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RESEARCH DISCIPLINES IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT: A REVISED PARADIGNI

DR. L. KEITA
FOURAH BAY COLLEGE, SIERRA-LEONE

Given that the technologically more advanced societies rely much on the technical skills of their citizens for maintaining their dominance in world affairs they regard it as necessary that these technical skills be properly transmitted over time by way of their centres of training, i.e. schools, polytechnics, universities, etc. This is the practice of Western societies such as the United States, West Germany, France, Britain, Japan, and Eastern bloc countries such as the Soviet Union, East Germany and Hungary. This point is greatly underscored by the case of Japan, a society which invests most heavily in its human capital given that that nation is not fortunate in terms of natural resources. The striking result is that Japenese society is perhaps the most productive society in the world today, principally because of the level of technical expertise of its citizens. Thus it appears that proper investments in human capital (contrary to the emphasis in orthodox development theory) constitute a necessary condition for genuine capital formation and economic growth.

It is noteworthy in this connection that although all the above mentioned societies stress the acquisition of technical skills appropriate for the functioning of modern industrial society their centres of training are not uniformly structured. Each society has evolved systems of training which would seem to reflect particular sociological histories. There is also the assumption that each society has developed those pedagogical structures most appropriate for it. In fact this is most evident in the recent pedagogical histories of the Soviet Unio and China. Perhaps the main reason for the revolutions of both societies is that some of its leaders recognized that their socieities would fall under the influence of the more industrialized nations unless drastic steps were taken to acquire the technological and industrial skills of these societies. In this respect the pedagogical structures of both China and the Soviet Union reflect these considerations. But in conjunction with the imparting of technical skills the pedagogical structures of the industrialized societies also impart information whose function is to serve as a sociological justification for the particular societal complex in question. This information is filtered into society through disciplines like history, political theory, economics, religion, sociology and

literary history. Thus in France, for example, the study of mathematics and engineering is accompanied by the study of the role of Charlemagne in history and Descartes in the history of ideas. Similarly the ideas of Lenin and Mao assume importance in the pedagogical structurers of the Soviet Union and China although much stress is placed on technical education in both societies.

In the case of African societies one discovers that the mode of transmission of technical knowledge and its accompanying phenomenology is not quite tailored for local requirements. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to examine the possibilities of establishing a proper structure for the imparting of technical and nontechnical knowledge so necessary for social transformation. In this regard, I shall examine the possibilities of novel orientations for the major research areas especially in the scientific and social scientific areas. I wish to point out too that although there has been much research on the education and manpower training needs of African society such research is generally descriptive (stressing nevertheless the negative aspects of the contemporary situation) and when prescriptive, appeal is invariably made to the necessary and charitable role of international donor agencies.[1]

In most African countries existing pedagogical structures are modeled predominantly on those of the ex-colonial societies. Thus in the francophone African countries the pedagogical structures are almost identical with those of France; similar considerations apply in their anglophone and lusophone counterparts. Since it is assumed that one of the marks of the autonomy of society is its independence in intellectual matters it is imperative that the existent pedagogical structures in African societies be examined as to their viabilities for actual sociological conditions. It is also imperative that these evaluations take place within the framework of general inter-regional conferences so that structures could eventually be made uniform. Initially two or three models could be formulated and tested on a regional base over an adequate period of time. Eventually, results would be evaluated to determine which models seem to produce the most encouraging results. And finally, the most efficient model would be implementd at the continental level. The rationale for this approach is empirical: the successes of the Soviet or Japenese systems of pedagogy, for example, do not derive from mere imitations of European or American systems; furthermore, despite their large populations and geographical extent the pedagogical structures of China, the Soviet Union and the United States are uniform from region to region.

Thus a few observations concerning the actual situation in African societies are fitting. In Western socieites it is not compulsry that university students receive substantial training in technical and mathematical disciplines, and, of course, similar requirements hold for African universities. Students are allowed to graduate without receiving at least three years training in mathematics and a technical discipline. But given the importance of modern

technical knowledge for social transformation I believe that each university student should be trained in the following three areas beyond his area of specialization: instruction in mathematics for three years, instruction in two scientific disciplines for at least three years and two years of training in a technical area.[2]

But training in technical subjects though necessary is not sufficient. The student must also be exposed to at least three years of history and political econonomy. Modern Africa would be poorly served by students who were technically sound but ignorant of the sociological and historical contexts in which their technical knowledge should be applied. At this point in time it would appear that the ideal graduate from an African university should be a generalist rather than a specialist in orientation. This is not the situation at the moment given the specialist programmes inherited directly from Europe. The point is that specialization though a necessity in some areas should be dictated by social needs. In the following sections there will be discussions on possible orientations of those research disciplines necessary for the training of technical cadres. The areas to be discussed are the natural sciences, the technological sciences, the social sciences, and literary and linguistic studies, and the theory of scientific analysis.

I should want to add though that the prescriptions recommended in the following discussion would be more effective were the spirit of meaningful pedagogical instruction generalized throughout society. In other words one would expect pre-university pedagogical structures such as primary and secondary schools to tailor their curricula to fit local needs. An obvious goal of pre-university education would be one hundred percent literacy and maximal competence in basic technology. The latter prescription would mean that a precondition for secondary school graduation would be demonstration of competence in financial accounting and a skill relevant to the needs of a nascent manufacturing and industrial society. For example, one might consider skills in the electronic and mechanical fields.

THE NATURAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Given the great practical need for technological development at the moment, it would seem that instruction and research in the natural sciences should be geared especially towards pratical applications. In the field of chemistry, for example, instruction and research should be undertaken with an eye to possible implementation in the low cost manufacture of items such as dyes, soaps and fabrics. One would hope that university instruction and research in the sciences should constitute the research and development components of fledging industries. In this regard, students who specialize in the sciences would be guaranteed continuing research, hence employment in the industrial or research development sectors.

Given the elitist nature of European university structures, divorced as they are from industry and the practical application of knowledge, this model of instruction can hardly be implemented with success in African societies given the need to create techologically oriented societies. . One can add further that no student in a modern African university should graduate without turning in a project emphasizing the possible utilization of scientific knowledge in the manufacture of low cost items.

A similar approach should be undetaken in the areas of physics and biology. The abundant sunlight available in local environments can serve as an impetus for the formulation of instruction geared towards the exploitation of solar energy. In the area of biological research easily implementable principles of genetic engineering should be taught at the most elementary levels so that students who eventually enter professions such as farming would be equipped to do so efficiently. It should also be impressed on young students that there is much prestige to be gained from embarking on a farming career and that urban office employment does not really add to a developing nation's gross national product. Another area of research that requires a novel orientation is that of biological research relevant to the medical and health areas. Concerns should be raised about the fact that research and training in the above areas are based almost completely on the Euro-American model without consideration given to the needs of local populations. One might consider the novel orientations in this regard adopted by the Chinese government in recent years. Quite obviously, differences in ecology, levels of industrialization, etc. between the nations of Europe and Africa suggest different research orientations. Given the constant threat of such diseases like malaria, cholera and typhoid in most African nations research combining both preventive and curative aspects of these diseases should be granted primary emphasis. Yet paradoxically the major research centres of tropical medicine are not located on the African continent. One reason for this state of affairs is the financial constraints engendered by the weak capital bases of Africa's ministates. There is no reason why regional cooperation could not lead to the estaolishing of major research centres focusing on these critical areas. Initially joint ventures involving a number of universities should be implemented.

Similar considerations apply for the technological disciplines in the areas of engineering. Again it should be stressed that there should be a close working relationship between infant industries and engineering research programmes in the universities. Thus, for example, industry could market low cost products such as air-conditioning and refrigeration appliances developed in electrical and mechanical engineering departments. It is to be expected too that industry, working in consort with university research centres, would be the major supplier of the instruments and appliances needed for experimental work. There is no reason why basic research equipment like test tubes, ther-

mometers, weighing scales etc. should continue to be imported. Again regional cooperation should be stressed in order to generate an adequate technological expertise for this end.

THE SOCIAL SCIENCE

The pedagogy and research in the social sciences is important from the point of view that it is these disciplines that determine the intellectual orientations and social structures according to which technological knowledge is applied. An improperly oriented social science could lead to forms of alienation that might retard economic development and social transformation. As proof of this claim consider the hybrid social scientific field of African Studies developed in the West for purposes of synthesizing theories in anthropology, history, economics and politics as they related to African societies. Obvsiously research in this area was conducted principally from a European standpoint. Given the above it would be erroneous for African universities to maintain such research programmes in their present forms. I believe that research institutes of Western and Asian studies would be more fitting for African universities at this juncture. The function of such institutes would be to engage in research geared towards not only the interpretation of the political, economic and military strategies of the Western and Asiatic powers, but also the formulation of counter strategies advantageous to the African wold. I consider too the fact that the majority of Africa's decision makers in the areas of economics and finance although trained in modern techniques have been unable to formulate relevant theories of economic growth and development. One would have expected that after more than twenty five years of political independence that regional groupings such as ECOWAS would have already implemented programmes of currency uniformity and integrated infrastructures. With the exception of the naira (petroleum supported) and the CFA (franc supported) the other currencies of ECOWAS are viewed as practically worthless by central bank authorities outside national boundaries. Again, one notes that communication by road between member countries of ECOWAS is quite inadequate; and that, two thousand years after the Romans built an impressive road system throughout Europe, that is still viable.

A plausible reason is that the modern African social scientist is so imbued with Western paradigms of analysis that his views on economic development and social transformation tend to coincide with those of the so-called Western "expert". But the West's views on African economic development are formulated principally to establish and support Western rather than African interests.

ECONOMICS

The most important of the social sciences is undoubtedly economics – for it is through economic transactions that individuals and nations are able to obtain the wherewithal for survival. In fact economics is such an important discipline that the world today is riven along poltical lines determined by particular economic ideologies: on one side there are the communist type economic systems of the Soviet bloc and China, and on the other there are the liberal economies of the Western world and and their ex-colonial dependants.

The practical result of this divide in economic orientation is that the economic activitites of the communist bloc countries are insulated from the surveillance of such Western instituions as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. African economies, given their continuing incorporation into the general economy of the West, are constantly monitored by the above institutions. In this context the Western economies enjoy the enviable role of importing raw materials from African nations at prices set by the former. These materials are then transformed into finished products then exported back to African nations, again at prices set by the seller. The ongoing result of this has been economic crisis in Africa: the problematic of debt servicing, currency devaluations, increasing unemployment, etc. One might note too the ensnaring role played here by the EEC (Uropean Economic Community) engendered ACP (African, Caribean, Pacific) organization and its accompanying STABEX (System for Stablisation of export earnings from agricultural commodities) and SYSMIN (System for assisting countries with high dependence on mining products) regulations. Of course it should be recognized that the role of the neocolonial bourgeoisie in the formulation of an apartheid-like structure such as ACP (note that the North African and Asiatic nations are not hncluded) is not exactly passive. One could more amply explain this ongoing phenomenon by appeal to the dependency theory already adapted by Samir Amin to contemporary Africa[3].

In short, the economic theories taught and researched in Western society are geared to the perpetuation of Western economic control and influence in those areas of the world open to Western economic penetration. It should be noted that in this context the currencies of the Western nations are all assumed to be "strong" and easily exchanged. On the other hand the currencies of African nations are viewed as "weak" and lacking in foreign exchange value. Two interesting results follow from this: regardless of the productivity of the African worker his remuneration in local currencies has an exchange value that is usually much less than the unemployed worker receiving unemployment benefits in Western Europe or the United States. The relative minimal exchange value of local currencies forces African nations to gear their exports to the demands of the industrialized nations in order to obtain foreign

exchange. The Western nations have mandated that only foreign exchange is acceptable as payment for imports. African nations in need of capital goods are forced thereby to comply with this dictate. One recalls here the tax and tribute reuses employed by the ex-colonixing powers during colonial times to generate forced African labour.

The important point in all this however is that the student of economics in most African universities is exposed to theories of economic decision making more appropriate for the economic life of the technologically advanced Western nations. The student is led to believe that the ends of economic decision making are nothing more than the short term maximization of profits and utility. He is also taught that only the market economy is capable of generating the supply and demands of goods and services, that labour is a factor of production, that the international economic system operates best under the principle of comparative advantage, and that the currencies of the Western nations are the only real currencies.

Yet the highly successful Japanese interpretation of the market economy demonstrates that the short term maximization of profits and the objectivization of labour are not necessary for the efficient working of a decentralized economy. The curious student must also wonder why the remuneration for a basic labour intensive task in an African country generates much less exchange value than a similar task performed in Europe. Quite obviously the question of "value" must be rethought in the context of countries that trade with each other in a so-called free-trade environment. In sum, the discipline of economics must be reformulated in order to satisfy the economic life of societies whose economic structures do not conform to those of the industrialized Western nations. The issue here is of crucial importance given the situation common to most African nations. Such nations need to import capital in order to establish the foundations of a viable capital infrastructure, yet in order to import capital they must obtain foreign exchange.

But as was mentioned above this vital foreign exchange is controlled by a small group of nations headed by the United States.[4] One useful approach would be to stress the importance of world economic geography and the dynamics of international economics in any revised curriculum for the teaching of economics.

As proof of the great influence exercised by Western economic doctrine on those non-Westerners who have been exposed to it, consider the decision making procedures of the organization of petroleum exporting nations known as OPEC. The precipitous rise in the price of petroleum in the early 1970's afforded this organization an excellent opportunity to gain some economic advantage over the West. But this opportunity was completely wasted in the sense that OPEC immediately returned to Western banks revenues, determined in dollars, obtained from the sale of its petroleum. A possible non-Western

alternative could have been to create an OPEC currency supported by the assets of the member nations of that organization. OPEC in turn would then have demanded that payment for its product be made in the OPEC currency. Furthermore, payments for OPEC petroleum would have been deposited in banks located in member OPEC countries. As is well known the so-called petrodollars deposited in Western banks were squandered in loans to financially profligate governments and business elements, especially in Latin America.

Were an autonomous OPEC economic policy followed, loans from its sales could have been made at reasonable rates of interest to African, Asian and Latin American nations in need of development funds. Instead the petro-dollars lent by the Western banks were subject to the vagaries of the interest rates prevailing in the industrialized world. Consider the huge debts incurred by countries like Brazil, Mexico and Argentina, all politically close to the United States. The Western-oriented mentality of OPEC is again demonstrated by the fact that this organization has chosen to locate its headquarters in Austria despite the fact that no European country is a member of OPEC. By way of contrast it is unthinkable that the Western industrialized nations would situate the headquarters of its major industries in Africa or Asia.

Another example of the intellectual paralysis of the Western trained economic decision makers in contemporary Africa is the fact that they seem powerless to deal with the situation in which African nations do not control the prices of the raw materials they produce for the markets of the industrialized West. Yet it would seem a very elementary idea in economic theory that those African nations which produce a sizable portion of the world output of agricultural produce and minerals could form cartels which, according to the principle of monopoly, would be in a stregnthened position to control prices. This principle states that those who monopolize the supply of some commodity are in a position to influence its price. And it is a fact that some African nations are already among the world's leading producers of cocoa, coffee, copper and bauzite.

Further aspects of this approach to economic decision making would mean that African producer groups could request payment for thei produce in African currencies. Of course the present status of African currencies leave much to be desired: serious consideration should be given to the creation of regional currencies to replace those now in existence. Such currencies are indeed problematic given that they are rarely exchanged among neighbours on an official basis. Yet much inter-country trade is conducted through smuggling and its attendant corruption. Regional currencies exchanged in an atmosphere of free trade would do much to answer the incessant complaint that African nations trade little among themselves.

I belive that the constant appeals by African decision makers to the West

for better terms of trade is best viewed as a set of conditioned reflexes derived principally from their being trained within the matrix of Western civilization. It is this kind of training that leads Africa's decision makers to believe that the so-called North-South dialogue is not fundamentally a zero-sum game in which the industrialized nations would be the constant gainers. It is on the basis of this one sided game that radical theorists like Samir Amin prescribe a delinking of dependent African states from the world capitalist system.[5]

As a final though important note on the research status of economics let us recognize that theories of economic decision making divorced from political and socio-logical considerations, as is the practice in most Western institutions, lead only to empty tautological formulations. The recent Western research habit of specialization works best, perhaps, in the natural sciences (though there is a tendency to overdo it), but in the sciences of man, the orthodox research distinctions of sociology, politics, economics etc. lead to results that are highly artificial and unrealistic. A revised theory of the social sciences would instead choose to view the behaviour of man as being multidimensional yet ultimately coordinated. It would seem that emphasis on multidimentional analysis would tend to yield less than complete understanding of human behaviour.

History

One of the evident paradigm shifts in post-colonial times has been the reorientation of the historiography of the African continent. Imperialist history has been replaced withan approach which is not only more balanced but also attempts to present an integrated history of Africa. Thus one has witnessed a transition from the colonial histories of Oliver, Fage and Crowder to the more balanced histories of Ki-Zerbo and Diop. One of the sonstraints surrounding the works of these two latter historians is that their works are better known in the so-called francophone countries. The continuing influence of neocolonial educational structures results in the fact that "franscophone" African historians are better known in France than in neighboruing "anglophone" countries even three decades after independence.

The point is that there is still much to be done in African hostoriography. Colonial history tended to present a view from an assumedly sober and objective point of view. Quite obvsiously this approach was taken to mask the grossly crass and ex-ploitative nature of the European presence in Africa. The new African historiography would not be flouting any acceptable methodology of historical research were normative considerations employed in the evaluation of events. One would tend to think that historical writing if done properly can be both instructional and teleological. For example, it might be pointed out that the European colonisation of Africa was a purely contingent event undertaken for economic and military gain. Since African autonomy was reduced to a minimum in the process of this historical event there are good

grounds for arguing that the quasi-national structures erected by the Europeans do not reflect an African will and should be superseded as soon as convenient. In short the teleological component of African history should be understood within a context of economic development, modernization and macrostatehood.

