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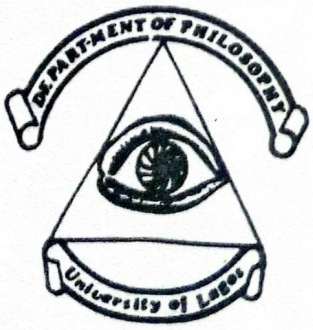

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MARIO BUNGE S FORMULATION OF CAUSAL LAW: AN APPRAISAL

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INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth and the last paper in the series of essays which I have devoted to the examination of the problem of causality, and I wish to consider here what I regard as an adequate formulation of causal principle by Mario Bunge.

In the first of the series of essays on this problem which I title "Hume's problem of Introduction",[1] I examined Hume's analysis of causality into contiquity, succession and constant conjunction as well as the logical or epistemological problem his analysis posed in philosophy. It was my conclusion that "Hume's metaphysical problem of induction, at least in the way it is formulated seems isoluble; and the theories of Mill, Hegel and Schopenhauer do not resolve the epistemological questions involved in this problem".[2] In the second essay, "The Dilemma of Induction"[3], I examined the theories established by Sir Harrod, Pascal, Reichenbach and Wisdom as the solutions to the metaphsical problem posed by Hume. Again, I consider their solutions to be inadequate because they merely redefined the problem in question and offered solutions to some of the questions other than those which confronted Hume. In the third essay, "The Incompatibility of Causality with Constant Conjunction",[4] I provided orguments to undermine Hume's idea of causality, especially by pointing out some features of his theory that are epistemologically undersirable.

Now, I would point out some of the several and competing theories of causation or casual principle so that one may understand why Mario Bunge's formulation of causal principle seems to be adequate. And I must also indicate that I am referring to an adequate formulation of causal principle as it applies to science, especially the natural science. The existence of such a variety fo causal theories may be attributed to the fact that different philosophers seem to be using their own notions of cause, and is another reason why it is necessary to examine some of these competing causal theories before I can specify Mario Bunge's formulation (of causal principle) which I regard as adequate. The reason for regarding his formulation as adequate would emerge in the course of examining this question.

OBSERVATIONS

I must indicate the approach I am adopting to this problem in order to minimise any misunderstanding. First, I believe that any knowledge that is removed from its historical background or context tends to be misleading, and this is why I must offer some historical survey of this question. However,

since I must give concession to brevity as demanded by any article or journal I would not provide more detailed analysis of the historical survey. Second, I doubt very much that the practising scientists pay much attention to Journals of the philosophy of science, and they may be justified for ignoring them. And the reason is because most philosophers of science do not approach science from the standpoint of the men of science but merely from their own "logic" or "illogical" view–point. The consequence is that most philosophers misrepresent what actually goes on in science and assume that their own logical treatment of the subject is binding on science and the scientists.

Third, philosophers and scientists who are working in the same field, as V.V. Nalimov points out, may be governed or guided by different paradigms in their interpretations of philosophical and scientific issues. For example, "in Western literature the problem of whether science should be regarded as a rational structure or as an irrational one is debated very acutely. Popper is supposed to be a supporter of the first view, and Kuhn, of the second. Feyerabend, answering this question, says, 'Yes and no'[5] Therefore, the fact that two or more people are in the same field does not mean that they would necessarily interpret their findings in the same way; and the fact that I regard Mario Bunge's formulation of causal principle as an adequate one does not mean that others may not find it inadequate. Fourth, my intention is to approach the issue of causal principle from what the men of science actually do and not from what philosophers necessarily think about it. In fact, if this approach is adopted Hume's notion of causality would be irrelevant in the actual working of natural science.

Hume's scepticism, for example, is a reaction against scientific methodology; but Hume might have thought that all the statements of the natural science are empirical statements. And even if he realised that the natural science embodies theoretical statements, he might not have known anything about "epistemic correlations" or "semantic rules" linking empirical statements with theoretical ones. Furthermore, he must have thought that inference in science was syllogistic in nature; and since one cannot arrive at *certainty* by generalising on a particular experience, Hume concluded that there could be no necessity in scientific knowledge. But the truth is that a syllogistic type of logic does not explain the proposition of physics because scientific propositions arise from different methods of drawing physical inferences; from geometrical optics and mathematical symbolisms or equations. In short, Hume misunderstood the language of science; and if philosophers look at science merely with the Humean epistemological attitude they would misunderstand the actual working or logic of science.

I have no interest in the analysis of the terms "cause", but in making explicit the structure or context of science where the term may be applicable. Therefore, I will examine some formulations of causal principle within the context of science as a historical phenomenon.

SOME FORMULATIONS OF CAUSAL PRINCIPLE

Those things which appear strange to us due to the fact that we do not know them cease to be strange when we succeed in explaining them through their causes. The problem here, that is, philosophical problem, is to make explicit what is meant by *explanation* or to specify the kind of *cause* that we are looking for, and without which we would not have any claim to the knowledge of the events confronting us.

Berkeley explains that "For the laws of nature being once ascertained, it remains for the philosopher to show that each thing necessarily follows in comformity with these laws; that is, that every phenomenon necessarily results from these principles. This is to explain and solve the phenomena, that is, to assign reason why they take place."[6] Berkeley therefore seems to be attributing the cause of a phenomenon to a law, that is, empirical rule, governing the whole class of similar events or phenomena; and the group of events involves another group. Since observation is an act that takes place in time and since we are able to observe events successively, it seems that Berkeley's empirical law[7] would amount to the law of succession of events. And if so, this view would be in agreement with one of the features of Hume's notion of cause.

Taine, on the other hand, states in *De l'intelligence* (Paris, 1869; Vol.II pp. 403 – 404) that "a stone tends to fall because all objects tend to fall". Again, Taine, like Berkeley, is attributing *cause* to a *law* or empirical rule governing the whole class of similar events; and it is therefore in line with Berkeley's formulation of causal principle. But Helmholtz's statement that "the principle of causality is nothing else than the supposition that all the phenomena of nature are subject to law"[8] appears to be more of an expression of lawfulness than of causal principle. It has a wider scope of application than Berkeley's and Taine's views about cause. And according to Hannequin, "to search for the cause of a fact is, for the physicist, to search for its law"[9]. Finally, in Ostwald's formulation of causal principle, it is stated that "if we establish the same conditions, phenomena will take place in the same manner"[10], and, again, this view is closely in line with Hume's own.

These various formulations of causal principle seem to have somethings in common, namely, the notions of *cause* and *law* which appear to be treated in the same way. In fact, the concept of *cause* appears to be assimilated by that of *law* so that the term, *law* becomes another word for *cause*. However, there are other formulations[11] of causal principle in which the concept of law is not assimilated by that of cause. If the knowledge of a *law* governing an event or a class of events means the knowledge of *cause*, it may suppose that where that knowledge of law is lacking there is no knowledge of cause. If x says that the cause of his crying is the loss of his money, it seems that this explanation of *cause* would not be admitted by Helmholtz because there is no law governing the loss of money, or it is not subject to law. We can conclude that even if *cause* can be assimilated to *law*, this does not provide an adequate formulation of causal principle since there are also other

formulations of causal principle in which the concept of law is not assimilated by that of cause.

One of the most interesting formulations of causal principle in philosophy is that of Aristotle, and it is important to know it if one is to understand the modern, notion of cause. Aristotle's four causes[12] (the "material", "formal", "efficient" and "final" causes) should be well-known to the students of the ancient, Greek philosophy; but what may not be well-known to most students is the apparent inadequacy of the Aristotelean notion of causes. In Aristotle's view, all the four causes (not a single one alone) are needed in order to produce an effect in art as well as in nature. How appropriate is the Aristotelean formulation of causal principle in the explanation of events?

Since Aristotle formulated his principle of causality through the study of man-made or artificial things, *formal cause* (the shape or form of a thing) contributes, according to him, to the "essence" of a thing. *Efficient cause* (motive cause) is a kind of external compulsion which material things have to obey, while Final cause refers to the goal which everything strives or serves. Whereas the material and the formal causes explain *Being*, that is, what a thing is, the efficient and the final causes explain *Becoming*, that is, how a thing comes to be.

Aristotle's four causes do not seem philosophically sounds, and they do not constitute an adequate formulation of causal principle from a scientific perspective. For example, Aristotle ties the formal, the efficient and the final causes together in the individual artisan who, on account of the end in view, devises the form of a thing and then effects its materialisation. Even though the form constitutes the determining factor, the "essence" of a thing; the artisan as the "efficient", "moving" or "motive" cause (or agent) is indispensable for bringing the effect into existence.

It is doubtful that Aristotle adequately accounts for the efficient agent, especially when one views his theory in the light of Plato's doctrine of Ideas which he challenged or rejected. For example, Aristotle seems to regard *Form* is not real *per se* but is merely or purely notional. If this is so, then Form cannot possibly effect its own realisation It seems therefore that Aristotle's denial of Plato's Ideas cannot possibly enable him to establish or justify his own doctrine because "it is inconceivable how two non-entities can effect the synthesis whereby they become *hoc aliquid*"13

This, I believe, is not only the apparent deficiency in Aristotle's formulation of causal principle. Aristotle supplements *matter* and *form* by *potentiality* and *actuality*, and in doing so "the venue is completely altered. Aristotle now leaves the domain of 'logic' to which change and process are altogether foreign, for that of 'physics' or 'Nature' where they are always dominant and at home"[14]. The term, "potentiality", also means "possibility" (in Greek); and it seems that one can only speak of potentiality and actuality appropriately in the human domain. It is therefore the appropriateness of the application of these terms to Nature that is doubtful. In fact, if one follows Aristotle's admonition not to seek the definition of everything

but rather to be satisfied with an analogy, it would suggest that what may be true of man may be applied only analogically to nature.

Analogically speaking, "statue is to marble block as the man actually studying to man when he is not. Relation of statue to block or marble is relation of form to matter, while relation of the man when he is studying toman when he is not is relation of energy to potentiality"[15]

Obviously a man who is not studying now can do so if he wishes, and there is no doubt that the process of studying (the intention or desire to study) commences from his mind of faculty. In the case of a man when he is not studying, one can say that he can potentially study. In other words, potentiality and actuality can be appropriately applied to human actions. But how can one appropriately say that a shapeless marble begin of itself to take an a form? This is, of caurse, impossible; and it explains why Aristotle's *potentiality* cannot be regarded as a faculty but as a bare possibility when it is applied to the doman of nature. Potentiality cannot therefore mean the same thing when it is applied to nature and to the human domain, and following the same line of thought pure form cannot also be *actual* because. to be so, it has to be *real.* Since Aristotle however denies the independent reality of Plato's form, it is difficult to conceive how Aristotle's *form*, can possess inherent efficiency.

MODERN SCIENCE AND CAUSAL PRINCIPLE

The significance of the historical analysis of causal principle seems obvious when one recollects the impace of Aristotle s philosophy on the European Middle Age and the fact that the attack on the Aristotlian science gave birth to modern science. Aristotle's notion of matter as a passive thing or as a receptible on which the remaining *causes* act is rejected by modern science. It also rejects the Aristotlian *formal* and *final* causes because they are outside the realm of experimental verification. But it regards *matter* as subject to change and not,. as Aristotle suggests. "that out of which a thing comes to be and which persists"[16]

Of all the four causes of Aristotle, modern science accepts only the *efficient cause*[17] (as worthy of scientific investigation) because it is clearly conceived, mathematically expressible and can be assigned empirical corelative in accordance with some determined or fixed rules. From now on wards, science restricts *cause* to efficient cause or extrinsic motive that is, to an external influence producing change of motion It means that the identity of word in different systems of philosophy, and even science may not imply an identity of meaning. In other words, the term, 'cause'' in the Aristotelian and the modern sciences does not have the same "meaning' ; and it would be erroneous therefore to argue or conclude that Aristotle's philosophy is also contained in modern philosophy, and vice versa.

GALILEI'S NOTION OF CAUSAL PRINCIPLE

We have seen that in the Aristotelian doctrine of causality, efficient cause is an agent that produces change in the passive matter. Whereas modern science does not reject or abandon the externality of cause, it gives it another definition which has to be examined now.

To Galilei, causal principle is "the necessary and sufficient condition for the appearance of something. That and no other is to be called cause, at the presence of which the effect always follows, and at whose removal the effect disappears".[18] Thomas Hobbes, on the other hand, makes a distinction between *necessary cause* and *sufficient cause*, and he states: "the cause ... of all the effects consist in certain accidents (properties) both in the agents and in the patients; which when they are all present, the effect is produced; and that accident either of the agent or patient, without which the effect cannot be produced, is called *causa sine qua non*"[19]

In Galilei's notion of causal principle which seems to have a lot in common with that of Hobbes, some important points have to be noted. First, Galilei's notion of causal principle seems to have ontological as well as methodological significance as Dunge points out because it specifies a standard or a criterion by which one can determine whether or not a factor is a necessary cause; and, that is, by removing it. But the inadequacy of this causal formulation seems quite apparent. It embodies an infinite number of factors because any thing or any event that could make a difference to the production of the effect or result seems to be included in this notion of cause. Second, this formulation of causal principle involves indeterminateness which is contrary to the requirement of causal determinacy.

Third, the inadequacy of this formulation can be brought out clearly if it is viewed within the context of the theory of universal causal interconnection. In this case, one is compelled to regard every event as the effect of other infinite events of various kinds, and then to identify Galilei's *cause* with the state of the whole universe immediately preceding the event under consideration. This notion of cause is not quite different from that of Laplace.[20]

The practical usefulness of Galilei's formulation of causal principle is scientifically in doubt. Fourth, any causal analysis here would be practically impossible due to the infinite number of factors involved. Fifth, due to the importance of each of the infinite number factors this hypothesis cannot be subjected to empirical test because there would be a difference in the result if one removes any of the factors. Sixth anyone who adopts this formulation would face the problem of controlling an infinite number of parameters, a task that no one would possibly accomplish. Seventh, the general nature of this causal principle (or causal formulation), coupled with the set of condition it specified (conditions that are necessary and sufficient for any event whatsoever to occur), can make it applicable to diverse process (statistical and dialectical). Even though Bunge considers this formulation of causal principle as a statement of regular conditionalness (hence a part of all kinds of determinacy), the definition of causal bond here lacks precision.

BUNGE'S FORMULATION OF CAUSAL PRINCIPLE

Let us consider some forms of causal principle which in Mario Bunge's views, have been established as the correct formulations of causality. (1) "Cause, therefore, effect", or "effect, because a cause". We can state these propositions as follows. "C, therefore E". or "E, because C". Do these propositions constitute formulations of causal principle?

They do not appear to meet with the requirements of an adequate, causal principle due to the fact that the terms *therefore* and *because* seem to imply that a reason, as opposed to an agent, is involved in the causal bond. No doubt, the propositions affirm that there is a causal bond between C and E, but these propositions can be regarded as singular, factual propositions once the values of the symbols (C and E) are specified. On the other hand, scientific laws are not singular, factual propositions in the sense that they have references of factual matters. Rather, they are general hypotheses and conditional in nature.

Unlike statements of facts (or matters of fact) which are singular, factual and categorical (for example, 'the sun is shining' or 'the snow is falling.), statements of laws are hypothetical and have application to the idealised equavalents or models or reality. For this reason, any proposition which claims to be an adequate formulation of causal principle cannot suggest or imply the assumption that C exists in actuality. Instead, it should suggest that if C happens to be the case, E will also be the case, that is, it should be conditional.[22] We would therefore reject the proposition (1) as the adequate formultion of causal principle.

PROPOSITION (2).

"If C, then", or "if C, E".[23] Can this be an adequate formulation of causal principle? If the causal principle is to be concerned with *relation* instead of *relata*, as Bunge argues, with change instead of *being*, with the difference among the existents as opposed to existents themselves, then, "C" and "E" (which are regarded as representing different, specific events or objects), should, in fact, not have any reference to particular objects or their properties.

Furthermore, "C" and "E" should only refer to a limited (not unlimited) number of features if the principle is to be capable of (empirical) verification. In this case, it seems reasonable to say that causal principle asserts certain relations among the variable "C" and "E" which we have taken to be the symbolic representations of certain kinds of classes of facts.

There are possible ways in which the relation among the variables, "C" and "E", can be viewed, especially when one considers the formulation of causal principle in terms of constant–conjunction. Such relations may therefore hold sometimes ("whether in a fixed or in a variable percentage of cases" as Mario Bunge points out) or always (that is, "for all the values of the variables"). Science, in an adequate formulation of causal principle, causal connection is supposed to hold universally, it would be erroneous or inconsistent to say that it holds only *sometimes.*

What causal principle asserts is that there is an exceptionless repetition of E whenever there is C, or whenever C is the case. Therefore, the term *always* (the "all–operator") has to be added to proposition (2) to read thus: "If C, then E always", or "for all C and E, if C is the case, then E is the case". We shall regard this modified version of (2) as proposition (3).

This third formulation of causal principle is supposed to be a better way of expressing our everyday notion of causality, namely, that "everything has a cause", or that "the same causes produces the same effect". As sound as this everyday statement of causal principle may appear, it has its own defect because it lays emphasis on the sameness of cause and effect instead of emphasising the constancy of their relation.

PROPOSITION (3):

Proposition (3) has some peculiar features. First, the term *always*, as Bunge explains, could mean *generally* or *forever*. Second, since the notion of time is not present or is not involved in it, that proposition seems to be dealing with timeless, logical relations (or Being) instead of process. However, this proposition seems to embody two fundamental concepts necessary for an adequate formulation of causal principle, and these are *conditionalness* and *constancy*.

For example, if we take the terms "if C" as specifying the condition for E to occur, this conditionalness, being a requirement for causal and non–causal law, cannot be established as peculiar to causal lawfulness[24] alone. What conditionalness or existential succession implies is that E will result provided the conditions specified by C are met, but not necessarily after C.[25]

The term, *always* (the "al–operator") brings out the constancy of the occurrence of E, and proposition (3) means therefore that E will invariably occur if C is the case. It does not however indicate that the existence of C entails that of E, or that E would result in a certain number of cases when C is given. Rather, what it does assert is that the connection obtains invariably, that is, the unsymmetrical, conditional and necessary characteristic of causal bond. Modern philosophy and science have eliminated the concept of *necessity* as a part of an adequate formulation of causal law of principle because, in its traditional philosophical usage, necessity seemed to imply unconditionalness and passive obedience to external power. Furthermore, it seemed to express human desires or needs.

