The 1st
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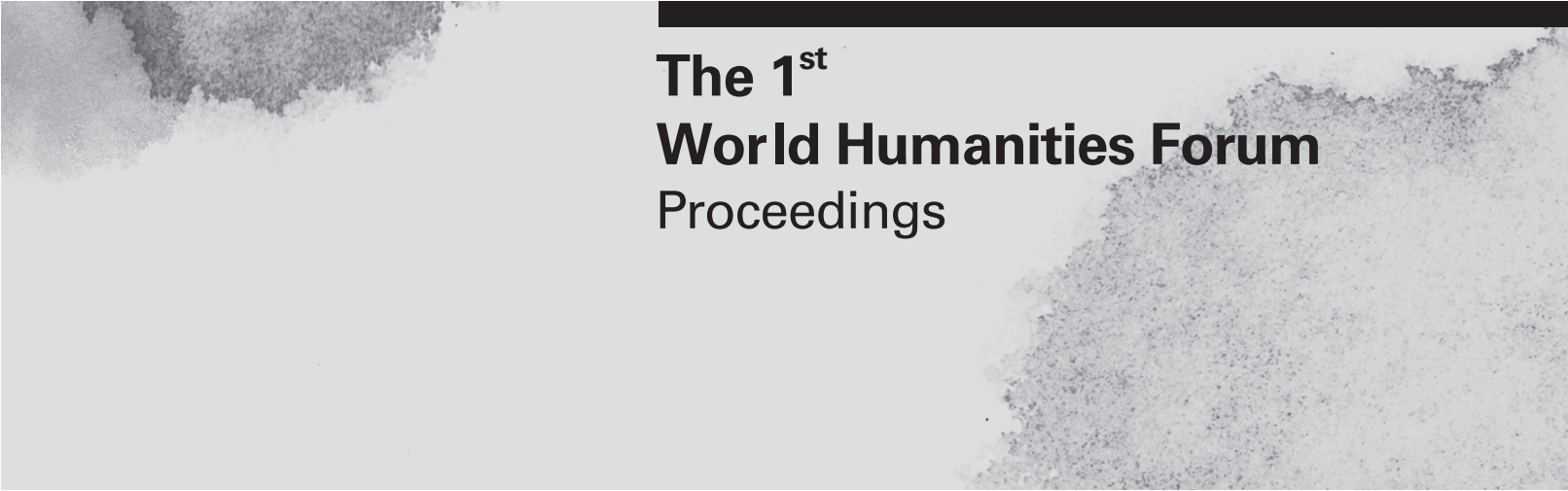## Session 4

Parallel Session 2.
Global Ethics and Dialogue of Cultures

The 1st World Humanities Forum
Proceedings

To Live in the World as Humans

Tanella Boni

University of Abidjan

Introduction

The question in which I'm interested for this essay is as follows: how can we live in the world as humans? But first, what do "humans" mean and what is the "world"? What distinguishes us from artificial products and organisms like plants and animals and what makes us "humans" ("human persons") – this is what intrigues me. However, what is evident is that a human, who is neither an animal nor a vegetable, lives among other humans. In the same vein, each organism having the characteristics of "woman" and/or "man" must be able to stand up, to take initiative, to act and to accomplish his or her own task: to think, to express and to act. How would they not infringe on others' space and time in these conditions? How would they not ignore this space and this time? How would they not step on the other, annihilate and kill him or her? Because the fight over the spaces and territories to conquer, what I call fight over places, is probably one of the first rules that we experience, in contexts, it is enough to ask the question about living to make it clear: a human, a concrete being with the double directions of female or male, doesn't live only as a poet, an artist and a creator. A human also lives as a conqueror and a predator. How can this living style be free of any disaster? Is there a just measure that would be taken so that the diverse worlds which are juxtaposed or included one in the other and which cannot coexist may not ignore each other or harbor strong hatred or annihilate each other? This means a non quantifiable measure whose right use would go beyond all the particular moral lessons and probably all the positive laws. Likewise, a human would rationally choose life rather than death in all its forms, locally but also globally.

When the chaos is omnipresent, as we witness today in certain regions, what does remain from the world's primary beauty? After the 20th century of all the disasters and the beginning of the 21st century when extremely urgent situations and uncountable violence destroyed local worlds dispersing thousands of individuals onto unfriendly and dangerous roads of the global world, we realize that evil exists, whether it is banal or radical (Revault D'Allonnes 1999). However, we lack an *almost nothing* to judge between

good and evil, to make decisions in contexts. Who will provide us with these rules? The local moral lessons that are linked to cultural diversity seem to be weak when faced with global threats for the future of humanity. What we search for must be something absolute or true going beyond our principles and precepts, something unshakable that would enlighten our choices and guide our actions. The question which remains to be asked is that of the possibility of universal ethics, which would be valid regardless of existing cultures and values.

Most likely, there may be only particular, regional and local ethics. If that is the case, it is the notions of humanity, person and human dignity that are in danger because these notions will also admit fragmentation and dispersion. They will be modified in contexts. Human rights, whose protection has been considered fashionable (or almost) today, would lose its foundation. We would imagine several categories of humans or degrees at the level of humanity. Nevertheless, we should understand the situation well when acting, in order to prevent human characteristics from leaving us. However, the human that we search for is already there, the human "perseveres in his or her being," resists and can't suggest a purely meaningless idea. He or she transforms the world and the multiple worlds live in him or her.

To Live in the World

Today, each local world forms its own borders (Agier 2002). The global world forms its margins, pieces of isolated worlds, whereas societies, regardless of what they are, generate the excluded, who are sometimes invisible. The enlightening story written by Ben Okri (1998), *To Surprise the Gods (Etonner les Dieux)*, tells us about this point amazingly. This is a story of an invisible man who comes of age and who decides to travel around the world to discover visible people and those who exist in reality. He faces surprise after surprise during his seven-year trip. We could also mention what I would call the "zombie factory." Indeed, in certain countries, for example in sub-Saharan Africa, the political leader maintains an atmosphere of soft and subtle terror in an attempt to reach his goal (to conquer or preserve power without sharing it with others). Such terror is so banal that people are gradually transformed into floating shadows without any will, standing shocking violence. Meanwhile, zombies are unkillable as mentioned in this saying which is widely known on the streets of Abidjan: "A dead goat isn't afraid of a knife."

Thus, all humans don't live in this world in the same way as they would live at home in entire freedom, peace, observing their domestic laws and fulfilling their duties as citizens. Some people (these people gradually increase in number) cannot choose their living place, facing the law of *nowhere*.

What is then the world? To me, the etymology of this word sounds truly interesting. While mundus refers to an object, more precisely the "harmonious entity of the sky" and also "earth where organisms live," it

is also the word that expresses certain quality. First and foremost, the world is neither good nor bad. We then find out that mundus first means "clean," "pure," "cleaned" and "washed" (Gaffiot 1934) and all the range of terms meaning order and beauty. However, what would be the value of a world without any humans and life? Would the world be a place where all the dirt is removed and where unwelcome guests would not have the right to citizenship? Meanwhile, who decides to do this cleaning work? In fact, it is the most common words that lead us to what humans can do to others. These words also suggest these uncontrollable convulsions which, in the form of natural disasters, become out of control. As we know, human activities, which show little respect for the environment, can aggravate this situation (Rapport Brundtland 1987). Today, neither the sky nor earth provides us with order, harmony and beauty that the etymology of the word "world" would suggest. That is because the world is this physical and political space where evil is generated in the form of incidents having incalculable consequences.

Studying the usage of the word cosmos by some Greek philosophers, the model of order and beauty turns out to be the natural model of the sky. In the city, the law had to create certain political and social order in which inequality looked natural. According to Aristotle, nature commands and the legislator obey it while the philosopher justifies and strengthens the law. Likewise, for Plato, the artisan who does manual work, touching the material, is regarded as belonging to the lowest social class. At the opposite end of the classes, in the first class, is the philosopher, who has been educated for a long time. In this way, the philosopher can distinguish between true and false, know himself, and if necessary, govern the city of justice (Plato, *The Republic*). In this case, he will become the councilor of a prince (Platon, *The Statesman*). The human, who is regarded as a microcosm, must ensure that his talents are well organized, thanks to appropriate education. In this context, thoughts can control desires, and if necessary, imagination and sensations as well. A human of justice, who is educated, who has knowledge on everything and who is integrated in his or her society, thus benefits from harmony of all the virtues that live in him or her. A human is thus truly a cosmos. The world lives in him or her. A human is the order of the world in miniature. For a citizen, the city is his or her local world where he or she lives with other citizens and free people, but also with slaves and outsiders. We can thus say that the notions of inclusion and exclusion are first linked to a context which is local, political and historical at the same time. In the era of Greek philosophers, slaves were "animated instruments" (Aristotle, *Politics*, I) that were subordinate to domestic economy. According to Aristotle, a slave doesn't make any reasonable choice and he doesn't participate in public affairs. The world, in terms of its meaning of balance, order and beauty, already contains a principle of social inclusion and exclusion.

The Real World and the Virtual World

The long history of humanity as well as the accumulation of science and technology changed the shape

of the world and we discover unexpected parts on earth and in the sky. We can ask ourselves if there is still the concept of "local" on populated earth since the concept "global," which is imposed on us as an uncertain, blind and inhuman entity, seems to prevail.

In fact, we realize that the planet Earth is, from an ecological point of view, a heritage shared by all organisms. The dimensions that have been hidden so far and the possibility of life are unveiled thanks to the technologies becoming increasingly sophisticated. Now, the virtual world is considered part of everyday life and also tends to become a living space, as we witness the flourishing social networks on the Internet. From this point of view, is it a coincidence that we talk about the "web"? We could discuss the globalization of networks and their consequences regarding inclusion and exclusion, opening and closing, approval and refusal of the other. However, who is this other human who is so close and so distant at the same time when news is spread in the world in real time and when new media is imposed as primary tools of human relationships? Sometimes, this "other" human has neither body nor face, on the web. This human may be wearing a mask like a serial killer or a kidnapper or he may be a neighbor with a face of an angel free of all suspicion. Taking contemporary people hostage unscrupulously seems to be child's play. In fact, anything can happen, under the cover of a mask or an innocent face: the best and the worst, rational thinking and the most murderous ideology. It is enough to remind ourselves of the flourishing cyber crimes to better understand the situation. Where money is regarded as having a central value, an unscrupulous world is also formed, and in this world, utilitarianism serves as the master. This is a world whose rules make fun of their surrounding ethics. New information and communications technology is made a tool by people without face and body who are unreal or almost unreal and who use pseudonyms to deceive others on a large scale. Likewise, the real world, which has become global, has generated unprecedented and unlimited violence linked to new ways of living in the virtual world.

Supposing that this living style is a game, the web could be a place of experimenting new forms of solitude among the crowd of "friends." That is because we lack an almost nothing in the new living spaces in the virtual world, which always has a gap with the real world. This lack could be linked to the idea of humanity, a word that refers to this vague thing that characterizes humans: a sense of sociability (Aristotle, *Politics*, I, 2). A human is neither a god nor an animal; what characterizes a human is the fact that he or she naturally lives in a community, as Aristotle points out.

It thus seems to me that – this can also sound paradoxical – social networks are also places of inclusion and exclusion: inclusion due to a group of close friends and exclusion due to the law of networks implying new members, approval, protection or refusal. However, Myriam Revault D'Allonnes (1999:15) affirms: "…the world becomes inhuman or acosmic when the complex structure woven by humans is broken, when the period during which they maintain their unlimited conversations goes nowhere, when

there remains no trace of words which were spoken long time ago and finally, when – without sufficient understandable words in hand – they ask themselves what they would pass on to the next generation."

Likewise, awareness of the concept "global" is most of all that of shared problems concerning the future of humanity. Is this future predictable? This question remains without answer because uncertainties seem to precede any form of certainties, naturally generating new forms of religiousness and the international spread of numerous religious institutions. Today, awareness of the globalness of the world goes hand in hand with that of evil. Evil destroys the order of the world – with its diversity and its globalness – that we no longer see from an innocent point of view. Therefore, the incidents that we experience at the crossroads of all the worlds that we live in and that live in us – as well as the encounters that we face – teach us the omnipresence of evil and the commonness of death. We thus realize how much the borders of good are blurred and how complex the notions of world and humanity are.

If the world, in its diversity and complexity, is regularly transformed into chaos, separating humans and giving pain to body, heart and spirit, what remains to be done is to view human conditions in relation to the new possibility of living in the spaces where people cannot live.

To Live Nowhere and To Continue to Be Human

The notion of living has a completely different aspect when we try to view it in relation to the diversity of contemporary migration. How do we move physically and psychologically? What are the laws that shine the paths that women, men and children borrow without thinking much – because they don't have any choice? They move in unknown spaces. Likewise, to live doesn't mean to stay in one place like a plant, fixed to the ground (Heidegger 1958), and to have a living space somewhere. From another point of view, it means to be in motion or to learn to exist nowhere, where people must start their life from scratch, face the emptiness of an unwelcoming space and transform it into a familiar place.

Some literary texts realize that men and women, who are excluded from the "beautiful world" that is organized and ruled by the social laws in which moral values are valid, inevitably end up constructing other words in unpredictable spaces that they make living places. Paradoxically, this isn't a clean place that they squat in. Tons of garbage, a symbol quite far from the idea of "world," is this space which is transformed into a living place, with its own community life rules as described in *When Incense Is Rubbed with Garlic (Quand l'ail se frotte à l'encens)* (Adame Ba Konaré 2006), a story of the everyday life of a poor family living from the garbage of consumer society in Bamako. Mount Olympus of Misfortune (L'Olympe des infortunes) (Yasmina Khadra 2010) describes its characters living in no man's land located between a landfill site and the sea. It doesn't mean that they lose their own dignity when they live out of

society. They say, "When we are like rats, we don't try to blame each other. This is a question of dignity." (Khadra 2010 :12). They dream, take initiative, think and play the music. Everything goes on as if they were forming a new family.

Likewise, every society can have the right to ignore the excluded, who will in turn continue to create other worlds in the margin of the world that people can live in. Meanwhile, stateless people, migrants and refugees transform nowhere into a living place, swayed by seasons of violence and incidents. That is because life means starting again forever, despite omnipresent death and all kinds of sufferings to undergo. Those in whom nowhere lives bring with them their symbolic luggage composed of some pieces of former worlds or some traces of knowledge, languages and faiths that are mixed with other elements crossed on the way. This is how complex cultures are born in opposition to ancestral cultures as Edouard Glissant repeats throughout his book. According to Glissant, in the era of slave trade, in wharves and in plantations were born such colonized and nonexclusive cultures, witnesses of the relationship between different worlds.

On the roads of nowhere, accepted or rejected, faced with the law of the global world, sometimes subordinate to the humane law – that concerns the beings made of flesh and bones who fall from their human status – we could ask ourselves who are these human persons who are trampled on and crushed alive on the threshold of humanity? There are several kinds of *nowhere* and an unlimited number of ways of losing human conditions. The most common way is the one that happens just before us, as Sony Labou Tansi tells in *l'Anté-peuple,* story of Dadou, a respectable and stoical citizen who becomes addicted to alcohol from the moment when he meets his female student with whom a scandal breaks and a life in hell begins. Dadou fell down and he gradually wanted to get up again. His place was wiped out of the world where he lived for a long time. He went into the forest, a place which allows him to go back to the origin of life and also a place of breakdown and revolt. He pretended to be "crazy."" The story is not as ordinary as this because "to resist" isn't what we believe it to be. It is not just to refuse to be the passive victim of an incident but to continuously get up again, in other words, to take initiative and to change the direction of life.

Question of a Human and Possibility of Universal Ethics

Whatever cultures they have in hand, humans are the persons who have equal dignity. However, what is a human? Domestic and international laws can help us acknowledge the diversity, plurality and specificity of cultures. It is also about respecting each individuality and singularity. On the other hand, we are aware of the existence of a particular human beyond his or her culture and all of his or her characteristics, when we are conscious of our own vulnerability despite all the material wealth that we can possess. Does such

vulnerability start as soon as we are born, as Lucien Sève points out in *What Is a Human (Qu'est-ce qu'une personne humaine)*?

According to Sève, "A person is much more than a legal fiction and a premise of moral rationality. This is a real being; but from a purely secular point of view, this reality (…) cannot totally be reduced to that of biopsychic individuality but this reality is basically historical and social. In other words, while this reality has a totally secular meaning, it evidently transcends a natural being, as soon as it is generated by what is acquired from civilization which goes much beyond this reality and that we can call the order of a person." (Sève 2006: 51)

Serving as an active member of the National Advisory Committee on Ethics of France from 1983 to 2000, Lucien Sève comes up with what he calls an "order of a person" which is not natural but historical and social. However, Sève affirms that it is difficult to imagine such an order from the perspective of respect deserved by "a psychosocial and neurobiological individual." Other approaches can also turn out to be less pertinent. In fact, can we command respect for a human through law, religion or ethics? Kant's categorical order isn't enough and the perspective envisaged by Levinas, which is about ethical obligation when faced with the other's face, (Levinas 1961) has some limits "because there are also humans capable of trampling on a face with heels." (Sève 2006: 52). What Lucien Sève calls the order of a person is civilized order which is not savage or barbaric and which refers to "the entity historically formed over the course of several centuries and always in motion of social forms which are material and ideological at the same time, in which awareness of inviolable human value is gradually objectified and from which it is subjectified more or less in everyone" (Sève 2006: 52). This value is the entire world that lives in a person and that makes him or her being not resembling anyone else. This world was formed from ancestral respect deserved by the dead, by every dead body. Nevertheless, this same world is so complex and so contradictory that it regards human value as dignity, and it tends to question such dignity, for example, concerning the approval of some exceptional cases as humans. Focusing on "a concept of 'human' that would be accepted by everyone," Lucien Sève suggests calling a conscious individual capable of being responsible for his or her actions, *person for self* and exceptional cases, which add to the existence of the human world, *person in self*: "a newborn baby, an autistic person, an insane person, person in a vegetative state for a long time after an accident…" (Sève 2006: 55). Nonetheless, before a newborn baby comes to the world, he or she passes through much more stages, which are regarded as stages of biological life development. Where does the human world start then? Where does it stop? Should we perhaps change our direction?

In *Ethics, Essay on the Awareness of Evil (L'éthique, essai sur la conscience du mal)*, Alain Badiou shows that he would never witness the existence of "general ethics." What is thus searched for here is not exactly

respect for a person or a human but rather, the formation of a topic. This topic is linked to "ethics of truths," which is different from "ethics of human rights," which, from a very close view, could be ethics of a "conquering civilized person." That is because integration of immigrants proposed by this ethics (for example in French society) suggests eliminating differences. However, a human is neither a simple mortal person nor a victim. He or she is "the most resistant and the most paradoxical among all animals" (Badiou 2003: 33). The starting point of Badiou's analysis is the idea that a human is an immoral person: "An immortal person: in this way, the worst situations that could happen to him or her demonstrate what is a human, considering particular actions taken by him or her in the multiform and predatory flow of life" (Badiou 2003 : 27). This immortal person perseveres along the path of truth. He or she is wary of faiths and multiple opinions which construct the world of "communication." For him or her, the important question is this: "How will I, living as someone, *continue* to exceed my own being and to consistently link what I know to the effects of the realization of the unknown?" (Badiou 2003: 72).

Conclusion

Ethics that we search for is a question about the meaning of the human world, history, values, multiple ways of living, and ultimately, it is about the local actions taken daily in order to fight against self annihilation and demolition of living places. How would we resist the disasters that are already happening and those who are expected to happen?

At the time, when obvious inequality divides the global world which generates unwelcome guests, we could ask ourselves if the affirmation of human rights is based on a certain *solid* foundation. It is true that international intervention saves lives, but hasn't it become an unavoidable element in the competition arena of conquest and predation? Intervention in a country's domestic affairs doesn't bring liberty to an oppressed people if they don't have the resources necessary for their emancipation. However, how would one find emancipating resources in oneself, have this will (which is rather good), in order to choose an action to take when urgency and time pressure replace other forms of time which used to strengthen social links?

When the future perspective is uncertain, we had better be somebody rather than be nothing. In other words, we should choose to be somebody rather than a thing or an instrument subordinate to a powerful person. That is because, regardless of our multiple living spaces, we all have this amazing aptitude of becoming somebody, in order to better welcome another person. To take care of oneself, to accomplish the task for which we live in the world: to think, to create when political action fails and when economy spreads its commercial values on the alleys of the global world. To rise above the opinion shared by all, to break away from prejudices, to learn to know one's own world and that of the others. These are some

of the rules of everyday ethics that all education teaches us. In this way, science and culture, creation and thoughts appear as the only alternative to construct a world where people can live, to enhance the human conditions filled with sufferings and solitude. *To judge with one's soul and consciousness* could be an acceptable maxim. However, awareness of evil doesn't come in advance and such awareness is formed and cultivated until it becomes closer to the truth. This is how we learn to recognize good, albeit tiny, amidst all kinds of catastrophes. Writing this essay, I think of the recent dark moments faced by Côte d'Ivoire. That is because it is these moments that enlighten our consciousness and from our thoughts.

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Habiter le monde en humains

Tanella Boni
Université de Abidjan

Introduction

La question qui me préoccupe ici pourrait se formuler comme suit : comment habiter le monde en humains ?. Mais que signifie « humains » et qu'est-ce que le « monde » ? Ce qui nous distingue des fabrications artificielles et des vivants tels que les plantes et les animaux et qui fait que nous sommes « humains » - des « personnes humaines »- voilà ce qui m'intéresse. Pourtant, rien de moins évident que d'être une « personne humaine » même si l'homme n'est ni fauve, ni légume, et qu'il ne vit pas seul mais parmi ses semblables. Ainsi, chaque vivant doté des attributs de « femme » et/ou « d'homme » doit pouvoir rester debout et être capable de prendre des initiatives, d'agir, d'accomplir sa tâche propre : penser, s'exprimer, agir. Comment ne pas, dans ces conditions, empiéter sur l'espace et le temps de l'autre ? Comment ne pas gommer cet espace et ce temps? Comment ne pas écraser l'autre, l'anéantir, *le tuer* ? Car la *lutte* des espaces ou des territoires à conquérir que j'appelle lutte des places, est sans doute l'une des premières règles dont nous faisons l'expérience, en situation. Il suffit de se poser la question de l'habitation pour se rendre à l'évidence : l'homme, l'être concret au double sens du féminin et du masculin, n'habite pas seulement en poète, en artiste, en créateur. Il habite aussi en conquérant et en prédateur. Comment cette habitation peut-elle perdurer sans désastre ? Y a-t-il une juste mesure pour éviter que les divers mondes juxtaposés ou inclus les uns dans les autres, incapables de cohabiter, ne s'ignorent, ne se vouent une haine tenace ou ne s'anéantissent ? Une mesure non quantifiable dont la justesse serait par-delà toutes les morales particulières et peut-être les lois positives. Ainsi, l'homme ferait le choix raisonnable de la vie, plutôt que celui de la mort sous toutes ses formes, localement mais aussi à l'échelle planétaire.

Quand le chaos est omniprésent, comme on le constate aujourd'hui dans certaines régions, que reste-il de la beauté primordiale du monde ? Après un 20ème siècle de tous les désastres et le début d'un 21ème où les situations d'extrême urgence et les violences innommables fracturent les mondes locaux, dispersant des milliers d'individus sur les routes inamicales et périlleuses du monde global, nous avons conscience

que le mal existe, banal ou radical (Revault D'Allonnes 1999). Cependant, un presque rien nous manque pour juger le bien et le mal, pour décider en situation. Qui nous fournira ces règles ? Les morales locales, liées à la diversité des cultures, semblent impuissantes face aux menaces globales qui pèsent sur l'avenir de l'humanité. Ce que nous cherchons doit être quelque chose d'imprescriptible ou de vrai par-delà nos principes et préceptes, quelque chose d'inébranlable susceptible d'éclairer nos choix et de guider nos actions. La question qui reste posée est celle de la possibilité d'une éthique universelle valable quelles que soient les cultures et les valeurs en présence.

 Peut-être n'y a-t-il que des éthiques particulières, régionales, locales. Si tel est le cas, ce sont les notions d'humanité, de personne et de dignité humaine qui sont en péril, puisqu'elles admettront, elles aussi, la fragmentation et l'éparpillement. Elles seront modulées en situation. Les « droits de l'homme » dont la défense est aujourd'hui de l'ordre de la mode-ou presque- seront sans fondement. On pourrait imaginer plusieurs catégories d'humains ou des degrés à l'échelle de l'humanité. Or, il s'agit d'agir en connaissance de cause afin d'éviter que l'humain ne s'écarte de lui-même. Cependant, l'humain que nous cherchons est déjà-là, il « persévère dans son être », il résiste, il n'est pas à poser comme une idée, une pure vue de l'esprit. Il transforme le monde et des mondes multiples l'habitent.

Habiter le monde

Aujourd'hui, chaque monde local façonne ses propres bords (Agier 2002). Et le monde global ses marges, des fragments de mondes isolés, tandis que les sociétés, quelles qu'elles soient, engendrent des exclus, parfois invisibles. Le récit lumineux de Ben Okri(1998), *Etonner les Dieux*, nous en parle admirablement. Il raconte l'histoire de cet homme invisible, qui, à l'âge adulte, décide de voyager dans le monde pour découvrir les gens visibles et ceux qui existent réellement. Il ira de surprise en surprise, après sept ans de voyage. On pourrait évoquer aussi ce que j'appellerais la fabrique des zombies. En effet, dans certains pays, par exemple en Afrique subsaharienne, le pouvoir politique, pour arriver à ses propres fins –conquérir ou conserver le pouvoir sans partage- entretient un climat de terreur fine, subtile, tellement banal que les humains se transforment peu à peu en ombres flottantes, sans volonté, supportant des violences inouïes. Seulement, les zombies sont *in-tuables* comme le suggère cet adage qui a cours dans les rues d'Abidjan : « Cabri mort n'a pas peur du couteau ».

Tous les humains n'habitent donc pas le monde de la même manière, comme on habiterait chez soi, en toute liberté, en toute tranquillité, en respectant les lois de son pays, en faisant ses devoirs de citoyen. Certains, et ils sont de plus en plus nombreux, ne peuvent choisir leurs lieux de vie, ainsi affrontent-ils les lois de *nulle part*.

Qu'est-ce donc que le monde ? L'étymologie du mot me paraît intéressante à plus d'un titre. Si *mundus* désigne un objet, plus précisément « l'ensemble harmonieux du ciel » mais aussi la « Terre habitée », il est également le mot qui exprime une qualité. Au premier abord, le monde n'est ni bon ni mauvais. Ainsi apprend-on que *mundus* renvoie d'abord à « propre », « pur », « nettoyé », « lavé » (Gaffiot 1934) et à toute une série de mots du champ lexical de l'ordre et de la beauté. Cependant, que vaut un monde vide d'humains et sans vie? Le monde serait-il le lieu nettoyé de toute souillure, là où des indésirables n'auraient pas droit de cité ? Mais qui décide de ce nettoyage? Ce sont en effet les mots les plus anodins qui nous conduisent à ce que l'homme est capable de faire à son semblable. Ces mots suggèrent aussi ces soubresauts indomptables qui, sous la forme de catastrophes naturelles, échappent à tout contrôle de l'homme. Comme on le sait, des activités humaines peu respectueuses de la préservation de l'environnement peuvent en être des circonstances aggravantes (Rapport Brundtland 1987). Aujourd'hui, ni le ciel, ni la Terre ne nous présentent l'ordre, l'harmonie et la beauté que suggéraient l'étymologie du mot monde. Car le monde est à la fois cet espace physique et politique où se produit le mal sous la forme d'événements aux conséquences incalculables.

En suivant cosmos chez quelques philosophes grecs, le modèle de l'ordre et de la beauté est celui, naturel, du ciel. Dans la cité, il fallait instaurer, par la loi, un certain ordre politique et social dans lequel les inégalités paraissaient naturelles. Aux yeux d'Aristote, la nature commande et le législateur obéit, pendant que le philosophe justifie et conforte. De même, chez Platon, l'artisan qui travaille de ses mains, au contact de la matière, est classé au bas de l'échelle sociale. A l'autre bout de l'échelle, au premier rang, se situe le philosophe qui suit une longue formation scientifique. Ainsi est-il apte à discerner le vrai du faux, à se connaître soi-même, et, au besoin, à gouverne la cité juste (Platon, La *République*). Le cas échéant, il deviendra le conseiller d'un prince (*Platon, Le politique*). L'homme, pensé comme un microcosme doit, par une éducation appropriée, veiller au bon ordre de ses facultés : la pensée maîtrisant les désirs, muselant au besoin l'imagination et les sensations. L'homme juste, éduqué et savant en toute chose, intégré dans sa société, bénéficie ainsi de l'harmonie de toutes les vertus qui l'habitent. L'homme est donc véritablement cosmos. Le monde l'habite. Il est l'ordre du monde en miniature. En tant que citoyen, la cité est son monde local dans lequel il cohabite avec d'autres citoyens et hommes libres, mais aussi des esclaves et des métèques. On peut donc dire que les notions d'inclusion et d'exclusion sont d'abord liées à un contexte à la fois local, politique et historique. Au temps des philosophes grecs, les esclaves étaient des « instruments animés » (*Aristote, Politiques*, I) au service de l'économie domestique. Chez Aristote, l'esclave ne fait aucun choix raisonnable et il ne participe pas aux affaires publiques. Le monde en tant qu'équilibre, ordre et beauté contenait donc déjà un principe d'inclusion et d'exclusion sociale.

Monde réel et monde virtuel

La longue histoire de l'humanité ainsi que l'accumulation des sciences et des techniques ont changé les contours du monde dont on découvre des parties insoupçonnées aussi bien dans le ciel que sur la Terre. On peut se demander s'il existe encore du local sur la Terre habitée, tant le global, qui s'impose à nous comme une totalité incertaine, aveugle et inhumaine, semble prendre le dessus.