Anthropology and Sociology

The discipline of anthropology can perhaps be viewed as one of those discriplines specifically created for the sociological study of non-Western peoples. Implicit in these anthropological theories was the assumption that the relatively advanced technology of Western European society was due to the genetic superiority of the members of that society. A specialised vocabulary was formulated to describe the sociological structures of non-Western people in general, which included highly value-judgemental terms like tribe (used indiscriminately for all types of social structures), primitive (also used without any scientific rigour), animistic, etc. It should be noted that these terms have their more acceptable synomys in the European context. Thus terms like "tribe" and "primitive" are metaphorphosed respectively into "ethnic group" and " pre-modern".

One of the key components of colonial anthropology as formulated by its theorists was the assumption of the biological specificity of non-Western peoples which was expressed in most extreme form vis-avise the societies of Africa. Thus in the analysis of African societies it was the biology of their inhabitants which constituted the major explanatory concept. In this regard the sociological, political and economic analysis of relevant phenomena was always predicated on the racial background of the group in question. A significant result of this racially based methodology is that concepts such as "black Africa" and "Africa South of the Sahara" assumed a spurious importance. Anthropology is decidedly such a major tool for colonial and post-colonial interests that its importance in African pedagogy is limited. One might consider the long pseudoscientific tradition of European theorists like Blumenbach, Hegel, Gobineau, Levy Bruhl et al. From an African point of view it would seem, therefore, that whatever empirical concerns the discipline preoccupies itself with could be easily examined within the context of sociology.

Sociology in the Western context has had a history of a set of explanatory paradigms. Consider structuralism, functionalism, positivism, Marxian sociology, etc. Such theoretical approaches are indeed useful for consideration but it would appear that sociology in an African context should assume a predominantly pragmatic approach. This discipline should serve the function of gathering data specifically for national planning. In this regard

emphasis would be placed on demography, statistical reports obtained from interviews, etc. The rationale in this approach would be for purposes of the optimization of such social necessities as health care and education, etc. For example, given modifications in national birth rates as evidenced by sociological data, governments could more efficiently plan for the construction of new schools, housing and hospitals.

Political Science

While the function of sociology as a research discipline in an African context ought to be viewed primarily as an empirical discipline, political science, on the other hand, should be concerned more with theoretical issues. The reason for this orientation is that in the present post-colonial era there is yet no clear consensus on what kinds of political systems or arrangements could best serve the newly independent states. Clearly the political systems of the erst-while colonial states cannot be adopted without modification given that they were developed in different sociological and historical environments.

Much credit will certainly be due to those theoreticians who could develop political systems appropriate for the present empirical realities in the indepent African nations. The present crop of one-party and military dictatorships cannot augur well for the future development of the continent. Much theoretical discussion at the research level should seek to examine the causes and possible remedies for the present regimes. The discussion of new polilical structures, it would seem, must necessarily take seriously into consideration the ideas of regional or continental unions previously urged by Kwame Nkrmah and Cheikh Anta Diop. Clearly, and if only from the point of view of economies of scale, a substantial number of Africa's mini-states would face a brighter future were they members of federated unions. It is difficult to imagine how accidental and whimsically conceived political units like Togo, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, Malawi, etc. could ever be economically viable in a world dominated by industrialized megastates. Of course, the West would like to see these feeble poltical structures maintained, and preferably ruled by petty dictators. The point is that any African nation of less than ten million inhabitants is viewed as nothing more than a target of opportunity for raw material exploitation.

Let us note too that a major accompanying problem in the theoretical debate is the fact that the colonial political structures and those inherited from Eastern bloc countries, as a result of material and ideological support granted during wars of independence, are either now deeply entrenched or in the process of so becoming. But hope for change is offered by the fact that the majority of the post-colonial African states are characterized by much instability thereby offering a potential role for theorists of novel political ideas.

LITERARY AND LINGUISTIC RESEARCH

Much will not be said about the state of contemporary literary research since its practioners have done much in the area of novel orientations in African literature. There is one major problem though which is being vigorously debated. the question of literary expression in African languages. There are those who believe that literature expressed in languages alien to a particular cultural settling is essentially incompatible with it.

The solution to this problem lies with African linguists who must embark on a rational, efficient and disinterested plan to determine how Africa's linguistic problematic may be solved. Once one language or a minimal number (two or three) of regional languages are agreed upon the next step would be the logical one of imparting it (them) in schools and universities. Ideal candidates would be languages which are already very widely spoken such as Swahili and Hausa, or politically neutral, in the sense of being practically a national lingua fraca of some nation, such as Wolof. Another solution could be the forging of a new language out of elements of chosen languages: this alternative would, of course, rquire the efforts of a creative team of linguists. One should recall in this connection that this has been done before in the case of the language Esperanto. Furthermore let us note that most major languages derive from a multiplicity of linguistic roots, as is the case with, say, English and French.

Quite obviously the problem is not a simple one given the petty politics and intellectual inertia that surrounds the issue. Some elements, as an ironic tribute to the efficacy of European colonialism, would rather see the colonial language entrenched indefinitely than have the language of a national ethnic group elevated to the status of regional or continental language. Yet before the issue could be resolved it is necessary that the pedagogy of chosen African languages should be embarked on at all instructional levels. In this contest, one would hope that departments of modern languages in African universities should offer not only modern European languages as courses of instructions but also modern African languages. It is unfortunate that such courses are relegated to such incongruous research areas as "Institutes of African Studies".

As a final observation on this topic let us note that while most non-African nations formerly colonized by the European powers have reverted to their indigenous languages for official purposes, in Africa this is not the case except in North Africa – one recognizes of course the efforts in this regard made by Tanzania and Kenya. In Indo-China the French linguistic influence no longer exists and the Asian subcontinent (India and Pakistan) is cognizant of the fact that alternatives to English must be sought. In fact, the extent of Africa's linguistic problematic is evidenced by the fact that the terms "Francophone" and Anglophone" refer almost exclusively to the nations of Africa.

THE THEORY OF SCIENCE

The above discussions have focused on possible orientations of the research disciplines within an African context. The essential point about the discussion on the orientations of such disciplines is that they should be structured according to the dicates of African developmental needs. Yet given the rapid growth of knowledge internationally, determined essentially by novel theoretical analysis, African universities would do well to conduct purely theoretical research relevant to all scientific displines with the aim of exploring the possibilities of novel and original forms of knowledge.

In this connection research in the theory of science would entail epistemological analysis of theories in the sciences (natural and social) and mathematics. It is in the context of the epistemological analysis of the different modes of knowledge that new insights into the nature of phenomena could arise. It is assumed that researchers in the theory of science would have acquired substantial amounts of training in the special areas of scientific research. In terms of the actual physical structuring of such areas of research one could envisage the coordination of several research units set aside especially for this kind of enterprise. Thus theoretical questions concerning the sciences could be analyzed and researched by interested members from all research units. The practical importance of research in the theory of science is that it affords the conditions for original and creative work in all scientific areas – a necessity for technological and economic development.

CONCLUSION

In the above discussion we have critically evaluated the actual pedagogical structures of the contemporary African university and research centres. Recommendations were made as to how they should be modified for present needs. This issue is one of much importance given the pressing need for the social transformation of African society. The Western world today is dominant mainly because it was able to effect social transformations that established the foundations for industrial society. These social transformations were directed by theoreticians of knowledge who expressed and developed their novelideas independently within university and research centres.

And the social transformation of Africa is necessary because of its material and metaphysical pay-offs. The industrial and technological development of AFrican nations would serve as a deterrent to their ongoing economic exploitation and political manipulation by the industrialized nations. It would also actualize the sense of political liberation and autonomy promised at independence. I have attempted to make a case for the role of the research discipline in this venture.

NOTES

1. See, for example, David Court and K. Kinyanjui, "African Education: Problems in a High-Growth Sector", and Kenneth King, "Manpower, Technology, and Employment in Africa: Internal and External Policy Agendas", Strategies for African Development, edited by R. Berg and J. Whitaker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), pp. 361–392 and pp. 422–450 respectively.

2. By a "technical area" I mean areas such as automotive engineering, electronics, basic agricultural skills, etc. I assume though that the student would have had some prior exposure to the above skills in his preuniversity training.

3. See Samir Amin, Imperialism and Unequal Development (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977).

4. Note in this regard Celso Furtado's trenchant comments thereon. "That the United States should hold almost exclusively the privilege of creating international liquidity constitutes of the most damnable aspects of the present economic order. There is no doubt that the resource transfers resulting from the exercise of this privilege occur mainly among the rich countries whose central banks accumulate large reserves of dollars". See Celso Furtado, "An Age of Global Reconstruction",

   Directions in Economic Development, edited by Kenneth P. Jameson and Charles K. Wilber (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), p. 178.

5. Samir Amin, The Future of Maoism (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1982), pp. 107–146.

Hussserlian Phenomenology and Existential Phenomenology

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When Existential Phenomenology first appeared in Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*, it was rejected by Edmund Husserl, "the father of phenomenology", as a distortion of his phenomenology. But Heidegger had no apology for what Husserl considered as a distortion of his phenomenology because he had no intention of reproducing Husserl's phenomenology. Rather he adapted phenomenology to his own style of philosophy. Soon Existential phenomenology appeared again in Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, in Merlau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, and other works of Existentialists. The Existentialists were attracted by phenomenology which they saw as a very useful method of philosopy. Indeed, Heidegger maintained that phenomenology was the most appropriate tool with which the issue of the meaning and nature of Being could be investigated. 1 Ontology is possible, he maintained, only as phenomenological onotology. The subtitle of Sartre's major work, Being and *Nothingness*, is An Essay in Phenomenological Onotology. Yet the Existentialists were not prepared to adopt Hussrl's phenomenology whole sale, they were not prepared to use phenomenology in the Hussrlian way, but in their own way. Thus in the hands of the Existentialists phenomenology became Existential Phenomenology.

While Husserl rejected existential phenomenology as a distortion of his phenomenology, the Existentialists on their part also rejected some aspects of Husserl's phenomenology. This paper will examine Husserl's phenomenology and assess the points of disagreement between Husserl and the Existentialists.

Alghough the term phenomenology had been used, before Husserl, by other philosophers such as Kant and Hegel (whose major work is entitled Phenomenology of Spirit), it was Husserl who developed phenomenology as a philosophical method. There are, however, two phases in Husserl's phenomenology, namely, the descriptive phase and the transcendental phase.

(i) Descriptive Phenomenology

Under the influence of his teacher Franz Brentano (1883–1917), a descriptive sychologist, Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) developed pheno-

menology as a descriptive analysis of experience. Its aim is to analyse and describe experience exactly as it occurs, without the prejudice of any prior assumption or presupposition. Its aim is an objective, unbiased knowledge. Phenomenology makes no assertion about, nor is it concerned about, the actual existence of the object of its analysis; It is of no importance to phenomenology whether the object really exists or is a mere figment of the imagination. It is only concerned with the essences of things and not with their actual existence or their existential traits. In fact phenomenology does away with all the existential and particular traits of the objects of its investigation. All it wants are the essences of these things and not their existential or individual traits. In order to extract the essence from an object, the phenomenologist performs what Husserl calls the "eidetic reduction" on the object in question. This means that the phenomenologist puts aside all the existential and individual features of the object and focusses only on the essence in order to intuit it. Hence Husserl describes phenomenology as an "eidetic science", that is, the science of essences, the science concerned only with the essences of things.

We can see here the influence of Plato on Husserl. Just as Plato held that the object of philosophical knowledge are the "Forms" of things and not concrete things in their ecistential, particular traits, so does Husserl maintain that the objects of phenomenological knowledge are the "essences" of things. In fact Husserl's essences are no other than Plato's Forms. Husserl is thus firmly in the Platonic tradition.

But Husserl is also a Cartesian. Like Descartes, he believes that in order to attain true and indisputable knowledge, the philosopher should do away with all his prior assumptions and start from a presupoositionless positiion. The phenomenologist does this through what Husserl calls the "phenomenological epoche" or the "phenomenological reduction". This consists in putting aside (or putting between brackets) all prior assumptions, beliefs, or presuppositions about the object of investigation. The phenomenologist thus approaches the object with a completely open mind, an unprejudiced mind so that he can seee the object exactly as it is. The object then reveals itself to him exactly as it is and the phenomenologist grasps its essence by a kind of intuitive "seeing", intuitive vision. Husserl thus follows in the footsteps of Descartes' methodic doubt, and he acknowledges his debt to Descartes. "No philosopher of the past has affected the sense of phenomenology as descisively as Rene Descartes", Huseerl tells us in his Paris Lectures. "Phenomenology must honour him as its genuine patriarch. It must be said explicitly that the study of Descartes' Meditations has influenced directly the formation of the developing phenomelogy and given it its present form, to such an extent that phenomenology might be called a new twentieth century Cartesianism."2 As a true Cartesian Husserl's phenomenologist also puts aside (put between brackets) even the world itself along with everything he

had previously known in order to make a fresh start, without taking anything for granted. "We can no longer accept the reality of the world as a fact to be taken for granted..... As radically meditating philosophers we now have neither knowledge that is valid for us nor a world that exists for us. We can no longer say that the world is real."3 Like Descartes, Husserl also wanted to start philosophy afresh after an initial demolition exercise carried out through the "phenomenological epoche" which is his own version of Descartes' Methodic doubt.

Husserl also follows Descartes in making the cogito his point of departure. Immediate experience expressed in the cogito is, for the phenomenologist, the only reliable source of all genuine knowledge. But right at this point (the point of the cogito) Husserl departs from Descartes and criticizes him for failing to draw the full conclusions from the fact of the cogito. Descartes, according to him, failed to see the full implications of the cogito. From the fact of thinking (the cogito) Descartes discovered and affirmed only his (discembodied) existence, the thinking subject. Husserl, however, maintains that the cogito reveals not only the thinking subject but also the object of his thought. Thus the existence of both the subject as well as that of the object of thought are simultaneously revealed in the cogito. Consciousness is always consciousness of something outside itself, it necessarily has an object to which it is directed. Thinking is always thingking about something outside the thinking self. Thus, the fact of thinking should have revealed to Descartes that something else exists apart from himself, since thinking is always object-oriented. Husserl therefore extends Descartes' cogito into "ego cogito cogitatum" which shows that both the thinking subject (ego) and the object of thought (cogitatum) are revealed simultaneously in the cogito. Husserl insists that there is an indissoluble link between the subject and the object of experience, and he calls this link "intentionality". The conscious act is an intentional act, that is, an act directed by its very nature twoards an object. Here we can see the influence of Husserl's teacher, Franz Brentano, a descriptive psychologist who insisted that all pschological acts (thinking, desiring, liking, loving, hating, etc) are object-oriented. The essence of consciousness, according to Brentano, is intentianlity, that is, the fact that it is by its very nature related (or directed) to objects outside itself.

Phenomenology is for Husserl not only a method of philosophy but the genuine philosophy, scientific philosophy and the foundation of all scientific knowledge. Husserl's aim was in fact to make phenomenology the foundation of modern science, a solid foundation that is free from the errors caused by prejudices, preconceptions, misconceptions, unproven assumptions, presuppositions, etc. The phenomenologist must be completely detached and see himself as an impartial disinterested observer with an open mind focussed on the object of investigation as it reveals itself to him in immediate experience. The object here means not the physical features but the essence of what is

being investigated. It is this (the essence) that reveals itself to consciousness and it is then analysed in "pure internal experience".

Phenomenology, Husserl says, takes no account of the findings of natural science. Any claim to truth must be subjected to the test of the phenomenological reduction. "That means every transcendent (that which is not given to me immediately) is to be assigned the index zero,i.e. its existence, its validity is not to be assumed as such..... I am to treat all sciences as phenomena, hence not as a system of valid truths...This applies to the whole of natural science."4 Only what is seen" clearly and distinctly" in internal experience can be accepted as valid. Husserl rejects Kant's distinction between things as they are in themselves and as they appear to us. He maintains that things appear to us exactly as they are in themselves. One can understand why Husserl has to reject this noumena-phenomena distinction of Kant since it implies that the essences of things do not appear and cannot be known whereas the objects of phenomenological knowledge are precisely the essences of things.

