THE NIGERIAN JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

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

VOL. 7 Nos. 1 & 2 1987

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. J. I. Omoregbe is an Associate Professor and Acting Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Lagos, and the current Editor of th e Nigerian Journal of Philosophy.

Dr. (Mrs.) S. B. Oluwole is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy University of Lagos

Dr. K. C. Anyanwu is an Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy, University of Lagos.

Dr. Parker English is a Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy & Religious Studies, University of Calabar.

Olufemi Taiwo is from Department of Philosophy University of Toronto, Toron t o, Ontario, Canada, M.551A1

Nkeonye Otakpor (Lecturer in Philosophy) General Studies Department, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, P.M.B 1154, Benin City Nigeria.

Olusegun Oladipo, Asst. Lecturer, Department of Philosophy University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

O. Fasina, Department of Philosophy, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Eugene O. Iheoma is a Senior Lecturer, Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Port-Harcourt, Nigeria.

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– Parker English

INTRODUCTION

In "The Realist Bias of the English Language", I argue that the way we learn English predisposes us towards a Realist theory of perception[1]. A major assumption in this argument is that we learn to construe perceived things as objects in conjunction with learning to use certain parts of language. This assumption is based largely on W.V. Quine's analysis of the process by which we learn to treat perceived things as objects. As is well known, Quine goes on to use this analysis in his own argument to support a theory which he calls ontological relativity, or the inscrutability of reference. In a footnote to my previous paper I remarked that I think Quine's argument is mistaken. The present essay will explain why I think this.

*

1. There are two broad ways in which to construe a perceived thing with respect to individuation. On the one hand, it can be construed as an object. In this case, spatial uniqueness is salient to the individuation of that thing. Specifically, spatial difference entials numerical difference for it. Qualitative identity therefore does not entail numerical identity for this thing. Dogs, trees, and motocycles are good examples of perceived things which we normally construe as objects. On the other hand, a perceived thing can be construed as bulk stuff or as an unindividuated portion thereof. In this case, spatial uniqueness is not salient to the individuation of that thing. Spatial difference does not entail numerical difference for it. Rather, qualitative identity entails numerical identity for it. Flour, water, and sand are as good as any examples of perceived things which we normally construe as bulk stuff at least some of the time.

Quine's theory of ontological relativity presents a rather shocking claim about these ways of individuating a perceived thing. According to this theory, a person cannot determine how he ndividuates a perceived thing except by *uncritically* accepting omething else. He must uncritically accept one of many equally cceptable interpretations of the grammatical particles and onstructions which modify the noun referring to that perceived hing. As a result, he can never determine absolutely how he ind-/iduates the things he perceives.

The argument Quine advances to support this theory contains three primary assumptions.

First, extension alone will not individuate a perceived thing. Extention alone will not specify the perceived occupant of a given place as an object rather than as bulk stuff. For example, extension alone will not specify the perceived occupant of a given place as an individual is rather than as some of the world's beef on the hoof. Whenever we point to different parts of an ox we are also pointing to beef on the hoof. Whenever we indicate the whole ox with a sweeping gesture we are also indicating beef on the hoof.

Second, however, we can individuate a perceived thing by individuating the noun referring to it. We individuate a noun by deciding whether it accepts or resists such particles and constructions as pluralization, pluralized demonstratives, numerals, and the indefinite article. These are what Quine calls the devices or apparatus of individuation. If we treat a noun as accepting these devices then we are treating it as a general or individuative term having a divided sort of reference. That is, we are treating it as a noun whose proper use depends on our distinguishing when one of its referents is present from when more than one is present. For example, we treat 'dog' as a noun with divided reference because we cannot master its use without learning to distinguish between the presence of a single dog and that of *those four dogs*. Whatever criterion we use in construing that dog as an individual object. On the other hand, if we treat a noun as resisting the apparatus of individuation then we are treating it as a mass term having a cummulative sort of reference. In other words, we are treating as a noun whose proper use depends on our not distinguishing between qualitatively identical but spatially different things which it denotes. For example, we treat 'flour' as a noun with cumulative reference because we master its use by treating a certain sort of stuff as flour whether here or there or both here and there. The combination of this and that is flour just as much as this is or that is. So flour is bulk stuff rather than one or a group of individual objects.

In sum, we learn to construe perceived things as objects or as bulk stuff in conjunction with learning to use certain parts of language. We learn that a perceived thing is an object for which spatial difference entails numerical difference in conjunction with learning that the noun denoting it accepts the devices of individuation. Conversely, we learn that a perceived thing is bulk stuff for which qualitative identity entials numerical identity in conjunction with learning that the noun denoting it resists the devices of individuation.

Third, however, this is what we do only if we interpret the devices of individuation in the normal way. Unfortunately, according to Quine, we can also interpret these devices in abnormal ways. When we do we must thereby individuate the nouns they modify in abnormal ways. Hence, we can individuate a perceived thing in different ways by interpreting in different ways the particles and constructions which modify the noun denoting that thing. In other words, we cannot determine how we individuate a thing we perceive except by uncritically accepting one of the many equally acceptable interpretations of the particles and constructions modifying the noun denoting that thing.

Quine's major support for this third assumption is his analysis of Japanese phrases involving certain grammatical particles which are called classifiers. According to Quine's analysis, we can interpret such a phrase equally in two different ways. On the one hand, we can interpret it as denoting what are construed as individual objects. On the other hand, we can interpret it as denoting what is construed as the correlative bulk stuff.

It seems to me that Quine's analysis of these phrases is faulty. Nonetheless, it also seems to me that there are phrases which can be interpreted equally as denoting what are construed as individual objects or as denoting what is construed as the correlative bulk stuff. So far as I can tell, however, this does not actually support Quine's assumption that we cannot determine how we individuate what we perceive and denote. I shall discuss the first of these claims in Section 2, the second in Section 3, and the third in Section 4. (the first two assumption which Quine advances to support ontological relativity seem covered to me.)

2. According to Quine, the combination of a Japanese numeral and a Japanese noun cannot by itself indicate how many perceived things are denoted. Rather, to accomplish this such a combination must be supplemented by an additional word, a particle is called a classifier. The interesting thing about the classifier, however, is that it can be equally interpreted as declining the numeral or as individuating the noun. In the first case, the noun is then interpreted as referring dividedly. In the second case, the noun is then interpreted as referring cumulatively[2].

Quine then claims, rightly I think, that verbal behaviour will never determine whether a Japanese noun refers dividedly or cumulatively when it is combined with a numeral and a classifier. But he then infers, incorrectly I think, that what is denoted by a phrase containing a noun, numeral, and classifier can be construed equally as individual objects or as bulk stuff. For example, if cattle

are denoted by a phrase containing a noun, numeral, and classifier, then the cattle can be construed equally as individual oxen or as beef on the hoof.

> Between the two accounts of Japanese classifier there is no question of right and wrong ... All whole sentences, and even component phrases like "five oxen", admit of the same net overall English translations on either account. This much is invariant. But what is philosophically interesting is that the reference or extention of shorter terms can fail to be invariant[3].

Quine's argument is enthymematic. An additional premise is required for inferring the inscrutability of reference from the fact that a Japanese noun combined with a numeral and classifier can be interpreted equally as referring dividedly or as referring cumulatively. For the noun-numeral-classifier phrase itself remains identically individuated regarless of whetlier the contained noun is construed as referring dividedly or as referring cumulatively. In particular, the phrase continues to be construed as referring dividedly. 'Five head of cattle', after all, refers dividedly just as much as does 'five oxen'. This much is admitted by Quine in the pass age quoted in footnote.[1] Thus, Quine can use the Japanses example to support the inscrutability of reference only if he assumes that the individuation of what is perceived is not determined by the individuation of the noun-numeral-classifier phrase itself. Rather, he must assume that the noun *alone* determines the individuation of what is perceived.

Quine does not approach this issue directly. Rather, he compares the example of Japanese classifiers to his earlier example of French pleonisms.

> This example is reminiscent in a way our trival initial example, "ne...rein". We were able to represent "rein" as "anything" or as "nothing", by compensatorily taking "ne" as negative or as vacuous. We are able now to represent a Japanese word either as an individuative term for bovines or as a mass term for live beef, by compensatorily taking the classifier as declining the numeral or as individuating the mass term ... The early example was dismissed on the ground that we had cut too small; "rein" was too short for significant translation on its own, and "ne...rein" was the significant unit. But you cannot dismiss the Japanese example by saying that the third word was too short for significant translation on its own and that only the whole three-word phrase, tantamount to "five oxen", was the significant unit ... If you are indeed prepared thus to call a word too short for significant translation even

when it is a denoting term, then in a back-handed way you are granting what I wanted to prove: the inscrutability of reference[4].

Still, this quotation definitely suggests how Quine intends for the above issue to be decided. He intends for us to deny that the individuation of cattle is determined by the individuation of the noun-numeral-classifier phrase which refers to cattle. Instead, he intends for us to assume that the individuation of cattle is determined by the individuation of the Japanese noun for 'cattle' regardless of how the noun-numeral classifier phrase is individuated. Specifically, he intends for us to assume that the individuation of cattle is determined by the individuation of the Japanese noun for 'cattle' when that noun is construed as referring cumulatively and the noun-numeral-classifier phrase is construed as referring dividedly. If we dont't assume this, we are back-handedly granting the inscrutability of reference. Of course, if we do assume it then we are fore-handedly granting the inscrutability of reference. For we have already admitted that verbal behaviour will never determine whether a Japanese noun refers dividedly or cumulatively when it is combined with a numeral and classifier.

Quine does not explain why he thinks it a back-handed admission of the inscrutability of reference to interpret a noun as too short for reference (translation) when it is interpreted as referring cumulatively in a phrase construed as referring dividedly. Evidently though, he thinks our back-handed admission would result from alternately interpreting the noun as referring (when detached from numerals and classifiers) and as not referring (when combined with them). In other words, alternately interpreting a sometime referent of that noun can be individuated in different ways.

This thought by Quine seems faulty to me. There is a perfectly good reason why our interpreting the noun first as referring and second as too short to refer would not in fact imply the inscrutability of reference. In other words, it would not imply that the noun's sometime referent could be individuated in different ways. For we cannot interpret the Japanese noun as too short to refer without construing the noun-numeral-classifier phrase as the unit of reference. As we have noted, however, the individuation of the noun-numeral-classifier phrase remains constant, regardless of whether or not the noun contained by that phrase is interpreted as too short to refer. Specifically, it remains identical with the individuation of the contained noun when that noun is interpreted as long enough to refer. *It continues to refer dividedly*. So we cannot interpret the contained noun as too short to refer without treating what is perceived as individuated in the same way it is

individuated when the noun is interpreted as long enough to refer. We cannot interpret the contained noun as too short to refer without retaining a constant individuation of what is perceived.

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3. On the other hand, this is only to affirm that the individuation of what is denoted by a noun phrase which is construed as referring dividedly does not correspond to that of the noun contained in that phrase when the noun is interpreted as referring cumulatively. It is only to affirm that any non-English noun for bovine things construed as individual objects can be equally translated as 'oxen' or as 'head of cattle'. Specifically, it is not to deny that 'cattle' can be so modified that, in certain contexts, the *combination* of 'cattle' and its modifier can be interpreted equally as referring dividedly or as referring cumulatively.

For example, 'cattle' in "We left some cattle" may be interpreted equally as in plural form without benefit of a suffix and referring dividedly or as in singular form and referring cumulatively. After all, while 'cattle' resists pluralization as well as the indefinite article, it accepts both numerals and pluralized demonstratives. Furthermore, if 'cattle' is interpreted as referring cumulatively, 'some' need not be interpreted as individuating 'cattle' in the manner of 'head of'. It can instead be interpreted simply as indicating that we left more than no cattle.

As a result, cattle can be equally construed as individual objects of as bulk stuff when cattle are/is denoted by 'some cattle' and the context is restricted to "We left some cattle". So the complexities of Japanese classifiers are not required to present Quine's point. The English phrase 'some cattle' can, in some contexts, be interpreted equally as referring to bovine things construed as objects or as referring to those bovine things construed as mere bulk stuff. And after all, the inscrutability of reference begins at home, according to Quine.

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4. On the face of things, we can nonetheless determine how we individuate what is denoted by 'some cattle' by moving beyond the context of "We left some cattle". For, regardless of how it is grammatically indicated, what is denoted by 'some cattle' is regarded as individual objects if they are regarded as things for which spatial difference is salient. They are regarded as objects when qualitatively identical cattle are construed as numerically different if they are spatially different. On the other hand, what is denoted by 'some cattle' is regarded as bulk stuff if it is regarded as something for which spatial difference is not salient. It is re-

garded as bulk stuff when spatially different portions of it are regarded as numerically identical.

On the face of things, then it doesn't matter that such a statement as "We left some cattle" is equally true or false regardless of whether cattle are construed as individual objects or as bulk stuff. We can determine how we individuate what is denoted by 'some cattle' by deciding whether or not we regard it/them as having portions which are numerically different when spatially different. In practice, we can determine this by deciding whether or not we regard the cattle in the barn, say, as identical with the cattle in the pasture.

Before proceeding further, I think we should admit the obvious. Most people normally assume that no cattle in a barn are identical with any cattle in a pasture. There is a simple reason. Regardless of the fact that 'cattle' resists both pluralization and the indefinte article, we normally assume that spatial difference entails numerical difference for whatever is denoted by 'cattle'. Quine is therefore wrong to regard 'cattle' simply as a mass term with cumulative reference. 'Cattle' is indeed a term which has some, though not all, of the grammatical features of a mass term with cumulative reference. Normally, however, we simply assume that its referents are individuated as objects. As a result, we normally assume that 'cattle' has *divided* reference. Normally, then, there is no question of our deciding whether or not we regard the cattle in a barn as identical with the cattle in a pasture. Normally, we *never* regard the former cattle as identical with the latter. Thus, insofar as Quine's theory of ontological relativity depends on our taking this question seriously, then his theory fails.

There are things, however, with respect to which this sort of question is serious. It is serious with respect to flour, grass, and water, for example. Consider flour. By stretching things a little in one direction, we can admit that flour here is the same as flour there. We can admit this by regarding the flour here *only* as stuff. Since it is exactly the same sort of stuff as the flour there, we can regard it as identical with the flour there. By stretching things a little in the opposite direction, on the other hand, we can deny that the flour here is identical with the flour there. We can deny this by regarding the flour here as what is here. Since it is not there, we can regard it as not identical with the flour there[5].

Flour is still not an ideal sort of example for discussing ontological relativity. Unlike 'cattle', 'flour' has none of the grammatical features of an individuative term with divided reference. It resists all of the devices of individuation: pluralization, pluralized demonstratives, numerals, the indefinite article, etc. With respect to grammar, then, flour is a less ideal example that is cattle when ontological relativity is being discussed. On, however, I think flour is a better example than cattle. For I

think it clear that the salience of spatial difference is more essential to our construing something as an individual object than is the fact that the noun denoting it accepts the devices of individuation. The reason is that we can easily compensate for the grammatical deficiencies of that noun. For example, we can modify 'flour' with 'portion of' in referring to the flour here if we regard it as not identical with the flour there. Clearly, 'portion of flour' *accepts* the devices of individuation even though it also accepts modification by 'unindividuated'. Thus, we construe the portion of flour we perceive as an individual object by referring to it as a portion of flour. Equally, however, we can treat it as an unindividuated part of bulk stuff by referring to it as an *unindividuated* portion of flour.

To continue this discussion of ontological relativity, then, let us use the example of flour in summarizing the argument to this point. Portions of flour can be equally construed as individual objects or as unindividuated parts of bulk stuff when denoted by 'some flour' and the context is restricted to "we left some flour". On the face of things, however, we can still determine how we individuate the referent (s) of 'some flour'. We can do so by deciding whether or not we regard such referent (s) as numerically different when they/it are/is spatially divided.

Quine, however, has an effective response to this line of argument. He has earlier noted that we learn to use 'same' only in conjunction with learning to use the other devices of individuation[6]. Thus, he can respond that our affirming the flour here to be the same as the flour there does not imply our construing the flour as unindividuated portions of certain bulk stuff. According to Quine, we could have cunningly adjusted our interpretation of 'the same as' in that affirmation for an object-construal of flour. Specifically, we could have interpreted 'the same as' as 'different from'.

This response would be prohibited, however, if there were a use of 'the same as' which is *equally and essentially* involved in construing perceived things as individual objects and in construing them as unindividuated portions of bulk stuff. For in this case, there would be a crucial question about perceived things which involves a use of 'the same as'. This crucial question involving 'the same as' would have to be answered identically regardless of whether certain perceived things are construed as objects or as unindividuated portions of bulk stuff. It would follow that a person could determine the interpretation of 'the same as' when affirmatively answering "Is the flour here the same as the flour there?" by then answering the cruical question. He could do so by then answering the question involving 'the same as' which must be identically answered regardless of whether portions of flour are construed as objects or as unindividuated parts of bulk stuff

Fortunately, there is such a use of 'the same as'. It concerns the fact that all sides grant that a seen object is at least numerically identical with the correlative felt object. Of course, Realist and Idenalists dispute about how the intermodal sense of identity should be interpreted. For Realists affirm while Idealists deny that a perceived object exists when it is not perceived. Hence, Realists affirm while Idealists deny that a perceived object is distinct from the perceptions of it. As a result, Realists affirm while Idealists deny that a seen object is strictly identical with the correlative felt object in exactly the way the seen object is identical with itself. After all, Realists affirm while Idealists deny that the same independent thing is presented both visually and tactually when an object is both seen and felt. Still, both Realists and Idealists affirm that any seen object is well correlated with one felt object at most. And in this sense, both Realists and Idealists affirm that a seen object is at least numerically identical with the correlative felt object[7].

What is important is that the same holds true for a seen portion of bulk stuff. For example, all sides grant that a seen portion of meat is at least numerically identical with the correlative felt portion of meat. Indeed, this expresses one of the primary criteria by which we distinguish experienced things which we construe as material from experienced things which we construe as dreamed, hallucinated, or otherwise immaterial. It is arguable that there are exceptions. Wind can be felt but not seen. Shadows can be ssen but not felt. Generally, however, we regard a thing as material only if we can not only see it but also feel it. This holds regardless of whether we treat it as an object or as an unindividuated portion of bulk stuff. It certainly holds for flour. Thus, a primary difference between material flour and dreamed or hallucinated flour is that only material flour can be seen as well as felt.

It follows that there is an obvious way for a person to determine how he interprets 'the same as' in affirmative answering "Is this flour the same as this flour? when ostending spatially different portions of flour. He can do so by then affirmatively answering the crucial question which involves an intermodal use of 'the same as'. He can do so by then affirmatively answering "Is this flour the same as that flour?" when the flour at some place is first visually ostended and then tactually ostended. For a person cannot use 'the same as' consistenly when answering both questions affirmatively if he regards portions of flour as objects which are numerically diferent when they are spatially different. After all, he can regard spatially different portions of flour as objects when affirmatively answering "Is the flour here the same as the flour there?" Only if he interprets 'the same as' as 'different from' But, he cannot

affirmatively answer "Is this flour the same as that flour?" affirmatively at all when both visually and tactually ostending some portion of flour if he interprets 'the same as' as 'different flour'. This holds regardless of whether he construes that flour as an individual object or as an unindividuated part of certain bulk stuff. Hence, he can determine a unique interpretation of 'the same as' in affirming that the flour here is the same as the flour there. So, he can absolutely determine how he individuates the perceived things he denotes with 'flour'.

In sum and in general, then, a person can determine how he individuates the perceived things he denotes with nouns which do or with nouns which do not accept the devices of individuation. He can do so because he can critically and absolutely determine how he interprets those devices. Hence, he can critically and absolutely determine how he individuates the nouns which individuate the things he perceives and denotes. Ontological relativity is a clever, erudite, complicated theory which is false.

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So far as I can tell, Quine presents only one argument which might be used in response to this challenge to ontological relativity.

> We cannot know what something is without knowing how it is marked off from other things. Identity is thus of a piece with ontology. Accordingly, it is involved in the same relativity, as may be readily illustrated. Imagine a fragment of economic theory. Suppose its universe comprises persons, but its predicates are incapable of distinguishing between persons whose incomes are equal. The interpersonal relation of equality of income enjoys, within the theory, the substitutivity property of the identity relation itself; the two relations are indistinguishable. It is only relative to a background theory, in which more can be said of personal identity than equality of income .... that we can appreciate a contrast between persons and income[8].

The central claim in this argument is that we cannot distinguish numerical identity from qualitatively identical but numerically different. This claim seems utterly true. It indicates the salience of relational difference when distinguishing qualitative identity from numerical identity. We describe qualitatively identical things as numerically different by treating relational difference as salient to those things and then by noting that they are relationally different.

But this does not prove anything specifically about the relativity of identity. It proves only that we can hypothetically omit a condition which is required for making a distinction. Specifically, we can omit the distinction between qualitative identity and numerical but relationally different.

