for the ontological status of the objects of awareness, expect by positing them as 'constituents' of awareness because neither in external perception nor in imagination can we be certain of the causes of our 'impressions'. To some extent Hume and Brentano ought to agree, for it can be inferred that both maintain that the objects or referents of awareness may not exist in reality. The similarities stand out as both would agree that when

one's awareness is directed toward a "unicorn' the latter does not exist in reality.

In Brentano then the 'in' (in inexistence) indicates only that there is awareness of something. Ontologically it would be wrong to take it literally to mean that those objects are 'in' the mind. One important distinction that can be made between Brentano and Hume relates to the ontological status of the objects of awareness: to Brentano they may or may not exist in reality while to Hume the sole claim that can be made is that "there is awareness". Hume's skepticism preludes certainty about the reality of the referents particularly when the awareness is mediated by the senses.

When Aguila deals with Descartes' theory he admits that since the mind — though a thinking substance — is incoporeal it cannot be said to "contain comporeal substances or the actual resemblances of corporeal substances".[23] Yet according to the Cartesian ontological argument it is held that the Idea of God is in the mind. A three–fold distinction may be made about awareness in this case: (a) the mental act, (b) the immanent object (the idea of god) and (c) the Transcendent object (God). On this basis it must be concluded that "the mind contains two different sorts of things ... its own mental activity and also all the proper objects of that activity."[24] The real problem for Descartes and for Aguila himself is how to explain what it is to "contain" or what it is for a mental activity and proper objects of that activity to be 'in' the mind. If we take into consideration the impossibility to ascertain the real existence of referents (even with Descartes's idea of a Perfect God!) we may say that just as Brentano was accused of immanentism so may be Descartes in so far as he is committed to admit that some objects of awareness "must have at least an immanent existence".[25]

Actually the "in the mind" bears such weight in Descartes that it seems to cancel out the "directedness" towards the objects of awareness (whether immanent or transcendent). The "emphatic" immanence (owing to the 'in the mind') could and did actually make it difficult for many people to see that even in introspection or inner perception, the self or ego that reflects upon itself takes "un dé-doublement" so that the object of awareness is "another" transcendent self (ego) even though the whole process takes place 'within the mind'.

Coming to Brentano's account of perception and non-existent objects, Aguila observes that he "includes as instances of mental phenomena the occurrences of mere "sensation", such as the "hearing of sounds", the "seeing of colors", and the "sensing of warm and cold."[26] This indicates that, since in Brentano mental phenomena show features of intentionality, occurrences of mere "sensation" are also intentional. However, according to MacAlister's interpretation, mental phenomena are the objects of inner perception and, contrary to Chisholm's views, physical phenomena are neither objects (like

trees) nor physical activities (like riding) but "sensible qualities". It seems to follow that MacAlister's "sensible qualities" are Aguila's occurrences of mere "sensation". Since "sensations" or "sensibles qualities" need a preceiver in order to be perceived or sensed, the argument goes in favour of Aguila that the notion of intentionality is implicity in the notion of external perception in the sense that there must be a mind (or mental phenomenon) which is directed toward an object.

Whether we consider the classical theory of awareness or the sense datum theory, both make the distinction between the act of sensing and the datum (object) of sensation and both make room for illusion, error and the like so that whereas the ontological status of the act (that is, its occurrences) cannot be doubted, the factual existence of the object is not certain. In this respect Brentano is close to both theories. Yet, according to Aguila, he differs from the sense–datum theorist because the latter holds that both act and object sensation do not have any actual existence at all; they exist "only phenomenally and intentionally."[27] The real issue at stake, as Aguila rightly points out, relates to the meaning given to the assertion that sensations have "only phenomenal or intentional existence."

The problem raised above is that of appearance, given the fact that sensations are phenomenal. However, as C.D. Board's comment put it, it would be wrong to believe that once some object is labelled "apparent" it means that it is not real or that it is non–existent. Indeed the problem of 'appearance' stands as one of the fundamental issues of philosophy from both metaphysical and epistemological points of view. For, as our knowledge of the external world depends upon the way we perceive it, i.e., how it appears to us, the ultimate reality we may talk about will depend on the inference we make from the appearances. So that the ontological problem is not whether appearances, perceptions, or phenomena, do take place but rather whether we are, entitled to infer referents for those appearances, as we have to make room at least for, say Descartes evil genius !

Still on Brentano Aguila notes that, according to him, "Mental and physical phenomena do not both exist in the same sense of the word; only the former ... truly and actually exist".[28] We saw above how difficult it was for Brentano, Chisholm and McAlister to distinguish one from the other. Yet there are at least three reasons why Brentano attributed true and actual existence to mental phenomena, namely:

(a) He held inner perception to provide self- evident judgements and consequently objects of inner perception to be evidently real.

(b) In making the distinceion between mental and physical phenomena, he sought to establish it through 'mental acts' and 'sensible qualities' (according to McAlister's interpretation).

(c) As Aguila himself put it — Chisholm and McAlister had almost a similar understanding — Brentano "equates the merely phenomenal existence of physical phenomena with merely intentional inexistence."[29]

In the three cases, it may be observed that what gives true existence to mental phenomena is not only the mental act but also the epistemic object which even though it may not exist in reality, establishes the directedness towards' that characterizes by definition intentional inexistence. However, in terms of (a) Brentano was mistaken like Descartes about his 'clear and distinct ideas' and in terms of (b) Brentano, like philosophers before and after him, had to give room for error and consequently concede to given more reality and truth to what is self–evident than to what is only apparent. And in terms of (c) since intentional inexistence does not commit us to real existence, since physical phenomena are only apprehended by the sense, Brentano could not do better than concede intentional inexistence to physical phenomena; so that both physical and mental phenomena, in so far as both are apprehended by thought, exist only in thought.

Given these various and almost conflicting interpretations of Brentano, from a historical point of view, it is worth asking now: were these views the same Brentano held in later years?

Brentano does not seem to have changed his views even though some critics claim he did. Their claim might eventually be explained by a misinterpretation they made about his views. To be sure Brentano made a clear distinction about the ontological status of 'a thought about a centaur' and that of 'a centaur thought about:' the thought is a fact which, by definition, must exist whereas the 'centaur thought about' is an object (of thought) which need not exist in reality but only immanently. But even immanently, it is not to be located in the mind as some sort of tangibly identifiable object "that is posited there". As Brentano put it:

> I allowed myself the term 'immanent object' in order to say, not that the object exists, but that it is an object ... It being an object however is merely the linguistic correlate of the person experiencing having it as object.[30]

Still on this ontological thesis, according to Aguila, Brentano rejected sense data (from his ontology). If this view does not agree with that of McAlister who formulated Brentano's thesis in terms of "mental acts" and "physical qualities", it also disagrees, to some extent, with the above remark that Brentano equates the phenomenal existence of physical phenomena with intentional inexistence. Thus to say that he rejected sense data from his ontology does not seem to make sense. What Brentano must have rejected seems to be the necessity of factual existence of sense–data and such a denial would not destroy his thesis on intentionality; one cannot be certain

of the identity or relation between sense- data and an actual physical object. Indeed Aguila seems to agree with us here as he notes that

> It is necessary to construe sensation as intentional in Brentano's case: sensation must be intentional not simply in the sense that we may always distinguish an act and an object of sensation but also in the sense that its proper objects may be such objects without really existing at all.[31]

Clearly here Aguila gives room for illusory apprehension and consequently the uncertainty about the tangible existence of intentional objects in the mind and their causes. To Aguila then intentionality may be characterized by two facts about awareness:

(a) all awareness is awareness of something, i.e. all awareness implies intentional directedness.