Several objections can however be raised against proposition (3) as an adequate formulation of causal principle. First, it fails to explain the uniqueness of causal bond. In other words, it does not assert that a one–to one correspondence exists between C and E. Second, "the term 'C' may denote any of the *sufficient* causes, hence the formular makes room for multiple causation".[26] One of the characteristics of a simple causation, as Mario Bunge points out, is the existence of "one–to–one reciprocal correspondence between cause and effect";[27] this means that in the relation between C and E there is only one E for ever C. In other words, E follows uniquely and unambiguously from the existence of C (though not necessarily in time); or we can say that "E is a single–value function of C".[28]

It must be noted however that uniqueness or lack of ambiguity does not have the same value as conditionalness has in scientific law. Whereas the former does not figure in some kinds of laws, especially in statistical regularity where there are many–to–one connections between cause and effect, the latter is a generic feature of scientific laws.

Proposition (3) does not therefore qualify as a simple causal principle, that is, as an adequate formulation of causal principle; and this would necessitate its modification to read; "if C, then (and only) E always". (4). This fourth proposition, as Bunge explains accounts for the features of causation, namely, conditionalness, existential succession, constancy and uniqueness.

PROPOSITION (4).

Proposition (4) is not only a conditional but also a universal statement expressing the constant conjunction[29] of two kinds of terms, namely, external association and invariable coincidence. But it fails to mention certain features which causal agents are generally expected to possess, namely "active" and "productive" nature. Furthermore, it makes no mention of the process from which E arises. As a result, propositions (3) and (4) are typical examples of the notions of causal principle held by the phenomenalists, that is the notion of cause as merely an antecedent, not as a category of determination through change.

Through the reduction of causation to constant conjunction, constant association of successiveness, or regular succession is found in antiquity,[30] it was Hume who seemed to have popularised it. And, in fact, it has been taken for granted by the empiricists, since the time of Hume, that proposition (3) exhausts the meaning of causal principle or represents an adequate formulation of that principle.

For example, A. J. Ayer asserts, while defending the empiricist's idea of causation, that "every general proposition of the form 'C causes E' is equavalent to a proposition of form 'whenever C, then E', where the symbol 'whenever' must be taken to refer, not to a finite number of actual instances of C, but to the infinite number of possible instances".[31] Hans Reichenbach, in support of the empiricist's notion of causation, explains that "by a causal law the scientist understands a relation of the if–then, with the addition that the same relation holds at all times".[32] He further remarks that "the meaning of causal relation consists in the statements of an exceptionless repetition".[33]

By defining causation as a relation, not as a connection, Reichenbach seems to imply, as Bunge correctly points out, that his definition of causation can be placed on the same pedestal with a statement like 'y lies between x and z'. Furthermore the property of exceptionless is not definitely empirically verifiable, and by accepting this notion as the meaning of causation Reichenbach seems to have abandoned the criterion of meaning which the positivists established, namely, verifiability.

I doubt that the contemporary empircists have shown any improvement on Hume's idea of causal relation as "constant conjunction" or as "constant union between the cause and effect".[34] Thus, Ayer's and Reichenbach's views on causal principle seem inadequate. In fact, William James criticised the Humean notion of causal relation saying that it would merely offer "a world of mere *withness*, of which the parts were only strung together by the conjunction 'and' ".[35]

The empiricist's notion of causal relation as "constant conjunction" is inadequate for other reasons which can be shown by assigning values to the variables "C" and "E" in order to see if the singular statement arising from them are causal or not. Consider the following statements :

(a) "Draught causes worries".

(b) "Yellow bananas are delicious".

Whereas (a) is a causal proposition, (b) asserts a correlation between "yellow" and "delicious". And this is so because nobody would suppose that a quality like "yellowness" is the cause of another quality like "deliciousness". But the two propositions conform with proposition (3), and "this counter example should suffice to indicate that the Humean formula of causation is not specific enough to be regarded as an adequate conceptual reconstruction of the causal bond".[36]

I would say that the inadequacy of Hume's causal idea arises from the fact that it does not express connection but relation. As a result, proposition (3) asserts merely the constant relation between two terms, that is, an invariable correlation between "loose and separate events" which are "conjoined" rather than "connected". In spite of the inadequacy of Hume's idea of causal principle, it however embodies certain features that characterise causal link, namely conditionalness, unsymmetry and lack of exception; but it fails to account for "the uniqueness and the generic character of the relation between C and E".[37]

Hume's notion of causal principle merely indicates that an effect is regularly conjoined to cause, not that it is produced by the cause. A law of correlation[38] cannot therefore be regarded as a causal law because it does not assert that any given entity, or the change it undergoes, is the product of another entity. Rather, it merely states that the two are regularly associated.[39] Hume's idea of causation does not include the idea of *productivity* (a factor that renders the cause–effect connection unsymmetrical). And furthermore, it is ontologically defective.

Abner Shimony[40] has argue that Hume's criticism of causation (that is, its efficacy) can be shown to be circular; but what I would like to point out is the possible ground on which the empiricists reduce causation to mere regularity of events. The empiricists identify *truth* with criterion, and reduce the meaning of proposition to the mode of its verification. This therefore seems to be the ground on which their arguments about causal principle

rest. Moritz Schlick,[41] for example, states that the only test of causation is the observation of constant conjunction; and from Wittgenstein's doctrine of the verifiability of meaning, the conclusion is reached that the idea of regular association exhausts the meaning of causation.

I think that these views are unsatisfactory. It is reasonable to say that if a person wants to test the hypotheses about any kind of facts, he has to examine a large number of similar instances, or facts, or a series of almost, repetitive events. But it must be realised that this is not always and even practically possible. The important point to note here is that as sound as this methodological prescription may appear, it does not entail that causation is equal to regularity *in re;* and a reduction of this nature would involve a confusion of epistomology or, even scientific methodology, with ontology; that is, the criterion of material existence involves subjects who are able to sense, act or judge; but it does seem to imply that every existent depends on sensing, acting on judging subject.

I think that the empiricists mistake causation for one of its tests, and it is their epistemological position that compels them to reduce an ontological category to a methodological criterion. It is doubtful that any unprejudiced analysis of the laws of nature would lend support to the empiricists' notion of causation.

An adequate formulation of causal principle would, I think, emphasise the idea of necessary, constant and unique production. In other words, we need a proposition expressing the idea that causation is "a category of genetic production",[42] that is, a way of producing new things from other things; and, in this case, it would be more than a mere relation. Such a proposition would avoid Hume's error, namely, the neglect of the efficacy or the productivity of the efficient cause.

Consider proposition (5). "If C hapens, then (and only then) E is always produced by it".[44] This proposition goes beyond a mere assertion of constant and unique (that is, necessary) conjuction to emphasise that the effect is engendered by the cause, not merely accompanied by it.

Hume claims that "the terms of efficacy, agency, power, force, energy, necessity, connection and productive quality, are all nearly synonymous; and therefore that it is an absurdity to employ any of them in defining the rest".[45] It is difficult to accept and to justify that *production* and *causation* are identical, and science shows that some things are produced in a way that is non—causal. Even though we may regard causation as a particular case of production, there is no reason to limit production to causal production.

Proposition (5) asserts that something, that is, E, is produced or brought forth by something else, that is, C, in a necessary (or constant and unique) way. Those concepts which supposedly constitute the essential features or parts of an adequate formulation of causal principle (they are, conditional or parts of an adequate formulation of causal principle (they are, conditionalness, uniqueness, invariability of connection, one—sided dependence of effect on cause, productivity) are present in this proposition. And for these reasons, I would conclude that proposition (5) seems to be an adequate formulation of causal principle.

APPRAISAL OF THE FORMULATIONS OF CAUSAL PRINCIPLE

Why does Bunge's formulation of causal principle seem more adequate than other various formulations presented here? I do not think that this question can be resolved purely on a logical basis, for it would suggest that Bunge is more "logical" or intelligent" than other formulators of the same principle; a suggestion that may be open to doubt. The truth is that all the formulations of causal principles stem from the understanding of the structure of science at a particular period of time, and Bunge's formulation has arisen from a much better understanding of the structure and workings of scientific activities. If the historical and the cultural background of science is neglected, and this background is very little emphasised in the writings of most philosophers, one would think that the difference between Bunge and the previous formulators of causal principles mentioned here is merely logical. On the contrary it stems from the breadth, depth and richness of scientific experience of a given epoch.

"Physical science, which aims not only at devising fasinating new experiments, but at obtaining a rational understanding of the results of observations, incurs at present ... the grave danger of getting served from its historical background ... Along with this disregard for historical linkage there is a tendency to forget that all science is bound up with human culture in general and that scientific findings, even those which at moment appear the most advanced and esoteric and difficult to grasp, and meaningless outside their cultural context"[46] If the scientific conceptions of the world are to be understood, it would be impossible to ignore the historical and cultural background of scientific thought without the danger of falsifying scientific knowledge. The fact that most philosophers treat scientific knowledge as if it were merely a matter of logical analysis alone may even suggest why the men of science have no interest in the Journals of the philosophers of science. As Benjamin Farrington remarks, "... the most decisive defeat of the scientific spirit in antiguity had been the lost of the sense of history. History is the most fundamental science, for there is no human knowledge which cannot lose its scientific character when men forget the conditions under which it orginated, the questions which it answered, and the functions it was created to serve. A great part of the mysticism and superstition of educated men consists of knowledge which has broken loose from its historical moorings".[47] Schrodinger points out painfully that "the disregard for historical connectedness, nay the pride of embarking on new ways of thought, of production and of action, the keen endeavour of shaking off ... the indebtedness to our predecessors, are no doubt a general trend of our time".[48]

Cultural and historical circumstances make Bunge's formulation of causal principle more adequate than that of Aristotle, Hume and Galilei because the structure of science and the principles of its understanding are different today from what they were in the past. In other words, the science on which Hume based his arguments was that of Newton while Bunge's experience is largely from the science of Einstein, especially from the

Relativity and the Quantum theories. The science of Newton and that of Einstein were based on different paradigms; in fact, the concepts of space, time, matter and motion are different in both scientific systems. Furthermore, the classical physics conceived of nature as an independent reality and objectively apart of man; and this means that the act of observation does not affect the observed. But the Uncertainty Principle of modern science shows that the act of observation affects the observer. Furthermore, we understand the nature of mathematics today much better than in the past.

It is understandable therefore if Hume's formulation of causal principle does not fit into what actually goes on in modern science, and the reason is because the structure of reality which Hume experienced through the science of Newton and its mode of understanding have changed. Bunge, on the other hand, has scientific experience which was not available to Hume; and his formulation of causal principle is therefore more adequate for the science of his time.

Finally, I do not think that logical coherence and strict consistence should be the judge of an adequate formulation of causal law, but experience. "To by–pass experience in the pursuit of truth is to make oneself a God ... "[49] Laplace and Descartes, for example, thought that they could arrive at *certainty* purely by reason without any appeal to experience; but the Laplacean certainty, as V. U. Nalimou indicates, "is dead and beyond recall". By experience, I mean what actually goes on in the structure of science as the men of science practice it; not as the philosophers merely look at it from their logical point of view. Nature has no obligation to fit into our logic, and if the philosophy of science is to be a fruitful reflection on the structure of science it cannot ignore experience.

Philosophers may tend to establish, through logic, the law or knowledge that is valid or binding at all times and in all places; but science, as a cultural activity, is a changing process in which deeper and broader insight into the workings of nature and of our mind modify the previously acquired knowledge. Therefore, the differences between the various formulations of causal principle depend, not on better logic per se but on better insight into the structure of science, nature and the human mind.

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7. Cf. George Berkeley, De Motu in *Works*, Fraser (ed.), Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1971, Vol. III, p. 37).

8. Emile Meyerson, Op. cit. p. 17.

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11. Jean Bernoulli maintains that the rejection of the principle of causality would mean that "all nature would fall into disorder". And for Lucretius, the rejection of the same principle would force us to abandon the attempt to establish regularity of any kind in nature. "Nor would the same fruits stay constantly to the trees, but all would change; all trees might avail to bear all fruits". (Cf. Emile Meyerson, Op. Cit. P. 17).

12. Cf. Aristotle. ***Metaphysics*** (Trans. H. Tredennick) BK. I, Chap. iii, 983 a, b. London; Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass; Harvard University Press, 1947. Aristotle Physics, Bk. II, Chapters III and VII.

13. James Ward, Essays in Philosophy, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927, P. 218.

14. Ibid. P. 219.

15. Ibid. P. 219.

16. Aristotle, ***Physics***, in ***Works***, Vol. II, (ed. by W. D. Ross), Bk. II, Chap. ii, 1946, Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1930.

17. Modern Science accepts efficient cause and rejects the three other causes of Aristotle because it is controllable and leads to the harnessing of Natural forces. This is the pragmatic of Instrumental concept of science advocated by Bacon and Descartes.

18. Mario Bunge, ***Causality and Modern Science,*** 3rd ed, New York: Dover Publications, Inc; 1979, P. 33. Cf. Galileo. Il Saggiatore, in Opere, Florence: Edizione Nazional, (20 Vols.) 1890 – 1909, Vol. 6, P. 265.

19. Thomas Hobbes, Selections (ed. by F. J. E. Woodbridge), New York: Scriber and Sons, 1930, P. 94.

20. According to Laplace, "a spirit which for one moment knew all the forces which vitalise Natural and the reciprocal situation of all the beings whereof she consists, would necessarily be able, if all–embracive enough to subject all these data to mathematical analysis, to comprehend in the same formula the motion of the greatest of heavenly bodies and of the lightest of atoms; nothing would be uncertain for such a spirit, and future and past would lie open to his eyes". CF. Hans Zehrer, ***Man in this World,*** London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1952, p. 255).

21. Emile Meyerson, ***Identite et Realite,*** 3 Vols. Baris; Alcan, 1931, P. 19. Cf. Richard B. Braithwaite. ***Scientific Explanation,*** Cambridge University Press, 1953, P. 314ff. Law statements, as Mario Bunge points out are hypothetical in nature as evidenced by the fact that that have application to idealised models of reality when, in fact, they are supposed to have reference to concerte facts. According to the principle of Conservation of Energy, "if a system is isolated, its total energy is conserved", or "if a system were isolated, its total energy would be conserved".

    Mario Bunge, Op. Cit. P. 36. In spite of the fact that a perfect isolation does not exist anywhere, and with the exception of quantum virtual transition, the principle of energy conservation is universally valid; and since it makes no claim that isolated systems exists, it would in no way contradict any statement of their existence in fact.

22. This means that emphasis should be placed on *relation* instead or *retat* as Bertrand Russell points out. In other words, emphasis is laid on the conditions for the occurance of events or facts of certain class, and not on events or facts themselves. Cf. Bertrand Russell. Our ***Knowledge of the External World,*** London; Allen and Urwin, 1952, pp. 229 ff.

23 Mario Bunge, Op Cit In Bunge's explanation, C and E may be considered as designating singulars belonging to any class of concrete events or processes, conditions or objects; and should the class of the fact be specified we would necessarily go from No. 2 (an empty scheme) to specific statement of law. In this case, C and E differ from 'C' and 'E' represent different specific events or objects, or particular characteristics of such concrete events or objects, provided, of course, those specific objects belong to definite classes.

24 Lawfulness may be regarded as regular conditionalness as Mario Bunge explains, while the unconditional or the arbitrary becomes the unlawful. The unconditional is that which occurs or would occur no matter what the conditions are or may be. For John Stuart Mill, in ***A System of Logic.*** London. Longmans, Green, 1952, Book III, Chap. V. Sec. 6, unconditionalness is a peculiar nature of causal connection. This means therefore that, given C, E will follow no matter what the conditions may be.

25. In the terminology of traditional philosophers, the cause is extentially before the effect, but it does not precede it in time. Because C is prior to E or because there is an unsymmetrical dependent of E Upon C, the orthodox logical empiricists tend to identify laws with their statements. Bertrand Russell, ***An Outline of Philosophy***, London: Allen and Unwin, 1972, p. 12, speaks about the "reversibility of causal law" in the sense it facilitates the prediction as well as retrodiction of events. Bunge warns however that this statement, symbolised in the form of C and E, should not be taken as a logical implication because causal analysis is synthetic connective, not analytic; hence, it has no bearing with analytic necessity. Even though statements laws cannot function in reversible ways in the sense that they can be used for explanatory purposes and post–dictive, this is merely an epistemological issue which has nothing to do with the process of events to which the statements refer.

And if the meaning of causal principle is the logical structure of the statements which are formulated for the purpose of reconstructing the causal bond in thought as logicians sometimes believe; this belief can only be correct, as Hegel points out, if structure of the world were indeed logical.

26. mario Bunge, Op. Cit. P. 41.

27. Ibid, P. 41.

28. Ibid, P. 41.

29. Constant conjunction is to be understood here in an ontological rather than in a logical sense. In other words, it does not signify a joint assertion of two statements but rather implies that there is a concomitance occurence of two types of terms; or ;properly speaking, two types of events.

30. Cicero, (c. 44 B.C.) in De Fato (On Destiny), trans. by H. Rackham, Cambridge. Harvard University Press, 1942, pp. 34–35, criticised this notion. Joseph Glanvill who Richard H. Popkin (Cf. Journal of the History of Ideas 14, 292 (1953) considered as the "Precursor of Hume" propounded this notion of causation in his *Scepsis Scientifica* of 1665 ;and Malebrance, in Recherche de la Verite (1675), also defended this notion of causality.

31. A. J. Ayer, *language, Meaning and Truth,* (2nd ed.), London: Victor Gollancz, 1946, P. 55.

32. Hans Reichenback. The Rise of Scientific Philosophy, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951, P. 157.

33. Ibid. P. 158.

34. David Hume, Treaties on Human Nature, Bk. I, Part III, Sec. XV, London and New York: Dutton, 1911.

35. William James, Pragmatism, New York: Meridian, 1955, P. 105.

36. Mario Bunge, Op. Cit. P. 144.

37. Ibid. P. 44.

38. Cf. Charles Darwin, *Origin of Species* (6th ed.), London: Oxford University Press, 1951, pp. 11–12. Darwin shows here the correlation between hair on the one hand and teeth or horns on the other.

39. There is no doubt that the two arms of a lever, for example, are rigidly associated ;but we cannot say that they are causally connected with each other. Furthermore, the sides and the

angles of a triangle rigidly and uniquely determined each other, but this is not in a causal way.

The formula, "if–then always", can represent most statements of pure mathematics, yet nobody would (at least, easily) expect pure mathematics to account for causal connections.