Nor does Quine's argument prove anything specifically about the relativity of ontology. It proves nothing about the relativity of the distinction between such individuals as people and such universals as income. Again, it proves only that we can hypothetically omit a condition which is required for making a distinction. The distinction between numerical identity and qualitative identity is a necessary condition of distinguishing between individuals and universals. Individuals are things which accept the distinction between numercial identity and qualitative identity while universals are things which resist that distinction. In other words, qualitatively identical individuals are numerically identical only if they are also relationally identical. But qualitatively identical universals are numerically identical regardless or anv relational differences they have. This is why I remarked in note #5 that spatial (relational) difference is not salient to qualities such as red. So Quine's omitting the possibility of regarding qualitatively identical people as numerically different in his economic universe contradicts his assuming that it is individual people which comprise that economic universe.

Of course, we ordinarily do regard people as numerically identically identical only if they are spatially identical. But this indicates simple that we ordinarily regard people in a way which is prohibited by a theory which omits the distinction between numerical identity and qualitative identity. It does not indicate that Quine's economic theory contains a latent contract between people and income which awaits appreciation and interpretation by initiates to background and ordinary ways of thinking. By omitting the contrast between numerical identity and qualitative identity, the economic theory simply omits the contrast between people and income.

NOTES

1. *The Nigerian Journal of Philosophy,* Vol. 5, Nos 1 & 2.
2. "On one view the neutral numeral and the classifier go together to constitute a declined numeral in the 'animal gender', which then modifies 'ox' to give, in effect, 'five oxen'. On the other view the third Japanese word answers not to the individuative term 'ox' but to the mass term 'cattle'; and the neutral numeral applies directly to all this without benefit of gender, giving 'five head of cattle', hence again in effect 'five oxen". W.V. Quine, *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 36.

3. *Ibid.,* p. 36

4. *Ibid.,* p. 37.

4. In contrast with the way we treat flour, we normally identify red here with red there without stretching things at all. The reason is that, *normally,* we do not regard spatial difference as in any way

salient to red in specific or to qualities in general. With respect to the salience of spatial difference, then qualities and objects are opposites while things such as flour are in the middle.

6. "The contextual learning of these various particles ('same', 'another', 'that', 'not that') goes on simultaneously, we may suppose, so that they are gradually adjusted to one another and a coherent pattern of usage is evolved matching that of one's elders.... Only at this stage does it begin to make sense to wonder whether the apple now in one's hand is the apple noticed yesterday". (*Op. cit.*, pp. 9 - 10)

7. This distinction between numerical identity and strict identity is discussed at greater length in "The Reality Bias of the English Language".

8. *Op. cit.*, p. 55.

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THE NOTION OF CHI (SELF) IN IGBO PHILOSOPHY

K. C. Anyanwu

INTRODUCTION.

No writer on Igbo religion and philosophy can ignore the notion of Chi because this notion determines how the Igbo people discover meaning in the world, how they evaluate their experience and realise themselves. Yet this notion has not been deeply or thoroughly examined beyond the belief that it is a "personal deity". Uchendu (1965)[1], Ilogu (1974)[2] and Uzukwu (1982)[3] touched on the meaning of Chi in Igbo religion, but the philosophical meaning of Chi was ignored; perhaps because Uchendu is a sociologist while Ilogu and Uzukwu are clergy-men.

Philosophically, Chi is the basis of freedom, morality and creativity; and the analysis of this notion will show that Igbo philosophy is basically an ethical philosophy.

PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM.

In discussing any philosophical problem it is important not to divorce it from its cultural, social and historical context if such a problem is to be fully understood. This is so because philosophical problems and ideas rise from man's cultural and historical experience, and differences in culture and experience determine how philosophical problems are formulated or the kinds of question that are permitted. Once philosophy is understood from its cultural and historical context, it will be seen that in every culture there are questions which are permitted and formulated, and others which are forbidden[4].

I am therefore arguing that all cultures do not formulate the problems of experience in the same way. For example, the notion of Chi in Igbo thought does not present the same problem which the notion of self or self-identity presented in English philosophy of David Hume. In Igbo thought, the fundamental problem is not whether Chi is real or through what senses it can be perceived, but how to realise and actualise the self and to determine the role which the will plays in self-realisation.

In the attempt to explain the meaning of Chi, I must touch on some philosophical issues in order to minimise any misunderstanding. My philosophical audience may try to evaluate the notion of Chi in Igbo thought with the western mindset, that is, the assumptions, concepts, logics and world-views of western philosophies; and misunderstanding will ensue. If African philosophy of which Igbo thought is an instance were to say, for example, what the Greek and the British philosophies said, African philosophy may be regarded as unnecessary because the Greek and the British philo-

sophers have already said it. And should African philosophy say what the Greek and the British philosophers did not say, it would be regarded as false because the latter did not say so. This kind of mental attitude is detrimental to the search for truth, meaning and value; and it should be realised that religions and social issues give rise to certain kinds of thought as well as determine what philosophical solutions a society or a philosopher may adopt or favour.

I wish to point out that there are at least three basic structural constituents in philosophy, namely, questions to be answered, hypotheses whereby the questions are answered, and the means which allow those hypotheses to be accepted or rejected. And where there are different hypotheses there are different philosophical answers even on the "same" issue.

In the context of Igbo thought, I regard philosophy primarily as self-knowledge and not a matter of playing games with words. It may be possible to study the self or human consciousness from the outside or "objectively" by observing its effects on others and by generalising it in the abstract. Hume tried to observe the self but found nothing there except "a bundle of impressions". Descartes, on the other hand, saw it as an indubitable reality. In each of these cases the self or human consciousness seems to be regarded as another phenomenon apart from the person..

This is not the way Chi is approached in Igbo thought. Rather, when a person becomes himself, that is, when he reflects on the awareness and implications of self, this inquiry inevitably leads to the question of God. In other words, the question, "who am I? ", leads ultimately to the question of origin of the self. This is so because Chi is not in isolation from others, that is, self-knowledge is possible only as a member of an articulate consciousness. This means that introspection and public discourse should fecundate one another, and I believe that the lack of fecundity between the self and public discourse rendered the ideas of Hume and Descartes about the self or consciousness quite sterile.

I also realise that any attempt to express Chi in the language of western enlightenment is an invitation to failure. This is so because Chi is not an object to be discovered by sensory or extrasensory perception (and Hume did not discover it) or else by some technique of deduction (as Descartes did). Rather, it is a fact that many experiences of life are spoken of only with great difficulty; and definitely not with language which is dear to enlightenment. Chi is not an object of our perception or syllogism but of man's intentionality.

Chi is to be approached as a matter of intelligent subjectivity; intelligent in the sense that the experiences of the subject are not mere emotions but proper to his intellectual life, and subjectivity in the sense that what the subject or person does is done as a conscious subject, not as an object. Chi is not understandable in a

formal system, that is, even if we have all our definitions straight, use proper technical terms correctly and their proper relationships, we will still not come to grip with our intelligent subjectivity nor gain insight into the way we talk about it. This is no longer the question of being logically consistent and systematic but of knowing the limitation of our logic. It is not a quest for certainty but of understanding, not understanding in the abstract but of oneself in practical life. The difficulty surrounding self-understanding may be due to the fact that there are languages for describing the external world and scientific objects, but none for understanding self. This may explain why, in African thought, people resort to allegories and proverbs when words of ordinary discourse fail to express an experience that is beyond language.

In the attempt to explain the meaning of Chi, all that may be demanded of me is that the question be traceable by a method that commands itself to the nature of this subject-matter. Then, I hope that others will concur in the method adopted as well as in my good judgement. In any case, all these can still be criticised or rejected, but the most important thing is to be honest to myself even if the logic is faulty.

It is obvious that the conception of philosophic method chosen in the beginning governs the conclusion at the end. If the notion of Chi is to be a fruitful philosophical inquiry, I should suppose that the important marks of it may not be conclusions, premises and connections between conclusions and premises but the question of horizon. By horizon I mean the limit of what can be seen from a determinate view-point. It possesses a subjective-objective pole because it relates the subject to the range of matters which a person can investigate from that standpoint.

Though I share other horizons of philosophy, the issue here is to justify or explain the choice I make of my own horizon, that is, to explore the meaning of Chi. In other words, the primary task here is not the question of logical relationships between propositions, logical consistency (beacuse it is possible to be consistent in error), definitions and establishment of terms, the construction of a consistent system but the knowledge of self.

There is no revolution in philosophy without self-knowledge, and in order to understand the notion of Chi it is necessary to pay attention to horizon and outlook, that is, the directions by which people live. This inquiry into the meaning of Chi is not concerned with impersonal and systematic discipline as mathematics, logic and physics but with moral decisions. Such decisions, I assume, are the roots of philosophy because by deciding what I think (or anyone thinks) human knowing is, I inevitably define a vision of man, his aims and the attitudes fruitful for man to take.

There are many hypotheses about what it is to know, and it is within such hypotheses that each philosopher establishes the method,

criterion or rule for argument, discovery and evidence by which his philosophy unfolds or conducts itself on every question that it considers. I assume therefore that the doctrine of knowing determines the answer to the question of one's identity. For example, materialism, idealism or other philosophical views on life cannot be conclusions from philosophic reasoning but rather the horizons determined by the starting point of each philosopher.

What I consider knowing to be will eventually determine what I am able to know. Thus, one is a materialist, idealist or spiritualist in one's views prior to one's articulation of these doctrines of knowing or about the known. Philosophy should begin with a decision about oneself, and it is possible for such a decision to be responsible or irresponsible. It is through intelligent subjectivity, that is, an act of highly personal insight that I become aware of Chi or self, and on this capacity for insight depends the development of the self. The inquiry into the meaning of Chi shall therefore be conducted outside the contexts of Hume's empiricism and the Cartesian rationalism. Igbo philosophy is not concerned with a kind of metaphysical self or Chi. Rather it sees the individual person as a concrete manifestation of Chi, and its concern is to determine the activities, rules and processes which make an individual truly a self.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

Self realisation is an ideal to which the Igbo addresses himself. Ndu (life) is the greatest value around which all other values and activities find their meaning. Ndubuisi (life is first), Ndukaku (life is greater than wealth), are proper names which express the value or meaning of life. Ndu (life-force) is a dynamic process which is sometimes "strong" and sometimes "weak", but the ideal is to strengthen the life-force.

Chi is the principle of individualisation, and every Chi has his or her own nature (uwa). "Uwam na chim" means "the self and his or her own circumstance", world or nature, and this expresses the uniqueness of every individual. It explains everything that is characteristic of the self as a unique individual.

Chi is therefore a term of self-reference or an emphatic reference of oneself as a subject. I pointed out earlier that self-experience is not technically observed by oneself or by others because to observe is to regard it as an object. The self, as a subject, is not to be discovered as an object is discovered; and therefore the experience a person has of himself arises from intelligent subjectivity without looking for or at it. Though Chi is not observed, it can be analysed. But if one can avoid the error of supposing that all understanding must be rational, that is, logically clear, simple and consistent, a favourable mental attitude toward the understanding of the notion

of Chi would have been created. Bear in mind that not even the present physics of elementary particles is rationally understood. In fact, it defies rational understanding. How, for example, can one understand a particle that goes through four or more different doors all at the same time, or a particle that changes its positions without traversing through space, or a particle that loses its identity once it collides with another particle.

Who am I? What shall I hope for? How shall I live? These are some of the questions confronting the self, and it would be absurd to suppose that they can be discussed with the same rational criteria which govern mathematical discussions. Nor do I insinuate that whatever is not rational must be emotional, and I have never claimed that African thought is emotional. To say, on the other hand, that subjective experience must be sacrificed to objective experience as if both forms of experience are unrelated is to ask a person to deny his self but to accept the truth of logic and mathematics as the source of his personal development. Intelligent subjectivity has its own logic, namely, "organic logic" or the logic of aesthetics which unifies the subjective-objective experience as a vital, living and meaningful experience.

NOTION OF CHI

Chi is a self-governing or self-regulating principle. It is the totality of one's life hence "Chi bu ndu" ("Chi is life"). A concrete individual is the concrete realisation of Chi, that is, Chi represents the totality of what a person is as an existent individual. Chi is the locus of self-orientation and self-government, but it is sharply distinct from other chis because "Chi abu otu" ("Chi is not the same").

There is no problem in Igbo philosophy in understanding the uniqueness of Chi. Rather, the problem lies in knowing all its potentialities and possibilities. Hence it is asked: "Onye ma chi"? "Who knows Chi or self? " This question does not mean that the individual is ignorant of or sceptical about Chi. Rather arises from the awareness that the self embodies a lot of possibilities and nobody can claim to know completely what the self may become in the future.

Chi is characterised by or with temporal existence, that is, by wanting, wishing, living, belonging, interacting with others, etc; and all these are some of the processes of self-realisation. Since wantings vary, and may be in conflict with those of others, the process of self-realisation has to be governed by ethical and moral codes which required the individual to be in harmony, with his Chi, with Nature and with his creator (Eke). In other words, the individual has to possess the knowledge of the intrinsic qualities governing one's "Chi na uwa" ("self-and-world"), that is, the knowledge

of vital relationships between and individual and the symbols (God, society, nature) mediating his life, in order to realise himself.

The process of self-realisation requires that a person strives to develop certain skills and correct attitudes to work, to have good motives in all his activities and base his activities on ethical and moral principles. A person is, through self-awareness, is compelled to commit himself whole-heartedly to the goal he wishes to accomplish. He must be diligent and persistent in his work if he is to realise himself. But above all, the individual must have the will to succeed.

Chi is the afirmation of individual will, and according to Igbo thought "onye kwe che ya ekwe" ("as a man wills, so will his chi will"). If a man is at peace with himself, his Eke (creator) and his nature, he will be successful in life depending on the strength of his will. Personal will, like personal chi, generates, controls and directs one's activities.

Self realisation can be measured by different standards; long life, wealth, progeny, up-right life, etc. In this case, one's chi is said to be good (onye chi oma) or to have made good choices in life. "Onye chi oma" literally means "one whose fortune is good." To be so fortunate means that the individual must make efforts to succeed in life (to be wealthy, to have children, to be in harmony and solidarity with communities, that is, the past, present and future generations, and to ensure the well-being of his groups). A person who is unlucky in life is, on the other hand, "onye chi ojoo" ("an unfortunate person"), and such a person may go to the dibia (a diviner) to find out why his chi brings him misfortune. Then he would offer sacrifice in order to placate the offended spirits or to restore harmony between him and all symbols mediating his life.

The meaning of sacrifice in African thought has not been examined beyond the description of rituals and ceremonies associated with time. Sacrifice reveals the character of an individual or a people, and there is no living without sacrifice. Letting go or giving up to powers beyond or greater than the self, giving up the pleasure or joy that is possible for greater joy in the future, that is sacrifice. It is not without pain, but it is not without reward. Sacrifice can be freely chosen and executed, or necessity will impose it on an individual or a people. There are some sacrifices which are determined by life, for example, giving up one's interests so that there may be harmony in society or family. The incapacity of individuals or a people to make sacrifice, or even to know those sacrifices which the conditions of life establish for them, is according to Carl Jung, one of the causes of neurosis. Sacrifice, in African thought, is a form of self-readjustment in the scheme of life so that the individual or society can be in harmony with God, nature, past and future generations. It is a symbolic act with a lot of moral meaning and value.

There is no fatalistic view of life in Igbo thought, that is the view that an individual is ordained by fate to fail in life or that the individual cannot affect the course of his life. Therefore, an unfortunate person who complains that his chi is evil will be severely rebuked by public opinion because it amounts to saying that life is inherently evil, and that the author of life is also inherently evil. Since life is a force of variable intensity, it suggests that a poor man may become rich tomorrow and a rich man, poor. So it is emphasised in Igbo thought that no individual is greater than his chi even though he can determine for himself what he wants to be in life. This is a caution that nobody should be so carried away by success as to forget the limits set by one's chi. Death is the limit of all wealth, and nobody carries wealth along with him after death. What survives after death is one's name and reputation, and this awareness compels people to maintain the good name of their families or lineages.

UNITY AMONG CHI.

We have seen so far that every chi is unique, that every person has his or her own chi, that it is a principle of individualisation and that it is characterised by different kinds of interests, wishes, ambitions, goals and desires. Though chi is self-governing and self-directing, all its desires and wants may be chaotic if there is no control over all chis. In order words, the fact that every chi has self-control does not necessarily mean that all of them will have self-control when they form a society.

If every individual were to pursue solely his or her own interests and desires, would there be no conflicts between individual interests in the community? How would all the different personalities be controlled, and what should be the controlling force? Since every personal chi and uwa make reference to the individual alone, what should be or is the common ground for resolving conflicts of interests?

Chi-Ukwu (Greater Chi or Big Chi, that is, God) serves as a point ·collective reference. Every personal chi is limited, but Chi-Ukwu is the sources from which it originates. This does not mean or suggest that personal chi is indentical with or equal to Chi-Ukwu (God). Rather, what is meant here is that Chi derives its power from Chi-Ukwu without whom he would be morally powerless. Though man is not God, he can metaphorically be a god through his creative power, especially the power of word.

The life-force of Chi-Ukwu is independent and greater than that of every personal or individual chi, but the latter is dependent on Chi-Ukwu. If every individual Chi is directed to Chi-Ukwu, then all of them will be inspired by the moral force of Chi-Ukwu to harmonise their will and activities. Thus individual Chi recognises Chi-

Ukwu as the common ground to which he directs himself and ultimately justifies his choice of actions. Chi-Ukwu, on the other hand, does not have reference to individual chi alone but to all men; and this is why He is a universal point of reference for the harmonisation of the lives, activities and desires of a community of people.

The morality of an action may be known depending on how that action is related to the general standard of morality, that is, to Chi-Ukwu. So, even though every Chi asserts and exercises his will, the direction of their will and their controlling force is Chi-Ukwu. Ideally or morally speaking, Chi-Ukwu ought to be the controlling force and the direction of all chis. Individual Chi is still self-controlling and self-directing, but Chi-Ukwu is the ground fate accounting why a specific direction is chosen or why that is controlled at all.

Chi-Ukwu is not *outside* the universe of Igbo culture or world-view. It is not even appropriate to say that He is *inside* . Inside and outside are a unitary and continuous process of life or life-force. So, Chi-Ukwu is not *inside* or *outside* but life process itself. The community, being the expression of community will, has Chi-Ukwu as its Head. Chi-Ukwu is the Head of the community of believers or of faith because the unity solidarity and harmony achieved by individual chis are the products of faith, not of logic. Thus a community of morally conscious people is created and sustained, not by common facts of equality and individual right; not by the imposition of the will of some individuals on others, but through spontaneous expression of every chi. If that common faith weakens, unity and solidarity cease to be creations of spirit but of force.

In a moral community, every chi is by nature, culture and faith born into a community; and the duty as well as the obligation of every individual is to manifest the spirit of community in him or her sharing from collective beliefs, faith, ideals, work, reward, joy and suffering. In Igbo thought, the whole is the real, that is, Chi-community-Chi-Ukwu. Community is an area for collective action, will, experience, direction and purpose. It is the medium through which Chi-Ukwu enables every Chi to actualise himself. The word (creative power) of Chi-Ukwu is actualised in a human community, but it flows through personal Chi or will.

Since man's existence means co-existence with others, the community is a common or communal environment for collective existence. John Mbiti is correct when he identifies God, ancestors, the past and future generations of men as members of a community in solidarity with the present living generations. A community is one of shared faith and values, of feelings and experience, hence a strong corporate personality is attributed or attributable to it. In a moral community each self or chi orders his environment within the larger community and finds meaning for his life and experience,

as well as the avenue of self-realisation, within it. And through the community, Chi finds his identity through purposeful actions and by identifing with Chi-Ukwu who orders the community and the universe.

Even though personal Chi has his specific characteristics, even though he is self-directing, it is difficult to separate the specific qualities of individuals from what the community endows them. The community is an organic symbol of life-force, and it also provides the symbols as well as qualities which confer all its members the specific qualities of humaness. Without the community, the self or Chi cannot succeed in achieving its goals or in realising himself. No individual can realise himself or attain full maturity in isolation from others (Chi-Ukwu, Nature or Ala, community).

In western thought, the individual is either an isolated ego or consumed by the totality, that is, the Absolute Spirit. In Igbo thought the individual (Chi) is aware of himself, not in isolation, but in relation to others (Chi-Ukwu, community, Nature). But in almost all cases, the western thought lays emphasis on the individual; individual mind (philosophy); individual right (politics); individual interest (ethics); individual taste (economics). In other words, modern western thought endorese the sovereignty of the individual ego; and I am afraid that most teachers of western philosophy in Africa have taken this as the paradigm of their thought even on African issues. It is the pursuit and analysis of the individual particle in western science that has embarrassed the physicists because the individual is no longer understood except in the context of the whole.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ETHICAL SELF IN IGBO THOUGHT

It is possible to find similar ideas about Chi in the philosophies of other cultures, but for philosophically minded individuals or people the most important thing is not what others say about life but what they themselves conceive life to be. The notion of Chi, as an ethical philosophy, is to build and lead people, to uplift them towards justice, harmony, self-realisation and virtuous lives.