(b) Not all awarenesses refer to real objects – some refer to objects which may be said to exist only in mind.[32]

These two remarks drawn from Aguila's interpretation of intentionality relate to the ontological status of objects in intentional relations. Whereas a non--fictional entity – say man -- may be related psychologically to a fictional entity -- say a winged horse, yet the latter cannot be so related as to exhibit psychological intentions vis–avis that non-fictional character. However 'fictional' psychological relations may be conceived between two fictional entities, e.g. when two winged horses think of destroying each other. The relation that obtains between a non-fictional character and a fictional entity has a spatio–temporal dimension, unlike that between two fictional entities. Aguila stresses that one is committed to an ontological assumption in the case of the relation obtaining in "I believe that winged horses exist," namely, the assumption that there is an entity which is nothing else but the fact or state of affairs whereby "I" is related to winged hourses."[33] This ontological assumption, we may note, restates Brentano's earlier analysis whereby he identified this fact with an object and argued that "it being an object however is merely the linguistic correlate of the person experiencing having it as object."

Brentano's "linguistic correlate" answers the two seemingly independent questions, namely, whether the intending thinker is referring to an object and whether the object intended and referred to exists or not. Surely, by definition intentionality implies that there is reference to an object and the latter exists even if not in reality. With reference to Brentano's "immanent object" it is tempting to believe that there is a "tangible something" called object that is "posited there" and really exists, whereas what is really implied is the subject and the experiencing of having something in the mind.' As Aguila explains:

Even when it is said that something is in our mind or heart, because we are occupied with it a thinking or loving it is only a matter of Being in a quite improper sense, and accordingly something thought **qua** something thought or something loved **qua** something loved **is no thing at all.** However, **it is also no object of our thinking,** but rather the **thinker and the** lover who as such belong to the Real, **are here to be designated** as object — **as also it may be said of that to which** they **themselves are directed in thinking and loving*** (e.g., if one thinks of a house or feels love for his friend), that they belong to the Real.[34]

However, it appears that one might be precluded by one's empirical experience from conceiving that "thinking of a horse" and "thinking of a winged horse" amount to the same experience of an "immanent object", (to take Brentano's terminology). It is not the case, we may believe, that Aquila holds that a "loved friend" is as real as the 'loved winged horse' and the lover, for whereas a "loved friend" may exist in reality, a "loved winged horse" is "no thing at all" for it is "something loved qua something loved" and imagined.

The philosophical interest we derive from the above characterization of awareness and intentional relations relates to the implication arising about the ontological status of objects of awareness (or intentional objects) given the metaphysical status of the mind. From the fact of "intentional directedness' we may infer psychophysical dualism for it seems to follow from the conception of "directedness towards something" that the mind (psyche) interacts with the body or with physical entities. But if the mind is simply identified with the brain it is conceivable that it interacts with the body — leading to a numerical dualism — and the latter interacts with external objects (through the brain as a medium). Given then the brain (as the mind) which is part of the body and interacting with the latter, numerical dualism is thus reducible to some sort of monism -- which in fact is the claim of the identity theory: e.g. when I say: "I am thinking of unicorns" this is nothing but a brain process.

Psycho–physical dualism could be regarded as the foundation of intentionality should we conceive the mind as non–physical, i.e., if it considered in Cartesian terms. Should we therefore regard the brain as the mind, numerical dualism — instead of metaphysical (psycho–physical) dualism — will constitute the foundation of intentionality. And in this case, intentionality will mean that the mind (the brain indeed!) will be directed to itself, or to put it otherwise, intentionality will be defined in terms of the modifications that will take place within the brain so that intentional objects will only be part of those modifications. And this agrees with Brentano's argument above that the 'immanent object' does not mean that there is

an object that exists, but that "it being an object ... is merely the linguistic correlate of the person experiencing having it as object." Likewise this agrees with Aguila's remark that no contradiction would arise if Brantano and Chisholm maintain that intentionality is a feature of psychological phenomena without, for that matter, such a feature precluding an identification of psychological phenomena with states of the central nervous system.[35] The reason behind this argument, we may hold from the aforegoing, is that the mind may be identified with the brain; which will explain that what is called "psychological phenomena" (i.e. our mental acts) represent modifications of the central nervous system.

The agreement on this physicalist interpretation of the mind by Aguila seems to be rather apparent when it is argued that for a mental event and a brain process to be identical the two phenomena must have the same "constituents".

Aguila holds that:

> It is impossible to maintain that certain states of my brain or central nervous system contain as constituents such objects as the imaginary Central Park unicorn. Therefore it would be impossible to identify the event of my imagining of a unicorn in Central Park with some event in my brain or central nervous system.[36]

We may say that Aguila's conclution derives from the fact that he does not fully (if at all) accept the physicalist thesis (which indeed is formulated in various ways!) owing certainly to the uncertainty of the meaning given to 'constituents' and the metaphysical status of the mind. What is most suggestive is that Aguila, like Brentano and others like Chisholm, wants to emphasize the specificity of intentionality and intentional objects. The fact that intentionality means awareness of objects that may not exist at all, or the fact that intentionality requires the introduction of a class of relations which may relate one thing to something else that may or may not really exist leads Aguila to hold that "any adequate account of awareness will apparently reveal that mental phenomena exhibit a feature which is quite unlike any ordinary physical relation or property."[37]

Clearly, for an understanding and elucidation of that feature Aguila calls for a thorough re–examination of the physicalist thesis on the basis of his belief on the specificity of intentionality, intentional objects, in relation to mind. The neuro–phsiologist and philosopher John Eccles, aware of the specificity of consciousness, admits the existence of brain processes but stresses that beyond these brain processes, the intractable problem arises. He writes:

> ... How as a result of these brain actions, you have an experience, you see a light, you feel a touch, you hear a sound, or you have

much more complex blended experiences. Somehow what is going on in your brain, which we understand **up to a point,** turns into a perception. **This is a tremendously important problem, beyond any present solution,** yet nevertheless a real problem ... physics and physiology are far too primitive yet to explain how thought can give rise to action ... We can now define the problems much better with respect to the neural counterpart of consciousness; but still the essence of the problem eludes us.[38]

Thus, as we said at the beginning of this article, intentionality must be viewed as only one amongst many other concepts that may define 'the mental'. By itself it cannot settle the issue as to what the mental is as it is clearly shown by the critics of the concept. The proponents, as the history of the concepts reveals, overemphasized the so–called 'ability' of the concept to solve the fundamental issue of philosophy. Their attitude may be attributed to the familiar yet paradoxical belief of philosophers when they try to make their contribution with 'a seemingly new concept' like the one under consideration. John Eccles' remarks suggest that he regards the issue as much more complex than the intentionality theorists seemed to realize. In his own attitude, we feel that he is wavering between dualism and the identity theory. Unsatisfied with both theories, he, like Aguila, calls for a deeper re–examination of the thesis of the identity or physicalist theory. We cannot at this stage of the present article, comply with his suggestion, for surely a thorough examination of such a profound issue will require another article.