L'on constate, en effet, que la planète Terre est, d'un point de vue écologique, ce patrimoine commun à tous les vivants. Des dimensions jusque-là cachées ou des possibilités de vie sont dévoilées grâce à des technologies de plus en plus sophistiquées. Désormais, le virtuel fait partie intégrante de la vie quotidienne et tend à devenir, aussi, un lieu d'habitation, comme en témoigne la floraison des réseaux sociaux sur Internet. Est-ce un hasard si, de ce point de vue, l'on parle de « toile mondiale » ? On pourrait épiloguer sur la mondialisation des réseaux, ses conséquences en termes d'inclusion et d'exclusion, d'ouverture et de clôture, d'acceptation ou de rejet de l'autre. Mais qui est cet autre humain à la fois si proche et si distant à l'heure où les nouvelles sont diffusées dans le monde en temps réel et que les nouveaux médias s'imposent comme des outils privilégiés de relation entre les hommes ? Parfois, il n'a ni corps, ni visage, sur la toile mondiale. Peut-être porte-t-il un masque ou une cagoule comme un serial killer ou un preneur d'otages ou alors est-il un voisin au visage d'ange, lavé de tout soupçon. Prendre ses contemporains en otage, sans état d'âme, semble être un jeu d'enfant. Tout peut arriver, en effet, sous le couvert d'un masque ou de la pureté d'un visage, le meilleur comme le pire, la pensée raisonnable comme l'idéologie la plus meurtrière. Il suffit de penser à la floraison de la cybercriminalité pour s'en convaincre. Là où l'argent est conçu comme valeur cardinale, là aussi se construit un monde sans scrupules, où l'utilitarisme règne en maître. Un monde dont les règles se moquent de la morale ambiante. Les nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la communication sont instrumentalisées par des personnes –sans visage, sans corps, irréels ou presque- portant des pseudonymes pour mieux arnaquer à grande échelle. Ainsi se créent dans le monde réel devenu global, des violences inédites, sans limites, liées aux nouvelles manières d'habiter le monde virtuel.

A supposer que cette habitation soit ludique, la toile mondiale pourrait être le lieu d'expérimentation de nouvelles formes de solitude parmi la foule des « amis ». Car, il manque un presque rien aux nouveaux lieux d'habitation dans le monde virtuel-toujours en déphasage avec le monde réel- et ce manque pourrait avoir un lien avec l'idée d'humanité, mot qui désigne cette chose insaisissable qui nous caractérise en propre : le sens de la sociabilité (Aristote, Politiques, I, 2). L'homme n'est ni dieu, ni bête : ce qui le prouve, c'est qu'il vit naturellement en communauté, comme le souligne Aristote.

Il me semble donc, aussi paradoxal que cela puisse paraître, que les réseaux sociaux sont aussi bien

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des lieux d'inclusion que d'exclusion : d'inclusion selon des affinités électives, d'exclusion selon la loi des réseaux qui implique cooptation, acceptation, protection ou rejet. Or, Myriam Revault D'Allonnes (1999 :15) affirme: «… le monde devient inhumain ou acosmique lorsque se défait l'entrelacs que les hommes ont tissé, lorsque s'éparpille la durée où ils entretiennent leurs conversations infinies et qu'il ne reste plus aucune trace des paroles depuis longtemps expirées, lorsque enfin- faute d'avoir encore en partage assez de mots intelligibles-ils se demandent ce qu'aux tard venus ils pourraient bien léguer .».

Ainsi, la conscience du global est d'abord celle de problèmes communs qui concernent l'avenir de l'humanité. Cet avenir est-il prévisible ? Cette question reste sans réponse puisque l'incertain semble avoir pris le pas sur toute forme de certitude, laissant libre cours à de nouvelles formes de religiosité et au déploiement mondial de nombreuses institutions religieuses. Aujourd'hui, la conscience de la globalité du monde va de pair avec celle du mal. Celui-ci entache l'ordonnancement du monde -en sa diversité et en sa globalité- que nous ne voyons plus d'un regard innocent. Ainsi, les événements dont nous faisons l'expérience à la croisée de tous les mondes que nous habitons et qui nous habitent, les rencontres que nous faisons, nous instruisent de l'omniprésence du mal et de la banalité de la mort. Nous savons donc à quel point le bien est difficile à cerner et les notions de monde et d'humanité si complexes.

Si le monde, dans sa diversité et dans sa complexité, se transforme périodiquement en chaos, séparant les humains les uns des autres, éprouvant les corps, les cœurs et les esprits, il nous reste à penser la condition de femme et d'homme en rapport avec les nouvelles possibilités d'habiter des espaces inhabitables.

Habiter nulle part et rester humain

La notion d'habitation prend un tout autre relief quand on essaie de la penser en rapport avec la diversité des migrations contemporaines. Comment se déplace-t-on dans l'espace et en esprit ? Quels sont les lois qui éclairent ces chemins que femmes, hommes et enfants empruntent parfois sans choix réfléchi-parce qu'ils n'ont pas le choix? Ils s'orientent dans des espaces inconnus. Ainsi, habiter, ce n'est pas être enraciné comme une plante, être fixé sur la Terre (Heidegger 1958) avoir une demeure quelque part. C'est, d'un autre point de vue, être en état de mobilité ou apprendre à exister *nulle part*, là où il faut recommencer une vie à zéro, affronter le vide d'un espace inhospitalier et le transformer en lieu familier.
On pourrait citer quelques textes littéraires qui rendent compte de ce que des femmes et des hommes, exclus du « beau monde » ordonné, régi par des lois sociales dans lesquels des valeurs morales ont cours, arrivent, par la force des choses, à construire d'autres mondes sur des espaces imprévisibles, qu'ils rendent habitables. Paradoxalement, ce n'est pas le lieu *propre, net, qu'ils squattent*. Le tas d'immondices, symbolique très éloigné de l'idée de « monde », est cet espace qui se transforme en lieu d'habitation, avec ses règles de vie en communauté comme dans Quand l'*ail se frotte à l'encens* (Adame Ba Konaré 2006),

récit de vie quotidienne d'une famille pauvre, vivant des rebuts de la société de consommation, à Bamako. L'Olympe des infortunes, (Yasmina Khadra 2010) campe ses personnages sur un no man's land entre une décharge publique et la mer. Hors de la société, ils ne perdent pas pour autant leur propre dignité, ils en parlent : « Quand on est fait comme un rat, on n'essaye pas de se débiner. C'est une question de dignité. » (Khadra 2010 :12). Ils rêvent, ils prennent des initiatives, ils pensent, jouent de la musique. Tout se passe comme s'ils formaient une nouvelle famille.

Ainsi, chaque société peut se donner le droit d'ignorer ses exclus, ceux-ci continueront de créer d'autres mondes dans les marges du monde habitable. Par ailleurs, les apatrides, les déplacés et les réfugiés, transforment le *nulle part* en lieu de vie au gré des saisons de violences et des événements. Car la vie est un perpétuel recommencement malgré la mort omniprésente et toutes sortes d'épreuves à traverser. Ceux qui sont habités par le *nulle part*, emportent par devers eux leurs bagages symboliques, quelques fragments d'anciens mondes ou quelques traces de savoirs, de langues ou de croyances qui se mêlent à d'autres éléments croisés en chemin. Ainsi naissent les cultures composites par opposition aux cultures ataviques comme le répète Edouard Glissant tout au long de son oeuvre. Dans les cales des bateaux et dans les plantations, sont nées, dit-il, au temps de la traite des Noirs, de telles cultures créolisées, non exclusives, témoins de la relation entre mondes différents.

Acceptés ou rejetés, sur les routes de *nulle part*, confrontés aux lois du monde global, parfois soumis aux lois de l'humanitaire-celles qui concernent les êtres de chair et d'os qui chutent de leur statut d'humains-on pourrait se demander qui sont ces personnes humaines, piétinées, écrasées vivant au seuil de l'humanité ? Il y a plusieurs sortes de *nulle part* et une infinité de manières de déchoir de la condition humaine. La manière la plus courante est celle qui se déroule sous nos yeux, comme le raconte dans l'*Anté-peuple*, Sony Labou Tansi qui met en scène Dadou, citoyen respectable et stoïque qui devient alcoolique à partir du moment où il rencontre l'une de ses élèves, par qui le scandale arrive et la descente aux enfers commence. Dadou a chuté, peu à peu il a voulu se redresser. Sa place a été effacée du monde où il a si longtemps habité. Il a rejoint la forêt, lieu de ressourcement mais aussi de ruptures et de révoltes. Il s'est fait passer pour « fou ». Histoire pas si banale que ça, car « résister » ce n'est pas ce que l'on croit. Ce n'est pas seulement refuser d'être la victime passive d'un événement, mais être apte à se redresser, c'est-à-dire prendre des initiatives et orienter sa vie autrement.

La question de la personne humaine et la possibilité d'une éthique universelle

Quelles que soient les cultures qu'ils ont en partage, les humains sont des personnes qui ont une *égale dignité*. Mais qu'est-ce qu'une personne humaine ? Les lois étatiques mais aussi internationales peuvent aider à la reconnaissance de la diversité des cultures, leur pluralité et leur spécificité. Il s'agit aussi de respecter

chaque individualité, chaque singularité. Or, on prend conscience de l'existence d'un humain singulier par-delà sa culture et toutes ses particularités, quand on a conscience de sa propre vulnérabilité malgré toutes les richesses matérielles que l'on peut posséder. Et cette vulnérabilité commence les tout premiers jours de la vie, comme le souligne Lucien Sève dans *Qu'est-ce qu'une personne humaine* ?

« La personne, dit-il, est beaucoup plus qu'une fiction juridique et un postulat de la raison morale, c'est un être réel ; mais cette réalité (…) est d'un point de vue purement laïque tout à fait irréductible à celle de l'individualité biopsychique, elle est d'essence historico-sociale. C'est dire du même coup qu'en un sens tout profane elle transcende bel et bien l'être naturel, dès lors qu'elle émane d'un acquis de civilisation qui la déborde immensément et qu'on peut désigner comme *l'ordre de la personne*. »(Sève 2006 : 51)

Ayant été membre actif du Comité consultatif national d'éthique en France de 1983 à 2000, Lucien Sève en arrive à concevoir ce qu'il appelle un « ordre de la personne », non naturel mais historico-social. Cependant, cet ordre est difficilement pensable affirme-t-il, à partir du respect dû « tant à l'individu psychosocial que neurobiologique ». D'autres approches peuvent également s'avérer moins pertinentes. En effet, peut-on commander le respect de la personne humaine à partir du droit, de la religion ou de la morale ? L'impératif catégorique de Kant ne suffit pas, et la perspective envisagée par Levinas, celle de l'obligation éthique face au visage de l'autre (Levinas 1961) a quelques limites « parce qu'il se trouve aussi des humains capables d'écraser un visage à coups de talon. » (Sève 2006 : 52). Ce que Lucien Sève appelle l'ordre de la personne humaine est un ordre civilisé et- non pas sauvage ou barbare- qui renvoie à « l'ensemble historiquement formé au fil des siècles et toujours en mouvement des formes sociales, à la fois matérielles et idéelles, où s'est peu à peu objectivée et à partir desquelles se subjectivise plus ou moins en chacun, la conscience d'une intransgressible valeur de l'humain »(Sève 2006 : 52). Cette valeur est tout un monde qui habite la personne et la fonde comme être ne ressemblant à aucun autre. Ce monde s'est constitué à partir du respect ancestral dû aux morts, à chaque corps. Pourtant, ce même monde est si complexe, si contradictoire, qu'il pose la valeur de l'humain comme dignité et tend à questionner celle-ci, par exemple à propos de l'acceptation comme personnes de quelques cas exceptionnels. Lucien Sève, soucieux de penser « *un concept acceptable par tous de personne humaine* », suggère de nommer personne pour soi, l'individu conscient susceptible d'être responsable de ses actes et *personne en soi*, ces exceptions qui confortent l'existence du monde de l'humain : «le nouveau-né, l'autiste, le dément, l'accidenté en état végétatif prolongé… »(Sève 2006 : 55). Or, avant que le nouveau-né ne vienne au monde, il aura parcouru bien d'autres étapes, conçues comme stades de développement de la vie biologique. Où commence donc le monde de l'humain ? Où s'arrête-t-il ? Peut-être faut-il s'orienter autrement ?

Alain Badiou, dans *L'éthique, essai sur la conscience du mal*, montre qu'il ne saurait y avoir « d'éthique

en général ». Ce qui est donc recherché ici, ce n'est pas tant le respect de la personne ou de l'humain mais plutôt la constitution d'un sujet. Celui-ci adhère à une « éthique des vérités » différente de « l'éthique des droits de l'homme » laquelle, à y regarder de près pourrait être une éthique « du civilisé conquérant ». Car l'intégration des immigrés qu'elle propose (par exemple dans la société française) suggère la suppression de la différence. Or, l'Homme (avec une majuscule) n'est ni un simple mortel, ni une victime. Il est « le plus résistant et le plus paradoxal des animaux ».(Badiou 2003 : 33) Le point de départ de l'analyse de Badiou est que l'Homme est un immortel : « Un immortel : voilà ce que les pires situations qui puissent lui être infligées démontrent qu'est l'Homme, pour autant qu'il se singularise dans le flot multiforme et rapace de la vie. »(Badiou 2003 : 27) Cet immortel persévère sur le chemin de la vérité. Il se méfie des croyances et de la multiplicité des opinions qui construisent le monde de la « communication ». Pour lui, la question qui importe est celle-ci : « comment vais-je, en tant que quelqu'un, *continuer* à excéder mon propre être ? A lier de façon consistante ce que je sais aux effets de la saisie de l'insu ? » (Badiou 2003 : 72).

Conclure

L'éthique que nous cherchons est une interrogation sur ce qu'est le monde de l'humain, son histoire, ses valeurs, ses multiples modes d'habitation et, in fine, elle concerne les actions locales menées quotidiennement afin de lutter contre l'anéantissement de soi et l'effondrement des lieux d'habitation. Comment résister aux désastres qui sont déjà là et à ceux qui s'annoncent ?

A l'heure où des inégalités flagrantes divisent le monde global qui fabrique des indésirables, on pourrait se demander si la phraséologie des droits de l'homme repose sur quelque fondement solide. L'ingérence à l'échelle internationale sauve sans doute des vies, mais n'est-elle pas devenue un maillon incontournable sur l'échiquier de la conquête ou de la prédation ? L'ingérence dans les affaires intérieures d'un Etat n'apporte pas la liberté à un peuple opprimé si celui –ci n'a pas les ressources nécessaires à son émancipation. Or, comment trouver en soi-même des ressources salvatrices, avoir cette volonté, bonne de préférence, pour décider de la conduite à tenir quand l'urgence et le temps court remplacent d'autres formes de temporalité qui consolidaient les liens sociaux ?

Quand l'horizon est incertain, mieux vaut être quelqu'un plutôt que rien. Choisir d'être quelqu'un plutôt qu'une chose ou un instrument au service d'un pouvoir. Car nous avons tous en partage, quels que soient nos multiples lieux d'habitation, cette aptitude inouïe à devenir quelqu'un, pour mieux accueillir l'autre. Prendre soin de soi, accomplir la tâche pour laquelle nous sommes au monde : penser, créer quand l'action politique a fait faillite et quand l'économie répand dans les ruelles du monde global ses valeurs marchandes. S'élever au-dessus de l'opinion commune, rompre avec les préjugés, apprendre à connaître

son propre monde et celui des autres. Ce sont là quelques impératifs d'une éthique de la quotidienneté que toute éducation nous apprend. Ainsi la science et la culture, la création et la pensée apparaissent comme la seule alternative pour construire un monde habitable, pour améliorer la condition d'homme ou de femme faite de souffrance et de solitude. Juger en son âme et conscience, pourrait être une maxime acceptable. Or la conscience du mal n'est pas donnée d'avance, elle se forme, se cultive, afin de tendre vers le vrai. C'est de cette manière que nous apprenons à reconnaître le bien, même infime, au milieu de toutes sortes de catastrophes. En écrivant ces lignes, je pense aux heures sombres vécues, ces derniers temps, en Côte d'Ivoire. Car ce sont les événements qui instruisent notre conscience et forment notre pensée.

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Global Ethic, Clash of Civilizations, and a Historian's Vision

Chaseop Kwak

Pusan National University

When the Muslim extremists' horrendous September 11th terrorist attacks took place, some people thought about the two "prophets" who kept warning of possible terrorist attacks. Both prophets agreed that the world was in a highly dangerous and unstable situation. One prophet suggested political solutions while the other prophet proposed religious solutions. Their arguments, made in the "prophetic tone," were widely received by many people around the world. And even their critics acknowledged the significance of their messages. Their "prophecy" has later become the "discourses" that exercise strong authority toward many people. Tubingen theologian Hans Küng and Harvard Political Scientist Samuel P. Huntington are the two prophets who made predictions about the September 11th terrorist attacks.

Hans Küng criticized a narrow viewpoint of Catholic doctrine by rejecting the doctrine of papal infallibility, and since the late 1980s, he began to deliver the message that the dialogue between Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, and other non-Christian religions is crucial for world peace. At the World Economic Forum held in Davos in Feb. 1990, Hans Küng emphasized *Weltethos*, or Global Ethic, for the survival of mankind. He summarized his argument on Global Ethic in his book < *Projekt Weltethos*> published in 1990. In the book, he introduced the three mottos - "without Global Ethic, no human existence," "without peace among the religions, no peace in the world," and "without dialogue among religions, no peace among the religions" – as a means to summarize his argument. He explained that the time has come for us to avoid the old hostility and misunderstanding and to declare a universal ethic based on true humanity. He said that extracting and embracing essential religious teaching and doctrine, rather than pointing out differences between religions, would be the new universal ethic for the future of mankind. For that, he strongly urged global religious leaders to have serious and in-depth discussions.[1]

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1 Hans Küng, Projekt Weltethos (München: Piper, 1990); Translated into Korean, Translator Ahn Myeok-Ok (Whaegwan: Boondo Publishing, 1992). In the Korean translation book, "Weltethos" is translated to "World Ethic." However, "Global Ethic" – instead of "World Ethic" – is used in general discussions. Thus, in this research, the term "Global Ethic" will be used.

A total of 140 religious leaders - representing over 20 different religions - were gathered at the Parliament of the World's Religions held in Chicago in 1993 and signed Hans Küng's initiative "Towards a Global Ethic," laying the foundation for a full-fledged discussion on the issue. (However, out of 142 leaders whose names were verified, religions with more than 10 representatives were just a few: 42 for Christianity, 18 for Hinduism, 16 for Islam, and 14 for Buddhism. Plus, most Muslims are Americans.) This document, "Towards a Global Ethic," begins with a resolute sentence, "The world is in agony," and it states that "Our world is experiencing a fundamental crisis: a crisis in global economy, global ecology, and global politics." At a time when "the lack of a grand vision, the tangle of unresolved problems, political paralysis, mediocre political leadership with little insight or foresight, and in general too little sense for the commonweal are seen everywhere," "old answers" are just repeated and no "new challenges" are taken seriously in the current situation. However, according to Hans Küng, there is already a correct answer to offer "the possibility of a better individual and global order", "a common set of core values is found in the teachings of the religions" and that is the answer for building "the basis of a global ethic." In other words, the answer for global ethic is "a minimal fundamental consensus concerning binding values, irrevocable standards, and fundamental moral attitudes" and "this truth is already known, but yet to be lived in heart and action." Global ethic proposed by Hans Küng and his followers does not refer to "a global ideology or a single unified religion beyond all existing religions" and does not in any way refer to "the domination of one religion over all others." What Hans Küng and his followers meant with global ethic is "a fundamental consensus on binding values, irrevocable standards, and personal attitudes." So they warned that, without such ethical consensus, "sooner or later every community will be threatened by chaos or dictatorship, and individuals will despair." [2]

A sentence that sums up "a common set of core values is found in the teachings of the religions" is the "Golden Rule" of "What you wish done to yourself, do to others." This Golden Rule is already there, and this is confirmed with Confucius's "Do not do to others what you would not have done to you" and Judaism's "Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you." And it is pointed out that Kant's categorical imperative that states that "Always act according to that maxim whose universality as a law you can at the same time will" or "Always act according to that maxim whose universality as a law you can at the same time will" can also be understood as a modern, rational and secularized version of the Golden Rule.[3] An expanded notion of the Golden Rule is the following four codes of conduct in the "Initial

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2 Parliament of the World's Religions, drafted initially by Hans Küng, "Towards a Global Ethic," http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/_includes/FCKcontent/File/TowardsAGlobalEthic.pdf; Hans Küng & Karl-Josef Kuschel, eds., A Global Ethic: The Declaration of the *Parliament of the World's Religions* (London: SCM Press, 1993), pp. 13-16. The list of signatories pp. 37-39.

3 Hans Küng, 『Projekt Weltethos』, pp. 127-128.

Declaration": 1) commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for life, 2) commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order, 3) commitment to a culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness, 4) commitment to a culture of equal rights and partnership between men and women.[4] In the summer of 1993, Samuel Huntington released the article "The Clash of Civilizations?" when Hans Küng made the "Declaration toward a Global Ethic." In his article, Samuel Huntington stated that the collapse of the Cold War Regime between the US and the Soviet Union in the aftermath of the Second World War and the birth of a multipolar world led by the US - the world's only superpower - doesn't necessarily mean Fukuyama's "end of history," but rather it means that the world is now entering an era of uncontrollable competition. He stated that in the post-Cold War era, the global landscape will be divided based not on ideologies, but on different attributes of civilization, which will mostly be determined by religion.[5] As suggested by a question mark in the title, Samuel Huntington's article was written in the form of an essay, but - against expectations - it was widely received among people. So he later published a book, an in-depth version of his previous article, titled 『*The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*』 In the book, he divided the world's major civilizations into eight categories - Sinic (Chinese), Japanese, Hindu, Islamic, Orthodox, Western, Latin American, and African – based on the premise that future conflicts and collisions will mainly be caused by the differences of cultures. He thought it will be hard for those different civilizations to share their values because of their different characteristics, and he borrowed a geological term, "fault line," to emphasize the differences between civilizations.[6] According to Samuel Huntington, fault lines of different civilizations collide with each other and trigger conflicts between them as the globe is comprised of multiple plates and there are fault lines along the boundaries of each plate just as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur when such fault lines collides with each other. His argument lacks solid ground and can give a wrong impression that civilizations are mutually exclusive just like the fault lines in geology. His warning that Western civilization should not impose their values onto non-Western civilizations is a mere extension of such a quasi-concept. Samuel Huntington's solutions for the Western civilization and the US are as follows: 1) each civilization should respect other civilizations, and when they can be assimilated, civilizations should be assimilated as in the case of South America. 2) If civilizations cannot be assimilated, each civilization should respect and negotiate with the authority of a leading country in other civilizations. 3) World peace can be maintained through such balancing of power between different civilizations. In the last chapter of his book, Samuel Huntington summarized his argument as follows: "Clashes of civilizations are the greatest threat to world peace, and an international

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order based on civilizations is the surest safeguard against world war."[7] The Cold War mentality remained in his thoughts and his book; only the names were changed from the Cold War for ideologies (the US from the Western world vs the Soviet Union and China) to the Cold War for civilizations.

Hans Küng and Samuel Huntington's arguments share many similarities although they look quite different on the surface. Hans Küng is an open and forward-looking Catholic theologian who believes that global conflicts should be resolved through active dialogue and global ethic, while Samuel Huntington is a practical political scientist who has a faith in the traditional concept of the balance of power. The former is noble and ideal and the latter is extremely practical. Despite such differences, Hans Küng and Samuel Huntington's arguments are very similar in terms of the framework for perceiving reality. That is, they both believe that they belong to a single religion or civilization and presume that other people also belong to a single religion or civilization. This is a typical way of 'otherization,' and it entails the following two major problems: First, this way of thinking simplifies and standardizes diversity and differences within their own civilizations. Second, it also standardizes diversity and differences in other groups and believes that other groups are inferior to their own group. Such problems come from the fundamental limitations of the notion of civilization, which is vehemently pointed out by Historian Bruce Mazlish who sought to define "Global History." It is said that civilization is created through otherization in the first place. (It's interesting that he still pursues an adjective contradictory to the ideal of "global civilization.")[8] Hans Küng discussed religion while Samuel Huntington discussed civilization. But to them, both religion and civilization are mutually substitutable notions. Religion is comprised not only of doctrines and is always 'presentized' under the name of 'tradition.' Moreover, it is hard to imagine civilization without religion. As religion is one of the essential elements in civilization, religion and civilization are in an inseparable relationship. Is it possible for one religion to propose dialogue to another religion and for one civilization to initiate negotiation with or check another civilization in either the conceptual or realistic sense? This is the point where Hans Küng and Samuel Huntington made common mistakes. They either overlooked or undervalued the fact that religion and civilization are "extremely differentiated and complicated entities" that have been built by notions of numerous forces, customs, and power relations over a long period of time.

There is another similarity between Hans Küng and Samuel Huntington: Their arguments are focused on the relationship between the Western world and Islam world. On the surface, their notions of "Global Ethic" and "civilizational word order" fell under the global prospect, but the actual focus was placed on

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7 Samuel P. Huntington 『The Clash of Civilizations?』 (Seoul: Gymmyoung Publishers, 1997), esp. p. 442.

8 Bruce Mazlish, 『Civilization and Its Contents』 (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 4, 38, 143; 125, 130.

the confrontation between the West and the non-West, between the Western Christian civilization and Islam civilization. Although Hans Küng mentioned various religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, what he referred to with the dialogue between religions is nothing but a dialogue between Christianity and Islam. Compared with the conflict between Christianity and Islam, the conflicts among other religions are negligible. A positive answer for Hans Küng's dialogue came "unexpectedly" from Iran, a country that is hostile to the Western world and the US. In a speech to the UN General Assembly in September 1998, Iranian President Mohammad Khatami suggested that the UN designate the year 2001 as the "Year of Dialogue among Civilizations" as a first stage to achieving "realization of universal justice and liberty." Hans Küng equated the proposal of Iranian President Mohammad Khatami with his plan for "dialogue among religions" and "global ethic" and was pleased with such a proposal. However, Iranian President Mohammad Khatami made the proposal out of concern that "theses of a clash of civilizations" might irritate the radical conservatives following Ayatollah Khomeini. By proposing the "Year of Dialogue among Civilizations," Iranian President Mohammad Khatami tried to strengthen the status of "the reformists" within Iran and to proclaim that Iran is both a descendant of the Persian civilization and a strong member of the Arab civilization.[9] In the "Year of Dialogue among Civilizations," as if they were waiting for this year to come, conservative Muslim radicals committed the September 11th terrorist attacks, showing the fact that they are followers of Samuel Huntington, not followers of Hans Küng. Although Samuel Huntington's book 『The Clash of Civilizations?』 divided the world into 8-9 civilizations, it predicts the majority of "fault line conflicts" to take place along the "bloody borders" of Muslims and non-Muslims (the majority is Jews-Christians) in Eurasia and Africa. A case in point is the Palestinian conflict, and there is a more recent example of the Bosnia-Serbia dispute. According to Samuel Huntington, the Western Christian world and the Muslim world collide with each other and have continuous conflicts because of the question "who rules and who are ruled" because the two worlds have been in a relationship of constant competition and war.[10] In this sense, it's not surprising that he suggested "theses of a clash of civilizations."

The biggest problem with the similarities of Hans Küng and Samuel Huntington's arguments –although they might not have intended to share "similarities" – is that both arguments overlook the history of constant "hybrids" and "crossings" between the Western Christian world and the Muslim world. It's without doubt that a revered theological scholar such as Hans Küng opposes Samuel Huntington's "theses of a clash of civilizations." However, Hans Küng regarded the confrontation on the national-civilizatinal

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9 Hans Küng, Islam: Past, Present and Future (München: Piper, 2004; Oxford; Oneworld Publications, 2007), pp. 654-656; Mohammad Khatami, Hope and Challenge: The Iranian President Speaks (Binghamton, NY: Institute of Global Cultural Studies, Binghamton University, 1997); Mazlish, Civilization and Its Contents, pp. 119f.

10 Samuel P. Huntington 『The Clash of Civilizations?』, pp. 346, 282-283.

levels – rather than exchanges on the local-regional levels – as a crucial paradigm that determines the two worlds in the past. The difference between Hans Küng and Samuel Huntington is that Hans Küng was optimistic and believed that the dialogue between different religions can "build bridges of trust and stabilize relations between the Western and the Islamic world" in the future. In addition, Hans Küng thought his plan – as opposed to Samuel Huntington's plan – is "the only realistic alternative."[11] What we would be wary of is such a simplification of history. Is religion or civilization really the fundamental reason why the two worlds collide and have conflicts? Both Hans Küng and Samuel Huntington exaggerated the conflicts between the two worlds as inevitable conflicts between the two different religions or civilizations. Despite their different intentions and motives, Hans Küng and Samuel Huntington both have the same top-down view of history. They both did not pay much attention to how people lived on "the micro-scale." Can Hans Küng's global ethic, which is applied from top to bottom like the ancient natural law, truly be an alternative to Samuel Huntington's clash of civilizations?

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How can I contribute to such discussions as a historian? History is the discipline that is based on 'evidence,' and thus, there are quite a number of people who believe that 'evidence' itself tells the 'truth.' Many historians are now aware that their stories does not equate to the truth for anyone since the late 20th century when diverse efforts were made to reflect on the essence of the 'historical narrative.' That is because people began to ask themselves: "whose history is it?" and "whose truth is it?" The questions on "whose history" and "whose truth" took off the outer cover of the concept of religion and civilization. Who will answer those questions on 'whose civilization' and 'whose religion'? And how? That is why I feel uncomfortable with Hans Küng and Samuel Huntington's 'macro-paradigms' from the viewpoint of a historian. True, it is hard for me - who poses such a question – to provide a clear answer. But our perception must change. We need to break away from the "conquest" view of history, which is mostly observed in existing history books. Such a "conquest" view of history has no hope: it will either become the historical view of the "rise and fall" of a civilization, country or dynasty or be reduced to the historical view of "revenge." There are only "the vicissitudes of strength and power" based on such a "conquest" view of history. Therefore, in the coming years and decades, history should focus more on 'small centers' rather than 'big centers' and more on cultural exchanges, hybrids, and crossings among 'local or regional' districts rather than on political and economic struggles among dynasties. At the same time, it is important that history draws the various aspects of exchanges and lives in detail. The smaller the 'observational

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11 Küng, Islam: Past, Present and Future, xxv.

scale' is and the 'thicker' the description is, the greater human 'sympathy' is felt.[12] When historians lose sympathy for mankind, history is reduced to an abstract 'power struggle.' Sympathy is nothing but hope, and history should become a discourse that gives hope as history since historical presentation is also a kind of discourse. This is the point where historians can cut in Hans Küng's dialogue. There are two historians who are eminent in their respective fields. However, these two historians are in stark contrast in terms of 'the discourse of hope.' They are Bernard Lewis, a historian of Islam, and Natalie Zemon Davis, a historian of early modern France.