Chi creates vitality or that quality which make people or nations great. This vitality is demonstrated through knowledge of human relationships, creative effort, sustained competence and above all strong feeling of ethical responsibility. The idea of Chi allows individuals to set demanding and exciting goals for themselves. It encourages individuals to cultivate the attitude of self-reliance, of dependence, of-independence. It demands the best of individuals at all times. It enables them to combine past experience and wisdom with initiative.

Chi teaches how individuals and people can live and build a good life. To live is to act, and to act is to follow one way or the

other. In other words to act is to make decisions. Chi is a principle of self-leadership, and to lead oneself or others is to chose among different courses of action. The idea of Chi explains how decisions or choices ought to be made, namely, along the general direction established or symbolised by Chi-Ukwu. But before this, Chi offers self-knowledge, that is, the knowledge of the horizon of life. It also offers self-confidence and freedom, but it also allows the individual to see himself in the light of the whole. The ethical responsibility which self-knowledge imposes on the individual is an inner urge or need not merely to do what the individual is required to do but to do what is right and just.

There is no doubt that the process of self-realisation requires the knowledge of human relationship; and the individual has to be constantly making decisions. On what basis should the choice be made if it is to be morally good? Let us assume that the self, an individual, is faced with starvation or is extremely hungry; but luckily he sees edible fruits in another person's garden. He also knows that it is prohibited (morally and legally) to take another person's property without his consent. Has the individual stolen by taking and eating the fruits in his neighbour's garden?

Whereas this action will be regarded as immoral in western thought because it is robbery, it will not be so considered in African thought (especially in Igbo philosophy). Life being the greatest value, the individual has preserved his life by eating those fruits even though they did not belong to him. Had he collected more than he needed in order to sell them, he would have been accused of robbery. This may appear as an ethics of situation or a matter of expediency, or the condoning of robbery. But this is not so.

"Chi bu ndu" ("Chi is life") is a principle which justifies an individual to take his neighbour's fruits inasmuch as his action is a life-saving one. It is only greed however that can compel him to take the fruits for sale. Chi is the moral awareness that moral decisions are not merely matters of expediency but that they are basically ethical choices.

The concept of man's duties, obligations and freedom are extremely demanding. As a result, they compel the individual to fully make use of his intelligence, knowledge and foresight in what he is actually engaged and also in foreseeing the future. Chi, as an ethical notion has far-reaching influence in the growth and development of the self. For example, it compels an individual to feel worried if he is not always doing all in his best to prepare himself for living, working and growing as a human person. An individual who fails in his responsibility will say that his Chi has failed him. In fact, it is the individual that fails himself,and his failure, upon reflection does not lie in what he did or did not do at that specific time but in his lack of preparation. In other words, his failure was much earlier in time.

Chi has no option as to whether to develop or not to develop himself as well as his capacities. Rather to live, to act and to accept one's obligations as a person are ethical issues. This is why Chi, in order to realise himself, sets goals for himself and tries to reach them through just means. And by setting those goals, he is inevitabiyheld responsible for them. His Chi can praise or rebuke him for his actions.

The moral self however does not succeed or realise himself in isolation from others. Therefore, the community must also be a moral environment if the self is to develop himself morally. This is why the understanding of Chi leads ultimately to the question of Chi-Ukwu, and it is in a moral community that Chi and Chi-Ukwu become concretely realised.

CONCLUSION

Igbo ethical thought is not divorced from concrete and practical life. It requires the individual to pursue self-realisation through possession of knowledge, ability and skill; but, above all, through just means. Self interest has to be harmonised with communal interest, and Chi-Ukwu is the principle that harmonises the interests of individuals and society.

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2. E. Ilogu. *Christianity and Igbo Culture,* New York and London: Nok Publishers, 1974.

3. E. E. Uzukwu. "Igbo world and Ultimate Reality and Meaning", *Ultimate Reality and Meaning,* University of Toronto, Canada; Vol. 5, No. 3, September 1982, pp. 188-209.

4. V. V. Nalimov, in *FACES OF SCIENCE,* Philadelphia: Institute of Scientific Information Press, p. 2; gave the example of the conversation between Jesus and Pilate. According to the Gospel of St. John, Christ said: "I came into the world for this, that I should bear witness to truth". Pilate asked: "What is truth? "

   Nalimov, explains that Pilate, from a Hellenic culture, has to begin by discussing the question of what is truth. Christ, on the other hand, represents another culture in which the question is forbidden.

CAPITALISM AND MORAL PROSTITUTION

WHY SHOULD I SELL MY LABOUR POWER?

Dr. Dipo Fasina

It is clear that the worker cannot become rich in (the exchange of labour power), since, in exchange for his labour capacity . . he surrenders its creative power, like Esau his birth right for a mess of pottage". (Karl Marx, Grundrisse)

1

Imagine the following. You are one of four bright high school kids discussing their aims for the future. As you wonder what you wish to do in adulthood, your friend, Agbada, declares.

"I want to become a shoemaker. I will work only for biggest of shoe manufacturers, either Lennards or Bata". Buba begins to laugh. Hearing the laughter, you turn to Buba and ask.

"What is wrong with wanting to be a shoemaker. Or, don't you like big companies? He can work for anyone he wants. At any rate what do you wish to achieve in life?". Buba replies.

"You are kidding aren't you? A bright fellow like Agbada should have a better ambition. As for me, I wish to get a University degree, become an engineer and a manager". Sokoto cuts in.

'I'll do better than that. I'll get a doctorate and become a professor".

You don't know what so say now. All along, you've harboured the wish to let others use your body for sexual gratification, in exchange for money. Your ambition is to become a successful prostitute, but you fear mockery.

"I think I'll sell my body. I'll become a prostitute".

Later in life, all four have fulfilled your ambitions: for ten years Agbada has been a foreman in Bata; Buba is the manager at Nigerian Creative Engineering Company; Sokoto is professor of Africanism at the center for cultural Studies; you are a well-known prostitute in town.

One evening you meet the others in a club. They ask, "Why did you choose this undignifying living?" You reply: "Look, what difference is there between you and me? I sell my body for money, Agbada has been doing the same, Buba sell both his body and his mind; Sokoto can not survive unless he sells his brains. We are all prostitutes"

The Problem:

Here begins the philosophical problem: Is there something morally wrong with selling one's body? Suppose that I sell my mental capacities, do I thereby commit some moral error? Does the buyer do me moral wrong?

Ordinarily, we do not ask these questions. Why do they arise at all? It seems that If I own something, I should be free to dispose of it as I chose - sell it, give it away as a gift, whatever. For example, if someone grants that I own my 'labour power' but denies that I am free to sell it, I should doubt that, that person really believes that I own my 'labour power' (I leave 'labour - power' unde fined at this point).

The problem arises when we see our way clear to this: I may be free to do what is morally wrong. Marxists and non-Marxists have drawn attention to the following fundamental characteristic of a capitalist society: capitalist society requires, for its existence, that the greater portion of its members sell their 'labour power' in order to survive. If the sale and purchase of 'labour power' is mora lly wrong, it may turn out that capitalist society is such that in it, most people can survive only by mutual moral maltreatment (in a sense to be spelt out); It might be that the legally right transaction basic to capitalist society carry with them self-debasement.

The usually criticism of capitalism attribute to Marx is ground ed in the consequences of the sale of 'labour power'. it causes psychological damage to workers and, according to some, to capitalists as well; it enables the capitalist to exploit workers and exploitation is unjust. There are persuasive arguments to the effect that these are right. In this paper, however, I am looking for some arguments whose, conclusion is that the sale of labour power is objectionable on nonconsequentialist reasoning. On a consequentialist reasoning, the sale (and purchase) of labour-power is morally justified if, and only if society will be better off from the practice than under the counter-factual conditions. Nonconsequentialism, or, rather, the rejection of consequentialism assets that sale (and purchase) of labour-power is morally unjustified, even if the practice makes society better off in some nonmoral sense.

Socrates almost got it in the following remark ascribed to him by Xenephon:

> ...if a person sells his beauty for money to any that wishes to purchase, men call him a male prostitution... In like manner, those who sell their wisdom for money, to any one that will buy, men call Sophists, or, as it were, prostitutors of wisdom."

But he did not quite get it. The view that the worker, the hired engineer, the paid teacher and residents of warehouses are all mor-

ally debased requires much argument.

So, why shouldn't I sell my physical and mental powers? The answers I am looking for are guided by remarks or arguments in Karl Marx's works.

2

The Private Property Argument:

The best way to begin to answer the question posed is to consider how a defender of the sale of 'labour power' will defend his view. Consider, then, the following argument:

(1) I own my labour power
(2) Anyone is free to sell what he owns. Therefore,
(3) I am free to sell my labour power

Call this the Private Property Argument. Let us look at the first promise - "I own my labour power". My labour power is, let us say, some cluster of physical and intellectual power. These include my brute physical strenght, rationality, creativeness, self-awareness, artistic and aesthetic capacities[2].

The Private Property Argument is Valid. Its summary; *my* sale of *my* labour is the exercise of my right to alienate what I own. This is correct if (and only if?) the liberal of private poverty is right.

We might begin to consider the acceptability of the argument by looking carefully at its first promise. There is no need to deny that everyone owns his or her labour power. But, as soon as we ask, in what sense of 'ownership' do I own my labour-power,? the matter is not that simple: the liberal conception appears to loose much of its force.

The Liberal Conception of Ownership:

According to the best available formulation of the liberal conception of private property, to say that P (a person) owns O is to say that P has at least the following rights:

(1) the right to exclude others from O; nobody else has the right to exclude P from O

(2) the right to personal enjoyment of O

(3) the right to decide how and by whom O shall be used

(4) the right to forego his use of O and allow others to use O, for some reward.

(5) the right to alienate O, i.e., to exchange, consume, modify or destroy O

(6) the right to security, i.e. P is immune to expropriation with respect to O.

(7) P should not use O to harm others

We can begin to see how the ownership of labour power poses a problem for the liberal conception.

In what sense of ' ownership' do I own my labour power? Suppose that anyone owns his or her labour power in the sense in which he or she owns his or her language.

The Liberal Conseption and Ownership of Language:

Applied to the ownership of a language, the liberal conception would commit us to some propositions obviously too implausible to defend, others lacking a clear sense. But it does not mean "Yoruba is my language". It makes grammatical sense. But it does not mean "Yoruba is my private property" in the liberal sense. Why? I know what it would mean to say that I have the right to alienate, say, my piece of land. But I do not know what it would mean to say that I have the right to alienate my language; I have the right to exchange the land which I own for something else, or give it away as a gift. There is no ambiguity about that. But the claim that I have the right exchange Yoruba as a gift is hopelessly ambiguous. Furthermore, I exercise my ownership right when I fence the piece of land that I own. But, certainly, I do not have the right to exclude others from the use or benefit of Yoruba language; Again I have the right to use my language and perhaps, the duty to refrain from causing others harm by my use of my language, but these do not amount to private ownership. Thus, (1), (5) & (7), usually sufficient for private ownership in the liberal sense, do not apply.

Other rights usually appended to private ownership do not apply: the grammarian may stipulate how and when language is correctly used, but this is not because he or she has the right to decide how or by whom it should be used.

I cannot make sense of a claim to the effect that my language is immune to expropriation though, if the liberal conception is correct, the claim should be as intelligible as the claim that house is immune from expropriation.

The next move, then, is an argument which will rely upon the analogy with language.

Analogy with Language:

(1) I own my labour power.
(2) Anyone is free to sell what he or she owns
(3) I own my labour power in the sense in which I own my language.

(4) I am not a private owner of my language. Therefore,
(5) I am not a private owner of my labour power. Therefore,
(6) I am not free to sell my labour power.

This argument, if sound, would establish that I am not free to sell my labour power even though I own it. Premise (2) needs qualification: an exemption is when I am a trustee. But this can be ignored, since I do not wish to claim that I hold my language in trust. Premise (4) can be defined on the discussion in section II, (5) would be correct if (3) were.

But, (3) is not quite convincing, for the following reason: Some ownership claims that can plausibly be made about my labour power can not be plausibly made about my language. In a clear sense I (should) have the right to exclude others from the use of my labour power - no one may force me to work for him or her. It is implausible, however, that I (should) have the right to exclude non Yorubas from the use of Yoruba Language, I (should) have the right to decide how and by whom my powers are to be used. I do not (and should not) have the right to decide how and whom Yoruba should be used. Nobody does, nobody should.

4

The promising analogy with language does not seem to work.

And, so far, I have not stated why the defender of the sale of labour power is so convinced that I should be free to sell my labour power. It is this: I should be free to sell my labour power because my labour power is a result of my own efforts (and I should be free to sell whatever is a product of my own efforts); that is, the sale of labour power is justified if some version of the labour theory of property is correct:

> ... every man has a property in his own Person. This no Body has any right to but himself. The labour of his Body, and the work of his Hands, we say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that Nature hath provided, and left in it, he hath mixed his labour with and joyned to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property. It being by him removed from the common state Nature placed it in, it hath by this labour something annexed to it, that excludes the common right of other men...[3]

Each person comes into the world endowed with some powers and capacities. These develop, let us assume, in virtue of the person's efforts. This assumption is only partially correct, but let us do our best for the defender of the sale of labour power.

His argument is the following:

(1) At any time t my labour power is the result of my own efforts

(2) Whatever results from my own efforts belongs (should be-long) to me (This is because some version of the labour theory of property is true)

(3) I am free (should be free) to sell whatever belongs to me Therefore, (4) I am free (should be free) to sell my labour power.

The argument is not as compelling as it seems. One may accept all the premises and reject the conclusion. Suppose that I have a proven capacity to produce some substance capable of destroying the whole of humankind at one blow. Suppose, further, that some entrepreneur, now hater of people, has a proven disposition to destroy other people. It might be argued that I should not be free to sell my capacity to produce that substance to that entrepreneur; for, although my right to sell that capacity creates the duty that others do not interfere with my disposal or my use of it, this does not carry with it that others should leave me free to endanger their lives and liberties.

It might be objected, however, that in nonextreme cases,(4) will go through because, among other things, (1) is true: I should be free to sell my labour power when the sale would not result in the loss of liberties for others and would not endanger their lives-because my labour power is a product of my own efforts. But (1) can be challenged.

The analogy with language was not arbitrary. It seems true that I owe my labour power to society in a sense similar to how I owe my language to society:

> As regards the individual, it is clear, e.g. that he relates even to language itself as his own only as a natural member of a human community. Language as the product of an individual is an impossibility. But the same holds for property[4].

> I am speaker of Yoruba.I speak the language well (or badly) in virtue of my being a member of some society whose previous generations have used and developed the language. At any given time, my mental and physical development depends upon the social conditions of my life. I can best develop my physical powers in a society where nutritious feed, time and facilities for physical exercise are available, good scientific skill where there is a scientific tradition, good artistic skill where people appreciate beauty, and appropriate social conditions exist.

5

The Argument from the social Nature of Labour

Consider, then, the argument from the social nature of labour;
(1) I owe my labour power to society (at least in part)
(2) My labour power is not entirely mine (because (1) is true)
(3) I should be free to sell only what is entirely mine. Therefore,
(4) I should not be free to sell my labour power.

This argument establishes that society can justifiably call upon me to put my labour power in its services. It leaves intact that my labour power is due at least partially to my efforts. It might now be suggested that it is difficult to separate the social from non-social contribution to my labour power at the time when the question of sale comes up. But this is only to suggest that any calculation of what I am free to sell (or should be free to sell) is bound to be untidy, awaiting some state of the development of the human sciences. The argument does not establish that I should not be free to sell my labour power at all.

6

Yet the argument could be turned around, to conclude that I should not sell my labour power even if it were wholly the result of my efforts, as follows:

(1) I own my labour power
(2) My labour power is an essential part of my person (individuality)
(3) I should not sell what is essential to my person (individuality). Therefore,
(4) I should not sell my labour power (even though it is entirely a product of my own efforts).

Let us ignore the vagueness of "part of my person". (2) means roughly that (the history of) my labour power (perhaps among other things) makes me a unique person. But why should I not sell what is unique about me? On what ground can (3) be rejected? On the ground that I own my person, no more no less: the sale of any "part of" my person is an expression of my personal freedom.

But, *I* do not first sell my labour power and thereafter surrender control over my powers. My sale of my labour power is my surrender of my powers and hence of my person. (it does not matter that this is only for a few hours a day). Thus, the sale of labour power is at once the expression of my personal freedom and the

loss of personal freedom. It is deeply self-contradictory. It is as if one were to say: "I express my personal freedom by choosing to become a slave". Robert Nozick would find nothing morally wrong with enslaving oneself[5]. We might imagine a person who contracts himself into slavery reasoning as follows: "*I* am a person. The slave I choose to become is not a person. So he will not be me". But it is moral self-degradation that a person who does not suspend his belief in his own personhood allows himself to be treated as if he were not a person.

Someone might point out that the moral degradation of the sale of labour power works for the good of society. A reply to this is that it is not redeeming for any society that large numbers of its members must degrade themself for the good of the society.

Again, someone might deny (2) - that my labour power is essential to my person in the relevant sense; he might contend that what is unique about me are my skills, not my labour power in general. The distinction would be that my labour power marks me out as a member of the human species but my skills mark me out as a unique person. An answer to this is that there is no way, at any rate no neat way, of separating a person's skill from his -distinguishing powers. My labouring skill includes, at least, my purposiveness, creativeness, my physical and aesthetic powers. So does my artistic skill. There does not seem to be a skill which operates without the excercise of the cluster of peculiarly human powers. It is true that I may retain my skill when I sell my labour power.

But it does not follow from this that my skill and my labour power are physically distinct. It is wrong to assume that when I sell my labour power, I lose (physically) it. I do not. I only give up control over its use, and this is a different thing.

Let us now consider what might be called the Humanity Argument:

The Humanity Argument:

(1) I own my labour power
(2) My labour power makes me a human being
(3) I should not sell what makes me human. Therefore,
(4) I should not sell my labour power

It can be inferred that I should not sell my skills because my skills are intimately tied up with my essentially human powers, so that I cannot sell my skills without selling my 'humanity'. Suppose that someone claims that my labour power 'depends upon' my skill and that my skills constitute my species-distinguishing characteristics; it would still follow that I should not sell my skills, with some adjustments to the Humanity Argument. The crucial move in that argument is (3), But why should I not sell what makes me human? A modification of the Humanity Argument would suggest why:

(1) I own my labour power
(5) There is some cluster of peculiarly human powers and my labour covers these powers.
(6) The only morally worthy treatment of one's labour power by oneself and by others is the pursuit of the development of one's human powers.

Therefore, (7) Anyone who sells his labour power treats himself in a morally unworthy manner.

The argument would, if sound, establish that anyone who buys my labour power for the purpose of profit making does me moral wrong; it would also establish that I treat myself in a morally unworthy manner by selling my labour power.

But, assuming that (1) and (5) are true, (6) requires argument. The argument might be that persons are essentially their powers and persons should be treated as ends in themselves, so human powers should be treated as ends[6]. It seems to be the nonconsequentialist argument sought for. The argument, when one premise is omitted is:

(8) Human beings are distingushed from nonhumans by some cluster of powers P1..... pn. Therefore,
(9) P1 ..... Pn should be treated as ends in themselves. But this comes dangerously close to the indefensible view that a dog's barking capacity should be developed as an end-in-itself. There is need for a warrant from (8) to (9). The warrant to be sketched is not deductive, and might be better construed as a historical warrant.

One test of the accepability of any view of morality is whether (or not) it supports or promotes beliefs that tend to justify institutions and practices widely considered unjust. Examples of such institutions and practices are: slavery, colonization, Nazi holocaust, racism. In a world where each human being treats himself or herself and others as ends, these are unlikely to occur. In a world where people treat themselves and others as mere means, they remain open possibilities. A morality which deems human powers, needs as ends-in-themselves can be justified along this line. Its detailed formulation would require more than I can attempt in this paper. But notice that the justification has taken a consequentialist turn: The abolition of the sale and purchase of labour-power will make the world a better world.

To mend some loose ends. Can not a person sell his labour power (or buy another's) and the purchased labour power is used to develop the powers of the seller, the buyer and other people? Imagine the following kind of society each individual works, there are differences in the kinds of work people do, but no-one receives wages. Labour power is used to produce physical necessities and facilities for cultural advancement. One gets from society as one needs and does what one is able to do.

Properly speaking, no one in that society sells labour power: in any act of sale, the seller obtains something deemed proportional to the value of what is sold; this calculation would not be relevant in a society where people obtain social and cultural goods according to their needs. In our imagined society human powers are treated as ends. What each produces is freely used by all for the development of their powers, and everyone knows what the arrangement is like. In that society people do not buy the means of satisfying their physical or cultural needs (or anything). Selling and buying, and hence selling and buying labour power, would be pointless.

CONCLUSION:

The view that a person should be free to sell his or her labour power appears unassailable in so far as it is grounded in the liberal conception of ownership or property acquisition. A successful attack on the liberal conception would make it less defensible that I am free to sell my labour power. If the liberal conception justifies what is objectionable on moral grounds, the worse for the liberal conception. Reformulating some arguments found in Marx, I have suggested how the sale and purchase of labour power is morally objectionable though 'backed up' by the liberal conception. Given the historical epoch, we may have no choice other than sell our labour power. But the objection is that capitalist social arrangements force us to live with the moral selfdegradation and perhaps harm to the moral integrity of other.