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THOMAS HOBBES'S RECONSTRUCTION OF HUMAN NATURE AND SOCIETY

By

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Hobbes's project in civil philosophy was aimed at creating a new science of politics or civil philosophy by introducing a new method of civil philosophy. With the new method, known as the resolutive–compositive method or analytic–synthetic method, he was able to offer a reconstruction of the body politic. In essence, this meant the reconstruction or reordering of the facts of human nature and human society. This reconstruction raises a problem concerning the relation between human nature in its original state and human nature within the reconstructed social order.

Professor C. B. Macpherson has put the question quite sharply when he asks:

> If men's natures, as discovered by scientific resolution are such as to render them at war with each other (or society at war with itself), men are consistent with their nature in so acting. Hobbes's composition of the elements of men's nature is different from the arrangement of those elements which actually prevails. How can it be called more consistent with their natures than the arrangement which actually exists in their present composit natures?[1]

In an attempt to resolve this question, both Professor Macpherson himself and Professor J.W.N. Watkins have given different but closely–related answers.

According to Macpherson, the only way to avoid contradiction in Hobbes's views about his reconstruction of men's social character is to see his theory as a theory of and for possessive market society:

> his theory is an attempt to persuade present men by showing them their actual nature, to behave differently from the way in which men have hitherto behaved, and in which they are now still behaving simply for lack of realizing what is demanded of and permitted to men in possessive market society.[2]

Accordint to this argument, the only consistent statement of Hobbes's reconstruction of society, is to say that he was showing men how to behave in accordance with the logic or possessive market society. The emergence of possessive market society brings about certain principles which were not needed in the mere state of nature. In other words, each historical epoch requires a new set of principles all of which are consistent with human nature.

Watkins, on the other hand, considers the problem from the point of view of Hobbes's resolutive–compositive method and his theory of knowledge. The implication of the resolutive–compositive method is that what comes out at the end of reconstruction is different from what went in at the beginning, because the result may have prescriptive and explanatory implications not contained in the original condition. Hobbes, according to Watkins, was concerned with a rational reconstruction of society in order to show men how they could behave better. The purpose of reconstruction is to remind men of what they know already, or may know from their experience, because knowledge is rememberance. In other words, the resolutive–compositive method does not allow the introduction of principles not found within the subject–matter, consequently, the result of reconstruction is consistent with human nature.

> When one applies it (the resolutive–compositive method) to a physical effect or to a geometrical figure the recomposed whole, which one now understands, is still the whole with which one had previously only been acquainted. But when this method is applied to society the recomposed whole may very well differ from the original. An actual society may be inconsistent, at war with itself. But when a system of political authority is rationally reconstructed by deduction from the nature of the system's elements it will obviously be consistent with them. To apply the resolutive–compositive method to society is to discover what men **are** and what the State **ought to be** to be consistent with their nature.[3]

This account of the result of the resolutive–compositive method is quite perceptive, but as Professor Macpherson correctly observed, it leaves the problem still unresolved and it leaves the notion of consistency unexplained. It does not explain how the phypothetical order which Hobbes constructs can be said to be more consistent than the arrangement which actually prevails in their present composite natures.[4]

In his book, *Hobbes's System of Ideas* ... Watkins made a further defense of his position by emphasizing Hobbes's version of the Platonic theory that knowledge is remembrance. In other words, what Hobbes achieves through the reconstruction is to remind men of what they know so that they may behave more consistently with their nature.

> He is not trying to instil any alien material – whether factual or moral – into their minds. They already possess all the needed material. He only draws attention to what they know already (or can know if they will but look into themselves) and draws out logical consequences of it.[5]

In spite of this Professor Watkins fails to meet the objection of Prof. Macpherson. What is at issue and what he has not adequately explained is

the very notion of consistency. He has not offered convincing explanation of the way in which men may act inconsistently in the state of Nature and the sense in which they in the same respect, may act consistently in the new social order. In other words, the whole project of reconstruction was motivated by the problematic character of the state of Nature, which is meant to be overcome through the reconstruction.

Professor Macpherson's thesis about possessive market society is a result of external reflection on the whole Hobbesian system in an attempt to reconstruct it. In order to do this, one has to go beyond the project as stated by Hobbes himself and one also has to ignore the internal logic of the system. The analogy which Watkins makes between Hobbes and Plato on the theory of knowledge as remembrance is not, as he later acknowledge, quite satisfactory. It is true that Hobbes said that knowledge is remembrance but he means knowledge as memory and not knowledge in general.

On the other hand, Watkins is correct in showing the method of resolution and composition as a way (though only part of the way) of resolving the apparent contradiction. But he fails to draw the full implications of that method and to explain the sense in which we can talk of consistency within the Hobbesian scheme. His failure is also due to the fact that he neglected other principles which are important for resolving the problem.

My aim in this paper is to offer a more comprehensive answer to the problem by drawing on theoretical principles immanent in Hobbes's system. I will argue that in order to offer an adequate interpretation of the notion of consistency which pertains to the theoretical reconstruction carried out by Hobbes, we need to draw the full implications of the principle of infinity and the resolutive–compositive method. In addition, the degree and character of abstraction which such a procedure involves has to be demonstrated.

THE PRINCIPLE OF INFINITY

There is an apparent ambiguity in Hobbes's notion of infinity. This ambiguity results from his confusion of an *image* with a logical *concept*.