Bernard Lewis is one of the most influential historians in the present century when it comes to the history of the 'Middle and Near Eastern Islam World,' and he researched middle and modern Islam history based on his deep knowledge on Arabic, Turkish, Farsi, Hebrew, and other diverse languages in the Middle East and Africa. Since 1996, He had worked as a founding member of MESA (Middle East Studies Association of North America). In 2007, he established ASMEA (Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa) because MESA was dominated by scholars who criticized the role of Israel and the US in the Middle East. In fact, Bernard Lewis was one of the most important advisers for American policies on the Middle East for a long period of time including the time of the Bush Administration.

Among Bernard Lewis' many books on the Islam world, his subtle 'orientalist' view is well shown in the 1967 published book 『*The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam*』,[13] which portrays the activities and characteristics of the so-called "Assassins," created by Hasan i-Sabbah in affiliation of "the Ismailis" in the late 11th century. The religious sect "Assassins" became well-known for its practice of assassinating leaders of other religious sects that oppress or criticize its religious doctrine. Although their main target was Muslims, this religious sect became notorious among Christians as its members killed Conrad I, King of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem (Conrad of Montferrat) during the Crusade and was later named "Assassini" among the feudal lords in Europe. Bernard Lewis thoroughly reviewed the messages of the time and the following researches and examined various attributes of religious doctrines, the origin of the religious sect, and its relationship with the Ismailia sect, tracking the history back to the late 13th century. As the Western world's best scholar on Islamic studies, he made a very sophisticated political discussion by comparing the first document with other preceding researches.

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12 Perhaps, Arif Dirlik's "World History" and Carlo Ginzburg's "Microhistory" might offer a "clue" for such prediction and perspectives. Out of their many books, refer to the following book: Dirlik, Arif. 『Postmodernity's Histories: The Past as Legacy and Project.』(Pajoo: Changbi, 2005); Carlo Ginzburg, 『Miti emblemi spie. Morfologia e storia』 (Torino: Einaudi, 1986).

13 Bernard Lewis, The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1967).

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The problem is his ideological bias, which is hidden behind the academic discussion. Unlike previous chapters covering academic details, the last chapter "Means and Ends" shows his view on the Islam world – in a very subtle way – without making any adjustments. In this chapter, he stated that 'the Assassins' didn't create assassination and they just lent the name to it, and added that such things happened in the Christian world before. According to Bernard Lewis, it is universal phenomena that 'the Assassins' assassinate others to protect their own religious doctrine. However, he used the term 'terror' to describe the activities of 'the Assassins' at the end and made a rather shocking argument that 'the Assassins' can be dubbed as "the first terrorists" as they "are without precedent – in the planned, systematic and long-term use of terror." He cited the comments made by one modern scholar: "Terrorism... is carried on by a narrowly limited organization and is inspired by a sustained program of large-scale objectives in the name of which terror is practiced." Moreover, he asserted that "this was the method that Hasan chose – the method, it may well be, that he invented." And Hasan's methods are described as "terrorist attack" and "sustained terror."[14] Bernard Lewis' attitude of associating the assassination practice of 'the Assassins' with a modern concept of terrorism is quite questionable. Also, the chapter title "Means and Ends" reminds people of the 'vulgar Machiavellism' that argues "the end justifies the means." (But Bernard Lewis didn't seem to support – at least on the surface – Machiavellism.) In 2002, Bernard Lewis published a new edition of 『*The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam*』. In the new edition, he added the preface, and in the preface, a subtle tug of war continued. He stated – albeit with some conditions – that there is an astonishing level of similarities between 'the Assassins' and modern Muslim terrorists, and 'the Assassins' conducted the original version of suicide bombings.[15]

Although Bernard Lewis' writing strategies seemed to maintain a certain political sense and sophisticated academic levels, he instilled his ideological values in many parts of the book. A 'rhetorical analysis' is crucial to read between the lines in this sort of writing and to see what kinds of "patterns" are being used to deliver the "fact." However "objective" the truth is –although I'm not sure if such truth can exist - the "objectivity" itself is analyzed through the writer's "rhetoric." It is not too much that Edward Said classified Bernard Lewis as a key orientalist.[16] Without explaining political and cultural reasons behind tragic suicide bombings of modern Islamic extremists – not to mention the September 11ᵗʰ terrorist attacks – Bernard Lewis tried to link them with the assassination practice of 'a small religious sect,' which was created in the 11th century and disappeared in the 13th century. Bernard Lewis' approach can be understood as a typical style of orientalism, which fossilizes a part of ancient traditions and views it as a continuation of diverse 'cultural lag' in modern society. In fact, Bernard Lewis believed that the Christian

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14 Lewis, The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam, pp. 129-131.

15 Lewis, The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam, with a new preface by the author (New York: Basic Books, 2002), xi, xii.

16 Said, Edward W. 『Orientalism 』/Translator Park Hong-Gyu. (Seoul: Kyobo Bookstore, 1991), pp. 503-511.

and Islam worlds have been riddled with constant conflicts since the 7th century when Islam was created. Bernard Lewis is the person who used the term "a clash of civilizations," which became well-known after the publication of Samuel P. Huntington's 『The Clash of Civilizations?』. Also, Bernard Lewis first used the term "Islamic fundamentalism."[17] Of course, such expressions might include the slight possibility of truth, and what is more worrisome is his attitude that leads people to mistakenly believe that such notions define the characteristics of the Islam world.

A number of Bernard Lewis' books have been translated into Korean. The book 『The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam』 has also been translated into Korean and released in Korea under the Korean title 『The Assassination Squad: the Islam Tradition of Assassination』.[18] What is interesting is the title, which translates "the Assassins" into "Assassination Squad" and the subtitle that translates "A Radical Sect in Islam" into "the Islam Tradition of Assassination," making Korean readers to mistakenly believe that there is an Islam sect that is created for the purpose of assassination by using the word 'assassination' twice in one title. The Korean title "Assassination Squad" focused on the action of assassination from the Western/ Anti-Islamic/presentist perspectives, and associating such actions of assassination with that of the Islam sect in the early medieval times is anachronistic and orientalistic. As demonstrated in the above-mentioned example, the simplification of history can become a kind of discourse and, in turn, lead to another form of simplification. If Korean readers get to view Islamic history from a biased perspective after reading 『The Assassination Squad: the Islam Tradition of Assassination』, both Bernard Lewis and Samuel P. Huntington's anti-Islamic ideology and Korean translators and commentators – as they fail to point out such a biased perspective – are responsible for the biased perspective of Korean readers.

Natalie Davis is an eminent historian who has outstanding achievements in social history, cultural history, and the history of women in France in the 16th century and other periods in the early Modern times. She is also a pioneer who introduced the course on 'the history of women' at the University of Toronto in Canada when she moved to Canada to escape the strong waves of McCarthyism. By paying attention to the shaky identity of a peripheral character in history, she thoroughly described 'a cultural strategy for survival of one Muslim man who experienced an 'identity crisis' between the Christian world and Islam world in her book 『Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim between Worlds』. Her book tells a

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17 Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," Atlantic Monthly 266.3 (September 1990). Such recognition on the Islam world became obvious in his following publication 『What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response』 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

18 Lewis, Bernard. 『The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam』 / Translator Joo Min-Ah/Editor Lee Hee-Soo(Seoul: Sallim, 2007). It is regrettable that this book's editor Lee Hee-Soo did not point out Bernard Lewis's ideological bias while strongly emphasizing his academic politicality (情致性). It's surprising given the fact that Lee Hee-Soo has emphasized the independence of Islamic culture.

story of Al-Wazzan, a border man who lived a life as "a trickster" hovering between the Mediterranean straits in the early modern times. Al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Wazzan was born in Granada on the southern part of Iberian Peninsula between 1486 and 1488.[19] When Granada was faced with the crisis of falling due to the so-called "Reconquest" of Spain in 1492, Al-Wazzan's family – like many other people in the country – moved across the Mediterranean Sea to Paz, a big city in Morocco in North Africa. In Paz, Al-Wazzan learned the Muslim Law and Arabic poetry. Starting from his late twenties, Al-Wazzan began to work as a diplomat for the 'sultan,' conducted exchanges with Cairo, Maghreb, and Istanbul, and made a pilgrimage to Mecca. In June 1518, right after he turned the age of 30, Al-Wazzan experienced a very important incident that determines the fate of his future: he was seized by the España pirate ship and sent to Leo X, Pope. After being confined at the Castel Sant'Angelo for some time, he was released and converted to Christianity. Since then, he lived the life as Ioannes Leo (Latin), Giovanni Leone (Italian), or Yuhanna al-Asad (Arabic). With the 1521's transcription work on an Arab translation of Saint Paul's Epistles, he began to be acknowledged widely among Rome's high-level religious leaders and scholars, and he was engaged in the translation and transcription work of the 『*Arabic-Hebrew-Latin Dictionary* 』 in 1524 and the correction of a transcription and a Latin translation of the *Qur'an* in 1525. In 1526, he became very well-known as an eminent scholar as he completed 『the *Cosmography and Geography of Africa*』, a comprehensive report and travel essay on African society, scenery and customs. After he published 『the Sack of Rome』 in 1527, he returned to his hometown in North Africa and again began to live a life as a Muslim. His whereabouts after this period is not at all known. But it is said that he lived in Tunis in 1532.

Al-Wazzan's life, full of moving across various boundaries, is like a window (窓) that shows complex and colorful historic scenes in the Mediterranean World around the 16th century when modernity began to form in the world. During that time, Europeans' views began to expand to the global view, and Europe received the impetus for the development into 'the modern states.' Through the Renaissance movement in the early modern times, Europe restored and changed the classical Ancient cultures and values, paving the way for 'modern secularism.' Furthermore, the Reformation and the subsequent Wars of Religion severely disrupted the Catholic world, which had been sustained from the Middle Ages. The emergence of modern secularism and the division of Catholic Church eventually led to the establishment of modern independent sovereign states, which was confirmed in the 1648 Peace of Westphalia that put an end to the Thirty Years' War. For Europe, the early modern times were the era when clear borders were drawn and also the Age of Voyage. In addition, the early modern times were also the era that saw the establishment of 'citizenship'

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19 Davis, Natalie Zemon/Translator Kwak Cha-Seop 『Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim between Worlds』 (Seoul: Green History, 2010) The paragraphs below on Al-Wazzan is based on 'Translator's Preface' of 『Trickster Travels』

and 'the theories of international law' for Europeans.

Al-Wazzan is a witness of such early modern times in Europe, and, unexpectedly, he was put in 'the Land of War (Dar al-Harb)" while he was building a career as a Muslim scholar and writer. And then he was forced by the Pope to convert – his new names, 'Leo' and 'al-Asad,' are both after the name of Pope Leo X. He also had to live a life as 'a border man' in his thirties. Such unstable political and social position led him to adopt 'a very sophisticated strategy for survival.' Just like 'the amphibian bird,' he utilized 'the strategy' of birds that live both in the water and on the land area for the sake of convenience. That is, he attempted to earn trust on the land of Christianity while restraining from criticizing the Islam world because he might one day return to his homeland. Taking such a strategy was not easy, and he eventually went back to his hometown. It's highly questionable whether his strategy worked well in his homeland afterwards.

What is the message of Al-Wazzan's astonishing story? His extraordinary and complex life can serve as a good example that shows 'diversity' of Catholic, Protestant, and Muslim forces in the Mediterranean world in the early modern times. Whatever his original purposes were, he travelled to every corner of the large Mediterranean world and experienced a diversity of customs and cultures. As a matter of fact, his experience is both a "geography and ethnography of Africa" and "a diplomatic report" that has all the secrets of the royal court. In fact, the "cose grandi" and the "cose vane" in the Mediterranean straits around the 16th century coexist according to 'the classification of Machiavelli.'

However, the true message of his story is – or would be – perhaps the possibility of 'cultural hybrids and crossings.' His life was tragic and the external obstacles surrounding his life were too strong for him to throw off the yoke of fate. He struggled to overcome such obstacles but failed. The true message would be the fact that diverse cultures in the Mediterranean world (Italian, Latin, Spanish, Moroccan, Jewish, or hybrids like a Jew the "Marrano" or a Moor the "Converso") in the 16th century were able to act as 'a crossroad of exchange and communication' despite his personal – or ethnic – misfortune and despite the apparent conflicts of cultures he experienced. We remember Walter Benjamin's statement "We can always learn something from our failures in history." That is why we are trying to find "the hope for, the possibility of communication" as in Natalie Davis' phrases, despite the dark sides such as the "coercion and violence" committed on Al-Wazzan. History presents us irony, and we see a layer of hope in that irony.

We can take lessons – in terms of our view on the world and history – from Bernard Lewis' interpretation of Hasan and Natalie Davis' interpretation of Al-Wazzan's story. They are both Jews; but Bernard Lewis is hostile to the Islam world and regards it as the inferior 'other,' while Natalie Davis doesn't interpret Al-

Wazzan's tragic story as an inevitable tragedy and factors in the possibility of hybrids and crossings. The biggest difference between Bernard Lewis' interpretation and Natalie Davis' interpretations is that the latter is filled with human 'sympathy' for the other. Respecting cultural identity of each other, maintaining a sympathetic viewpoint of not being afraid of 'mixing,' and a hopeful message for the future is probably the best gift that historians can give to people and the 'vision' required of historians. I'm certain that Hans Küng would share the thought with us at least in terms of a "vision of hope."

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http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/_includes/FCKcontent/File/TowardsAGlobalEthic.pdf.

Global Ethics: Inclusion and Exclusion

Paulin J. Hountondji

National University of Benin

"The time of the finished world begins." This is what Paul Valéry wrote just after the Second World War. Europe was realizing that it wasn't eternal and that it wasn't the center of the world any more. Europe had constantly been obsessed with destroying others, but it became the victim of others' attacks. Europe had believed that conflicts have clear borders, but they spread all around the world. In addition, Europe was saved thanks to the intervention of non-European forces after all. Under these circumstances, Europe came to understand that there are other centers of decision in this world, that they are absolutely close toeach other and that these centers can have immediate impacts on Europe's future.

Philosophers' Foolishness

In a famous Gulbenkian Foundation report on the current situation of social science, a group of professors led by Immanuel Wallerstein found out that new researchers from the non-Occidental world appeared in the area of social science, just after the Second World War. These researchers contributed to considering enlarging the scope of traditional themes. [1]

In fact, not only the themes became more various, but certain concepts were questioned, and firmly established beliefs broke down as well. Certain extreme thoughts are no longer allowed today. In the 19th century, Arthur de Gobineau was able to calmly write about the inequality of human races. He wouldn't do so any more today. At the beginning of the 20th century, Lévy-Bruhl was able to say that certain peoples living in Australia, Africa and elsewhere have a "primitive mindset," a logic that isn't fully developed. He wouldn't do so any more today, and consequently, he wouldn't have needed to partially cancel what he had said before his death.

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1 Immanuel Wallerstein, Open the Social Sciences. Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996, 124 pp.

However, Gobineau isn't the only one, and Lévy-Bruhl isn't the only one. It is sometimes surprising to read what very serious authors wrote, authors who are regarded as undoubted role models everywhere, even out of Europe and out of the Occident. That is because these authors sometimes wrote about very strange observations, which should at best be considered foolish.

I don't enjoy mentioning all the examples. There are so many of them. For instance, Hume talked about the "natural inferiority of negroes compared to whites," saying that such inferiority was confirmed throughout recent and contemporary history.[2] Heidegger tried academic alchemy, saying that "'philosophy' is Greek in itself." He said, "Considering the nature of philosophy, it is first the Greek world that it seized, and it is only this world it reclaimed as its own venue." [3] Kant also "falsely mentioned the different human races." [4] Moreover, Diderot provided the definition of negro in the 11th volume of Encyclopedia,[5] and Hegel argued for the non-historicity of blacks. Husserl told a joke in bad taste on Papuans.[6] There are many more such strange remarks.

In the remarkable book entitled Philosophy and an African culture, our Ghanaian colleague Kwasi Wiredu quotes the text of Hume mentioned before, commenting as follows: "Africans need to have considerable maturity to be able to impartially examine Hume's lack of respect for blacks and his philosophical views,

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2 Dans une note au bas d'un article de 1748 sur "Les caractères nationaux", Hume écrit en substance:

"Je soupçonne volontiers les Nègres, et en général toutes les autres espèces d'hommes (...) d'être naturellement inférieurs aux Blancs. Il n'y a jamais eu de nation civilisée, ni même d'individu éminent dans le domaine de l'action ou de la spéculation, qui ne fût de couleur blanche. (...) Il y a des esclaves noirs dispersés dans toute l'Europe, chez qui personne n'a jamais découvert le moindre signe d'ingéniosité (...). En Jamaïque, il est vrai, on cite le cas d'un Nègre qui serait un homme intelligent et cultivé; mais il est probable qu'on l'admire pour des exploits superficiels, comme un perroquet qui prononcerait distinctement quelques mots" (cité par Eze, 1997: 33. Je traduis)

3 Heidegger, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* Paris, Gallimard, 1957: 15. Bien qu'il soit signé Heidegger, la logique de ce texte ne va guère plus loin que celle des médecins de Molière (l'opium fait dormir parce qu'il possède une vertu dormitive...), ou celle des alchimistes qui expliquaient la combustion par l'évaporation d'une substance mystérieuse, le phlogistique.

4 Dans un essai paru en 1775 sous le titre "Des différentes races humaines", Kant affirme, sur le mode du constat, que tous les Nègres sentent mauvais. Tenant ce phénomène pour acquis, il entend l'expliquer en faisant intervenir des notions qui en disent long sur la science de l'époque: particules de fer dans le sang, dont l'excès serait compensé par un dégagement d'acide phosphorique dans la substance rétiforme, etc.

5 *"Non seulement leur couleur les distingue, mais ils diffèrent des autres hommes par tous les traits de leur visage; des nez larges et plats, de grosses lèvres, et de la laine au lieu de cheveux, paroissent constituer une nouvelle espèce d'hommes. Si l'on s'éloigne de l'équateur vers le pôle antarctique, le noir s'éclaircit, mais la laideur demeure: on trouve ce vilain peuple qui habite la pointe méridionale de l'Afrique"*

6 *"L'homme est un animal raisonnable, et en ce sens vaste, le Papou est aussi un homme, et non un animal (...). Mais de même que l'homme, et le Papou lui-même, représentent un nouveau degré dans l'animalité, précisément celui qui s'oppose à la bête, de même la raison philosophique représente un nouveau degré dans l'humanité et dans sa raison »* in Husserl, *La crise des sciences européennes et la phénoménologie transcendantale, Paris : Gallimard, 1976: 372*

in order to deplore the former and to praise and fully understand the latter." [7] Emmanuel Eze goes further to strongly condemn what he simply calls the racism of the Enlightenment.

Invisible Border

For me, it is more productive to note that the philosophers of the Enlightenment and other authors that were mentioned before weren't writing for African, Papuans or non-whites in general. He didn't know that they would read their works one day, and they immediately excluded them from the circle of discussion. Only such an exclusion explains why they were saying anything about them, staying among Occidentals without any risk of provoking protests.

Althusser used to humorously say "I said a foolish thing" to correct what he had said the day before or some days before. Applying this sentence to the famous philosophers' cases, we can put ourselves in their place, supposing that they didn't have any bad intention and that they would have corrected their errors if they had had such an occasion. One could say that he or she didn't know about that, asking for generosity, and we can consider the problem less serious. Such an attitude to consider a certain problem less serious is necessary if you want to read Kant, Hegel, Husserl, Marx and all the others, if you don't want to lose the benefit of understanding the best part of the Western tradition, if you want to have such essential maturity suggested by Wiredu.

The pugnacious discourse has its limits because there is the risk of throwing the baby out with the bath water, as in the English expression. Beyond the clearly racist remarks, we must thus reflect on what made the speaker say this: excessively narrow limitation of the circle interlocution, invisible border limiting to just one culture or race the community of partners and other participants of an academic discussion, false security of a discourse which is considered free from any protest. Focusing on making an issue less serious and understanding the existence of the limit of discussants, we can minimize the impacts of such remarks. We can thus regards such remarks as errors as well as mistakes and we can thus find these remarks *foolish*. That is because they don't know the real scope of those who can think.

In sum, the limit of geographical knowledge partially explains why these philosophers said something unacceptable. This doesn't mean that they are free from their errors. That is because in the same era, there were other authors, who were less known, who made better use of their geographical knowledge

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7 Kwasi Wiredu, Philosophy and an African culture, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1980: p.49

in hand to elaborate on completely different observations.[8] What is more troublesome is that despite today's knowledge on other cultures and other civilizations, despite the education on contemporary history, geography and anthropology, we find the same type of remarks from famous intelligent authors. [9] This means that the lack of existing knowledge can never explain everything and that each author is still responsible, whatever they say, for the use of scientific legacy of their era and for the way of limiting the space of interlocution based on this legacy.

Secret Geography

Everyone has his own geography. Eurocentrism is first a geography of discourse. Before being a prejudice of the superiority of Europe, Eurocentrism is a decision, generally unconscious, concerning the space of interlocution. This decision limits this space to the circle of European interlocutors or to those who were born in Europe. Without noticing, choice of audience largely influences the content of discourse because this choice determines, directly or indirectly, the themes regarded as interesting and attractive. What we talk about thus depends on the public to which we speak, even if we can have very free positions regarding the limited scope of topics, arguing against the traditional way of thinking.

We can take a simple example: the perception of a person regarded as primitive. It isn't a coincidence that if Bantu Philosophy (*La philosophie bantoue*) written by Tempels was published just after the Second World War. This Belgian Franciscan who served as a missionary in Congo for a long time, argued against the theory of primitive mentality. Criticizing Lévy-Bruhl without calling his name, Tempels tries to demonstrate that the Bantu isn't primitive, but they actually have a perfectly coherent world view which is totally rational, albeit different from the Western world view. Rather than having a primitive mentality, ignoring the law of identity, law of contradiction and law of excluded middle, they have, according to Tempels, a theory of forces serving as ontology on which theories of knowledge, theories of humanity or psychology, ethics and philosophy of law are based.

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8 La critique la plus forte et la plus rigoureuse de Hume a été faite justement par un de ses contemporains beaucoup plus jeune, il est vrai, mais qui ne disposait pas d'autres repères géographiques que lui. *Dans An Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, in Opposition to Sophistry and Skepticism (1770), James Beattie rappelle entre autres choses, l'étonnante civilisation des Aztèques et des Incas, déjà parfaitement connue à cette époque. Bien que l'histoire africaine fût encore mal connue, il montre, sur la base des faits alors avérés et d'une réflexion de simple bon sens, l'absurdité de la démarche de Hume. Voir Eze, op. cit.: 34-37*

9 Des intellectuels noirs se sont beaucoup émus aux Etats-Unis, dans les années 90, d'un ouvrage qui prétendait établir "scientifiquement" les différences de quotient intellectuel et de "capacité cognitive" entre les races (Herrnstein and Murray, The Bell Curve, 1994). Peut-être aurait-on dû plus simplement noter l'indigence de la question même à laquelle ces auteurs prétendaient répondre et faire apparaître, avec un détachement total, la logique cachée de ce type de discours ainsi que les conditions de son succès dans l'Amérique des années quatre-vingt dix.

However, this effort to giving back honor to black people is still limited because Tempels writes his book exclusively for Western readers. For example, the book's last chapter is called "The Bantu Philosophy and Our Civilizing Mission." Moreover, while showing other surprising arguments, Tempels insists on the unconscious characteristics of this "philosophy" and the inevitable need of an external revelator, which is, in this case, nobody but a European scholar.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that Tempels' book also contains very old concepts such as primitive people. The author develops his view on primitive people, limiting the scope of his readers to the so-called "civilized" people. What is done to create this circle of readers is to exclude another group of humans who are falsely called uncivilized. Failing to talk about the essential, authors immediately confirm what they want to demonstrate. Tempels uses this logic of exclusion, and this logic is also used by Lévy-Bruhl whom he wanted to refute.

Extroversion

Facing this academic discourse, we need to ask the author or the authors this simple question: To whom are you speaking?

We actually know how Tempels' book fascinated African intellectuals themselves. We know how he served as a role model for many of them, who tried in their turn to explain the "philosophy" of their ancestors and their respective communities, correcting some details in Tempels' book if necessary. The Bantu Philosophy thus generated a new genre and a new paradigm of research. This paradigm was called ethnophilosophy, which refers to a new chapter of ethnology dedicated to the study of collective philosophies, in other words, the collective world vision and thinking systems of oral civilizations (They were very improperly called societies without any writing system for a long time).

A great number of African intellectuals thus addressed the issue raised by Tempels. There are so many articles, works, theses and research reports on African "philosophy" in general or on the "philosophy" of particular African ethnic groups. Nevertheless, we have never asked these authors this question: To whom do you present your academic analyses? To our African compatriots or to the Western public? This question needs to be asked to understand this: African ethnophilosophy is an attempt to bring back honor to the black cultures for the Western public but not for African people. It is thus an extrovert discourse, turning toward the outside. Influenced by the approach of Tempels and other Western philosophers and ethnologists (Griaule and his school in France, Paul Radin in American and many others), African ethnophilosophy is organically linked to this Western tradition, which is always on its side and which is enriched with these new inputs. Just like all the scientific research in French, English and Portuguese,

African ethnography is largely inscribed in this geography of Eurocentric discourse, which is about excluding non-Westerners. Even if its declared goal is the "defense and illustration" of African cultures, it is developed in an interlocution space which mainly excludes the African public.

There would be an alternative. Such an alternative would consist of focusing more on the horizontal debate among Africans in general, between African intellectuals and the African public in particular, rather than on the vertical debate, which has so far been emphasized, between African intellectuals and their Western counterparts.

Temptation for Relativism

Extroversion in this specific context inevitably leads to temptation for relativism. Being aware that he mainly speaks to his Western counterparts, and more generally, to the public educated in the European system, an African researcher would first focus on emphasizing the value of his or her own culture, comparing African and Western values. All the nuances would no longer be necessary, and there would be no need to try to understand the strengths and weaknesses of African and Western cultures. The basis of this thinking process is one, and the other are equal in every aspect. That is, every culture has its own science, ethics and art.

This is true in a way. Every culture, even if it's mainly oral, generates a knowledge system, moral code, and esthetic code which are transmitted from generation to generation. Tempels was totally right when he determined the title of a chapter in his book: "Bantu Ethics." Assane Sylla was also right when he wrote the book *Ethical Philosophy of the Wolof (La philosophie morale des Wolof)*. However, there should be more than just describing or giving back honor to these norm systems with false objectivity. We, thus, need to question the validity of systems and ask ourselves to what point the guidelines that were considered just in the past are still acceptable today. However, such a question can be asked only if we are free from the imaginary debate between Europe and Africa to start an internal debate in Africa. Indeed, Africa should be able to solve its own problem in a serious and responsible manner when faced with new challenges of history. What is mentioned about Africa could also be applied to any region in the world.

For example, it is said that during the funeral of King Ghezo, one of the greatest kings in the history of Dahomey, 41 of his wives, selected among the youngest and the most beautiful, were buried alive with the king so that they can serve him even after death. It is also said that these young queens fiercely competed with each other because it was an honor for them to be chosen. However, today, we wouldn't be able to make use of such a story for ideological purposes, regarding it as a norm characterizing the ethics of Dahomey or as an example of good governance. Once the story is told in its specific historical context,

we need to ask these two questions: first, would such a practice be acceptable today? Furthermore, was it acceptable during the era? This is an ethical question. Secondly, was it accepted by everyone, without any exception? Beyond conventional approval and public declarations, beyond political correctness and inevitable social comedy, what was the secret opinion of these wives' mothers or their secret admirers? What were people murmuring about, and what did they say to protest secretly? These are the questions that today's historians would not be able to avoid, and it is about a new direction for social science research.

Conclusion

Eurocentrism doesn't explain everything. Beyond the imaginary debate with Westerners, beyond the ambiguous effort to differentiate oneself from others by continuing to mainly speak to those from whom one tries to differentiate paradoxically and by excluding from the circle of discussion those who are supposed to be one's spokespeople, today's humanity is faced with certain forms of fanaticism and conservatism that are extremely dangerous for one's own survival. The considerations included in this paper leave this problem intact. However, this is a huge problem that must be addressed in itself. This paper only announces this problem and says that it is definitely necessary to define, for our times, universal ethics at the level of humans, ethics without God and without the gods.

L'éthique mondiale : inclusions et exclusions
Par

Paulin J. Hountondji

National University of Benin

« Le temps du monde fini commence », écrivait Paul Valéry au lendemain de la deuxième guerre mondiale. L'Europe prenait conscience qu'elle n'était pas éternelle, pas plus qu'elle n'était le centre du monde. La rage de détruire qu'elle avait, avec obstination et avec une constance étonnante, exercée contre elle-même, la mondialisation d'un conflit qu'elle avait cru, au départ, limité et parfaitement circonscrit, l'intervention des forces extra-européennes à laquelle elle devait, somme toute, son propre salut, avaient achevé de la convaincre non seulement de l'existence, en ce monde, d'autres centres de décision, mais de la proximité absolue de ces centres et de l'impact immédiat de leur action sur son propre destin.

Sottises de philosophes

Dans un rapport célèbre adressé à la Fondation Gulbenkian sur l'état actuel des sciences sociales, un groupe d'universitaires réunis autour d'Immanuel WALLERSTEIN constatait l'irruption dans le domaine des sciences sociales, au lendemain de la deuxième guerre mondiale, de cohortes nouvelles de chercheurs venus du monde non occidental et l'élargissement considérable, qui s'ensuivait, des thématiques tradition-nelles.[1]

En fait, on n'assiste pas seulement à l'élargissement des thèmes. On assiste aussi à la mise en cause de certains concepts et à l'effondrement de certitudes jusque là bien établies. Certains excès ne sont plus possibles aujourd'hui. Arthur de Gobineau pouvait encore au XIXème siècle disserter tranquillement sur l'inégalité des races humaines. Il ne le pourrait plus aujourd'hui. Lévy-Bruhl pouvait, au début du XXème

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[1] Immanuel Wallerstein, *Open the Social Sciences. Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Science*s. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996, 124 pp.

siècle, attribuer à certaines peuplades d'Australie, d'Afrique et d'ailleurs, une « mentalité primitive » caractérisée comme prélogique. Il ne le pourrait plus aujourd'hui et n'aurait par conséquent plus besoin de se rétracter in extremis comme il l'a fait partiellement dans une autocritique tardive.