The analogy with language, though not wholly successful, backs up the argument from the social nature of labour. The rejection of the private property argument leaves it open that I may violate some claims that are properly society's when I treat labour power as *my* private property. This comes close to criticism based upon rights, hence is nonconsequentialist. The humanity argument, despite its Kantian appearance, admits of consequentialist justification. There are, then, both consequentialist and nonconsequentialist reasons for rejecting capitalism. Good consequences are found in Marx's description of the "civilizing nature" of capitalism; Bad consequences are expressed in terms such as 'pauperisation', 'enslavement', 'prostitution', 'oppression', exploitation', and similar terms. The considered separate arguments do not reveal a unifying principle around which Marx's criticism of capitalism could take a clearly moral status, in philosophers' usual sense. To find such a principle, one would rely upon our beliefs about human labour power and human nature; One would then show how Marx's particular criticism arises from his view of human nature, taking care to show, as well, how the stated principle of human nature is a *moral* principle. This is a difficult task beyound this relatively brief paper.

FOOT-NOTES

1. "Memorabilia of Socrates", in Plato and Xchophon *Socratic Dialogues* (London: Dent, 1954), BK. 1, Ch.6, Section 13. I own this reference to Professor Joe Bedu-Addo.

2. "Unter Arbeitskraft. oder Arbeitsvermogen verstehen wir den Inbegrif der physichen undgeistigen Fahigkeiten, die in de Leiblichkeit, der lebendigen Personlichkeit eines Menschen existierer und die er in Behegung Setzt, so oft er Gebrauchs werte irgendeiner Art preduziert". - Karl Marx, *Das kapital,* in *Werke* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1962), XXIII, 181.

   "By Labour power or labour-capacity we mean the sum-total of the physical and intellectual powers which exist in bodily state, the active personality of human being which he sets in motion, whenever he produces a use-value of any sort." (My translation).

3. John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government,* ch V. Section 27 reprinted in Property, ed. C.B. Macpherson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), p. 18. There is a proviso that the acquisition right on the basis of labour is limited - there must be enough left for others. This need not worry us there.

4. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse,* trans. Martin Nicolaus (New York: Vintage, 1973), p. 490.

5. Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (New york: Basic Books, 1974), p. 214.

6. See, Karl Marx, *Grundrise,* pp. 243-246, p. 408, pp. 611-612, for the view that human power are ends-in-themselves.

7. For a glimpse, see Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program, in The Marx - Engels Reader,* ed. Robert. C. Tucker, (New *York: Norton, 1972); pp. 386 -388.*

8. For the good consequences, *see Karl Marx, (Grundrisse),* pp. 287, 289, 465; *Capital,* trans. Ben Fowkes, (New York: Vintage, 1976, p. 1021; For the bad consequences, see *"Machinery and Large-Scale Industry"*, in Capital, Ch. 15, pp. 517 - 75.

BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY

— Christopher S. Nwodo

I

The relationship between philosophy and History has gone through some very interesting stages. It starts off in Aristotle with a kind of strain, a down grading of what historians are doing compared to that with which poets (of all people) are concerned. "Hence poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history, since its statements are of the nature rather of universals, whereas those of history are singulars"[1]. The points to be underlined here are: that something philosophic is to be highly regarded or taken seriously; that which pertains to universals is more important than that which concerns individuals or particulars. Since history belongs to the second group and presumably both poetry and philosophy belong to the first, both are "of graver import than history." Here Aristotle does not condemn history outright either as being a mistake or productive of falsehood. He is concerned with the fact that historical statements are about particular facts which presumably cannot be about the essences of things. There was a belief among the ancient Greek philosophers that real knowledge is knowledge of being not of becoming, and that the constancy of reality is predicated upon the concept of substance (*ousia*) understood as the permanent. The universal reflects this substantive aspect of reality. Philosophy, especially metaphysics (or ontology) is essentially about universals. History on the other hand, is concerned with particular and concrete events and so cannot be about the essences of things. For those who wish to place a wedge between philosophy and history a fertile ground has thus been prepared by Aristotle.

The second stage in the process of this relationship is found in the works of Rene Descartes (1596 - 1650). Descartes was primarily concerned with laying a solid foundation for the sciences especially physics. He considered absolute certainty in knowledge a requirement of scientific methodology. His method was to start with axioms or postulates and gradually, deductively and systematically to construct a scientific edifice. The first step then is to doubt whatever can be doubted until one arrives at an indubitable truth or proposition and this becomes the first axiom or postulate. It is in this process of doubting everthing that can be safely doubted that he came face to face with the various disciplines including history. He concedes that history can be read with profit since it can "exalt" the mind; "and that, when read with discretion", it can "assist in forming a sound judgment"[2]. However, there are serious internal problems. Historians go out of their way to "exaggerate the value of things in order to render them more worthy of being read". This is why "omit" from their accounts "all the circumsta-

nces which are basest and least notable". The consequence of this is that a historical account "is not portrayed as it really is" and people "who regulate their conduct by example which they derive from such a source, are liable to fall into the extravagancies" of a dreamer and and so "form projects beyond their power of performance"[3]. Strictly speaking therefore history cannot be accurate and so the demand for certainty and scientific regour finds history inadequate. Considering the influence of Descartes on modern thought, these negative remarks on history could not but produce the most damaging effects on both the possibility and credibility of historical knowledge. Lucien Levy-Bruhl point out how disciples of Descartes made mockery of history and historians. "They rarely missed an opportunity of showing historians and scholars that they had an extremely low opinion of the matters with which they were concerned. Malebranch, in particular, did not spare his epigrams, jeers, and even sarcasms at their expense. His example was followed by a number of Cartesians"[4]. Even though historians were forced, after Descartes, to improve upon their craft along the lines suggested by Descartes' criticism and scepticism, the relationship between philosophy and history remained strained from Aristotle to Descartes and beyond.

Generally speaking, British philosophy even when it is not a form of empiricism or positivism had always felt uneasy about, if not suspicious of history. W.H. Walsh makes the point that the British idealists, particularly, F.H. Bradley and B. Bosanquet, even when continental idealism was making a big production about historical knowledge, did not feel inclined to follow the trend. He quotes Bosanguet as saying that history "is a hybrid form of experience, incapable of any considerable degree of "being or trueness"[5]. When we consider the attitude of empiricists, and particularly that of positivists towards history we notice not only a strained relationship but an attempt to treat historical knowledge with contempt. This arises from the way positivism looks at scientific knowledge. Because of its postulate of "the unity of science", positivism maintains that "all branches of knowledge" follow "the same basic procedures of observation, conceptual reflection and verification".[6] According to the earlier positivists like Comte history was not yet a science but could be raised to the level of a science. In order to do this, historians have to turn away from their search for particular, individual and concrete facts, and instead look for universal principles or laws that lie behind them and which these facts "illustrate"[7]. Later positivists, and Walsh mentions Karl Poper, feel that history should continues with individual facts, although it "is something less than a science". It may be compared "to practical activities like engineering" but not pure science. From a positivistic point of view the last concession, equating history with engineering, does not help much in redeeming the situation; and so the relationship remained strained.

The overall effect of this approach is that history has no claim to a place of respect among the other disciplines.

Philosophy being the kind of discipline that it is, the same relationship between philosophy and history can be seen, and has actually been viewed, from a comletely different perspective, offering history the most pre-eminent place among the sciences. This is particularly true of philosophyical idealism. According to Walsh, the brand of historical thinking started in Germany in the nineteenth century from where the Italian philosopher Croce picked it up and passed it on to R.G. Collingwood in England. The idealist for the most part, continues Walsh, attributes to history a privileged form of knowledge higher than that of science because it is more concrete. In the first place, history, for the idealist, is definitely a science because "it offers a connected body of knowledge methodolically arrived at". However, history is a science of a peculiar type because it is concrete and not abstract, and it arrives at individual truths not "general knowledge". The last point about individual truths is of great significance. The most important thing about any inquiry is its ultimate goal, and the ultimate goal "of all judgement is to characterise reality in its individual detail". The natural science are conspicously and hoplessly lacking in this regard. Descartes was one of the philosophers to point out that the natural "sciences do not describe concrete fact". They deal with only mere possibilities and hypothetical propositions which can be true even if no actual examples are forthcoming. Obviously this does not imply that the natural sciences have no contact with reality. However, it does emphasize the fact that the results of the natural sciences "state universal connections" and there formulated in propositions which lack existential import." Furthermore, the idealist capitalizes on the generally accepted view that the historian is concerned with past activities of man and gives it a most unusual interpretation. He (the idealist) argures that human activities are essentially mental and we can and do understand them "in their concrete detail" simply because we are essentially forms of mind. We as minds may not be able to penetrate nature but thoughts and other human experiences are open to us in a special way. This makes it possible for us to "rethink or re-live" "the thoughts and the lives of others past or present". This process of "imaginative re-living" is crucial to history and makes it possible for history to provide us with special and individual knowledge not available to the natural sciences. Collingwood goes beyong the exaltation of history over the natural sciences and entertains the idea that since history is "the only valid form of knowledge, it must absorb philosophy itself"[5]. Here we observe the pendulum swing from the positivistic assessment of historical knowledge as unscientific and therefore invalid, to the idealistic exaltation of historical knowledge above all other forms of knowledge.

These repesent the extreme polarities of the views regarding the relationship that does, or should exist between two of the most ancient disciplines that man has ever pursued. Most of the remaining view fall somewhere in between, and the majority of them tend to respect and advocate the independence of each discipline while exploring ways and means of enhancing one through the assistance of the other. Sometimes, this enhancement of relationship is brought out without being directly intended, and therefore discovered only in the end and through some interpretative analysis. This is how the present author sees two articles discussed below: Professor Raymond Aron's "Relativism in History"[9] and Professor John R. Hall's "The Time of History and the History of Times"[10]. None of them sets out specifically to discuss the relationship between philosophy and history, however, each has thrown some light on it to the mutual benefit of both.

II

When we talk about relativism in history we emphasize the fact that historical knowledge is limited and circumscribed, making no claims to any absolutes, without thereby negating a high degree of objectivity in history. This is what Professor Raymond Aron sets out to elucidate; that relativism does not entail subjectivism understood as the rejection of any standard of objective truth. The logical starting point of historical science is, he says, some "present interest". This explains why he describes history as a reconstruction of the past by the living for the living as a "reaction to the imagined happenings of the past". Man is at the centre of the whole affair because it is his past, or "imagined" event of his past that he wants to investigate. This deep personal involvement negates the distiction between subject in historical studies, without precluding the attainment of truth. Professor Aron identifies three steps towards the attainment of objectivity. There is the initial infatuation with an imaginary past with its myths and legends; then follows the process of the application of established canons and techniques that leads to the reconstruction and establishment of the facts as they happened. This is the level of "scientific achievement" which is in essence a rejection of "mythological credulity". After that comes the stage of "critical reflection", which should determine the limits and value of "scientific achievement". Once we introduce the notion of value, unless we establish some universal or objective value, we are forced to the realm of relativism even after the level of scientific achievement has been reached. What Professor Aron is saying here is that at the heart of history is a form of relativism. The historian is influenced by some value-system, and is driven by some "centre of interest".All of these make for some form of

relativism. The fundamental question being asked at this juncture is whether it is necessary as a further development in historical science and critical reflection to go beyond relativism. In other words, must historical knowledge, or any form of knowledge for that matter, transend relativism as a requirement of the attainment of truth and objectivity? Professor Aron does not think this is necessary. "It does not seem necessary to go beyond relativism . . . it will be enough to define the limits of that relativism at which we have arrived"[11]. We have to content with the fact that there is one form or the other of relativism in every science and in every discipline. Every discipline has a special area of interest or investigation in relation to which it sets up its methods of inquiry and conclusion predicated upon what is considered worth-while. "No science is concerned with total reality; each has its principle of selection, seeking to isolate that which is worth examining or that which serves to explain what is woth examining"[12]. So there has to be some centre of interest both in the natural sciences and in history, otherwise there would be no research. It is this centre of interest that influences "not just the decision to study or ignore this or that fact" but also "a certain way of construing facts, of choosing concepts, arranging complexes and putting events and periods into perspective"[13]. This explains why every age writes its own account of the past in accordance with its own "centre of interest" or values. There is therefore no such a thing as a fixed perspective of the past.

As was stated earlier, Professor Aron maintains that the above analysis does not condemn us to absolute subjectivism and there is no need for us "to go beyond relativism". Following Heinrich Rickert and Max Weber, he would seem to approve a form of universality within relativism. Although each historian chooses his own area of investigation and also poses the questions he would like to answer, "the answers given to them are given solely by the facts". And so we have a "hypothetical universality meaning "the universal validity of the deductions subsequent on a free choice of starting point"[14]. However, he opposes the attempt on the part of Rickert and Weber to overcome relativism through "a universal system of values" that would supposedly make the writing of history objective and transcendental. Not only would such a system be "a priori" and so contrary to what actually obtains in the writing of history, it "would inevitably subordinate scientific truth to the system of values, that is to say, to a philosophy"[15]. Besides, this universal system of values is likely to be formal in the sense of being abstract like the natural sciences while what the historian is concerned with is concrete and particular. What one should avoid among other things is "the vulgar idea of historical relativism" which is a misrepresentation of relativism properly understood. Viewed properly,

relativism does not destroy historical knowledge or philosophy for that matter. It is rather a sing of richness. "Nevertheless, this relativism, which the very history of historical science evinces, does not seem to be destructive of scientific history, as long as it is correctly interpreted. The fact that we acknowledge the existence of such relativism is a sign, not of scepticism, but of philosophical progress"[16]. It is not just that we can understand different perspectives, but that this is all one has a right to expect from history.

III

Among philosophers the question of the nature of time would seem to have remained an unsettled issue. Basically, it can be reduced to two namely: does time exist as an independent and subsisting entity, independent of our consciousness of it and independent also of events that take place in it; or does it rather form part of our consciousness? Philosophers as well as non-philosophers have continued, generation after generation, to argue in favour of one position or the other. Some have argued that time *does* have an objective existence independently of our consciousness of it, and distinguishable from events that take place in time. This conception of time is generally regarded as the objective view. One of the strong advocates of the objectivity of time is Isaac Newton according to whom time is aboslute in its nature with a regular and measured movement independently of things extrinsic to it. Others have argued on the contrary that time *does not* have an independent existence aside from our consciousness. McTaggart maintains that time is not real at all, while Leibniz sees both time and space simply as forms of relationship among things existing within space and time.

Previously, historians as historians never had to bother about the dispute over the nature of time. The general tendency among them had been to give preference to objective time and use it as a standard or scale to measure temporal consciousness or subjective time, and also "as the basis for observing the march of events". It is this state of affairs that Professor John R. Hall in his article[17] set out to combat, in other words to dethrone objective time, the favourite of historians, and in its place install subjective time for a better understanding of "social order and social change".

Fortunately for Professor Hall, some serious works have been done in this direction. Some "historians have explored the relativity of multiple scales of objective time" *(History and Theory* p. 113). The obvious implication is that objective time is not one but "multiple" and so we should not talk about objective time but rather about diverse scales of objective time. Among philosophers, some subjectivists have dealt with inner time-consciousness which articulates time. Some (subjective) historians have also advocated a

form of relativism based on the awareness of many and different historical figures (social actors) who had different interests and so produced different and often conflicting results on society. All these are, according to Professor Hall, attempts to undermine the objectivity of objective time. These attempts have not been very successful he maintains because "they are based on different conceptions of the nature of time and its relation to history" (pp. 133 -114). Professor Hall then examines the contributions of these attempts as well as their weaknesses in order to supplement them with other theories of history. He is definite that phenomenology will do the trick. "I propose a comparative phenomenology of time as a basis for linking the temporal character of social action with the unfolding process of history" (p. 114). This will produce two intellectually stimulating results. First of all, and this is not the major effect, it will realize the dreams of Max Weber about "the division of labour between historiography and sociology". But the main feat of this applied phenomenology is the realization that because subjective time differs among individuals and groups, an awareness of particular attitudes to subjective time can increase considerably our knowledge of historical events:

> But the more basic concern is to sketch an approach to historiography which recognizes that because subjective and social temporal orientations themselves differ among individuals and groups and over chronological time, knowledge of historically given temporal orientations can tremendously enrich understandings of social order and social change. (p. 114).

Here we have it spelt out quite clearly. The plan is to undermine objective time and in its place extoll subjective time; the purpose of which is "the more basic concern" Professor Hall therefore takes us on a trip through a broad landscape of critiques of objective time before settling down to the green pasture of applied phenomenology. The first stop is in the camp of "The *Annales* School of Historiography" whose "concept of time provides an accessible key to understanding" the essence of objective time. A critique of their approach to objective time will therefore reveal "certain problems inherent in any historiography based solely on concepts of objective time" (p. 115). From one of the leading figures among them, Fernand Braudel, we learn that objective time is essentially "a problem of scale". He is known to have recognized three scales of objective time. Even though there are three scales, there is only one time: "the of history, that is objective world time". What Braudel does for us according to Professor Hall is to point out the path to subjectivity inherent in his conception of objective time as essentially a problem of scale. It is a path that Braudel can only point out but dare not travel. He is already committed to the idea

that "objective time is the necessary scale for historiographic inquiry" (p. 116). However, that does not seem to be the major issue. Neither the subjectivist nor the objectivist would "deny the objective and non reversible flow" of time. Even the two who might be considered strong advocates of subjective time namely Edmund Husserl and Alfred Schutz "acknowledge the passage of objective time . . . In fact, both assert that the unity of objective time synthesizes the multiplicity of subjective temporal experiences" (p. 117). What Braudel fails to notice which is what the subjective approach does, is to "raise the issue of whether passage of objective time is always equally important" (p. 117). Or is it the case that groups and individuals act differently towards events based on their "different conceptions of Now and its relation to past and future" (p. 117). Assuming that this is true, then history itself could be influenced by temporal orientations of groups and individuals, that is, subjective time. What this means is that whatever temporal scale is being used to measure events it is just another scale. A scale is a scale and objective times as a scale is not different from any other scale. Despite this revelation Braudel would not face the truth of the situation "for fear that objective time could not be regained once a subjective turn had been taken" (p.118). Since Professor Hall makes it sound like a case of intellectual dishonesty on the part of Braudel, we move on to the next camp, that is, to the Marxist structuralism of Louis Althusser.

Althusser is presented to us as an engaging thinker. He does not accept Braudel's objective time. However he does recognize the contribution towards subjective time made by Braudel's awareness of "the multiple rthythms". Althusser goes further to point out that dividing time into units of Now does not do justice to "the character of social formation (that is, economy and society structured as a totality)". No single Now can offer ample opportunity for all the elements of a social formation to come into play (p.119). What obtains according to Althusser is that there are different "levels" of social formation, such as the economic level, the political and the scientific. Each "level" has its own temporal character. What this means is that there is no connection in time between one event taking place on one level and another event occuring on a different level. "Consistently then, Althusser resists falling back upon a single reference time as a way of connecting different levels and different social formations" (p. 121). Althusser throws the whole thing out (objective as well as subjective time). The interesting aspect of his theory is that it involves "more than recognition of the relative autonomy of different times within levels of social formation" (p. 122). The problem is how to explain the effect of an individual's action in society as a whole (social formation). Since the levels" are somehow parallel (disconnected) the flow of actions

across levels is not easy to explain. What this means is that when two people on different levels (of economic class structure) share the same social formation (belong to the same society) their subjective times (consciousness of events affecting them in time as well as their own contribution to society) can be "relatively autonomous", which is a polite way of saying their times have little or no connection. The consequence of this is that it is different to explain the effective role of the individaul in the historical process of the social formation since his action is not seen as going beyond his level. To make matters worse two different social formations do not seem to have any temporal common denomiator:

> The temporal features of each social formation's various "levels" are articulated in relation to the social formation itself, and the two social formations therefore cannot be synchronized. Even though they may overlap in what is conventionally construed as objective time . . . the two bear no overall temporal relation to one another (p. 121).

Not only do we have different "levels" within a given social formation, but even the transition from one social formation to another is not essentially chronological: "there would be no point to giving a simple chronological account of the *transition* from, say, feudalism to capitalism" (p. 121). So the question of the role of the individual in history, that is the effect of his action beyond his social formation, becomes for Althusser a "spurious question".