For Hobbes, an image is a material content, (existing as a picture, in the 'mind's eye', of a material existent). This is obvious when he says:

> No man can have in his mind an Image of Infinite magnitude, nor conceive infinite swiftness, infinite time, infinite force or infinite power.[6]

And again:

> whatsoever we imagine is Finite. Therefore there is no Idea or conception of anything we call Infinite.[7]

Inspite of these statements, Hobbes used the concept of infinity to signify 'something' the "something" does not necessarily connote a material object but a concept as he does in the following passage:

> When we say a thing is infinite, we signify only that we are not able to conceive the ends, and the bounds of the thing named, having no conception of the thing but our inability.[8]

We can therefore conclude that *infinity*, is a significant name in so far as it names our conception or expresses our 'inability'. And this follows from Hobbes's theory of language which allows for such concepts that signify only our conceptions or the way we perceive a certain reality. *Infinity* names a conception, though of a non–existing thing. To put it this way is to make a distinction which Hobbes himself hardly made, i.e. the distinction between conception (or idea) as image, and conception as a logical notion. For Hobbes, image, conception, idea, cognition, are the same thing.[9]

Infinity is an a priori concept derived from the character of language and from the structure of our cognitive powers. It signifies that which is not finite, or known to be finite. It is a mere concept not derived from the nature of things. Words, according to Hobbes name things as well as our ideas. Words may also be *Negative* names "which are notes to signify that a word is not the name of the thing in question." Among this class of names Hobbes includes Nothing ... infinite ... *"(p. 108 of Leviath)."*

It is because *infinity* is a significant expression that Hobbes was able to apply it meaningfully in elucidating his theories of motion and causation in order to show the hypothetical boundlessness of their propagation. We cannot perceive, according to Hobbes, the actual end of any process of motion or causation and therefore express this by the word *infinity*, meaning non–finite. This, however, is only a hypothesis, a conjecture, formed in our mind. For Hobbes such terms as infinite, unjust are privative or negative terms indicating absence of a positive quality.

The principle of infinity is stated in several formulations within Hobbes's system. For our purpose, we shall quote only two.

(a) "When a thing is in motion, it will eternally be in motion, unless somewhat else stay it."[11]

(b) All endeavour, whether strong or weak is propagated to infinite distance, for it is motion.[12]

Thus the hypothetical principle of infinity states that there are certain classes of phenomena whose extension is unlimited. Among them is *human action* (including human behaviour and disposition in general) which, of course is a form of motion.

Human action is a form of voluntary motion. It is infinite and unlimited both in number and in its extension. This is true of both the actions of men in general and of each individual. For each person, let us say A, there is a system or set of actions. This would be an open system since it is unlimited. In society, therefore, we have several such systems or sets of infinite and unlimited forms of human actions, capacities and dispositions; all criss–crossing, helping or hindering one another. Such a condition, which Hobbes calls the *State of Nature* is as such nature because it is determined by the facts of human psycho–physiological character.

For a Robinson Crusoe, a lone individual, his actions will be propagated to infinity without those of other human beings helping or hindering them. Each action of his will be systematically related to his vital motion, i.e., the principle of his life(of course, we are assuming that all non–human elements will cooperate with his endeavours). Everything he does is done according to his nature and can be systematically related to his desires and aversions, although the results of his actions, even in that non–humam world, cannot be correctly predicted.

The position is different in a condition of plurality or sociality where one move is in danger of being counteracted by other moves. Often, Hobbes reminds us, men have appetite to the same thing at the same time. This condition, as we said above, is no less natural because of its apparently chaotic state.

The question that arises at this point in relation to this model of human action and society is in what sense can the idea of the *unnatural* (or even *inconsistency)* be applied to the elements of this model? With a particular human action that does not proceed from human nature itself, it could be said to be inconsistent with that nature. Since the basic principle of human action is voluntary motion, anything that does not proceed from this principle could be said to be inconsistent with human nature. According to Hobbes, this happens when an action is impeded. As long as an action takes place, it is natural.[13]

It is difficult if not inappropriate to speak of human behaviour or even society as unnatural or even inconsistent within a mechanistic model such as the one Hobbes was working with. To be able to use that language we must adjust the model to accomodate teleological factors. In that case, what is to be called unnatural or said to be inconsistent is not human behaviour as such, but the results of human behaviour. And we cannot speak of natural society as being unnatural unless we introduce a purpose for natural society from a speculative standpoint. Certainly, such speculation would lack scientific grounding.

The situation is different in respect of the reconstructed or artificially created society. We can, in ordinary terms, speak of men acting with some design, but that would still be unHobbesian. Yet one is at a loss to under-

stand the *need* for such a project in the first place unless one had not thought that human behaviour and action as well as human society was faulty in respect of something else.

Hobbes had some difficulty in trying to avoid the use of teleological terms in the explication of the nature of human action. For example, endeavour is defined as the small beginning of appetite or desire; in other words, it is conceived as selfmotion. At the same time, he says that endeavour is called appetite or desire when it is made towards something which *causes* it.

> These small beginnings of Motion, within the body of Man, before they appear in walking, speaking, striking and other visible actions, are commonly called ENDEAVOUR.
> This Endeavour, when it is towards something which causes it, is called APPETITE, or DESIRE.[14]

The idea of an extra object causing movement towards itself apparently introduces a strong teleological element into the doctrine. And when one adds Hobbes's contention that voluntary motion is preceded by some thought, then we easily have a full teleological model of action.

What Hobbes seems to stress is that in nature there is interaction of forces, and each force acts on the other either immediately or mediately. There is a continuous stream of action and reaction, with the resultant motion being determined by the preponderance of force.

Returning to the problem of how to explain the notion of unnatural within the mechanistic model, we can now attempt a summary on the basis of the foregoing discussion.

For Hobbes's, whatever a man does is natural, i.e., consistent with his nature. All human action springs from the constitutive element of endeavour or is constituted by a series of endeavours. It is the basic element of human nature.

Even if we define what is natural in terms of voluntary motion, or in terms of Hobbes's doctrine of liberty, and say that only those things which are consistent with human liberty are consistent with his nature, it remains the case that whatever he does is consistent with this liberty. Liberty, according to Hobbes, means absence of external impediment to action. As long as action proceeds, whether out of aversion or desire, it is a voluntary action, according to this mechanistic mode. If a man's hand is raised by another without any imput from the man himself, the action is not voluntary. But if the same man raises his hand because he has been commanded to do so, it is a voluntary action. A man's endeavour must be part of the constitutive cause of an action for the action to be called voluntary.

It therefore follows that whatever men do in the above sense, either in the state of nature or in the civil society is consistent with their nature. The question of consistency can be raised in two ways:

(a) in terms of the constitutive cause of action. In this sense to say that an action is consistent with human nature is to imply that it emanates or springs from the basic principles of the human nature. Since all human action, in the sense in which we have indicated above, spring from the principle of endeavour **(conatus)** which is the same as self–preservation,[15] therefore all such actions are consistent with human self–preservation. This is the only application of consistency which is in keeping with a mechanistic model.

On the other hand, it seems Hobbes was concerned with something more than this mechanistic consistency. When he speaks of war of all against all and the danger to which men are exposed through their actions, he seems to imply that not all action *conduce* to this self–preservation. In this way, self–preservation is spoken of not as the *constitutive cause* of action but as the *effect* of action, and an assumed effect for that matter. This gives us the second sense in which we can apply the notion of consistency to human action i.e.