Mais il n'y a pas que Gobineau. Il n'y a pas que Lévy-Bruhl. On est parfois surpris de lire sous la plume d'auteurs très sérieux considérés partout, même hoirs d'Europe et hors d'Occident, comme des modèles au-dessus de tout soupçon, des observations bizarres qu'on ne peut considérer, au mieux, que comme des sottises.

Je ne m'amuserai pas à citer des exemples. Ils sont légion, depuis les trouvailles de Hume sur « l'infériorité naturelle des Nègres par rapport aux Blancs », infériorité confirmée, selon lui, par l'histoire récente et contemporaine,[2] jusqu'à l'alchimie savante de Heidegger, pour qui « *la 'philosophie' est grecque dans son être même* » c'est-à-dire qu' « *elle est, dans son être originel, de telle nature que c'est d'abord le monde grec et seulement lui qu'elle a saisi en le réclamant pour se déployer - elle* »,[3] en passant par les pseudo-constats de Kant sur « les différentes races humaines »,[4] la définition du Nègre donnée par Diderot au volume 11 de l'*Encyclopédie*,[5] les allégations de Hegel sur la non-historicité du Noir, la plaisanterie de mauvais goût de Husserl sur le Papou,[6] et bien d'autres divagations encore.

Dans son ouvrage remarquable sur *Philosophy and an African culture*, notre collègue ghanéen Kwasi

2 Dans une note au bas d'un article de 1748 sur "Les caractères nationaux", Hume écrit en substance:
"Je soupçonne volontiers les Nègres, et en général toutes les autres espèces d'hommes (...) d'être naturellement inférieurs aux Blancs. Il n'y a jamais eu de nation civilisée, ni même d'individu éminent dans le domaine de l'action ou de la spéculation, qui ne fût de couleur blanche. (...) Il y a des esclaves noirs dispersés dans toute l'Europe, chez qui personne n'a jamais découvert le moindre signe d'ingéniosité (...). En Jamaïque, il est vrai, on cite le cas d'un Nègre qui serait un homme intelligent et cultivé; mais il est probable qu'on l'admire pour des exploits superficiels, comme un perroquet qui prononcerait distinctement quelques mots" (cité par Eze, 1997: 33. Je traduis)

3 Heidegger, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* Paris, Gallimard, 1957: 15. Bien qu'il soit signé Heidegger, la logique de ce texte ne va guère plus loin que celle des médecins de Molière (l'opium fait dormir parce qu'il possède une vertu dormitive...), ou celle des alchimistes qui expliquaient la combustion par l'évaporation d'une substance mystérieuse, le phlogistique.

4 Dans un essai paru en 1775 sous le titre "Des différentes races humaines", Kant affirme, sur le mode du constat, que *tous les Nègres sentent mauvais*. Tenant ce phénomène pour acquis, il entend l'expliquer en faisant intervenir des notions qui en disent long sur la science de l'époque: particules de fer dans le sang, dont l'excès serait compensé par un dégagement d'acide phosphorique dans la substance rétiforme, etc.

5 *"Non seulement leur couleur les distingue, mais ils diffèrent des autres hommes par tous les traits de leur visage; des nez larges et plats, de grosses lèvres, et de la laine au lieu de cheveux, paroissent constituer une nouvelle espèce d'hommes. Si l'on s'éloigne de l'équateur vers le pôle antarctique, le noir s'éclaircit, mais la laideur demeure: on trouve ce vilain peuple qui habite la pointe méridionale de l'Afrique"*

6 *"L'homme est un animal raisonnable, et en ce sens vaste, le Papou est aussi un homme, et non un animal (...). Mais de même que l'homme, et le Papou lui-même, représentent un nouveau degré dans l'animalité, précisément celui qui s'oppose à la bête, de même la raison philosophique représente un nouveau degré dans l'humanité et dans sa raison »* in Husserl, *La crise des sciences européennes et la phénoménologie transcendantale*, Paris : Gallimard, 1976: 372

Wiredu cite le texte de Hume mentionné ci-dessus, puis commente : "L'Africain a besoin d'une maturité considérable pour être capable d'examiner de façon impartiale le manque de respect de Hume pour les Nègres et ses vues philosophiques, de manière à déplorer le premier et à apprécier et assimiler les secondes".[7] Emmanuel Eze va plus loin en dénonçant, sur le mode militant, ce qu'il appelle tout simplement le racisme des Lumières.

Frontières invisibles

Je crois cependant plus productif de noter que ni les penseurs des Lumières, ni les autres auteurs que nous venons de citer n'écrivaient pour les Africains et les Papous, pas plus qu'ils n'écrivaient pour les non-blancs en général. Ils ne soupçonnaient pas que ces derniers les liraient un jour, et les excluaient d'emblée du cercle de discussion. Seule une telle exclusion explique qu'ils puissent raconter à leur sujet *n'importe quoi* en restant entre Occidentaux, bien au chaud, sans risque de susciter des protestations.

Althusser disait parfois avec humour, pour corriger un propos qu'il avait tenu la veille ou quelques jours plus tôt : « J'ai dit une sottise ». En reprenant ce mot pour qualifier les aberrations de nos célèbres philosophes, on se met un peu à leur place en leur supposant de la bonne foi et en les créditant d'une autocritique qu'ils auraient en effet peut-être formulée, s'ils en avaient eu l'occasion. On plaide en quelque sorte l'ignorance, on sollicite l'indulgence, on dédramatise. Une telle dédramatisation est nécessaire si nous voulons continuer à lire Kant, Hegel, Husserl, Marx et tous les autres, si nous ne voulons pas perdre le bénéfice d'une assimilation critique de ce qu'il y a de meilleur dans la tradition occidentale, si nous voulons exercer cette indispensable maturité à laquelle nous invite Wiredu.

Le discours militant a en effet ses limites, car il court le risque de jeter, comme on dit en anglais, le bébé avec l'eau de bain. Au-delà du propos manifestement raciste, il faut donc remonter à ce qui le rend possible : la délimitation trop étroite du cercle d'interlocution, les frontières invisibles qui limitent à une culture ou à une race la communauté des partenaires et autres parties prenantes à une discussion savante, la fausse sécurité d'un discours qui se croit à l'abri de toute contestation. En attirant ainsi l'attention sur la démarcation, le tracé des frontières, la délimitation du cercle comme acte fondateur, on minimise la portée de tels propos. On les considère davantage comme des erreurs que comme des fautes, on y voit des sottises, des formes de divagation découlant d'une méconnaissance totale des limites réelles de l'humanité pensante.
En somme, les limites du savoir géographique de l'époque expliquent en partie les propos inacceptables de nos philosophes. Cela ne les dédouane pas tout à fait, il est vrai, puisqu'aux mêmes époques, et en

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7 Kwasi Wiredu, *Philosophy and an African culture*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1980: p.49

faisant un meilleur usage des connaissances géographiques alors disponibles, d'autres auteurs, souvent plus obscurs, ont eu des appréciations totalement différentes.[8] Plus troublant encore, malgré tout ce qu'on sait aujourd'hui des autres cultures et des autres civilisations, malgré les enseignements de l'histoire, de la géographie et de l'anthropologie contemporaines, on retrouve le même type de propos sous la plume d'auteurs réputés intelligents.[9] Cela veut dire que les lacunes du savoir existant n'expliquent jamais tout, et que chaque auteur reste responsable, quoi qu'on dise, de l'usage qu'il fait du legs scientifique de son époque et de la manière dont il délimite, sur cette base, son espace d'interlocution.

Géographies secrètes

A chacun sa géographie. L'eurocentrisme est d'abord une géographie du discours. Avant d'être un préjugé sur la supériorité de l'Europe, il est une décision, généralement inconsciente, concernant l'espace d'interlocution, décision qui limite cet espace au cercle des interlocuteurs européens ou d'origine européenne. Sans que l'on s'en rende compte, le choix du destinataire influe largement sur le contenu du discours, car il détermine, directement ou indirectement, les thèmes jugés intéressants ou pouvant retenir l'attention. Ce dont on parle dépend du public à qui on parle, même si l'on peut développer, sur les questions ainsi délimitées, les positions les plus libres, qui confirment ou contredisent l'orthodoxie régnante.

On peut prendre un exemple simple : la perception de l'homme dit primitif. Ce n'est pas un hasard si *La philosophie bantoue* du Père Tempels a été publiée, elle aussi, au lendemain de la deuxième guerre mondiale. Ce franciscain belge, missionnaire au Congo depuis de longues années, y prend le contrepied de la théorie de la mentalité primitive. Critiquant Lévy-Bruhl sans le nommer, il tente de montrer que les faits et gestes du Bantou et du « primitif » en général renvoient en fait à une conception du monde parfaitement cohérente, parfaitement rationnelle quoique différente de la conception du monde dominante en Occident. Plutôt qu'une mentalité prélogique ignorante du principe d'identité, du principe de contradiction et du principe du tiers exclu, l'on doit reconnaître chez le primitif, estime-t-il, une théorie des forces tenant lieu

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8 La critique la plus forte et la plus rigoureuse de Hume a été faite justement par un de ses contemporains beaucoup plus jeune, il est vrai, mais qui ne disposait pas d'autres repères géographiques que lui. Dans *An Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, in Opposition to Sophistry and Skepticism* (1770), James Beattie rappelle entre autres choses, l'étonnante civilisation des Aztèques et des Incas, déjà parfaitement connue à cette époque. Bien que l'histoire africaine fût encore mal connue, il montre, sur la base des faits alors avérés et d'une réflexion de simple bon sens, l'absurdité de la démarche de Hume. Voir Eze, *op. cit.*: 34-37

9 Des intellectuels noirs se sont beaucoup émus aux Etats-Unis, dans les années 90, d'un ouvrage qui prétendait établir "scientifiquement" les différences de quotient intellectuel et de "capacité cognitive" entre les races (Herrnstein and Murray, *The Bell Curve*, 1994). Peut-être aurait-on dû plus simplement noter l'indigence de la question même à laquelle ces auteurs prétendaient répondre et faire apparaître, avec un détachement total, la logique cachée de ce type de discours ainsi que les conditions de son succès dans l'Amérique des années quatre-vingt dix.

d'ontologie, sur laquelle reposent une théorie de la connaissance, une théorie de l'homme ou psychologie, une éthique et une philosophie du droit.

Toutefois, cet essai de réhabilitation de l'homme noir tourne court parce qu'il s'adresse encore exclusivement au public d'Occident. A preuve le titre même du dernier chapitre : « La philosophie bantoue et notre mission civilisatrice ». A preuve aussi, parmi d'autres affirmations surprenantes, l'insistance sur le caractère inconscient de cette « philosophie » et la nécessité incontournable d'un révélateur extérieur qui n'est autre, en l'occurrence, que le savant européen. On ne s'étonnera pas, dans ces conditions, de la persistance, dans cet essai, de notions surannées comme celle d'homme primitif. L'auteur reste pris dans le schéma d'une construction de l'homme primitif par un cercle de débats théoriques limité à une catégorie de « civilisés » autoproclamés. Le geste qui institue ce cercle, c'est l'exclusion d'une autre catégorie d'êtres humains prétendument non civilisés. On tourne en rond, on affirme d'emblée ce qu'on prétend ensuite démontrer. Tempels participe de cette logique d'exclusion, la même que celle de Lévy-Bruhl qu'il prétend réfuter.

L'extraversion

Face à un discours savant, il faut donc d'abord poser à l'auteur, ou aux auteurs, la question toute simple : à qui parlez-vous ?

On sait en effet la fascination exercée par le petit livre de Tempels sur les intellectuels africains eux-mêmes. On sait comment il a servi de modèle à nombre d'entre eux, qui ont entrepris à leur tour de rendre compte de la « philosophie » de leurs aïeux et de leurs communautés respectives, corrigeant au besoin Tempels sur tel ou tel point de détail. La philosophie bantoue inaugurait ainsi un nouveau genre, un nouveau paradigme de recherche. On a appelé ce paradigme l'ethnophilosophie, désignant par là un nouveau chapitre de l'ethnologie consacré à l'étude des « philosophies » collectives, c'est-à-dire, en fait, des visions du monde ou systèmes de pensée collectifs des civilisations de l'oralité (celles qu'on a longtemps appelées, très improprement, les sociétés sans écriture).

Nombre d'intellectuels africains ont donc pris en charge la problématique de Tempels. On ne compte plus les articles, ouvrages, thèses et mémoires inédits sur la « philosophie » africaine en général, ou sur la « philosophie » de telle ou telle ethnie africaine en particulier. Or, on ne s'avise jamais de demander à ces auteurs : à qui s'adressent vos savantes analyses ? A vos congénères africains ou au public occidental ? Il suffit de poser cette question pour se rendre à l'évidence : l'ethnophilosophie africaine est un essai de réhabilitation des cultures nègres aux yeux du public occidental et non à l'adresse des populations africaines elles-mêmes. C'est donc un discours extraverti, tourné vers l'extérieur. Héritière de la démarche de

Tempels et d'autres philosophes et ethnologues occidentaux (Griaule et son école en France, Paul Radin en Amérique et bien d'autres encore), elle reste organiquement liée à cette tradition occidentale qui se poursuit de son côté et s'enrichit de ces apports nouveaux. L'ethnophilosophie africaine, comme d'ailleurs toute la production scientifique africaine d'expression française, anglaise ou portugaise, s'inscrit massive-ment dans cette géographie du discours euro-centré qui exclut, par hypothèse, les non occidentaux. Même si son objectif déclaré est une « défense et illustration » des cultures africaines, elle se développe dans un espace d'interlocution qui exclut par principe les masses africaines.

Il y aurait bien une alternative. Elle consisterait à privilégier le débat horizontal entre Africains en général, entre intellectuels africains et populations africaines en particulier, par rapport au débat vertical, qui a jusqu'ici prévalu, entre les intellectuels africains et leurs pairs occidentaux.

La tentation du relativisme

L'extraversion, dans ce contexte précis, rend inévitable la tentation du relativisme. Sachant qu'il s'adresse d'abord à ses pairs d'Occident et plus généralement, au public instruit du centre du système, le chercheur périphérique aura pour préoccupation première de valoriser sa propre culture en opposant aux valeurs oc-cidentales le système des valeurs dont il se réclame lui-même. Toute nuance serait superflue, de même que tout effort de discernement qui tendrait à apprécier de manière équilibrée les forces et les faiblesses de la culture qu'il s'agit de défendre et celles de la culture occidentale elle-même. Le credo implicite est que l'une et l'autre se valent à tous points de vue : à chaque culture sa science, sa morale et son art.

Il se trouve que c'est vrai, dans un sens. Chaque culture, même à dominante orale, produit des systèmes de connaissances, un code moral, des codes esthétiques qui sont transmis de génération en génération. Tempels a parfaitement raison d'intituler un chapitre de son livre : « Ethique bantoue ». Assane Sylla a parfaitement raison de consacrer tout un livre à *La philosophie morale des Wolof*. Mais il ne faut pas se contenter de décrire ou de restituer, avec une fausse objectivité, ces systèmes de normes. Il faut en inter-roger la validité et se demander dans quelle mesure telle ou telle prescription, considérée naguère comme juste, est encore acceptable aujourd'hui. Or une telle question ne peut être posée que si l'on se libère du face-à-face imaginaire Europe – Afrique pour s'inscrire dans un débat interne à l'Afrique elle-même, qui doit pouvoir se prendre en charge, de manière critique et responsable, face aux nouveaux défis de l'histoire. Et ce qui est dit ici de l'Afrique peut l'être de n'importe quelle autre région du monde.

Par exemple la tradition rapporte qu'aux obsèques du roi Ghézo, un des plus grands rois de l'histoire du Danhomè (devenu Dahomey), quarante et une (41) de ses épouses, choisies parmi les plus jeunes et les plus belles, ont été enterrées vivantes avec lui pour continuer à le servir dans l'au-delà. On ajoute qu'une

rivalité féroce avait opposé entre elles ces jeunes reines, qui considéraient comme un honneur d'être ainsi sélectionnées. Mais on ne saurait se contenter aujourd'hui de rapporter ce fait, encore moins d'en faire une exploitation idéologique en le brandissant comme une pratique modèle caractéristique de la morale fon, ou comme un exemple de bonne gouvernance. Une fois qu'on l'a restitué en le replaçant dans son contexte historique, il faut se poser une double question : premièrement, une telle pratique serait-elle acceptable aujourd'hui ? Mieux, était-elle vraiment acceptable à l'époque ? C'est la question éthique. Deuxièmement, était-elle acceptée par tous, sans exception ? Au-delà de l'approbation conventionnelle et des déclarations publiques, au-delà du politiquement correct et de l'inévitable comédie sociale, quelle était, là-dessus, l'opinion secrète des mères de ces épouses et, le cas échéant, de leurs admirateurs secrets ? Quels étaient les murmures, les protestations étouffées ? Voilà des questions que l'historien actuel ne saurait éviter, et une nouvelle piste de recherche pour les sciences sociales.

Conclure

L'eurocentrisme n'explique pas tout. Au-delà du face-à-face imaginaire avec l'Occident, au-delà de l'effort ambigu pour se démarquer en continuant à s'adresser, en priorité, à ceux dont on prétend paradoxalement se démarquer et en excluant du cercle de discussion ceux dont on se veut les porte-parole, l'humanité est aujourd'hui confrontée à des formes de fanatisme et d'intégrisme extrêmement dangereuses pour sa propre survie. Les considérations ci-dessus ont laissé intact ce problème. Mais c'est un problème immense qui doit être abordé en lui-même. On ne fait ici que l'annoncer, et dire l'impérieuse nécessité de définir, pour notre temps, une morale universelle à hauteur d'homme, une morale sans Dieu, et sans les dieux.

Testing Universalism and Inclusion in Light of Lived Culture

Paul Willis

Princeton University

We are in need of a new humanism in light of the pressing need for valorising, clarifying and applying universal values in the period ahead of unprecedented global challenge and opportunity where issues of inclusion and exclusion will be paramount. This needs to be developed, though, in a theoretically nuanced way in relation to a more conditioned view of universal values taking in a proper understanding both of local experience and wider operations of power, exploitation and systematic inequality. I present a perspective on *lived culture* and critical ethnography to help in that process of testing and development, I do this in a spirit of multi or post disciplinarity believing that ethnography is one important route to a -disciplinary science of the human. My comments are general and rather abstract at times, though I do give a detailed example of the approach in action, and I know that societies and cultures differ extraordinarily across the planet and that a perspective developed and exemplified in the West may have difficulty crossing continents, but the theoretical and methodological focus on the local, creativity and response to specific forms of historical power and domination give it an ability in principle to carry its messages widely.

'Culture is Ordinary' [Williams, 1987] is a central tenet of the *lived culture* perspective. Emphatically small 'c' culture is seen as composed of the unspoken assumptions, values and practices, uses of symbols, symbolic forms, representations and artefacts which make up and direct the everyday life of particular groups. In my particular approach [Willis, 81, 2000] these cultural materials are seen not as inert things but as raw materials and resources towards creative local practices of what I call cultural production which involve 'meaning-making' and the production of representations from below as ordinary accomplishments. There is a production process at the cultural level, you could say, similar to material production in the labour process, whereby humans engage in sensuous practices working on symbolic raw materials to produce new or re-fashioned things fit for useful human purpose. In this case the 'products' are meanings and expressions useful in themselves but also, in one way or another, useful for making sense of the conditions of existence in which humans find themselves. You could say it is the entry of the 'ordinary' individual into history or into, at least, a register of its contemporary forms. Structural influences, inherited

cultures of class, race and gender, ideology: these all play a part in the formation of subjects and the means available to them for sense-making but the *cultural production* perspective sees class, gender and race discourses and cultural formations as reproduced and newly formed in each generation in part through the *bottom up* creativities of individuals and groups, re-ordering categories and creating new orders of signification as quotidian activities.

Objects, artefacts and expressive forms help to constitute the field of *lived culture* and are important raw materials, mediums and results of *cultural production*. The interest is not only in the things themselves but also in their human contextual and specific uses and appropriations. For instance the focus might be on how certain kinds of music, iconic symbols or artefacts, highly prized person possessions or particular styles of clothes become an over-riding preoccupation for an individual or social group, help to orient how they see and are 'in' the world and are profound influences on identity, interest and aspiration. Ethnographic methods and analysis have used either the notions of homology or bricolage to theorise relations between humans and things, images and artefacts.

Cultural mediation of formal communication whether in institutions or as part of initiatives and programmes of various kinds aimed at inclusion is of fundamental importance. The point is that no official information, 'meant message' or intended communication from the powerful or institutionally sanctioned or designated leadership will pass directly into the heads of individuals understood or assumed to be atomised and isolated from each other. All communications pass through the bars, barriers and transformations of human groups, informal culture and informal *cultural production*. Forms of *cultural production* humanise potentially alien and threatening institutional/organisational/communicative environments, regulating what is seen as reasonable levels of effort or participation and provide 'maps of meaning' to place and deal with others at the same and different levels of hierarchy. Some cultures become organised by opposition to authority and the problems they pose, in turn, help to structure or restructure institutional forms and disciplinary regimes focussed not on maximising performance in the achievement of direct institutional/organisational objectives but on controlling and punishing deviants and deviant behaviour. All forms of *cultural production* have implications for the development of self-identity.

In order to restore the colour and irreducible human-ness to subordinated and dominated groups, one must be with them and exercise an open human understanding of their condition through a human presence and interaction with them. The privileged methodology of my approach to *lived culture* and *cultural production* is ethnography or some variant on its associated range of qualitative methods and techniques. The essential point about ethnography is that the human body is used as the privileged means and instrument of research. This involves placing the self in the same circumstances and under the same regimes of control as the subjects of study for some times quite long periods of time. Participant Observation is a fundamen-

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tal part of the group of methods and involves placing of the self not only in the same circumstances but also performing the same actions and duties as the research subjects. Ethnography aims to show 'how things go on' and starts with a simple inquiring attitude, 'What's going on here?'; 'How do you do things around here?' Listening to the answers involves understanding how they 'make sense' of their conditions of existence including economic positions and relationships and through which they also forge viable identities and strategies for maintaining human dignity, for development and becoming as human beings.

Crucial here is structural and ideological location. A focus on *lived culture* and *cultural production* as they relate to meaning-making in context cannot escape the glaring fact that the powerless and subordinated live in multi dimensional and vertically as well as horizontally petitioned worlds. Too often the circulation of ideas, values, religions, cultures is pictured as a horizontal flow with mergings, possible universalisms, and clashes being seen as roughly same level things. The dominant imagery for the flow of communication and network connection is basically the circle, whereas for social structure they are topographical. We need to bring them together for a notion of symbolic space with up/down dimensions as well as lateral ones. Interests and programmes and theories to do with 'Inclusion' and 'Exclusion' do bring in issues of power but there can still be the sense of the symbolic issues being uppermost so that division can still be a kind of corralling on a similar flat surface of social interaction with network perspectives of various kinds showing patterns of essentially flat connection. What must be decisively added is a vertical dimension of power and social relation as provided especially by economic relations and exploitation as well as local traditional or hierarchical or state forms. The efforts of meaning-hungry as well as really hungry agents, understood together, can then be understood in a much more effective, dynamic and dimensional fashion. From the cultural perspective, meaning-hungry agents look to find and develop cultural resources - folk, religious, traditional, commodity borne – not simply for their own sake or for their abstract or universal values with respect to the timeless mysteries of la *condition humaine* - but for the more practical purposes of problem solving with respect to material, symbolic and subjective conditions of existence: finding identity and dignity and a means for self-respect and gaining respect from others . Their *cultural production* does not take place on a flat surface. The main 'horizontal' dimension of the flow of ideas is actually tipped violently towards the vertical axis frequently coming to them as abnegation and stigmatisation. If you like, slipping down a vertiginous *slope* whose parameters are material vertical oppression and horizontal ideological abnegation, they pursue the only resources – horizontal - available to them [they cannot fix the vertical problem] of circulating ideas and values for their own purposes to find other dimensions of worth to enable the Sisyphean tasks of resisting sliding down what might become the infinite gradient of symbolic loss. Our new humanism must be universal in its applicability but not universal and abstract with respect to its understandings of how values and cultural forms develop under specific conditions and the creativities of *cultural production* develop under specific conditions of possibility.

I argue that practices of *cultural production* [Willis, 1981] function to penetrate or 'see into' their conditions of existence as part of a lived judgement of how identities and actions can be best developed in their light, the constraints and enablements they supply. The notion of penetration tries to capture, at one moment of analysis, the impetus of *cultural production* to reveal the structural elements, both economic and ideational, on which cultures depend and which locate them. If you like, these are the 'insights' of embedded 'folk' knowledges, their practical 'common sense', their 'making do' of meaning. In this sense living cultural forms are of intense interest for the post disciplinary critical ethnographer, not because they preserve a set of quaint customs and hypostasised self maintaining values to be recorded for ethological and historical record, but because they contain certain cruciality in context, embedded and lived insights with respect to conditions of existence. They are practical, lived, in situ, solutions to problems. To be interested in an ethnographic account of a lived cultural form is to make a kind of an epistemological break. The whole point of going to the field is to try to understand how particular subjects are making sense of themselves and their situations in ways that cannot be prefigured and which might 'surprise' you. What sense is this culture making of its situation? What sense are you making of that sense making? How can we recognise in this instance that there is a possibility of a break, a difference, a form of local knowledge, created by actors upon conditions of course but which is, nevertheless, simply irreducible to what is supplied from outside, officially, ideologically, commercially.

 A further crucial point about - adding my fourth and last analytic term of reproduction to cultural production, penetration and reproduction within the overall field of lived culture - is that processes of 'making sense' of structural location not only 'reveal' aspects of them but also act, not as you might intuit, to challenge but, to reproduce them, in a variety of ways but most importantly in supplying the living, moving, embodied forms through which they (positions and relations structured according to power) are maintained and reproduced. Cultural actions and understandings which flow from the ways in which varieties of lived culture grapple with their conditions of existence, stress, conflict and contradiction can have unintended consequences or produce effects unimagined in their makings. Often problematic issues are not resolved or remain in tension so that the status quo ante is ironically reproduced or remains unchanged so ensuring the necessity for continued rounds of cultural exploration and challenge.

 It is as part of this continuous, unstably stable, dialectic of renewal and the reformation of the old, albeit in new forms, that lived culture should be understood from an ethnographic point of view. Key ethnographic questions, therefore, concern not only how far cultural practices 'make sense' of structural location as forms of solution to human problems but also how far these same practices ironically contribute towards conservative or non-emancipatory outcomes, to the eerie maintenance of the status quo. This is one of the reasons why sudden eruptions of feeling from below as in the Arab Spring and American Autumn take everyone by surprise. Actually, of course, they have not come from 'nowhere' and are the results of

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specific conjunctures but also come from the breakings free of lived cultural meanings which lie as unseen water tables beneath the visible topography. Questions arise here of the broadest hue: can various plans and initiatives for emancipation and inclusion understand these mutual relations and switch the balance more to the advantage of the dominated; under what conditions might the *penetrations of cultural production* be turned into forms of political consciousness and practice, towards emancipation as the strengthening from below of universal values and ethics.

Case Study

Learning to Labour [Willis, 1981] reported the results and findings of a long term ethnographic study conducted in the mid 1970's of a group of working class 'academically failing' white boys, members of what I termed the counter-school culture – they called themselves 'the lads' - in a working class comprehensive school in an industrial town of the English midlands. I followed them through their last eighteen months at school and then into work, where I 'clocked on' and worked alongside individuals in their different jobs. I did 'qualitative' work with less depth on five comparative groups. The puzzles leading me to the field were fairly straightforward. 'Despite all efforts at inclusion over a long historical period in the UK, why do working class kids continue to 'fail?'. 'What is the role of their *own* culture in this?' Not all working class students failed then, of course, but, then as now, middle class school students were about six times more likely to go on into Higher Education than were working class pupils: I wanted to get at the inside story of this phenomenon. I observed 'the lads' around the school, sat in classes, attended all careers sessions, accompanied them to a limited extent in their social rounds, conducted regular recorded group discussions and interviewed their parents at home.

The central vertical dynamic of their lived culture was a vigorous opposition to the authority of the teachers, 'Who are they, telling' us what to do when they're no better than us'. The central horizontal dynamic was a rejection of conformist pupils favoured by teachers and doing their best to fulfil official discourses of 'inclusion'. They labelled such students as 'ear'oles' - i.e. always listening, never doing: 'They'm prats, they never get any fun do they?' This rejection was felt as a kind of distinction and superiority, 'We can make them laff, they can't make us laff'. These positions and orientations were enacted and embodied through a strong 'rough' masculine style, embellished in various ways through smoking, drinking and stylish dressing. Also central to the culture was devotion to and deployment of 'the laff', an ubiquitous form capable of turning almost any situation into material for jokes and ribbing, 'it's the most important thing in life, even communists laff'.

From an educationalist and 'inclusion' point of view, the strangest thing about 'the lads' attitudes and behaviour was their low interest in, often hostility towards, academic work and the gaining of qualifications.

From a sociological point of view the strangest thing about their culture was the indifference it induced amongst 'the lads' to the actual kind of work they thought of undertaking, in the event, ranging from factory work to tyre fitting to brick layers mate.

The ethnographic, 'surprising', 'scientific' findings? The sheer life, intelligence and wit of the cultural practices of 'the lads' have to be recognised. The book details some of their horseplay, adventures and confrontations around the school as well as some of their later experiences and cultural practices at work. What was different and fresh about the book, drawing much and continuing attention was its digestion and presentation of ethnographic, fine brush, data in relation to and through a practical methodological and theoretical open-ness and recognition that 'the lads' 'anti-social' culture was actually creative and craftedley interesting in its own right [*cultural production*] and contained, embodied and embedded, often highly rational seeds of knowing and analysis [*penetrations*] about their current and future situations. Here was no sullen defeat, nor cultural inadequacy, nor simple ideological domination. They were not dupes or zombies. At the same time it has to be recognised that it is this same culture which helps deliver them, and those like them, into a life of manual labour (and now unemployment) in ways which seem quite against their basic interests. School based informal cultures can have profound implications for the future life courses of their members.