The problem with Althusser is that he does not know what will help him advance his theory. He wants "to construct a concept of each kind of social time" (p. 123), and yet he does not want to take into consideration that human activity and subjective time must be involved. "He wants to maintain a radical separation between scientific concepts and theories on the one hand, and actual social developments on the other" (p. 123). Althusser and his collaborator Etienne Balibar consider "theory as a realm unto itself". Now, since they consider the notion of the mode of production as based on objective social relationships, they do not therefore feel compelled to have to deal with individuals, consequently they leave subjective time out of consideration (p. 124). The problem facing Althusser is "the relation between theory and social life". A theory has to be established, and this involves examination of actual social formation. "Yet such a project demand an understanding of subjective time and the intersections of individuals in an intersubjective temporal world" (p. 124). This is so because any social event can be explained ultimately only in relation to the involvement of human beings "who stand in meaningful relation to one another" (p. 124). Now to be in a meaningful social relation is to

be in an intersubjective temporal relation. And any theory of social phenomena presupposes a knowledge of "the temporal of human beings. Even in Althusser's "structuralist approach to Marxist analysis of social formation", one must be made to understand that a mode of production is a complicated structure involving human beings in direct relationship to other human being and to the *means* of production: "In short, modes of production involve ongoing interaction of human being; and an understanding of their temporal natures therefore requires analysis of the temporal orientations of action subjects" (p.125). It is obvious that Althusser's Marxist structuralism is not enough because it fails to give adequate consideration to interpersonal relationship. "It seems both possible and necessary to incorporate subjective and intersubjective temporal concepts into this approach, but Althusser and Balibar have not done so" (p. 125). And with this we leave Althusser and his Marxist structuralism behind.

By now everybody on this intellectual tour knows already where we are going. Our question has narrowed down to an explanation of the "concept of subjectively meaningful action" because that is the concrete essence of subjective time, that is how we measure consciousness of time. Now "Husserl's emphasis on the stream of internal time-consciousness as the sources of meaning" (p. 126) would seem to do the trick. An so we are led through Husserl's phenomenology especially his analysis of Now in relation to past and future as this affects our consciousness of time in relation to actions. It is good to point out that Husserl's analysis is about ideal types that is, not actual. So it would be necessary to incorporate "a descriptive phenomenology of the temporal structure of the life world". This is very important because after all we are concerned with "the world of paramount reality which humans act within and upon by means of our animate organisms" (p. 126). This "applied phenomenology" cuts across Alfred Schutz, Max Weber and Edmund Husserl. But the centre-pieces are Husserl's method and Max Weber's strategy. "For the purpose of these investigations Husserl's phenomenological analysis of essential structures of time-consciousness can be used to derive alternative mundane (life wordly) concepts of time" (p. 127). And there is no doubt that when the operation is finished we shall be more enlightened. "These concepts of applied phenomenology can be used to enrich other sociological concepts, as well as to analyze specific historical developments" (p. 127). Husserl's analysis of our consciouness of time aims at showing time as a continuum or at least as connected. He starts by analyzing the notion of Now which connects the past and the future in one "stream of consciousness". Past and future (remembrance and anticipation) are capable of introducing to the Now consciousness of things not present to it either as that which exists only "as memories of previous perceptions" or as that which

exists as expectation of things yet to come. On further analysis Professor Hall divides Husserl's analysis into four categories. In the first place we have the *synchronic* temporal orientation in which the Now is the centre of individual and collective attention in such a way that both past and future are ineffectual in the Now. Secondly there is the attempt to de-emphasis the Now in favour of past and future. Third -*Strategic* time emphasizes the future exclusively. This is concerned with future goals. Eternal time concentrates on the past. "These life world phenomenological possiblities must be understood as ideal types which could not exactly correspond to empirical reality" (p. 128). The effort then is to use these four ideal types "to specify particular temporal orientations, which involve the interplay of subjective temporal orientations. . . in vivid social situations" (p. 129). This brings us back to Max Weber's analytic strategy which aims at safegaurding the subjective and the objective. "However, it is important to note that Weber did not ever deny the effect of external events on the course of subjectively meaningful action. Thus, weber allows for a subject-object relation" (p. 129). In this way Weber was able "to give a conceptual account of empirical events" with various levels of overlapping "histories each with its typical paths of social action directed to other people and to the natural and cultural worlds" (pp. 129 - 130). This is it. By combining Husserl's ideal types with Weber we arrive at a point where we would be able to de-emphasize objective time, give a good account of subjective time without falling into Althusser's pit. This will produce a coherent history of times (subjective times, that is) because there is an inherent temporality in socially oriented subjective actions; that is, they are both temporal and at the same time social in the sense of interpersonal.

Professor Hall would seem to have set out to accomplish one thing among others; if not to deny objective time completely, at least to undermine it in order to emphasize subjective time. On the very first page of the article we are told that: "Too often historians have solved their temporal problematic by the fact of posing objective chronological time as the basis for observing the march of events". And so something must be done "By way of combating this solution". something by way of alternatives. At the end of Professor Hall's alternative attempt; in fact the very last sentence of the article, the hope is expressed that "The objectivist time of history is to be replaced with a "history" of times". It is a hope expressed with reservation because he is quite aware that others before him have failed in their attempts to dethrone objective time.

have failed in their attempts to dethrone objective time. He even pointed out the cause of their failure, their efforts "are based on different conceptions of the nature of time and its relation to history". After what would seem to be a correct diagnosis of the

faults of others in this regard, one would have expected a more detailed analysis of the nature of time as well as the difference between time and events, because a closer analysis of the nature of time would have clarified some of the confusions in Professor Hall's article. A typical example is his failure to distinguish on the one hand between time itself and our consciousness of time, and on the other between time and events that take place in time. According to Aristotle it would seem that time is distinct from our consciousness of it and also from events that take place in it. In his *Physics*[18], he defines time as *arithoms Kineseos Kata to proteron Kai hysteron*: The measure of motion according to before and after. Professor Randall Jr. translates it slightly differently as "the number of motion with respect to earlier and later"[19]. The main point in Aristotle's conception of time which Professor Hall fails to notice is that even though time is related to motion, what Professor Hall refers to as "the march of events", it is nevertheless different from motion. It is the measure or number of motion not in the sense of a unit for measuring motion nor the actual process of measuring motion but rather "an aspect of motion", the measureable aspect of motion "that aspect of motion which permits the enumeration of successive states". Aristotle clearly points out the intimate relation between time and motion or change: "We measure not only motion by time, but also time by motion, because they are determined reciprocally. For time determines the motion of which it is the number, and motion, time"[20]. But one should always make a clear cut distinction between time and motion. Professor Copleston commenting on Aristotle's conception of time says: "In regard to Time, Aristotle points out that it cannot be simply identified with movement or change, for movements are many, while time is one. However, time is clearly connected with movement and change: if we are unaware of change, we are also unaware of time".[21] Professor Hall fails to take note of these distinction namely, that time is different from change or motion; that our awareness of change goes with our awareness of time but they are distinct and that our consciousness of time is quite different from time itself. Had he taken note of these points, he could perhaps have avoided identifying our consciousness of time with time itself. He appears to be arguing in some places that human consciousness is "time", I do not mean temporal. Consciousness is temporal in the sense that it takes place in time, but it does not seem to constitute the (substantive) essence of time. Nor does it make sense talking about the history of times as if time were many. Professor Hall constantly talks about different times instead of different activities in time, or perhaps of consciousness of the different social activities taking place in time.

The historian who thinks like Professor Hall might be inclined to look at events in history as forming some form of temporal essences. According to Aristotle at least, there is only one time altho-

ugh there may be many events. Some periods of time may pass without our being conscious of them and that is because no significant event has taken place during the periods in question. If historical events were to form different times there would be no common denominator for measuring change, we would not be able to say of events that they passed quickly or slowly. The speed of events can only be measured in relation to a constant and equal flow of time.

One last remark in connection with the subject of time. There is a general tendency for all of us to speak of time as if it were a form of space. Consequent upon this, is the inclination to give substance to events as if they were physical objects. This explains why we unconsciously speak of events taking place in time as if time were some sort of spatial dimension within which events now hypostatized occupy their allotted locations. It is true that events take place in time, but being in time does not mean being in a sort of spatial dimension. It simply means being measured by time. In this sense historical events are measured by time just as time is measured by historical events.

IV

Whether or not Professor Hall succeeded in establishing the priority of subjective time over objective time is not, strictly speaking, the crucial issue here. We are more interested in a much more healthy approach to the relationship between philosophy and history which is here being advanced indirectly by both Professor Raymond Aron and Professor John R. Hall. It is a healthy approach which advocates neither spite nor subordination but rather mutual respect and independence. It is indirect in that neither of the two Professors set out specifically to discuss the relation between philosophy and history. Each meant to elucidate a point he thought worth while which happens to involve both philosophy and history. Professor Aron was interested in showing that historical relativism does not mean nor imply subjectivism, a denial of objective standard of truth. In the process he establishes the fact that perspectivism is universal in all the sciences and "a sign not of scepticism, but of philosophic progress". It is indeed a sign of philosophical progress to realize that the demand for objectivity is never without reference to a particular perspective, a particular realm of experience within which certain internal requirements of consistency constitute the relevant objectivity. Professor Hall on his own part set out explictly to dethrone objective time, and exalt subjective time in order to have a better understanding of history or what he calls "social change". He illustrates, without making it his major concern that

the concept of time is of mutual interest to both philosophy and history whether or not one proves the priority of subjective time over objective time. His main interest is a better understanding of historical events through a combined involvement of sociology (Max Weber) and phenomenology (Edmund Husserl). Professor Hall is persuaded that "applied phenomenology can be used to enrich other sociological concepts, as well as to analyze specific historical developments". The applied phenomenology in question is of course Husserl's "analysis of time-consciousness" which Professor Hall says "must be understood as ideal types which could not exactly correspond to empirical reality". There is need therefore to involve Max Weber who "allows for a subject - object relation" and in this way was able to give a conceptual account of empirical events". Thus by combining philosophy (phenomenology) and sociology, Professor Hall hopes to give a good account of subjective time that makes for a better understanding of history, and the enrichment of philosophy. This is how it is supposed to be, a situation in which both philosophy and history feel comfortable to participate in a relationship of mutual enhancement.[22]

FOOT NOTES

1. Aristotle, *Poetics* 1451 b 5 in *Philosophies of Art and Beauty* edited by Albert Hofstadter and Richard Kuhns, The Modern Library, New York, 1964 p. 106.

2. *The Philosophical Works of Descartes* translated by Elizabeth S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1973, Vol. I p. 84.

3. Ibid; p. 85

4. "The Cartesian Spirit and History", translated by Mary Morris in *Philosophy and History*: Essays Presented to Ernst Cassirer edited by Raymond Klibansky and H.J. Paton, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1936 p. 191.

5. *The Principle of Individuality and Value* , pp. 78-9, quoted in *An Introduction to Philosophy of History*, by W.H. Walsh, Hutchison, London, 1967 p. 15.

6. Walsh, Ibid; p. 45

7. Ibid; p. 46

8. Ibid; p. 15.

9. In *The Philosophy of History in our Time* edited by Hans Meyerhoff, Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1969, pp. 153-161.

10. In *History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History*, Vol. XIX No. 2, 1980 pp. 113-131.

11. "Relativism in History" in Meyerhoff Ibid; p. 158.

12. Ibid; p. 157.

13. Ibid; p. 158.

14. Ibid; p. 159.

15. Ibid

16. Ibid; pp. 159-60.

17. Subsequent references to this article will be incorporated in the text and placed in brackets.

18. *Physics*, Book IV Chapter 11: 219b 1-2. Quoted in *Aristotle* by John Herman Randall, Jr. Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1960 p. 201.

19. Randall, Ibid;

20. *Physics* Book IV Chapter 12: 220b 15-18; Randall *Ibid*;

21. *A History of Philosophy*, Doubleday, Garden City, New York 1962, Vol. I Part II p. 64.

22. A work entitled *From Historiography to Philosophy of History* is in progress; and in it is a detailed investigation of this interplay of mutual enhancement between history, historiography and philosophy.

SOCIETY AND PHILOSOPHY

AN EXPOSE OF A FALSE PHILOSOPHY AND A FALSE NOTION OF TRUTH

E·K· Ogundowole

The question as to what philosophy is, its nature and purpose is very vital to the philosopher because it raises, albeit indirectly, some doubts about the worthiness of his professional calling. Aside, a good grasp of "what philosophy is", an adequate understanding of the nature of philosophy is very necessary from two crucial points of view: it directs theoretical exploration of the world, and it guides practical application of resultant knowledge. It is for these reasons that J.J. White's articles "Philosophy and Society"[1] has attracted my attention.

The author claims, his intention is "to remind philosophers ... of the true nature of philosophy"[2]. And according to him, the true nature of philosophy is to be sought in the tradition of Medieval philosopher-theologians who employing their mind in both its contemplative and reasoning capacities could think "metaphysically" and could put order into their knowledge[3]. In so doing, White holds, metaphysics reveals to this sort of thinkers "the hierarchy of authentic values through all the extent of being"[4]. This is so owing to the nature of their vision of reality which is "harmonious", and in a certain way "potentially total", in the sense that it can "enter into a relationship with the totality of whatever has being"[5]. This tradition of the theologian philosopher, employing Leibniz term, J.J. White calls "philosophia perennis", i.e. eternal philosophy. In order to comprehend this notion of philosophy "a certain disposition of soul is required on the part of the aspirant. *Sympathy of mind* and spirit. And this implies sharing a similar conception of what philosophy is and what it is for"[6].

In J.J. White's opinion the valuable role philosophers have to play in society is to constantly remind policy-makers of man's " essential orientation to a goal above and beyond the state"[7], and to elucidate a truth which man may serve and not to discover or establish truths which will serve man[8]. The metaphysics of the eternal philosophy ("philosophia perennis") is not knowledge as understood in science or in the objective world of modern epistemology, but "only form of natural knowledge which may legitimately be called wisdom"[9]. In this present paper I shall endeavour to show the untenability of the basic position assumed by White, examine the social and other implications of this kind of metaphysical opinion, and discuss in brief the nature and purpose of philosophy.

The notion of an eternal philosophy suggests a philosophy conceived, formulated and developed outside of space and time, outside of the history of man. As such, "philosophia perennis" cannot be said to represent genuine human heritage of any kind. Thus it cannot serve as a basis for the orientation of any society. For philosophy or any culture for that matter can only exist in, and actually constitute the embodiment of, space and time. To be such, is to have limitation and scope, to be measurable in time and space. To possess this qualities implies that a philosophy or any other aspect of human culture cannot be immune to change, since change, motion, is a universal attribute of being.

It is no accident or error of whatever kind that modern philosophical reasoning differs from this misconception of philosophy of the Dark Ages. While the type of philosophy handed down to us by the Renaissance served as a weapon for the removal of a kind of veil Catholic Christian theological mystification wove around mankind's face, it also laid the foundation of modern science and technology. Contemporary science-oriented philosophical schools serve to further consolidate achievements so far attained and strive to guide further development in all aspects of human endeavour.

It is an interesting question to ask, why is White silent on the Age of Restoration in Europe? Why was that Age necessary, and what were the Europeans of that Age restoring? And also, why was it that during the Renaissance, inspirations were sought in Antiquity's materialist philosophy, its science and culture as a powerful means to unseat the darkness into which Christian theology and its "vision", the "philosophia perennis" type plunged mankind?

The assertion by White that beginning with Renaissance Europe the importance of man started to diminish in philosophy and that man became mutilated is utterly false. On the contrary man began to recover, and discovered more about himself and his possibilities in a proper sense, beginning from the Renaissance. During the Dark Ages of the "philosophia perennis" man was reduced virtually to a mere instrument of God; he had no aim of his own, but was made to serve just the purpose of God. Religious alienation blindfolded man from seeing reality of things and life, and man continued to swim in the ocean of illusion while his problems of coping with his environment continued to pile-up. The study of nature and the world objectively outside the realm of religious mystification was seen as totally blasphamous and infidelity. Ptolemy's illusion that the sun moves around the Earth, because it fits properly into the scheme of theological misinterpretation of the

universe was held as an absolute truth, "a truth that we may serve". While Kepler whose view conforms with the reality of the relationships between the Earth, the sun and other planetary systems, and who provided necessary accurate mathematical calculations that reflect such relations was burnt alife together with his writings, apparently because he was interested in, sought and discovered, "truths which ... serve" man. Needless to state that in a sense the foundation on which science grew in opposition to theology and its "philosophia perennis" was laid this way and dates back to that period, contrary to White's assertion that "there was no necessity for such a development"[10]. Such is the effect of the kind of "harmonious vision" of the universe which "philosophia perennis" had on man and history. Right from the very beginning, objective scientific comprehension of the universe, scientific knowledge, and all kinds of superstitions, especially christian religious superstition including its philosophy, which as claimed, is situated outside space and time, have always formed two opposites.And the struggle that naturally ensued between the two opposites continues even to date. In truth, J. White is an active participant of this struggle. He is on the side of his superstitious theological precursors.

Listen to him:

> One of the great advantages of returning to the tradition of the "philosophia perennis" is to rediscover an intellectual world in which the mind can move freely ... without arbitrary artificial restrictions[11].

At the same time he cajoles African leaders for allowing the minds of the African youth to move freely without harsh, arbitrary, artificial, religious restrictions.

He claims:

> It is surely an irony that in a continent like African, whose peoples are for the most part of a very religious disposition, and many of whose leaders have frequently warned of the corrosive effects of importing wholesale an alien technology, there should be so little awareness of the.... atheistic tendencies of so much modern and contemporary ..... philosophy[12]

being offered in a number of philosophy departments. Departments

> Whose chief source of pride is their ability to offer a wide range of courses in a variety of different philosophical traditions, ... And one cannot help wondering whether

the net effect of such a conception of philosophy may not be to corrode the natural and healthy ideals of those yound people who are exposed to them[13].

Thus although J.J. White claims that realism is the predominance of his unchanging, eternal philosophy, and that "realism is the only approach for a philosopher who hopes to understand something of the nature of reality without subjectivity, without distorion"[14], he thinks realism would mean too much a treasure for the African. As such he calls for an imposition of religious subjectivity and religious distortion of reality on the minds of the African youth so that their "natural and healthy" religious ideals with which their minds have been infested by English and other European colonialists would not be corroded. This is because as a philosopher of the "perennis" cult, he wishes to "exercise a healthy influcnce on the future development" of African societies, "in the first place by helping create that much-needed environment of respect for truth". However, not truth or truths which will serve Africans in our efforts to overcome grave developmental problems and difficulties, but a truth which Africans will continously serve. For the Africans need "to enter into a relationship with the totality, of whatever has being"[15], and perhaps also with whatever has been in the continent

J.J. White's convinction is that philosophy of the eternal nature and charactor, the "philosophia perennis", being propagated by him can be of service to African societies only if it is first of all true and thorough to itself by keeping away "modern and contemporary" philosophical traditions especially "the communist one, where' scientific socialism', as it is termed, or scientific atheism, declares religion to be the principal obstacle to human progress"[16]. This last point seems to be the main target of the author of "philosophy and society" despite his smokescreen of anti-modern and anti-contemporary traditions. He is particularly embatted by the idea that philosophy should aid the transformation of the world[17], to make it a better and happy place for man to live in, without new kind of injustice endangering his existence and life any longer. This kind of philosophical endeavour would demand of philosophers more and more objective true knowledge about man, his universe, etc., ... "truths which will serve" man to achieve such objective on Earth, but according to White and other thinkers of his likes, what mankind needs "is not truths which will serve us, but a truth which we may serve"[18], eternally.

Such is the false notion of truth borne out of a false conception of philosophy! The notion of philosophy conceived outside of space and time, independent of specific human culture and history can only breed illusion; as such the notion itself is illusory.

The peculiar feature and nature of philosophy consist mainly in its being a synthesis effected by means of the most general categories that are of equal significance for all branches of human knowledge. It could then be stated that philosophical knowledge is a theoretical synthesis of the most general views of nature, society, man and cognition, a synthesis implying an appraisal of all that makes up the content of these general views, an appraisal that is not only epistemological, but also ethical, social, and so on.

Philosophy is not, therefore, a generalisation that simply sums up the available data as fully as possible; attitude and appraisal are key attributes of the philosophical generalisation, because the philosopher singles out what he believes to be most important in the knowledge available, what he believes to be most important for man, at least from his partisan standpoint.

A comparison between the "perennis" philosophy and existentialism, for instance, will reveal with relative ease the significance of the appraising attitude for philosophical reasoning. It is a well known fact that the tradition of the "philosophia perennis" noted far back in the ancient world, declared that philosophy, rising above everyday consciousness and thus above personal, subjective, human appraisals and opinions, regards all that exists from the standpoint of eternity, i.e., from positions of universal human reason, which was thought to be superior to anthropological limitations of individual human beings. Existentialist philosophical world view repudiated this sort of philosophical principle and proclaimed that the human "I" is human only because it is finite. Existentialist philosophising is an examination of the world from the standpoint of genuine human existence, from the positions of man who is aware of his morality, his absolute oppositeness to the so-called intransient being-in itself.

One can thus suggest that any philosophical reasoning has two starting points, in itself. On the one hand, the world, as everything that exists outside and independently of man, and so on the other hand, man himself who does not exist outside the world, and regards it as the external world only because he distinguishes it from himself as reality existing independently of him, while recognising at the same time himself as a part of the world and indeed a special part of the world which thinks, feels and aware that the world, as distinct from the part which is him, is infinite, eternal, indestructible, and so on. This attitude of man to the world forms the basic peculiarity that may be defined as bipolarity, not only objective but also *subjective*, since some attach primary importance to the former, and others to the latter.