(b) if we take self–preservation as the end or purpose which the result of action must satisfy.

It is clear that not all human actions are conducive to self-preservation. Hobbes would not say that self-preservation is a goal which men set for themselves. It is rather the fact of human existence, the essence of life, as Spinoza put it. However, he recognised that this essence of life is endangered by the processes of life situated in both natural and human society. His project was to see a way to order society so that the danger to self-preservation is removed.

The problematic character of self-preservation, therefore, becomes a project and with that it becomes a goal of action. Hence, Hobbes's system, as shown by this problem, is not complete without the introduction of teleological consideration. Thus, we move from mechanism to design, at least within the realm of philosophy and all rational action. This is the context in which Hobbes could, offer a critique of natural society. It is also the context in which Professor Watkins could speak of an actual society being at war with itself or being inconsistent with itself, or even speak of a well-ordered sovereign state.

With respect to the principle of infinity in relation to the reconstruction of society, we deduce the necessity for an ordering scheme to be supplied by human intervention in order to reorder the infinite processes that otherwise proceed naturally and necessarily, and which would be seen as chaotic from the standpoint of human self-preservation.

Self-preservation, from the standpoint of nature (as cosmic totality) is a subjective notion. In nature, there is no design, everything proceeds

necessarily, and hence, everything that happens happens naturally. Necessarily, everything happens according to the mechanistic principles of nature.

Thus, from the point of view of nature, war is natural, being the conflict of endeavours. Peace too is natural, and is the happy concourse of endeavours.

For the man who dies in the course of war, it is unnatural for him, because as Hobbes realized, men act with some design being rational beings. Self-preservation has become for most men an important goal. And, as we stated above, self-preservation is also the essence of life. But self-preservation, as a goal, is posited as a rational principle, as the law of nature.

For Hobbes, philosophy must provide the rules of action so that a relative harmony could be attained between the necessary processes of nature and the goal of human preservation. In order to achieve this, we need a supra-personal mechanism as an ordering scheme. This he found in speech, that gateway to philosophy and civil society.

The problem of reconstruction of human nature and human society arises in a condition of plurality and infinite systems of action which tend to endanger human lives. The aim of the reconstruction is to arrive at a situation in which all the systems act, and at the same time act in harmony with self-preservation. Hobbes saw this as very fundamental. There are two types of answers which he gave.

I. Men must first be able to communicate before they can transcend their subjective standpoint. Therefore, he offered a theory of language or communication.

II Men must attain self-consciousness of how this is to be done. Therefore, remind men of what they know or may know if they read themselves.

These two answers constitute major tasks for civil philosophy. The demonstration of these facts aims at reminding men of what they know so that they may, as Professor Watkins put it, behave better. But how do they behave better? how can they behave differently and still behave according to their nature? To answer this question, we now consider what the resolutive compositive method accomplishes.

The method itself is a theoretical intervention to reorder the infinite facts about human behaviour. It involves a thereoretical dissolution of human society and human behaviour into their constitutive elements, in order to discover the principle around which men rationally order their lives and priorities. Hobbes found this to be the principle of self-preservation - the essence of all human endeavours and activities.

The next step is the selection of those elements which conduce to this goal. When these elements are composed, we have a new totality, a new system with some imperativeness immanent within it. It says, given the fun-

damental need for self-preservation in the context of a plurality of actors, only such and such moves are consistent with them. In this way a reconstruction is accomplished.

What went in or what we began with is an infinity of elements of human nature, but what we need for our reconstruction, according to Hobbes's scheme, are only those elements that are consistent with our ordering assumptions, i.e., self-preservation, plurality of actors and infinity of actions and reactions. Therefore, what comes out in the end is different. Yet all the elements in this reconstructed whole are immanent in human nature. They were there from the beginning, and nothing has been introduced from outside. If men behaved according to their nature, as much as they were doing except that certain moves are ruled out and others made imparative by the new arrangement, and the effect which the new arrangement produces guarantees certain ends with a greater degree of certainty than hitherto.

What emerges at the end of Hobbes's reconstruction of society is a new totality, but one whose elements were there from the beginning. What he did was to neglect, as irrelevant for his purpose, those elements not necessary for the reconstruction. Hobbes was aware, for example, that human beings are capable of what may be called 'altruistic motives' (which may be explained as a happy concourse of voluntary motions).[16] Yet, he did not need that principle for his project, and so he dismissed it as such. Rousseau, on the other hand, found the same principle more fundamental for his own ordering assumptions, and, therefore, used it for his own reconstruction of society.

Hobbes was also aware that the hypothetically reconstructed society defines only a political order, and hence, does not embrace all the elements of human nature, and that even those elements not considered for purposes of the reconstruction. continue to be operative in human intercourse and private life within the Commonwealth. This is why something more than mere knowledge or self-consciousness (e.g. punishment) is needed to make the Commonwealth work in reality.

In answer to the problem raised by C.B. Macpherson, therefore, it is obvious that the postulate of infinity and the principles of abstraction or objectivity, in addition to the resolutive-compositive method are required in order to show that the behaviour of men in the reconstructed society would be as natural as in the one out of which the reconstruction is made. Furthermore, the dichotomies of consistency - inconsistency, and natural - unnatural cannot be applied without introducing teleological categories into the system. Hence, the reconstructed social order is meant to provide greater security to life. Hobbes believed that if civil society is founded on the scientific principles he enunciated, it would be more consistent with the goal of self-preservation than the State of Nature.

FOOTNOTES

1. C.B. Macpherson, **The Political Theory of Individualism: Hobbes to Lock,** Oxford: Clarendon Press; 1962, p. 101.
2. Ibid., p. 105.
3. J.W.N. Watkins, "Philosophy and Politics in Hobbes," **Philosophical Quarterly,** V. No. 19 (1955), p. 133.
4. C.B. Macpherson, **op cit.** p. 101.
5. J. W. N. Watkins, **Hobbes's System of Ideas: A stuty in the Political Significance of Philosophical Theories,** London: Hutchinson University Library, 1965, p. 79.
6. T. Hobbes, **Leviathan,** p. 99. (The edition used is the 1968 Macpherson edition, Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc.)
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. T. Hobbes, **The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic ed. with essay by Ferdinand Tonnies. 2nd Edition with introduction by M.M. Golsmith. New York, Barnes and Boble 1969. 1, i.8.**
10. **T. Hobbes,** The Elements of Law, . . 1, v. 3.
11. T. Hobbes De Corpore II, XV, 1, Leviathan.
12. T. Hobbes, De Corpore III, XV. 7.
13. One important element of Hobbes's theory is that it allows for action to be the result of both internal and external factors. Voluntary motion is defined as the result of the interaction of internal and external factors. See Leviathan, p. 118.
14. T. Hobbes, Leviathan, p. 119.
15. Spinoza who worked within similar theoretical model wrote "Everything, in so far as it is in itself, endeavours to persist in its own being." (Ethics, II, Proposition VI). And this endeavour, according to him, is the essence of the thing. p. 70.
16. See Leviathan, pp. 186-187. The condition of war, for example, defines a disposition, and not a condition always actualized. Hobbes admits that peace does sometimes obtain in a state of nature.