Principles Towards a New Humanist Project

Collective logics
Lived cultures operate often to drive a wedge between dominant individualism and collectivism. Neo-liberal versions of global capital, even riven by crisis, still drive much of the social and economic re-organisation of the world. This is driven by an individualist ideology with implicit or explicit references to a supposedly Darwinist model of the 'survival of the fittest'. Here, economic development and individual energy are unleashed by the individualist and selfish pursuit of profit with the 'hidden hand of the market' almost by accident and as a bye product left to produce collective benefits. But an often unremarked contradiction of capitalism at the cultural level is that the pursuit of self advantage at the material plane and the ideological individualism which must follow can be profoundly damaging, not helpful, for the majority. By definition, most cannot be 'winners' in a competitive individualistic race but all are asked to make the sacrifices of being ready to compete as if they really expected to win, increasingly in the very sinews of their being, making over all interests and capacities in the name of the 'entrepreneurial self'. The majority bear not only the pain of inevitable failure but likely also the extra burden of self blame and the disorientations, anomie and alienation flowing from having remodelled their inner most selves to no purpose or outlet. Now more than ever, the majority can be seen and asked to see themselves as a serial bunch of atomised 'losers'. Worse, most races are rigged, often in unseen ways. Through inheritance of

cultural, social and monetary capital most races are rigged to start with – elites running flat or down, the poor up vertiginous and never ending slopes where they are often blamed for their slow pace and criticised for making mountains out of mole hills.

Lived cultures often forge practically different ways of being in the game and pose different logics experimenting with different types and ontologies of identity. Multiple identities may co-exist, of course, with major remnants of individualistic ideologies expressed often and dominant even in individual self accounts where the 'I'-centric organisation and interpellations of language continue to enforce individual narratives of self account and justification and some aspects of behaviour, too, in line with them. But ethnographers must look behind the words at actions and rituals, at the somatic and lived, at dynamic relations with objects and artefacts, to see what collective logics may be in solution in cultural forms to refuse, deflect or blunt individualistic games of thought in which the majority must lose but all asked to place the same symbolic stake. They experiment with uses of human capacities and the development of grounded aesthetics [Willis, 2000] and ethics which refuse to pay a double price of failure; one material, one ideological. Practically, they eschew individualism because they do not receive its benefits. There are many factors and different kinds of situated expressions in this which are the subject of and reason for ethnographic investigation, but often crucial and under-estimated is the universal role of humour: astonishing rituals of good nature, ironic but accepting comments on the cruel twists of fate even in the most desperate of circumstances, future tragedies elliptically imagined and defended in wry comments and gallows humour. This is a finding, scrapping and reaching for a momentum of humanity in practice at the very bottom of the barrel which is often strangely missing from the top.

Even in societies and areas of the world heavily influenced historically by communal and collective forms, it is the still revolutionary force of capitalistic economic development which is the prime mover, shifting historical patterns ever more towards individualism and re-organising older loyalties and ties with respect to individualised notions of survival or advantage in the ever encroaching market. Dynamic elites increasingly understand themselves, at least in part, as individual members of global elites rather than as members of their original collectivities. Mutatis mutande, *lived culture* can operate here, in the 'emergent' or 'frontier' economies, just as in more profoundly individualist and neoliberal contexts, to pose lived alternatives in how to live and questions concerning actual conditions of existence probing the ideological and contradictory processes constructing the subordinate in rapidly changing historical conditions.

Implicit collective logics with respect to situated context often map onto, draw sustenance from and reproduce in stronger or specific form inherited or other pre-existing supra-individual symbolic entities, apparently universal or transcendental collective forms of religion and higher form of collective belief apparently offering kinds of salvation not based on and superior to the secular calculation. Collective log-

ics may also have an affinity with belief in 'cultural/ethnic genes' and various kinds of essentialisms, fundamentalisms and quasi-mystical senses of authenticity as some kind of guaranteed connection between a spiritual, given core and its cultural expression: that 'we really are different from others'. In ironic and often tragic twists, the excluded can make their own exclusions on grounds of what they regard as being sacred contrasted with what they take to be the profane. Sometimes election for the chosen proceeds from before birth. The lack of insight into the actual social construction here can lead to intended and unintended circles of the horizontal and sometimes violent, certainly divisive, othering of others who should be brothers and sisters in sharing a vertical or slopped plane of domination and abnegation. It also has to be recognised that collective logics of action, experience and survival can also harm individual interests and lower individuals' already low chances of succeeding in already unequal competition. In all these twists and turns, though, the analyst in respecting the genuine held-ness and fast-ness of belief should never overlook the common aetiologies of lived cultures, their logics of social purpose and effect in specific historical locations where nothing else would serve. This is necessary, not only for better understanding but also for the potential of developing a conditioned communication addressed at bringing together apparently disparate forces, even oppositional, interests and meanings

Ethics From Below

The collective forms developing and expressed through the practices and mediations of 'lived culture' of subordinated and dominated groups can give rise to an emergent ethics, often expressed through norms of behaviour and belief rather than in and through logocenrtric reasoning or canonical texts. Such ethical forms need interpretation but have importance in times of dramatic change across an increasingly interconnected globe because of their likely inner relationship to the actual drivers of change and experience at the bottom of social space. This emergence might be the first indication, not only of structural shifts at all levels, but also of qualitative changes in human response to, and as part of, them. Such ethics come not from the outside or the universal as abstraction but are emergent from the activities and forms of life of *lived cultures*. They arise from practice and from conflicts mediated by available symbolic forms and from agonistic tension of the full human - full because humanity is wholly on the line, vulnerable to and immersed in a changing mass - with their conditions of existence in historical situation. Even where abstract belief systems are taken over, grounded ethics arise not from them but from their traction in particular circumstances. Moreover what is received is not a given, the original repeated, but subject to transformation and focus through practice.

The source of the innovative ethical content is that the fate of the individuals is not contained within an individualistic frame of fatefulness, with a group notion arrived at simply by the addition of units, but in a larger conceptual frame sensing something of the ontology of the collective level for itself and of itself.

Here the individual has positive identity and a right to respect at least in part with respect to the conscious-ness of being part of a larger group and that the survival of the larger group is part of the survival of the individual. To apprehend in a concrete situation that 'this is not a way to be human', inescapably poses the lived not abstract question of what it is to be human, how 'to go on', which then works in part at least through a collective logic which looks for practical answers in relation to a shared human-ness, to what early Marx called the 'species being' of humanity. Perhaps it is only suffering within shared contexts that produce this impulse as seeking for practical answers concerning the nature of human-ness where leisured and advantaged abstraction remains stuck in solipsist, individual study. Abstract laws can be overturned, ignored, even transgressed -like Anigone, 'dishonouring the laws which the gods have established.., [I am] sinless in crime for I owe a longer allegiance'. This allegiance is that things symbolic have to be shared, the earth has to be shared, the silences and ellipses of individualist ideologies have to be filled out in ways arising out of, not added to practice. Loss of dignity for the whole is loss of dignity for the self, inescap-able connections of the mainland of humanity. It is felt in the cultural bone that tides of individualism would make you not only an island but a submerged island. Loss of respect for what it is to be human in this case is loss at some level of the totality of humanity. Gaining positive identity at this level brings back a valorisation of a whole category of humanness.

Just as with collective logics, ironies and unintended consequences abound sometimes enabling an ethics which seem anti-universal, a finding of one set of practical beliefs demonises or stigmatises those of others regarded as 'out groups'. New kinds of lateral 'othering' can feed off and reproduce sometimes in more virulent forms pre-existing socially available social stereotypes. The work of the social always proceeds in the social and has no Archimedean vantage points to lever an abstract universal. Arising unconsciously from the social, they have real effects in the social. What is needed to comprehend and cope with this is not an accepting cultural relativism but a more analytic cultural relativity. This is why pursuing the lived culture perspective requires analysis as well as respectfully descriptive work. Amongst other things, com-parison and analysis can disinter the grounded ethical root and route sometimes to the unethical. To show the conditions of illumination and historical groundedness in one view of ethics may offer a way of work-ing within the cultural to show and lay bare its mechanisms for greater general emancipation and control, to show in one case how the practical recognition of the interchangeability of 'I' and 'Thou' in defeating its own 'othering' can be extended more formally, under conditions, to recognise the same thing in others, to refuse the refusal of 'the other' in general. An ethics which has a collective genesis can have a collective destination. There is a universal embedded in the micro, but emergent ethics need a specialist human work on them to be finished, finally done, set on their feet to be an ethics for a new kind of historical person. We need a human science for that but its own footings need to be in the emergent, not received, in the contra-dictory not the comfortable, in process not code.

World Scene / Social Becoming

Material and Social conditions are changing at a colossal pace around the globe. A bewildering new world is emerging of contradictory influences, profound crises of the old and tumultuous birth of the new. Through what cultural mediations does the necessary now connect with the voluntary under new conditions? A perspective on lived culture, ethnographically studied, offers grounds for understanding the human unfoldings of this colossal historical canvass. At the minimum, and as a pre-condition, critical ethnography stresses agency and always insists on a role for subordinated group in the production of their own cultures and understandings. Too often profound macro changes are seen as passive processes, described in gerund terms from above – nobody, no acting subjects are really responsible. Globalisation? Who does it, who suffers? Who cares, its globalisation stupid! Downsizing – nobody is doing the sacking, it's just a process – nobody knows from where it comes. Restructuration and massive moves of population? Well that's a condition of the modern world. Ethnography reminds us that real social agents live simultaneously, and in the same life space, the dislocations of structural domination and change with the recompositions of the social together with economic transformations and state formations n relation to them. Ethnographic work must encompass the inter-twinings of these too often separated worlds as they constitute the practical field on which agents live and act. In the train of the new relations and the erosion of traditional cultural forms come new possibilities, emergent forms which must be scrutinized for their social possibilities, clues to social becoming.

At bottom my message is simple: culture is not a static hypostasised thing, not a pedagogic or a religious instrument, but a tense and living thing which includes *cultural production, penetration and reproduction*. It is hard to break open its secrets; how production and reproduction seem to co-exist, how emancipation and entrapment can be so entangled. But outside plans for inclusion and development must listen to these blind, strange overtures, to find music and a universal value which also moves with and is moved by the rhythm of daily life or they, in turn, will be condemned to the endless discords of failure and un-intention.

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Parallel Session 2.
Global Ethics and Dialogue of Cultures

B. The Boundaries of the Human

Session 4

The Human Person in the Age of Global Climate Change

Rainier A. Ibana
Ateneo de Manila University

Introduction

The phenomenon of global climate change is an opportunity for human beings to reflect on the limitations and possibilities of their actions with respect to their environments. The UNFCC had attributed climate change "to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability." This definition makes a distinction between the effects on the environment of human action and natural processes, and bestows the responsibility for the mitigation, adaptation and reversal of global climate change squarely on human hands.

Human Embodiment

The border line between natural processes and human activities, however, is difficult to delineate because humans are partly immersed in their surroundings. Alfred North Whitehead, for example, asks:

> "Consider one definite molecule. It is part of nature. Perhaps it started from a distant nebula. It enters the body; it may be as a factor in some edible vegetable; or it passes through the lungs as part of the air. At what exact point, as it enters the mouth, or as it is absorbed by the skin is it a part of the body?" [1]

Human well-being, therefore, can be improved or degraded by the quality of its environment. A degraded environment can consequently cause illness and diseases as pollution is ingested from the surroundings that envelope human life. The most common types of cancer, for example, are those of the skin and the

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1 Alfred North Whitehead, *Modes of Thought*, (New York: Capricorn Books, 1958), p. 30.

lungs, the parts of the body that are most exposed to the environment. Mr. H. Sekiguchi, a Japanese expert on toxicology, suggests that one need not use sophisticated instruments to determine the presence of pollution. He recommended that

> "When you go to a dump, look at the trees, listen to your body. Are your eyes sore? Do you feel something strange? Do you feel sick?"[2]

The human body may serve as a reliable barometer of prevailing environmental conditions. Even sophisticated instruments that identify the most minute microbes through microscopes are mere extensions of the limitations of human eyes. Allan Watts argues, from an epistemological standpoint, that

> "Our whole knowledge of the world is, in one sense, self-knowledge. For knowing is a translation of external events into bodily processes, and especially into states of the nervous system and the brain: we know the world in terms of the body…"[3]

Even our thinking processes are empowered by the energy of the leaf because we need oxygen and other nutrients in order to think properly. Even carnivores that relish meat are dependent on plants that ultimately derive their energy from the soil, water, air and sunlight.

Ecological pyramids

Located at the apex of food pyramids, the human being is positioned to become the most voracious consumer of the environment. His intellectual and technological prowess can overcome the strongest animal and conquer the widest and deepest horizons of the earth and its outer space. Every feeding level, however, can absorb only a limited amount of energy and the rest are dispersed to the environment. The second law of thermodynamics, when applied to biological systems, states that only ten percent of energies are made available to a consumer as one ascends a higher feeding level while the rest of the energies are released to the environment in the form of heat.[4]

2 *Time Magazine* (May 20, 2000), p. 33.

3 Alan Watts, "The World is Your Body" in *Ecological Conscience: Values for Survival*, Edited by Robert Disch (Inglewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc, 1970), p. 188.

4 http://www.google.com.ph/imgres?q=food+pyramid+ten+percent+law&hl=tl&biw=1337&bih=548&tbm=isch&tbnid= xxDCmjn89SLIVM:&imgrefurl=http://www.bittersweetcandybowl.com/forum/topic/431-any-vegetarians-here/page__st __40&docid=XA1gn5zcWZz40M&imgurl=http://jacqueline110gs.edublogs.org/files/2010/10/EnergyPyramid-26a65z5. gif&w=447&h=335&ei=m-eeTpqAM-OWiQLFhpTfCQ&zoom=1&iact=hc&vpx=650&vpy=161&dur=10452&hovh=1 94&hovw=259&tx=138&ty=212&sig=109802118299459700530&page=1&tbnh=161&tbnw=215&start=0&ndsp=10&
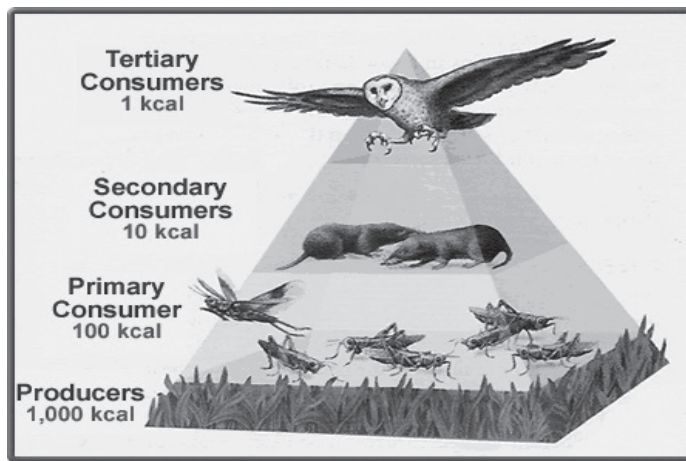
Energy consumption therefore varies as consumers ascend or descend feeding levels. Vegetarians, for example, conserve more energy from an ecological niche because they require far less joules of energy in order to consume the same amount of energy in comparison to carnivores whose consumption patterns are mediated by an extra-feeding level. The higher feeding levels consume more energies while those that live closer to the source of energy, those who "live closer to the ground," so to speak, conserve more energies.

This principle is corroborated by a UNESCO study on "Energy Flow, Environment and Ethical Implications for Meat Production" wherein it was found out that in order to produce one kilogram of meat, requires 7-9 kg of grain to produce beef, 4-6 kg of grain for pork and 2 kg of grain for chicken. These estimates do not include a significant amount of fossil fuels that are actually used for fertilizer, water, land, and industrial chemicals.[5] This does not yet include the consequent expenditures to construct, maintain, refrigerate and transport meat production systems.

Furthermore, the introduction of "antibiotic-resistant and pathogenic bacteria in animals and food" in order to optimize meat production and preservation pose serious health hazards and the reduction of the life-span of carnivores, especially humans,[6] whose metabolic rates are slower than smaller organisms. Metabolic rates are directly proportional to capacity of organisms to release toxins from their biological systems.

Food pyramids also expand in proportion to the higher densities of consumers because as the food pyramid extends vertically, its resource base also extends horizontally. Technological innovations that are introduced to increase consumption levels that further stress the carrying capacity of ecological niches unless these technologies include a corresponding attempt to increase the regenerative capacity of primary producers and decomposers that provide additional nutrients to eco-systems.

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ved=1t:429,r:2,s:0 (Accessed on October 19, 2011)

5 Robert A. Kanaly, et.al., Energy Flow, *Environment and Ethical Implications for Meat Production* (Bangkok: UNESCO 2010), p. 5-13.

6 Ibid., p. 13.

Technologies must therefore balance production systems, on the one hand, and the sustainable consumption of ecological systems, on the other hand. The tipping point in this balance is when consumers over-extract resources at the expense of the capacity of ecological systems to regenerate themselves. Air pollution, for example, is the result of the imbalance between the capacity of carbon sinks to absorb the amount of carbon emissions released to the environment.

Likewise, technologies that extract carbon-based fossil fuels instead of harnessing renewable energies increase the height of the pyramids of consumption and add to the generation of heat to the environment instead of working with the cyclical regeneration of nature to continually produce the required energies by human consumption.

The Maximum-power Principle

In the same manner that the boundaries of the human body are porous to the environment, food pyramids are immersed within ecological systems and food webs that interact with one another. The organisms that eventually survive are those who are more intricately and intensely interrelated to other organisms and support systems. The notion of "social capital", which refers to the ability to harness mutual benefits and assistance among neighbors, friends and relatives, for example, indicate that people with higher income levels tend to also have broader social bases of support for their sustenance and survival.[7]

Human beings, moreover, can intervene in the organization of production systems in order to maximize the transfer of energies by creating feedback loops by generating subsystems that store and reuse energies.[8] Recycling and reusing finished products, for example, are more economical than producing new ones, by virtue of the second law of thermodynamics, because energies are maintained at the same trophic level instead of being transferred from one level of consumption to the next.

Three of the five 2011 Ramon Magsaysay Awardees, touted as Asia's equivalent of the Nobel Peace Prize, reminded us that small scale renewable energies, such as solar and hydroelectric turbines can become more efficient and effective in providing the much needed electric power in many areas of the

7 http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTTSOCIALCAPITAL /0,,contentMDK:20185164~menuPK:418217~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:401015,00.html (accessed on October 9, 2011)

8 Howard T. Odum and /Elisabeth C. Odum, *Energy Basis for Man and Nature* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company 1976), pp. 40ff.

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developing world especially when they are generated and consumed at their source.[9] They argue that cost for transportation and transfer of energies can be eliminated by producing and consuming energies at the household or community level. A cursory investigation of household electric bills indeed reveals a significant amount of expenses that are being spent by subscribers to electric companies on such items as "system loss, distribution and transportation costs."[10]

Creating Decentralized Technologies on the Ground

A significant aspect of the project of enabling electric power consumers to generate their own sustainable energies is the empowerment of the poor as "asset creators" themselves.[11] Marginalized and vulnerable sectors of society, in particular, gain control and confidence in the affairs of their daily lives because they are released from their dependence on the paternalistic assistance of patrons who could later exploit their political and economic weaknesses as a means to other ends.

Aside from developing power generating technologies at the local level, simplified agricultural techniques such as vermi-composting, multi-cropping and propagating endogenous plant species are not only generating extra income for farm workers but also contributing to the sustainability of agricultural production systems. Vermi-composting, for example, systematically produce organic fertilizers by feeding biodegradable materials on worms that transform organic wastes into high grade humus fertilizers. The benefits added by composting to ecological conservation lie beyond the realm of agriculture. According to Sarah L. Kimbal and Gerarld A. Doeksen of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service,

> By removing [organic household] items from the waste stream with home composting, residents can reduce the cost of municipal solid waste collection and disposal, prolong the life of landfills, add valuable nutrients to their gardens and soil, reduce the amount of commercial fertilizer in their yards and gardens, and save money.[12]

Instead of becoming dependent on the seasonal harvests of large-scale plantations such as coconut and coffee that are cultivated for exports that fluctuate according to the volatility of foreign markets, multi-cropping has allowed farmers to diversify their sources of income aside from contributing to the increase of carbon sinks that the much needed oxygen for the environment. The reintroduction of endogenous

9 http://globalnation.inquirer.net/7375/2011-ramon-magsaysay-awardees-announced (accessed on October 19, 2011)

10 Henry Ibana, *Camarines Norte Electric Cooperative*, Electric Bill for September-October, 2011.

11 http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleId=720332 (Accessed on October 20, 2011)

12 http://www.ehow.com/facts_5655159_benefits-vermicomposting.html (Accessed on October 20, 2011).

plant species, in particular, contributes to the complexity of ecological niches that favor the stability of agricultural production systems.

The promotion of biodiversity, in general, has gained support from the international community because of the intrinsic value of endangered species that can survive only within complex ecological systems. These values include pharmaceutical and other commercial uses of endangered species that are becoming extinct because their importance has not yet been fully recognized because their knowledge base are usually tied up with local and traditional communities. The UN Convention on Biodiversity has recognized, in its Preamble,

> The close and traditional dependence of many indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles on biological resources, and the desirability of sharing equitably the benefits arising from the use of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices relevant to the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components.

The involvement of the traditional cultural practices to the preservation of endemic species is a reminder that biodiversity does not refer only to the preservation of a single and particular specie or entity but a relational and systemic concept that includes the participation and interaction of many organisms within ecological niches and the broader social and geological contexts of ecosystems.

Harish Hande, one of the Ramon Magsaysay Awardees for 2011, claims that technological solutions to energy generation problems at the local level must be tailor-made to fit the specific needs of its consumers. Solar Energy Electric Company (SELCO) which he founded to deliver the energy requirements in the rural areas of India and Bengalor, anchors the success of his initiative in the principle that

> SELCO designs and installs solar technology applications based on each customer's specific needs, whether two- or four-light system for the house, head lamps for night workers like midwives and rose pickers, or electricity for sewing machines.[13]

Contrary to arguments for the efficiency of the so-called economies of scale, the decentralization of technologies at the local level has actually serviced more people and has directly addressed the problems of poverty and scarcity among the most vulnerable sectors of society without the mediation of large corporations and governments. Another Magsaysay awardee, the *Alternative Indigenous Technologies Foundation* (AIDFI) based in Negros Occidental in the Philippines redesigned a ram pump that made use

13 http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleId=720332 (Accessed on October 20, 2011)

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of the kinetic energy of flowing waters from rivers and springs in order to push water upland and they have exported their technologies to far flung and underserved countries such as Afghanistan, Columbia and Nepal.[14]

These ingenious technological innovations have shown that technological development is anchored on the enhancement of the capability of the affected populations to address their own problems in a more sustainable way. Sustainable and even economic development ultimately depends on the development of human capabilities, as the Nobel Laureate for Economics Amartya Sen puts it.[15]

Critical, Creative and Compassionate Modes of Thinking for Sustainable Development

A key element in the success of the introduction of decentralized technologies for the consumption of the vulnerable sectors of society is the high level of educational attainments of its initiators. Auke Idzenga, a Dutch marine engineer and one of the founders of AIDFI, reintroduced the ram pump technology that led to the revitalization of their NGO. Harish Hande earned an engineering degree and was a graduate student at the Massachussets Institute of Technology when he was inspired to develop and introduce small scale solar energy technologies in India. Tri Mumpuni, another awardee who established small scale hydro electric power in far flung communities in Indonesia was supported by her husband, Iskandar Kuntoadji, an engineer who instituted the Yayasan Mandiri, a pioneering non-government organization that promoted hydro electric power technology in the country sides.[16]

These innovators identify themselves as social entrepreneurs and activists who assumed a critical stance against the current models of economic development. They claim that they hardly relied on government support and made use of the capabilities of the marginalized sectors themselves in order to uplift their living conditions. They put their confidence on the people whom they served and believed that they can eventually solve the twin problems of poverty and environmental crisis by inventing technologies that address these issues. Their innovations remained rooted to their natural resources base while addressing the needs of their clients' levels of consumption by relying on renewable energy resources.

They made sure that their inventions were simple and affordable to those who would use them. Their sympathetic understanding of the difficult living conditions of their partners and searched for technologies that can address their needs in accordance with their actual situation and at the pace of development that

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14 http://www.gmanews.tv/story/227739/nation/negros-ngo-among-2011-ramon-magsaysay-awardees

15 Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books, 1999), pp. 87 ff..

16 http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleId=720953&publicationSubCategoryId=68

they can absorb and make use of the available sources of energy. Their success lies in their deliberate effort to be attentive to the needs of their partners and in creatively meeting these needs from the resources that are already available to them.[17]

Concluding Reflections: The Boundaries of Being Human in the Age of Global Climate Change

We stand today at the verge of the tipping point of what it means to be human as we are come face to face with the boundaries of our existence. The impending catastrophe of global warming, as experts have discerned, is anthropogenic or made by humans. The quality of our humanity, therefore, is mirrored by the quality of the environment. As an Ancient Chinese adage puts it, "if you wish to know the character of a people, look at the quality of their mountains."[18]

We are bound by the environment in so far as our lives are sustained by our breaths. The oxygen that we breathe in was gifted to us by leaves who in turn receive the carbon dioxides that we expel for them to produce chlorophyll through photosynthesis. This process of breathing in and out and exchanging the air we breathe with plants serve as a metaphor of every mode of being in so far as every being must receive from and share with others in order to exist.

Caring for the environment, therefore, also means taking care of oneself. The interchange of resources among beings means that humans must also provide for the existence of others not only for the sake of their own survival but as a matter of natural necessity. As the being that dwells at the upper most level of consumption, however, the depth and expanse of the human beings' capacity for caring is just as far as their capacity to understand and reach out to others. As the story of philosophy has shown, every major intellectual epoch has tried to reduce to its own root metaphor the meaning of what it means to exist. "All nature is akin," as Plato poignantly wrote in his attempt to explain his theory of the Forms.[19]

The boundaries of being human, as further shown by our three Magsaysay award laureates, are limited only by the comprehensive power of the human imagination to find solutions to the seemingly insurmountable challenges of poverty and environmental degradation. Their success stories have amply demonstrated that answers can be found if humans will only persevere in finding solutions to problems no matter how difficult the obstacles may happen to be. It is to this end that scholars and discoverers have dedicated their meaningful lives; I believe that it is likewise for the attainment of such higher purpose that human beings can find happiness and ultimate fulfillment.

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17 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6MdjvFRMd8 (Accessed on October 20, 2011.)

18 Attributed to Mencius

19 http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1446430&pageno=28 (Accessed on October 20, 2011)

The Boundaries of the Human:
From Humanism to Transhumanism

José Cordeiro

Singularity University

The famous astronomer and astrobiologist Carl Sagan popularized the concept of a Cosmic Calendar about three decades ago. In his 1977 book, *The Dragons of Eden: Speculations on the Evolution of Human Intelligence, Sagan wrote a timeline for the universe*, starting with the Big Bang about 15 billion years ago. Today, we think that it all started about 13.7 billion years back, and we keep updating and improving our knowledge of life, the universe and everything. In his Cosmic Calendar, with each month representing slightly over one billion years, Sagan dated the major events during the first 11 months of the cosmic year (see Table 1).

Table 1: Cosmic Calendar: January – November

Big Bang	January 1
Origin of Milky Way Galaxy	May 1
Origin of the solar system	September 9
Formation of the Earth	September 14
Origin of life on Earth	~ September 25
Formation of the oldest rocks known on Earth	October 2
Date of oldest fossils (bacteria and blue-green algae)	October 9
Invention of sex (by microorganisms)	~ November 1
Oldest fossil photosynthetic plants	November 12
Eukaryotes (first cells with nuclei) flourish	November 15

Source: J. Cordeiro based on C. Sagan (1977)

Interestingly enough, most of what we study in biological evolution happened in the last month. In fact, Sagan wrote that the first worms appeared on December 16, the invertebrates began to flourish on the 17ᵗʰ, the trilobites boomed on the 18ᵗʰ, the first fish and vertebrates appeared on the 19ᵗʰ, the plants colonized the land on the 20ᵗʰ, the animals colonized the land on the 21ˢᵗ, the first amphibians and first winged insects

appeared on the 22nd, the first trees and first reptiles evolved on the 23rd, the first dinosaurs appeared on the 24th, the first mammals evolved on the 26th, the first birds emerged on the 27th, the dinosaurs became extinct on the 28th, the first primates appeared on the 29th and the frontal lobes evolved in the brains of primates and the first hominids appeared on the 30th. Basically, humans are just the new kids in the block, and only evolved late at night on the last day of this Cosmic Calendar (see Table 2).

Table 2: Cosmic Calendar: December 31

Origin of Proconsul and Ramapithecus, probable ancestors of apes and men	~ 1:30 p.m.
First humans	~ 10:30 p.m.
Widespread use of stone tools	11:00 p.m.
Domestication of fire by Peking man	11:46 p.m.
Beginning of most recent glacial period	11:56 p.m.
Seafarers settle Australia	11:58 p.m.
Extensive cave painting in Europe	11:59 p.m.
Invention of agriculture	11:59:20 p.m.
Neolithic civilization; first cities	11:59:35 p.m.
First dynasties in Sumer, Ebla and Egypt; development of astronomy	11:59:50 p.m.
Invention of the alphabet; Akkadian Empire	11:59:51 p.m.
Hammurabi legal codes in Babylon; Middle Kingdom in Egypt	11:59:52 p.m.
Bronze metallurgy; Mycenaean culture; Trojan War; Olmec culture; invention of the compass	11:59:53 p.m.
Iron metallurgy; First Assyrian Empire; Kingdom of Israel; founding of Carthage by Phoenicia	11:59:54 p.m.
Asokan India; Ch'in Dynasty China; Periclean Athens; birth of Buddha	11:59:55 p.m.
Euclidean geometry; Archimedean physics; Ptolemaic astronomy; Roman Empire; birth of Christ	11:59:56 p.m.
Zero and decimals invented in Indian arithmetic; Rome falls; Moslem conquests	11:59:57 p.m.
Mayan civilization; Sung Dynasty China; Byzantine empire; Mongol invasion; Crusades	11:59:58 p.m.
Renaissance in Europe; voyages of discovery from Europe and from Ming Dynasty China; emergence of the experimental method in science	11:59:59 p.m.
Widespread development of science and technology; emergence of global culture; acquisition of the means of self-destruction of the human species; first steps in spacecraft planetary exploration and the search of extraterrestrial intelligence	Now: The first second of New Year's Day

Source: J. Cordeiro based on C. Sagan (1977)

The previous Cosmic Calendar is an excellent way to visualize the acceleration of change and the continuous evolution of the universe. Other authors have developed similar ideas to try to show the rise of complexity in nature. For example, in 2005, astrophysicist Eric Chaisson published his latest book, Epic of Evolution: Seven Ages of the Cosmos, where he describes the formation of the universe through the development of seven ages: matter, galaxies, stars, heavy elements, planets, life, complex life, and society. Chaisson presents a valuable survey of these fields and shows how combinations of simpler systems transform into more complex systems, and he thus gives a glimpse of what the future might bring.