Thus, one would not be wrong to state that philosophy as a special kind of inquiry is equally a conception of the world and a conception of man, knowledge of both and a special mode of generalising this knowledge which has the significance of a theore-

tical, social, moral, orientation; it is the expression of a comprehended relationship to reality and the theoretical substantiation of this relationship, which manifests itself in man's decisions, behaviour, spiritual self-determination, and so on.

Philosophy is above all the posing questions which one is aware of as the fundamental questions. These questions arise either from scientific investigation of nature or/and from individual as well as from socio-historical experience. They may be called the fundamental questions, because, in posing these questions, philosophy enters upon a discussion that is important for mankind. Such, for example, are the famous questions, the solution of which, according to Immanuel Kant, constitutes the true vocation of philosophy:

What can I know? What must I do? For what may I hope;
and what is man?

And, in so far as they are all recognized as of importance both for the individual and human society, and not only for the present but also for the future, they retain their philosophical significance.

Our characterisation of philosophy would be imcomplete if its emotional charge, which is conditioned by its social, practical basis, by people's hopes, their attitude to the world around them and to themselves is examined. If we described as emotions, people's feelings about their relationship to the world around them their historical circumstances and themselves, it becomes clear that philosophy cannont confine itself to the analysis and comprehension of the theretical, metaphysical aspect of this relationship alone. The personal character of human emotions acquires general expression in any philosophy, White's eternal philosophy not excluded. Hence philosophers not only discuss various questions, explain and interpret certain phenomena or processes; they *condemn* one thing and *defend* another, in other words, they feel, believe, struggle, hope and so on. And this is true not merely of the personality of the philosopher taken separately from his doctrine, but also of the doctrine itself, in which human passion are transformed into a specific philosophical form, but of course do not disappear. This is why philosophy is said to be socio-culturally conditioned, has social and emotional implications, and above all that philosophy is partisan by nature[19]. Philosophy in this sense has always served as one of the major weapons of the struggle of ideas of various social groups, it has formed the spiritual arena of conflicts of world view affiliates. By its own nature and function, world view bears class as well as partisan character. The position of a group of people in a definite system of relationship determines the nature, characteristics of its reflection of the system.

The struggle of peoples or social groups as the history of human societies reveals, has its expression in the struggle of world views. This has been and will continue as long as human history continues,

or at any rate for many generations to come. This struggle of world views is particularly very severe during transitional epochs in world history. These periods mark high rise in the demand for philosophical examination or re-examination of the processess that are taking place in social, economic, political and ideological spheres, because the hostility between the opposing forces of progress and of reaction is usually profoundly sharpened. To illustrate, during the Renaissance period in Europe the spirital dictatorship of the religious world view was counterpoised by the ideas of philosophical materialism and humanism. The philosophy of the French Englighteners constituted the ideological pre-requisites for the French bourgeois revolution, and the German classical philosophy - for bourgeois revolution in German. Precisely, the theories of natural law propounded by Hobbes, Spinoza, Locke and Rousseau, the rule of reason proclaimed by the Enlighteners, the idea of enlightened self-interest, Kant's "good will", the doctrine of Freedom as the essence of man, etc form the springboard of socio-economic, scientific and technological progress in Europe of the Modern Age. It is precisely this period of the history of the development of philosophy that J.J. White calls on Africans to ignore as of no value. His call therefore is most surprising.

Perhaps one of the unfading values of *History of Western Philosophy*[20] is that the author, Bertrand Russell (incidentally J.J. White's compatriot) meticulously demonstrates how the conditions under which people live and the peculiar problems emanating from these conditions influence the formation and development of any philosophy, while the purpose of any philosophy is to find solutions to problems, it also poses new problems that are relevant to the progressive development of the social-cultural environment that engendered its emergence.

Having embraced the deep-rooted problems of human existence, philosophy has since the ancient time become no longer just the personal affair of an individual thinker or the prerogative of any particular school, "philosophia perennis" inclusive.

The same goes for education. J.J. White thinks "metaphysics of the first principle" should form the basis of education. This is false, judging by historical experience of mankind. The inter-action between man and his ecology shapes the mode of his activity, its scope, depth and the rate of the expansion of man's activity, as well as man's orientation, reflection and knowledge, practical and theoretical. Acquired skill and knowledge is the foundation of education, informal or formal. The range or intensity of the interaction between man and his ecological environment (both social and bioshpere), the scope of this interraction, the level of the penetration by man of the nature, the secrets. of his ecological environ-

ment, and of his own very nature determines the scope and substance education at a given moment of the development of mankind. While acquired skill and knowledge are the foundation of education, education is the lever for the expansion and deepening of knowledge and its practical moment - skill. There is no a priori principles of education. Nor are there absolute educational values suitable for all times, all generations, everywhere. Educational programme and value orientation change in time with improved interaction between man and his ecological environment.

If there is "philosophia perennis", then there would be "truth perennis", "value perennis", "pedagogica perennis" as implied by White. This is his enunciation; this is the message he tries covertly to pass on to our innocent youth. It is a false philosophy, a false notion of truth, a false conception of value, and a false understanding of the principles involved in shaping education. And since J.J. White holds that there is order in knowledge with "metaphysics" as its "first principle", judging from his "perennis" mania his metaphysics must be "metaphysics of false principles".

Philosophy is the consciousness of a definite historical epoch[22]

It ensues from concrete issues and problems as they affect the daily life of a people when such issues or problems become noticeable obstacles[23] on the way to progress, on the path leading to improved human environment his essence, and an improved sense of purpose.

White tends to argue at times as if to say that Kant's or Descartes' philosophy and infact that most modern philosophical schools and trends are not rooted in ancient Greek philosophy, a truth about which historians of ideas are unanimous. Plato and Aristotle have been specifically mentioned as the fathers of all European philosophers, Medieval, Modern and Contemporary. It is a very popular view among philosophers of the European orientation that one is either a platonist or an aristotelian, mode of thought wise.

J.J. White alone is unaware that despite the sophistication philosophy has assumed in our days certain continuity which is rooted in Antiquity (earlier than the period of, and aside from the "philosophia perennis" tradition he so admires) still persists. Such continuity may be noticed in certain types of question raised by philosophers, of different ages and of dissimilar geographical locations. Examples of such questions are those enumerated earlier, the fundamental questions. Problems associated with these questions are regarded as perennial problems in so far as they reoccur from time to time and from place to place. However, dis-

cussions of them as well as solutions offered to them vary depending on socio-cultural environment, range and scope of knowledge, modes and types of activity, and nature of instruments, tools available to aid these activities. All these factors, individually and jointly exert influence on the degree of intellectual advancement at any given time in space. At the same time the purpose of intellectual advancement of man is to further the progress of his practical endeavours, both in scope and range. In turn all this enhances the furtherance of philosophical investigation and at times determines the content and direction of philosophical development. Thus, in Medieval Europe, a period commonly referred to as the Dark Ages precisely because of the predomination over peoples' mind at that time of Christian religious mysticism which hindered the general and particular progress of manking and everthing including the interpretation of the world hung on theological mystification, philosophy assumed the role of justifying Christian religious dogma. It is not surprising therefore that the notion of "philosophia perennis" also came into being at that time under the prevailing circumstances. The resultant effect was a general inertia, changelessness. Francis Bacon's philosophy was a natural reaction to these obstacles and it grew as a means of rèmoving them. In his *Novum Organum*, Bacon stressed that "Nature to be commanded must be obeyed", meaning that we must study reality objectively and concretely too, and not mystify it through the "metaphysics of first principles" of any kind!

White discovers a close affinity between present African and the Dark Ages in Europe. Religiousness is the link. He decried the inability of African leaders to preserve this state of religiosity. But he is silent over the truth that the degree of religiosity among the Africans today at the close of twentieth century, along with other factors, account for the reason why we are still just at that level of development and societal progress which Europe was, in the Middle Ages which earned the title "Dark Ages". Whereas the rest of the world particularly Europe, North American and Japan, are at the treshold of entering into the twenty-first century before others, White is silent over the historical fact, that the very high degree of religiosity among the Europe at that time explains some of the major problems that then confronted them which is why historians of subsequent periods referred to the period as Dark Ages. That was period when religious mystification and the illusions it created in the minds of people reached climax and it became grave impediments on the way of progress of the then European societies. A natural reaction and in seearch of a proper authentic path leading to progress philosophers and other thinkers of the Renaissance period proclaimed a cult of man[24] and of human reason, expressed

invincible faiths in man's tremendous creative potential and thus liberated philosophy and other thought systems from religious tutelage and from the notion of "a truth" man "may serve".

A historical fact, I am sure, White cannot deny, however, is that it was to the increasing role and importance attached to the "truths which will serve us" that Europeans owe the improved quality of life they have attained today, their technology, their ability to feed their population, organise reliable and effective health delivery systems, their dominant role in world affairs,etc. Conversely; the degree of submission to the "truth which we may serve", whether in form of religious dogma, superstitions of all kinds, including the prejudice of racial-superority, colonial or neo-colonial established truths, and so on, account for our inability in African today to meet up with development demands of our societies, our inability to feed our people and protect them from even preventable diseases, defend them from external aggression, and our insignificant role in world affairs.

Philosophy arsoe in a sharp struggle with myths and false views of the world out of the need for objective knowledge of the world in which man lives and works; and of the influence of other celestial bodies on human natural and social ecology. The victory of philosophy over myths, dogma of all sorts, superstitious beliefs of all kinds ushered in various branches of human scientific knowledge.

Ironically the first philosophers were called madmen simply because their views contradicted/and actually conflicted/with established forms of superstition which for a long time were mistaken for knowledge.

In our present era of tripolarised world (the world of capitalism, socialism and its world system, and a third newly emerging front consisting of the larger world in terms of territorial scope and of human and mineral resources) which breeds utter confusion, anarchy, misdirection and outright lack of direction, particularly on the continent of African - under such circumstahces and condition - philosophy truly has to re-merge boldly as a mode of empirical cognition. Part of the task of philosophy today therefore is to re-examine and put in question the ontological, epistemological and methodological foundations of the centre European philosophical tradition and culture which bred most of the myths and superstitions that underlay this state of confusion; the myth of "philosophia perennis" inclusive. To liberate one's thought from existing calculated suppressive and deppressing myths being paraded as knowledge, philosophy primarily has to re-discover itself as a liberating instrument to aid man in overcoming the domineering forces of his environment, naturally and artificially created ones. In this respect, a fundamental task of philosophy today is to search for, discover, establish, formulate, explain and interpret such truths which can serve man. J.J. White's approach in his article is at best a philistine method of smuggling in European philosophical dogma

while publicly abusing and disavowing a section of it. His brand of philosophy could best be described as wretched epigoni.

J.J White is distressed, that many want to change society, but no one wants to change himself. He wishes to change man, employing his "metaphysics of first principle". The truth, however, is as Simeone Neil says: it is absurd to want to change society by changing the individual, because the way society functions prevents man from being virtuous. As such, he argues that institutions in society must be changed first, in order to effect a change in society. Since it is the very nature of society, the way it is organised, etc. that makes a man what he is[25].

Our task should be to liberate the African mind from the metaphysical spell, especially of the "eternal philosophy" tradition. The attempt to escape from modern and contemporary trends in philosophy is nothing but "conciliatory quakery". White is verbally confusing the issue by phrase-mongering and adopting methods of reasoning which involved a concession to mysticism and the adoption of the position of theology. Only people whose minds had already been corrupted by reactionary professorial philosophy could fail to notice it. Occassionally, he turns technically to Latin words which he employs in quotes as if he could not find equivalent English words to substitute them with. The source of concern is that beneath the covering of terms, definitions, scholastic devices and verbal artifices are hidden J.J. White's partisanship in philosophy, his political, ideological motivation, etc. This must not be overlooked.

The notion of metaphysics which is a "science" of "first principle", in my opinion, is a "metaphyiscal priestcraft". The "metaphysical priestcraft" of the 'eternal philosophy' is simply the antechamber to open priestcraft. Thus, white's "metaphysical priestcraft" is seriously endeavouring to assist dogmatic religious priestcraft. When one remembers that in the sphere of epistemology, the misuderstanding of the human mind is such a house-hole in which both kinds of priests lay their eggs, one begins to smell the danger entailed in the conception of philosophy which White preaches. He had himself earlier pointed out the evil effect on students of a wrong notion of philosophy, or rather the propagation and spread of a false philosophical conception. It is on the basis of this that White's "philosophia perennis" should be seen as going far beyound the expression of a mere personal opinion. It may represent in fact a calculated effort in the direction of that very fear to which he claims he is simply drawing people's attention. In earnest it may mean an instance of a whole range of subversive philosophical system now crupping up among us.

In the same manner as antipodes of the "good God" is the devil, so the professional priest has his opposite pole in the scientific conception of philosophy.

In order to follow the true path, without being led astray by all the religious and metaphysical gibberish, it is necessary to take note of this false path, philosophy.

Such "theoretical" devices ("perennis" "first principles", etc) in which some may be naively inclined to believe are confined to a narrow and tiny school, while the ideaological and social tendency of the devices is immediately seized upon by necolonialists and serves their purposes. The neutrality of a philosopher in this question is in itself servitude to neocolonialism.

Above all, White might claim his is of good intention. The trouble however is that at best "good" intension is the subjective affair of every Dick and Harry, while the socio-political significance of such pronouncements is definite and indisputable, and no reservation or explanation can diminish it.

Our problems are vast and extremely acute. As we need urgent solutions to them so we need appropriate genuinely authentic philosophical orientation. A single claw is ensured, and the bird is lost. Contemporary period of our development calls for a full alertness, objective reasoning. The task in this case then is to be able to lop off the reactionary tendency of professorial philosophers who are learned salesmen of theologians, to pursue our own line and to combat the whole line of the forces hostile to the cause of progress in African.

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PHENOMENOLOGY AND MARXISM

Nkeonye Otakpo

INTRODUCTION

Being a review of literature in Phenomenology, Marxism and Sociology, this paper will examine the efficiency of "Phenomenological Marxism" as an alternative social theory, and will indicate whether the possiblity of understanding behaviour exists by means of such a theory. Consequently, attention will be devoted to the analysis of the works of Husserl, Lukacs, Paci and others, in this field.

It is arguable that by attempting a fusion between Phenomenology, sociology and marxist analysis, the foundation of an alternative (new) social theory could be laid. This is so because both "Phenomenological and marxian analysis have been considered as the source of basic criticisms of classical and contemporary sociological approaches, producing a new direction for sociology and yet another rebirth of marxian as the only science of society, in contradistinction to conventional sociology"[1] -

For the past four decades or more, Sociology proceeded on the assumption that basic methodological problems and questions have been satisfactorily solved. However, whenever the subject addressed itself to the problems inolving the nature of social phenmena, social reality, or society itself, the lacuna in its methodology has been thrown into relief. Various interpretations have been offered for this methodological lag and the resultant crisis. For Husserl, the crisis was due to the seeming collapse of reason, its exteriorisation and absorption in naturalism, and was identified by the rise of positivism. Husserl saw two responses to the crisis:

> "The crisis of European existence can end in only one of two ways; in the ruin of Europe alienated from its rational sense of life, Fallen into a barbaric hatred of spirit; or in the rebirth of Philosophy, through a heroism of reason that will definitely overcome naturalism"[2].

Phenomenology is that Philosophy which would accomplish this rebirth of reason.

In a way Phenomenology is the study of phenomena - that which appears toconsciouness. ForHusserl, rational inquiry involved the searching for reasons or the revealing of the ground or origin of phenomena in consciousness. Unlike the naturalists, phenomenologists understand the world as a correlate of consciousness. The fundamental thesis of intentionality:

> "stresses that all consciousness is consciousness of something, that is to say, it is directed towards the world, in its acts and manifestations. Its acts have both a subjective pole (consciousness itself) and an objectives pole (the world)"

The significance of this approach rests on the fact that most sociological reasearch relies for analysis almost entirely on data drawn from individuals through questionnaires and interviews. Hence whether by default or intention they practice "phenomenological sociology". This is so because:

> "all that remains for phenomenologists is for the questionnaires, the interviews and all other methods of recording meanings to be so constructed that the structure of everyday life experience and conduct is reflected in them"[4]

The advocates of the "action frame of references" and ethnomethodolofists use the sociology of knowledge as a base but in adapting its nature and scope, move from the periphery to the centre of sociological theory. The central question to which they address themselves is: how do the subjective meanings of individuals become reality or objective facticity?

The relationship between Phenomenology and Sociology is very complex and this is largely due to the heterogeneous nature of disciplines. However, the emergence of a distinctive "phenomenological sociology" as an alternative social theory, derived from the fact that philosophical clarifications of sociological task has contributed to and is a product of the declining credibility of conventional approaches in Sociology. It has been contended by writers like Smart that "phenomenological sociology" provides a critique of conventional approaches to Sociology which minimise the differences between the socio-cultural and physical worlds. Hence the

> "methodology, assumptions and nature of sociological work have had to be seriously reconsidered."[5].

One of the major criticisms made of sociology has been, as phenomenologists maintain, that the former has adopted the paradigm of the natural sciences. This has, perhaps, been brought about by the inherent (and often unstated) assumption of sociologists that natural phenomena and social phenomena do not possess qualitatively distinctive characteristics. Freedom of observation which natural science presents is quite different from social science which already has its phenomena structure. Phenomenological sociology rejects the idea that the social world constitutes an objective world which is seperated from the interpretations of men. On the contary

> "the social world is looked at as the product of human activity, interpretation and intention as the subject world"[6].

Phenomenological Sociology usually begins with a critique of positivism, the following features being attributed to the latter:

(a) "that the Scientific method is the one employed in the phiysical world and that it is equally applicable to the study of the social world;
(b) that the goal of sociological enquiry is to formulate laws and generalizations with a view to offering predictions as in the natural or physical sciences"[7].
(c) that facts and values are distinct from the purpose of scientific analysis.

Notable among the alternatives presented to conventional sociology are the works of Heap and Roth (1974), Filmer *et al* (1972). As Smart puts it:

> "the concept of phenomenological Sociology is predicated to Schutz's attempt to formulate a phenomenology of the social world although other approaches coexist with the Schutzian position, for example, reflexive sociology, ethnomethodology and existentialism"[8].

However, it is incorrect to assume that to argue for a phenomenological sociology is to argue for a restriction of analysis to a somewhat micro level.

Three important elements emerge in evaluating Sociology as a discipline:

(a) the implicit assumptions of sociology;
(b) the distinction between subject and object; and
(c) the fallacy of micro and macro analysis.

Phenomenologists have placed great emphasis on the implicit assumptions of sociologists and argue that the meanings atributed by the latter to social facts must be treated as issues in their own right.

The point, however, is that macro data depend heavily on empirical evidence which is borne out of everyday life experience. Hence the fallacy of the distinction between both is thrown into relief and the citadel of defence built by conventional Sociologists against the attack of Phenomenologists tends to crumble.

The distinction between subject and object, in sociological terms, is also born out of the initial premise that sociology treats people as objects for scientific analysis. Marx had earlier noted that in society the form of the relationship between the various pheno-

mena and beings dictates this notion. All relationships in society dictate the place a thing occupies within the total reality.

Ogden and Richards in their well known *The Meaning of Meaning*, have shown that answers to the philosophical problem in relation to the question of how meaning comes about having one common element: the idea that there is an absolutely unique relation between thought and object. They listed sixteen explanatory models for meaning and explicitly mentioned sub *VIII:* The place of anything in a system[9]. If any use has to be defined by a place in a system, it follows that the subject-object distinction lies in error.

The social scientist cannot therefore adopt a theoretical stance, stand back and reflect upon the everyday world in order to analyse phenomena hitherto taken for granted. Whereas the conventional Sociologist sees human experiences as too complex and subjective to be studied and so makes second order conceptualizations, leaving that nature of relationships to first order conceptualization as unaddressed and taken for granted, to the Phenomenological Sociologist,

> "subjective experiences are to be regarded as related to the process of externalization and objectification through which the social world is produced and hence requires study"[10].

How the concepts are constructed or created, and of what *object* they are the concept, is a problem sociology fails to explain.

The implication is not that Phenomenological Sociology merely calls for descriptions of social reality as they appear to those involved or that impressions are not borne out of analysis. To do so would be to discount the interpretations of Goldthorpe[11] and Pelz[12], which maintain that the mind senses and analysis before forming impressions.

Phenomenology and Marxism

There have been attempts to discover Marxist problems, method and analysis in phenomenology in the works of Edmund Husserl. To some extent the evidence of such attempt can be found in Young Lukacs[13]. Marxism is thus regarded:

> "as the outcome of Phenomenology and phenomenology is seen as being inherent in Marxism"[14].