(II) Transscendental Phenomenology

From a purely descriptive analysis of experience, i.e. descriptive phenomenology, Husserl's phenomenology gradually developed into a transcendental idealism. As the ego became increasingly subjective it became more and more removed from the empirical world until it eventually became a transcendental ego. The phenomenologist, Husserls says must not only put the empirical world in brackets, but his natural self must also be put in brackets to give way to the transcendental self. This putting of the natural self in brackets is what Husserl calls the "transcendental reduction". It is a process by which "I reduce my natural self and my pschological life-the domain of my internal pschological experience - to my transcendental and phenomenological self, the domain of my ineternal transcendental and phenomenoligcal experience".5 "The objective world which exists for me, which existed or will exist for me, this objective world with all its objects is drawn from me, as I have said above, all the existential meaning and value that it has for me is drawn from my transcendental self".6 The transcendental ego is not, according to Husserl, part of the empirical world, it now transcends the world and has become an impartial and distinterested obsserver of the world. The world now derives its meaning, value and even existence from the transcendental ego. "Through this ego alone does the being of the world, and for that matter, any being whatsoever, make sense to me and has possible validity. Once I have banished from my sphere of judgement the world, as one which receives its being from me and withing me, then I, as the sole transcendental ego which is prior to the world, am the sole source and object capable of judgement."7 We can see that at this point Husserl's phenomenology has become a kind of transscendental idealism, similar to that of Fichte. The world and everything in it are now "constituted" by the transcendental ego from which they derive their existence, meaning and value. "As a phenomenological ego I have become a pure observer of myself. I treat as veridical only that which I encounter as inseparable from me, as partaining purely to my life and being inseparable from it, exactly in the manner that genuine and intuitive reflection discloses my own self to me. Before the epoche, I was a man with natural attitutde and I lived immersed naively in the world . . . . . In order to become aware of my true being I needed to execute the phenomenolocial epoche.... In it I become the distinterested spectator of my natural and worldly ego and its life. In this manner my natural life becomes merely one part or one particular level of what now has been disclosed as transcendental life. The transcendental spectator places himself above himself, watches himself and sees himself as the previously world-immersed ego."8

Husserl is convinced that it is only by means of phenomelogy that absolute certainty can be attained. He claims that phenomenology is the only true scientific philosophy. Before phenomenlogody, there was no scientific philosophy although "from its earlest beginnings philosophy has claimed to be a rigorous science."9 But philosophy was never a rigorous science until the advent of phenomenology. It was in phenomenology that the age old aspiration to become a rigourous science eventually became a reality. He distinguishes between what he calls ',weltanschaung philosophy" and phenomenology The former is, according to him, the expression of the wisdom, value, world-view, life-experience of a culture at a given epoch. Its aim is to provide theoretical answers to the problems of life in a given age. Weltanschauung philosophy is thus the wisdom of its age the highest expression of the life experience of an age. When the cultural motive of an age is conceptually grasped, logically unfolded, and elabrated in thought, "there develops a weltanschauung philosophy which in the great systems gives relatively the most perfect answer to the riddles of life and the world."10 Weltancschuung philosophy provides an explanation "to the theoretical, axiological, and practical inconsistencies of life that experience, wisdom, mere world and life view can onlu imperfectly overcome."11 In contrast to weltanschauung philosophy is scientific philosophy which is Husserl's own philosophy. It is not an expression of the cultural world view of an age like weltanschauung philosophy. Rather it is concerned with scientific truths, that is, absolute, timeless, immutable and universal truths which are attainable only be means of phenomenology. The aim of phenomenology is precisely to grasp and analyse such eternal, immutable and universal truths. Hence phenomenology is the only true science, the only genuine scientific philosophy. We can see that what Husserl means by "scientific truth" is quite diffrent from what we ordinarily mean by that

term. By "scientific truth" he means Platonic truths, that is, absolute, timeless immutable, universal truths.

There are a number of influences at work in Husserl's phenomenology. In the earlier stage, the stage of descriptive phenomenology, the influences of Brentano and Descartes are immediately evident. In the later stage, that is, the stage of transcendental phenomenology, the great influence is, of course, Kant. By his "Corpernican Revolution" Kant had elevated subjectivity over and above objectivity and attributed to the former the role of re-structuringand constituting the objective world. It is the subject which gives the objective world its structure and meaning. What we know the world to be is, according to Kant, what our mind has structured it to be, and the meaning it has is the meaning which the mind has conferred on it. Thus, it was Kant who sowed the seed of German idealism which sprouted in the philosophy of Fichte and became full-blown in the absolute idealism of Hegel. Rejecting Kant's distinction between the noumenal world and the phenomenal world Fichte claimed that the phenomenal world is all that there is, and that it is the product of the ego which constitutes it. Thus Husserl's cendental phenomenology follows closely in the footsteps of Fichte's idealism. For it is the transcendental ego, we are told, that constitutes the world, gives it existence, meaning and value. Thus Kant and Fichte were the two philosophers that decisively influenced Hussrl's transcendental phenomenology just as Brentano and Descartes influenced his descriptive phenomenology.

Like Descrates and Kant Huseerl also believes that the human mind has a natural tendency to go astray and take illustion for reality or genuine knowledge. These three philosophers (Descrates, Kant and Husserl) each in his own way think it is necessary to resist this natural tendency of the mind to take illusion for genuine knowledge. Descartes' "methodic doubt" is designed precisely to check this tendency. Kant, who identitfies this natural tendency with the tendency towards metaphysics tries to check it by restricting human knolwedge to the empirical world beyond whicb lies illusion To go beyond the empirical world in search of knolwedge is, according to Kant, to indulge in illusion, since the categories of human understanding cannot be validly applied beyond the empirical world. Husserl for his part tries to check this natural tendency of the human mind by his "phenomenological epoche" and the "transcendental reduction".

Poor Criticism

However while Husserl was telling us to put between brackets all our prior assumptions, presuppositions and all our influences before embarking on our investigation, he failed to put between brackets the influences of Plato, Brentano, Descartes, Fichte and Kant on him. Hence his aim or claim of starting philosophy afresh was unsuccessful. It was no more successful than that of Descartes who, while claiming to have made a complete break with the past had his mind stuffed with scholastic philosophy. That having been

said, we should not fail to credit Husserl for his contribution to philosophy especially by his doctrine of "interntionality" which makes the subject and the object interdependent and inseparable. This was an important improvement on Cartesianism which logically leads to solipsism.

His emphasis on the need to approach our investigation with an open, unprejudiced mind is commendable as well, even though it is in practice impossible to completely divest our mind of all presuppositiions and influences.

(iii) Existential Phenomenology

After Husserl, phenomenology passed into the hands of the existentialist philosophers who transformed Husserl's phenomenology into "extential phenomenology". Although some non-existentialist philosophers like Nicolai Hartmann and Max Scheler also made use of phenomenology, it was the existentialists that made most use of it, to such an extent that phenomenology virtually became part of existentialism. There are, however, some differences between Husserl:s phenomenologu and existential phenomenology. While Husserl's aim was to make phenomenology the foundation of modern science the existantialists employ phenomenology only as a method of philosophy, a method of decriptive analysis. Husserl's phenomenology is concenred with essence and not existence whereas the existentialists are concenred with existence and not essence. Husserl's phenomenologist aims at being uncommitted and impartial whereas the existential phenomenologist is committed and involved in what he is analysing. The existential phenomenologist in fact rejects the idea of being an impartial spectator in the drama of life's experience which he is analysing and wants to be part of it. Existential phenomenologists reject Husserl's transcendental phenomenlogy and confine themselves only to descriptive phenomenology. They see the transcendental phase of Husserl's phenomenology as an aberration into idealism. They severaly criticize Husserl's transcendental ego and insist that the ego cannot be transcendental. The ego must be part of the world; the subject cannot place itself over and above the world, for it is committed to the world. "When I turn upon myself from the dogmatism of science", says Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "I find a subject committed to the world."12 Merleau-Ponty sees no reason why phinomenology should be transformed into idelaism as Husserl has done. "Far from being, as one might think, an idealist philosophy, the phenomenological reduction is that of existential philosophy."13 Thus phenomenology is essentially existential, and not idealistic. The world, he containes, "is not what I think but what I live."14 Jean-Paul Sartre for his part describes Husserl's transcendental ego as "useless and dangerous."15 Husserl, according to him, is responsible for the charge levelled against phenomenology, that it is a "refuge doctrine", an idealist escape from reality and from the problems

of life. There would be no reason for such a charge against pehnomenology "if the ego is made rigorously contemporary with the world, the existence of which is of the same characteristics as those of the world."16

Conslusion

Phenomenology need not become a transcendental idealism, centered around a transcendental ego which is over and above the world and which" consistutes" the world. By his doctrine of the transcendental ego Husserl transformed phenomenology into subject idealism which leads logically to solipsim. Hence the existentialists are right in seeing this phase of Husserl's phenomenlogy as an aberration rather than a logical development from the first phase of descriptive analysis of experience. The estitentialists have, however, left out an important aspect of phenomenology, that is, the essences of things. Phenomenology as it was employed by Husserl is a descriptive analysis of the essences of things, that is, the universal features of things. Preoccupied as they are with the concrete existence of things, the existentialists ignore the essences of things. But there are essences of things, there are universal features common to things, and any scientific knowledge of things must be knowledge of their common universal features which constute their essences. Thus while Husserl's transcendental ego should be rejected and removed from phenomenology, the essences of things which were ignored or delibrately left out by the existentialists should be brought back to phenomenology so that phenomenology will remain, as it was intended by Husserl, an "eidetic science" (the science of the essences of thigns).

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Conceptual Foundations of Empirical Knowledge Scepticism: A Critique.

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1. Introduction.

The grounds for agnoiology, subjectivism and scepticism are more numerous and compelling today than they were at the time of Protagoras of Abdera in Thrace, Gorgias of Leontinin in Sicily, Pyrrho of Elis, Sextus Empiricus, Aenesidemus of Knossos and the British David Hume.1 The situation has become more aggravated, particularly with the exhogenous and endogenous advances achieved by man in his attempts to understand and control nature, as is evidenced by the results of science and technology. such that things that were beyond the grasp and conception of these past masters and their epochs have become common places.

There has been a number of arguments that have been deployed to support general and epistemological scepticism about human knowledge, particularly of the external world and things that can be claimed to be known about the universe inhabited by man. Some of these arguments are listed by Montaggue thus:

a) historical argument
b) psychologial argument,
c) physiological argument, and
d) dialectical argument.2

But in this essay, only some of the conceptual assumptions that have engendered empirical knowledge scepticism are discussed.

Most sceptics tend to take for granted as a 'fait accompli' an unscrutinized assumption that some concepts, namely, certainty, fallibility, dubitability, truth, verification, etc., necessarily enter into any acceptable definition of knowledge. These concepts are presumed to enter implicitly (most often) and explicitly (when formally compelled), into the formulation of the necessary and sufficient conditions for an adequate definition of "knowledge'

This assumption has not had particularly salutary consequences for the theory of knowledge for a number of reasons. The reasons will unfold as this essay progresses, but some of the consequences that the assumption has had are. a) that theory of knowledge is impossible,3 b) the apparent impossibility of defining or formulating the necessary and sufficient conditions of

knowledge,4 c) paradoxical conclusions that knowledge is impossible, which embodies epistemological scepticism,5 and d) the efficacy of the 'malin genie' hypothesis or the super neuro-surgeon theory of Descartes and Unger respectively.6 But are these consequences unavoidable? And, more importantly, it should be asked whether these concepts are necessary to the formulation of the conditions and definition of knowledge in the ways they have been supposed in traditional epistemology.

Professor Nicholas Rescher has argued against unguarded scepticism by attempting to meet sceptical arguments on their various fronts – metaphysical, logical and pragmatic. His rebuttal of scepticism is instructive and informative, and in fact, almost exhaustive, and would have been probably effective except that he did not feeel specially constrained to manifest and examine the ways in which conceptual issues have been a source of scepticism It is this defect that is rectified in this essay.

As to the question whether these concepts are indispensable to the definition and the formulation of the conditions of knowledge and whether scepticism is unavoidable – that is, the consequences alluded to above – the answer is negative. However, before embarking on the prosecution of the actual business of this essay, one final remark is necessary to put our discussion into a proper perspective.

Scepticism is not homogenous in philosophy. It has various forms and concerns various items. It ranges from metaphysical scepticism – that metaphysics is a moribund, sterile, impossible enterprise, to ethical scepticism – subjectivism in ethics, noncognitivism, egoism, etc., logical scepticism – particularly about the status of the laws of thought, the status of logical proofs, etc., to epistemological scepticism – concerning the past, other minds dreams, matters of fact, induction, etc. There is also a variety of scepticism concerning the spcialized disciplines concerning truth, validity, and proof in history, psychology, law, science – from physics to genetic technology, etc

These are diverse forms and subject matters within a particular theory of knowledge.8 They cannot all come under the compass of a short essay as this. This is what has necessitated the limitation of the essay to a consideration of epistemological scepticism with regard to empirical knowledge.9

II. Certaintiy and Knowledge.

The sceptic claims that we are, strictly speaking, never certain of anything and that, as such, we never have knowledge, because our claims to knowledge always go beyond what we have the right to claim. Knowledge he argues, involves certainty about what is known. It also entails the total absence of doubt, the possibility of mistake or error and complete assurance concerning what is known.10

If S knows that P, and S is asked whether he is certain that p, whether he is sure that p or about p, or whether he could be mistaken about p, then the interlocutor does not understand the use of 'know'. For, these questions would not have srisen if he understood how the word 'know' functions in traditional epistemology. Furthermore, it is argued, cases of knowledge that goes away warrant a redescription of concerned cognitive states in terms of opinion, belief or mere conjecture. Hence, nobody ever knew that 'the earth is flat', that 'the atom is indivisible' that 'the earth is the centre of the unvierse' etc., they only thought they knew and the attendant certainty of such items was mistaken.11. However, to provide an unambiguous account of certainty is problematic. Whatever justification the sceptic has for his position can become clear only after the various interpretations of 'certainty' has been highlighted and critically considered.

The first possible interpretation of 'certainty' is complete subjective assurance or psychological indubtability.12 In this sense a person may be unable to think of the contrary of a belief or position, thereby attaining an individual, subjective certainty. Descartes, for example, thought he was using 'certainty' univocally in supposing that what was psychologically indubtitable was alsologicallyindubitable; the 'cogito', as the foundation of knowledge, he thought to represent a truth logically impregenable to doubt. But, as Ludwing Wittgenstein said,

> One does not infer how things are from one's certainty. Certainty is, as it were, a tone of voice in which one declares how things are, but one does not infer from the tone of voice that one is justified;14

and as Bertrand Russell says

> subjective certainty is no guarantee of the truth or even a high degree of credibility.15

It is this type of 'certainty' which accounts for unwarranted dogmatism that deos not entertain any alternative as plausible. It entirely forecloses all debate.16

It seems clear, therefore, that 'certainity' is not used in ordinary and epistemic discussions to mean subjective assurance per se. 'Certainity' so construed would be incomplete, because it is easily conceded that my saying that "I am certain" is not only expressing my attitude, it also conveys information (tacitly or expressly) that what I claim can be seen by others to be as it is claimed, by me, to be. I did not intend to convey only my personal subjective assurance about the matter at hand, I am asserting more, namely, that I should be relied upon concerning the item at issue.

A second interpretation of 'certainty' is logical certainty via logical necessity. This account of certainty derives from an acceptance of what John Dewey has called the "spectator theory of knowledge."17 On this theory,

only what is completely fixed and immutable can be real or certain. It equates what is certain with what is logically necessary and takes logical necessity to mean the internal relationship of propositions, the type whose denial involves a contradition. Hence, the statements of mathematics and logic are certain because logically necessary and analytic; they are, in spite of John Stuart Mill, not dependent upon experience to be known as true or false.18

But do we need to accept this account of 'certainty' and the consequent scepticism with regard to empirical knowledge derived from it? No. For one thing, Dewey, arguing from a pragmatic instrumentalist perspective, showed that this account of certainty and knowledge is mistaken. As he argued, the relationship between what is known and the knower is not one in which what is known is antecedent, prior and fiexd, unaffected by the mental acts of observation and inquiry.19 Thus, the consequent position of the sceptic would not have arisen, as he says,

> were it not for the prior uncritical acceptance of the traditional notion that knowledge has a monopolistic claim to reality.20

For another, the contrast between 'certainty' and 'uncertainty' is not indentical with that between 'necessary' and 'contingent' propositions, so that it is mistaken to identify it with 'the epistemological contrast between the a priori and the a posteriori, 21 and it does not follow

> that character of being further testable and less than theoretically certain characterizes every judgement of objective fact at all times,22

with the implication that 'certainty' does not, properly speaking, apply to empirical propositions. Furthermore, this conception of 'certainty' marks a departure from common sense ordinary usage of the word. This departure results from an errorneous idea of what it entails for an empirical proposition to be certain. For example, Professor C. Lewis suggested, about an empirical proposition concerning a piece of paper, that the proposition can never ba absolutely certain because there would always be further implications of the belief which would still not have been tested. To be certain all the innumerable consequences" of such a proposition would have to have, per impossible, been decided.23 This is absurd: It is absurd to suppose that there is an infinite number of tests that I have to perform in order to be certain that "I am now sitting at a writing table" or that the following proposition is true when I assert it, that

> It is absolutely certain that Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library is in the University of Ife.

The account of 'certainty' thus suggested makes the certainty of empirical statements a logically unattainable ideal. As Malcolm rightly argued, it would be paradoxically self-contradictory to postulate an ideal which is unattainable It would require us to perform an infinite number of tests and observe an innumerable number of consequences which the empirical proposition is

assumed to have. But one cannot (logically) exhaust an infinite series, nor go through an innumerable series of consequences.

Moreover, 'verification' applies properly speaking to matters of fact and only eliptically to relations of ideas. Adequate verification can only properly apply to empirical statements. In other words, that an empirical proposition is known to be true does not mean that one has undertaken an infinite number of tests. An infinite series, by definition, is inexhaustible.

It is clear from these considerations that 'certainty' is not synonymous with 'logical necessity' and that it cannot be a differential of a priori and empirical knowledge. The sceptic, having adopted the absolutist spectator theory of knowledge, and having discovered that logically the empirical statements of fact differ from the analytic ones in logic and mathematics, became incesed by the possibility of denying a statement of fact without contradiction and concluded that such statements and knowledge of them are never certain, but only probable, because they are not logically necessary. Other interpretations of 'certainty' have been in terms of 'Incorrigibility', 'self-authentication', 'beyond reasonable doubt', 'indubutabulity' and 'infallibility'. Since these concepts are examined seperately in subsequent sections in this essay, I do not feel compelled to pre-empt what would be said in those other places here. I proceed immediately, therefore, to a discussion of 'fallibility'.

III Fallibility and Knowledge.