40. Cf. Abner Shimony, "An Ontological Examination of Causation", Review of Matephysics, I, 52, 1947.

41. Cf. Moritz Schlick, "Causality in Everyday Life and in Recent Science", (1932) reprinted in Herbert Feigl and Wilfrid Sellars, ***Readings in Philosophical Analysis,*** New York: Appleton–Century–Crofts, 1949.

42. Plato, in Greater Hippias, 296E, and Caeatylus, 413 A, identifies cause with "that which creates". Cicero, in ***De Fato,*** asserts that causes are productive, but his definition of cause as "that which effectively produces what it causes" is circular. Emile Meyerson, in Identite et Realite (Paris: Payot, 1921, P. 37,) considers productivity as the core of causation. "Cause", he writes, "is that which produces, that which must produce the effect".

43. Mario Bunge, Op. Cit. P. 47.

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PERMISSIBLE INFANTICIDE

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Euthanasia, abortion, infanticide and a host of other related moral problems provide great stimulation for philosophical discourse. But to the physician, these issues transcend such mere academic questions as: "What is the ultimate value of human life?", "When does life begin or end?", Is human life worth sustaining at all cost and who is morally justified to decide for whom?". "What method is best suited for terminating human life were it morally justifiable to do so?" It would be wrong to suggest that the medical profession is indifferent to this wide-range set of questions, for these are substantially part of the concerns of medical ethics. The difference, however, between the moral philosopher's concerns in these areas and those of the physician, is that the former ends up almost always with strings of arguments with an eye more for thier logical validity than for their practical import, while the latter blends his theoretical interests with a greater concern in concrete terms for how they affect his profession and humanity in general.

In this paper the general problems of infanticide are discussed, first, from a theoretical plane; mainly on certain controversial issues that it generates. I would want to argue that under certain circumstances infanticide is morally permissible. Secondly, I wish to establish how attitudes to these issues are often influenced not by the logic of the arguments involved but by a variety of cultural factors.

The practice of infanticide dates back to the early days of the Greeks and Romans who thought that under certain conditions infants had no right to life. They had several reasons for justifying the killing of infants; acute deformity or malformation, mere physical weakness, mental retardation or merely as a means of population control. There were other reasons based on customs or traditions. But occasionally the attitudes of the Greeks and Romans to infanticide went beyond mere cultural considerations. In fact, Plato and Aristotle thought that the state should pass laws enforcing the killing of deformed children.[1] In traditional African societies infanticide was and perhaps still is practised but for reasons not necessarily similar to those of the Greeks and Romans. In some parts of Africa the customs were such that the birth of twins was considered an abonormality so much so that such children were either killed or allowed to die.

It is necessary perhaps to start by stating what appears to be a universal fact. In all societies, past and present, human life has always been accorded "sanctity" which takes a connotation wider than that which the religious sense of the word provides. The sanctity of human life whether conceived in religious terms or in purely secular ethics implies that human life has a *special value* which stands above the lives of other living things. With exceptional cases, therefore, such as war, self-defence, possibly capital punishment, and any others that may depend on particular cultures or uniquely accepted

codes, the wilful taking of a human life is deemed morally wrong. It is philosophically disputable whether this general secular attitude by contemporary ethics is self-evidently defensible, but I do not intend to go into that issue here. The fact, the claim that in all known societies human life is given an extremely high value can only be sustained on inductive grounds and not beyond our logical reasoning.

There is another fundamental observation as a prelude to the theme of this paper. Infants and adults alike may be said to assume equal sanctity with regard to the value placed on their lives. But the former seem to be fundamentally prized higher. The killing of an infant seems to be regarded with a higher degree of atrocity than that of an adult. Some may disagree with this, but all it is intended to say is that the life of an infant is to a lot of people more precious than that of an adult. It is for this reason that in war situations, allegations of the killing of infants is usually used as propaganda in pointing to attacks on civilians, which is prohibited by international convention. Clearly the reason for this is because infants are considered harmless, morally not responsible and so regarded as not party to conflicts between warring factions. But, of course, infants are also helpless and considered to be innocent human beings.

But whether harmless, helpless or innocent, many philosophers argue that these attributes considered in isolation, are not enough to make a newborn babdy more sacrosanct than adults. Some even argue that if these considerations are enough to determine the high value we attach to infants they are also applicable to the lives of young non-human animals. Surely, the life of a young harmless, helpless and innocent animal is not valued the same as that of a human infant. This, however, appears to be a misplaced comparison The question, perhaps, should be why the life of a human infant is commonly more valued than that of an adult. This is by no means a universally acceptable position for its is certainly contingent upon particular individuals and circumstances. One easy way of dismissing this issue is to say that it is more of a sentimental attitude than an objective moral assessment.

Without going into more comparison it seems clear, at, least, that the killing of infants is prima facie wrong. But would there not be circumstances in which infanticide could be said to be morally permissible? I want to argue for a positive answer to this question. But before doing so, one confusion needs to be cleared. Most philosophers who argue for or against infanticide are in the habit of thinking that the issues raised by the phenomenon of abortion apply equally to infanticide. In the case of abortion the central argument usually runs like this: it is wrong to kill a human being; the foetus is a human being; therefore it is wrong to kill the foetus. Out of this main argument a reamification of other disputes arises, some of which question the premises as to whether indeed, there is anything wrong with killing human beings or whether the foetus is in fact human. These considerations need not arise in the case of infanticide since it is almost indisputably accepted that infancts are human beings.

It is perhaps necessary to point out why this distinction between the issue of abortion and that of infanticide is necessary. There are many who

would agree that there are possible justifiable reasons for destroying a foetus. Form this, they would infer that since the development from a foetus to a newborn babay is a continuous process, it is difficult to locate an intermediate stage at which arguments for the former fail to apply to the latter. In other words, the argument is that if abortion is ever morally justifiable then infanticide, (given that the circumstances are similar) is also morally justifiable, unless some *morally relevant* reasons can be produced for a differential treatment between a new born baby and the earlier stages of development of the human being.

There is plausibility in this argument but I do not think the morally relevant reasons it calls for can be established. The abortion controversy centres on whether or not the foetus is a human being. But the caveat in the issue of infanticide is on whether or not the newborn baby is a *person.* Surely, there is an essential distinction between being a human being and being a person, and our moral judgments greatly depend on this distinction.[2] The point is simply that being a human being could simply refer to membership of the species homo sapiens,[3] whereas being a person entails the possession of certain qualities such as self awareness, rationality, the recognition that one is an autonomous entity and so forth.

Being a person is thus normative, encompassing a variety of moral considerations which being a human being, in its descriptive connotation, does not entail. The importance of this, as it will be made clear shortly, is the consideration whether or not the human infant under certain conditions, is really to be regarded as a person. Hare thinks, for instance, that most moral disputes hang on the notion of a person. According to his argument, once it can be established that X is a person, this alone carries a moral content. "This will validate the step from 'X is a person' to 'X ought to be treated in a certain way".[4]

Granted it is established that a newborn infant is a person and so constitutes a subject for moral discourse, the crucial issue is, under what conditions is infanticide morally permissible? In trying to explore this question I must crave the indulgence of medical experts into whose areas references may be made. I do not make claims to expert knowledge of medicine nor am I up to-date in recent developments in these areas. However, it is hoped that possible factual inaccurancies in this regard do not render untenable the arguments such examples are meant to support.

The stress in this paper is on the moral aspect of infanticide, with special reference to defective newborn babies. Usually, on the issue of medical care for a newborn baby, medical ethics presupposes that the doctor's relation with the patient (i.e. the baby) is based on a "contract" with the parents. This "contract" is usually seen as between an obstetrician and or a paediatrician on the on the one hand and the parents on the other hand who stand on behalf of the baby. There is therefore an obligation, almost of a legal kind. In fact, legal tussles between courts, organisations for the welfare of children, doctors and parents, have become commonplace in most developed countries of the world. A good example of this was a case reported very recently in a popular news magazine.[5] One Mrs. Jennifer Daniels

was reported to have given birth to a baby suffering from what doctors described as "a rare deformity in which the spinal cord and nerves protrude from a fault in the spinal column caused by the spine's failure to close completely". In the doctor's opinion, with the best surgical operation, the child would remain "paralysed from the knees down, and might still be retarded" The parents of the child for reasons which they described as the "life-time stress and psychological pressures" the child would undergo, decided they did not want surgery and that the child be left to die. The doctors disagreed with the parents and the case was taken to a court which ruled against the wish of the parents. My concern here is not with the legal question of right or wrong since that depends on the laws in question. The crucial question raised is one of whether or not moral justice was done to the parents of the child.

Surely, not all cases of defective infants give rise to the issue of infanticide. In fact, according to Guttmacher, 97 percent of human progeny are perfect at birth and, of the 3 percent which are imperfect many have only minor defects as hammer toe, extra digits, small appendage to the ear, birth marks, pilonidal sinus at the base of the spine etc."[6] I take it that these facts were about the United States of America as at the time of the publication quoted. They may not necessarily reflect what the case is now, nor do they necessarily reflect other societies. But the issue of infanticide inevitably arises in such a case of a defective infant as Waldman describes as "the hopelessly ill child, the hopelessly and profoundly retarded child, and the hopelessly and impaired neonate with the grave motor-mental prognosis"[7] Waldman is describing one of those defective infants with Down's Syndroma (commoly called mongolism) or with problems such as trisomy D and E whom he thinks have no conceivable future potentials. A variety of questions arise out of this: Are we morally right to make efforts to salvage such infants regardless of the outcome? Do we kill such "hopelessly ill" infants, simply allow them to die by witholding medical care, or do we use extraordinary measures to keep them alive?

It might be thought that these are issues which parents and medical experts are best equipped to sort out themselves. This is mistaken. It is true in almost all societies that infanticide is committed either by parents who withhold essential care for malformed babies thereby leading to their death or by medical practitioners who at their own discretion either actively or passively terminate the lives of defective infants. But such practices do not come to the open. Or even if they do, their evaluations depend on circumstances. According to Robertson and Fost, there have been cases of parents who have actively killed defective children and have been acquitted by courts in America, and no doctor as far as they knew, had been prosecuted for passive euthanasia of a defective newborn infant.[8] These instances are best regarded as exceptions rather than the rule because generally, the killing of an infanct whether defective or not is met with an attitude of disapproval. Even the passive form of euthanasia on children which is often tought to be less culpable, carries almost equal weight as that which is actively performed.

Killing a person under certain circumstances could be less morally wrong than allowing the person to die. I have discussed the moral distinction between killing a person and merely allowing him to die elsewhere.[9] Even when it is assumed that under certain kinds of abnormalities defective infants could be killed or allowed to die there is bound to be some degree of arbitrariness in setting up the criteria under which this is done. Let us assume that there are such acceptable criteria, and basing their judgment on such criteria a doctor and the parents of a given defective child unanimously agree to kill the child or to allow it die, would they be doing moral justice to the child? This raises the issue of the right to life and who can be said to possess that right. An adequate answer to this question can only be provided if we take note of the distinction made earlier between a human being and a *person*, for only in the case of a person can the issue of rights arise.

In the case of abortion which was referred to earlier, the tendency on the part of those involved in the dispute is to use "human being" and "person" interchangeably. The argument of the anti-abortionist is that because the feotus is a human being, and therefore a person, it has a right to life which ought not to be tampered with. The foetus, at a very early stage of pregnancy acquires certain essential human characteristics. "By the tenth week", it is claimed, the foetus "already has a face, arms and legs, fingers and toes; it has internal organs, and brain activity is detectable".[10] Such physiological characteristics may lend support to the position that the foetus is a human being. But, surely, this has nothing to do with the organism being a person. Going by what has just been said, being a human being merely involves the acquisition of certain properties which are purely of a biological sort. It is therefore a factual issue and not a moral one.

The significant question is what properties must an entity possess in order to be a person? Once these properties are ascertained, according to Hare, they provide a necessary condition for that thing having a right to life.[11] Here again, it must be admitted that no such list of properties can be said to be universally acceptable to everyone. Tooley, for instance, would simply say this: "An organism possesses a serious right to life only if it possesses the concept of a self as a continuing entity".[12] What I understand Tooley to mean by this is that the entity in question must be self-conscious, rational and must possess some degree of autonomy or independence. If the possession of properties such as these is essentially what distinguishes a person form a mere human being, a further corollary of this will be that to be considered to be a person an organism, because it is autonomous and self-conscious, must have a desire to continue to live. This, I think, is the crux of the issue.

If a defective infant is considered a person, this presupposes that it is self-conscious and therefore has a desire to live. And if it has a desire to live then any attempt to destroy it amounts to a violation of its right to life. The unfortunate consequence of following this line of argument is that it seems to apply to all infants whether defective or normal. They can all be said to have no right to life since they do not possess self-consciousness or see themselves as authonomous entities. This may even imply that all living

organisms apart from humans at certain stages of development, have no rights to life and could be destroyed at will. This may be true to some extent but we do not usually accept that animals have a rights to life in the way we speak of human beings (person to be precise).

One way out of such a difficulty is to modify our conception of a person. Being a person and therefore having a right to life must not be construed solely in terms of the *actual* possession of those properties mentioned, but also includes the *potentiality* to possess them. In this sense we may say a normal newborn infant is a person by virtue of the fact that it possesses the potentiality to develop into a person. To that extent it may be considered to possess the right to life. A cat or a dog by this reasoning cannot be said to have a right to life because it does not possess the potentiality for acquiring these properties. Now, what about the severely defective newborn infants of the sort we are concerned with in this paper?

The instances of newborn defective infants we have in mind, some of which were mentioned earlier, include cases of severe brain damage. Medical opinions are that in some of such cases the degree of damage could be so high that the best medical treatment can do for such infants is to make them continue to live but only in either physically or mentally retarded states. Either such children suffer from a high degree of paralysis as in the case with some afflicted with Spina Bifida and or hydrocephalus or they end up as spastics in the case of Cerebral Palsy. There are other congenital abnormalities in which the infants concerned, even after the best of medical care, end up almost in a vegetative state. The issue is not just one of their being misfits in society nor one of their lack of social utility. These are quite good considerations. But beyond these, such defective infants constitute a burden to their parents for life or valuable resources are used in keeping them alive through medical gadgets for no other reasons than that every person has a right to life.

My contention in this paper is based on the concept of a person and who can be said to have a right to life. And on this, it is my belief that for severely defective newborn babies for which there is no convincing evidence or hope of their ever living a meaningful life, doctors with the consent of parents, ought to allow such children to die. By this, I mean that there are other factors which when taken into consideration could lead to conclusions opposed to the one taken here — factors such as cultural beliefs and customs or the legal codes of the societies in question. Before relating the first of these factors to the attitude of African pediatricians on the issue of infanticide, it will suffice just to give an instance of the latter. Wilker reports that in some states in America, at a certain degree of mental retardation a "person" is not legally allowed to make some important decisions which affect him. These include the decision to marry, to have children, to enter into financial contracts and to live alone.[13] The reason for this, Wilker thinks, is that such "persons" could do harm to themselves or to others. I would suggest that the main reason for this is that the law concerned does not regard such human beings as persons, going by our own conception of personhood.

One possible objection to the position taken in this paper needs to be refuted. It might be argued that if the criteria for being a person include an entity being self-conscious and autonomous, which essentailly entail the desire to continue to live, and that the possession of this desire to live is what grant the entity a right to life, there are various organisms which display this desire to continue to live, but which are in no plausible way to be considered as persons. By this argument, merely having the desire to continue to live does not confer on an entity the right to life. A possible example, which critics of this kind might have in mind, is that an animal or even any infant confronted with danger always instinctively tries to escape and that such an effort is indicative of a desire to continue to live. To use such a criterion as fundamental in determining the right to life, it might therefore be argued, would include organisms which ordinarily, we do not accord the right to life.

The acceptability of this argument rests essentially on what is meant by the desire to live. Obviously, all animals faced with danger to their lives display some kind of desire to live. But the human desire to live is of a different sort. Not all human beings want to continue to live under all conditions. The phenomenon of suicide supports this point. The desire to continue to live by a human being, given that the person is in a position to judge for himself, is always contingent upon the evisaged state of his continued existence. Most human beings are not content with bare survival but desire to live what might be described as a meaningful life. This is not the same with nonhuman animals. In any case, man conceived purely in biological terms, is also an animal and any instinctive display of efforts to escape from danger can only be construed as a manifestation of his animal nature. Beyond this, the uniqueness of man resides in his ability to assess situations rationally and decide on what, out of given alternative courses of action, he wishes to follow. The desire to live, definitive of personhood in this paper, is in this sense of a rationally worked-out choice.

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THE PUBLIC INTEREST: ITS MEANING AND USE IN LIBERAL POLITICS

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The concept of "the public interest" has attained a higher degree of popularity in political discourse and academic writings probably more than any other political term.[1] Many policies are defended by their supporters on the ground of their contribution to the promotion of the public interest; and for many writers, the public interest is, or at least ought to be, the standard of judging public policy.[2]

But popularity is one thing, precision in meaning is another. One still needs to be clear about what exactly the public interest is supposed to mean. What does it stand for? Are there any set of objective considerations that a person can be referred to in determining its meaning? Are administrators who often have to use the term guided by any specific considerations? Or can one conclude, as some have done, that the use of the term is just a camouflage for the interest of a particular group or a faction of the electorate?[3]

There is also the problem raised by the sceptic: there might be a public interest, but either we cannot know it, or at least we do not now know it.[4] On this view then, either it would be sheer waste of time to justify policies in the name of the public interest, or it would be mere hypocrisy, if not deceitfulness. If we do not know what it is, or cannot know it, we should be deceiving ourselves, if we are not being dishonest, by justifying any policy for its promotion of the public interest.

Other writers have been more sympathetic to the concept.[5] They have sought to account for its reality, the possibility of having an objective knowledge of what it means, and then its popularity in political discourse. Throughout this paper, I shall identify myself with this last group. That is, I shall assume that it is possible, given certain conditions, to account for the meaning of the public interest, and to determine which, out of a number of policies, could serve it best.

Among those conditions, one of extreme importance is an agreement on the legitimate authority of the state. It is (perhaps, unfortunately) part of the usual meaning of the concept of the public interest that it is the area of state action. It is generally regarded as an interest which the state ought to advance, usually against the manouvres of special interests. The muddle surrounding the meaning and usefulness of the public interest can be viewed as part of a larger problem of justifying state authority and state interference in the affairs of citizens, even when such interference favours the majority. This is part of the reason why some would rather regard the public interest as the aggregate of the individual interest of those who make up the community; and that short of this, the concept has no meaning.[6] I shall assume that there is aggreement of citizens on the legitimate authority of the state and

then try to show that under this condition, it is possible to find an objective meaning for the concept, without thinking of it in terms of an aggregate of individual interests. So the difficulty of aggregation interests would not constitute any problem for my project.