It is argued that it is possible to achieve a mutually beneficial reconciliation between phenomenology and Marxism, the rationale of the execise being to "overcome the crisis" of marxism, to move beyond the fossil of orthodoxy held to be characteristic of Marxist thought. Dallmayr (1973), Piccone (1971) and Rovatti (1970) appear to have been motivated by such an impulse to break new ground, for as Habermas says:

"the science of man itself is a critique and must remain so"[15]

Lukacs has been rather a controversial Marxist scholar Like Merleau Ponty [16], he too was disillusioned with the conventional wisdom. However, while Lukacs attempted to develop a new version of Marxist thought and orthodoxy pressured him into entering into self- criticism, Merlean Ponty criticised Marxism, rejected its method as well as its analysis. Lukacs' analysis ought to be seen on the one hand as being a defence of Marxist method and on the other hand a revolutionary basis for Marxist method. To him, the nature of social reality and the historical processes needed re-examination and re-validation. Social facts, he maintained, are historically determined and any endeavour which takes them for granted and as self evident is uni-directional and sterile. It errs because it reifies social reality and hides behind the facade of the *assumed* objectivity of analysis.

Usually, social reality is consistently mystified by the academic and this is done in three separate ways. First, the social world is regarded as being composed of unchanging objects. But reality is, obviously,quite the contrary - the objects interact with each other and are at once conditioning and being conditioned by the social processes. Second, the social scientists reify their disciplines. Social science sees and portrays itself as being objective. But this is not the case. It is a fact that this facade of objectivity is put up to conceal the ideaological content and subjective assumptions inherent in all social science. Man is a part of social reality, he exists within it and in turn is influenced by it.

> "The self as that which can be object to itself, is essentially a social structure, and it arises in social experience. It could not conceivably arise outside of social experience. And after it has arisen it contains the social system actively within itself"[17].

Hence to reduce man to an object of social encounters (role behaviour) is to deny the very intelligence and uniqueness of man. Third, the distinction between object and subject or between theory and practice is often used to conceal the inadeguacy of much of what goes on at the level of theorization. Allen has maintained that theory and practice cannot be separated and a theory that has no practical utility is a bad theory or not a theory at all[18].

The dualism of subject and object, theory and practice takes the key place in Lukacs' reading of Marx and the path to enlightenment, emancipation and true consciousness appears only possible through dialectical materialism - the science of society. The entire programme of Lukacs reduces to this: an attempt to revive Marxism through the incorporation of the active subject and the phenomenological analysis of the latter.

The work of Enzo Paci sought to bring about a convergence between Phenomenology as apparent in the works of Husserl[19], and Marxism as represented in the works of Labriola, Gramsci,

Merleau Ponty and J. Satre. Paci reinterpreted Husserl's crisis and put forward an alternative title: "The struggle Against the Alienated use of the Sciences in order to Regain the Meaning of Man, his Society and his History"[20]. The purpose attributed to Husserl is the returning of subjectivity to Man, the freeing of Man from fetishism through the re-relation of humanity to itself. Husserl's phenomenology meant more than this for Paci. It is the:

> "science of the whole man - a radical humanism"[21].

Intentionality of man is not only the consciousness of something but also, and most important, the dependence on something. Man's ego is conditioned and dependent upon the satisfaction of the most elementary economic needs and:

> "..... here we are confronted with the binding character of the precategorical economic structure which is lived in the first person"[22].

The neglect of the natural sciences and nature, material factors and precategorical economic needs in particular, represents a stumbling block to the unification of the sciences - the corner stone of Husserlian programme. Paci's critique of Husserl's thesis appears to revolve around this central issue.

To Paci, Husserl's discussion of inter-subjectivity, science and language is incomplete. Athough there is the discovery of the original problem of lack of intentionality as the stumbling block to the historical foundation of the sciences,

> "it is unaccompanied by an adequate consideration of the problem of materialism and the positive function of sedimentation and technology"[23]

Paci, therefore, strives for a rational society of subjects using Husserl's phenomenology as a convenient basis for his theorising. But Husserl's preoccupation with the questions relating to language, consciousness and psychic life disabled his attention to questions of matter or "real things". Husserl did not appear to recognise the significance of the principle of irreversibility - the basic law of the life world, and consequently fails to discover the grounds for the temporal structural domination of economic life, culture and history. For Husserl, the philosopher performs the ruling function in society, but for Paci, all men are philosophers in so far as they become conscious of their own meaning.

Reconciliation of Husserl and Marx in a New Social Theory

Beginning, perhaps, with George Presthas,[24] the attempt to reconcile Husserl and Marx has been a very vigorous one. According to Piccone, Husserl is as important to contemporary Marxists as Hegel was to Marx[25]. Paci, above all, regarded Marxian analysis as inherently phenomenological when he argued that:

> "..... to the things at their roots and to discover man who is his own root, is to discover what ideology hides. This is an analysis ..... a phenomenological analysis"[26].

On another plane, Gouldner sought to bring about a convergence between functionalism and Marxism and conceded that:

> "starting with the primitive assumption that theory is made by the praxis of men in all their wholeness and is shaped by the lives they lead, and pursuing this into concrete empirical contexts, one is led to a very different conception of what generates social theory and of what it is that many theorists are trying to do, ... one is better able to see just how complex social theory is. It is a complexity that cannot even be glimpsed, let alone grasped, if we fail to see the ways in which theorists are entrenched in their theories"[27]

It is held that functionalists are more interested in studying an ongoing system. They want to know how it works and why it works so. They are *ipso facto* assuming that an ongoing system has permanence. Marxists, on the other hand, have been preoccupied with the stability of an ongoing system and usually wish to know how and why it endures the stress and strain borne out of change. Clearly, these two groups view social reality from quite different perspectives and so by definition have something to learn from each other. Hence a rationale for the type of convergence thesis is, indeed, not entirely novel and Paci, inter alia, is certainly not the first to attempt it. However, to Paci belongs the credit of attempting a coherent synthesis between Husserl and Marx.

Barry Smart has noted that:

> "whereas materialism recognizes both the precategorical conditioning of man and also the importance and significance of subjectivity, naturalism reduces man to mere natural object thereby alienating and estranging man from his essential humanity. It is the criticism of naturalism by Husserl, specifically in terms of the crisis of the sciences, which for Paci represents

the basis of a critical Marixism able to return to not only the phenomenon themselves but also to the whole man"[28].

"Phenomenological Marxism" is therefore, not a mere attempt to synthesise or reconcile Husserl and Marx but to secure the social sciences from the abyss of objectivism and alienation. Both Durkheim and Comte, to a lesser extent,envisaged the difficlty in attaining a totality of "social? " knowledge due to the advancement of "science". The fragmentation brought about by increased specialization can only be remedied if an all embracing philosophy is found and accepted. But such a task will be difficult to achieve unless the synthesis is incidentally brought about as the "sciences Nature". While Paci does not accept Durkheim's view, he, like Husserl, emphasises the need to act decisively to restore intentionality and unity to the scientific project. For according to him, the crisis of the sciences is:

> "the crisis of the use of the sciences and therefore the crisis of human existence"[29].

CONCLUSION

This study has been devoted to a review of the literature in phenomenology, Marxism and sociology, and to indicate whether the attempts being made at a synthesis leading to a (new) social theory has indeed been possible. I have tried through the discussions to include on the spot my own evaluation of them. There is no doubt that the need for such a synthesis is urgent considering the deficiencies in conventional sociological thinking and the acute crisis in the social arena, a crisis in which much of what was taken for granted is now declared to be in need of proof. The criteria of proof have themselves become subject of dispute among scholars. Though not entirely successful, the fusion of Marxism and phenomenology, nonetheless, can be justified.

One of the great, dramatic sicknesses of our time is the disaggregation of knowledge by hyperspecialization. Reintegration of knowledge is the great task of the present and the coming generation. The need for generalists is now even felt in public life everywhere. It is evident that philosophers, theologians, social scientists, etc., in so for as they do not flatly deny truthfulness to any "scientific" proposition or theory about man, society and nature, are constantly obliged to refer to data or even to interprete data of human biology, of psychoanalysis, of Freudiasm, of Marxism, of Phenomenology and so on.

To remedy the situation (brought about by the specialization mania), what is called for is a rigorous intellectual discipline which comprises: objectivity. unequivocal communication and rational

thinking. The one and only method will have to be interdisciplinary. It is good to know that the basic method of any "science" from physics to Theology, is always the same. It is a specific way:

(a) of experiencing given objects in reality;
(b) of speaking, communicating about realities by means of conceptual system; and
(c) of thinking about realities by means of abstract systems or analogic models.

The interdisciplinary way to solve the problem of the relationship between the different objects, languages and abstracts systems of the different branches of knowledge is, equally, the same as the one followed within each discipline. It is, namely, finding an answer to the question: what, within the wide variances between objects, languages and abstract system, remains invariant?

This appears to be the central concern of Barry Smart, Paci, Piccone, Presthas and others. If there are contradictions and inconsistencies in their efforts, this is, I think not so much due to the fact that they overtly overlooked them but probably because they felt that in this difficult area of human knowledge such inconsistencies should not be concealed, rather those sore sports in our thinking, if any thing, need considereable exposure.

NOTES

1. Barry Smart, *Sociology, Phenomenology and Marxian Analysis,* (London: Kegan Paul, 1976), p.115.

2. Edmund Husserl,*Penomenology and The Crisis of Philosophy,* translated by G. Laner, (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 192.

3. Laurie Spurling,*Phenomenology and The Social World,* (London: Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 7.

4. V.L. Allen, *Social Analysis: A Marxist Critique and Alternative,* (London: Longmans, 1975), p. 7.

5. Barry Smart, *Sociology* p. 74.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 29 - and 80.

9. C.K. Ogden and I.R. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning* (New York: Harcout, Brace & World, 1949), p. 186.

10. Barry Smart, *Sociology*, p. 83.

11. J. Goldthorpe, "A Revolution in Sociology", *Sociology*, 7, 3, (1973).

12. W. Pelz, *The Scope of Understanding*, (London: Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 145.

13. G. Lukacs *History and Class Consciousness*, (London: . Merlin Press, 1971), p.1.

14. Barry Smart, *Sociology*, pp. 120 – 121.

15. Jurgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest*, (London Heinemann, 1972), p. 62.

16. Merleau Ponty, *Adventures of the Dialectic*, London: Heinemann, 1974).

17. Kingsley Davis, *Human Society*, (New york: Macmillan, 1966), p. 210.

18. V.L. Allen, *Social Analysis.*

19. Edumund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology*, (Evanston: North Western University Press, 1970).

20. E. Paci, *The Function of the Sciences and The Meaning of Man*, (Evanston: North-Western University Press, 1972).

21. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 265.

23. Barry Smart distinguishes Paci's criticism of Husserl under three headings: Objectfication, Technology, Sedimentation and Language.

24. Geaorge Presthas (ed.) *Phenomenological Sociology*, London: John Wiley, 1973).

25 P. Piccone, "Phenomenological Marxism", *Tees*, 9 (1971).

26. E. Paci, *The Meaning of Man*, p. 383.

27. Alvin Gouldner, The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology, (London: Heinemann. 1971), p, 483.

28. Barry Smart, *Sociology*, p. 133.

29. E. Paci, *The Meaning of Man*, p. 323 and quoted by Barry Smart, *Sociology*, p. 134.

The Question of Reincarnation: A Re-Appraisal

— Rev. Dr. A. O. Echekwube

INTRODUCTION

Reincarnation is a terminology which has posed a serious problem to scholars, especially as used in the African Continent. Those who have given it some place in their publications seem to have divergent opinions as to what it really means to the African. It is for this reason that I have decided to devote this article to a thorough treatment of the belief in reincarnation.

The issues involved in this topic are so complex that one requires an objective approach. Therefore, in order to prudently conduct this study, I shall seek to give the true meaning of the term (Reincarnation), bearing in mind what has been said by some eminent scholars of the History and Philosophy of Religions. Thereafter, I shall endeavour to show through the beliefs and pratices of the African that what we regard as problematic in the concept is our own making.

We shall come to appreciate the rich philosophical, psychological and moral contents of this all important belief of the African. I am quite optimistic that at the end of this exercise the reader will discover that the African has a unique contribution to make to the growth of the much desired peace and harmony in our world.

What is Reincarnation?

There is a general understanding that Reincarnation means the soul of a deceased person taking a new body. In this view when a person dies his soul is believed to return to take a new body. In other words, the person who died is reborn. Invariably, those who hold such views maintain that man's life here on earth is so short for him to have accomplished his divine assignments. The rebirth is considered as an opportunity for the deceased to come back as it were on a second mission to make amends for his evil deads.

This conception of reincarnation is held by Onwuka who condemns the idea of reincarnation as promising nothing but endless and hopless cycle of life. His stand is vividly expressed in the following words:

> . . This belief in the rebirth of the spirit in another body (reincarnation) is accepted as a fact by many, if not all the peoples of Africa, yet I believe it to be opposed to the teaching of the Church. I believe in the immortality of the spirit. I believe that after death God will give me a spiritual body like the one Jesus

had at his resurrection. Reincarnation promises nothing but an endless and hopeless cycle of life. Some people use the belief as an excuse for not considering seriously the teaching of Christ. They believe they will have a second chance later on.[1]

My knowledge of the African and his belief in reincarnation is not properly represented by the author I have just quoted. I shall gradually expose the weaknesses of this position because rather than giving the true meaning of the term in the African situation it expresses a foreign attitude which is explicable in the Indian concept of *Samsara,* (continuous rebirth). There is much difference between the African understanding of reincarnation and the Indian conception of rebirth.

While for the Indian one's action here on earth is the motivating factor, the African thinks more of the survival and prolongation of the family. In the case of the Indian, it is believed that one's actions here on earth determine the type of life he would have in the future life. If the person led a good life he is expected to return to life much more elevated than he was in the previous life. On the other hand, if he led a reckless life he could return into a very poor and wretched state. In fact, it is believed that he can be reborn into a dog or a pig or some other unbecoming state[2]. S. A. Nigosian gives a clear picture of this concept thus:

> "Karma is a technical term which means "action" in general, whether it be good or bad, ritual (religious) or secular (non-religious). Because actions produce their own good and evil fruits, "a man reaps what he sows"... Therefore, the Hindu believes that his present life is the result of past Karma and that his future lives will be affected by his Karma in the present existence. Thus, pain, suffering, sickness and any sort of ill-fortune is not regarded by the Hindu as an affliction sent from God, but as the result of his evil Karma in a past existence or existences".[3] In the light of this, Onwuka's description of reincarnation is nearer to the Indian or Hindu conception of Karma – Samsara.

The idea of a soul being reborn in a new body does not therefore reflect what the African believes about reincarnation. It is more reflective of metempsychosis or tramsmigration, ideas which purport that the soul of the deceased goes to inhabit a new body. Hence Drever states that:

"Metempsychosis is the Transmigration of souls"[4].

All these ideas fall short of what the African believes and understands to be reincarnation. It was on this ground that professor E.B. Idowu asserted and rightly so when he writes:

> In African belief, there is no reincarnation in the classical sense. One can only speak of partial or, more precisely, apparent reincarnation, if the word must be used, at all. There is the belief in certain areas that ancestors return in one or several children in the family[5].

Undoubtedly, it would have become clear that the African does not believe the soul of the deceased takes a new body as is the case in the Hindu Samsara or metempsychosis. These concepts would have required that the soul take just one new body and no longer existent as an individual entity in the spiritworld. But contrary to this the soul of the reincarnated spirit still exists in the ancestral or spiritual abode. Moreover, it returns in not just one child but also in more children.

This indicates therefore that the soul of the man who reincarnates still has its own individual existence in the spiritual abode while some characteristic traits of him are made manifest in his grandchildren. This explains why for the African there is no complication about the existence in the physical and spiritual worlds of the soul of the departed. The true position of the African in this regard is illustrated by Professor Idowu who states as given below:

> The deceased persons do "reincarnate in their grandchildren and continue to live in After-life. . . according to this system, one grandchild may not have the monopoly of the ancestral ori. .. *Yiya omo* cannot be taken as establishing a reincarnation in the technical sense. All it appears to establish is the belief in the concrete fact that there are certain dominant characteristics which keep recurring through births and thus ensuring continuity of the vital existence of the family or clan[6]

This understanding of reincarnation cannot be regarded as promising nothing but an endless and hopeless cycle of life. Instead it is full of meaning and is purposeful. There is an urgent need to seek a more appropriate definition for what is called reincarnation when it is applied to the African. It is true that the African desires the continuity of the family and clan. In order to effect this, he sees the necessary relationship and interaction between the ancestors (the living-dead) and his member who are still on earth. Parv-

inder rightly declares that "the African attitude to life is world affirming".[7] Our definition of reincarnation should therefore, be modified to indicate that the African would not be pleased to see the life of a family end with the extinction of its members through death. Moreover, it should reflect the ardent desire of the African to obtain the support and protection of his ancestors.

The Fact of Reincarnation

In this subsection it is my intention to reflect seriously on the fact of reincarnation as it is manifested in the people's daily activities. This will later facilitate an analysis of its philosophical, psychological amd moral contents. These factual data will further enhance the application of these to the christian situation.

I had earlier indicated my agreement with Parvinder that the African attitude to life is world affirming. Various other authors are also agreeable on this point. It would be appropriate to give the African an opportunity to speak for himself on this all import issue which has to do with the continuity of life, especially the sustenance of the family and clan.

The starting point is the experience at the burial of the deceased. The funeral rites are carefully carried out to grant the soul of the deceased perfect rest in the spirit world. The reason is that if the man is not given a proper burial, he would remain a ghost, wandering about and could often return to harass his surviving members[8]. But when the man's children fulfil their obligations and give their father befitting burial they are sure that their father is led home safely to join his ancestors. Thus they count on his protection and guidance at all times now that he is nearer to God. The prayers at the grave of a dead person show that they desire him or her to rest in peace and at the same time the children implore his quick return to the family, that is, to be reborn into the family for the prolongation of his name and that of the family. Illustrating this case among the Yoruba, Lucas gives a typical Yoruba prayer at the grave in this manner:

Jẹki ẹhin rẹ ki o san mi o.	-	May I be blest after you are gone!
Jẹki ile yi tutu mo ni.	-	May this house know coolness.
Ma ma ṣe pẹ ki o wa ya lọdọ wa	-	Do not delay in being reincarnated in our home or family[9]

This prayer gives an insight into the people's concept of what they intend when it is asserted that a person is reborn. There is the urgent need for him to arrive safely at the ancestral home to rest in peace. In addition, he is requested not to delay in returning to his living members on earth. He is equally requested to ensure peace for home from his spiritual abode. All these are signs that the man is operating on a spiritual level because he is released from the material body with its limitations. This same experience is made among the Edo of Nigeria as testified to by Bradbury who writes:

> While one purpose of these rites is to transform the dead man into an ancestor who will reside indefinitely in the spirit world, watching over his descendants and demanding their attentions, yet, in song and prayer, he is constantly urged to return in a new incarnation among his descendants . . . : The ancestor, by establishing the roots of descent group in the past, has the function, among others of legitimizing the authority of family and lineage heads and of providing sanctions for the maintenance of proper relations between kin and spouses[10].

Apart from this desire of the African that the deceased should rest in peace and also return to the family in no distant time, there is a more pratical demonstration of reincarnation in the names of children. Much importance is attached to the naming ceremony. In order to carry out this exercise properly, the parents of a child consult a diviner to know which ancestor has been reborn. It may even be discovered that it is the same grand-father who has reincarnated in several cousins[11]. Invariably, these children are addressed and treated in almost the same manner at all times. Thus among the Yorubas those called *Babatunde* (father returns) are those in whom their deceased fathers are reborn. Likewise, the name *Yetunde* is given to girls in whom it is believed that the mother has been reincarnated. *Iyabo* is equally used more frequently for girls who manifest characteristic traits as ther grandmother who have passed through this world. This names, therefore indicate the strong belief and conviction of the African in the fact that the deceased come back to life.

Furthermore, there is another phenomenon which gives glaring evidence of the people's be lief that the dead come back to life. This is in the form of what the Yorubas call *abiku* (children who are born to die) and the *Ibos* call it *ogbanje* (repeaters)[12]. These are children whose spirits are believed to enter women's wombs to be born. They are believed to have held their meetings prior to ente-

ring the womb and to have taken decisions on when and how they would die[13]. Instance have been reported by parents who have had several such children. In order to ascertain the truth or falsity of such a belief, they are said to have lacerated such children, giving them marks on specific parts of the body. On return to the world, these children are said to have returned with such marks. This belief is described by Nabofa in this manner:

> The problem of the born-to-die children raises another issue. The belief is that there are wandering *Irhi* who enter some women's wombs only to be born and to die soon after. There are many stories and practical instances of such children who are said to have died and come back with marks made on them while on earth[14].

There are, however, cases in which members of the *ogbanje* group have grown to adulthood. In such cases they present serious problems - frequent illness, irresponsible behaviour on certain occasions and periods of loss of consciousness. Often the female group are said to have husbands in the sea with whom they are believed to have intercourse. Some of the spiritual Healing Homes have professed to be experts in dissociating such ladies from their invisible husbands. I view these beliefs as what the people accept to be a part of their lives. My personal views on these shall be expressed shortly in the philosophical analysis and evaluation of these ideas.

So far it has been discovered that the word reincarnation is not used in the classical sense among the Africans. It has been sufficiently explained that it is not the spirit of the deceased that returns fully in the new born baby but some of his spiritual qualities. The veneration of the ancestor as in the spirit world and his return in several children buttress his argument. That reincarnation is true to the African has also been demonstrated in the case of the *ogbanje* and their marks. It would be proper to examine the philosophical background of these.