REASON AS THE PRESUPPOSITION UNDERLYING THE PHILOSOPHY OF HEGEL

REV. DR. INNOCENT ONYEWUENYI

INTRODUCTION:

In his inaugural address delivered at Heidelberg on October 28, 1816, Hegel regretted the fact that philosphy had become insipid and dull. In several parts of Europe, philosophy, excepting in name, had sunk even from memory. In Germany, a nation called by nature to be the conserver of the holy flames of philosophy "just as the Eumolpidae in Athens had the conservation of the Eleusinian mysteries, the inhabitants of the island of Samothrace the preservation and maintenance of a higher divine service,"[1] philosophy had been turned to practical uses to such an extent that emptiness, shallowness and insipidity had completely overlaid it.

The reason for this loss of vitality in philosophy was due to the fact that it had ceased to be a science, a discipline dedicated to the realization of Absolute Truth, the reconciliation in thought between the human and the divine. Rather philosphy became a history of ideas stated one after another in chronological order without any particular object or end in view. While in the discipline of history it is possible to have a clear-cut conception of the subject matter because it deals chronologically with one specific area of life, as history of art, race, music, physics, philosophy does not lend itself to such a historical procedure because it deals with all areas of life. There is a difference between philosphy as the knowledge of the Absolute Truth and a history of its origin, maturity, decay, revival; history of its teachers, adherents and opponents. These specifics may be in contradiction to one another; they may be opinionated, but philosophy cannot.

A similarity is observable in the history of Christian religion. There is an outward history of Christianity in terms of those who have adhered to it, its growth from the time of Christ into a world-wide organization, its political involvements and crusades, its failures and achievements. All these consitute the external history of Christianity and in their setting, some contradictions, additions and losses may be evident. But the inward subject matter of Christianity is the same for every age, culture and race. "And this old creed has been an acknowledged influence to every age, and will still be acknowledged unchanged as the Truth. . ."[2] It may happen that some misunderstanding as to meaning and application of this unchanging truth may occur at a particular time and place, in the nature of deviations from and additions to the central subject matter. Sooner or later, however, the errors are combated and the subject matter, Truth, emerges clear, simple and unadulterated from the dark clouds of fanaticism and/or laxity.

Philosophy before the time of Hegel had been treated as mere history. The contingent aspects, the external history of philosophy had been studies, emphasized and mistaken for the study of philosophy as a science. It had been a chronological narration of a number of philosophical opinions as

they had arisen and manifested themselves in time. Although these opinions related to the more special content of philosophy, God, Absolute Truth, Spirit, yet they were treated in a rationalistic manner, so that the intellectualists, even in their intense rational exercises, regarded the truth of philosophy as an object of knowledge, to be studied and admired. The truth of philosophy was not an existential problem to these intellectualists. They were self-satisfied, self-possessed, one-sided — the very opposite of philosophical personalities. For them: "What I cannot think as true does not trouble me as doubt. A question which I do not understand, I cannot answer; it is for me as good as no question at all.[3] The outcome of this kind of rational exercise was regarded by Hegel as a display of senseless follies, self-deciet by men deeply but erroneously engrossed in thought and in mere ideas. These intellectualists came up with personal philosophical opinions and acknowledged their ignorance of philosophy because for them "it is thought that anybody can form a judgement on its character and value without any comprehension of it whatever."[4] These philosophical opinions have become the interests of historians of philosophy Hence, "this history, considered only as the enumeration of various opinions, thus becomes an idle tale, or if you will, in erudite investigation. For erudition is in the main, acquaintance with a number of useless things, that is to say, with that which has no intrinsic interest or value rather than being known."[5]

REACTIVATION OF PHILOSOPHY

Hegel, now in Heidelberg, called on German scholars to earnestly and honestly strive to draw philosophy out of the solitude into which it had wondered. "Let us together greet the dawn of a better time in which the spirit, hitherto a prey to externalisties, may return within itself, come to itself again, and win space and room for a kingdom of its own, where true minds will rise above the interests of the moment, and obtain the power to receive the true external and divine, the power to consider and to grasp the highest."[6] The better time had now dawned in the development of Spirit when it had to pass from the level of understanding to that of philosophical reason; from blind faith and opinion to a grasp of the Absolute Truth, God. Before now it had not been deemed possible that man could grasp God. Before now nature had been represented as something alien to spirit, as a projection of spirit into an objective mode.

This line of thought was evident in the English philosopher Spencer's "Unknowable" as the ground of meeting and reconciliation of science and religion. In his book First Principles, Spencer noted that "all religions have their legitimate sphere in that nescience which must ever remain the antithesis to science."[7] He said that nescience was the subject matter of religion and that scientific philosophy also terminates in nescience such that the power which the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable. "The mystery of the universe," according to Spencer, "is not relative but an absolute mystery."[8] By these statements, Spencer and other intellectualists positively assert that man knows nothing about the ultimate reality except that it is absolutely unknowable. While denying knowledge of the ultimate reality

to the human mind, Spencer unconsciously recognizes a species of knowledge of a unique kind. He recognizes that the mind is able to know the unknowability of the ultimate reality. This is a positive knowledge. Furthermore, he knows that this "Unknowable" is a Power "an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed."[9] What he is not prepared to accord the human mind is knowledge of the nature of this absolute which he says transcends intuition.

In another book, Principles of Sociology, Spencer seems to deviate considerably from his stand on Man's inability to know the nature of the Infinite by crediting the mind with the ability to know the modes in which this inscrutable Power manifests itself. "The Power manifested throughout the universe distinguished as material, is the same Power which in ourselves wells up under the form of consciousness."[10] Furthermore, "amid the mysteries which become the more mysterious the more they are thought about, there will remain (to man) the one absolute certainty that he is ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed."[11] We see a new dimension in these quotations. Spencer now at least sees sameness or identity between "Power manifested throughout the univvers" and "Power which in ourselves wells up under the form of consciousness." He now regards as absolutely certain that man "is ever in the presence of an Infinite and Ternal Energy." Yet upon all these, Spencer withholds the conclusion that should logically emerge from the progress of his thinking. He would not concede to the human mind the power to know God absolutely.

It was Hegel who broke the ice by declaring his faith in the power of the mind to know the Absolute Truth. This is the first and necessary condition of his philosophy. This presupposition of reason underlies the entire philosophical system of Hegel. The progress of the Spirit from the level of sense-experience to perception and understanding has now reached the level of reason. In the first three levels the analysis of experience was occupied with the relation of consciousness to an object admittedly different in nature from the mind which cognizes it. There was external opposition. The intellectualists before Hegel gazed at this opposition with despair and consoled themselves in their inability to unify consciousness and its object, by advocating the limitedness of the human mind and the inscrutability of the Infinite Truth, such that the mind never pressed on towards Truth, towards Knowledge itself. Hence, the character of faith and feeling as alternative means of contacting the Absolute.