A second point I should want to take notice of on this issue is that the legitimacy of the state may also be questioned by advocates of a different political order. Those interested in a radical (revolutionary) change may refuse to recognize the state as the legitimate authority for the promotion of the public interest even when they accept a common meaning for the concept. A Marxist, for instance, might insist that the bourgeois state exists (necessarily) to promote the (class) interests of the members of its capitalist class.[7] He might then have problem in accepting the idea that administrators could meaningfully and validly justify policies in the name of the public interest. What I shall assume, then, is that the meaning of the public interest which I am about to press makes sense within the liberal democratic theory. The argument will show ultimately that even within the distinctive theoretical assumptions of the liberal tradition about "interests", it is possible to find a valid meaning and justification for the notion of the public interest.

For my purpose, then, I shall take as a fairly reasonable meaning for the term, the definition which regards it as "those interests which people have in common as members of the public"[8] The public, I shall take as not limited nor determinate in number: it is open in membership, the defining condition being the characteristic of having shared interests in a policy or action. Since it is possible for a whole community to have shared interests in a policy, I shall assume that a community to have shared interests in a policy, I shall assume that a community could be referred to as the public for the purpose of the analysis of the public interest. In fact the problems I have in mind for the purpose of explicating its meaning and justifying its use are communal problems with consequences for the individuals. This way of approaching the problem could be justified on the ground that when administrators say that a certain policy is in the public interest, they have in mind the citizens whose want-satisfactions are to be enhanced by the policy in question. In that case, then, even though the members of the public are unassignable, it makes sense to suppose that, since there is no limit, the whole community could constitute the public.[9] Such policies are supposed to enhance the want-satisfaction of everyone, none excluded, and none assigned in particular. Of course, there are those who would feel, sometimes with justification, that their particular want-satisfaction which the policy is supposed to enhance, could be better enhanced by some other policy. Our problem is to account for the possibility of such views and how they would affect the significance of the meaning of the public interest which is being pressed.

Given my proposed "fairly reasonable meaning" of the term: "those interests which people have in common as members of the public", I have to grapple with some problems and clarify some issues. The basic problem is whether, in fact, it is realistic to assume that people have common (or

shared) interests even as members of a public (in the broad sense I am using it here). It has been claimed that conflict of interests are real issues in modern politics; that even when people agree on the desirability of a particular goal, they may nevertheless disagree about the means for achieving it. And so, even if we can say they have a common interest in the end, we cannot say the same thing about the means. Given this reality of conflicting views, can we say that there are common interests among members of the public? Consider a practical problem: Suppose that every member of a community desires the security of his community as a worthy goal, a reasonable assumption since this is a necessary condition for enhancing the degree of want-satisfaction of individuals. Suppose, however, that there is no widespread agreement among different individuals or groups on a particular means for attaining this desirable end. Different policies might be suggested by different individuals. While some might favour the training of every citizen in a defence tactics; other might favour (however absurd) a policy of relying on the "goodwill" of friendly neighboring countries to provide security assistance in the event of external aggression. Usually, it should be easier to defend the choice of one of these in the name of "the national interest". But "national interest" differs from "public interest" in that while the former could refer to the interest of an entity-the nationa-with no special emphasis on what the individuals expressly want, the latter refers to those interests common to members of the community (where it forms the public). Sometimes, however, any of these policies could be defended in the name of "the public interest". The problems then are these: Given the expressions of different views on the best policy for attaining the commonly accepted end of security, can one still maintain that any of these policies, if adopted, is in the public interest? What objections could be raised against such a move? How can such objections be met? These are the issues that constitute my "basic problem" as I shall continue to refer to them. I shall maintain that the first question could be given a positive answer. But I am aware that objections could be and have indeed been raised. Also, serious efforts have been made to meet them. What follows will be an effort to clarify certain issues. First, I shall attempt to deal with the objections raised by critics, especially concerning the meaning I have assumed. Then I shall deal with the basic problem already sketched from at least two more positive perspectives, one of which I shall have reason to reject as inadequate for solving the basic problem.

II

One of the leading critics of the concept of "public interest" is Prof. F. J. Sorauf. His "sceptical evaluations" argued in two different works[10] are based on a number of theses: First, public interest, as it occurs in academic writings is commonly taken to be a standard of public policy, the measure of the greatest wisdom in government.[11] It turns out, as we shall see, that Sorauf's entire critique derives its import from this thesis. To this extent, it is not impossible to deal with it from a more positive standpoint. It is true,

as Sorauf maintains, that one cannot define the public interest in terms of its role or function without begging the question of its nature and the validity of its claim to be a policy standard. There should be a separation of the "is" of the concept from its "ought". But it is equally true that, from the fact t that some writers have so confused the two, it does not follow that they cannot be separated or that the public interest has no meaning apart from its being a policy standard. Its being a policy standard, if in fact it is such, is not a necessary part of its meaning when one is concerned with a descriptive analysis of the concept.

Sorauf's second thesis, following from the first, is that construing the public interest as a policy standard will not do, because none of its several definitions qualifies it for that function. For one thing, none of these definitions is universally accepted as the correct or most adequate one; and this in itself, is a genuine cause for scepticism about the possibility of knowing what it is. Second, even if it were possible to have a universal agreement on one of the definitions, we would still need to justify it, and that is what is called to question by the critic.[12]

According to Sorauf, it is inadequate to define public interest as common interest people have as members of a community because no interest is universally held by all members of a community. Invoking the authority of Bentley, he maintains that no general interest exists, for "there are always some parts of the nation to be found arrayed against other parts"[13]. Further, the reality of group activity is an indication of the existence of opposing interests. And finally, in the absence of universal acceptance, no other criterion of acceptance will do; certainly not majority standards which, for many, is the only real possible alternative to unanimity in defending the notion of public interest. Public interest cannot be majority interest because the latter is just an interest that is more widely held than other interests. To accept it as a criterion is to accept nose-counting as a means of determining the public interest. But, for Sorauf, this will not do, because as the first thesis implies, public interest has been used as a symbol of standard of policy, and for him, a standard that is determined simply by nose-counting is simply no standard. Of all the definitions of the concept reviewed by Sorauf, this is the most damaging to the thesis of this paper and I shall have cause to deal with it more extensively in the third section.

Meanwhile, however, I think what needs to be clarified is that the validity of the notion of public interest as common interests of persons as members of the public need not presuppose to unanimous consent of all members of the community in a particularly policy claimed to be in the public interest. This would only be presupposed where one adopts the notion of interest which equates it with (promotion of) pleasure. Bentham, it will be recalled, construes interest in this sense. "A thing is said to promote the interest, or to be for the interest of an individual when it tends to add to the sum total of his pleasures, or what comes to the same thing, to diminish the sum total of his pains"[14] Because of the assumption that what gives an individual pleasure is personal and private to him, Bentham is able to conclu-

de that each person is the best judge of his own interest: "There is no one who knows what is for your interest so well as yourself".[15] The consent of the indidividual is necessary, directly or indirectly, for anything aimed at the promotion of his pleasure, his interest. This leads to the conception of the public interest as the sum-total of the interests of individuals who make up the public. But, as will be seen, a different and more adequate conception of interest will avoid the problem raised by the fact of lack of unanimous consent. It is Sorauf's conception of interest as "selfish, personal, self-centered goals of those who hold them"[16], which is responsible for his objection to public interest as common interests of persons as members of the public.

The other definitions which Sorauf criticizes are either peripheral to the concept, or indeed truly inadequate.[17] In either case, his objections to those definitions are not so damaging to the concept. Thus it is not necessary to conceive the public interest as superior interest, or as the moral imperative. These are not the central elements of the concept and so objection to them does not constutite a valid objection to the reality of the concept. Further, the theorist of public interest or interest in general, may *deny* that "each man is the best judge of his own interest" without himself being a paternalist and so without doing any "self-evident damage to the democratic theory" For he might hold that the individual, if not the best judge, is at least the ultimate source of his interests, because he is the ultimate source of his wants which determine his interests. Interests can be known and promoted without knowing what gives an individual pleasure.

Sorauf's third thesis is that though there is no such thing as the "public interest", for all interests are "selfish", it might be a misleading way of characterizing something else. The realm of politics is the realm of conpeting interests, the realm of group activity. A policy that is finally adopted as an outcome of competing interests is not properly considered "the public interest". It has no claim to that label since it is not produced by a unanimous consent. What is more appropriate, then, according to Sorauf, is to take the concept out of the realm of conflict to the realm of consensus. Public interest (as standard of policy) does not belong to the realm of politics, it belongs to the community. It is the value commonly held by the social whole It makes reference to unanimously accepted value upon which the process of resolving or balancing conflicting interests depend. Unlike what he regards as the "myth" of the public interest as policy standard, public interest, in his view (as unanimously held value) recognizes the reality of conflicts and so is not applied to policies. Sorauf's "modest conception" of a public interest, then, makes it applicable to the democratic method: "the interest of all in the democratic method and its settlement of conflict by orderly rules and procedures".[18] Policies do not unite people, only method does, and is therefore the proper reference of the public interest.

It would seem then that, contrary to what he explicity rejects at first, Sorauf finally comes to accept the notion of public interest as a commonly held value. This is not so for two reasons. First, his conception differs from

the first definition he rejects. For him there is a difference between a value and an interest. Interests are held in policies, values do not necessarily refer to policies. No interest can be assumed to be unanimously held, and so no interest can be claimed to be the public (commonly held) interest. Values, on the other hand; can be unanimously adhered to. Therefore values, not interest, can capture best what the idea of public interest connotes. This is why Sorauf feels that the democratic method of decision making, being a unanimously held value by all members of the community, constitutes the public interest:

> "Perhaps, however, Americans do embrace a public interest or value in another sense. They are agreed upon a governmental process that reconciles divergent interests according to established rules and process. We are at one in accepting the method of democracy, even though we may share no common policy goals. We expect only that this political organization will settle in an orderly, equitable way the differences that divide us. Americans, in other words, accept the method of demoncracy without attaching to it any concrete ideology or values... We are bound together, therefore, in accepting the process of demoncracy and the method of compromise, regardless of the policies it may produce.
>
> To this extent we may claim a "public interest"-- our interest in the demoncracic method and in its settlement of conflict by orderly rule and procedures." [19].

So from the assumption that "public interest" as commonly held interest has meaning only when there are interests unanimously held by people, coupled with the belief that no interest (in policies) are so held unanimously, Sorauf concludes that the concept makes sense only when applied to the democractic method of decision making--which is a commonly accepted value.

But this will not do as an acceptable meaning of the concept. We know that public interest features mostly in the language of politics and administration from which Sorauf wants to remove it. A value that is commonly held by all, outside the realm of conflict, or a policy that is unanimously assented to without any opposition, are not usually justified by appeal to the public interest; nor do they need to be so justified.[20] Policies are claimed to be in the public interest when there are wants the satisfaction of which they can enhance and there are justifications that opposition to their formulations are not well-informed or even biased. Thus the use of the concept leaves open the possibility of opposition. However (and this is my second reason for saying that Sorauf does not change his objection to the meaning of public interest as common interest), even this "modest conception" is rejected by him in a later work in which he takes a "stronger and more negative" position.[21]

Like Sorauf, J. D. Miller objects to the notion of public interest as common interests on the ground that no common concern has ever been observed among a people, and probably it may never be observed:

> I am not denying that there can ever be such a thing as the general interest, I am saying that the only way in which we can consider it scientifically is by looking for evidence that it exists and that the only evidence worthy of consideration will be widespread concern in any society. Such common concern is, I believe, rare, it does occur, but it does not last. When it does occur, it is much more often related to ends than to means, and is likely to dissolve under the stress of divergent interests pressing for the employment of different means.[22].

Miller is also concerned with policies as generalized means toward the attainment of accepted ends. His problem is the reality of conflicting interests expressed in different policies; and for this reason, it is directly relevant to our basic problem: Suppose security of the community enjoys a widespread acceptance of all members as an end; but that there is no widespread agreement on the particular means (policies) for its achievement: training every citizen in military tactics, hiring mercenaries, relying on the "goodwill" of friendly countries, or a combination to the inconvenience of having to undergo military training, may favour reliance on foreigners for their security. There will be at least one to speak in favour of even the most absurb means. Can we then say with honesty, and confidently, that any of these policies is the public interest? How do we know what is the common interest of people as members of the public.

In answering this question, one could simply deny that there is a public interest in such a situation. Since there is no unanimous agreement of all members of the community on "military training for youths", it cannot be regarded as the public interest, and we might be forced to conclude that "in such situations it is just not possible to assert that it is in the public interest to adopt one rather than another policy".[23].

But this is not the only answer one could give, and it is certainly not the best answer. One reason why it is not the best answer is that it is not necessary to conceive interests as self-centered goals of individuals, unknowable by anyone esle besides the individuals who possess them. Once we do not have such a subjective conception of interests, it will be easier to see how it is possible to objectively determine what is in the interest of another person, and so to objectively determine what is in the interest of the public, even where the latter refers to interests common to various (unassignable) members of a community.

III

One could approach our basic question from the perspective of someone who believes that people could take interest in things other than what

gives them pleasure. One could attack Sorauf, Miller and others for following Bentham in presupposing psychological hedonism, and then proceed to show that, even in the face of such conflicting views exemplified in our basic problem, persons could possibly take interest in certain social values which could then be taken as the constituents of a possible public interest. In other words, even where it is conceded that people are divided on certain policies, there are still other values which they as individuals can take an interest in alongside their own private values. The evidence of conflicting views then does not necessarily mean that there is no public interest or that we cannot know it. What individuals collectively take interest in, a social value which is irreducible to private values, if there is any such thing, will constitute the public interest. One would then follow Wolff in castigating liberal philosophers for being unable (theoretically and practically) to countenance the public interest as characterized.[24]

It will be recalled that Wolff locates the reference of the public interest in what he refers to as the social values of community: the affective community, the productive community and the rational community, "the reciprocal consciousness of a shared culture" and this interest is a possible element in the public interest. Further, for Wolff, it is not the same as the summation of private interests because the object of my interest in the shared culture of the community makes essential reference to states of consciousness in at least two people. It is irreducible to my own state of consciousness alone. It refers to a reciprocal state of consciousness in myself and others with whom I share the joy of a common cultural tradition. Second, people may take interest in the productive community, in the creation and enjoyment of a reciprocal awareness in the work process, that is, in cooperation with others, and this may also be viewed as an element of a possible public interest. Finally and most important for a new political philosophy being pressed by Wolff is the type of reciprocal consciousness that is appropriate to entire societies of men, the rational community. This is "the collective deliberation upon social goals and collective determination of social choices". It is achieved by equals who discourse together publicly for the specific purpose of social decision. When the value of the dialogue itself is recognized individuals may be willing to defend it at all costs, even at the risk of sacrificing the pursuit of private values. Otherwise, there is no necessary conflict between the public interest and private interests.

But this approach cannot help us resolve the basic problem, it only poses it anew. The problem Wolff addresses is not to determine whether there is any justification for the claim that a policy is in the public interest in the face of conflicting views. Rather his problem is to show that conflicts notwithstanding, there are certain values people hold which qualify as the public interest. What we are interested in, however, is whether and now we can know that a policy is in the public interest even when there are oppositions to its adoption. This is the real practical problem. What Wolff means by the public interest is not the object of the sceptics' attack. That Wolff's approach cannot help us resolve the problem is by no means strange. In

"Community". Wolff's effort is to urge for a shift from the liberal political discourse and in particular from the liberal concept of interest which is presupposed in the various sceptical arguments. For Wolff, neigher classical liberalism nor modern pluralism will do for they all emphasize the reality of conflicts and group struggle.[25] Wolff, however, wants to emphasize the importance of the political process, not as a means of resolving conflicts but as a means of discovering truth. It is very much like urging a shift from a whole world-view to another. Since our basic problem is raised within the liberal theory, perhaps a solution to it could be motivated from the perspective of that theory.

IV

I have been maintaining, without proof, that a person could be mistaken about what his interests are, and that other persons may know what a person's interests are and advance them on his behalf. If true, these facts about interests might help in solving our basic problem. For part of the sceptic's problem rests on his conception of interest. Our basic problem makes sense within the liberal tradition. To solve it we have to motivate a liberal notion of interest which, following Barry we may conceive as a want-regarding concept. Interests are what put a person in a position to satisfy wants. To say that a policy X is in the interest of a person A is to say that X increases A's opportunity to satisfy his wants. Because interests have immediate reference to policies, they are not the same as wants. Thus, even if it can be claimed that A cannot be mistaken about his wants, since his interests are those policies or actions that put him in a position to satisfy his wants, it remains true that he can make mistakes about what his interests are. By the same reasoning, it remains true that B can know and promote A's interests on A's behalf. But, if interests are not as selfish as Sorauf maintains, wants are. An individual, then, if not the best judge of what his interests are, would still be their ultimate source, since they are determined by his wants. Furthermore, one can establish the fact that a certain policy is in a person's interest without knowing whether the person has consciously approved of it. To say that a policy is in A's interest is to say that A wants the result of it; even when he is not known to have consciously approved of it. A person's interests, then, can be known and advanced on his behalf. It will be a question of knowing what his wants are, and what the results of a policy are likely to be, then determining whether those results are the sort that could enhance the degree of want-satisfaction of the individual.

To say this is not to press an ideal-regarding concept of interest. What is basic is the want an individual has. We are not maintaining that certain things--say, smoking, are *not* in the interest of an individual whether he wants them or not. However, it could still be maintained that given the degree of want-satisfaction a person has, or could have in the future, some things which he wants now, might not be in his (best) interests--in view of the fact that they may reduce his degree of want-satisfaction in the future.

Going back then to those questions which constitute our basic problem, one might ask whether the expressions of different views on the different policies necessarily constitute different interests. If we agree that for liberals, interests are what place persons in positions that enable them to satisfy their wants, then it would seem that we can conclude that the expressions of different opinion on different policies, or the advocacy of a particular policy against others, do not necessarily constitute a reflection of differing interests. Interests, on the view we are pressing, are objectively determinable given the wants of persons. Each individual, from his point of view, has an interest in *the policy* that could provide the security he needs for pursuing his want-satisfaction. Given that all individuals have wants the satisfaction of which an adequate security can help to enhance, then each, from his point of view, has a common interest with others, in *the policy* that could provide security. So the policy that is aimed at providing, on the view we are pressing is in the public interest.