'Fallibility' and 'corrigibility' bear logically on the possibility of error or mistake and the human capacity to realize and correct same. It is this which necessitates their being treated together.

According to the most popular view of knowledge, knowledge pertains to what cannot turn out to be otherwise. In other words, knowledge applies to claims that remain true under all conceivable circumstances: If one knows that p, then one cannot be mistaken about or with regard to p. The claim that ,p' must be incorrigible, no matter what.

The major consideration responsible for the claim that knowledge is infallible and pertains to incorrigible truths is the possibility of simple logical and mathematical truths.25 As propositions, such truths have a logical status that makes them 'infallible' or 'incorrigible', The affirmations which they yield are "either intuitively or demonstratively certain".26 As 'relations of ideas" the conclusions formed by reason are once for all perfect.27

The failure of attempts to elicit some propositions about the external world which have similar logical status shows that no factually significant statements about 'matters of fact'– call them protocal, basic, given, expressive, sense datum or what have you – can be infallible or incorrigible epi-

stemically. Saying that one is not mistaken about the truth of what is claimed does not clsoe the matter. The issue involved is more logical than psychological.

This difference between 'relations of ideas' and 'matters of fact', between analytic and synthetic, between necessary and contingent propositions used to express a priori and a posteriori knowledge, respectively, viz the 'impossibility' of error with regard ro simple a priori knowledge,28 and the 'possibility' of error with regard to empirical knowledge have engendered a facourable epistemic bias for the first and a negative, unfavourable appraisal of the second, such that 'relations of ideas' are supposed to be certain and knowable while 'matters of fact' are uncertian and unknowable.

I suggest that the scepticism so adopted and the sceptical conclusion that knowledge of matters of fact is uncertain is mistaken by confusing the role played by the logical possibility of error in theoritical considerations and those it plays in practical matters. It seems clear however that there is nothing logically incongruous in saying that one knows that p and conceding the frailty of man's cognitive and intellectual powers; afterall to err is human. To pretend otherwise as traditional epistemologists have been wont to do is to request for what is not possible, or at least, what is beyond human capacity. For this reason, I suggest that a cognitive state does not cease to be one of knowlege because what is known is not logically necessary or deductively provable. 29.

If this is accepted, then the dogmatic assumption or belief that the title 'knowledge' has to be withdrawn from any claim that turns out to be mistaken is avoidaed· there would be no justification for sayin that at no time did some people ever know that (i) "the earth is flat" (ii) "the atom is the samllest indivisible particle of an elemnet", (iiii) "the carth is the centre of the universetc., but merely believed these prositions. It has turned out that knowledge is always subject to changes, modifications and suplementation.

This serves to make human beings more realistic with regard to what our cognitive capacities acquaint us with; thus leading us to an equally more realistic theory of knowledge. The philosopher has little choice in the matter.

Apart from that, we must not loose sight of the point made by Ludwig Wittgenstein when he daid that

> Knowledge belongs to the sphere of debate, challenge, inquiry, proof, that is its logical home. It does not belong where there is final and unquestionable authority; it belongs where there are differences and controversy,30 hence, corrigibility or fallibility is not a pernicious defect suffered by human knowledge. Rather, it is an epistemic fact we have to live with and thrive on.

IV. Dubitability and Knowledge.

Logically speaking, no statement, proposition or claim is immune to actual or hypothetical doubt.[31] This fact has been found disturbing by man epistemologists who conceive that any item of knolwledge must by definition be free from uncertainty and doubt; it has also led some to the sceptical conclusion that certainty and knowledge, particularly of matters of fact is unattainable For, if one can doubt either that o is true, or that on knows that o, and if any proposition or claim that can be doubted is uncertain, then no proposition is known with certainty.[32]

But doubting the truth of p does not establish the falsity of p, and I think it does not establish the unknowability of p.[33] In fact one can contend that doubting that p is true or false is indiffferent to the truth or falsity of p. As such it is clear that 'dubitability' and 'knowledge' are not mutually exclusive, so that it is mistaken to use dubitability as the differential of knowledge. Hence the sceptic fails to get the support he badly needs for his thesis, because dubutability does not mean positive disbelief.

Perphaps it is useful at this junction to disambiguate the meaning of dubitability. Saying that a proposition is dubitable may mean either that the proposition is doubted or that it can be doubted. If a person doubts a proposition, then the person may not have reached a cognitive state of positive disbelief, whereas, if a proposition is dubitable but not doubted, it does not mean that anybody has even doubted it, hopes to doubt it or does not know it to be true. The first sense of dubitability may be incompatible with knowledge, depending on how the person construes his cognitive state or the importance of the item epistemically, while the second sense does not affect knowledge, in such a way, because it is merely a warning concerning dogmatic, ungrounded epistemic attitude.

In this regard, it does not follow that when I say that "I doubt p" I mean that "I believe that p is false". Considere, for example, a statement that has often been used to make the point about the problem of induction: "the sun may not rise tomorrow" Logically speaking, this statement is dubitable, because its contradiction or negation doesnot imply any self-contradition. But it is not dubitable that "the sun will rise tomorrow" in the sense that "it is false that the sun will rise tomorrow".

This leaves open another sense of 'doubt' which implies indifference or suspension of judgement in the face of the plausibility of mutually discrepant theses. This is pyrrhonism.[34] But it seems clear that the sceptic does not intend this sense to doubt when he says that any item that can be doubted is not, properly, knowable; he is not a pyrrhonian philosopher. He has gone beyond the stage of mere suspension of judgement to that of negative conclusion about knowledge, namely that one really never attains certain knowledge of matters of fact.

Now, the mistake of those who say that what is dubitable cannot be known consists in confusing 'dubitable' with 'doubtful'. One applies to all propositions, while the other applies only those about which one is, so to say, 'in two minds'.[35] Dubitability does not negatively affect the certainty of any proposition but its doubtfulness does: doubtfullness signifies some degree of uncertainty; But even so, there is no way one could successfully argue with plausibility the truth of p. Some who doubt the existence of God still find it prudent to believe that God eixst. They may not have attained absolute certainty here because of their doubt; as such, allowance is made to accommodate their understanding or absence of it., hence we say they believe that God eixist in spite of their doubt.

As such, Hume's scepticism with regard to geometry in the Treatise and Descartes' concession that a powerful demon may deceive him about the truth of simple geometrical proofs stem from the mistaken conception of the relationship between knowledge and dubitability.[36] Any scepticism that is based on the logical possibility of doubt is misconceived. Doubt is imaginable wih regard to anything. This is a truth that does not suggest the impossibility of knowledge and certainty of, and about, anything. The issue of what notion of possibility is involved in this is one that cannot be entertained here without unncessarily digressing from the problem being considered. What we have done here is simply to highlight how conceptual mistake engender erroneous conclusions.

V. Truth, Belief and Knowledge.

The problem here is not ',what is 'truth'?" or "what is 'belief?", nor is it that of the adequacy of those various theories of truth and belief that has been formulated in epistemology and philosophy of mind. In fact, for the purpose of discussion, I shall supposee that we have an idea of what it means to say that a statemetnt is true or that somebody believes a statement to be true. Our concern here can be roughly formulated to articulate a particular sceptical thesis and the kernel of its foundation: How valid is the claim that since knowledge cannot be of what is not the case – that is, what is not true any item which is claimed to be known but which turns out false was never really known but merely believed? Or, are we justified, as the sceptic thinks he is, to retrospectively deny knowledge of items that turn out to be other than they were claimed to be? I do not think there is any way of answering any of these questions in the affirmative, contrary to what has been supposed by traditional epistemologists[37].

It is the rationalist dogma originated by Plato that knowledge must remain eternally true that has led to this ceptical reduction of mistaken knowledge states to belief states. I think we cannot by fiat redescribe prior cognitive states that qualified as knowledge in terms of belief, no matter the weight of authority of the originator of the idea that we should

For, as Merril Ring has argued

> given a failed claim to know, a rediscription of the case in belief language is not necessary.39

Belief, I suggest, is one of the consequences of knowledge, not a necessary condition of it as is commonly supposed.40 If one knew or claims to know that p and it turns our false that p, the best analysis of the situation seems to be to say that the knowledge or claim was based on faulty reasons and that the attendant belief (if any) false. Not that the person never knew that p. or that all that actually happened was that he only believed.

Thus, while one would want knowledge and claims to knowledge to be true and valid, and while one would want one's convictions to be justified, it seems clear that is is one of the limitations of man to make mistakes. A person who knew or claimed to know that there was a particular mosque in East Beirut will not cease to know or be justified in his position or reduce his cognitive state to that of belief just because after a war, the mosque has been destroyed. He would still have been justified in his knowledge and in his claim to same if, on getting to the scene of the wreckage, he claimed to know that it was the site of a mosque.

VI. Verification and Knowledge.

Verification applies intrinsically and primarily to matters of fact (both in principle and in practice) but only eliptically to relations of ideas. It is proper to say that one has verified a matter of fact or that one can verify it as a matter of course and that one can check out a certain calculation or deductive reasoning for correctness or validity. Thus, one can say that one has verified that "there is a faculty of law in Ogun State University" and also that one has verified that "the square of the hypothenus of a right-angled triangle equals the sum of the squares of the remaining sides"41 In this sense we can say we have made sure or certain of the tests we have conducted that the University has a faculty of law and that Phyagoras' theorem is valid with respect to Euclidean space.

Professor G. E. Moore's basic certainties have meaning in this simple and primary understanding of verification.42 But the sceptic does not intend this. He would say that knowledge is possible only when certainty is possible, and certainty (of empirical matters, especially) only where complete verification is possible and one has eradicated all possible doubts. However, he contends, certainty is never attainable here because complete verification involves going through a series of tests which is impossible in empirical knowledge. And one could never totally eradicate all conceivable doubts. Professor Ackermann, for example, contends that knowledge that is non-trivial must be ready to meet all doubts. He says:

> Non-trivial knowledge, by contrast, will always be subject to other than metaphysical doubt. The knower himself will not doubt what he knows, but he will typically be aware of various possible objections to his knowledge claim (reasons why it is doubted by others), and he must know that he can meet all such objections, or at least be able to meet them as they come up, if his knowledge claim is to stick. 43

This type of requirement is too stringent and counterintuitive. It would mean that, contrary to the reality of our epistemic life, we never had any empirical knowledge. This is what it means to say that empirical knowledge is never certain; because it is always conceivable that further developments and questions not yet raised may make the item of knowledge suspect.

This contention, as this graphic examination shows, is errorneous. The necessary nature of contingent matters does not annul the application of 'knowledge' to knowledge or cognitions of matters of fact. When I use a piece of paper to write, I do not have to subject it to innumerable tests to determine or know that it is really a piece of paper. I do not have to spit on it, sit on it, tear it, burn it, etc., before I can say that I know what it is. To suppose otherwise as C. I. Lewis and others have suggested is mischievious and flies in the face of reason and facts. Accepting such an epistemic stance will lead to consequences that will make even scientific progress cumbersome if not impossible. We would be unable to go beyond the investigation of our very first hypothesis, because we need to exhaust an infinite series of tests and assuagé innumerable sequence of doubts.

VII. Conclusion

In the preceding pages I have elicited certain conceptual considerations which have been used to show that knowledge of matters of fact is impossible where possible, uncertain and consequently unreliable. Apart from pragmatic and practical confirmations of our claims to knowledge and confutations of the same (which confutations the sceptic intends to use against the epistemist), I have shown that these concepts rather support our epistemic practice of the usage of knowledge and confidence in such claims to knowledge.

It may be apposite to state that the development of those impossible rigorous conceptions of knowledge is due largely to the influence of mathematical and logical sciences, such that all other areas of human endeavour have continually struggled vainly to attain similar precision and internal necessity in their reasonings. The extent to which these other sciences have failed these tests, to that extent have the protagonists of formalism been disappointed and led into scepticism. This, perhaps, is an unfortunate development. One should not set up ideals which are, in principle, impossible to meet.44

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43. I wish to acknowledge the useful comments of Drs. Omoregbe, Bah, Oke and makinde on earlier drafts of the essay. Professor Bodunrin also made valuable suggestions, which I have profited immensely from.

ON THE RATIONALITY OF LOGIC MATHEMATICS AND METAPHYSICS

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1. THE PROBLEM

This essay assesses the epistemological status of the knowledge that Logic, Mathemathics and Metaphysics (henceforth to be coded LMM) yield. In other words, the essay examines how objectively true and certain is knowledge yielded by each of the pairs. This objectivity shall be measured in terms of the degree of rationality that is involved in these disciplines. This rationality shall be identified in its (LMM) ability to affect not only the thinking process but man's capability or capacity to think. The definition of this objectivity therefore implies the question of how rational each of these pairs is. This goal may look simple but for a critical philosophy the problem assumes another dimension. Here, LMM are no longer considered as simple individual subjects which exist in themselves and are to be known by themselves. They are to be conceived in terms of their functionality, that is, how they function in man's thinking process. In any case no matter how we portray this objectivity, we may have to take side with either of two extremes: to think that certainty and objective truth cannot be achieved or to think that we can attain objective truth. Since it is the primary objective of philosophy to attain objective truth and certainty, if we then take side with the first extreme, one can still hardly suppose that several years of intense philosophic thought produced nothing that was worth the effort expended. So it can hardly be denied that the effort being made here, for instance is worthless if one is of the view that LMM can bot yield objective truth. The fact that this is the case does not put an end to philosophy in so far as the search for truth is a continuum. It is no doubt then that the study of LMM presents some difficulties.

2 LMM AS SCIENCE

I want to see LMM as science. But while I concede that Logic and Mathematics (LMa) are sciences, purely in terms of methodogy and functions, I

want to grant metaphysics the dual appellation of being both a rational and a 'real science'. "A real science is concerned directly with propositions and so with terms; these terms stand, for things"[1]. These propositions and terms are thus the immediate objects of science. "As to rational science, this is concerned with terms which do not stand directly for things. Terms like 'genus' and 'species' are not terms of first intention,' standing for other terms"[2]. It is in the light of this definition that LMa are said to be purely rational. Logical terms, for example, do not refer directly to entities. they refter to class of classes. Consider theses examples: x is a class of cats and x is a class of classes because within the class fmaily there are lions, leopards, tigers and pussy cats. Equally if x is a class of Apes then x is a class of classes because this class necessarily includes theclasses of Monkeys, Gorrillas, Baboons, Chimpanzee, etc. What is however true of Logica as a rational science is equally true of Mathematics: mathematical terms do not refer directly to existing individual things.

Metaphysics is a real science. Although the subject-matter of metaphysics from the antiquity, was transcendental hence it cannot be experienced, Rev. Fr. Placid Tempels tries to rescue us here when he writes that "metaphysics does not treat of the abstract or the unreal: these are but its notions, its definitions, its laws, which are abstract and general, as the notions, definitions and laws of every science always are".[3] In addition to this, I want to assert that both the spiritual and emperical nature of a metaphysical assertion are parts of reality – this is not necessarily paradoxical because any object of empirical study is a combination of elements that are intuitive (spirit) and those that are concrete (empirical). It takes intuition to knit together what we perceive empirically for conceptualisation. Our conception of reality depends on our comprehension of what metaphysics is and what it seeks to explain. Here, one must bear in mind those extra-philosophical factors such as physical science, religion, etc. which may have influenced the mind that interprets the subject-matter of metaphysics. Whoever wishes to acquire a more extensive and profound knowledge of metaphysics would have to make a study of the language of the science. By 'language', it is not the language in whichmetaphysical treatises are written, but the terms employed and the categories of thought. Once this is accomplished, it should be clear enough that metaphysics is a real science.

3 THE RATIONAL OUTLOOK OF LMM

Logic is the art of reasioning. but we need not give just a blanket definition of logical as it concerns our intention in this essay. If by logic we have in mind the various syllogistic methods viz dialectic, demonstrative and sophistical syllogisms with probable or definite conclusions then logical is

purely a system of reasoning. These are the forms of logic we inject into our ordinary daily speeches. But logic as a discipline (and which this paper has in focus) goes beyond being syllogistic. It is at this juncture that Logic is answerable to the definit of being the study of the 'principles' of reasoning especially of the structure of propositions as distinguished from their content By this definition, Logic thus shares a common characteristic with mathematics where concentration is only on the method of validation and of proof. The method of validation takes the form of applying some mathematical formulae or logical principles to solve problems in mathematics and logic. This then, in some sense portrays the deductive method of logical reasoning. However this is not to imply theat LMa are solely deductive in nature. I am not unaware of iductive, prescrptive, descriptive and dialectical systems of logic but the exaltation of these systems often tended to express a concentration on probable reasoning which encourages us to think that certainty cannot be attained in philosophy. This I feel has a debilitating effect on the claim of logic which has been held in esteem as being able to resolve the uncertainty problem in philosophy.

Then how rational are LMa? We have said that LMa are rational sciences in contra-distinction to metaphysics which is both a real and rational science. I recognise that a study of Platonism reveals that logical and mathematical entities tend to espouse metaphysical reality. But this is only to a limited degree. LMa are rational in the sense that their propositions and terms are purely intuitive and apriori. For instance, the method of LMa (which is purely deductive) may facilitate the process of thinking but the language of logic, for example adds nothing new to our body of knowledge. If logic is, as defined by Irvin M. Copi, "an instrument or organnon for appraising the correctness of reasoning"[4] then logic itself will have to shelve the identity of its being called a rational subject. In this role. logic stands as a litmus test for validity of arguments. Validity does not mean resaonability. So it becomes an easy task to conclude that logic as a discipline has little or no influence on human rationality in solving ordinary day problems thus conforming to Copi's view. He writes' "the principles and methods of logic used as organnon are intresting and important topics to be themselves systematically investigated"[5]– thus we are left with out intuition in dealing with these principles and methods.