Both Sagan and Chaisson have written excellent overviews about evolution, from its cosmic beginnings to the recent emergence of humans and technology. However, a more futuristic look is given by engineer and inventor Ray Kurzweil in his 2005 book: *The Singularity is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology.* Kurzweil wrote about six epochs with increasing complexity and accumulated information processing (see Table 3).

Table 3: The Six Epochs of the Universe according to Kurzweil

Epoch 1	Physics and chemistry (information in atomic structures)
Epoch 2	Biology (information in DNA)
Epoch 3	Brains (information in neural patterns)
Epoch 4	Technology (information in hardware and software designs)
Epoch 5	Merger of technology and human intelligence (the methods of biology, including human intelligence, are integrated into the exponentially expanding human technology base)
Epoch 6	The universe wakes up (patterns of matter and energy in the universe become saturated with intelligent processes and knowledge)

Source: J. Cordeiro based on R. Kurzweil (2005)

According to Kurzweil, humanity is entering Epoch 5 with an accelerating rate of change. The major event of this merger of technology and human intelligence will be the emergence of a "technological singularity". Kurzweil believes that within a quarter century, non-biological intelligence will match the range and subtlety of human intelligence. It will then soar past it because of the continuing acceleration of information-based technologies, as well as the ability of machines to instantly share their knowledge. Eventually, intelligent nanorobots will be deeply integrated in our bodies, our brains, and our environment, overcoming pollution and poverty, providing vastly extended longevity, full-immersion virtual reality incorporating all of the senses, and vastly enhanced human intelligence. The result will be an intimate merger between the technology-creating species and the technological evolutionary process it spawned.

Computer scientist and science fiction writer Vernor Vinge first discussed this idea of a technological singularity in a now classic 1993 paper, where he predicted:

> *Within thirty years, we will have the technological means to create superhuman intelligence. Shortly after, the human era will be ended.*

Other authors talk about such technological singularity as the moment in time when artificial intelligence will overtake human intelligence. Kurzweil has also proposed the *Law of Accelerating Returns,* as a generalization of Moore's law to describe an exponential growth of technological progress. Moore's law deals with an exponential growth pattern in the complexity of integrated semiconductor circuits (see

Figure 1).

Figure 1: Moore's Law
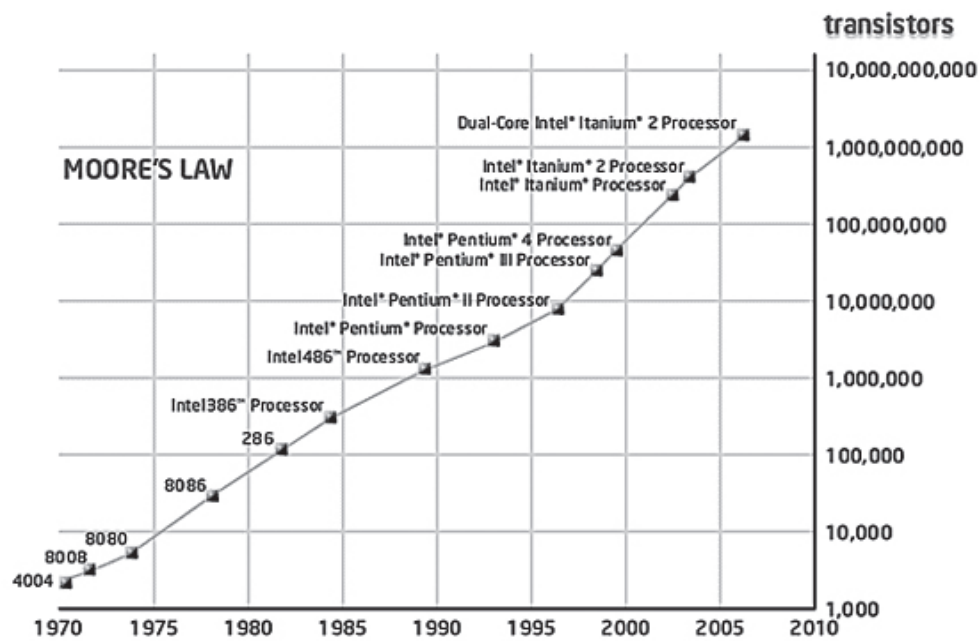
Source: Intel

Kurzweil extends Moore's law to include technologies from far before the integrated circuit to future forms of computation. Whenever a technology approaches some kind of a barrier, he writes, a new technology will be invented to allow us to cross that barrier. He predicts that such paradigm shifts will become increasingly common, leading to "technological change so rapid and profound it represents a rupture in the fabric of human history." He believes the *Law of Accelerating Returns* implies that a technological singularity will occur around 2045:

> *An analysis of the history of technology shows that technological change is exponential, contrary to the common-sense 'intuitive linear' view. So we won't experience 100 years of progress in the 21st century—it will be more like 20,000 years of progress (at today's rate). The 'returns,' such as chip speed and cost-effectiveness, also increase exponentially. There's even exponential growth in the rate of exponential growth. Within a few decades, machine intelligence will surpass human intelligence, leading to the Singularity —technological change so rapid and profound it represents a rupture in the fabric of human history. The implications include the merger of biological and non-biological intelligence, immortal software-based humans, and ultra-high levels of intelligence that expand outward in the universe at the speed of light.*

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Technological Convergence

Futurists today have diverging views about the singularity: some see it as a very likely scenario, while others believe that it is more probable that there will never be any very sudden and dramatic changes due to progress in artificial intelligence. However, most futurists and scientists agree that there is an increasing rate of technological change. In fact, the rapid emergence of new technologies has generated scientific developments never dreamed of before.

The expression "emerging technologies" is used to cover such new and potentially powerful technologies as genetic engineering, artificial intelligence, and nanotechnology. Although the exact denotation of the expression is vague, various writers have identified clusters of such technologies that they consider critical to humanity's future. These proposed technology clusters are typically abbreviated by such combinations of letters as NBIC, which stands for Nanotechnology, Biotechnology, Information technology and Cognitive science. Various other acronyms have been offered for essentially the same concept, such as GNR (Genetics, Nanotechnology and Robotics) used by Kurzweil, while others prefer NRG because it sounds similar to "energy." Journalist Joel Garreau in Radical Evolution uses GRIN, for Genetic, Robotic, Information, and Nano processes, while author Douglas Mulhall in *Our Molecular Future* uses GRAIN, for Genetics, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, and Nanotechnology. Another acronym is BANG for Bits, Atoms, Neurons, and Genes.

The first NBIC Conference for Improving Human Performance was organized in 2003 by the NSF (National Science Foundation) and the DOC (Department of Commerce). Since then, there have been many similar gatherings, in the USA and overseas. The European Union has been working on its own strategy towards converging technologies, and so have been other countries in Asia, starting with Japan.

The idea of technological convergence is based on the merger of different scientific disciplines thanks to the acceleration of change on all NBIC fields. Nanotechnology deals with atoms and molecules, biotechnology with genes and cells, infotechnology with bits and bytes, and cognitive science with neurons and brains. These four fields are converging thanks to the larger and faster information processing of ever more powerful computers (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Technological Convergence NBIC
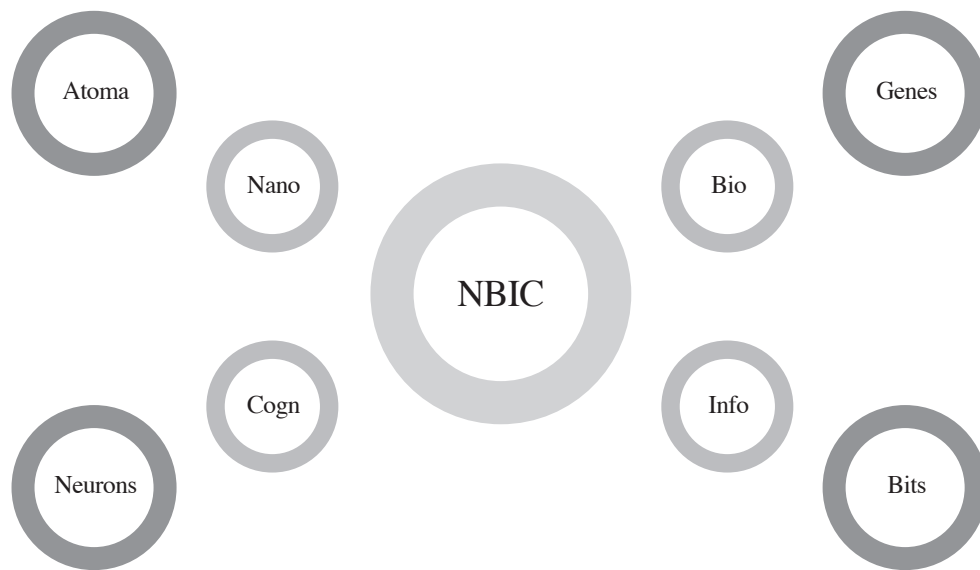
Source: J. Cordeiro based on M.C. Roco and W.S. Bainbridge (2003)

Experts from the four NBIC fields agree about the incredible potential of technological evolution finally overtaking and directing biological evolution. Bill Gates of Microsoft has stated that:

> *I expect to see breathtaking advances in medicine over the next two decades, and biotechnology researchers and companies will be at the center of that progress. I'm a big believer in information technology… but it is hard to argue that the emerging medical revolution, spearheaded by the biotechnology industry, is any less important to the future of humankind. It, too, will empower people and raise the standard of living.*

Larry Ellison of Oracle, Gates' rival in the software industry, agrees: "If I were 21 years old, I probably wouldn't go into computing. The computing industry is about to become boring". He explains that: "I would go into genetic engineering." Biologist Craig Venter has said that he spent 10 years reading the human genome, and now he is planning to write new genomes. He wants to create completely new forms of life, from scratch. Scientist and writer Gregory Stock also believes that cloning, even though a fundamental step in biotechnology, is just too simple and unexciting: "why copy old life forms when we can now create new ones?"

Biological evolution allowed the appearance of human beings, and many other species, through millions of years of natural selection based on trials and errors. Now we can control biological evolution, direct it

and go beyond it. In fact, why stop evolution with carbon-based life forms? Why not move into silicon-based life, among many other possibilities? Robotics and artificial intelligence will allow us to do just that.

Scientist Marvin Minsky, one of the fathers of artificial intelligence at MIT, wrote a very famous 1994 article "Will robots inherit the Earth?" in *Scientific American,* where he concludes: "Yes, but they will be our children. We owe our minds to the deaths and lives of all the creatures that were ever engaged in the struggle called Evolution. Our job is to see that all this work shall not end up in meaningless waste." Robotics expert Hans Moravec has written two books about robots and our (their) future: *Mind Childr*en in 1988 and *Robot* in 1998. Moravec argues that robots will be our rightful descendants and he explains several ways to "upload" a mind into a robot. In England, cybernetics professor Kevin Warwick has been implanting his own body with several microchip devices and published in 2003 a book explaining his experiments: *I, Cyborg*. Warwick is a cybernetics pioneer who claims that: "I was born human. But this was an accident of fate – a condition merely of time and place. I believe it's something we have the power to change… The future is out there; I am eager to see what it holds. I want to do something with my life: I want to be a cyborg."

As these authors and thinkers suggest, we need to start preparing ourselves for the coming NBIC realities of technological convergence, including robotics and artificial intelligence. Thanks to technological evolution, humans will transcend our biological limitations to become transhumans and eventually posthumans. To ease this transition into a posthuman condition, we must ready ourselves for the distinct possibility that the Earth, and other planets, will be inherited by not just one but several forms of highly intelligent and sentient life forms. Thus, the philosophy of humanism is not enough for a world, and a universe, where future life forms will continue evolving.

From Humanism to Transhumanism

A new philosophy has been proposed to continue the ideas of humanism in a new world where science and technology are the major drivers of change. Julian Huxley, the English evolutionary biologist and humanist that became the first director-general of UNESCO and founder of the World Wildlife Fund, wrote that:

> *The human species can, if it wishes, transcend itself —not just sporadically, an individual here in one way, an individual there in another way, but in its entirety, as humanity. We need a name for this new belief. Perhaps transhumanism will serve: man remaining man, but transcending himself, by realizing new possibilities of and for his human nature.*
> *"I believe in transhumanism": once there are enough people who can truly say that, the human*

species will be on the threshold of a new kind of existence, as different from ours as ours is from
that of Pekin man. It will at last be consciously fulfilling its real destiny.

Huxley originally published those words in his essay *Religion Without Revelation* (1927), which was later reprinted in his book New Bottles for *New Wine* (1957). Other scientists and philosophers discussed similar ideas in the first half of the 20th century, and these ideas slowly helped to create new philosophical movements considering nature and humanity in a continuous state of flux and evolution. English scientist John Burdon Sanderson Haldane and French philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin helped to identify new trends in the future evolution of humanity. Thanks to them and many others, the philosophy of transhumanism has greatly advanced since Huxley first used that word. The philosophy of Extropy (see Appendix 1) and Transhumanism (see Appendix 2) explore the boundless possibilities for future generations, while we approach a possible technological singularity.

"Humans" can no longer be regarded as a stable category let alone one which occupies a privileged position in relation to all that is subsumed under the category of the non-human. On the contrary, humans must be understood as a tenuous entity which is related to the animal, the "natural" and indeed other humans as well. Humans are at a crossroads like other natural species that are reclassified in the face of new relational dynamics and shifting epistemological paradigms. Moreover, such dynamics and interpolation serve to reveal the boundaries of humans as a corporal, cognitive, and agency-laden construct. Discovering such boundaries, one may glean where humans end, where humans are called into question, and where humans stand to augment themselves or become more than human.

Our understanding about ourselves and about our relationships with nature around us has increased significantly due to the continuous advances in science and technology. Reality is not static since humans and the rest of nature are dynamic, indeed, and both are changing constantly. Transhumanism transcends such static ideas of humanism as humans themselves evolve at an accelerating rate. In the beginning of the 21st century, it is now clear than humans are not the end of evolution, but just the beginning of a conscious and technological evolution.

The Human Seed

Since English naturalist Charles Darwin first published his ideas about evolution on *The Origin of Species* in 1859, it has become clear to the scientific community that species evolve according to interactions among them and with their environment. Species are not static entities but dynamic biological systems in constant evolution. Humans are not the end of evolution in any way, but just the beginning of a better, conscious and technological evolution. The human body is a good beginning, but we can certainly

improve it, upgrade it, and transcend it. Biological evolution through natural selection might be ending, but technological evolution is only accelerating now. Technology, which started to show dominance over biological processes some years ago, is finally overtaking biology as the science of life.

As fuzzy logic theorist Bart Kosko has said: "biology is not destiny. It was never more than tendency. It was just nature's first quick and dirty way to compute with meat. Chips are destiny." Photo-qubits might also come after standard silicon-based chips, but even that is only an intermediate means for augmented intelligent life in the universe.

Homo sapiens sapiens is the first species in our planet which is conscious of its own evolution and limitations, and humans will eventually transcend these constraints to become enhanced humans, transhumans and posthumans. It might be a rapid process like caterpillars becoming butterflies, as opposed to the slow evolutionary passage from apes to humans. Future intelligent life forms might not even resemble human beings at all, and carbon-based organisms will mix with a plethora of other organisms. These posthumans will depend not only on carbon-based systems but also on silicon and other "platforms" which might be more convenient for different environments, like traveling in outer space.

Eventually, all these new sentient life forms might be connected to become a global brain, a large interplanetary brain, and even a larger intergalactic brain. The ultimate scientific and philosophical queries will continue to be tackled by these posthuman life forms. Intelligence will keep on evolving and will try to answer the old-age questions of life, the universe and everything. With ethics and wisdom, humans will become posthumans, as science fiction writer David Zindell suggested:

> *"What is a human being, then?"*
> *"A seed."*
> *"A… seed?"*
> *"An acorn that is unafraid to destroy itself in growing into a tree."*

Appendix 1: The Principles of Extropy

- **Perpetual Progress**: Extropy means seeking more intelligence, wisdom, and effectiveness, an open-ended lifespan, and the removal of political, cultural, biological, and psychological limits to continuing development. Perpetually overcoming constraints on our progress and possibilities as individuals, as organizations, and as a species. Growing in healthy directions without bound.
- **Self-Transformation**: Extropy means affirming continual ethical, intellectual, and physical self-improvement, through critical and creative thinking, perpetual learning, personal responsibility,

proactivity, and experimentation. Using technology – in the widest sense to seek physiological and neurological augmentation along with emotional and psychological refinement.

- **Practical Optimism**: Extropy means fueling action with positive expectations – individuals and organizations being tirelessly proactive. Adopting a rational, action-based optimism or "proaction", in place of both blind faith and stagnant pessimism.

- **Intelligent Technology**: Extropy means designing and managing technologies not as ends in themselves but as effective means for improving life. Applying science and technology creatively and courageously to transcend "natural" but harmful, confining qualities derived from our biological heritage, culture, and environment.

- **Open Society** – information and democracy: Extropy means supporting social orders that foster freedom of communication, freedom of action, experimentation, innovation, questioning, and learning. Opposing authoritarian social control and unnecessary hierarchy and favoring the rule of law and decentralization of power and responsibility. Preferring bargaining over battling, exchange over extortion, and communication over compulsion. Openness to improvement rather than a static utopia. Extropia ("ever-receding stretch goals for society") over utopia ("no place").

- **Self-Direction**: Extropy means valuing independent thinking, individual freedom, personal responsibility, self-direction, self-respect, and a parallel respect for others.

- **Rational Thinking**: Extropy means favoring reason over blind faith and questioning over dogma. It means understanding, experimenting, learning, challenging, and innovating rather than clinging to beliefs.

Appendix 2: The Transhumanist Declaration

1. Humanity stands to be profoundly affected by science and technology in the future. We envision the possibility of broadening human potential by overcoming aging, cognitive shortcomings, involuntary suffering, and our confinement to planet Earth.

2. We believe that humanity's potential is still mostly unrealized. There are possible scenarios that lead to wonderful and exceedingly worthwhile enhanced human conditions.

3. We recognize that humanity faces serious risks, especially from the misuse of new technologies. There are possible realistic scenarios that lead to the loss of most, or even all, of what we hold valuable. Some of these scenarios are drastic, others are subtle. Although all progress is change, not all change is progress.

4. Research effort needs to be invested into understanding these prospects. We need to carefully deliberate how best to reduce risks and expedite beneficial applications. We also need forums where people can constructively discuss what should be done, and a social order where

responsible decisions can be implemented.

5. Reduction of existential risks, and development of means for the preservation of life and health, the alleviation of grave suffering, and the improvement of human foresight and wisdom should be pursued as urgent priorities, and heavily funded.

6. Policy making ought to be guided by responsible and inclusive moral vision, taking seriously both opportunities and risks, respecting autonomy and individual rights, and showing solidarity with and concern for the interests and dignity of all people around the globe. We must also consider our moral responsibilities towards generations that will exist in the future.

7. We advocate the well-being of all sentience, including humans, non-human animals, and any future artificial intellects, modified life forms, or other intelligences to which technological and scientific advance may give rise.

8. We favour allowing individuals wide personal choice over how they enable their lives. This includes use of techniques that may be developed to assist memory, concentration, and mental energy; life extension therapies; reproductive choice technologies; cryonics procedures; and many other possible human modification and enhancement technologies.

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The Dialectic of Trans-modernity

Hong Bin Lim
Korea University

1

Trans-modernity as a philosophical term is coined by Rosa Maria Rodriquez Magda, who is working at the University of Valencia. Let me quote her definition of 'trans-modernity': "Trans-modernity presents itself to us as a type of dialectic synthesis of the modern thesis and the postmodern antithesis, and in certainly the light, hybrid and virtual form typical of these periods."[1]She introduced this idea in her book at the end of the last century.[2] Until recently did I notice neither her work, nor the fact, that this technical term was circulated among some colleagues, who mainly are working in southern parts of the world.

 Her formulation of trans-modernity is not free from the well-known rhetoric of 'overcoming.' By the 'rhetoric of overcoming' I mean the underlying, often unconscious interests of late comers, who insist on their own originality in terms of neologisms. Let me introduce another case of 'the rhetoric of beyond' to you.

"A better understanding of our western modernity should enable us better to overcome the alternative modernity, which are developing in other parts of the world, to free them from the distorting grid of a bogus universality, and us from our ethnocentric prison."(Charles Taylor, 623)[3]

At first glance his statement seems to a conscientious stance, which is, of course, cautious of 'political correctness'. Taylor's noble project of interpretative turn in contrast with naturalistic and pessimistic theory of modernity is basically a normative worldview, whose methodological stance is supported by a non private but narrative coherence of agency. His respectable design remains in the philosophical discourse

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1 Rosa Maria Rodriguez Magda, „Globalization as Transmodern Totality", in: *Transmodernidad*, Barcelona, Anthropos, 2004.
 (Citatation from: http//transmodern-theory.blogspot.com p.10)

2 See Rosa Maria Rodriguez Magda, *La sonrisa de Saturno. Hacia una teoria transmoderna*, Barcelona: Anthropos, 1989.

3 Charles Taylor, „Inwardness and the Culture of Modernity", in: *Zwischen-betrachtungen*: *Im Prozess der Aufklaerung*, hrsg. Von Axel Honneth, Thomas McCarthy, Claus Offe, Albrecht Wellmer, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt 1989. 601-623.

as is the case with other social theories.[4] Now I doubt whether alternative version of modernity has any substantive relevance, when every society in the world manifestly could not escape the imperatives of economic globalization among other real constraints. We may wonder whether the alternative modernity is to be expected. I will argue that we need keep us from repeating the mantra of overcoming the modernity without any substantive and deep-going analysis of the contemporary civilization. At the same time, we could not neglect the fact that alternative projects of modernity carries often with it the common interests of emancipation. So the rhetorically and semantically overblown versions of alternative modernity are different from substantive form of self-critical thinking. In this polarizing context the postmodern movement does not have any groundbreaking role to play in prevailing over the modernity. I do not want to conceal my critical attitude toward pluralistic complacency of postmodern stance, because we still are destined to live with unavoidable consequences of the modernity itself. Seeing the postmodernism movement under the broad perspective of cultural malaise of the 20th century leads us to reflect on the modernity's own dialectic. The modernity's 'desire' not to exclude anything is the real dynamic pattern of system-logic. The constellation between economy, state and other social institutions could be changed whenever the environment of modern world requires new arrangement of institutional powers. But this arrangement cannot escape from unexpected crisis. The turbulence of modern societies in terms of economic disparity or religious movements reveals not the limits of modernity's principles but the very own feature of the modern spirit.

The stumbling process of globalization continues with its own paradoxes, as we have already experienced in the turmoil found in the virtual and real economy as well. Furthermore technological rationality, which corresponds with the predominance of instrumental and strategic rationality, is not only a further condition of global capitalism. The logic of capitalistic development collides with the cultural rationalization, which was conceived by the enlightenment project. It could be contended that the primacy of economy in terms of the contemporary neo-liberalism is consistently supported by the technological a priori. However, the self-engendering economy without any reflection on cultural or semantic history of human is a sort of quasi-theological residue. The globalization of technology is not always negative for the implementation of universal ideas, as the critical theory of Frankfurt school or Heidegger has shown. Without cultural and anthropological interpretation we are not able to figure out how capitalism transformed into a quasi religious system.[5] Given the intrinsic character of trans-modern civilization from the beginning, we should trace back to the concept of modernity.

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4 See Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989. See also Terry Pinkard, „Taylor, ,History, "and the History of Philosophy" in: *Charles Taylor*, Edited by Ruth Abbey, Cambridge, UK.: Cambridge University Press, pp.187-223.

5 This thesis has been recently carried out by Christoph Deutschmann, "Capitalism as a Religion?: An Unorthodox Analysis of Entreprenership", in: European Journal of Social Theory 4(4): 2001, pp. 387-403.

The vulnerability of modern society comes partly from its own need of everlasting evolution. It is also well known that creative destruction is essential for the support of innovation at many dimensions of human life. It is reasonable to expect the unexpected crisis, whenever the evolutionary system adopts the strategy of innovation in every sphere of life-world.

 If this is so, the category of trans-modernity should be also regarded as the crux of global society. Trans-modernity is, then, another face of the dialectic of globalized world. The imperative of capitalism in terms of structural innovation is one of the salient features of modern world. If the comprehensive description of the 20th and 21st century could not escape its destiny of transiency, we could not but remember the highly unstable character of modernity itself. This is the reason why I regard the fundamentalism movement with its diverse motivations not as an alternative project of humanity but as a reactive force against modern social arrangement. As the postmodernism could be identified as the radical re-description of modernity as Lyotard expounded, the other social and cultural movements like religious fundamentalism, feminism and other critical voices belong to the real consequences of modernity's spirit.

Perhaps we need take pains to expound what exactly the dialectic of modernity means. I think it is crucial to regard the critical and even anti-modern movement as self-accusation of modern agency. Now I presume that the above statements about dialectic of contradictory moments of modern world have no basis at all, when we do not agree with a monistic worldview of modernity. But I don't think it is meaningful to conceive this monistic worldview under the dubious concept of universal history or the evolutionary theory of society. The real malaise of modernity pertains to socio-cultural tensions which could have found its indigenous forms such as religious fundamentalism or other parochial movements. So I argue that the new social movements are not the alternative of 21st century of global world but represent only the despair of common people who are left to the pre-modern and often inhumane life conditions. The overwhelming desire to alternative society than the modern might come from reactive emotion of collectives, which is based arguably on the personal perception of real standards of normal life or on the affective interpretation of the people in terms of relative poverty.

Having said that new social movement could be comprised in the monistic point of view, I would like to focus on the theoretical idea that the trans-modernity could be regarded as a meta-description of self-referential operation of modern social systems. Given that the concept of trans-modernity as an alternative to modernity has lost its substantive cause we could try to describe trans-modernity not as a historical period, but as a form of self-description of modernity. Certainly we may use the concept of modernity in the same way. Furthermore I deny that we could ever get a transcendent perspective over contemporary age. This makes it clear that the monistic program requires another methodological idea of immanence. Hegel's reading of modern society leads certainly not to any kind of visionary ideal of future humanity. The immanence of modern life world reflects also his well elaborated methodic thought. When I try to

avoid the obscure Hegelian term of synthesis with the ambitious program of holistic comprehensiveness, I do not mean that I am ready to sacrifice the other interesting thoughts of Hegel regarding his subtle theory of modernity.

2

As is often the case with the other philosophical issues, the formulation of trans-modernity in terms of self-referential operation of modern institutions faces a vehement criticism. Therefore, I will at first focus mainly on the tension between the two concurring perspectives of the self-referential differentiation of systems. The functionalistic idea of trans-modernity needs to be contrasted with normative theory of communicative rationality, which is mostly motivated by the necessity of trans-cultural and trans-institutional dialogs at many levels. I will argue that the normative theory of interpersonal communication represents a further try, whose substance depends on the real divergence between socio-political reality and modernity's promise. At the heart of this theoretical strain between social theories we feel not only their uneasy task to solve the problem of institutional legitimacy, when it comes to the real predicaments in the life-world. But also we may presume that this kind of normative theory is not unfamiliar with emancipator project of modernity. Here we observe the conflict between the theory of justification and more or less naturalistic and empirical theory of modern society in the widest sense of the word. The former stance recurs always to the possibility of will formation of the public sphere, upon which the empowerment of people depends.

In this regard, the public sphere reminds us of one of the principal elements of democratic will formation also at the level of life-world. This might be the moment where we should take notice of the global transition which comprises the urbanization of the world societies, geographical change, demographic and economic development etc. as the empirical conditions of the possibility of the communication theoretical approach. The urbanization, for instance, is a reason for the assumption that wherever the social communications are encouraged, the civilized life would find its footing at an accelerating speed. We can capture the uniqueness of transformation of modern world in the history of mankind under the interconnected world of mega-cities, where we find all kinds of cultural semantics.

The motivation of 'communicative rationality theory (Habermas)' or 'deliberative democracy also at the global level (Thomas Pogge)' might be regarded as a well tempered version of enlightenment project. Communication theoretical concept of globalization could be regarded as a moderate response to a socioeconomic change in the 21ˢᵗ century. The desirability of the communicative rationality in terms of global civil society is based substantively on the linguistic competence of mankind, through which it is believed that we might cope with the normative problems of the evolving trans-modern society. But it is

also possible for us to describe this problem under the perspective of naturalism. Every social movement for the fairness among individuals seems to me a resonance of the unconscious voice of pre-historic community. The lack of political and economical legitimacy of the modern capitalistic society could have been stimulated our deep-seated affects of natural justice. Without supposing the collectively embedded emotion of 'natural justice' we are not able to figure out why the principles of reciprocity, empathy and other embedded normative dispositions are universal in all societies.[6] The collective emotion of natural justice belongs to anthropological constant since prehistoric times. Therefore I presume that any normative theory of the modernity should take account of evolutionary paths of human societies, whose beginning can be traced to the pre-historic dimensions of humanity.

Now I presume that the dialectic of trans-modernity does not allow the realization of empowerment of normal people without any reservations. In fact, the dialectic of trans-modernity can be used to conceptualize the core issues which arise from the real antinomy of the modernity itself. But functionalism, following Parsons and Luhmann, denies the possibility of social integration theory, which is based on the normative principle of enlightenment ideals. Furthermore the functionalistic perspective is not concerned with the emancipatory semantics of modern subjects based on the ideals of equality and freedom. The idea that all men are born free and equal spreads now all over the world, so that we find the eco of such universalizing idea in every corner, where the traditional privileges, customs and failing pre-modern institutions are demolished.