Mind as Potentiality and Actuality:

On the contrary, Hegel insists that "Man because he is Mind, should and must deem himself worthy of the highest; he cannot think too highly of the greatness and the power of his mind and with this belief, nothing will be so difficult and hard that it will not reveal itself to him.[12] The Mind for Hegel is not just an instrument used by man for reasoning out objective propositions. It is that and more. Hegel distinguishes two diffe-

rent states of the mind. The first is what is known as capacity, power or being-in-itself. This, in fact, is nothing at all but the living ground of all existence and knowledge. The second is what is known as actuality.

The mind as potentiality or power is mind understood in the intellectualist sense, namely, a principle in man for thinking thoughts. No matter how stupid and ignorant and obtuse a man may be, he is able to use the mind in the above sense when he has to make personal decisions and personal choicies. Following his lights of reason, man is invariably and intellectually shrewd in the matters of what Aristotle terms "the practical life of man as possessing reason."[13] Here Aristotle was making a distincition between the good of man and that of animals and plants. The good of man as "possessing reason" was not simply a matter of staying alive and performing the vegetative and animal functions characteristic of plants and animals, but the exercise of those powers and capacities that are distinctively human, namely, intelligence or rational understanding. This further reminds us of Socrates, for whom the good life for man is the examined life, the so-called unexamined life being just not worth living.

Hegel does not dispute the position of Aristotle and others but points out further that the function of the human mind is much more than thinking out thoughts and examining life rationalistically. These types of mental exercise which are mainly syllogistically oriented are not yet the completion of thought and speculation. These also evidence the fundamental opposition between the mind and what it thinks; between subject and object; spirit and nature. Mind in this necessary but intermediary stage is yet finite and objective: "Finite spirit rises through many levels of its activity until it reaches its true identity in the light of which its previous phases and ascending steps are known in their truth. Concurrently each finite station and level in this ascent of the spirit is an obstacle and dim light which the spirit has created in and for itself, in order to pass beyond it, in its very retention of it."[14]

Mind as potentiality cannot know the truth of itself as knowing. It cannot encompass the object of its thought so as to heal the division between subject and object. This state of mind operates in the levels of sence-experience, perception and understanding in which the subject knows only some aspects of the individual and cannot subordinate the object totally on account of the principle of infinite regress. Mind in this sense lacks the characteristic of freedom and necessity and consequently depreciates the aim of philosophy "which is in thought and in conception to grasp the Truth, and not merely to discover that nothing can be known, or that at least temporal, finite truth, which also is an untruth can alone be known and not the Truth indeed."[15]

Man is actually rational when he uses his mind in such a way as to comprehend Truth in its totality; when the relation between mind and object vanishes and man becomes self-conscious and self-realizing but not just conscious of or realizing a "truth" outside of self. In the levels of sense-experience through understanding, there is a doubling process which has the

effect of separating into two, that which in content is the same. For Hegel only the rational is real and the world of nature is not real. True Mind or Reason is the level of the development of consciousness when the Mind finally unites in itself the external truth or object, which was initially a projection of the mind. Mind as actuality encompasses and subordinates the external object in nature such that the mind realizes itself in realizing its objective and vice versa. "In the case of mind both factors not only are implicitly the same in character, but there is a being for the other and at the same time a being for self. That for which the 'other' is, is the same as that 'other', and thus alone mind is at home with itself in its 'other'. The development of Mind lies in the fact that its going forth and separation constitute its coming to itself."[16]

This is mind in-and-for-itself or mind coming-to-self, the highest development which consciousness can and will ever reach but beyond which there can be no further development of the Spirit. The previous levels of development are stages of the struggle that the mind passes through in its effort to freely know itself without necessarily being connected with an external object or dependent upon anything. "This being-at-home-with-self, or coming-to-self of Mind may be described as its complete and highest end; it is this alone that it desires and nothing else. Everything that from eternity has happened in heaven and earth, the life of God and all the deeds of time simply are the struggles for mind to know itself; to make itself objective to itself, to find itself, be for itself, and finally unite itself to itself . . . Only in this manner does mind attain its freedom."[17]

CONCLUSION:

Having shown the final development of the Spirit in its struggle to know itself, to become objective to itself, after passing through the dim and one-sided objective levels of knowledge, Hegel then states the frame of mind with which modern philosophy , which has developed its various aspects into a totality, the Absolute, and has interpenetrated into one harmonious whole, the spiritual and natural universe, should be approached. "The present standpoint of philosophy is that the Idea is known in its necessity; the sides of its diremption Nature and Spirit, are each of them recognized as representing the totality of the Idea, and not only as being in themselves identical, but as producing this one identity from themselves; and in this way the identity is recognized as necessary. Nature and the world or history of Spirit are the two realities; what exists as actual Nature is an image of divine Reason; the forms of self-conscious Reason are also the forms of Nature. The ultimate aim and business of philosophy is to reconcile thought or the Notion with reality"[18]. Modern philosophy has exposed the inward reconciliation in the opposition between knowledge and its object; between the Idea of God and His Being; between Good and Evil; between the freedom of man and God's absolute determining power. It is Reason or Thought that comprehends both sides of the opposition and reconciles them into one unity which they were ab initio but never discovered in the history of

philosophy until the time of Hegel. Hence, Reason underlies the philosophy of Hegel.

FOOT NOTES

1. G. W. F. Hegel, **Lectures on the History of Philosophy**; trans. E.S. Haldane and F. H. Simson. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), Vol. 1, p.xii. (Abbreviated here-after as **Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Vol. 1, etc.**)
2. **Ibid.**, p. 8
3. G.W.F. Hegel, **Sammtliche Werke** (Stuttgart, 1959), Bd. 19, p. 537.
4. **Lectures on the History of Philosphy**, Vol. 1, p. 11.
5. **Ibid.**, p. 12.
6. **Ibid.**, p. xiii.
7. J.A. Leighton, **Typical Modern Conceptions of God** (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), p. 103.
8. **Ibid.**, p. 104.
9. Ibid., p. 104.
10. **Ibid.**, p. 104.
11. **Ibid.**, p. 105.
12. **Lectures on the History of Philosophy**, Vol. I, p. xiii.
13. H.B. Veatch, **Rational Man: A Modern Interpretation of Aristotelian Ethics.** (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), p. 55.
14. G.W.F. Hegel, **Encyclopedia of Philosophy** , trans. G. Emil Mueller (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), Section 386, p. 196.
15. **Lectures on the History of Philosophy**, Vol. I, p. 19
16. **Ibid.**, p. 23
17. **Ibid.**, p. 23
18. **Lectures on the History of Philosophy**, Vol. III, p. 545.