Under what circumstance, then, can some individual or group be opposed to a policy that is claimed to be in the common interests of people as members of a community in the sense that it aims at enabling the members to satisfy their wants; in our case, say, the policy of training citizens in defence tactics to provide adequate security. One reason might be that in the situation, it is believed that the policy in question is not he best for the purpose for which it is formulated. Policies are, after all, still human undertakings. They may fail to achieve the objectives for which they are proposed To that extent, it might be denied that they are in the interest of anyone. If for instance, it is proved that military training for the youths will in fact increase the death rate among youths, more than it provides security for the members of the community, there might be concern over its choice as the means of meeting their defence needs. This is, however, possible to determine fairly easily.

However, it is equally true that those opposed to the policy might be mistaken about its effectiveness as a means towards the satisfaction of the wants they commonly share with others. They may oppose it for lack of adequate knowledge about its effectiveness. Administrators are often confronted with the problem of analyzing the various data-supporting their adoption of one policy rather than another, and in most cases, agreement on effectiveness, if it is the only problem, can be easily reached.

On the other hand, still, there are those who will oppose the policy even when they have no doubt about its effectiveness. They may know it is, perhaps, an effective means for the purpose, but nevertheless oppose it because they believe that there is another policy which when compared with the first, is more in their own interest. The youths who are to be involved in military training, might be opposed to the policy because it requires them to make sacrifice for others. Thus many will prefer a policy which makes it possible for them to be "free riders" while others pay for the services they enjoy. It is this set that is most difficult to convince. It may be assumed, however, that an administrator who claims that a policy is in the public interest may be taken to believe that any alternative to it will be worse for all those whose want-satisfaction it aims at increasing. When doubts about a policy's being in the public interest are expressed, it is the justification for this type of claim that could be put to question. Unfortunately, even though

data may be provided by the administrator to support his claim, the "free rider" is not likely to be satisfied.

Thus, apart from the concern over whether a policy is the most efficient and the best in the circumstance for promoting the degree of what-satisfaction of the public, one has to worry over the problem posed by special interests and "free riders". While the question of effectiveness and efficiency can be resolved, in most cases, satisfactorily, the question posed by special interests and "free riders" raises a larger problem which might lead to a consideration of its normative claim.

The concept of public interest is applicable in the justification of policies which are aimed at benefitting everyone whose want-satisfaction may be increased by such policies. The policy in question need not claim any superiority over others. After the foregoing considerations, however, we can see that there is a possible justification for that claim to superiority if it is made. The reason is that in a community where there is a substantial agreement on the legitimate authority of the state, the common interest people have as members can be advanced mostly by the state authority, sometimes against the pressures of special interests. It is the administrator's task to balance the demands of special interests and the interests of the public. The amorphous nature of the public demands that its interest be advanced by state policies. This then is the modest claim that could be made about the importance of the concept in the administrator's language. Of course, it is still not to claim as absolute superiority for the public interest. Obviously other considerations enter into the administrator's thinking. Justice is one. But they do not necessarily conflict. Indeed, from what has been pressed here, it could be maintained that the members of public (even where the public is equivalent to the whole community) have a shared interest in a policy that guarantees the pursuit of justice. This will be so especially if, as a policy, it will have equal application to all concerned. Then everyone will have interest in it, from his own point of view since his degree of want-satisfaction could be improved by such policy.

Now, apart from the objections which have been considered, there is at least one more serious scholar of the concept who has levelled strong criticisms against this definition. In her book referred to earlier, Virginia Held maintains that the public interest is not adequately conceived as the interest of persons as members of an unassignable individuals. For

> "..... merely to benefit indeterminate persons would seem to be a questionable criterion for the public interest, because anything under consideration, such as a measure conducive to defence or full employment, will probably harm *some* indeterminate persons"[27].

She then charges Barry for not giving any "indication of how to decide in such cases, whether the activity at issue is then in or not in the public interest".[28]

I hope that the assumption behind this objection is not that one cannot decide in such critical situations what the public interest is. For it is clear from Barry's analysis, and from what has been said so far, how one can deal with such situations of conflict.[29] The innovation brought in by this criticism, however, is the idea that, against the unassignable group referred to as

the public, there could be at least another unassignable group which has an equal claim to the label "the public". If this is correct, then if policy X increases the opportunity of the members of, say, public A, to satisfy their wants, but it reduces the opportunity of the members of public B, then there will be a problem if one were to claim that policy X is in the public interest (wintout specifying the public in question).

If this is the crux of Held's objection, I think it could be met. For one thing, it is often clear the type of want-satisfaction a policy claimed to be for the public interest is expected to improve. To take a familiar example: Suppose a road is to be constructed across a town. This is a particular action which might be justified, for being in the public interest. Such a justification might be warranted if oppositions are expressed against the project. It could be claimed to be in the public interest if it is expected to increase the opportunity of an indeterminate number of individuals in the town to get their (transport) wants satisfied. Suppose, however, that the road cannot be constructed without some inconvenience to some groups. The groups may be assignable or unassignable. For instance, some houses may have to be pulled down to make way for the road and in this case the inconvenience will be due to assignable individuals. We could then maintain that in the capacity of these individuals as houseowners along the route of road construction, the policy at issue is not in their interest. But it might still be in their interest considered as members of the public with (transport) wants to satisfy. On the other hand it is even rare to find any such a policy executed without some adequate compensation to houseowners.

However, suppose we consider the interest of the other "public": the unassigned group which might find its degree of want-satisfaction reduced by the policy of road construction across the town. I do not know how such a "public" can arise unless one can imagine that there could be some yet-to-be-discovered individuals whose opportunity to satisfy transportation wants might be reduced by the construction of roads in a town! Policies claimed to be in the public interest are not just chosen arbitraily, and if particular policies are considered along with particular wants they are expected to contribute towards satisfying, then there are variety of policies that could be claimed to be in the public interest via the idea of shared interests of unassignable individuals.

CONCLUSION

So far, my concern has been to clarify at least two issues. First, I have tried to press the view that, to know what the public interest means in the context of policy decisions, one should not assume before-hand its claim to superiority as a standard of policy. There are objective considerations that determine its meaning in particular contexts, and in most cases, such considerations are determinable without having to sample the opinion of individuals about what their interests are. Second, I have tried to maintain that there is a conception of interest which makes sense in liberal democratic theory and from which one could generate a want-regarding concept of the public interest without conflating it with the common good and without conceiving it as the sum of individual interests. In this sense, the public

interest will be considered as the common or shared interests of persons as members of a public, a loose group of indeterminate and unassigned individuals.

The problem, I realize, is with the term "public". For if it is impossible to make sense of its reference, we probably cannot make sense of the whole concept of the public interest. If there is no public, there is nothing like the public interest. But even if it is true that there is no stable public, it does not follow that there could be no public to be identified for each policy or actions that is claimed to be for the public interest. True enough, because of the fact that for them the public interest is equivalent to the common good, idealist philosophers have no problem with the concept. For them the public interest is stable because it refers to the interest that is public and the latter refers to the common good which is also the good of each individual member of society whether he recognizes it or not. However, it should be possible to agree that this does not exhaust the range of possible meanings of the concept. And what I have done is to take the concept out of this idealist interpretation and find its possible application in liberal political discourse. In majority of cases where the concept get used, what is being urged, it should be clear, is the interest of "unassignable individuals". So if the concept of unassignable individuals makes sense, there should be no problem in finding application for the concept of the public interest without conflating it with the idealist concept of the common good.[30]

But if there is no problem in thus finding application for the concept there might be problem in justifying an action or policy of the political authority just because it is in the interest of an unassignable individual. I grapple with the last problem above where I consider whether and in what sense the public interest is to be regarded as a worthy goal of public policy. My argument there is not as conclusive as one might wish. And this problem in fact lies at the root of the need to formulate an adequate theory of the public interest. The above considerations by no means have any claim to being sufficient clarifications of theissues that need clarification. However, they can at least claim to be necessary steps on the way toward an understanding of the public interest in liberal politics.

FOOTNOTES

1. Many writers have noticed the popularity of the concept in political theory, e.g. William D. Zarector, "The Public Interest and Political Theory", in *Ethics,* Vol. 69 (July 1959), 277, and Virginia Held *Public Interest and Individual Interests,* (New York: Basic Book, 1970) pp. 203-226.

2. See for instance, Clarke E. Cochran, "Political Science and 'The Public Interest", in the *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 36, 1974, pp. 327-355, esp. 353, and R. P. Wolff, *The Poverty of Liberalism* (Beacon Press, Boston 1968) ch. V. But of Brian Barry *Political Argument* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1965) Ch. XI.

3. See, among others, F. J. Sorauf, "The Public Interest Reconsidered" in *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 19, 1957, pp. 617- 639, and "The Conceptual Muddle" in C. J. Friedrich (ed.) *The Public Interest* (Nomos V), (New York: Atherton Press, 1962,) pp. 183- 190.

4. For instance, J. D. Miller in *The Nature of Politics*, (London: Duckworth, 1962) Ch. IV. In section Ii of this paper, I shall deal with the objections raised by Sorauf, and Miller will provide the basis for the proposals to be discussed in Section III and IV.

5. For instance, Brain Barry. See his *Political Argument op cit.* Ch. X, "The Use and Abuse of the Concept of the Public Interest" in C. J. Friedrich (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 191--204 and "The Public Interest" in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Suppl. Vol. 38 (1964) pp. 1–10.

6. e.g. Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, (New York Hafner, 1948), p. 3: The community is a fictitious body, composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting as ti were its members. The interest of the community then is, what? --- the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it".

7. have come to realize that the Marxist concept of (class) interests (i.e. imputed interests) cannot be compared with the concept of interest as it figures in liberal political discuourse. Hence the need to be specific about the content in which the argument of this paper make sense. I am grateful to Professor Andrew Levine on this point.

8. Cf Brain Barry's proposed definition in *Political Argument op.cit.*, p. 190.

9. My justification for the choice of the problem is that it exemplifies the typical practical issue that critics of the concept could raise. See, for instance, J. D. Miller, *op. cit.*, Ch. IV.

10. "The Public Interest Reconsidered", *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 17, 1957, pp. 617–639, and "The Conceptual Muddle", in C. J. Friedrich, *op. cit.* pp. 183–190.

11. "The Public Interest Reconsidered", *op. cit.*, pp. 616.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 618.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 3

14. *O.p. cit.*, pp. 3

15. Bentham, "Plan of Parliamentary Reform" in ***Collected Works*** III, 33, cited in Hannah Pitkin: ***The Concept of Representation,*** University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972) p. 198, also cf. J. S. Mill, "Considerations on Representative Government" in H. B. Acton (e.d.), ***Utilitarianism et al.,*** (J. M. Dent and Sons, London, 1972) p. 208

16. ***Op. cit.,*** pp. 635

17. ***Ibid.,*** pp. 635–639.

18. ***Op. cit.*** pp. 633.

19. ***Op. cit.,*** 633.

20. Cf. Richard Flathman, ***The Public Interest*** (New York: Willey and Sons, 1966), pp. 71. "..... it is in part because disagreement is rarely if ever eliminated that we have the concept "Public Interest".

21. In "The Conceptual Muddle", ***op. cit.,*** pp. 183–190.

22. ***Op. cit.,*** p. 61.

23. ***Ibid.,*** p. 61.

24. In "Community" in his ***The Poverty of Liberalism*** (Boston: Beacon Press, Boston, 1968), Chap. 5.

25. For Wolff's definition of classical liberalism and modern pluralism, see ***The Poverty of Liberalism*** (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968) Chaps 1 and 4.

26. In Ch. X of ***Political Argument*** (Boston: London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1965.

27. ***Held, op. cit.,*** p. 117.

28. ***Ibid.,*** p. 117.

29. See Ch. XI and XII of ***Political Argument.***

30. Rousseau proposes an idealist concept of interest in his discussion of the general interest. See his ***On The Social Contract,*** Roger Masters ed. (New York: St. Martins, 1978), Bk..I Chap. VII and Bk II., Chap. III.

IN DEFENCE OF MEDICAL PESSIMISM

Dr. J. I. Asike

In the past, the Judeo-Christian tradition has attempted to walk a balanced path between medical vitalism (that preserves life at all cost) and medical pessimism (that kills when life seems fraustrating, burdensome, and useless). Both of these extremes are rooted in an identical idolatory of life - an attitude that, at least by inference, views death as an unmitigated, absolute evil and life as the absolute good. The middle course that has structural Judeo-Christian attitudes is that life is indeed a basic and precious good, but a good to be preserved precisely as the condition of other values. Among man's rights the right to life is fundamental, for there can be no further rights or duties unless there is someone there to have them. That this is a natural right is evident. The only way man can fulfil his function as man, reach the goal of his existence, and achieve his highest good is by performing morally good acts. To perform such acts he must live. It is, therefore, the view of the Judeo-Christian tradition that the very nature of man demands that he has the right to life.

I find it of great philosophical interest with the above mind to read the divergent views of various writers on the topic(s) of medical vitalism and medical pessimism and to understand why proponents and critics of these views have given strong support and opposition (as the case may be) to any form of its permissibility and legality. The issue of medical pessimism or Mercy Killing or, in short, Active Euthanasia raises the most agonizing and delicate moral problems. Mercy Killing is the giving of an easy, painless death to one suffering from an incurable or agonizing ailment. Its advocates argue that the person will die anyway, that the purpose is not to invade the person's right to his life but only to substitute a painless for a painful death; that the shortening of the person's life merely deprives him of a bit of existence that is not only useless but unbearable; that for all the good be can do to himself or others his life has reached its term anyway. Decision to perform active Euthanasia in some cases is that of the physician, but often it requires the consent of the subject. Until recently, Euthanasia had only this meaning. It is still the only meaning appropriate to the term Mercy Killing, where killing has an active sense. However, an extended sense of the term has emerged due to the controvercy over it in the recent decades. A distinction is being made between the active euthanasia and passive euthanasia. In passive or indirect Euthanasia, artificial life support systems such as respirators, intravenous feeding, heart pump, etc., are either not employed to prolong the life of the terminally and hopelessly ill, or if employed are purposely stopped in order to allow the person to die.

In some sense, then, we are talking about directly taking or terminating a person's life, and in another, we are talking about allowing a person to die. Since the term Euthanasia is such a two-edged sword, cutting both towards

killing someone and allowing someone to die, it might be better to talk in terms of "Mercy Killing" on the one hand, and "Allowing someone to die" on the other. In whatever sense we employ the term in the rest of the paper it simply means what we had earlier referred to as medical pessimism. In other words the means, whether passive or active has one desired goal and that is death. Decision to employ any of the means depends on the orientation complexes of either the physician or the subject. The problem of medical pessimism is best seen in the ambiguity of the terms "terminally ill", "hopelessly ill". These used to, and may still refer to lives that cannot be saved, that are irretrievably in dying process. They may refer to lives that can be saved and sustained, but in a wretched, painful or deformed condition. With regard to infants the problem could take the dimension, which infants, if any should be allowed to die? On what grounds or according to what criteria, as determined by whom? Or again, is there a point at which a life that can be saved is not "meaningful life" as the medical community so often phrases the question? If the past experience of man is any hint of the future, it is safe to say that public discussion of such controversial issues will invariably collapse into such slogans as: "There is no such thing as life not worth saving" or "who is the physician or the parents to play God"? These are questions that have plagued the abortion and suicide debates and we are precisely experiencing it in the Euthanasia discussion since the last two decades.

Much of the debate on Euthanasia has focussed mainly on the Judeo-Christian tradition and the moral justification or otherwise of it. Our attempt in the paper therefore is to try to situate the problem within the Nigerian Socio-cultural setting bearing in mind the words of Lawrence K. PicKett, Chief of Staff at the Yale — New Haven Hospital (U.S.A.), that allowing hopelessly ill patients to die "is accepted medical practice". This according to him "is nothing new. It is just being talked about now".[1] We shall try to argue that the means or the method of medical pessimism makes no moral difference in situations in which it is already established that death is desirable or preferable result and that this has been the attitude and practice in some traditional African groups.

I intend to avoid, wherever possible, the highly theoretical, technical and abstract aspects of the discussions on the topic, using as it were ordinary language and reasoning. The discussion of medical pessimism from an ethical point of view is difficult for the following reasons: First it may easily be misconstrued as a mere recommendation of a wholesale murder of the aged, the infirm and helpless infants. Second, the effect of such a doctrine on weak and unsound minds (and here we have in mind the new attitude of our medics towards material benefits) incapable of weighing correctly the condition which may be held to render death more desirable than life, is apt to be perilous. Third, and most importantly, there are obvious and important obstacles in the way of any practical application in modern civilized societies. Religious prejudices, beliefs, coupled with moral feeling, that human life is so sacred and valuable to be taken, make it difficult to carry out practical application of medical pessimism. And unless it is most strictly regulated,

it would lead to an appalling increase in the forms of crime already too common in our Nigerian Society. If it were legally recognized and socially accepted that terminally ill infants, those with multiple anomalies, trisomy, cardio-pulmonary crippling, meningomyelocele and other central nervous system defects, might be put to death, a new excuse for infanticide would at once be provided in traditional societies, particularly in African societies where this had been the practice in the last and early part of this century.

This notwithstanding, it is our contention that given the stage of our development in Nigeria for instance, the dwindling medical and economic resources available to us and above all the reality of our situation in the context of global economics and values, that we can strike a middle course between sheer concretism and dogmatism. In short, the position we adduce should be based on the circumstances of each case rather than by means of dogmatic formular approach. This is because the sentiments of ethical alternatives are narrowed to dogmatism (which imposes a formula that precinds from circumstances) and pure concretism (which denies the possibility or usefulness of any guidelines).