But the devil is in details, as the idea of freedom is not free form contestation. Since the dawn of the modern world political theory is destined to seek the imaginary balance between negative and positive freedom. The ideals of modernity do not have any function of stabilization of post-traditional societies as we have been observed at least since the dawn of 'New Age'. We see apparent evidence of the double aspects of enlightenment ideals in the process of globalization too.[7] Freedom of the market against the freedom of human life with dignity is only one of the main social agenda, since the ideals of enlightenment are doomed to disagreement. In order to escape from semantic uncertainties and ideological abyss as well, a theory of modernity seeks to refuge in the methodological asceticism, which I have introduced under the name of functionalism.

The quintessence of sociological functionalism lies in its intentional abstinence from providing any

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6 See more about this Peter Corning, *The Fair Society and the Pursuit of Social Justice*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011.

7 Here I am also thinking of Heller's Hedeggerian formulation, when she understand the paradoxical dimension of freedom as the intertwined relationship between ‚Grund' und ‚Abgrund' der modernity itself. Agnes Heller, „The Three Logics of Modernity and the Double Bind of the Modern Imagination", *Thesis Eleven*, Number 81, May 2005: 63-79.

substantive analysis of the human agency. When the proponents of system theory are conscious of the methodological limits of sociology, they try often to justify their a-historical functionalism in implementing evolutionary ideas. We are, of course, obliged to acknowledge that our original social planning cannot be achieved in a systematic way. One of the main obstacles to humane project of social planning lies in the contingencies of the evolution, which comprises of course the nature. Is the concept of trans-modernity an evolutionary one? Planning and evolution are always at crossroads. We have experienced sufficient historical events, which indicate the fundamental problem of 'intentional fallacy,' when it comes to the unprecedented effects of instrumental rationality at every level of human planning. Perhaps one can try to tackle the problem of rationality-paradox by implementing a sort of self explosive elements in their theory design.

But by the intentional fallacy or rationality paradox I simply mean on the one hand the unsolved problem of subjectivity in modern social theory. In this sense the trans-modernity is nothing other than modernity's own immanent feature. The modern world could achieve its own identity only through self-negation which implies multi-layered dimension of innovations which implicate self alienating effects in the life-world. On the other hand, what the dialectic of trans-modernity means should also be understood under the idea of objective realization of freedom as autonomy. Its objective formation opens the space for the institutionalized autonomous sub-systems. Although modernity is founded on the substantive idea of autonomy, the concept of trans-modernity deprives the former Ideal of normative connotations. This means that we are now confronting with a perversion of the idea of freedom, which once was the eminent symbolic core of western enlightenment movement. Autonomy at the level of system integration is understood as a dispositional power over nature and society altogether. The previous idea of autonomy, connected with other belief systems, has erased its historical remnants.

It has been well known that the spirit of modernity could be characterized, first of all, by its radical criticism against all kinds of tradition such as religion, political regime and Aristotelian concept of nature, so that process of modernization creates inevitably a diachronic rupture. So the modern spirit might be characterized as the revolt against historical self-description. The so called 'colonization of life-world' (Habermas) reflects just one salient aspect of aversion to history, memory and much more to our self-integrative being in ontological matrix. As a result of modern spirit the long held equilibrium between nature and culture or between time and space has been consequently disrupted. All of such cultural malaise leads to the problem of nihilism. So clearly has modern society become a-historical entity in terms of its trans-modern dialectic, so that traditional semantics of social integration has lost power and attractiveness.

One of the consequences of radical enlightenment in the occidental world turned out to be a lingering nihilism. Not a few philosophers since modernity have put their life work in solving and interpreting

the problem of nihilism. It is Nietzsche among others, who had penetrating eyes on the inevitable consequences of modernity in the form of nihilism. And I maintain that nihilism and a-historical functionalism in variable formulations are the twins from the same dialectic of trans-modernity. The eschatological tone of philosophical reflection goes hand in hand with annihilation of traditional semantics of meaning, which was once the resource of the enlightenment philosophy of modernity.

The heroic gesture of Nietzsche and Heidegger, however, could be regarded as an eminent issue for European intellectuals who were aware of the impending danger of nihilism. We might understand Nihilism in the context of European culture as the problem of spiritual homelessness, when the overriding idea of religious system has been collapsed. In this particular context modernity could be seen as a European event. But without European ideas of freedom and other related concepts we could not imagine how the ever-expanding transition process from stratified society to the functional differentiation of social systems has been realized. From status to contract is now more than a political slogan, which implies the well-known change of social interaction patterns among peoples. All those facts tell us that the modernity is a real process, which does not have any fix point, upon which we could describe the whole story of what is and will be going on.

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A conventional way of questioning modernity is to investigate our self-understanding of the world. Our feeling of something wrong with the whole world is one of the common features of modern subjects, which throw light on the structural problems of our affective economy. In this sense the agony and even despair of common people should be explained under the historical perspective. If we have lost our self-confidence, let alone the sense of reality, it reminds us only of the problem of nihilism. Under these circumstances it seems to me reasonable to refer to more fundamental aspect of human mind, since we have enough reasons for the assumption that the dynamic of modernity is based on a historicity of human mind. Hegel has famously conceptualized the activities of human mind in terms of self-negativity. Self-negativity, as a philosophical category of human mind, is not only related to the tradition, but also to the core of the modern self. Inevitably, the modern man needs to be characterized by the never-ending search for self-identity, which is destined to failure. When our relation to self led sometimes to pathological formations of narcissism or exhibitionism, we could try to find the extra-psychic reasons for that in the internal chiasm of modernity itself. We have observed how the anthropological elements of feeling, desire, and consciousness are eventually burdened with the demands of system-logic since modernity. But the 'conservative', not easily changeable rational parts of human mind come also in conflict with the other anthropological parts of affects, which include sensation and moral sense. In fact the requirements of the

contemporary society itself provide enough reasons for the crisis of self-identity, which could not recur to the semantically formulated collective consciousness. The deep seated divergence between affective economy and institutional conservatism accelerates ever more the tension of social conflicts in various formations.

When a social philosopher, Agnes Heller simply diagnosed the modernity as paradoxical project of self-negation, she recurs only to the appalling phenomenon of contradictory processes of society."Modernity is founded by not being founded…. It is the story of the conscious and willed abandonment of fundaments."[8] But our curiosity is more about the interface between mental representations of such paradoxes and social dynamics. Our experience of the latter transformations is not only social but also antagonistic in the eminent meaning of the word. In her further description of modern enlightenment as 'nihilism', there are some senses, insofar as we are not able to live up to our own traditional semantics.[9] It highlights also the unforgivable failure of functionalist perspective as a social theory. The functionalist approach does not provide any substantive basis for meaningful social integration. The affective reaction against such nihilistic culture succeeds easily in the destructive and degenerative way of parochialism.

The approach of communication theory in many forms tells us to our common sense that the essential element of humanity lies in our linguistic communicapability, whose conceptualization is not free of normative ideals. In this sense the idea of deliberate democracy at global level makes it clear that we need move on to the institutionalized alternatives of balancing equilibrium, which should prevail over the real divergence among peoples. This means that the normative enlightenment project should serve as a model for the formation of collective will of humanity. Of course, the paradox of the modern rationality could still be eventually formulated in terms of conventional semantics, insofar as the dynamic of modernity needs to be subsumed under the directive of interactive will formation at the public sphere. And our common emotional economy continuously brings us back to the universal idea of justice, freedom and equality. Nobody would deny that those ideals could have been successful in the last three centuries. I consider here the latter ideas not simply as political ones but as eminent nature of human mind. The trajectory of modernity is, in this sense, imposed by the latent anthropological impulses such as 'emotion of natural justice' to take up the challenges from the hostile environment. By contrast we often are forced to remember the other aggressive and egoistic dispositions, when these were also required by the practical impediments of self-preservation or even selfish will to hegemony.

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8 Agnes Heller, „Critical Theory in a World of Uncertainties", in *CSST Working Paper* #122, October 1996. p.306.

9 Ibid. p. 307.

In this sense trans-modernity is conceived as a further paraphrasing of open end of our history. We should then expect always the unimaginable system ruptures. Reflecting on the human conditions of 'trans-modernity' as open horizon of human experience we could regard the versions of 'the end of history' (Fukuyama), or the communist vision of totalized freedom (K. Marx) as the pseudo-scientific extravagances. One might claim that the same destiny will be expected for liberalism, while I tend to think that the ongoing success of the latter's trajectory has much in common with the essential elements of the modernity itself. The spirit of innovation with all those malaise of real people tells us a lot about adaptability of liberalism's semantics. The irreversible process of human history shows that we are allowed to expect the unexpected. Without proposing a speculative version of human history, we can take account of the finitude of human planning, whose inevitability comes from the trans-modernity of the global society. The social antagonism, which continues from the dawn of modern world to the globalized 21th century, needs also to be explained by the embedded contradiction of the human nature itself.

At the Threshold of Being: The Dialectic of the Human and its "Others"

S. Romi Mukherjee
UNESCO

The abstract figure of the Human and its corollaries, humanity and humanism, emerge as forces which domesticate human animals – they orchestrate a type of man-husbandry that delimits being and places it within the confines of what Desmond Morris perspicaciously refers to as the human zoo. When technologically inflected through inter-alia human engineering, convergence, and bio-technologies, this zoo may, furthermore, reach its bio-political paroxysm in what Peter Sloterdijk has recently called the human park (Sloterdijk, 2000). Furthermore, For James Lovelock, parks and zoos may be far too idyllic and the human predicament is actually one of pathogenic organisms mutating in a crepuscular petri-dish. What is of interest in these various attempts to dramatize the human condition is the metaphor of human life as something which unravels within the space of a series of boundaried landscapes. All allude to the imposition of the Human and on the natural environment and the human animal. The great illusion of the human camp is indeed the manner in which it dissimulates itself as the space of Man. Indeed, it is where the forces of the Human tame human animals and does so by constructing real and imaginary boundaries between this new creation, the human, which was never very good at being an animal – borders which are often violently erected in order to guard a series of taxonomies between the human, human animal and animals, nature, and the world of matter; the great ontological fiction of humanity moves by way of making appeals to its own imagined transcendence in order to naturalize a hierarchical order between itself and all that exceeds it. The ontology of the human is arbitrary and merits being superseded by an approach that recognizes the human animal to be at once a socio-historical creature and also the result of a biological accident. As Christopher Hitchens has suggested,

> Our place in the cosmos is so unimaginably small that we cannot, with our miserly endowment of cranial matter, contemplate it for long. No less difficult is the realization that we might be quite random presences on Earth (*indeed we are the offspring of the* Pikia *or* Pikaia gracilens *an early vertebrate mistakenly classified as a worm which survived the Burgess decimation by mere*

contingency or "just history." We may have learned about our modest position on the scale, about how to prolong our lives, cure ourselves of disease, learn to respect and profit from the other tribes and other animals, and employ rockets and satellites for ease of communication; but then, the awareness that our death is coming and will be succeeded by the death of the species and the heat death of the universe is scant comfort (Hitchens, 2007, 91-92)

The human camp is designed to insure that the human animal does not come to species consciousness which would engender a degree of reflexivity that would confirm that humanity might be a fiction and one that, moreover, by virtue of the opacity of its illusion functions as amongst the most potent drivers of anthropogenic domestication of the world and of other human animals. Species consciousness is consciousness of the impossibility of salvation for humanity – it is that which affirms the finitude of the delicate human species which, may in fact be thrust into the life world by chance only to interact with it the most aleatory of manners.

The human is a liminal construction and ours is a liminal epoch, a threshold between modernity and its certainty of the human and a future hyper-modernity wherein the human will be post-human and potentially transformed into a series of new entities in a reconfigured zoo. It has, of course, become a truism to claim that humans are a species no different than any other. But claiming this is not enough. Instead, we should ask: what kind of species or animal are humans in practice?; what are the reasons for its boundedness – what do these boundaries tell us about this practice?; and how do we gain access to the human with a view to not necessarily securing or domesticating it, but uncovering it? Hence, the importance of understanding the human as a site of radical chiasmus, an interzone, threshold, or flux, characterized by, pace Spinoza, movements of stasis and striving in dialectic of being boundaried and becoming. The critique of the human is one that moves by way of examining the political values embedded in this chiasmus and the degree to which they conform or break with our status as ethical animals. Thus, I want to telescope, for hermeneutic purposes, the interfaces or encounters between the human and nature, the human animal and the animal, the human and technology, and finally the human animal, other human animals, and the geography of the camp in hopes of illustrating how the human is holistically stretched out across the socio-eco-techno system as a product of these encounters.

The human is of nature, but it is in his nature to reject this embeddedness in favor of treating the environment as a plenitude of raw matter to be shaped in the name of human project. This rejection engenders the false oppositions between culture and nature, the man-made and the natural, and human ontology and non-human ontology. In this boundary, furthermore, are the commonplace rejections of environmental determinism and effects of climate on character, cultural practice, and conflict. The historical solidification of this boundary has transformed homo sapiens into what John Gray calls "homo

rapiens," very bad animals, who are conditioned to accept the aberration that is the inexorable gulf between the human and the rest of the cosmos. However, while it might be tempting to succumb to Gray's particular brand of nihilism, few would deny that humans, while perhaps in need of more naturalism, are not identical to nature which acts upon us as we act upon it. It is true that our dependence on nature is gloriously illustrated in the potential synchrony of our own terminus and the terminus of natural resources. At the same, time while apocalypticism is *de rigeur* in many ecological circles, the truth of the matter is that humans are not very good at seriously imagining their own extinction. And our dependence on nature does not necessarily serve as the grounds to overcome the gulf; while we may dream of continuity with the organic world, the desire to be implode into nature and the act of imploding into nature are not the same thing. Or, as Timothy Morton, has recently argued:

> I am immersed in nature is not a mantra whose repetition brings about its content. Thinking so is wishful thinking, otherwise known as the beautiful soul syndrome. …Ecology without nature is not automated. It does not appeal to a continuum that subtends the passing show of life…ecological politics has a noir form. We start by thinking that we can "save" something called "the world" "over there," but end realizing that we ourselves are implicated. This is the solution to the beautiful soul's syndrome…dark ecology undermines the naturalness of the stories we tell about how we are involved in nature. (Morton, 2007)

This is also an undermining of the historical borders that we have erected between ourselves and nature, a necessary undermining which illustrates how the human park was not built on nature, but in fatal interaction with it. The interface is then never smooth, but replete with impossibility – the impossibility of remaining Human, the impossibility of becoming immanent, and the impossibility of not acting. There is then another dialectical gray zone in our encounter with the environment; we are implored to simultaneously mourn the looming terminus of our nature which is the product of our ravaging of it, become-animist and overcome the chasm between the human and environment in one fell swoop under the highly romantic delusion that this would set the course straight, and cultivate ethical responsibility towards nature on the basis of various normative philosophies that remain highly anthropocentric. In this chiasmus, the boundary is dissolved, re-entrenched, and thoroughly confused – or rather we come to incarnate the boundary that itself is always unstable. The border exists to secure the fantasy of the utopian possibilities of humanity and such utopianism must be met with a certain pessimism, but pessimism need not become apocalyptic – it might simply be a question of decomposing the human as a self-assured apparatus and metaphysical category – revealing us to be fractured beings; fractured beings whose boundaries, furthermore, cease to be operational when broached by, for example, the natural disaster, the

excess of the system and the pure product of that which it exceeds.[1]

Here one finds the possibility of an ethical materialism, a radical naturalism, which recognizes that before society and history, the human is posed in relation to climate, mud, storms, and flies, and embedded in a natural rawness. Or, following Georges Bataille, the anthropoid foot raises the body from mud and bars itself from the subterranean. He objectifies nature and develops a *language of flowers* which codes, for example, a rose with "love," " beauty," and "purity;" but "love smells like death," and the truth of the beautiful rose lies in the putrid roots, "swarming under the surface of the soil, nauseating and naked like vermin…the ignoble sticky roots wallow in the ground, loving rottenness just as leaves love light…" The boundary between human animals and nature is also a boundary internal to the human itself.[2]

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1 Sustainability might therefore be a redemptive illusion driven by anxiety and the perceived lack of "steadiness" in social, ecological, and economic domains etc.

2 I certainly do not want to give the impression that the story of global environmental change is in any way foreclosed or that we find ourselves utterly bereft of possibility. Indeed, the vision of geo-engineered adaptation to environmental transformation can often be quite compelling. It is further interesting to reflect upon the philosophical and ethical repercussions of the geo-engineers fantasy come potential reality wherein not only is climate change rolled back, but with it, anti-humanism and philosophical pessimism concerning the status of man in the universe. Here it would not be man that was obsolete and dated but the entire ethos and theory of post-modernism itself. The larger question is whether the human would go back to its old ways, re-erect the binaries between itself and the non-human and bask once again in its technological might and capacity to beat back the harrowing forces of nature and its own destruction. Or would this "second chance" produce a more humble and modest human, one who would cherish those things that he did not before?
Moreover, In addition, biodiversity degradation problematizes the boundary between the human and the natural even more, not least because of the already well documented connections between biodiversity and human and cultural diversity, but because the discourse of biodiversity poses the question of nature as a political and ethical actor, a subject with a set of interests. The notion of "interest" in ecology traverses a vast spectrum from hard anthropocentrism (climate change denial) to equally hard anti-anthropocentrism (the Gaia hypothesis). Again, by virtue of their respective absolutisms, both positions disavow the inter-dependent nature of humans and non-humans that constitutes the socio-eco-techno system and hence also, a series of complex ethical questions concerning the intrinsic value of not only human agents, but also what they act upon. The socio-eco-techno system and the larger biosphere are animated by conflicting and competing forces that reveal the degree to which human interests and non-human interests exist in pure antagonism. Amongst the most important interventions of environmental ethics has been to take seriously this antagonism and examine how it sets into play conflicting regimes of value. Nonetheless, the question of establishing firm criteria from which value can be ascribed to the natural and the non-human proves no easy task. The burden of environmental evaluation is then one of incommensurability, a concept from moral philosophy which argues that ethics, morality, and the ascribing of value to things in the world may inevitably meet an insurmountable set of dilemmas when faced with a plurality of value systems. And insofar as environmental transformation obliges environmental evaluation to move beyond simply economic or utilitarian concerns that reduce all value to questions of profit, gain, or happiness, it occupies a tragic terrain where one value system precludes the existence of another. Ethical and environmental incommensurability are further confounded by the very principle of systematic inter-dependence that forms the basis for biodiversity. Political and ethical choices need to not only be made between saving humans and saving trees, but also between non-human entities themselves. However, human actions upon non-human entities may potentially reverberate into a serious of catastrophic and unknown future scenarios which may, in hindsight, illuminate the falsehood of certain current systems of value and evaluation. In other words, sacrificing a certain strain of fauna in order to save a certain strain of mammal, may have exacerbate biodiversity

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In nature, we also confront the animal or those sometimes frightening and often cute and fuzzy reminders of our pre-human past. One can imagine the passage from animal to anthropoid to man as tragic transition from a space of immanence and non-utility to one constituted by the introduction of the tool and tools to subjugate other animals. In becoming cognizant of the new division of the universe between the worlds of work and play and we enter into new modes of "classification" which create a series of interdictions between the universes which are of two unique aesthetic and moral economies. And in wielding technological mastery over the animal, appear not only new forms of tasty cuisine, but as Jean Baudrillard suggests, beast of burden who work for man, beast of demand that are summoned to respond to the interrogation of science, beasts of science that become the meat of the industry…" Do we owe the animal a debt? What would the balance sheets look like…? Our destiny has never been entirely separate from theirs, but our bestiary guided by human reason upholds an absolute privilege over their bestiality. Within the human zoo, one thus finds animal zoos that perpetuate the illusion of this privilege and in the spectacle of the animal, we negotiate through our disdain, our condescending sentimentality, our fears, curiosity, and also our correspondences; perhaps, our plight is, in some way not that different than theirs and perhaps their production, humiliation, and slaughter might be the truth of our condition as well. Humanity domesticates the anthropoid who in part domesticates the animal in order to enter but the causal chain of consumption, production, absorption, and dependence is never broken. In essence, the divide between human animals and nonhuman animals is not as vast as one would like to believe, but may simply be a question of evolutionary degrees. It is a site of both correspondence and alterity that can never resolve itself. And here one might ask: what does the animal know of me? The encounter between the two species is potentially ripe with anxiety -- anxieties about our sexuality, reproduction, death, and religious, agricultural, and economic life – a nexus of sadism, dependence, occasional care, an ethics of unspeakability, and hazy responsibilities.

It is well known that we share a great deal of our DNA with pigs. Regardless of this fact, there do exist boundaries between our next of kin, pigs, and ourselves. Pigs are peculiar creatures not least because of their power to command religious interdiction, be immortalized in Chinese astrology, be refracted into metaphor and caricature, be empathized with, and, of course, deliver up hearty bacon. And while ham and cheddar remains an American classic, porcophilia pervades; some Muslim zealots in Europe

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degradation even more and have a series of consequences on the lives of other human and non-human species who at first glance appear to be too genetically or physically distant to be implicated in such a decision. Because of the systematic inter-dependency of human and non-human entities, the destruction of one group of entities can have a host of effects on a series of others. And because of these concrete possibilities the ethical and philosophical task of ascribing internal value to non-human entities is clouded by both moral and scientific uncertainty. The question of the boundaries and certainly of the "good boundary" remains unclear.

are demanding that images of the three little pigs, Miss Piggie, and Winnie the Pooh's piglet, and other traditional pets and characters be moved from the gaze of their children. Pigs themselves are also rather interesting: they are extremely social animals who love the company of other pigs; nonetheless, they will engage in cannibalism if need be. Body language is extremely important for them in courting rituals. They enjoy games and are natural explorers and keen problem solvers. And contrary to popular opinion, they are quite clean animals, mindful of their environments. They are averse to travel, preferring to "tuck in" with their mates and nestle. In terms of their interaction with human animals, it has further been noted that pigs develop particularly strong bonds with the humans that raise them and love being scratched behind the ears. The hearts of pigs are also quite similar to ours and their heart valves are often used in heart transplants and other cardiac procedures.

In his journal of a pig slaughterhouse, journalist Charlie LeDuff recounts his experiences on the kill floor:

> Treat the meat like you're going to eat it yourself, the hiring manager told the thirty applicants… Kill-floor work is hot, quick, and bloody…they slit the neck, shackle the hind legs, and watch a machine lift the carcass into the air, letting its life flow out in a purple gush, into a steaming collection trough. The carcass is run through a scalding bath, trolleyed over the factory floor, and then dumped onto a table with all the force of quarter-ton water balloon. In the misty-red room, men slit the along its hind tendons and skewer the beast with hooks…It is then pulled through a wall of flames and met on the other side by more black men who, stripped to the waist beneath their smocks, scrape away any straggling bristles. The place reeks of sweat and scared animal, steam and blood. Nothing is wasted from these beasts, not the plasma, not the glands, not the bones.

There are two key empirical observations that are found in almost every sociology of the contemporary American slaughterhouse: kill men are hierarchically divided by race, with white superintendents balking orders to blacks who kill who in part resent the Mexicans who cut and turnover on the kill floor is 100%. As Le Duff further remarks "five thousand quit and five thousand are hired every year…they don't kill pigs in the plant, they kill people." The kill floors are often populated by the most hardened of criminals, many of whom have killed many a human, have no stomach for the mechanized slaughtering of swine and object to being treated like animals themselves.[3]

These brief digressions on the life and death of pigs are not meant to inspire maudlin ecologies that take

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3 The pig's death, moreover, has no sacrificial value – it is not a ritual wherein we communicate with the gods through the victim who is, in part, sacralized and valorized.

Bambi as their eminent paradigm. They are intended, rather, to open up, the human-animal interface as a site of struggle where the ethical looms largely, particularly when, as Giorgio Agamben suggests, that "the total humanization of the animal coincides with the total animalization of man." The animal's suffering also obliges reflection on and our ability to understand the animal's pain (let alone the pain of other human-animals) in terms of our own. Constructing a world with non-human animals requires not only that we contest the boundary between our species and others, but also recall that perhaps it is not a question of the animal's subjectivity or capacity to articulate itself in our terms – as Wittgenstein noted "if a lion could talk, we could not understand him." – precisely because they occupy a different life-world and language game. The animal's supposed muteness is not the grounds for his domestication, but the occasion to think of alterity beyond the confines of symbolic life. Moreover, the animal is precisely where philosophy stops and ethical explorations of what constitutes pluralism with the nonhuman and require new paradigms that comprehend, as Levinas notes, that "the dog cannot universalize the maxim." And speaking of dogs, recall that many of us may prefer to loyal friendship of a dog to the vagaries of other human animals; indeed we go so far as to Oedipalize them and turn them into members of the family.[4] The dog is a transhistorical and transcultural species whose domestication into *Canis familiaris* has created an elite species particularly adept at being man's best friend and indeed being loved. This process of domestication is a testament to what constitutes our rapprochement with the animal or rather how we "familiarize" the canine to serve our needs. Our relationship with dogs resonates with trust, respect, warmth, and above all dependence; hence, the wonder of rescue dogs, seeing-eye dogs, police dogs, watch dogs, attack dogs, and dogs that get the morning paper. The question, in the end, is whether our relationship to our dogs is a sign of an inferior bond, as Andrew Sullivan argues, as we don't have to earn our dog's unconditional fidelity and thus virtue is not at play at all, or whether this relationship is, as the protagonist of J.M. Coetze's *Disgrace* learns, the occasion for love with the non-human and thus also the occasion to rethink the ethics of the human-animal boundary. This boundary is, of course, also destabilized by the various becoming-animals and becoming-natural of the human itself; for instance the totemism of the Arunta recounted in Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, reveal the total identification of members of the Kangaroo tribe with the totemic Kangaroo which is society itself and its moral substrate. When, in the throes of effervescent ecstasy, a member of the Kangaroo clan, says "I am a kangaroo," he is in a sense an animal of that species -- the clan member traverses symbolic regimes; he moves from a state of individuation (the atomized subject who reflects on the social), to a state of ritualized social fusion (we, as members of society, become conscious

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4 On what grounds to we treat our dogs like humans who, among other things, eat at the table with us, sleep in some in some of our beds, receive presents on Christmas, wear sweaters in the winter, and are the reasons for hefty veterinarian bills, included in our last wills, given pet therapy, immortalized in salon portraits, and buried in pet cemetaries etc.? Conversely, the butchering and eating of dogs in many countries is quite normal (and the arguments among carnivores for and against the eating of dogs are not without interest…) and only greeted as a terrifying transgression by the aforementioned families who consider Fido to be a member of the family

of ourselves as bound), to a state of becoming-animal or becoming-totem (I am society, I *am* both subject and object). Becoming-nature and becoming-animal were also key motifs in the oeuvre of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, who transpose becoming from the corporal level to the level of the psyche, of affect, and of sensation. Becoming-animal and becoming-nature are also micropolitical movements that are typified by the human subject refusing his or her subjectivity in the normative identitarian sense of the term and occupying the interzone that gestures towards animal alterity. Becoming animal is thus a strategy for derailing and destabilizing normative forms of the human and the subject which inevitably become calcified. And becoming is also a technology.

It is a misnomer to assume that technology is mechanical, electric, computer-related, or something that we simply "use." Technology must be understood as techné, a type of know-how or as Heidegger suggests, an unconcealing of the world – it is a type of poesis and becoming that can make the human more and bring the human to overcome itself. In addition, we should recall that one does not use tools, but is imbricated in a matrix of the socio-techno-material; stated otherwise, there is something quite non-technical about technology (a variant of the word technique) which has an intrinsically social nature and can take the form of bodily and socializing techniques, the canalization of creative powers, and of course the mechanical and material manipulation of ourselves and our life-worlds. Hence, we must speak of a biological and technical habitus of dependency and over-coming. The human was therefore never without technology and certainly not a monad who became human through the invention of tools. However, the mythical transition from homo sapien to homo faber was not without drama insofar as the advent of technological being may enhance life, but also domesticate and transform the human subject into the object of technology; tools introduce utility into our lives. With the tool comes the capacity for accumulation and the correlary realization of scarcity (physical, economic, emotive) and death. The tool introduces "ends" into activity and potentially alienates us in objecthood and utility – wherein we stand to become reified. By way of the tool, humans developed a capacity for "objectivity." In other words, technology can both dissolve borders, by dissolving human identity in for instance the post-human cyborg, but it is also that which definitively creates the border between us and the natural order. What goes without saying is that the techno-species to come will crush all human determinism and the boundaries it engenders, but this is not to say that it will necessarily do away with boundaries tout court. Humans are hierarchical animals and one wonders whether the technologies it constructs to reconstruct its humanness will not re-entrench such hierarchies in new forms. So while technology may be man-made, the very possibility of the cyborg calls into question not only the stable limits between man and machine, but the very notion of man and his ethical life. Yet, the technological advances that create the new race of cyborgs may also create a sub-race of non-cyborg proles and open the possibility of greater bio-technological enslavement. Technology's emancipatory capacity is haunted by its capacity to be transformed into a war machine. As Paul Virilio has argued, "Every technology produces, provokes, programs a specific accident. The invention of the

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airplane was the invention of the plane crash…There's a lot to be said about the *obscenity* of technology... It's a certain relation to death." [5] So a utopia of the singularity? or a post-apocalyptic wasteland of techno-over-men and their underlings? Scientific, social, and ethical uncertainty, clouds much of our fantasies and our foresight. But what I want to stress is the need to no longer pose the false question of whether technology and the human-techné interface is intrinsically good or bad. On the contrary, while humans may have no essence and simply be organisms cast along a particular evolutionary path, our relationship to the fact of technology is ultimately bound up in the question of the ethics of science and technology, an ethics which occupies yet another boundary – that between mastery and non-mastery. Hence, as Jean-Michel Besnier has recently observed, that the end of the human, the crossing of a boundary of evolution, along with the end of certitude or long-honed convictions about what we are and what we should be, should not necessarily be the pretext for the abdication of ethical life….indeed, post-humanism is not alien to the ethical preoccupations imposed on our world. On the contrary, it raises the stakes and renders even more radical the exigency of the ethical specifically there where we become radical alterity, non-human, other to ourselves, techno-mystics without a god, or perhaps, as Alexandre Kojève argued, post-humans, who satisfied and having realized absolute knowledge regress back to new forms of animality and barbarism in a park that might be quite comfortable and technologically advanced, but filled with ruthless animals who are not quite human either. Whatever form this entity takes, the issue at hand is to what degree the human body is just a vessel for what we could call the human spirit or whether the two are enmeshed in one another this of course, brings us to debates on the order of the world, "nature" and "human enhancement." Let me begin here by noting what we already take for granted as always-already there: it should be recalled that we were once quite furry beasts whose thick pelts kept us warm; now, of course, most of us have central heating. Our brains slowly grew bigger and more complex with our social organizations. After facing near extinction, we learned to adapt to our environments and did so through artificially constructing our environments as well, which in part become more and more technological and demand new modes of adaptation. Would it be so strange to think that adaptation to changing hyper-modernity, might mean enhancing the human as a techno-organic species in what Nick Bostrom and Anders Sandberg call the "evolutionary heuristic," an extrasomatic space of mutual enhancement and

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5 Twitter and facebook, may be heralded as among the key drivers for the Arab Spring, but they also collapse the boundaries between the public and the private and does irreparable damage to standard English grammar. Nanotechnology, moreover, can be a key tool in tackling the various problems such as inter alia the scarcity of natural resources, rapid urbanization, pollution, illness and epidemic, equitable access to computers, and deteriorating living spaces. The argument for nanotechnologies thus claims that resolving these problems will contribute to a greater quality of life for all across the globe and bring us closer to an equitable and healthy society of vitality and opportunity. On the other hand, nanotechnology intervenes in nature and hence immediately poses controversial moral questions about the degree to which humans have the right to pervert "the order of things" or "play god" and what their responsibilities to nature and others actually are. Hence, the radically Janus faced nature of this thing we call technology that which can turn us into things and destroy our life-worlds or that which can augment our capacity to be human – to be more human.

adaptation where technology as a species adapts to the human species and vice-versa. In other words, would it be so strange to hear in someone say one day "once we were humans…" This could only be registered as a disturbance the ontological relationship between the subject and the world, only if such an ontology existed. The breakthrough of central heating and the breakthroughs that form the horizon of human enhancement are differing only by the degree of their adaptive capacity.