BOOK REVIEW

TITLE ETHICS A SYSTEMATIC AND HISTORICAL STUDY

AUTHOR: JOSEPH I. OMOREGBE

PUBLISHER: GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, LONDON, 1979

200 pp.

It is difficult to find a book on ethics that combines both the systematic study of ethics and the historical approach. While acknowledging his debt to numerous authors, Omoregbe in his introduction stated that "hardly any two of them treat ethics in exactly the same way or have exactly the same subject matter" (p.ii). Dissatisfied with the treatment of ethics from various points of view, either in terms of the choice of subject matter or the manner in which they are treated, he set out to write a book which "reflects my present notion of ethics, the subject matters I think should be treated in a book of this kind, and my own approach to the treatment of these issues" (p.ii).

With this at the back of his mind, the author eventually provided a text that is entirely novel, not in terms of the subject matters he selected or the way he treated his selected materials but novel in terms of the arrangement – a device that is intended to supply the missing links in extant works on ethics.

As the title correctly indicated, the book is divided into two main sections: (a) A systematic study of Ethics and (b) Historical study of Ethics. There is a forward, an introduction and a short but useful bibliography. The first part contains eight chapters and discusses the concept of Ethics, ethics and related disciplines, that is, law, religion, politics, economics, etc. There is a discussion on freedom, determinism, the moral standard, moral law and moral judgement. Chapter 9 of the same section briefly introduces and discusses African Traditional Ethics. The second section (four chapters) treats the long historical development of ethics as an integral aspect of Philosophy, beginning with the classical Greek mind to contemporary ethical theories, for example, existentialism.

One of the main merits resulting from the author's scholarly endeavour is that for once there is a book on ethics that effectively combines both the systematic and historical approaches in one volume. Hitherto, both students and lecturers have had the difficulty of trying to sort out these two essential parts of ethics in the course of study and lectures. Dr. Omoregbe has attempted to overcome this difficulty by offering in a single book almost all the elements needed in a book

on ethics. His choice of subject matters is neither arbitrary nor by fiat. Rather the choice reflects an in-dept understanding of the discipline of ethics and of those issues and problems in the discipline that any book can neither ignore nor gloss over.

However, one would have expected a book of this kind, authored by an African to devote some more chapters to African Traditional Ethics. The book has just one chapter (chapter 9) of only three pages (pp. 82 – 84) on this subject. The chapter highlighted on some of the important themes in African Traditional Ethics without much discussion. This shortcoming is, indeed, serious especially now that some Nigerian University departments of Philosophy (Ife, for example) have performed quite impressively in terms of research and publications into African modes of thought. It is hoped that future edition of the book will attempt to correct this.

Be that as it may, the book with its easily readable writing style is instuctive as well as useful to both students of Philosophy and non-Philosopers alike. Devoid of the usual technical presentation for which Philosophers are known, the book is a "gold mine" for the non-Philosopher trying to expand his frontiers of knowledge.

TITLE: ETHICS IN NIGERIAN CULTURE

AUTHOR ELECHI AMADI

PUBLISHER: HEINEMANN EDUCATIONAL BOOKS, IBADAN NIGERIA, 1982. 120 pp.

If it is difficult to find a book on ethics that combines both the systematic and historical approaches to the discipline inspite of its long history, it is even more difficult to find a book dealing exclusively on Nigerian ethics. The more so, when Philosophy is neither regarded nor recognised as an important and viable discipline nor recognised in terms of the contributions that it can make, has made, to Nigerian society. The acknowledgement and recognition of this fact, indeed reinforces, the obvious need for such a book and more of its kind. As Amadi rightly pointed out "it is a fact that the field of Philosophy has been almost completely ignored by Nigerian intellectuals. There is a general feeling that Nigerians are too poor, too hungry and too underdeveloped to philosophise. But then Philosophy has a direct effect on the pattern of thought, the politics and government of a people, and ultimately therefore on its moral, material and mental development" (p.viii). It is in the light of the need for a book of this kind that Elechi Amadi's effort has to be appraised and appreciated.

In his introduction Amadi acknowledges that: "ethics is a difficult subject,; it is not going to be easy discussing the ethics of a country like Nigeria with over 250 tribes; that his approach is mainly descriptive and he is concerned neither with theories nor definitions" (p.vi). Nonetheless, Amadi has demonstrated through his indomitable courage and pioneering spirit that a book on Nigerian ethics is possible, his constraints notwithstanding.

Beginning with an introduction, the book has twelve chapters: on religion; secret societies, murder; theft and adultery; supernatural crimes; warfare, slavery; concepts of goodness; social discrimination; sexual discrimination, awuf; leadership and conclusion. References have been put together at the end of the book, serially in chapters. There is a short but equally useful bibliography – almost a short hand of who is who in Nigerian and African Studies.

With no pretensions to philosical scholarship (p.viii), Amadi nonetheless tackled his selected themes with the vigour and determination of a messiah out to salvage Nigerian society from its present state of moral decay. Especially in chapters 7 – 11 where he discussed the concepts of Goodness, Social Discrimination, Sexual Discrimination, Awuf and Leadership respectively, Amadi displayed a high degree of scholarship and an understanding of the patterns and ways of life of the different tribes in Nigeria. His discussions on the concept of Goodness are more than relevant because unknown to many unbelievers in the genuineness and originality of Nigerian-African modes of thought there are parallels as well as divergencies with the classical Greek mind. If anything, this shows glaringly that philosophy and philosophizing are, indeed, worldwide activities.

However, Amadi probably did not appreciate the distance and distinction between ethics (morality) and religion. Though there is an overlapping between both, each belongs to a separate domain. Modern day presentations of morality and discussions on moral issues are devoid of the usual pontifications reminiscent of the pulpit sermon. To this extent, Amadi's inclusion and treatment of such issues as religion, secret societies, supernatural crimes, etc., ought to have been excluded. The area of revealed religion, of closed and exclusive secret organizations do not belong to the domain of ethics or of Philosophy.

In a review of this sort, it is not possible to dwell on every chapter of a book. The interesting presentations in chapters 7 – 11 are thought provoking and indeed relevant in terms of the current moral crisis facing Nigeria. Nigerians live with an inheritance of not only one but a plurality of moralities. Traditionalism, Islam, Christianity to a large extent; democracy, the new industrial culture, the civil war, the thirteen years of military rule and more, have all left their marks upon Nigerian national ethcs and moral vocabulary. Each of these has its end, or ends, a set of rules, a list of virtues,

and these differ considerably. Amadi's pioneering work has demonstrated effectively that these can be transcended through or by a substle and astute combination of courage and scholarship. The author deserves commendation for his pioneering spirit inspite of the obvious shortcomings of the book. The book, to a large extent, provides a useful insight into the ethical systems (life) of Nigerian peoples.

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