Again a rational discussion of medical pessimism (mercy killing) has been made somewhat ardous by the religious doctrines and beliefs of the Islamic and Judeo-Christian traditions we have inherited but only assimilated superficially. It seems that one of the earliest rejections of Euthanasia (broadly speaking now) in Jewish thought was by Josephus, the Commander of the defeated Jewish army. His soldiers, after suffering a battering defeat and severe casualty, wished to die honourably by their own bullets to avoid surrender because there was no hope for their survival. One would have expected the retreating army to accord "mercy bullets" to the wounded and completely exhausted solidiers because the only other option is death by starvation or at the hands of the enemy in the waste of an arid battle ground. Rather, Josephus opposed his men by saying".....the soul is a despositum of God, so that man acts wickely in casting it out of the body."[2] In the same vein, Thomas Aquinas contends that whoever "yields to mercy killing acts contrary to natural inclination, natural law and the charity a man owes to himself, and he usurped the function of God."[3]

The plausibility of Josephus and Aquinas arguments, if well considered, would have far reaching effects on the distinctions between the role of God as a Creator and the role of man as a free-willed image of God. In the same light one could therefore argue that if the disposal of human life is exclusively reserved for God, almost every action of man becomes an encroachment of His priviledge. Even admitting therefore that God has given us our life, yet it is truly a gift. A gift belongs to the receiver, who may now do whatever he wills with it. No gift is expected to be retained indefinitely at the expense and to the harm of the receiver. When its possession becomes more injurious than its surrender, it should be in accordance with the will of a good God and wise use of His gift either to terminate or relinguish it. Hence, when I withdraw myself altogether from my society, for example, I am no longer bound. And when the life of a terminally ill or vegatative infant is a positive burden

to the society, the desire to and it is not only laudable but also subject to no moral intervention. The role of God in Creation terminates in man and his freewill. His immanence in man guides man's life and action. Thus, God's will is in man's action. In the light of the above one may therefore recall Kant's maxim that "a rational agent is one who has the power to act in accordance with his idea of laws, that is, to act in accordance with principles."[4] Continuing, Kant says that morality lies not in seeking to satisfy one's own desires or to attain one's own happiness, "but as seeking to obey a law valid for *all* men and to follow an objective standard not determined by his own desires."[5]

This is why Kant adduces the maxim that "if actions are to be morally good, they must be done for the sake of duty".[6] It is Kant's assertion that the good taken purely and simply is found only in a good will, and a goodwill is one that acts, not from *natural inclination*, but from duty. Even acts done in line of duty but not from the motive of duty have no moral value. They lack the *form* of morality, that which precisely gives then their moral quality, and this is nothing else but respect for the law which is what Kant means by duty. Thus an act is not good because of the end to which it leads, but solely because of the motive of duty from which it is performed. The issue of establishing the relevance of "for the sake of duty" in the context of our discussion becomes problematic.

The question therefore is: Is it a duty on our part to opt for medical vitalism (bearing in mind the sacredness of life) or medical pessimism where *compassion* may be the motivating force to terminate the suffering of the terminally ill? Critics as well as opponents of medical pessimism have often confused natural inclination which is a biological drive in man with the motive of duty which is a moral issue. The fundamental reason why we think that such a misconception is wrong is that it perverts the whole realm of ends, according to which each rational being, each person must be treated never merely as a means but always as an end in himself. The dignity of the rational being, the nobility of a person as such, is therefore the fundamental reason why I must be moral not necessarily from any biological drive or inclination but for the sake of duty. This calls to mind Schoppenhauer's contention that for one to identify with the "other" in doing an action, one suffers the woe of the "other" just as one feels one's woe; one desires the "other's" weal just as one desires one's own weal. It is a problem of compassion, of the immediate participation, independent of all motives of inclination, primarily in the suffering of another, and thus in the prevention or elimination of other's suffering.

Hence compassion is simply and solely the real basis of all voluntary justice and "Loving-kindness".[7]

Proponents of medical vitalism often argue that there are obvious evils in mercy killing. The difficulty of ascertaining the patients' real consent which leads to the abuse, the risk of an incoherent diagnosis, the risk of administering Euthanasia and the "wedge argument" which says that condoning Euthanasia would lead to general disrespect for the sanctity of human

life, all make it difficult to carry out practical Euthanasia.[8] Another danger inherent in medical operation generally is that one can make a mistake by not acting as much as by acting. Moreover, the "wedge argument" that Euthanasia can lead to general disrecpect for the sanctity of life, does not explain why wholesale killing in war has no serious effect upon the value generally attached to the preservation of life. A true estimate of the value of human life would lead to the conclusion that the wishes, interests and aspirations of every human being ought to be taken into account by every other human being who has dealings with him.

Can, then, genuine moral obligation arise merely from the necessary connection of necessary means with a necessary end, independently of any commanding authority? In a sense, yes. Before any authority can command there must already exist the moral obligation of obeying the command. Moral obligation is entailed in the very idea of the highest moral value. Just as the evidence of truth imposes itself on the theoretical reason and demands assent, so the moral ideal imposes itself on the practical reason and commands consent. Moral obligation is but the clear manifestation of the intrinsic connection between an act to be done, as the necessary means, and the love of the good, as a necessary end. One cannot love the good and refuse the act. For the purpose of our argument, we may categorize good acts into two kinds: Those that *must* be done and those that *may* be done. The kind of good that must be done is the kind whose omission would render the necessary end impossible, and thus is as necessary as the end itself. The kind of good that may be done but is not of obligation affords an option, since the end can be obtained in perhaps other ways and the necessity is not absolute. It is the latter that serves our purpose in the discussion in that Euthanasia may be administered not as a means but an end in itself.

Sidney Hook had stated that the only rationally acceptable philosophy about the value of human life is that there is no ethical value in living just any sort of life. In other words, the only life worth living according to him "is the good life."[9] It seems that, where it is possible to define the value of good life differently, one basic fact remains. That is, no matter what our concept of good life, it presupposes a physical basis, a certain indispensable minimum of social and physical well-being, necessary for even a limited realization of that good life. Where that minimum is failing, together with all rational probability of attaining it, to live a life that at its best can only be vegetative, and at its worst runs the entire extent of degredation, public shame, reproach, abuse and discredit, what a high minded person could do is to listen and accept the noble adage in the traditional Ibo Culture which says that death is better than meaningless and vegetative life. We must recognize no categorical imperative "to live" but to "live well". Hume felt the same way when he staed:

> If I turn aside a stone falling directly on my head, I disturb the course of nature and invade the peculiar province of the Almighty by lengthening out my life beyond the period which, by the general law of matter and motion, He has assigned to it.[10]

CONCLUSION:

It is our view, therefore, that life is not a value to be preserved in and for itself. To maintain that would commit us to a form of medical vitalism that makes no human sense. It is a value to be preserved precisely as a condition for other values, and therefore in-so-far as these other values remain attainable. Since these other values cluster around and are rooted in human relationships, it seems to follow according to Richard A. McCormick that life is a value to be preserved "only in so far as it contains some potentiality for human relationships"[11] When in human judgment this potentiality is totally absent or would be because of the condition of the individual, that life can be said to have achieved its potential. In addition, once death is regarded as a desirable result, the agent should choose that course of behaviour (that is, active Euthanasia) in which he will most effectively and with least suffering cause the positive consequence, and should accept and welcome responsibility for the better end. It is finally our view that once a situation has been defined as that of Euthanasia, however, the decision in favour of death has already been made and death should be assumed to be the preferable choice.[12]

FOOTNOTES.

1. PicKett, Lawrance K. Washington Post, October 28, 1973.

2. Joseph, Flavius: *The Jewish War* Transl. by R. Trail London 1851 Book 3 Chapter 8 Section 5.

3. Aquinas Thomas: *Ethicus:* London 1892 and Part Article 5.

4. Kant, Immanuel: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals. Translated and Analysed by H. J. Panton,* Harper Torchbook, The Academy Library, Harper and Row, Publishers New York 1956, p.25.

5. Kant op. cit. p.22.

6. Kant op. cit. p. 14 In another passage, Kant refers to this as the *formal maxim* incontradistinction to *material maxims.* See Kant op. cit. pp. 64–65.

7. c.f. Schoppenhauer, A. *On The Basis of Morality.* Translated by E.F Payne, The Bobbs Meril Co. Inco. New York 1965.

8. Yale: *Euthanasia and Other Aspects of Life and Death* London. Oxford University Press 1936.

9. Hook, Sidney "The Fear of Death" in *The British Medical* Journal, 1958, Vol. 85 ff.

10. Hume, David: *Philosophical Works edited by H. T. Green and T. H. Grose* London 1874 – 1875 Vol II, p. 206 ff.

11. McCormick, A. Richard S. J. "To Save or Let Die" in *America National Catholic Weekly Review* New York, July 13, 1974 p. 10 (Edited and Published by Jesuits).

12. c.f. Natalie, Abrams: "Active and Passive Euthanasia" *in Philosophy, Vol. 53 No. 204,* April 1978 p. 261.

THE REALIST BIAS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

DR. PARKER ENGLISH

Kwasi Wiredu presented an intriguing response to one of his questioners at the 1984 meeting of the Nigerian Philosophical Association. The questioner wondered why Wiredu is intent on comparing the structure of English with that of languages which were developed in Africa. Doesn't concern with this issue make Africans prisoners of the system of thought embedded in the English language? Wiredu's response was succint. He said that indigenes of English speaking Africa already are prisoners who will escape only by means of comparisons such as his own.

Wiredu's concern applies a more general worry to a specific issue. The more general worry is that *each* of us is a prisoner of the system of thought embedded in his primary language. K. C. Anyanwu, for example, argues that we interpret what we perceive as we do because of how we talk we interpret we interpret what we perceive as we do because of how we talk about it. His primary support for this claim seems to be Mill's ; to describe a thing is to affirm a connection between it and every other things which is either denoted or connoted by the terms used. Anyanwu extends the poing, however, claiming that the structure of the English language in particular predisposes us to regard the subject and object of perception as two distinct entities. He thinks this predisposition is mistaken and that the observational disturbance factor involved in experiments at the quantum level proves the point.[1]

Many contemporary philosophers agree with Anyanwu's first claim. W.V. Quine, for example, claims that we do not even begin to regard perceived things as objects, as things for which spatial difference entails numerical difference, until we have begun to master certain linguistic forms. Specifically, we do not do so until we have mastered the use of pluralization, the indefinite article, pluralized demonstratives, numerals, etc. - what Quine calls the apparatus of individuation.

I think Quine and Anyanwu are right that we interpret what we perceive as we do largely because of how we talk about it. Furthermore, I think a point quite related to Anyanwu's second claim is right. I think the ways in which we learn to use those devices in the English language by which we construe perceived things as objects predisposes us to regard the subject and object of perception as two distinct entities. In other words, the ways in which we learn to use those devices in English by which we construe perceived things as objects predisposes us towards Realism and away from Idealism. I shall develop this point in the following discussion. Space prevents my discussing whether or not Realism is ultimately justifiable.

Realists affirm while Idealists deny that a perceived thing exists while not perceived. Now perception itself obviously does not exist while it does not exist. So Realists affirm while Idealists deny that a perceived thing is distinct from perception.

A primary support for Realism is the assumption that most perceived things can be seen as well as felt. The argument is that a seen dot, for example, cannot be identical with the seeing of it since it can also be felt; similarly, a felt dot cannot be identical with the feeling of it since it can also be seen.

As is well known, Berkeley used the Molyneux question to challenge the assumption at the base of this argument. He claimed that a newly sighted person who could identify a certain shape tactually must also be able to identify that shape visually if the felt shape were indeed identical with the seen shape. Since Berkeley knew of at least two cases in which newly sighted people could *not* do this, he denied that a felt shape is actually identical with the correlative seen shape. He concluded that perceived things are not distinct from perception; we think they are because experience teaches us to correlate each seen thing with exactly one felt thing, and vice versa.[2]

It seems to me that the ways in which we learn to use the English language predispose us towards Realism precisely because they predispose us to regard seen objects as identical with felt objects *in a certain way.* The key point in my argument concerns the nature of this certain way of identifying seen objects with felt objects. I shall therefore develop this point before turning to how the ways in which we learn English predispose us to construe seen objects as identical with felt objects in this way.

Normally, we use two primary correlations in identifying a seen object with a felt object. The first might be called the *behavioral correlation*: we can effectively guide our behaviour with respect to a given felt object by focusing on a certain seen object; and vice versa. The second might be called the *transfer correlation*: we can identify the object we would feel under certain conditions by identifying the object we now see; and vice versa. Normally, then, we identify a given seen object with a certain felt object if the behavioural and transfer correlations hold between them. In other words, these correlations are the criteria by means of which we identify a given seen object with a certain felt object.

There are two obvious facts about these criteria which are relevant to whether or not perceived objects can actually be regarded as distinct from perception. The first fact is that people *can* use these criteria to identify seen objects with felt objects. They can do so, anyway, after they have become accustomed to the correlations involved in the criteria. The second fact is that these criteria govern a sense of identity which is *numerical* identity. There is *at most* one felt object which is related to any seen object by the behavioural correlation. There is *at most* one felt object which is related to any seen object by the transfer correlation. Thus, regardless of whether or not newly sighted people can master the transfer correlation, normal people *can* regard seen objects as numerically identical with felt

objects. The reason is that normal people *can* correlate any given seen object with at most one felt object.

This is not all to say that Realism is that true theory of perception or that Berkeley was wrong to challenge Realism with the Molyneux question. If an object is distinct from perception and if it is seen as well as felt, then the seen object must be more than numerically identical with the felt object; the seen object must be identical with the felt object in exactly the way the felt object is identical with itself; and vice versa. Thus, for example, the seen object must be qualitatively identical with the felt object exactly as the felt object is qualitatively identical with itself. After all, if an object is distinct from perception and if it is seen as well as felt then a single, independent thing has been presented both visually and tactually exactly as it exists when not perceived. And there is only one way in which it can exist when not perceived; it exists exactly as it is. But if a seen object is identical with the correlative felt object exactly as the felt object is identical with itself, it certainly seems that a newly sighted person should be able to identify the shape of the seen object. This is true, anyway, if he can already identify the shape of the felt object. For the shape of the seen object would be identical with that of the felt object *exactly* as the shape of the felt object is identical with itself.

As a result, it *does* seem that Berkeley was on the right track in using the Molyneux question to challenge Realism. He expressed this challenge in unfortunately strong terms by denying that seen objects are identical with felt objects in any sense at all. For the bahavioral and transfer correlations *are* met by seen objects and felt objects; and these correlations *do* serve as criteria for a sense of numerical identity. Still, as Berkeley argued, the Molyneux question seems to show that seen objects are not identical with felt objects in any way which supports the claim that perceived objects are distinct from perception. For the Molyneux question does seem to show that no seen object is *strictly* identical with the correlative felt object. It does so by showing that no seen object is qualitatively identical with the correlative felt object exactly as the felt object is qualitatively identical with itself.[3]

Regardless of whether or not the Molyneux question actually challenges Realism, however, it does illustrate our major problem. It helps, that is, to show how the ways in which we learn to use the English language predispose us towards Realism and away from Idealism. It does so by showing that we need a sense of identity which is stronger than numerical identity to capture the argument between Realism and Idealism concerning the intermodality of a perceived object. Given the effective use of the behaviour and transfer correlations as criteria, both Idealism and Realism must regard a seen object as numerically identical with the correlative felt object. Where Idealism and Realism differ on this point concerns whether or not a seen object is also *strictly* identical with the correlative felt object: Realism affirms while Idealism denies that a seen object is strictly identical with the correlative felt object. Realism affirms while Idealism denies that a seen object is

qualitatively identical with the correlative felt object exactly as the felt object is qualitatively identical with itself, for example. Now it seems to me that the ways in which we learn English predispose us towards Realism precisely because they predispose us to substitute the identity between felt object and itself for that between a felt object and the correlative seen object. In other words, they predispose us to regard the identity between a felt object and the correlative seen object as a sense of strict identity.

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I base the argument to this conclusion on Quine's analysis of the process by which we learn to treat perceived things as objects.

Quine begins his analysis by pointing out that the perceived occupant of any spatial location can be treated equally as an object, as a set of undetached object parts, or as an un–individuated portion of the correlative mass. He also points out that ostension alone will never determine which treatment is indicated. He concludes that we can determine a unique way of treating a perceived thing only by determining a unique way of interpreting the term which refers to that thing. In particular, he claims that our learning to treat perceived things as objects is bound up with our learning to interpret certain nouns as general terms which refer dividedly. These are the nouns which accept what Quine calls the devices of individuation: pluralization, pluralized demonstratives, numerals, and the indefinite article for example. General nouns cannot be used properly for equal reference to the components of a sum as well as to the sum itself. For example, each component of the sum of this dog and that dog is *a* dog, whereas their sum is *those two dogs.* (In contrast, the sum of this meat and that meat is as much meat as they are. Thus, 'meat' is a mass noun which refers cumulatively). Furthermore, a general noun cannot be used properly unless we distinguish when one of a certain sort of thing is present from when two or three or more of that sort of thing are present. That is, learning to interpret a noun as a general term with divided reference requires learning not only the salience of the similarity between, say, Fido and Bowser but also the salience of the spatial difference between Fido and Bowser. Obviously, this latter is bound up with learning to use the identity predicate and its negation just as it is bound up with learning to use pluralization, pluralized demonstratives, the indefinite article, and numerals. Thus, beyond recognizing their similarities, we learn to construe Fido and Bowser as dogs by learning to use 'is the same as' with double ostensions of Fido or double ostensions of Bowser, but not with one ostension of Fido and one ostension of Bowser. And we learn to construe them as dogs by learning to use 'is not the same as' with one ostension of Fido and one of Bowser but not with double ostensions of Fido or double ostensions of Bowser. (In contrast, meat is meat whether here or there or both here and there.)[4]

It seems to me quite likely that Quine's analysis of the process by which we learn to treat perceived things as objects is correct. That is, we learn to treat perceived things as objects in conjunction with learning to

interpret the nouns which accept the devices of individuation as referring to things for which spatial difference is construed as salient. If this *is* how we learn to treat perceived things as objects, then it follows as a matter of course that we should treat perceived objects as distinct from perception. More accurately, this follows as a matter of course when it is additionally assumed, along with Quine, that a child's learning to speak often originates as a behavioral response which is conditioned by the example and correction of adults. This is not to say that human consciousness is no more than a sub–gestural surrogate for the running–back–and–forth behavior which precedes sudden drops in the learning curves of rats in mazes. Nor is it to say that there are no innate abilities either to learn or to speak languages. It is to say only that a child's present verbal behaviour can often be analyzed as resulting from the responses of adults to his previous verbal behaviour.

Pavlov's primary generalization concerns the simplest form of conditioning transfer: repeatedly show a red light to a subject immediately prior to shocking him electrically, and he will start when he sees the red light. Quine points out that a variant of this form of transfer occurs when a child learns such eternal sentences as "Snow is white". A child is conditioned to assent to the queries "White?" and "Snow?" in the presence of snow. Then, the word 'snow' is repreatedly presented, in the presence of snow, immediately before the query "White?", "Snow is white?" As a result, the child's assent to "White?" which has been conditioned to the presence of snow is transferred to the presence of 'snow'.[5]

Quine's analysis of how we learn eternal sentences can be easily extended to how we learn to use 'is the same as' in designating the identity between a seen object and the correlative felt object. At least, this is true if we assume that Quine is right about a child's learning to use 'is the same as' and 'is not the same as' mainly in conjunction with learning the salience of the spatial difference between things which are saliently similar.