If Logic is to be seen as rational, then it is to itself. What I mean by this is that for a thing to be rational in-itself, is not to be rational to man in its employment in the solution of man's epistemological and linguistic problems or as applied to the true nature of man. Of a fact, this is why I want to see formal logic as Ernest Nagel views it and according to him:

> The various modern systems of formal logic must accordingly, be viewed, not as accounts of the "true nature" of an antecedently identifiable relation of "implication". but as alternative proposals for specifying usages and for performing inferences. The adoption of a system such as is found in Whitehead and Russell's principal mathematica is in effect the adoption of a set of regulative principles for developing more inclusive and determinate habits for using language than are illustrated in everyday discourse.[6]

It is obvious from th above that logical principles "serves as instruments for establishing connections between statements which are usually not themselves logically necessary."[7] They are "used as norms for institutuing a more precise employment of language in situations in which such precision is essential for the task at hand."[8] If logic performs this function, then I consider logic as a facilitator of making quick deductive inferences. Logic is therfore not de facto rational but only helps the rational being in his contemplation. This facilitating role becomes obvious in the light in which Patrick J. Hurley sees logic. He says" one of the aims of studying logic is to develop the skills needed for construct sound arguments of one's own and to evaluate the arguments of others. Additional aims include the cultivation of habits of correct reasoning and the development of a sensibility for clear and accurate use of language."[9] When we can skillfully cultivate this habit, among the benefits to be expected from the study of logic is an increase in confidence that we are sensible when we advance arguments of our own and when we criticise other people's arguments.

In logic (a two-valued logic), we do not distinguish degrees of truth or falsehood. There is no "nearly true". "A near truth is a kind of falsehood, and in Logic, a miss is as good as a mile".[10] Every statement is either true or false; no statement is both. Much of logic is a series of literal-minded applications of this platitude. No system of quantificational logic is decidable. Even the use of truth trees-one-sided semantic tableaux – which takes much of the drugery out of the business of formalization and relates it in a natual way to the semantic interpretation is inconclusive. Completeness of this system may be easy to prove but there is no difficulty in seeing that the tree method fails to provide a decision procedure for quantificational validity of infererences. For instance, we can arrive at the conclusion – B ← C (by Hypothetical Syllogistic method) given the following premises : (i) A← B (ii) – C ← A. When we use truth trees to demonstrate this syllogism, the undecidable character of quantificational logic is illustrated as below[11].

1. A ← B (premise)
2. –C ← A (premise)
3. –(B← B) (denial of conclusion)
4. B
5. –C from 3
6. –A – B from 1
7. C A from 2
   X X

Looking at lines 6 and 7, it is quite obvious that no precise conclusion can be arrived at. This is just one example of indecisiveness of logic. Within this example, what we are sure of is the necessary logical connection between the premises i.e. between the first and second lines and down the lines but these necessities are no substitutes for certainties. 'Necessary connection' in this regard only shows relationship. Pointing out relationship does not amount to preciseness of such relationship. Granting that it is possible to formulate a definition of the customary meaning of logical entities or propositions, logical propositions can only be meaningful when their interpretations are restricted within the confines of such definition. But experience has taught us that not all our ordinary daily language can be constructed in such a way that it will be quantifiable and thus definable. Logic can be a workable science only if it abstracts from the complexities of natural language even though this cannot be boastfully guaranteed on the ground that logic can only abstract a very small proportion from such complexities. If logic is answerable to all these allegations, then its preciseness and decisiveness is in serious doubt. Perhaps this was why Richard of Occam devoted much of his attention to modal logic ; a kind of logic that involves such notions as possibility, necessity, belief and doubt.12.

Whatever can be said of Logic is to a very large extent true of Mathematics as mathemetics is said to be a branch of Logic. In his discussion of 'the truth of Peano's Postulates in their customary interpretation', Carl Hempel pointed out that "all the theories of arithmentic, algebra, and analysis cna be deduced form Peano postulates and the definitions of those mathematical terms which are not primitives in Peano's system."13 From this discussion, Hempel is of the view that the truth of mathematical theorems can be inferred from the definitions so given of those mathematical terms simply by means of the principles of logic. This is what Hempel calls "the thesis of logicism concerning the nature of mathematics."14

As with logic, the certainty in mathematics is only limited to the relation ship of its entities or terms. Just as the principles of logic are laws of deductive reasoning, mathematics, too, is a technique of reasoning Carl Hempel confirms this when he writes that:

> Mathematical (as well as logical) reasoning is a conceptual technique of making explicit what is implicitly contained in a set of premises. The conclusions to which this technique leads assert nothing that is 'theoretically new' in the sense of not being contained in the content of the premises.15

Mathematics like logic in no way adds anything to the content of our knowledge of empirical world. "Mathematics is an instrument for the validation of our scientifc knowledge. It is a conceptual structure without empirical content."16 It is also a field in which 'proof' is essential.

The short but precise nature of mathematics outlined above does not portray it as that which can influence man's thinking process in making explicit decisions. It can only help man in his effort to predict events. What I intend to establish is that the influential powers of logical and mathematical principles on the thinking process do not make man rational, they are only rational within themselves (i.e. they are separate rational disciplines in terms of their non-empirical nature. They can only be applied to objects of empirical study.) To qualify as rational sciences, they are not only to be rational in themselves but also by their being rational, make man rational in his efforts to produce positively human thoughts.

Being rational transscend mere application of logical and mathematical laws to human thought. Human thought nvolves some supra-conscious elemnt which are not mathematically or logically quantifiable hence we may find it difficult to define. These elements can be identified just as Temples identified them: "such elements are e.g. the origin, the growth, the changes, the destruction, or the achievement of the beings, passive and active casuality, and particularly the nature of being as such supporting these universal phenomena 17 We must endeavour to verify and understand these elements. It is when we strive to understand the elements that we are involved in rigorous thinking. It is these elements that make human thought real although one is aware of Descarte's "Cogito" which makes his thought real, his is circumstantial and contingent upon historical antecedents.

These elements may be called 'categories of thought.' These categories are forces which underlie human thought and are basic. They are fundamental in the sense that without them man: thought will be incomprehensible and irrational. According to Tempels, "the fundamental notion under which being is conceived lies within these categories."18

Metaphysics provides an avenue for the exercise of reason, rather than the acceptance of empiricism, authority, or spiritual revelation. In metaphysics reason provides the only valid basis for action or belief and it acknolwedges

that reason is the prime source of knowledge. The proper objects of metaphysics are the absolute objects, viz; God, freedom, and immortality – these are the transcendental characters of objects. But in addition to these, Tempels considers those elements mentioned above as things that "constitute the object of metaphysical knowledge, that is to say, of knowledge embracing all the physical or the real."19 It is very easy at this stage to conclude that objective truth is not possible to attain in metaphysics considering these 'elements of thought', by mere correlation of logical principles. There is no fundamental basis for making pure logical deductions in metaphysics to yield certainty. Metaphysical knowledge involves rigorous thinking as it involves a great deal of synthesizing facts and contents of judgements. In which case, metaphysics yields aposteriori and dialectual knowledge. Metaphysical knowledge is dialectical because of its method of investigating the nature of truth by critically analysising the concepts and hypotheses involved. Under this method, any empirical claim is always in danger of being refuted by experience.

Formulation of metaphiscal principles or assumptions are indispensable to the understanding of those metaphysical theories which explain the categories of thought. In this regard, such formulation involves some rudimentary principles of practical wisdom in which formal logic has no place. Unlike dialectical method, formal logic is only concerned with form and implication between propositions used in the judgements. The method of metaphysics under this consideration is basically rational and is devoid of any calculation.

4 CONCLUSION

The discussion above exhibits the systems of Logic and Mathematics (LMa) in the words of Carl Hempel as "vast and ingenious conceptual structure without empirical content and yet an indispensable and powerful theoretical instrument for the scientific understanding and mastery of the world of our experience."20 LMa are calculative devices for validation of accuracy and prediction. While granting Mathematics this role, Logic falls short of such role because it often lacks precision. This defect can adversely affect our pedictions about future events which may be based on various logical conclusions. Apart from this, definitions in LMa (do) suffer from overrestriction, from being so closely confined by the class word or the qualifiers in the definiens and that not all the things to which the definiendum may properly refer are covered by it. For example, 'Presidents or Heads of States are elected by balloting' is an overristrictive definition of words 'Presidents or Heads of States' since it makes no provision for rulers who have taken control by force or who have been elevated to such posts without elections at all.

So, to recommend logical (and perhaps mathematical) procedure as rational as to yield purely objective truth is to ignore other more valuable ways (such as metaphysics) of knowing what is truth. For example, description, narration, meditation, analysis, explanation, mystic's euphoria, the novelist's sense of pathos in daily existence, the poet's nostalgia for his childhood and man's relationship with the universe – all can be transmitted, and convincingly so, but hardly argued logically. And these are valuable things, central to human modes of life. Man is not inveterately, not even inherently, a logcial creature. Man and his activities are embodiments of metaphysics. Logic is his achievement rather than his inheritance. Beneath the subtle structure of logic which he has learned to erect lies a life of perceptions and emotions still largely uncharted.

From the brief discussion of metaphysics in this paper, the following are deduceable: (a) reason and intuitive data are possible in metaphysics. (b) Metaphysics is a real science because it deals with with elements in which being is conceived as real. (c) While LMa involve categories of knowledge that are apriori and analytic, metaphysics yields aposteriori and dialectical knowledge and this is the mark of its quality over LMa especially when we see dialectic here as a critical method of thinking in order to attain truth. But this does not make the knowledge it yields an absolutely objective truth. The question of 'absolutely objective truth' is a subject for future discussion.

Finally, the need for a philosophical meditation on the fundamentals of life is of extreme importance. Unlike Logic and Mathematics, Metaphysics affords us the opportunity for this philosophical meditation. Luding Wittgenstein in one of his writings opines and asks: what is the use of studying philosophy (perhaps logic) if all that it does for you is to enable you to talk with plausibility about some abstruse questions of Logic, etc., and it does not improve your thinking about the important questions of everyday life?

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THE ARCHITECTONICS OF SECULAR HUMANISM

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A simmering controversy has been going on for decades on what is and what is not humanism; on who is and who is not a humanist. For proponents (Kurtz, Flynn, Edelen, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, etc.) humanism is radically distinguishable from religion, while for opponents (Schlafly, Vansina, Sunden Metz, etc.) there is no essential difference between humanism and religion. Humanism for proponents is a man-centred affair. Others at the extreme right of the religious spectrum (Falwell) have no qualms linking humanism with atheism. All that I modestly intend to do here is, attempt to define humanism, present its main tenets, and analyse these tenets in order to indicate whether or not there are religious elements; and finally add a note of my own.

The concept of architectonics is a methodology that Kant applied to all systems of rational knowledge. For Kant it is a theory of science. As a scientific theory, it is first of all a theory of the forms of conceptual organisation. The concept of architectonics is based on a double metaphor: on the architecture of buildings and on living organisms. Employed in the context of this essay it retains this double metaphor: on the architecture of the socio-cultural arrangements in society and on man. This makes it possible to extract the essentially human interests in the social system as compared to the supra-empirical interests from which it differs and to which it cannot be surrendered. It enables us "to maintain the integrity of the ideal, organic or physical ensemble and to resist agents of destruction"1 from the Supra-emprical world.

2.

The Webster New Collegiate Dictionary defines humanism and humanist very simply as. "the study of humanities, an attitude of thought centring upon human iterests or ideals." The Oxford Learner's Dictionary of Current English defines it as follows: "devotion to human interests, system that is concerned with ethical standards (but not with theology) and with the study of mankind."2 It defines a humanist as a "student of human nature or

human affairs (as opposed to theological subjects)."3 Edelen agrees, contending that these definitions, so unambiguously stated accurately reflect current conceptualizations of the subject.4

Following from these definitions, it means that humanism is avowedly and aggressively secular, a human-centred point of view and completely divorced from the religious enterprise. Whatever religion is about, humanism is about something else. Both are pointing towards two diametrically opposed directions; two world-views that are contradictory pairs. Humanism as conceptualised by exponents is a philosophical-ethical position that is neither against/for religion nor alien to it, but equally neither a religion itself in form nor content . One can therefore be a humanist and at the same time be inwardly committed. It is equally not logically impossible to be religious and at the same time a committed humanist. The concern with human affairs and interest, and ethical standards does not entail being irreligious, whatever this means. It only means that religious issues are essentially of no concern to humanism and humanists. Humanism is an avowed commitment to freedom of inquiry in all areas of human interests.

3.

What are the basic concerns of humanists? How are they different from other world-views? For humanists, man and his interests broadly conceived, constitute the epi-centre of their concern. The intention is to safeguard and develop human freedom and responsibility. These ideals and interests are as varied as ever: economic, political, socio-cultural, legal and moral. It includes the systems that function to make these ideals and interests possible. Humanists, in general, believe that humankind cannot look up to some god for succour but must instead find the basis for a moral (good) life on their own. Man must thus put his trust in nothing but himself and others in the face of human hardship. We need the support of others since being an individual human is a precarious and an ambiguous adventure. Furthermore, human life is a "radical solitude and reality", and our conception of human nature is intimately bound up with our attitudes towards social change and the resolution of the problems of man.

As Ortega Y Gasset puts it, this radical reality "does not mean that it is the only reality, not even the highest, nor the supreme reality, but simply that it is the root of all other realities, in the sense that they – any of them in order to be reality to man must in some way make themselves present, or at least announce themselves, within the shaken confines of our own life. Hence this radical reality in essence is the open area, the waiting stage, on whcih any other reality may manifest itself and celebrate its Pentecost . . " 5 In the same vein, Lacroix contends, "I shall choose to exist not in relation to

God, but in relation to my fellows who share my predicament, even though their predicament may be worse than my own."6 To be a humanist, therefore, entails living in relation not to God but to other fellows.

Because of the eclectic nature of humanism it embraces individuals of all sorts of persuasions. socialists, liberals, liberal conservatives, atheists, free-thinkers, nondenominational christians, etc. This motley of varying beliefs and persuasions is partly responsible for the ambivalence in the ranks of humanism. Humanist manifesto I was virtually a unitarian document and liberal theologians and religionists were very prominent among the signatories of humanist manifesto II. At the same time many humanists call themselves religious men while some adherents of liberal religion consider their faith humanistic. And discouragingly enough, some humanist writers often fail to establish very firm boundaries between humanism and religion. Be that as it may, proponents are united in terms of one, single overriding aim: devotion to and promotion of human interests and the amelioration of the human condition in all its ramifications through human effort. Hence Sartre, for example, opposes all forms of theology insofar as theology derobes man from his freedom and his responsibility in favour of some other illusion.

4.

Prominent in the, enlarging group of individuals stridently opposed to humanism are the ultra-religious conservatives. Flynn has observed that "central to conservative attacks on secular humanism is the notion that humanism is a religion of man whose goal is to overturn christian vlaues. Many christians view humaniists as competitors in the spiritual market place, vying for souls in opposition to the true faith."7 This argument carries substantial force in the popular mind which already considers humanism a religion of some kind.

Granted that humanism is a human centred religion, does this really matter? Is there anything particularly obscene about it? Has man not engaged in this sort of exercise in the earlier course of his history and development when the search for causes was made more of imagination than of reason? Two stages of this development can be identified: (a) "the age of universal animism when the world was conceived of as a living being performing the difference phenomena of nature. and (b) the age of anthropomorphism when the world was conceived of as being full of gods and geni. These gods and geni were conceived of as men but having a superior nature, and all things were explained by the intervention of some of these gods and geni."8 This earlier practice has been seen as resulting from the harsh condtiions imposed by the environment in the pre-philosophic and pre-scientific times. Ironically the present trends represented by humanism are in fact the results of the undue influence of religion, science and secularism inspite of complaints by theological reactionaries from Falwell in America to Khomeini in Iran.

Humanism has been made possible by the advances in science and technology, an increase in the standard of living, the cultivation and democratization of knowledge and education, free inquiry and democratic institutions. These have all contributed to the weakening of superstitions and faith in supraempirical forces. Modernity, science; secularization have had the combined effect of forcing man back to his "post-critical innocence." Humanism is thus an enabling mechanism that man is using to discover that in "the cultures of the past are to be found attitudes, beliefs, etc., that are more than merely pre-modern, prescientific, pre-secular and hence has not been cancelled out by the scientific revolution and can speak to us from the far side of the Galilean and Newtonian revolutions."9

There are however important reasons to present humanism as a thrust clearly and avowedly distinct form the religious phenomena. One is linguistic, the other more compelling reason is pracical. Since man cannot look up to any God or gods for solutions on his own, to define humanism as a religion, the definition of religion mustitself embrace the rejection of God. In conventional usage, religion is concerned, as O'dea argues with "something comparatively vague and intangible, whose empirical reality is far from clear. It is concerned with a beyond, with man's relation to and attitude toward that beyond, and with what men consider to be the practical implications of the beyond for human life. It is concerned with something that transcends experience, taking experience to mean, as it did for Pareto, the observable events of our everyday existence....."10

When the definition of religion is extended and expanded to encompass humanism, the definition becomes so diffuse that religion intrudes on domains better regarded as purely philosophical, ethical, political or even art. The term, religion, is better reserved for those issues and things that touch tenuously on the other wordly, least the very useful distinction between religion and disciplines lime philosophy and ethics pass from language. From this it follows that "humanism is a religion, becomes a contradiction in terms, because any true humanist puts man first, either relegating God to irrelivance or discrding him entirely."11 In the words of Merleau–Ponty, "metaphysical and moral consciousness dies when it touches on the absolute."12

Whatever the advantages of the linguistic objections, the practical reasons are even stronger. If humanism is a religion, skeptics and atheists who consistently reject religion would also reject humanism. This is not the case. If humanism is a man - church and a religion, then it must be separated from the state for the same obvious reasons that religion (any one for that matter) and state are separated by law. This has not been the case.