Philosophical Interpretation

The philosophical background to the African belief in reincarnation is very essential for its proper assessment in an attempt to fully understand and appreciate its role in the life of the African. This postion has been taken because many philosophers have built their systems on what Father Tempels calls the philosophy of forces'. By this, Tempels explains that to the African: 'forces is being, and being is forces', J. S. Mbiti portrays this author's conviction that it is the African philosophy of forces which can explain everything about African thinking and action[16]

In like manner, Driberg has stated that the African has a conception of life which develops from a philosophy of power which pervades the whole of reality. Driberg's stand is given by Smith in the following words:

> J.H. Driberg declared that he had no hesitation in affirming that the religious beliefs and philosophy of the African are fixed primarily on the concept of a universal power or Energy which informs and is the cause of all life. . . [17]

It would appear than that the African has a basic understanding of life as a result of which all things are united, though each has its own individuality. The close connections between the various phenomena on earth can be determined by their origin. Among the Yorubas for instance, God is considered to be the Source and Creator of all things. Whatever happens to a person is seen as permited by Him. Hence Idowu writes about the Yorubas that:

> In all things, they are religious. Religion forms the foundation and the all-govering principle of life for them. As far as they are concerned, the full responsibility of all the affairs of life belongs to the Deity . . . Through all the circumstances of life, through all its changing scenes, its joys and troubles, it is the Deity who is in control . . . [18]

This unitary conception of life has greatly influenced the African to the extent that life is meaningless without reference to its ultimate meaning which can be found only in relation to God. The spiritual aspect of life is, therefore, emphasised. Consequently, the physical world is generally regarded as the outward manifestation of the spiritual world. In this regard Ezeanya writes thus about the Ibos:

> The world of men and the world of spirits are not two independent worlds; for one has no meaning without the other — they are complementary.[19]

Writing on The Religion of the Dinka, this complementary nature of the world is also given emphasis by Lienhardt. According to him the Dinka claim that they encounter 'spirits' of various kinds, which they call generically *jok*, though he prefers calling them "Powers". The powers are regarded as higher in the scale of being than men and the mere terrestrial creatures. They are believed to operate beyond the categories of space and time. However, the Dinka do not view them as forming a separate "spirit world of their own, and their interest for the Dinka is as ultra-human forces

participating in human life and often affecting men for good or ill"[20]

All these considerations about the African philosophy of "force", "power" and "energy" which underlie the understanding of his World and Behaviour appear to me to be partially right. It is true that the African sees God as the Source of life and that every other creature is dependent upon Him, but we cannot see the African as attributing God or His Essence to every existent object. This is tantamount to Pantheism (God being all things and all things being God). The words force, power and energy have been used as the basis for properly interpreting the African mind because the African is known to be able to tap the forces of nature. The African believes that God has given something of himself to each of his creatures, animate and inanimate. In consonance with the qualities of Being, every existent Reality has its own share of God's qualities, in accordance with its own nature. The Philosophical Law of Transcendence required that God should be superior to all that he has created. But he is equally immanent, that is, implicitly present in his own creation.

As long as God's creatures possess these gifts or qualities in various degrees, they can be employed according to their qualities. In view of this, I would suggest strongly that *Reality* be the key word in the interpretation of the African concept of life. Before forces, power and energy become qualities of the material objects, they are first and foremost existent objects, Realities by their own rights. The nature of force, power or energy is therefore, derivative from God's own nature, also as the Supreme Reality.

Elsewhere, I had observed that the African was prudent in his use of the forces inherent in the natural phenomena and indeed also in the spiritual world. This is because our African philosophy of life is in the main practical and dynamic[21] Its pragmatic and dynamic nature springs from the concept of Reality by which creatures are related in a hierarchical order, considering the transcendence and immanence of the Supreme Reality, known as God.

Therefore, the African conceives of the quality of 'force', 'energy' or 'power' from the nature of Reality or Individual Object concerned. The force derives from God and runs through the whole of creation, holding all the individual objects in one complete whole. Thus each reality ought to fulfil its role, giving meaning to its mode of existence. There is a law of justice which operates in the cosmos and by reason of which a superior being could be eradicated by an inferior object because it has lost its balance in the scale of things by performing below its quality and mode of existence. Hence Lienhardt observes that the Dinka say;

> . . . Once a man has left his cause to Divinity, any misfortune which befalls his opponent is easily interpreted as the result of divine action. The higher the religious reputation of a man. . . . the more careful people are not to offend him, . . . It is said that a famous prophet, Arianhdit, could kill those who offended him by simply breaking straws representing them[22]

In consonance with this conception of life, the African, therefore, considers the nature of object or creature (Reality) involved in each situation before giving credence to the degree of 'force' it possesses. Thus it becomes clear that the African conception of reality is the guiding principle for understanding his philosophy of life, though it is reinforced and fulfilled in the fact that God gives his dynamic and creative force to each Being according to its quality and capacity. It cannot be otherwise for He is the source of them all.

The cosmogonic theory of the Diola of Senagal has thrown much more light on this issue. The Diola conceive of Being as related to Embodiment by way of its emanation, Nummo; which is the life forces, symbolised as water and as the word which is at the origin of all things, persons and other beings, including the first ancestors of men and women[23]. It behoves us then to see God who in his action creates and concedes his dynamism to each reality for the fulfilment of its roles in the unitary control of the Universe.

The African Mystical Society

The unitary concept of life and the events on earth which have been so far discussed are extended to the African society. This is essentially so because the African feels the presence of his departed ancestors in his daily activities. He believes that in addition to being in the spirit world they are also influential in their earthly homes.

The greatest evidence being that they return in their grandchildren. It is in this process that the family survives and the clan extended. Dr Akoi has devoted much time to the treatment of his concept. He contends that the African Unitary Vision of cosmic reality sees the spiritual world as a continuation of the material world and watches the life of man going through them, by a process of death and reincarnation. He also assets that it is the clan that provides the link between the two worlds (spiritual and material) as well as the solidarity amongst their inhabitants.

In this regard man is seen as literally, a family tree, a single branching organism whose existence is continuous through time for death only makes the deceased ancestors more powerful than they were on earth with its limitations. As a result a son's life is considered as the prolongation of his father's life, of his grandfather's and of the whole lineage[25].

In more highly philosophically developed African Nation the ancestor is projected to be the Father of all the inhabitants for he is believed to be their root and source. All the other ancestors are honoured and venerated in recognition of the exalted position of this primogenitor. Hence among the Akan of Ghana, God is regarded as the Great Ancestor. Reporting the situation among the Akans, Danqua says:

> Akan knowledge of God teaches that he is the Great Ancestor. He is a true high God and manlike ancestor of the first man. As such ancestor He deserves to be worshipped, and is worshipped in the visible ancestral head, the good chief of the community . . . All ancestors who are honoured as such are in the line of the Great Ancestor . . . The Great Ancestor is the great father, and all men of the blood of that ancestor are of Him, and are of one blood and breath. Life, human life, is one continuous blood (and) . . the continuance of that blood in the continuance of the community is the greatest single factor of existence.[26]

In like manner, Maquet reports that the people of Ruanda consider Imana the creater as a person who is extremely powerful and takes care of men[27].

This exposure of the Mystical African Society justifies my stand that the conception of Reality is the main principle for the consideration of the African approach to life. It is what the ancestors have been to their children that has revealed the influence they wield and the powers which they possess. As God is regarded to be the Supreme Reality it is only proper that the ledest living ancestor should be his representative as has been elaborately treated among the Africa tribes, including the Banyarwanda who say:-

. . . . the first man is known as kazikamuntu, a name which means the 'Root-of-men'. He begat three sons (Gatutsi, Gahutu and Gatwa), who represent the three racial-social classes in the country[28].

The ancestors are therefore extensions of their families in the spirit world. As a result the African mystical society comprises the deceased ancestors who are called the living-dead, their physically surving members, and children yet unborn. If as has been shown earlier, the ancestors have origin in their greatest and eldest ancestors, it means that their qualities and characteristics could be testifies and verified in their earthly homes and among their grand children.

The reasons for this extension of the ancestor's spirit and personality are given by Bradbury in his assertion that:

> The ancestors, by establishing the roots of the descent group in the past, has the function, among others, of legitimizing the authority of family and lineage heads and of providing sanctions for the maintanance of proper relations between kin and spouses. The belief in and the desire for reincarnation refers to the dependence of the descent group for its continuity on the renewal of the personnel. The consequences of bad relations between kin and between man and wife are sickness, death, and failure to produce and keep children[29].

I have dwelt so much on the issue of the prolongation of the family through the children of the ancestors because it reveals the true relationship between the living-dead (the deceased) and their surviving members. To make this continuity a reality, there is this belief in reincarnation which I have been trying to explain. It is encouraging to note as given in the last portion of the quotation just made from Bradbury that the proper relationship between these two groups can be maintained only through good and unsullied moral life. The reason being that the ancestors are considered as the perpetual guardians and judges of kin morality. Therefore, vitality and survival are results of harmony and justice[30].

Psycho-Biological Inferences

The African Mystical society which compries both those ancestors in the spirit world and their descendants in the physical world with those yet unborn also calls for a psycho-biological

interpretation of reincarnation. This is only fair because of the necessity to properly comprehend and appreciate what reincarnation means to the African. Psychological and biological reasons abound for the support of the African concept of reincarnation.

A very serious case has been made to indicate that it is not the soul of the departed ancestor that has returned in the new child but some of his characteristics. In a bold attempt to illustrate this, Talbot explains that the personality soul (the Ego) sends out emanations in mental and physical activities[31]. In other words, the Ego gives itself consciousness in other levels of awareness realised through the meditation of the body. The sparks of the soul of the dead are extended and reflected in their children. These characteristic qualities of the child signify the presence of their deceased father in their midst. In support of the this assertion, Lucas stresses the need to trace certain characteristics possessed by individuals to the emi (spirit) which belongs to a large family group. He supports this argument with a quotation from Sir Lodge in which he says:

> We are each of us larger than we know; that each of us is only a partial incarnation of a larger self . . .
>
> As regards Reincarnation it is probably a mistake to suppose that the same individual whom we knew in bodily form is likely to appear again at some future date . . What may happen, however, is that some other portion of the larger self becomes incarnate. How large a sublinal self may be, one does not know; but one can imagine that in some cases it is very large, so that it contains the potentiality for the incarnation not only of a succession of ordinary individuals, but of really great men.[32]

Perhaps the Yoruba expression, Yiya-ọmọ - (Turning to be a child) would help in explaining better what is meant by the reincarnation of the ancestor in many children. In fact, at the funeral serivices of the dead, the Yorubas console the family members with such an expression as, *A ya l'ọwọ rẹ o* (May he become children for you). Parrinder has clearly explained that the Yoruba word for reincarnation is *Yiya* which literally means "shooting of a branch"[33]. It is for this reason that several authors have accepted that the deceased is survived by his children to who he also extends his own psychological influences. In conformity to this belief Nabofa rightfully asserts that:

> . . it has been said that it is the qualities of the departed ancestors that reincarnate. As the characteristics are spiritual, they could be absorbed or imbibed by as many children as possible . . . It is the spiritual qualities of the person that are believed to reincarnate but not his *Erhi* which remains in *Erivbin* as an ancestor[34].

The intensity of relationship between the living-dead and their surviving members makes the whole differences as long as the tie is maintained, especially in the conservation and prolongation of the clan. This is very prominent in Nigerian thought and there is a good reason to affirm it for the whole of Africa[35]. The land, for exampies, is the property of members of the family who are dead, those still alive and countless yet unborn. A Nigerian chief once reported to the West African Lands Committee in 1912 that he conceived of a land as belonging to a vast family of which many are dead, few are living and countless numbers are unborn.[36] The Universality of this concept in Sudanese and Bantu Africa has been confirmed by some Ugandan students in London.[37] Thus in this somewhat psychological disposition to feel the presence of the ancestors their role as custodians of traditional morality and harmony in the clan is purely acknowledged and reverenced, especially as they are mediators between the spirit world and the physical world, holding them together.[38] Thus the awareness of the presence of the ancestors round the environment and the consequent influence they have on their living members also make reincarnation psychologically possible. It is well known that in the immediate surroundings of a person he is greatly conditioned by its quality. Often, expectant mothers are kept away from ugly sites, that they may not give birth to ugly children.

Plato in describing the ideal life for the Greeks, regarded the category of the beautiful as moral, psychological and physical. These are factors which are hereditary and indicative of intuitive knowledge. Therefore, efforts are constantly made to keep pregnant women from emotional shock. The desire which is emotionally expressed at the grave lingers in the mind of the women and this could psychologically influence the physical manifestation of the qualities of the ancester when the child is born. Lepp recommends the application of the rules of mental hygiene for positive results[39]. On his part Mbiti says:

> . . . only some human features or characteristics of the living-dead are said to be 'reborn' in some children . . . I suspect that this belief is partly the result of externalizing people's awareness of the nearness of their living-dead, and partly an attempt to explain what is otherwise a purely biological phenomenon which applies not only to human beings but also to animals[40].

Undoubtedly, Mbiti makes very cogent points in this quotation made from him. The consciousness of the presence of the deceased makes his rebirth a possibility since he is spiritually present in the family. Furthermore, the hereditary aspect of man's nature cannot be underestimated.

The fusion of the male sperm and the female ovum forms the zygote which develops into a human being. Animals bear the likeness of themselves, for example, the dog bears a dog, a horse lits own kind, the seeds their own kinds and human beings their own kind. This equally true of the characteristic traits found in children. Neurotic cases have often been traced to a grandfather or some other person in the lineage who was mad.

This experience only substantiates the fact that there are also biological reasons for the resemblance in organisms and their various species. It is not anything strange, therefore, to discern certain qualities of a granfather or of a father in his children. There is a possibility of such resemblances as shown height, gait voice and general appearance.

CONCLUSION:

Properly understood, the African has an immense contribution to make towards the attainment of World Peace in his doctrine of reincarnation. The definition has shown that reincarnation means more than soul of the deaceased taking a new body. It does not take only one body but as many as it pleases. In addition, the soul is existent and resting as an individual entity in the spirit world. Emphasis was laid on the Mystical African Society in which concrete examples were given. The society is seen as a structural whole in which the hierarchical order requires reverence for the eldest ancestor. The greatest ancestor is called the *root-of-man* and the Father of all. The philosophical, and the psycho-biological interpretations are arguments to buttress this presentation.

As long as reincarnation implies in the positive sense the conservation of the clan, custody of moral and traditional values, I believe it is preparatory to the reception of the Good News of Christ. The Divine Master came not to destroy but to fulfil the Law. Hence the belief in reincarnation prepares a fertile soil for the planting of the Gospel. The desire that the good ancestors should return in children in the family is holy and welcome. This could be an incentive towards leading a morally good life. Moreover, the fact that the ancestors can still influence the affairs of their surviving members provide a fertile and ready ground to entrench the doctrine of the saints, being that the saints are invoked even as they are in the company of God.

However, the aspect of the oracle is not quite safe for the christian to accept. I hardly think it necessary, for I strive to liken my life to that of a model. This model is Christ who is the perfect image of God (Heb. 1;1-3; Colossians 1:15). For the African who visits the diviner to know who has reincarnated in his son I have

great admiration because of his readiness to comprehend in what manner the child should be handled. The christian is urged to strive to understand such a man's concept of life and adapt his methods to communicate the message effectively.

In conclusion, it can be said that reincarnation is a spiritual experience in which the sparks of the "Ego" of the deceased transmit his qualities to his descendants. Such mysterious transfer of eminent qualities is frequent occurence in the Bible, for example, "Yahweh your God will raise up for you a prophet like myself, from among yourselves from your own brothers, to him you must listen (Deut. 18.15), "I tell you most solemnly, before Abraham ever was, I Am" (John 8:58), and 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me"? (Acts 9:4). There is a sense in which the spirit of Light permeates all existent Realities, especially man, to make us other Christs. Reincarnation could be utilised in bringing about unity, obedience and sincere love among men when properly understood and applied.

FOOTNOTES

1. S. C. Onwuka, "I was A Juju Priest", in *Traditional Religion in West Africa,* edited by E. A. Ade Adegbola, Day Star Press, Ibadan, 1983, p. 10.

2. Chandogya Upanishad V. 10.7

3. S. A. Nigosian, *World Religions,* Edwárd Arnold, London, 1978, p. 119.

4. J. Drever, A *Dictionary of Psychology*, Penguin Books Ltd., England, 1969, p. 172.

5. E.B. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion*, A definition S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1973, p. 187.

6. E.B. Idowu, *Olodumare, God in Yoruba Belief* William Clowes and Sons Ltd., London, 1962, pp. 194-195. Mbiti also says: "Human life follows a rhythm of Nature which nothing can destroy: birth, puberty, initiation . . . death, entry into the company of the spirits. . . This personal immortality is also externalised and realized in the continuation of the individual.. some of the progenies bearing the traits of their progenitors". See J. S. Mbiti, "Eschatology," in *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs",* Kwesi Dickson and Paul Ellingworth (eds.) Lutherworth Press, London, 1969.

7. E. G. Parvinder, *African Traditional Religion*, S.P.C.K. London, 1968, p. 91.

8. (Fr. W. Morgan, *The Nature and Right of Religion*, T and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1926, p. 39.
9. J. O. Lucas, *The Religion of the Yorubas*, C.M.S. Bookshop, London, 1948, p. 254

10. M. Y. Nabofa, "Erhi And Eschatology", in *Religion In West Africa*, Op. cit., p. 311

11. E.G. Parvinder, *African Traditional Religion*, Op. cit. p. 139
12. F.A. Arinze, *Sacrifice in Ibo Religion* Ibadan University Press, Ibadan, 1970, p. 16.
13. . . . . children, who die young are believed to have decided beforehand in their group when they would die..." F. A. Arinze, op. cit., p. 16.

14. M. Y. Nabofa, op. cit. p. 312.

15. P. Tempels, *La Philosophie Bantoue*, Paris, 1949, pp. 74-76.
16. Cfr. J. S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* Heinemann, London, 1969, p. 10.

17. E.W. Smith, *African Ideas of God*, Edinburgh House Press, London, 1950, p.26.

18. E. B. Idowu, *Olodumare, God in Yoruba Belief*, Op. cit., p.5.
The world of men and the world of spirits are not two independent worlds; for one has no meaning without the other - they are complementary[19]

19. S.N. Ezeanya, "God, Spirits, And The Spirit World", in Biblical Revelation African Beliefs, Op. Cit. p.36.

20. G. Lienhardt, *Divinity and Experience*, The Religion *of the Dinka*, Oxford University Press, London, 1961 p. 28.
21. A. O. Echekwube, *Morality For Students* Martins Industrial Press, Issele-Uku, 1978, P.39.

22. G. Lienhardt, op. cit., p. 48.

23. Be. Davidson, *The Africans*, Hazell Watson and Viny Ltd., London, 1969, p. 170.

24. P. Akoi, op.cit., p.54.
25. J.V. Taylor, *The Primal Vision*, S.C.M. Press, London, 1963, p.91
26. J.B. Danquah, "God, the Great Ancestor" in *Pageant of Ghana* by Freda Wolfson, Oxford Univ. Press, London 1965,pp.229 -230.
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28. J. S. Mbiti, *Concepts of God In Africa*, S.P.C.K., London, 1970, p. 161.
29. R. E. Bradbury, op.cit., p.101.
30. Idem., p.101.
31. P. A. Talbot, *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria*, Oxford University Press, London, 1926, Vol.II, p. 279.
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33. E. G. Parvinder, op. cit., p. 52
34. M. Y. Nabofa, op. cit., p. 312.
35. L. S. Senghor, "What Is Negritude^"", in *Africa Is People*, Barbara Nolen, E. P. Dutton and Co. Inc., N. York, 1967, p. 129.
36. T.O. Elias,*The Nature of African Customary Law*, Manchester, 1956, p. 162; B. Davidson, *Which Way Africa?* Penguin Books England, 1964, p. 32
37 Uganda students, *Ntu*, 3 Collingham Gardens, London, SW5 January, 1962. Ntu is a journal dedicated to the dead, the living and the unborn

38. Pierre-Bominique Coco, ". . . Cependant elles honorent leurs mort parce qu'ellelles croient fermement que l'esrit de l'etre humainne meurt jamais qu'il continue d'influencer d'une facon ou d'une autre la vie de la communaute a partir d'une autre sphere. . . On comprend de's lors pourquoi, apres les derniers rites de passage, la famille organise des ceremonies periodiques au cours desquelles elle comunique et communie avec ses ancetres" "Notes sur la place des morts et desance es dans la societe traditionalle (Fon, Gen, Yoruba du Bas Dahomey) "Colloque de cotonou, 16-22 Aout, 1970, In Presence Africaine, Paris Vo, 1972, pp. 226-236.

39. Cfr. I. Lepp, *Health of Mind and Soul,* Image Books, Doubleday and Company, Inc., New York, 1968, p. 19.

40. J. S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* Op. Cit., p. 164.

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PUBLISHERS
P. O. Box 1454, Oshodi
Lagos State, Nigeria.