Under this assumption, the child learns to assent to "... is the same as ...?" with double ostensions of Fido but not with one of Fido and one of Bowser *because* Fido is spatially identical with himself and spatially different from Bowser. Now an adult can certainly query a child with "... is the same as ...?" equally while Fido is ostended once visually and once tactually and while Fido is ostended twice visually or twice tactually. After both of these types of query have been identically answered by the child however, he learns *three* things. First, he learns to individuate what he perceives as objects, as things which are numerically different if they are spatially different. Second, he learns to identify Fido as seen with Fido as felt. That is, the child is then conditioned to the intermodal use of 'is the same as' by transfer from being conditioned to the individuating use of 'is the same as'. Third, the child will then acquire a Realist interpretation of 'is the same as' when this expression is used to designate intermodal identity. For the child will then learn to substitute the identity between Fido as seen and himself for the identity between Fido as seen and Fido as felt. The child will then

learn, in other words, to interpret the identity between a seen object and the correlative felt object as a sense of strict identity He will learn this via a transfer of the conditioning by which he learns to use the identity predicate for individuation.

Thus, the assumption that a child learns to use the identity predicate as a behavioral response to adult example and corretion has two consequences of interest to the problem of perception. First, the child will learn to use the identity predicate for the relation between a seen object and the correlative felt object by transfer from the conditioning of his using the identity predicate for indivuation. Second, the child will learn the Realist interpretation of the intermodal senseof identity. That is, he will learn to substitute the identity between a sense object and itself for the identity between that seen object and the correlative felt object. He will learn to interpret the identity between a seen object and the uniquely correlated felt object as a sense of strict identity.

Of course, the assumption that a child learns the Realist interpretation of the intermodal sense of identity via a transfer of conditioning does not imply that this interpretation is mistaken. After all, the child learns to assent to "Snow is white?" via a transfer of conditioning, and nothing is wrong with this assenting. Rather, the correctness of the Realist interpretation depends on the power of arguments such as the one which is based on the Molyneux question.

The assumption that this Realist interpretation results from a transfer of conditioning does imply, however, that the child would be intuitively suspicious of resistance to this interpretation when he becomes an adult. This assumption implies that an adult would be intuitively suspicious of resistance to his substituting the identity between a seen object and itself for the identity between that seen object and the correlative felt object. After all, such resistance would deny legitimacy to a substitution which he has learned to take for granted. Hence, our intuitive suspicions of Idealism. The Realist interpretation of the intermodal sense of identity for perceived objects is embedded in the way we talk about this sense of identity by the way we learned that talk.

A similar point holds good concerning cases of perspectival relativity, incidentally. The Realist interpretation of the identity predicate in cases of perspectival relativity is embedded in the way we talk about this sense of identity by the way we learned that talk. The process by which an adult teaches a child the individuating use of identity involves time. During this time, Fido may roam about while Bowser stands still. The adult will nonetheless teach the child to affirm "... is identical with ...?" with double ostensions of Fido and double ostensions of Bowser but not with one ostension of Fido and one of Bowser. Again, the child will learn three things. He will learn to treat Fido and Bowser as objects, as things for which spatial difference entails numerical difference. Second, he will learn to use the identity predicate in cases of perspectival relativity. For the child will learn to substitute the identity between Fido as seen from five feet and himself for the identity between as seen from five feet and Fido as seen from fifty feet.

That is, the child will learn via a transfer of conditioning to interpret the sense of identity in cases of perspectival relativity as an sense of strict inditity.[6]

Notice, however, that it is not necessary for these interpretations to be embedded in the way we talk about these two senses of identity for perceived objects. We *can* teach children the individuating use of identity without involving Fido's roaming about while Bowser stands still. We *can* teach children the invididuating use of identity without involving ostensions in different modes of perception. Thus, no critic can object that Idealism entails consequences which are incompatible with a concept necessary for characterizing perceived objects as we do. No critic can object that Idealism's refusing to interpret the relativistic and intermodal senses of identity as senses of strict identity prevents Idealism's regarding a preceived object as something for which spatial difference entails numerical difference.

A critic might still object to the above analysis by claiming that a transfer of stimuli requires a subject's awareness of the distal stimulus in just the way he is aware of the proximal stimulus. After all, young James is equally aware of 'snow' and snow when his assent to "White?" is transferred from snow to 'snow.' And Pavlov's subjects were equally aware of the red light and the electric shock when their startings were transferred from the shock to the light. In contrast, it seems fair to assume that a child's attention is focused on the spatial difference between Fido and Bowser when he learns to use the identity predicate in conjunction with learning to individuate Fido and Bowser as objects. The child would therefore ignore, for example, the relation between what is seen of Fido and what is felt of Fido when he learns to individuate Fido as an object even if he learns this in conjunction with one visual ostension and one tactual ostension of Fido. Thus, so the objection would continue, the child's learning to substitute seen—felt identity cannot result simply from a transfer of the conditioning by means of which he learns to use the identity predicate in individuating perceived things as objects. Rather, if it results from a transfer of stimuli at all, it must result from a transfer which involves the child's being aware of both stimuli involved in the transfer.

In fact, however, a transfer of conditioning between proximal and distal stimuli does not require the subject's being aware of the distal stimulus in the way he is aware of the proximal stimulus. This may be seen from the following experiment. If a subject is repeatedly shocked immediately after uttering words which contain a certain syllable, he will cease to utter any word containing that syllable. However, although he is completely aware of the shock stimulus, he is not aware of the fact that he no longer utters those words now even what those words are. That is, while he avoids the shock by avoiding the words, he is not aware of his avoiding the words as he is aware of his avoiding the shock. He is not aware of the words as he is aware of the shock, even though he has learned to behave in a certain way regarding those words.[7]

Thus, it seems completely feasible to assume that a child learns to substitute seen–seen identity for seen–felt identity while learning the identity predicate's use in individuating perceived things as objects. This seems feasible even though the child may not then be aware of both relata of that substitution. Indeed, if anything, the child's being unaware of one of the relata increases his intuitive suspicion against any theory of perception which denies legitimacy to that substitution. For that way of learning the substitution tends to make the substitution independent of either challenge or defense. We accept the substitution as legitimate without knowing why we do so.

NOTES

1. K. C. Anyanwu, "The Role of Language in Pereception and Congnition" in ***Uche***, Vol. 6 (1982), pp. 32–49.

2. The authoritative collection of case histories of experiments concerning newly sighted people who are already tactually competent is Marius Von Senden's ***Space and Sight*** (London: Metheun and Co., 1960). These case histories leave no doubt that the Molyneux question must indeed be answered "No."

3. G. J. Warnock in Berkelev (London: Penguin Books, 1953, pp. 38 – 9) and in the Appendix to ***Space and Sight*** presents interesting arguments that the Molyneux question can ***not*** be used to challenge Realism. D. M. Armstrong does so as well in ***Berkeley's Theory of Vision*** (London: CUP, 1960, pp. 63–4). All of these arguments claim that (qualitative) identity between a seen object and the correlative felt object does ***not*** entail a newly sighted person's ability to identify a seen shape even if he can already identify the correlative felt shape.

4. W. V. Quine, *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969, pp. 1 – 53, *passim.*) *Of course, Quine goes* on to argue that we can never determine *absolutely how to interpret the apparatus of individuation. Therefore, we can never determine absolutely whether a noum refers dividedly or cumulatively. As a result, we can never* determine absolutely whether or not we construe a perceived thing as an object.

   I think Quine's extending his analysis of the process by which we learn to treat perceived things as objects into his theory of ontological relativity is mistaken. Space does not permit my defense of this claim, however.

5. W. V. Quine, *The Roots of Reference* (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1973, pp. 64 – 7).

6. Idealists must admit that most objects meet the ordinary criteria for identity in cases of perspectival relativity. When perception is continuous, for example, Idealists must admit that there is a continuous path through space–time which links an object seen from one perspective with the correlative object seen fron another perspective. Furthermore, Idealists must admit that this criterion governs a sense of identity which is numerical identity: with respect to any object seen from one perspective, there is *at most* one object seen from another perspective which is connected with the first by a continuous path through space–time. But Idealists would deny while Realists must affirm that this sense of identity is also a sense of strict identity. Idealists deny while Realists affirm that a perceived object is distinct form perception such that exactly the same thing is presented from different perspectives when it is viewed from different perspectives.

7. C. W. Eriksen and J. L. Kuethe, "Avoidance Conditioning of Verbal Behavior without Awareness: A Paradigm of Repression" in *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, Vol. 53 (1957), pp. 121 – 133.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE MEANING OF LIFE

REV. DR. C. B. OKOLO

In our modern world where practical pursuit and acquisitive instinct increasingly dominate, philosophy as a profession runs the risk of undeserved prejudice from the average intelligent person. Philosophy is an exceedingly abstract subject, one often hears. As a matter of fact, most books on it are unintelligible to most intelligent people. The average student often thinks that it has no practical value. Philosophy, for instance, does not teach one how to make money, increase one's social status, bear life's daily encounters with equanimity or perform such practical tasks. C.E.M. Joad is indeed emphatic that philosophy "offers no protection from impending danger, does not cure loneliness, allay fear or provide a sanatorium where the spirit of man may find a refuge from the increasing chaos of the contemporary world".[1]

Of course, one could easily react to this view by saying that neither wealth nor power by itself is a remedy to loneliness. Such refutation however, is not the contention of the paper. The aim is rather to point out that in the midst of stress and disquiet of modern living such as the Nigerian or the African experiences at the moment, philosophy performs for man a fundamental function. Like Religion or with it, it offers him an opportunity to find meaning and, hence, goal in life, if he asks the right questions and pursues the right answers in practical life. More than wealth and prestige, philosophy, this essay contends, provides for man an opportunity to fulfil his life's purpose which is a more basic need.

Admittedly this all-important need is hardly reflected upon by the average man yet it underlies all human strivings and actions in this precarious, uncertain life. It is consequently an important aim of this article to call upon man to realize the importance of philosophy[2] and its supreme usefulness in seeking ways of life's contentment. The aim is achieved if this essay enables the individuals in our society, particularly at these critical times, to think seriously for a change, on what life is all about or what it is afterall.

MEANING OF LIFE

There is little doubt that most people at one time or the other in their lives preoccupy themselves with the meaning of this mortal existence. The problem is articulated in many ways and by different categories of people. "What is life after all?" "What is the meaning of it all?" "Why is there something rather than nothing"? "What is the meaning of human existence?, etc." Ultimately these questions take on a subjective cast, what is my stake in life? or, what is the purpose of my life?

"It not only is a matter of wonder that there is this universe, but also that it contains *me:* Why am I here? And, of course, this connects with the question, what am I? How different might I have been or become and still be me?[3]

Where do people find or at least look for answers to these challenging questions of existence? Many turn to religion, rarely to science but often times, they take up philosophy because they somehow think that it is the key to the meaning of life. However, one must admit that the question of the meaning of life does not loom large in the teachings or writings of modern philosophers in particular. Their main preoccupation is largely on technical and specialized fields of philosophy. "Philosophy in modern world has become a specialised study". Joad notes, "divorced from life and devoted to the discussion of purely technical problems".[4]

Nevertheless, people who take up the study of philosophy such as the university students for example, do so in the understanding that philosophy offers the best method, perhaps, the only rational method for tackling the questions of the meaning of human existence and life in general. It would of course be incorrect to say that philosophy is the only rational method for tackling the questions. Religion for instance, offers much more in this regard but to a different category of people, namely, those who have faith in God, whereas philosophy can easily provide a rational attitude to life to non–believers as well.

The important point here is that it is not only words, phrases, or sentences which have meaning. The universe, indeed, life itself, has meaning as well, in the sense of something that may serve as a guide to our lives. "We are saying that we find some things worth–while on their account and that we can make these things our aim. Whether we succeed or not, life will not be pointless or meaningless. We *could* succeed".[5]

Consequently for someone to say that his life is worthwhile (many if not the majority of people would be of this opinion) is a realisation on his part that his life has some purpose which is not impossible for him to fulfil, perhaps, which only he can fulfil. It is for him to take steps to realise this purpose. Life appears not to be absurd to him.

Although the question of life's meaning is not a primary concern of modern philosophers (neither does it have definitive final answers) yet philosophy in its general task faces it as a persistent and unavoidable problem. Philosophy is an important tool for raising the problem and as a rational enterprise, somehow offers a satisfactory answer.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE MEANING OF LIFE

Most philosophers would agree that philosophy in its broadest task raises fundamental, critrical questions about the universe and man's place and role in it. These questions often raised in different ways by practically all

reflective individuals ultimately boil down to the meaning of life, that is to say, the purpose of the universe and of human existance. Among the most puzzling questions to the human mind is the existence of "something" rather than "nothing". Sam Keen calls it "ontologic wonder", the fact that "the mind is sometimes jarred into the realization that there is no necessary reason for the existence of the world or anything in it".[6] We are reminded of Wittgenstein in his statement that, "it is not *how* things are in the world that is mystical but *that* it exists".[7]

Man's wonder and puzzle at the world, his relentless drive to ask questions, stem from his own nature, namely, the need to know and feel at home in the universe. Man is compelled by his nature to investigate or try to investigate the origin of things, his own origin, what he is and how best to fulfill and realize himself. The discovery and creation of order in life, that is to say, some meaning out of the multiverse of raw experience becomes an inescapable imperative for him. "Man can live with only so much chaos", Sam Kareen writes.

> Reason constructs a world which is manageable and understood, one from which a measure of strangeness and unpredictability has been banished. It humanizes the world, makes a home out of an environment, and domesticates nature."[8]

The point is that for the world to be "manageable", "understood" and "humanized", certain questions about it have to be faced and answers attempted. This is where philosophy exerts its full weight and importance. Sidney Hook points to its role in this regard in his clear exposition of "The uses of philosophy". A fundamental use of philosophy according to Hook "concerns itself with the place of man in the universe from the point of view of certain large and perennial questions which all reflective men at some time or another ask".9

One such basic question about the universe which imposes itself as an inescapable burden on the human mind is, as we have seen, the question as to why the universe exists at all? The questions about man are closely connected with, hence related to, at times, inseparable from those of the universe, such as the known Kantian question, "what is man?"; or as formulated by Hook, "Is man a tenement of clay inhabited by an immortal soul or a handful of wonderful salt in a solution of water?"[10]

These closely related questions are beyond science. They are not raised not answer by science. Consequently if all constructive intellectual enterprises were to be abandoned to scientists, many questions which haunt and fulfil the human mind would not be raised and even more would go unanswered. These questions need to be approached above all in a rational spirit and reason is the main tool of philosophy.

Among the basic metaphysical questions about the universe which philosophy faces is the question of the meaning of life or existence and its inseparable inquiry about the meaning and purpose of man. For as Karl Britton rightly remarks,

> one of the very odd things about 'the meaning of life' is that people commonly do not make a sharp distinction between question about *themselves.* For the ordinary reflective person will go on; what is it all for? Why am I here? What is the point of it all? (And I suspect this often means: what is the point of it all for me?)[11]

Consequently the most profound field or subject–matter of philosophical inquiry is the basic (ultimate) question and meaning of the universe in general and man in particular. Hence for Heidegger, "philosophy always aims at the first and last grounds of the essent, with particular emphasis on man himself and on the meaning and goals of human being – there".[12] William James declares that philosophy deals "with the principles of explanation that underlie all things without exception the elements common to gods and men and stones, the first *whence* and the last whither of the whole cosmic procession, the conditions of all knowing, and the most general rules of human conduct".[13]

In its general task, too, philosophy according to C.E.M. Joad purports

> to give us some information about the nature of the world which exists independently of ourselves, telling us, for example, that it contains immaterial values which manifest themselves in and bestow some of their characteristics upon the familiar things, persons, codes, instructions, and communities of the everyday world."[14]

This is the role of philosophy and the question of meaning it raises about the universe (and man).

To raise basic questions about the world and man's place and role in it and to pursue the answers rationally, systematically, and coherently constitutes the essence of philosophic enterprise in its general and most profound task. What counts in philosophy is not so much the answers given as the raising of the questions, not so much the wisdom attained as perpetual quest for it. Question and searching for knowledge are the great hallmarks of a philosopher, not the achievement of wisdom nor the attainment of final and once–for–all answers. Consequently it would be futile to expect final or univerally–agreed upon answers to the meaning of life in philosophy.

One clear function of philosophy is nevertheless the fact that it *attempts* to raise and answer life's basic questions which inescapably impose themselves on man (since "man by nature wants to know" as declared by Aristotle in the opening pages of his *Metaphysics).* By tackling such questions as, "what is the meaning of life?; "why does something exist rather than nothing?" etc, the mind achieves some answers, though not final. It achieves some knowledge and wisdom about the universe and in the conduct of human affairs. Hence a philosopher is a lover of wisdom and a seeker of wisdom. Sidney Hook regards this characte istic as the greatest benefit of philosophy,

"Finally", he writes, "I come to what I regard as the most important use of philosophy, to which all the other uses of philosophy are ancillary, philosophy as the quest for wisdom".[15]

Spelling out the nature of this "wisdom" sought by philosophy, Hook defines it in some detail as a species of knowledge.

> It is knowledge of the origin, careers, interrelations and reliabilities of human values in our experience. Wisdom is an affair of values, and of value judgements. It is intelligent conduct of human affairs. It is knowledge of what is of most worth in our experience, of the ends which we can justifiably pursue, of the good, the better and the best, the bad, the worse, and the worst in those concrete situations in which confronted by alternatives of policies of action, we ask what shall I do?"[16]

In other words, philosophy boils sown, as we have noted above, to raising critical questions about life (universe) in general and man's purpose and destiny in particular. It must mean that through philosophical enquiries, one finds some meaning consistent with one's life.

It must therefore be emphasized that, as a rational activity, philosophy does not simply exhaust itself raising questions about reality. It offers some answers too, at other times yields great insight into life's most perplexing problems. Indeed, over the years, the cumulative efforts of philosophers have provided much insight and wisdom with regard to the nature of the universe, man's purpose in life, his nature, his political institutions, etc.