The basic, fundamental cleavage between religion and humanism must be protected because it relfects a concern for clarity, for distinctiveness and honesty in the use of language, and because a non-religious humanism,

properly understood as such, is a far more difficult target for strident objections from arch-conservatives determined to delimit the boundaries of human freedom and responsibility by fiat.

5.

Man is a horizon for transcendal reflection (CF Marcuse). Man is his origin. But this relfection is about human values, human life and certain aspects of cultural values. It does not involve the beyond or the otherwordly. Mankind cannot sacrifice itself to safeguard spiritual values. For this reflection the knowledge of human experience in suffering, hunger, freedom, choice and responsibility, is basic. Human experience is thus the ground, the foundation for this reflection. But man is dying in religion, in scientism, and gradually disappearing both as an epistemological object and objective reality (Foucault). Man is the ground of representations, the origin of meaning and is the only condition for the possibility of knowledge.

The ideational content of religion is a projection of man. So is humanism though both differ significantly in their contents and reference. For Durkheim god represents the hypostatization of society which supports man's morale but also impinges upon him as something other. Feuerbach sees this projective process as "the source of man's alienation from himself and consequently as making man unable to accept and develop his own natural endowment. God is the highest subjectivity of man abstracted from himself."13

These projections are absurbd and have had a corrosive influence on human life. As John Adams once wrote, the divinity of Jesus is made a convenient cover for absurdity. It is this absurdity and the corrosive influence of religion that humanism is intended as an answer, as a way of life to bring man back to his original innocence In this process, religion is demasked, thus enabling man to live as he is , as a moral agent fully responsible for his actions, his welfare and interests here and now. Man not God would then represent the hypostatization ofsociety to support man's moral without impinging himself. Self alienation ends with this radical reversal enabling man to accept himself for what he is. Humanism thus enhances man's self image of himself. It ends buck passing to the forces in the so-called great beyond. It gives man the scope to give full meaning to life's project, if any, and to wilfully define this project in existential terms. It forbids the sacrifice of human interests to spiritual values. It ensures the triumph of human consciousness and in the process banishes fear, insecurity, self defeat and submission to an impersonal God who is indifferent to human desire, suffering and the hostility of an overwhelming world. Instead, humanism encourages and gives mankind hope and faith in itself. Man thus becomes his own destiny in collaboration with others, not with a God brcause it is not God that gives ultimate meaning to human destiny but man himself.

It follows that the Weberian conception of religion as that concerned with the problem of meaning is unsustainable, because religious experience is a supposed encounter with a beyond. The question that arises is this: meaning in terms ofthis beyond or the here and now? Men need not only emotional adjustment but also cognitive assurance when facing the problems of suffering, disease, hunger, death, etc. Man needs to come to terms with the discrepancy between expectations and actual happenings in their society. In other words, answers are needed to questions concerniang human destiny, the imperatives of morality etc. Some of these problems have their origin in societal arrangements and are therefore man made. To this extent, the answers to these problems have to be articulate here and now since they are anchored on human needs and interests not on a Godhead in the beyond.

Death, specifically, is part of a biological process of coming to be and passing away. Man comes to be in birth and passes away in death. Death is thus death of a humankind, not of a God. Note however the humanised God of christian theology – a contraditction in terms. He died and resurrected as a God but left the human aspects of its being in the grave, for the eventual biological accounting – a logical consequence of the truncated relation between God and man. There is no biblical evidence, if this is anything to go by, to suggest that this once dead God resurrected as a humankind. God thus took absolute maximum care of his interests both in death and resurrection, while man is still absurdly hopeful of a place in God's own scheme of things. God may have had good reasons of his own to prove something, that is, that he had the capacity to resurrect. But this fact, interesting as it may be, is of no use, is of no relevance to man. Neither does man need any such proof to the extent that it is of no intrinsic importance to the promotion and sustenance of human interests. If man needs proof of anything, of any kind, that which is required is the assurance that man is eminently capable of managing his own interests, that it is self-defeating to suppose that a selfless, impersonal entity unconcerned with human welfare can manage these interests better . If man was ever created by a God, that God ditched man right from the very beginning, condemning man to eternal freedom, to be his own master, of himself and of his other fellow beings in the hazardous but noble art of being born, living, suffering and dying. For secular humanism this episodic moment of rupture marks the moment of free choice, of freedom, of care and of respnsibility. The misplaced human orientation is not therefore irreversible. The reversion enables man once more to take his destiny in his own hands and fully concretise it not by a vicarious beyond but right "here" in this phenomenal drama that is human life. This project obviously calls for ontic as well as ontological commitment.

The human condition is contingent because of its biological grounding It is powerless, if at all, because a) man cannot do or achieve everything within his time span here mainly because of the biological dimension, b) because of the corrosive influence of religion man aliented himself from his quiddity, c) and consequently believed erroneously that the forces in the great beyond are ultimately responsible as well as accountable for his progress destiny and interests, and thus surrendered himself to blind faith. It is overtly evident from the point of view of secular humanism that these forces in the great beyond cannot provide the ultimate answers to the problem of meaning. And if the problems concomitant with the human condition are soluble, man and him alone can provide the solutions, if at all. As Davids states, "religion contributes to the integration of the personality.

But like other medicines it can sometimes make worse the very thing it seeks to remedy. Innumerable are the psychoses and neuroses that have a religious content. The supraempircal world is so elastic, so susceptible to manipulation by the imagination that the disbordered mind can seize upon it to spin itself into almost any kind of bizarre pattern. It is a prop which takes courage to do without but which one dares not lean on too heavily."14

For humanists one dares not lean at all because religion aliented man from himself, and secondly it is an illusion, for the significant psychoanalytic reason that "wish-fulfulment is a prominent factor in its motivations, while it discregards the relationship of its contents to reality."15 The supraempirical world is inhabitable only because it is indifferent to the human condition, to the radical solitude of man encouraged by an existential outlook that precludes man from seeing and accepting himself as he is. Thrown into a situation he never chose, which he never had a hand in the making, the individual human must be judged only in strict accordance with purely human criteria. Encouraging man to take ultimate powers over his own being is no less absurd than allowing forces in the supraempirical world to take control. These forces or agents have not better knowledge and understanding of the human condition than man himself. We must therefore cherish our communion with the others, love them, hate them, help them, etc., because of the sake of man himself, because human nature himself makes abundant allowance for these and others, not for the sake of religion or God. As Vansina suggests, everybody can have "charity in his own manner and love may consist exactly in accepting that other people also are able to love."16

These remarks apropos of a situation created by religious factors refer to an affirmation that never ceases to depress and which essentially consists of a stifling and derogation of the exercise of human rationality to apply it to an order of a human supraempirical phenomena. In a way, this stifling and derogation in the order of knowledge goes back to the earliest part of human

history: man first wondered about the phenomenal construct of the cosmos before turning the search light on himself. This discentred the human project from the on set, distorted basic orientations and constituted a radical loss in terms of focus and initiative. Secular humanism is a poignant reminder of thhe need to deconstruct this essentially destructive mental as well as psychological image of man and of the world. Thus the spontaneous and sensory consciousness that humans have of their experience rooted in their bodies and their commonsense world is restored.

what theologians of all sorts and in all denominations reveal consistently is a posture adequate and proper to the interests they represent (the otherwordly) in which seemingly they are not concerned with the human dimension, with the place of man in the universe or with his position in the evolution of his society.17 With humanism marks a constant inaugurated by the end of religious cosmology and the organization of society and the world in, around and for man by man. The irruption of non-human phenomena in the sensory world produced convictions that led to the humanisation of entities that are supraempirical and ahuman. Now aware of the profound strangeness and absurdity of the non-human phenomena in human affairs and interests, man in secular humanism is attempting to re-relate to himself and to inscribe human affairs and interests in individual and collective thought in a positive manner.

6.

The humanist perspective is less concerned with proving or establishing the existence or non-existence of a God, less concerned withproving or disproving religious phenomena..

It is rather interested in and concerned with giving man overwhelming power over his own being. Insofar as its purpose is to persuade men to accept responsibility for themselves, humanism is eminently and supremely moral. Man not God or religion has to solve man's prblems. "The question about the ultimate meaning of the world and human science" observes Vansina, "remains open,"18 This openess is assured insofar as man does not abdicate his responsibility to himself and to others. The reality and acceptance of this responsibility neither entails absurdity nor ethical limitation or blindness of non-existence, a choice of the inherently absurd as contended by Murray.20.

The secularization of culture combining both desacralization and relationalization has meant that a religious world view can no longer be the only basic reference for thought. Other views perhaps more plausible are possible. Hence the so-called dilemmas presented by relgious world views are exposed as mischiefs. These dilemmas regarded as inescapable paradoxes which man must ever live with because they are ineliminable, are for secular humanism approachable in either the stoic or Epicurean manner. Some in

our midst, no doubt would like to repeal the modern world with its achievements, material and non material, but fortunately they will find this a difficult task.

NOTES

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RUSSELL'S UNOFFICIAL THEORY OF MEANING

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The purpose of this paper is to reveal Bertrand Russell's unofficial theory of meaning. Philosophers proffer both official and unofficial doctrines. Whereas the official doctrines are these that are professed by the philosophers themselves and acknowledged in philosophical cirles, the unofficial doctrines are the silent implications of the offical doctrines which are neither professed by the philosophers themselves nor widely acknowledged. The "denotation theory"was Russelll's official theory of meaning. I shall argue that the "use theory" is his unofficial theory of meaning.

It is true that Russell noticed the shortcomings of his denotation theory. It is also true that he attempted to improve upon this theory in his theory of descriptions and theory of types. I shall argue that both theories, on the contrary, were unconscious refutations of the entire denotation theory. I shall also argue that both theories are "use" theories, and, because neither he nor philosophical tradition recognized them as such, I shall label them his unoffical 'theory' of meaning.

II

In 1903, Russell wrote:

> Words all have meaning, in the simple sense that they are symbols which stand for something other than themselves..... That is to say, when a man occurs, in a proposition (e.g. "I met a man in the street)", the proposition is not about the concept a man, but about something quite diffeent, some actual biped denoted by the concept.[1]

This is his denotaiton theory in its strictest presentation. To him, "every word in a significant sentence must have a meaning and that there must be something that it means"2. That is, "the meaning of a word is that of which the word is the name, for example, the meaning of the words 'the Parthenon' is the Parthenon, that physical object of which 'the Parthenon' is the name".3 Thus, "Every word a menaing, every meaning an entity - these are theprinciples on which Russell at first worked"4.

According to Russell "This way of understanding language turned out to be mistaken"[5] It should be noted that the denotation theory "is not, and was never claimed to be, applicable to all meanigful words; it is obvious, for example, that there are no ifs and ands for the words 'if' and 'and' to denote. But the theory breaks down even in the case of the words and phrases which it does claim to cover".[6] He therefore proceeded to improve upon this theory – his efforts yielded the theories of 'descriptions' and 'types'. In a moment, I shall show that these theories catapulted him, unofficially though, from his official 'atomistic' metaphysics into a 'use' metaphysics.

The theory of descriptions was the reply to critics who attacked the denotation theory by pointing at meanigful phrases which do not denote anything. Such include "The golden mountain" and "The present king of France". How is it possible for such a satement as "The present king of FRance is bald" to be significant when in fact there is no object denoted by the words "The present king of France"? The theory of descriptions shows that philosophers, by faulty analysis of language, have been misled into believing in the real existence of such fictitious entities as "the golden mountain", "the present king of France", "Hamlet", and so forth.

Alexius Meinong had regarded such entities as existing in some shadowy realm not very differenct from the Platonic heaven. Russell, whose recent hatred for idealism was not just academic but also emotional, came to believe in the existence of such a Meinogian underworo.

He writes.

> All the arguments used by Hegelians to condemn the sort of things dealt with by mathematics and Physics depended on the axiom of internal relations. Consequently, when I rejected this axiom, I began to believe everything the Hegelians had disbelieved. This gave me a full universe. I imagined all the numbers sitting in a row in a Platonic heaven.

But he later realized that this view was held out of an analytic error. Those who hold this view think that the statement "The present king of France" is the subject of the proposition "The present king of France is bald" while "blad" is the predicate. To Russelll, this is not true. The grammatical form of the statement "The present king of France is bald" is according to him misleading. When translated into its logical form its true structure will be revealed In its true logical form, the statement will read:

1. Something is presently the monarch of France.
2. Not more than one thing is presently the monarch of France.
3. Whatever is presently the monarch of France is bald.

All of these propositions are general propositions – none denotes any particular subject. No proper names occur in them. "The present king of France" is thus, not logically a proper name. If it were a proper name it would have referred to something. It is rather a definite descriptive phrase, (definite because it begins with "the" thus, purporting that one and only one thing is monarch of France; ambiguous descriptive phrases begin with "a..."). Such descriptive phrases, Russell refers to as "incomplete symbols". They "have absolutely no meaning whatsoever in isolation but merely acquire a meaning in a context"[8]. Thus, anyone who utters the phrase "The present king of France" has uttered an incomplete symbol, but anyone who utters the sentence "The present king of France is bald" "would be jointly asserting three propositions, one of which (viz. that there is a King of France) would be false, and since the conjuction of three propositions, of whcih one is false, is itself false, the assertion as a whole would be significant, but false"[9] It should therefore be noted that Russell's theory of descriptions was never meant to supplant his denotation 'theory but to supplement it. What the theory (of descriptions) 'achieved' was to reinforce the fundamental thesis of the denotation theory by adding that phrases that do not denote anything are descriptive phrases and "incomplete symbols"; they only acquire their meaning" in a context".

But, to what extent does the theory of descriptions supplement the denotation theory? Does it cover all incomplete symbols? These are the questions Russell must have asked himself over and over again. Giving the warning that he was going to launch a new theory, Russell writes:

> There are a great many other sorts of incomplete symbols besides descriptions. These are classes, which I shall speak of next time.....[10].

This was the prelude to his theory of types. The theory of types was the weapon Russell invented to deal with certain puzzles discovered within his logical system, inorder to further the cause of analysis. The discovery of contradictions, alongside other well known antinomies, was shocking. To Whitehead, there was no solution; to Frege, it meant disaster (he gave up the attempt to deduce arithmetic from logic); but to Russell, it meant a challenge to rigorous scrutiny of classes. The theory of types was the result of his endeavour

Is a class a member of itself? The class of books is not itself a book, for instance, but the class of things which are not books is a member of the things which are not books. The class of rulers is not itself a ruler, but the class of things which are not rulers is itself not a ruler. Thus, besides classes which are not members of themselves (which we generally acknowledge), there are also classes which are members of themselves. Now, consider the class of all classes that are not members of themselves. Is that class a member of itself or not?.

> Let us first suppose that it is a member of itself. In that case it is one of those classes that are not members of themselves; i.e., it is not a member of itself. Let us then suppose that it is not amember of itself. In that case it is not one of those classes that are not members of themselves, i.e., it is one of those classes that are members of themselves, i.e. it is a member of itself. Hence either hypothesis, that it is or that it is not a member of itself, leads to its contradition. If it is a member of itself, it is not, and if it is not, it is.[11].

There are other well known paradoxes. When Epimenides the Cretan said that all Cretans are liars, was he speaking the truth? If he was speaking the t truth, it means he was lying (that all Cretans are liars). If he was lying. it means he was speaking the truth (being a Cretan).

In the theory of types, Russell showed that to say of a class that is is, or is not, a member of itself is meaningless. According to him "That has to do with the fact that classes,... are incomplete symbols in the sense in which the descriptions are.."[12]. To talk about classes meaningfully, one has to specify the range of objects (types) referred to. There are types or levels of classes. The first – type or first-le vels may be ordinary objects e.g. "dog". The classes whose members are first-type classes make up the second-type classes. Thus, if 'dog' belongs to type1, type 2 will consist of animals; type 3 living things, and so forth.[13].

So, upon analysis our antinomies disappear since the types or range of objects referred to in each statement will be revealed.

It remains now to show how these theories – descriptions and types – refute the denotation theory, or how they are use theories.

III

Ludwin Wittgenstein is one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century. Having "repented" of his Tractatus[14] (a monumental work), Wittgenstein reemerged with an ordinary language philosophy which was to give philosophical investigations a linguistic turn. In the Tractatus he had held that "a proposition is a picture of reality"[15] or that language pictures reality. This is the picture theory of meaning. How does it differe from his later philosophy? I agree with Bryan Magee that "the easiest way into this later philosophy of Wittgenstein – and thence to seeing how it differs from the ealier – is through the difference between two metaphors for meaning. In the early philosophy, meaning is seen as a picturing relationship. In the later

it is seen as the putting to use of a tool. the meaning of an utterance comes to be seen as the sum total of its possible uses"[16]. Thus, an "essential feature of this later philosophy is that language is seen as essentially a public or social phenomenon, one that can function only if there are rules that are accepted by more than one person, so that any one prrson's use of the rules which guide him in speaking is open to correction and improvement by another person's observations"[17]. Therefore, instead of looking for strict meanings of words as suggested by the denotation theory, one should look for the uses of such words in language. I do not see any fundamental difference between this use thesis and the suggestion of "incomplete symbols" which underlie both the theory of descriptions and the theory of types.

In his theory of descriptions Russell simply argued that such phrases as "the present king of France" that do not denote any real enity are incomplete symbols – they acquire their meanings in the context of their use. Furthermore, in the theory of types, he argued that discussion about calsses is meaningless unless the range of objects or types referred to is specified. This is context. But why the emphasis on incomplete symbols? It seems as if Russell must resort to the 'incomplete symbol' explanation to get out of dilemmas. I do not think anyway, that he could have done otherwise. The denotation theory on its own is not a sufficient theory of meaning. But supplementing it with a theory of descriptions which leads tp an "incomplete symbol explanation" is another way of rehearsing the slogan "Don't ask for the meaning, ask for the use". Russell sufficiently implies this in his writing . For instance:

> There are a great many other sorts of incomplete symbols besides descriptions. These are classes, which I shall speak of next time, and relations taken in extension, and so on.., In any case they are all incomplete symbols, i.e., they are aggregations that only have a MEANING IN USE AND DO NOT HAVE ANY MEANING IN THEMSELVES.[18].

Thus, while Russell was officaially supplementing his denotation theory he was unofficially setting forth a use doctrine. The question now is, which of these two theories is Russell's theory of meaning in the proper sense of "theory of meaning"? I do think that Russell's theory of meaning is the use theory. This is for four main reasons:

1. The "incomplete symbol explanation" refutes the denotation theory.

2. The "incomplete symbol explanation" cannot be a proper defence of the denotation theory.

3. The "incomplete symbol explanation" reveals Russell's reliance on the use theory.

4. The use theory covers both the words that denote real entities and the words that do not denote any real entities.

In what sense can the first reason apply? That is, in what sense does the "incomplete symbol explanation" refute the denotation theory? In the sense, I think, that it contradicts the fundamental thesis of the denotation theory (voz. that for every word there is a meaning, and for every meaning an entity)[19]. If the meaning of a word is in its use (as implied by the "incomplete symbol" explanation), it stands therefore, to wit that Russel is not committed to retaining the denoation theory, after all, the use theory also covers the objects covered by the denotation theory as well shall soon see. The main argument is that if the sue theory applies to "incomplete symbols" If it does pply to "complete symbols" (as it really does), presenting the denotation theory (with all its problesm).

This leads to the second point, that "incomplete symbol explanations" cannot be a proper defence of the denotation theory. To say that phrases like "The present king of France" do not denote entities because they are incomplete symbols that have no meanings of their own is, to my mind, unsatisfactory. If it was meant as a defence of the denotation theory, I thinl it is unsuccessful. The words "present king of France", "golden mountain", and so forth are anyway, not meaningless, inspite of the denotation theory. Certainly, we cna have mental images of golden mountains, and even "gods in heavenly places". I may not doubt that these are incomplete symbols butthat they have no meanings whatsoever is another matter.

The third point is that the "incomplete symbol explanation" reveals Russell's reliance on the use theory. According to him, incomplete symbols "have absolutely no meaning whatsoever in isolation but merely acquire a meaning in a context"[20]. He goes on to state that incomplete symbols are "aggregations that only have a meaning in use and do not have any meaning in thmselves"[21]. Considering these alongside the very important role the "incomplete symbol explanation" plays in his theory of meaning, it becomes increasingly difficult to avoid the conclusion that Russell's theory of meaning (in the proper sense) was the use theory.

It now remains to explain the final and vital point, which borders on the scope of the use theory. The fundamental thesis of the use theory is that the meaning of a word or sentence depends on its use. It should be noted that

this thesis is not committed to any kind of entity. A word or sentence may be "used" to refer to a concrete entity or a mental image. If the words "the golden mountain" for instance, are permitted within a particular language game, they are meaningful whether they denote an entity or not. Furthermore, if the words "the head of state of Nigeria" are not permitted within any particular language, game, they are meaningless. Thus, all words and sentences – whether thy denote an entity or not are meningful in so far as they find their significance within a language game. The point being made here is that the use theory covers both the words that denote real entities and the words that do not denote any real entitites. This means that the "use theory" did not only cover the areas which remained uncovered by the denotation theory, it also covered the areas covered by the denotation theory. In the light of this therefore, the denotation theory, juxtaposed with the use theory (as Russell has done) becomes irrelevant, for the use theory covers the denotation theory and much more besides.

* * *

I shall argue no further, after all, reactions – whether in admiration or in condemnation – shall further prove my point. Whereas reactions in admiration of my line of thinking shall obvisouly enhance my argument, reactions, in condemnation shall do more, so for the doctrine at stake is an unoffical doctine 'neither professed by the philosopher hmself nor widely acknolwedged'.

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EMOTIVISM: A Critical Account of Ayer's and Stevenson's Views on Ethical Philosophy

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Ethics, theology and Metaphysics generate utterances that do not seem to be subject to empirical investigatin. At least, so the verificationists – the logical empiricists and positivists 1 – think. This thinking has informed either the outright rejection of theological, metaphysical and ethical propositions as meaningless and nonsensical or a characterization of them as not yielding any genuine assertions. The assertion "God exists", for instance, is either meaningless because no state of affairs in the world could confirm or refute it or it is nonsensical since it is not literally significant. The statement "God exists" is a theological assertion and since God is adjudged to be a transcendent reality, it is also a metaphysical statement. On account of the fact that theology and metaphysics issue in statements that are not empirically verifiable, they are held to be fruitless enterprises.

The characterization of theological and metaphysical statements as either meaningless and nonsensical or literallynot significant has brought odium and embarrassment to Moral philosophy itself an offshoot of metaphysics, On the verificationist theses it should follow that the dialogue between moral philosophers throughout the ages is a huge expenditure of effort since ethical statements have no meaning. This odium and embarrassment to moral philosophy is exemplified by Emotivism whose most powerful advocates are Ayer and Stevenson. It is to their critique of ethics that we now turn. First, I make a general sketch of the theses of emotivism. Secondly, I outline the nature and functions of the sentences of a moralizer. Thirdly, I give account of Ayer's emotive theory of value as well as that of Stevension. Fourthly, I highlight Brandt's Posers for emotivism. And finally, I make a characteristic hit on emotivism.

GENERAL THESES OF EMOTIVISM:

Emotivism is the view that ethical statements, which Ayer calls "judgements of value", are nothing other than the expression of one's moral sentiments with a view to evoking similar sentiments in others. By and large, it

is the view that ethical statements are non-factual, non-cognitive and literally non-significant. Emotivism is the outcome of a rejection of metaphysics and it is cushioned on the verificationist thesis or what Ayer calls "a criterion of literal significance" which holds a propositiion to be really factual if any empirical observations would attest to its veracity or falsity. For any statement to count as being literally significant it has to be capable of being shown to be true or false. In other words, there has to be a body of facts such that when we juxtapose it with a statement the latter is either confirmed or refuted. If we can show that there is a body of facts to which an ehtical statement refers such statement is thus shown to be literally significant. But if we cannot appeal to a body of facts to corroborate or confute an ethical statement, it means that such statement is not literally significant. Now if ethical statements are neither true nor false because they are not significant in a literal sense would they, like metaphysical and theological statements, be meaningless and nonsensical? Not exactly. They would simply be "expressions of emotion" and commands.

THE SENTENCES OF A MORALIZER: NATURE AND FUNCTION

What are we doing when we use moral predicates or when we make moral judgements? What is the nature of the sentences of a moralizer? On the emotivist view, the sentences of a moralizer or what we call ethical propositions are not of the same nature with those of a logician or a mathematician and those of a scientist. For whereas the tautologies of logic and mathematics are verifiable by immediate inspection and the propositions of a scientist by empirical observation, the sentences of the ethician could neither be verified by immediate inspection nor by sense observation. In fact, the propositions of the ethician make no assertions at all. For, according to the emotivists, to make an assertion is to insist that something is the case which could be shown to be true or false, either by immediate inspection or by empircial tests. Since the sentences of a moralizer are not thus verifiable, they are not genuine propositions. Hence on the emotivist view moral predicates (i.e. good, bad, etc) are unanalysable. They are unanalysable because they are pseudo-concepts. As pseudo-concepts, the presence of an ethical predicate in a proposition does not in anyway add something new to the factual content of the proposition. It merely serves as heightened suggestion.3

The first question, how do moral terms function? is answered by the emotivists by saying that moral sentences or judgements of value are expressions of emotion towards an action. Moral statements simply serve to convey my feelings or sentiments or attitudes towards an action. Thus, when I make a moral statement about an action I simply express my approval or disapproval about that action. In doing so, I do not in anyway, says the emotivists, mean that something about the action can be said to be true or false. I

merely express my moral sentiments. And any other person has as much right to express a dissimilar feeling or adopt a different attitude from mine towards the same action and he would not be contradicting me. Apart from being a means of expressing my sentiments, moral judgements have a secondary function. This secondary function is that of awakening similar sentiments in others. When I say, for example, that "adultery is wrong", I perform two functions. I say that I disapprove of adultery and I want others who hear me make such a disapproval to do so as well. In other words, when I say "adultery is wrong", I show my disapproval of adultery and I want others to diapprove of adultery as well. In the same way, when I make a positive moral judgement or when I say, for instance, that "honesty is good" I am simply expressing my feeling of approval towards honesty and at the same time I am making a propaganda to win others into adopting a favourable attitude towards honesty. Thus, according to emotivism, whenever I make a moral statement I simply express my feeling of approval or disapproval towards an action, and secondly I launch a propaganda calculated to win others to my own side of the conflicts of emotion.

AYER'S EMOTIVE THEORY OF VALUE.

Alfred Jules Ayer begins his emotive theory of value by mapping out what he takes to be the real content of moral philosophy, which derives from the positivist view that the proper function of philosophy is analysis. Ayer distinguishes four kinds of propositions which he thinks are usually erroneously lumped together as ethical philosophy. These, according to him, are propositions relating to the definitions of ethical terms, or judgements which concerns the legitimacy or possibility of certain definitions; those that describe the phenomena of moral experience and their causes; those that are exhortations of moral virtue, and those that are expressions of ethical judgements. Ayer takes the first–definitions of ethical terms and their legitimacy or possibility – to be the actual business of moral philosophy But if perchance we regard the second – propositions describing the phenomena of moral experience – as the concern of moral philosophy, we run the risk of making ethics, says Ayer, a branch of psychology or sociology, for these sciences are descriptive. More confusing still is the third –exhortations of moral virtue – which Ayer says do not belong to any branch of philosophy or science since they are not propositions but ejaculations or commands. The fourth which Ayer says are expressions of ethical judgements cannot be put under ethical philosophy because they make pronoucements, and ethical philosophy ought not to make pronouncements 4".

We can restate Ayer's positiion more clearly in the following words: Ethical philosophy consists simply in the analysis and clarification of moral terms. Thus, only that aspect of moral philosophy which issues in proposi-

tions that relate to the definitions of ethical terms alone can qualify as ethical philosophy. Accordingly, propositions describing the phenomena of moral experience and their causes are ordinary scientific statements which belong properly to psychology or sociology and not philosophy. In the same way, exhortations of moral virtue are mere ejculations, and so, do not in any sense belong to philosophy or science. And since the proper function of philosophy is analysis expressions of ethical judgements which are pronouncements are strictly outside the scope of ethical philosophy.

From this arbitary classification of traditional ethical philosophy Ayer launches an attack on all existing normative theories of value. When the question is raised as to whether we could really translate normative ethical symbols to descriptive empirical symbols, Ayer says that the orthodox subjectivists and the utilitarians answer in the affirmative. The subjectivists, for example, hold that the goodness of a thing or the rightness of an action could be reduced to feelings of approval.[5] Ayer gives the lie to this by pointing out that if on the one hand, the general approval of the society is meant, then, it is not out of place to hold that certain actions which are generally approved are not good, or that certain actions which are extolled by many are not right. But if on the other hand, the approval of the doer of an action is meant Ayer points out that a man who confessed that he sometimes approved of what was bad or wrong would not be contradicting himself. A similar punch is delivered on Utilitarianism. The Utilitarians say that given a particular situation and a set of possible actions only one is right which would conduce to the greatest possible balance of good over evil or the greatest happiness of the largest number. Ayer says that this is hollow because it would not be absurd "to say that it is sometimes wrong to perform the action which would actually or probably cause the greatest"[6] possible balance of good over evil or the greatest happiness of the largest number. Thus, on linguistic grounds, orthodox subjectivism and utilitarianism are guilty of faulty "analysis of ethical notions" and hence have erroneously thought that they could reduce normative ethical terms to non-ethical empirical statements. In point of fact, however, ethical terms cannot be translated into non-ethical, psychological or empirical propositions. Subjectivists and Utilitarians thereofre labour under delusion.

While agreeing with the intuitionists that ethical concepts are unanalysable Ayer parts company with them at the point where their doctrine makes no room for verifiability. Intuitionism in ethics teaches that goodness is known by intuition or that an act is right because the agent sees it to be right 7 But suppose another agent sees the same act to be wrong, would it be wrong? Ayer makes a classic case against intuitionism by insinuating that we have nothing left in the moral universe save pure caprice if we have no means of choosing between conflicting intuitions. Intuitionism also claims, according to Ayer, that ethical judgements are synthetic propositions.

But since they cannot be put to any relevant empirical tests, Ayer says they are not synthetic propositions.

Now why are ethical concepts unanalysable? Ayer replies that it is not because they are simple concepts as Moore thinks, but because they are pseudo-concepts. As pseudo-concepts, ethical predicates or symbols add nothing new to the factual content of a proposition. Ayer says that if we were to say to someone, for example, that "You acted wrongly in stealing that money", we say nothing significantly different from simply saying that "you stole that money"[8] According to Ayer, when we add wrong to the sentence we do nothing but envince our moral disapproval of it. It is, says Ayer, as if one had merely exclaimed in a horrified tone that somebody had stolen money, where-upon the tone of the exclamation mark adds nothing to the factual content of the sentence.[9] Ethical judgements, continues Ayer, have no objective validity whatever, not that they are mysteriously independent of sense experience. Now if ethical sentences do not make genuine statements, they can be neither true nor false. Truth or falsehood do not apply to ethical sentences. Like a cry of pain or a word of command, ethical sentences are unverifiable;

Another dimension to Ayer's emotivism is the claim that when we argue or quarrel about which actions are "good" or which actions are "bad" we do not really dispute about questions of value, but questions of fact. According to Ayer, "one really never does dispute about questions of value."[10] When, therefore, emotivists appear to be arguing about questions of value, they are actually disputing about the facts of the case. They simply want to show that those who disagree with them on the moral value of a particular type of action are in error about the facts of the case. Emotivists want to show that whoever disputes with them may have misunderstood "the agent's motive: or that he has misjudged the effects of the action, or its probable effects in view of the agent's knowledge; or that he has failed to take into account of the special circumstances in which the agent was placed [11] When they fail to win their opponents over, says Ayer, emotivists even resort to abuses and derogatory terms complaining that those disputing with them have a distorted moral sense. "It is because when argument fails us when we come to deal with pure questions of value, as distinct from questions of fact, that we finally resort to mere abuse".[12] Thus does Ayer's emotivism remove judgements of value from the scope of rational argument.

In summary, Ayer's emotivism comes down to this: That there is no such thing as ethical philosophy if by that we mean "an elaboration of a "true" system of morals" (after all, says Ayer, it cannot be significantly asserted that there is a non-emperical realm of values.);[13] that the sentences of a moralizer do not express genuine propositions: that ethical concepts are unanalysable because they are pseudo-concepts: that judgements of value are mere expressions of emotion which are calculated to provoke similar feelings in others

that disputes about questions of value are really disputes about questions of fact, and that the moralizer is a grammarian with nothing of real consequence to argue about.

STEVENSON'S EMOTIVISM

In his article on "Emotive Concepts of Ethics and Its Cognitive Implications"14 Charles Stevenson discusses situations that involve a "personal decision", insists that man's ethical decisions are personal even though such personal decisions do in course of time become issues for public discussion and reflection. He distinguishes "personal' from "interpersonal" decisions and says that the personal relates to the kind of reflections the individual makes in his mind, in his privacy about the rightness or wrongness of certain actions. In such personal decisions and reflections others are neither consulted nor adviced about what is right or wrong, but the individual is merely settling the issue in his own mind. However, the whole of ethical problems do not end here because sooner or later personal problems do become interpersonal.15

The crux of Stevenson's theory of value is that when a man makes a moral decision, he is trying to make up his mind whether to approve or disapprove of something. He simply has conflicting attitudes toward or about something, and by the time he is able to resolve this conflict of attitudes or make them speak with one voice, he will have made his decision. He would have made up his mind about "what he really approves of "16 However, Stevenson concedes that this resolve about attitudes (i.e. emotive) or this "making up of one's mind" about what to really approve of also has cognitive aspects. In other words, Stevenson thinks that moral decision is not only emotive but also, cognitive. As he says, a man with conflicting attitudes is bound to think, reflect or call to mind several other alternative actions, learning more about them and weighing each alternative action. Between thoughts and attitudes, Stevenson says, there is an intimate relationship. So that the problem of resolving conflicts in attitudes invariably leads to the problem of "establishing cognitively", rationally, the many different beliefs that may help in resolving such conflicts 17

From here, Stevenson goes further to explicate how the influence of thoughts on attitudes actually takes place. He holds the proposition to be true that "our approval of anything is strenghtened or weakened depending on whether we approve or disapprove of its consequences."18

Stevenson supposes that if a man has conflicting attitudes towards X, and later believes that X causes Y, then, "if he approves of Y he will thereupon approve of X more strongly. And his strenghtened approval of X outweighing the partial disapproval that he has for it will tend to make him resovle his conflict in X'S favour."19

According to Stevenson, the function of thought or cognition is to establish the causal link between X and Y, that is, that X leads to Y. To the question, "why does the agent's belief in Y strenghten his approval of X?" Stevenson says that it is not simply that belief has any power on its own to strenghten a man's approval of something, but that it (belief) is able to do so only because Y is also "an object of his approval".20 For "if Y were indifferent to him, he would feel that any question about the relation of X to Y was foreign to his problem", that is, outside the scope of his inquiry. So, thought, according to Stevenson, simply acts as an intermediary between a man's or an agent's attitudes.21 As thought connects X to Y, it (thought) connects an agent's attitude toward X with his attitude toward Y, "letting the one be reinforced by the other."22

Stevenson says that by serving as an intermediary time and time again, man's reasoning fulfils an ethical function. In this way, the notion of "practical reason" becomes understandable.