Philosophy, particularly traditional philosophy has, for instance, given definitive answers about the meaning of life in the sense of the nature of this mortal life. Plato's philosophy for example, contains arguments which point to the existence of another order of reality, "the world of forms", which relates to and informs this familiar world, "the world of the senses". It thus reveals the nature of the two worlds. The one is real; the other, ephemeral the one, changeless, the other changing; the one, perfect; the other, faulty.

It is also the teaching of traditional philosophy that this familiar world of ours does not provide the principles of its own explanation, which principles must unless the world be wholly irrational, be sought for elsewhere, that is to say, outside the universe itself. This is in short, the capital teaching of the so–called *philosophia perennis* (the perennial or enduring philosophy).

> Which, starting from Plato, runs like a continuing thread through the Scholastic philosophies of the early Middle Ages down to the present day. It is also a channel in which the streams which flow from the two sources of our civilisation, Greece and Christianity, blend".[17]

Thus philosophy gives insight and yields some authoritative answers about the meaning and nature of the universe. This revelation in turn shapens and influence mah's conduct, values, attitudes, world–view etc. For if a man firmly believes, for instance, that the *real* world (whatever it is) informs and is immanent in this world of daily experience and that by following a certain mode of life, by holding certain things to be valuable ends–in–themselves, as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Kant and many other philosophers did, this belief cannot but affect his practical conduct and give meaning to his life, too.

We thus arrive at our point of emphasis in this paper, namely, that philosophy performs for man an indispensable function; It is a tool *par excellence* for discovering rationally the nature of the universe, the purpose and meaning of man himself.

MAN AS KEY TO "MEANING"

A point has been made that the question of the meaning of life cannot but be faced by man and that this question is really inseparable from the meaning and goal of man himself. This is clear enough, for the world has meaning presupposes someone or some people for whom the world could have meaning. The meaning is for somebody, for,

> if nobody (no person) had ever lived, the world would have had a character, a history and duration, and perhaps also an order and direction, but no meaning. If there were nobody, the world's history and duration would not be known but they would be there; no meaning would be there.[18]

Consequently the meaning of life, that is to say, of the universe can only be sought by man through man himself, through self–knowledge. "For unless I know who I am, how can I decide whether life has a meaning for me? And if I have doubts about who I am or whether I really exist, then it is unlikely that I shall discover any meaning in life at all '.[19]

It is indeed outside the focus of this short article to go into how man embarks upon self–knowledge. One thing remains clear, namely, that it is not just the question of the meaning of life that confronts philosophy but more importantly, the meaning of man himself. Man therefore is the problem of all problems in philosophy as well as the key to their solutions. For David Hume, for instance, there is no question of importance whose decision is not comprised in the science of man and there is none which can be decided with any certainty before we become acquainted with that science". Self–knowledge is the archimedean point, the fixed and immovable center of all thought , for Ernst Cassirer. Kant himself points to the anthropological question, what is man? as the residual question which has to be asked when all other questions about the phenomenal world have been posed. It lies behind all questions.

It is of course not that man has to face explicitly what concretely it is to be human but that the meaning of his life lies behind all his actions, values, social, and political pronouncements and aspirations, and so on. The meaning of his life is important and fundamental to him. Man simply cannot live without meaning. This point is clearly made by Viktor E. Frankl in his celebrated work, *Man's Search for Meaning.* It is a peculiarity of man, according to Frankl, that he can only live by looking to the future. For "he who has a *why* to live for can bear with any *how*". Man's search for meaning is a primary force in his life. Man is will–to–meaning, not will–to–power as Nietzeche views him.

Basically therefore man seeks for meaning with regard to both the universe and himself. The problem remains perennial and unavoidable to him. It is of practical interest to him, not just for a mere satisfaction of idle curiousity. Philosophy remains the best tool and a key to its solution. It performs an indispensible function for man.

We emphasize in conclusion the point that though philosophy might not contribute directly to the economy and government of a nation, it certainly does for man what no amount of wealth or government can do for him, namely, it provides the most rational quideline and key to the meaning of life itself. Consequently to ignore philosophic wisdom or its pursuit by any nation would be truly disastrous to the life of that nation. For philosophy remains what Epicurus once envisaged it to be, namely, "the health of the society", indeed the very key to the life and worth of individuals.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Philosophy* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976), p. 15.

2. Philosophy spoken of here is philosophy in its general function of critical analysis of the universe and man's place in it, not in its specialized tasks such as ethical enquiries, logical analysis, aesthetics, political philosophy, etc.

3. Karl Britton *Philosophy and the Meaning of Life* (Cambridge University Press, 1971), p.3.

4. *Op. cit,* p. 223.

5. Karl Britton, *Op. cit.* p.12.

6. *Apology For Wonder* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1969), p.22.

7. *Tractatus Logico–philosophicus (London:* Routledge & Kegan Palu, 1961), p.44.

8. *Op. cit.* p.45.

9. "The uses of philosophy" in *The Rang of Philosophy Introductory Readings* eds. Harold H. Titus and Maylon H. Hepp (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1970), p.5.

10. "The uses of philosophy", *Ibid.* p.5.

11. *Op. cit.*, pp.2 – 3.

12. *An Introduction to Metaphysics* Fr. Ralph Manheim (New Work: Anchor Double day and Co., 1961), p.8.

13. *Some Problems of Philosophy* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1911), p. 5.

14. *Op. cit.*, p.218.

15. *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

16. *Ibid.* p.6.

17. C.E.M. Joad, *Op. cit.* p. 219.

18. Karl Britton *Op. Cit.* p.126.

19. *Ibid.*

FAITH AS AN UNACCOMPLISHED FORM OF REASON IN HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY

REV. DR. I. C. ONYEWUENYI

INTRODUCTION

In his basic philosophical work, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, described by J. B. Baillie as "the first fruit of Hegel's intellectual maturity,"[1] Hegel outlined the logical progress of consciousness from the elementary levels of sense-experience, perception and understanding to reason or absolute knowledge. It was his intention to synthesize and incorporate the philosophical theories of the past which were tracks of experience which has each formed from time to time the subject of separate analysis by different thinkers,[2] and to logically connect and interpret them as fragments of a single system of experience.

Prior to Hegel, each of these stages was treated as self-contained, unrelated to other theories of the life-history of the human spirit, past and future. Hegel in the *Phenomenology* argues that the whole range of human experience as historically realized in different forms and at different stages, with particular exphasis on Western Europe, were interconnected phases of the necessary movement of human intelligence which arrived at its highest peak of development in modern philosophy. "Movements of human history which have marked epochs in the development of the human race are treated as typical or permanent embodiments of attitutdes of Mind or principles in operation in the Spirit of man and are discussed in shadowy form through which the historical reality implied is only dimly visible."[3]

Karl Lowith calls *Phenomenology* the history of the unfolding of the Spirit and of the cultural stages of knowledge where the systematic stages of thought and historical relationships are even more inseparable, since they have no empirically determined relationship, but rather interpenetrate in an elaborate dialectical movement of the spirit whose goal is Absolute Spirit.[4] With the object of philosophy in mind – which in Hegel's view is described in general terms as "the Whole, the Absolute or God,"[5] Hegel proceeded to expose the one-sidedness of knowledge in the stages of sense-experience through understanding. He showed that these stages were "moments" of consciousness in its development to grasp reality in Reason or Absolute Knowledge. True knowledge, he concluded, could not be realized in these stages which suggested separation or distinction between subject and object a doubling process wich has the effect of separating into two things, that which in content is the same. It was in the realm of reason that Absolute Knowledge was possible; there man used his Mind to comprehend Truth in its totality, to know the Idea in its

necessity. The adequate recognition of the Absolute Object, God, according to Iwan Iljin, becomes possible, "through the fact that the Absolute Object enters into the sphere of the human soul unchanged, takes possession of its powers and its living structure and there becomes real in its authentic way by claiming the whole structure and filling it with its living presence."[6] However, continues Iljin, "the human soul does not lose thereby its own consciousness as such but only its subjectivity and so becomes an Experience of the object .. . . the Absolute Object lives in the human soul by revealing itself to its consciousness as its own consciousness, by allowing that the soul recognizes it and so recognizes itself. In this 'Einswerden', in this real congruence, the soul recognizes the object as her own being; and the object becomes present in the soul as the living essence is present in its living past."[7]

The Identity of the Object of Religion and Philosophy:

The object of religion set fortth in Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* an elaboration of his doctrines in the *Phenomenology* is the same as that of philosophy. "The object of religion as well as of philosophy is eternal truth in its objectivity, God and nothing but God, and the explication of God. Philosophy is not a wisdom of the world, but is knowledge of what is not of the world; it is not knowledge which concern external mass, or empirical existence and life, but is knowledge of that which is eternal, of what God is and what flows out of his nature. . . And thus occupied with eternal truth which exists on its own account, or is in and for itself, and, as in fact, a dealing on the part of the thinking spirit, and not of individual caprice and particular interest with this object, it is the same kind of activity as religion is."[8]

In exposing the development of self-consciousness, logical philosophy contemplated its object, as a term of logical Idea, as it was in thought under the aspect of the specific forms of thought, viz. sense-experience, perception, understanding and Reason. Hegel showed that the history of philosophy was not a blind collection of fanciful ideas, nor an aimless progression. There was the character of necessity permeating the progression from the lowest to the highest stages of thought. The object of philosophy has been only one although this one object has been understood variably in the different levels of consciousness and at the different epochs in history, in accordance with the level of development reached by the Spirit. Hence, the origin of the successive philosophies. "The final philosophy of a period is the result of this development, and is truth in the highest form which the self-consciousness of spirit affords of itself. The latest philosophy contains therefore those which went before; it embraces in itself all the different stages thereof; and it is the product and the result of those that preceded it."[9]

There are a series of successive spiritual forms of knowledge, from sense-experience where the object is known in its immediacy as a fleeting general universality to perception, where there is a distinction between

subject and object; to understanding where the inner reality or internal of objects is contemplated, to reason where the absolute identity of subject and object is accomplished, "the domain of the belonging together,"[10] and the end "in the movement of transition,"[11] the notion in and for itself. Hegel regarded any knowledge in the stages below reason as inadequate or as mere opinions of the Spirit. Granted that each was necessary in the Sprit's march to absolute self-consciousness, they remain but steps to a goal – a goal achieved in Reason.

In his philosophy of religion, Hegel followed the same logical process of self-consciousness as he has earlier delineated in the *Phenomenology.* Since the object of religion is God, Hegel maintains that God cannot be known by man except through thought, by reason of which man is man and not animal or plant. Hegel calls God "the begining of all things and the end of all things. As all things proceed from this point, so all return back to it again."[12] In religion, man is placed in relation to this centre, this source of all things; he cannot adequately know the enature of this source of all things ;,he cannot adequately know the nature of this source except as he rises up to the highest level of consciousness, the level of Reason. "Religion, as something which is occupied with this final object and end, is therefore absolutely free, and is its own end. . . no other aim can hold its ground against this, and here alone all find their fulfilment."[13] It is only on the level of Reason that the spirit of man can unite with the spirit of God as the Idea in-and-for-itself, and thus frees itself from all finite relations and distinctions between subject and object. "In the region where the Spirit occupes itself with this end, it unburdens itself of all finiteness and wins for itself final satisfaction and deliverance; for here the Spirit relates itself no longer to something that is other than itself, and that is limited, but to the unlimited and infinite and this is an infinite relation, a relation of freedom, and no longer of dependence. Here its consciousness is absolutely free and is indeed true consciousness, because it is consciousness of Absolute Truth."[14]

Philosophic Religion Versus Religious Faith:

True philosophic religion, according to Hegel, is religion in the region of Reason. In true religion as distinct from worldly, positive religion or the religion of the godly man; man passes into the domain of absolute truth. He ceases to involve himself with finite existence, conditions, ends, interests, rationalizations and finite relations of all kinds. Philosophic religion is something essentially spiritual and is itself in its very existence the process of the transition of the Spirit of God into the Spirit of Man and vice versa, thus forming one united self-consciousness and producing Notion in-and-for-itself. "Man knows God only insofar as God knows Himself in man. This knowledge is God's self-consciousness, but it is at the same time a knowledge of God on the part of man The Spirit of Man whereby he knows God, is simply the Spirit of God himself."[15] We are not therefore before God as in the presence of an immediate, immobile

existence or overseer of the universe; neither do we form of Him a mental picture which blocks consciousness of an act of passing over or transition. Rather philosophic religion or true religion is in its very essence the forsaking of what is immediate and finite. It frowns on a relation between self and God and a contemplation of God as he is in Himself, an Other distinguished from myself and independent. But religious consciousness is a realization of these two independent things as one. There is a resulting unity of the two – man's spirit and God – in the one self-consciousness or concept. "The absolute object lives in the human soul by revealing itself to its consciousness as its own consciousness, by allowing that the soul recognizes it and so recognizes itself. In this union, in this real congruence – the soul recognizes the object as her own being; and the object becomes present in the soul as the living essence is present in its living parts."[16]

The question posed by Hegel is this: Could Christian religion which deals with the Absolute Truth, God, the realization of which is the sole business of philosophy, be adequately approached through Faith as a level of religious consciousness. If Faith must be defined as "the witness of the spirit (of Man) to absolute Spirit, or as a certainty of the truth which involves relation in respect to the distinction of Subject and Object. Religious Faith elevates finite, sensible things to the rank of essential ends . . .",[17] could its level of knowledge satisfy the philosophical approach by which truth, the Absolute in-and-for-itself is to be realized?

Faith is a kind of religious consciousness which, like perception and understanding in logical philosophy, favours a distinction between the believer and God, who is the object of belief. Religious Faith, in the sense of positive religion, contemplates God as an other, in his objective existence. There is, however, consciousness of God in Faith, but this consciousness is the same as that present in perception and understanding, as levels of knowledge. It is nothing but a subjective certainty of the existence of God, as an idea or ordinary thought. "We so conceive of the consciousness of God that the content is our idea, and at the same time exists; in myself, in my idea and knowledge, but has an absolute existence of its own, exists in and for itself . . . God is this Universality which has an absolute existence of its own, and does not exist merely for me; it is outside of me, independent of me."[18]

Knowledge attained by Faith Inferior to Self-Consciousness:

According to the Hegelian system of consciousness, therefore, the level of knowledge attained by Faith falls far below self-consciousness; the level of mind or Spirit, which is the domain of the belonging together of the Spirit of man and God, the realm of a toward-each-other of man and Ultimate Being. For the level of Reason or self-consciousness is the end of the movement of philosophy which has as its ultimate aim the development of the Absolute into a totality and the cancellation of the

one-sidedness which is present in sense-perception and understanding. But Faith forbids us to seek to comprehend God or argue about him because man's rational ability is limited and cannot be useful. At least, this is Hegel's understanding of modern theology. In fact, St. Thomas Aquinas discusses the object of Faith as the First Truth. "The object of every congnitive habit includes two things : First, that which is known materially and is the material object, and secondly, that whereby it is known, which is the formal aspect of the object . . . Accordingly, if we consider in Faith the formal aspect of the object, it is nothing else than the First Truth. For the Faith of which we are speaking, does not assent to anything, except because it is revealed by God. Hence, the mean on which Faith is based is the Divine Truth. . . Consequently, from this point of view also the object of Faith is, in a way, the First Truth, in as much as nothing comes under Faith except in relation to God."[19]

From this statement, St. Thomas, who greatly influenced theology in the middle ages, upheld the distinction between subject and object, the character of formal aspect and relationship in knowledge by Faith. One believed because God revealed, although one could not offer sufficient reasons for trusting God whose nature one did not comprehend. As Martin Buber puts it : "the relationship of trust depends upon a state of contact, a contact of my entire being with the one in whom I trust. . . It is a relationship which by its nature does not rest upon 'reasons,' just as it does not grow from such; reasons, of course, can be urged for it but they are never sufficient to account for my Faith."[20] For Hegel, Faith depicts a shadowy knowledge of the Divinity which is the content of revealed religion. That Faith is a necessary step to Reason, Hegel does not question but he does question any theology which stops at the level of faith as the highest and ultimate step of knowing God. All dogmas of positive religion can and must be intellectually grasped. In true philosophic religion, there is no room for Faith; Reason reigns supreme. "It is a false idea that these two, Faith and free philosophical investigation, can subsist quietly side by side. There is no foundation for maintaining that Faith in the content or essential element of positive religion can continue to exist, if reason has convinced itself of the opposite. . . The human spirit in its inmost nature is not something so divided up that two contradictory elements might subsist together in it."[21]

CONCLUSION:

Hegel cannot see how the characters of freedom and necessity can be present in Faith. For the very act of believing a man accepts something given, something already present in the forms of dogmas. Granted that there is a kind of freedom in Faith for a person is free to believe a dogma or not according to the depth of his conviction but this type of freedom never questions what is believed, never criticizes the truth of

Faith, whereas the freedom of self-consciousness takes only pure thought as its truth. Hence, we find collisions in subjective Faiths and religions, because these Faiths which are "moments" in the development of the Spirit, in terms of levels of consciousness, blindly regard their modified forms of content as final for the Absolute Spirit. "Under this head we may rank wars of the Mohammedans, the religious wars between Catholics and Protestants, the inquisition too and the battles in India between the worshippers of Siva and Vishnu. In such conflicts the combatants fight for the glory of God; they fight in order that God may be recognized in consciousness, and that what is truth for the nation may receive recotnition".[22] Hence, the freedom of Faith sometimes appears contradictory and self—defeating as it generates opposition and wars among believers who all profess to know the One God. God is love and he who abides in him abides in love and not in wars.

FOOT NOTES

1. G. W. F: Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, p. 11.
2. *Ibid.* p. 13.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
4. K. Lowith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche* (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1967), p. 29.
5. T*he Phenomenology of Mind,* p. 21.
6. Iwan Iljin, *Die Philosophie Hegels: Als Kontemplative Gotteslehre* (Bern: A. Francke Ag. Verlag, 1946), p. 181.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 181
8. *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* Vol. I, p. 19.
9. *Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Vol. III*, p. 552.
10. M. Heidegger, *Identitat und Differenz* (London: Harper and Row. Publishers, 1969), p. 96.

11. *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, op. cit., p. 510

12 *Vorlesugen uber die Philosophie der Religion*

13. *Ibid.* p. 20.

14. *Ibid.*, p.2.

15. *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. III, p.

16. Iwan Iljin, *Die Philosophie Hegel, op. cit.*, p. 181

17. *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* Vol. I p. 212

18. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

19. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theological* (New York: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1947), Vol. II – II, P. 1, a.1, p. 1169

20. Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith* (New York: Harper Publishers, 1961), p. 7.

21. *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* Vol. I, p. 49.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 224.