As he says,

> . . . . . .it is ordinary reasoning made practical by its psychological context. But let us note, and with full attention, that its function remains an essential, pervasive one. Without such reasoning each attitude would be compartmentalized from the others; and the net result would be conflict; it would be psychological chaos.23

Thus, a personal decision in ethics has many different cognitive elements The cognitive elements are not purely psychological, although some are Stevenson grants that the processes of personal ethical decisions are explainable in terms of psychology, that is,from conflicting attitudes which generate beliefs that in turn mediate between them. But the real issue is not in describing the phenomena of moral experience but in resolving the conflicts in attitudes. Stevenson says that is why ethics is a cognitive even if emotive discipline. Its central business is outside the scope of the specialized sciences. According to him, ethics occupies a territory of its own. Ethics "simply takes place beside these other sciences. It has no special privileges"24

Stevenson's emotivism, unlike Ayer's, restores some functions to thought in the moral universe. "Whatever else the emotive conception of ethics may do, it does not imply that evaluative decisions must be thoughtless."25 Stevenson however argues that reason as the traditional ethician thinks it can do no more credit to ethics than the emotive theory, because when two men disagree such that their attitudes cannot both be satisfied, will reasoning, he asks, to whatever degree by its "causal effects on their attitudes, resolve such a disagreement and lead both men to value the same things?"26 While it often does, says Stevenson, there is no guarantee that it always will. So although the emotive conception of ethics may be cognitively weak and

highly objectionable in interpersonal matters, Stevenson says it is defensible on account of personal decisions. He also thinks that the emotive theory of value is commendable on the following grounds.

i. That any workable ethics could not secure a rational convergence of of attitudes.

ii. And if we could not have a thoroughly rational convergence of attitudes the so-called objections to emotivism thus turn out to be an objection to the complexities of social life.

iii. That far from impoverishing ethics, emotivism really preserves the thoughtful relfective elements of ethics in all their variety.

BRANDT'S POSERS FOR EMOTIVISM

R. B. Brandt identifies five different theses of emotivism – the "Disagreement in Attitude" thesis which holds a moral disagreement as one in attitude, not in belief; ethical Statements as not always being capable of being resolved by observation of facts; ethical statements as not basically assertions about ethical attitudes but expressions of them (i.e. the "Expression Theses"); ethical statements as having a directive influence on emotions and attitudes of persons to whom they are directed (i.e. "Emotional Influence" thesis), and the mechanism of the directive influence of ethical statements (the "Blind Emotive"27 theory) – and takes real issues with the "Disagreement in Attitude" thesis.

Brand says that many an emotivist seem to think that all ethical disagreements are disagreements about attitudes and argues that 'if, when we have got our meanings for "right" clear, we are agreed as to what is right, I do not see the ethical relevance of any attitudinal disagreements'28 Again, STevenson has argued that various social groups disagree more on ethical matters than they do on factual ones and that this supports the "Disagreement in Attitude thesis of emotivism.29 The implication of this view, says Brandt, is that "if one works out a theory of social change he will be able to explain why different groups come by sharp ethical differences, if these are differences of attitude, but he cannot explain it so well if they are regarded as differences of belief, This is a large question, and there are serious difficulties in the argument".30 Brandt further contends that Stevenson's argument can only hold if it could really be shown that there are more disagreements or differences of opinion in the ethical plane than there are differences which are those of belief (as in theology and metaphysics), more so now that actions have or are believed to have, very different effects in one culture from those they have in

another. Furthermore, according to Brandt, Stevenson seems to assume that "we can make causal analysis of ethical opinions, relating them through laws to their sources, if we assume them to be attitudes, not if we assume them to be beliefs.'. But Brandt points out that since "psychological principles governing belief formation are very similar to those governing attitude formation beliefs are very often as much subject to needs and pressures as are attitudes.

At any rate, Brandt grants that Stevenson is right in saying that "this variation indicates that ethical opinions somehow involve attitudes." But insisting that the whole of ethical disagreements are disagreements about attitudes pure and simple is something only very crude facts and theories may support. In fact, says Brandt, the alternative theory that ethical disagreements are more of disagreements in "belief about attitudes" rather than about attitudes pure and simple enjoys more supportive evidence.31

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Certain crucial points about emotivism must be made explicit. The first is that not all emotive theories of value deny reason some function in evaluative decisions. Be that as it may, emotivism essentially makes reason a puppet of the passions in judgements of value. We shall illustrate this with suitable examples from Stevenson's emotivism. The second crucial point is that the principle which form the basis of emotivism is fundamentally in error Ayer's employment of the verificationist thesis in questions of statements of value is largely to blame for this error.

It can be shown that Stevenson falls foul of the fallacy of equivocation even though he assigns some functions to reason in value judgements. While admitting on the one hand that the emotive theory of value does not imply that evaluative decisions must be thoughtless especially in interpersonal matters, Stevenson sells ethics wholesale to emotion mostly at the level of personal decision. Whereas on the one hand Stevenson admits many different cognitive elements in ethical discourse, on the other hand, he doubts that there could be a "rationally obtainable convergence of attitudes in any ethics that actually works".

The crux of Stevenson's message is that since the bulk of man's moral decision is personal, and since in personal moral decisions the individual is not enunciating a universal norm, but resolving his conflicts of attitudes about the rightness or wrongness of actions, judgements of value must be largely emotive. In talking like this, Stevenson seems to forget that a moral agent has to take cognisance of the norms of conduct of society when making moral decisions. A man who likes adultery, for instance, may choose not to do it in order to avoid scandal or social reprobation. One should not forget that morality arizes from man's nature as a rational and social being. It is

these factors–man's rationality and sociality – that impels the moral agent to weigh the consequences of his actions. We would like to hold that deciding after careful deliberation and reflection is largely a rational function no matter how at variance with other value systems our moral decisions may turn out to be. Were man to act most of the times without careful deliberation emotivism would have had a field day. It is because the moral agent is a rational member of society,32, that it becomes necessary to resolve conflicts of attitudes about the rightness or wrongness of actions. For if man rejects society by perpetrating anti-social acts, society rejects him in return.

Nevertheless, Stevenson's emotive theory of value is not a fruitless expenditure of effort. At least, the orthodox ethician is called to face the full consequences of ignoring the irrational in moral discourse. It also serves to redress the ubridled emotivism of Ayer. With Stevenson , ethics is no longer a pseudoscience but a special science that enjoys no special privileges .

Ayer's emotivism, on the other hand, is a double-edged sword. It can be used to kill the moral philosopher and the moral philosopher could use it against Ayer. If questions of value are outside the scope of rational arguments as Ayer claims, emotivism which purports to be an argument against normative theories of value is fundamentally irrational. Ethical philosophers can simply reject Ayer's analysis of ethical sentences and say that it is a very trivial affair. For Ayer's emotivism to be radical enough it has to be shown that there is no principle of Being which supports his standpoint. Although he denies it there is because the "criterion of literal significance" which Ayer employs is itself not literally significant.

FOOTNOTES

1. Alfred Ayer distinguishes between logical positivism and logical empiricism and identifies with the later. For more details, see A.J. Ayer., *Language, Truth and Logic* London Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1964, p' 135

2. Ibid P. 103 (see also p. 28)

3. This emotivist notion of the nonassertoric character of moral statements, the unanalysability of fundamental moral concepts and the claim that moral concepts are pseudo-concepts will be treated in some detail in our discussions of Ayer's emotive theory of value.

4. A. J. Ayer, op. cit. p. 103

5. Ibid p. 104

6. Ibid. p. 105

7. This kind of argument is typical of G. E. Moore who is perhaps the most articulate of the intuitionists. For more details see G. E. Moore "The Indefinability of Good" in *A Modern Introduction to Philosophy* Arthur Paps and Edwards eds. Third Edition, pp. 322 – 328.

8. A. J. Ayer, op. cit. p. 107

9. Ibid. p. 107

10. Ibid p. 110

11. Ibid p. 111

12. Ibid. p. 111

13. Ibid. p. 31

14. The central point of this article is to show that contrary to what Ayer thinks, there are cognitive elements in judgements of value. For more details see C. L. Stevenson, "The Emotive Concepts of Ethics and its Cognitive Implications" *The Philosophical Review* vol. 59, July, 1950, pp. 291 – 304.

15. Cf. C. L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958, pp. 130 – 138.

16. C. L. Stevenson, "The Emotive Concepts of Ethics and Its Cognitive Implications" op. cit. p. 291.

17. Ibid p. 92
18. Ibid p. 293
19. Ibid p. 293
20. Ibid p. 293
21. Ibid p. 293
22. Ibid p. 293
23. Ibid p. 293
24. Ibid p. 294
25. Ibid. p. 302
26. Ibid p. 303
27. R. B. Brandt, "The Emotive Theory of Ethics" *The Philosophical Review op. cit. p. 305.*
28. Ibid p. 317
29. C. L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* p. 18
30. R. B. Brandt, "The Emotive Theory of Ethics" pp. 317–318
31. Ibid. p. 318
32. Cf. J. I. Omoregbe, *Ethics: A Systematic and Historical Study, London: Global Educational Services, 1979, p. 19.*

After Philosophy – End or Transformation. Edited by Kenneth Baynes, James Boham, and Thomas McCarthy. Cambridge, Massachustts: The MIT Press, 1987. Pp. 488.

Despite on going attempts to carve out a particular niche for itself, philosophy in contemporary Africa (as would physics, biology, economics, etc.) cannot afford to ignore intellectual trends elsewhere. Of course, the identity of philosophical research in Africa would ultimately depend on its capacity to interpret the world from a specific vantage point, yet its significance as an aspect of human intellectual effort can be appreciated only in terms of how its own particular interpretations constitute responses to questions of univasal scope.

For example, within the context of contemporary European philosophy there are obvious differences between, say, Anglo-American philosophy and Frendh philosophy: both schools of thought are said to represent different styles of doing philosophy. Yet these two approaches to philosophical thinking seek to interpret and elucidate intellectual concerns proper to the human condition: the question of ethical choice, questions on the structure of empirical reality, and general metaphysical questions concerning the limits of the human cognitive enterprise. Thus although philosophy in contemporary Africa may choose to be particularistic in its style of responding to theabove concerns it cannot avoid them The same principle applies to the natural and social sciences: the African researcher in these areas cannot afford to ignore research trends and findings elsewhere, regardless of local research orientations and emphases.

So given that contemporary philosophical inquiry in Africa is still concerned with questions of orientation it should be instructive to comment on similar trends elsewhere. It is for this reason that After Philosophy –– End or TRansformation is of particular significance. The editors of this text have good insights into present trends in European philosophy, both of the Anglo-American analystic tradition and the continental phenomenological approach. Interestingly enough, when one speaks of European philosophy reference is made almost exclusively to the research done by Anglo-American, Frendh and German philosophers. No doubt, this research monopoly derives from the long post-Renaissance tradition of the philosophical work done by French, German and British theorists. Yet in this connection, but parenthetically, the reflective student of European thought should wonder why contempo-

rary Spanish, Italian or Greek philosophical writings do not enjoy the popularity of philosophy written in English, French or German. It is for this reason that readers of After Philosophy would encounter in the same collection the research efforts of Gadamer, Habermas, Apel, Blumberg (German) Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard and Riccoeur (French); and Davidson, Dummett, MacIntyre, Putnam, Rorty and Taylor (Anglo-American) -- all important figures of contemporary European thought.

The editors of the text have conveniently divided it into three sections subtitled (1) The End of Philosophy, (2) The Transformation of Philosophy: Systematic proposals, and (3) The Transformation of Philosophy. Hermeneutics, Rhetoric, Narrative.

In the first section there are articles by Rorty, Lyotard, Foucault and Derrida One withnesses in this section a sample of Rorty's neopragmatisim which seeks to replace philosophy in the classical sense with its search for absolutes like "the truth" with philosoophy as an enterprise limited to the expression of nothing more than the epistemologically convenient. In Rorty's scheme the "question of what propositions to assert, which pictures to look at, what narratives to listen to and comment on and retell, are all questions about what will help us get what we want (or about what we should want)". (p.61) A similar deflationary approach to philosophyical discourse is assumed by Lyotard in his essay "The Postmodern Condition", where in a manner similar to that of Rorty's Philosophy is seen as unfit for "Meta-narraitve" or grand metaphysical designs. His explanation of this is that "the progress of science has led to a crisis of metaphysical philosophy and the university institution that in the past relied on it". The selection on Foucault completes the editors' selections on what they term as "the end of philosophy" discourse. Foucault in his rejection of the post-Enlightement subject chooses to replace philosophy with "genealogy" -- a discipline which would seek to demonstrate the necessary relationship between knowledge and power. Foucalt's views on the "end of philosophy" are expressed in interview form with a group of historians. Here he elaborates on the notion that ideas of truth and falsity are historically bound up with the ideas of social control and power. The final piece in, perhaps, the most interesting section of this text is the essay "Ends of Man" by Jacques Derrida, the major theorist of the deconstruction school. Derrida's grogramme for deflating philosophy is to show that in the process of deconstructing phylosophical thought the goals of dicovering or formulating absolutes are shown to be unattainable. In this piece one also notes Derrida's idosyncratic interpretation of Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger and Nietzsche.

The section on the transformation of philosophy also makes interesting reading with useful pieces from the Anglo-American tradition: Davidson,

Dummett and Putnam; and from contemporary Germany, Apel and Habermas These authors all attempt to make something out of a post-modern philosophy. Consider Davidson's attempt in "The Method of Truth in metaphysics" to anchor philosophy on the concept of truth, with his critique of an epistemological relativism made popular by theorists like Quine and Kuhn. For the old metaphysical questions Davidson seeks novel answers which could prove firm against the critical analyses of the end of philosopher theorists. Similar attempts to reconstruct and ground philosophy are evident from Dummett's "Can Analytic Philosophy be Systematic" and Putnam's "Why Reason Can't be Naturalized".

In the case of Apel one discerns a movement away from the constructive formalism of Davidson et al. to a more pragmatic approach to philosophy. This incipient pragmatism comes to full effect in Habermas' "Philisophy as Stand-In and Interpreter". Habermas is a prominent continental philosopher and his approach to philosophy is one which could be of interest to those who expect more from philosophy than mere theorising. In response to "those who advocate a cut-and-dried division of labour, (and for whom) research traditions representing a blend of philosophy and science have always been particularly offesnsive", (p. 309) Habermas argues that the historically seminal theories of Durkheim, Weber, Marx and Freud "each inserted a genuinely philosophical idea like a detonator into a particular context of research". (Ibid.) Thus philosophy shorn of its historical usher role since the demise of its maltre penseurs, instead of being satisfied with a very reduced role (this is the programme of Rorty et al.) should now assume the role of Platzhalter (place holder) for empirical theories with pretensions to universality. I believe that Habermas has a strong point here given the surreptitious ideologizing that the human sciences and other human interest theories are prone to engage in. It is on these grounds that I want to claim the Habermas' theoretical analyses are of much contemporary significance given his recognition that for thought to be maningful in the human sense, it should have an evident potential in practice. In this respect Habermas continues the noteworthy tradition of Marx.

The third section of the text contains other attempts at the transformation of philosophy in its essays on Hermeneutics, Rhetoric and Narrative. Note the essays by Gadamer on the methodology of hermeneutics – the neo-paradigm of interpretation. But according to Gadamer, Hermeneutics constitutes a kind of propaedeutic to practical philosophy – given its "theoretical attitude towards the practice of interpretation". While the essays by Ricoeur are in a similar vein, those by MacIntyre, Blumberg and Taylor are respectively about

questions of epistemological relativism, metaphor and myth, and the specificity of man, the consciously knowing and sensing subject in the general objective scheme of things.

As a collection of the most current philosophical trends in European though this text is to be recommended – especially to those interested in comparative philosophical thought The succint introductory comments on each of the authors should also be noted. However the text's virtues derive from its emphasis on the notion that what is most vital about philosophical thought is when it questions itself as it seeks to break new ground. And philosophy's questioning of itself in the post-modern world is an intellectual pheno menon of much interest. For the fundamental question is: is the age of philosophy as a vital intellectual acitivity over, given its historical role in the formulating and maturation of the special sciences? For after all, in the European world research in the natural and social sciences is viewed as being of more pragmatic importance than research in philosophy. In this regard it is natural science that serves the technological base of the West while social science reaserch offers its ideological support. I add too that it is the ideological support offered by the social sciences that afford the relativistically optimal usage of technology for European society. Consider, for example, the ideological arguments employed to defend expenditures on armaments, one of the important applications of modern technology.

Perphaps philosophical analysis structured as it is on epistemology would prove too disequilibrating for the reified ideologies of the social sciences – hence the claim that the end of philosophy has arrived. But it is this potential for distinguishing superficial appearances from more genuine states of affairs, for demonstrating the linkages between ideoligies, beliefs and sociological structures, that vindicates philosophy. The point is that those who argue for the end of philosophy are themselves making an ideological sttement.

Review by
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