The debate between nature and technology actually creates a false problem. Insofar as we were always in inter-face with techné, how could we ever claim that there ever was such a thing as a natural human state the proceeded technology, which has simply evolved with us from the creation of spears and hammers to current paradigms of convergence. Enhancement does not oppose nature, but posits a "second nature," and potentially many other natures. Moreover, this should not be read as a transgression of an old boundary as a site of irrevocable loss, but rather as a "natural" process in and of itself. And to pastiche Tony Holiday, does it really matter if I am a robot, monster, or chimera,– what matters is how I act and engage with others – the choices I make in a field of inter-subjective and inter-species uncertainty and ontological unknowingness. Hence, while the human may one day have multiple natures and perhaps not resemble any normative construction of the human as laden within that thing called humanity, the question of whether thee transformations usher in greater sustainability, greater responsibility, better health (both physical and social), greater equity and innovation, and greater "human-ness" should continue to guide us. But before thinking about friendly robots, we might want to briefly look at unfriendly humans.

The term "humanitas" was employed in Roman antiquity, by most notably Cicero, to refer to aesthetic culture, civilization, and, in a broad sense those virtues that distinguished Man from barbarians (here, an appellation not only for the Celts, Germans and various hordes that flanked the Roman Republic, but also for those troublesome philosophers known as the Stoics). The category of humanitas, for the Romans, was a means of asking whether all of the human species were indeed humans, whether slaves and barbarians were human, and whether our biological similitudes were grounds enough for an all-encompassing universalism. The response for Cicero and co. was an unequivocal no and thus, the human as philosophical category was boundaried and radically hierarchical, opposing itself to various projections of the low that could be readily manipulated according to political and national state interest whose violent repercussions in the form of slavery, scientific racism, colonialism, massacres, and the litany of de-humanizing modern barbarism unleashed on the so called barbarians who are always at the gates. The global ecumene, for some the paroxysm of modernity's democratizing currents, is thus shot through with an ambivalence: on one hand, the doyens of globalization and the homogenous universal state remain convinced that heightened liberalization, connectivity, dialogue, and flows will serve to beat back the scourges of hierarchizing "humanity" and reveal our world to be not only absolutely post-colonial, but a utopia of tolerance. But contemporary democracy, the liberal utopia, globalism or any variant thereof

does not dispel with the boundaries between humanitas and others. As persuasive as globalism's inclusive narratives might be, they fail to see how the recuperations of the global marketplace and "public sphere" thrive not on mass absorption, but equally on forms of mass exclusion. For all of its mythos of the melding of borders, it must be recalled that globalism is synonymous with psychic, social, and economic, redlining demands that it construct and continuously re-erect and re-entrench borders that are charged with the valences of the dirty, the impure, the sub-human, or the abject. Abjectification and redlining demonstrate the sacrificial and biopolitical dark heart of free-market capitalism, creating homines sacres or forms of bare life set aside from the global social and economic order and illustrating again how, in order for something to live, something else must suffer. Flexibility is also about making sure that some remain caged and permanently non-flexible, global exceptions to the global rule which correspond to 21ˢᵗ century modes of market expansion, appearing as the starkest of regressions in the good feeling of global progress.

All geopolitics aside, it might be useful to also look at quotidian geographies of interaction between human animals. Part of being human means understanding certain codes of etiquette or social hygiene – we civilized moderns are taught to be respective of the other's "personal space." We bathe regularly and engage in a host of beautification technologies and rituals. Failure to maintain a modicum of social decorum can result in social sanction, condescension, and exclusion. Boundaries are first established through the elementary forms of the body which, unlike our anthropoid forefathers, are coded not only terms of the beautiful and the ugly, but in terms of cleanliness and uncouthness. Mary Douglass is thus correct to note that to exclude or cast out, either psychically, geographically, or symbolically, is to reinstall a series of binaries not only between core and periphery, but also between purity and impurity -- to speak of abjection is not therefore to simply speak of dirt, but rather to examine how social organization and perpetuation depends intrinsically on processes of expiation and the regular re-emboldening of hierarchical distinctions between the clean and the dirty. People at the borders of society, or on the boundaries between categories are perceived as possessing both power and danger. In both cases we may find a rule against contact with the marginal person or thing. These are contingent and socially constructed processes and by no means natural --- and to speak of the abject is also to invoke a host of social processes of ghettoization, marginalisation – purging, cleansing.[6] These somatic politics are then readily over-layed with other racial, ethnic, and ethnic-religious connotations which are in apart over-coded with various forms of symbolic,

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6 And amongst the most powerful of our bordering senses, is that of smell – on cramped buses, in packed metros, in close quarters of all sorts –our first interface with the body that uncomfortably presses against ours is olfactory in nature. George Orwell was the master of olfactory politics and recognized how smell was a charged site of exclusion; for Orwell, political consciousness would only emerge burgeon from that inter-zone where the middle class neither coddled, nor tolerated, nor disavowed the existence of the low and deliberately made the effort to smell the smells, in good faith and with a dose of realism.

social, and aesthetic capital. The boundaries of the body are reshaped through boundaries created by one's clothing, manner of speaking, accent, milieu, tastes, intellectual and cultural acumen, and position within, as Bourdieu noted, a certain field of power, interest, and know how – Fields are of course contingent and mobility in one given field does not necessarily translate to mobility in another which makes it all the more interesting when fields collide (the ghetto youth in the posh downtown gallery, the business-man in the slums, "ethnic conflict" etc.) which precipitate potential agonistics. Above all, what is at stake in the construction of these corporal and symbolic boundaries is the reproduction of elites and their hegemonies on what passes for competence and capital which emerge from a system of acquired dispositions functioning on the practical level as categories of perception and assessment. We are still very much then in the world of *Humanitas Romana*. Symbolic capital can be accumulated and then deployed in various forms of symbolic violence; for forms of coercion which are effected without physical force...gentle, invisible violence, unrecognized as such -- forms of marginalization, class warfare, the play of language, insult, discursive persuasion and oppression. Following Lévi-Strauss, global urban life can be typified by both anthropogenic and anthropoemic process; in the former case, others and other-things are devoured, swallowed, cannibalized and assimilated. In the later strategy, however, maintains a certain contact with the other only to vomit or excrete him out through various processes of exclusion which reveal the limits of assimilation and the limits of the post-modern project of creating both a world free from strangers, but replete with the integrity of difference and singularity. Mixophilia and mixophobia – the love of global heterogeneity contrasted with gated communities.

Appeals to diversity and multiculturalism have been touted as the ideal means, on the leel of policy, planning, and scholarship, to grapple with these boundaries. And while many have come to the conclusion that multiculturalism and diversity have failed, few have yet to address the real reasons why. As with globalism, multiculturalism to is also shot through with a paradox – in the name of the global community to come, it actually returns to an archaic discourse of racial and ethnic essence. Moreover, as yet another motor of the dominant bourgeois ideology, multiculturalism and diversity are not intrinsically liberatory and certainly not of the "left," if the left be understood in its incarnation as an ethos that advocates social democratic ideals and prefers anti-racism and poverty eradication to a cultural politics of difference. Indeed, as my colleague, John Crowley has argued, multiculturalism and social democracy clash at the theoretical level as well: "Rightly or wrongly, classic formulations of egalitarianism have been dismissed as "simple" by proponents of "complex" understandings of equality that make space for the diversity of social goods (and, correlatively, of the individuals and social groups who value them) and for distributive principles that include criteria more sophisticated than the traditional indices of wealth, income, and educational attainment." Even among those who consider themselves leftists and not liberals, many have accepted unquestioningly the vacuous affirmations of multiculturalism, without really asking if this commitment involves sacrificing the radical alternative to capitalism. And as Slavoj Zizek further notes:

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the ideal form of ideology of this global capitalism is multiculturalism, the attitude which, from a kind of empty global position, treats each local culture the way the colonizer treats colonized people…Multiculturalism is a racism which empties its own position of all positive content (the multiculturalist is not a direct racist, he doesn't oppose to the Other the particular values of his own culture), but nonetheless retains this position as the privileged empty point of universality from which one is able to appreciate (and depreciate) properly other particular cultures—the multiculturalist respect for the Other's specificity is the very form of asserting one's own superiority.

Whence the bad faith of the rhetoric of tolerance which embrace's difference as long as it palpable, not radical and subversive; does anyone really want to be tolerated – wouldn't respect for the difference of the other be precisely the obverse of tolerance (i.e. real engagement)? The later questions ultimately ask whether the cult of the other and the straining for tolerant consensual democratic practice is indeed democratic or merely the motor of superficial overlapping consensus. We could also argue the essence of democracy is conflictual and that real democratic practice is incarnated in a contested field of political articulation and struggle which surpasses the feel good reverence of non-conflictual difference, the mystification of weakness, marginality, and irrelevance, the tears of the white man, and touchy feely emotive gestures in the name of a politics to come which is neither utopian nor unethical – rather it is one that refuses an ethics that masks the perversions of the social contract and the hypocrisies of really existing democracy. This would require, on one hand, reintroducing the the *agôn* of singularity, power and counter-power against interminable play of appearances which are at once "cultural" and absorbed into the mass simulation of roots and authenticity. On the other hand, it would mean exploding pluralism to also take into account the contingencies of the socio-eco-techno system, understanding that the decomposition of identity and culture into the humanity to come may be a means out of the inexorable recuperations of identity politics and the boundaries they blur and reinstill ad nauseum. The construction of this new politics is contiguous with the construction the "new man" which is also the ethical and aesthetic construction of the "new Earth." Rethinking the human animal as embedded within an immanent socio-eco system would then create the epistemological grounds from which responsibility would no longer be responsibility to oneself as the self would be marked by the principle of insufficiency, but responsibility to negativity itself. And in foregrounding the co-dependency of the human animal and milieu, a holistic approach to responsibility could be born wherein flows circulating from one entity would enter into assemblage with others creating a series flux and refluxes that would open up new spaces of play while also obliging the human animal to act ethically in the face of the catastrophe that may or may not come in this the human zoo.

The 1st World Humanities Forum
Proceeding

Parallel Session 2.
Global Ethics and Dialogue of Cultures

C. Beauty and the Good: Poesis, Aesthetics, and Ethics

1. Beauty and Destruction: Can Goodness Survive Life and What Would That Mean?
   / Michael Eigen (New York University)

2. Aesthetics is Politics and Beauty is Criticism: An Introduction to an African Evaluation of the Public Sphere
   / Jean-Godefroy Bidima (Tulane University)

3. Inspiring Ethics: Can Poetry have a Role in Moral Debates?
   / Bridget Vincent (University of Cambridge)

Session 4

Beauty and Destruction: Can Goodness Survive Life and What Would That Mean?

Michael Eigen

New York University

Beauty, I believe, is one source of ethics. To see something beautiful can arouse a sense of goodness. Not only a sense of feeling good but also a sense of wanting to do right by, wanting to justice to a world which can be so beautiful, which can so touch one to the depths. Tears of beauty. And as Keats says, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." An ethics with roots in beauty and joy. Tears of joy, happiness, at times, awe. The world in its uplifting aspect, world as inspiration. An ethics of beauty, joy, inspiration, creativity.

I am thinking now of moments of beauty fused with awe on viewing the great rocks at Yosemite Park in California (Eigen, 2007, Chapter 1). Yosemite silenced me. Words dissolved. A wordless world for millions of years. Mammoth rocks, mammoth stars. God's beauty. Tears of awe. The soul of the rock says, "Come closer."

I find a link between such stillness and awe while awake and the deep peace of dreamless sleep. For a psychoanalyst, dreaming is important. Dreaming plays a role in psychic digestion, emotional digestion. Yet dreaming speaks to us through fragmented narrative structures. Awe in face of Yosemite seems more immediate. Dreams feed us affective narratives we can work with while awake. They are rarely still. They have a certain speed, like fish swimming in water. They may rush by before you catch them or even glimpse them. Sometimes you "know" them only by their ripples. The deep stillness and awe evoked in Yosemite takes me to another place.

We sleep not only to dream, but to allow contact with places dreaming can't reach, that reach towards dreaming. W. R. Bion (1992, pp. 149-150) suggests one reason sleep is essential is to make possible emotional experiences the personality can not have while awake. Sleep enables experience outside the reach of waking and dreaming to move towards dreaming's reach. This coheres with the Hindu saying that everyday life is the past, dreaming is the present, and dreamless void the future.

Session 4

Shall we call this a wordless, imageless unconscious, a portal through which our lives are fed impalpably and ineffably by experience that accesses us in dreamless sleep? As though God or nature or evolution has safeguarded something from our use of it, a special form of contact that we can not ruin with our controlling narratives or our lust for power or our fears. That gains access to us when our ordinary focus and selective attention, even the foci of our dreams, are out of play. A contact that accesses us when we're not looking (Eigen, *2011a, b*). How can something touch us if we are not aware of it? A bafflement that marks our existence, our plasticity. Perhaps marks us with a sense of mystery.

The peace found in dreamless sleep gives us something most dreams can not provide. It takes us deeper than conflict, antagonism, fear. So many dreams have persecutory elements, distilling and exaggerating frictions of waking life. Where does the idea of peace come from? One source, I feel, is the profundity of sleep. The association of "profound" with sleep is no accident. That sleep can be profound gifts us with a profound sense of peace that daily anxieties can not exhaust. A peace we may fail to access while awake but which enters while we're asleep. We look forward to sleep after a day of activity, not just to refresh ourselves, but to contact the deep peace that rest and sleeping can bring. A peace we may try to tap and even base ourselves on through prayer and meditation.

There are threads in waking life that reverberate with the ineffable background of our beings. The thunderous silence of Yosemite, a wordless awe, feels connected to the impalpable portal in dreamless sleep that freshens life. An awesome peace stirring in Yosemite grandeur. A stirring peace embedded in heights of awakening and depths of sleep. There are different kinds of peace. I am interested in an enlivening one. Peace that stirs, lifts. It is not just that I am little and Yosemite is big or that we are both changing and passing, slowly or quickly. We are both amazing in spirit, the great spirit of the rock, my thrilling awareness of the rock, a stirred and stirring awareness. Coming alive, shivering by being touched by, invaded by stone. A grandeur that transfers to ordinary experience that is part of the touch of flesh.

There are great ideas that link up with this profound stirring. For me, Plato's vision of the Good is one, Kant's treating each other as ends, not just means, is another. These ideas link with the golden rule, giving, caring, and putting oneself in the place of the other. Kant speaks of the moral universe as more thrilling than the starry skies. Where does the idea of peace, caring, treating others as ends come from in a world permeated by survival needs, practicality, antagonisms, and lust for power?

Emmanuel Levinas (1969; Eigen, 2005) touches another possibility, expressed in response to the human face. An ethical sense inscribed in our flesh, growing through our experience of the other, particularly another's expressive face.

Levinas writes of vulnerability, an infinite appeal, even destitution. The other calls for our response. We are not speaking of the other as master now, or slave, but the other as naked before God, as naked to others, needy, yes, but also at risk. We ask something of others and it is that something we are required to give. An infinite asking, an infinite giving. Neither term can be exhausted.

What Levinas speaks of is the appeal of faces everywhere, universal appeal, a concrete universal embedded in experience. An immediate appeal that experience is made of. No exclusions. This is the ethical aim inscribed in our looking, hearing, feeling bodies, the aim that lifts us, impels us into life beyond murder. An impossibility, perhaps. But when we sense it we know that Kant is right, it is a beauty the stars themselves sing to. A happening that brings a smile to every infant's heart and face, a spontaneous smile in response to another, alive with expressive, touching radiance - unless something has gone horribly wrong.

What, then, are we called on to give? We are asked to give ourselves. To give of ourselves. And for this, no one else will do. There are no substitutes for what only you bring now, this particular, passing forever.

An enfleshed infinite, an immediate infinite, infinite immediacy: from an infant's response to its mother's face, to our response as grownups to each other. An infinite immediacy that embraces, that upholds within it as its nucleus an infinite distance, intimate distance that calls for respect as well as caring. To see and sense as a form of giving. How can distance be an infinite immediacy, an inexhaustible caring? Doesn't distance run the range from cruel to compassionate? To live a difference that does justice to what is lived: isn't this immediacy worth striving for?

We have had time to learn how injury is inflicted, to read the pain we create in one before us. To behead the enemy, the stranger, to destroy the intimate: we know these well. We are an abusive species, a tormented species, a pain inflicting group. We know how defensive we are, warding off the pain that is our heritage, that comes at us from all directions. We know, too, what it is like to support life in one in need. To come through ourselves, to help. Have we decided as a group which is the greater satisfaction, the greater prompting? Have we decided to water down the appeal - a mutual appeal - that brings life to another level?

Which do we imagine the greater fear: that we will be empty if not brutal, or empty if not giving? We dread losing either way, as if we need both to feel alive, a dependency, an addiction to the dialectics of brutality and giving. Part of suicide bombing's compelling genius is that both poles maximally combine: the flash of brutality and fullness of self-giving. Giving oneself to God or cause, supported in the background by devoted faces, friends, mother, and militant brothers. The flaw: to believe some faces are

human, some are not.

Financial "suicide bombers" are harder to pin down because devotion to a cause larger than themselves often is lacking. Or is the larger "cause" big business, money and power, so-called "self-interest", an economic monster run amok. Compulsive success in making and controlling wealth spirals to a point destructive of the welfare of many, even destructive of the psychological-spiritual well being of "winners." Ethical and practical safeguards that might help regulate abuse are disregarded and abandoned. The explosion does not take the form of visible bombs (unless they are part of a war machine that both saps and nourishes the economy), but financial brinkmanship and breakdown resulting in catastrophic erosion of human spirit, life and resources. How to channel vast resources of financial and technological power for human good is a basic challenge, given the conundrums of human nature.

We began with awe, deep peace, stillness in waking life and sleep, our caring response to aspects of nature and the human face but, inevitably, find ourselves talking about destructiveness. Talk about goodness and destruction appears. As if we are, in part, constituted of a double helix in which our response to beauty and need to destroy intertwine.

Is it surprising destruction plays so important a role in our lives, given that we live in a universe made up, partly, of explosive processes? We can try to personalize it, coat it with motivation, cause, and agency. Wounds, power highs, territoriality, survival, triumph, victory and defeat. The "who" varies. I beat you, you beat me. Subject-object pronouns vary - but the link, the "beat" remains the same. X allied with Y against Z allied with N. X, Y, Z, N vary but *allied with* and against is invariant. Structures of destruction remain constant, although conditions change.

I sometimes wonder if our products make us claustrophobic. We feel hemmed in by what we make, worlds we build, and destruction feels like freedom. We need to destroy what we create in order to escape feeling trapped by our creations.

There is, too, a feeling that beauty hides ugly realities. Something may look good on the outside. Look a little closer, like eyes getting used to the dark, and you begin to see graves, bodies, blood, rabid injustices that support a good looking city or face or work. Some feel it just to destroy the show of beauty, the make believe, and get to how things really work, realities of power.

What can psychoanalysis contribute in an Age of Economic Psychopathy? Not much, I fear, but it does offer explorations in the cracks. It begins to confront, sustain and work with destruction between human beings in ways not quite touched before. A question in deep analytic encounter is whether two human beings can

survive each other. And more, whether a human being can survive him- or herself - and how well.

In therapy, moment to moment exchange or sensing of feeling has time and room to breathe. A thread in these feelings involves mutual destruction. I destroy you, you destroy me. We are killers, one or another way. In therapy, we trace murderous impulses, see how they move, work, forms they take, how they function, what they contribute to the psyche as a whole. Self-destruction and mutual-destruction can't be written off as byproducts of attachment difficulties, although the latter can intensify them. They seem ingrained in human nature, a part of who we are. What we do with the destructive side of our nature is an open question. As of now, for the most part, we don't know what to do with it, and making believe we have answers postpones fuller struggle with the question. Jesus comes closest when he says, "Forgive them, father, they don't know what they're doing." We don't know what we are doing and pretending we do compounds the problem.

To kill the other and the other survives. To be killed and survive. This is one of the psychic paradoxes that therapy opens. To be killed and survive well. To kill and the other survives well. Therapy is training in dying and coming back to life, mutual dying and coming to life. This double movement is part of what I call a rhythm of faith. Faith makes this movement endurable, possible, at the same time faith is an outgrowth of mutual coming through (Eigen, 2004).

By faith, I don't mean belief. We literally kill each other over beliefs. Faith supports experiencing and exploration of experience. Faith is deeper than belief. Belief often functions as premature organization, closure of faith. One way faith goes beyond belief is by enabling unknown transformations that open reality, transformations we may sense but are unable to pin down. Meditation, for example, can take us places that have no names. We try not to interfere with nameless, imageless movements that change us as they happen.

Therapeutic faith supports engagement with destructive urges. In time, we begin to catch on, get an "inkling", a "feel" for processes involved in surviving murder, double murder. Can the therapy couple survive each other? And with what quality? Therapy is growth in quality of coming through. With what quality do *you survive yourself?*

In therapy, we build capacity to endure being with each other through mutual murder, death, renewal - a basic rhythm that is often aborted, often to the detriment of peoples lives. In therapy, murder, death and renewal is lived in terms of emotional reality. Actual, literal murder would abort the process. Literal murder short-circuits buildup of capacity to tolerate the waxing and waning of feeling. Literal murder substitutes for the hard work of building capacity to tolerate emotional life and begin dreaming and working with the latter.

We can try to solve all the social problems we can. Relieve poverty and hunger, racial and gender inequities. All to the good. But don't be surprised if the loose card in the deck, emotional life, finds ways to sabotage at least part of what gets built. I write in *Feeling Matters* (2007) that as long as feelings are second class citizens, people will be second class citizens. Without work in the trenches of our nature, we may wreck what we try to create.

Struggling with oneself is one ingredient but I am not speaking of the traditional "control" model. Controlling one's "animal" or "lower" or "recalcitrant" nature has had some value in controlling the masses and regulating destruction to an extent. But the lasting recurrence of wars, prisons, and exacerbated inequities involving "upper-lower" seem to add to problems they try to solve. Struggle is necessary but I'm speaking of more than struggle, something more akin to developing psychic taste buds. Developing a capacity to taste and work with experience, give all voices of experience a say. Developing capacity to let experiencing build. A model less of control than partnership, becoming partners with our capacities and evolving together.

A perennial challenge, more so today than ever, is the time and work that go into encoding goodness into daily living. Can goodness survive life, our lives? Inform our lives? Good people have tried a long time to make goodness count. To an extent, they succeed, even as life sweeps much of their efforts away. To a certain extent, we are stymied, since the will to do good often harms.

The Bible is not just about lust for life or will to survive. It is about the struggle of goodness to survive, to make life better, the ever besieged need to treat each other in better ways. The Bible sets goals like "do not kill each other", but fails to show us how. Even God gets exasperated and tries to wipe us out. I pointed out in a book called *Rage*, that God's personality provides a case example, a telling picture of our destructive realities. God's tendency to wipe us out is our own tendency to wipe ourselves out, as if we can wipe out the problem of destruction with destruction.

No one has the answers. We can not tell ahead of time what the outcome of decisions or actions will be. We need many kinds of contributions, science, art, politics, and all walks of life. I do feel psychoanalysis adds something to the brew. In psychoanalysis we learn a little more about destruction. We learn or think we learn that feelings matter, that we are sensitive beings who need to sense how sensitivity works, that ethics has roots in sensitivity to ourselves and others. Psychoanalysis does not have the answers either but provides avenues for exploring new forms of dialogue, new probes, and new ventures of spirit. It, at least, highlights difficulties and challenges our enigmatic, packed psyche brings.

Antagonism is everywhere. At boundaries between groups and individuals, in families, nations, within the

self. A certain antagonism is part of our psychic immune system. As Kant has it, we're a sort of unsocial social group. Our protective hostility easily runs amok, like fantasy porcupines inflicting injury while trying to keep warm.

And yet there is a seed of unquenchable optimism in our sea of pessimistic realism. Aren't we catching on that it is up to us to work with the equipment we have been given, to partner our capacities, not just exploit them, to learn and keeping learning about our make-up? Isn't that what we have been trying to do for thousands of years, probably longer? Isn't that where evolution is taking us - closer to opposing our need to murder (whether physical, economic, social, or spiritual)? Closer to embracing struggle with our make-up and trying to do better?

Psychoanalysis is one attempt to see what we can do if we open more boxes, combining models of control with models of affective exploration and emotional transmission. Whatever limitations and failures, psychoanalysis addresses aspects of psychic reality that must be grappled with. Attempts to outlaw or ban the psyche - by science, spirit, laughter, shouting, activism or inaction - delay the work that has to be done. Work unknown. We can not bully the psyche out of existence.

We glimpse ways of being together that I don't think quite existed before. Ways of feeling each other, exercising emotional taste buds, modes of relating that encompass
 but are more interesting than beating each other down. A cutting edge of evolution involves what it is like for people to be together. Affective attitude is a raw material shaping us as we shape it, creating richly textured possibilities of being. To listen, sense and speak: a long journey ahead, no less important than reshaping colors, material forms, genes and neural chemicals. Evolution of hearing, sensing, speaking: evolution materiality now depends on. Our sense of value and worth depend on this evolution.

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Aesthetics is Politics and Beauty is Criticism:
An Introduction to an African Evaluation of the Public Sphere

Jean-Godefroy Bidima
Tulane University

INTRODUCTION

Never has a society been governed without words, images, and liturgies. Political matters encompass at least three domains:

1. *The Structural Domain,* which analyzes concerns of power, hierarchies, administrations, territories, and population movements,
2. *The Representational* Domain, which calls into question political foundations, constitutions, and the ideologies that support political doctrine, and last,
3. *The Fantastical Domain*, which involves the intimate relationship woven between a subject and its figure of authority, the protocol inherent to power, either the repulsion or the love of power, the question of one's perception of power and sexual investment, and finally, the theatrical and textual settings of power and authority.

The terms Structure, Representation, and the *Fantastical* also represent the three methods by which a philosophical discussion of Africa has opened up to the political realm. Under closer examination, one may perceive that the domains of Structure and Representation dominate the field in discussion. Past investigations of the structure of the colonial State showed prevalent violence and arbitrariness. The postcolonial State is ruled by the concepts of prolonged heteronomy and a slow but certain death of human dignity.

The State also complies with the old colonial order—an order which lays hidden behind the courtesy of international relations. It is possible that if a Nation-State confronted with the various concerns associated with the question of power cannot find a solution, the dilemma would force all African states to reunite into a single entity called *Panafricanism*. Living in this panafrican existence, the "African identity"

(something which is still becoming) is said to be able to express itself through fraternity and rediscovered harmony. However, political theorists have rejected such an essentialist conception of *Panafricanism*, and today they prefer a sort of cosmopolitanism. In this newer approach, theories are based on the multiplicity of cultures, migration, flux, and an international right to surveil crimes committed by any "Nation-State" (Etat-Nation). The only problem with this theory of a Cosmopolitan existence is that it neglects to criticize the market economy seriously.

One must also reflect upon the question of *representation* in postcolonial States. What shall we do with the question of ethnicity, how to constitute new social classes, and what is the relationship between politics, religion and sexuality? What shall we call "the people" of this postcolonial States? How can we establish discipline and how is the Nation to conceive of a new postcolonial subjectivity? How can we evaluate the images dispensed by political leaders and what shall we name this "representation"? Who censures these images? Questions concerning the *Fantastical Domain* are often eclipsed by questions that relate to representation, such as those mentioned above. Having criticized ideologies, the philosopher fails to explain why a people have attached themselves to these concepts in the first place. Despite the severe criticism of African Socialism advocated by Senghor and Nyerere, the mockery made of Mobutu's "authenticity," and the disrespect for Colonel Kaddafi's *"livre vert,"* people have attached themselves voluntarily and in good faith to these ideologies. How can we explain this emotional investment?

For a Nation to exist, it requires a *genesis narrative* which usually is a fable (take for example, the narrative of Romulus and Remus in Rome), a survived *catastrophe*, heroes, martyrs, apostates, hereditary enemies, celebrations, monuments, and most importantly, *visible prosthesis*—to indicate the presence of power and authority.

Our research must then apply to the *fantastical* by forgetting for a moment these questions of constitution, regime make-up, politics, and various modes of repression. We shall discuss the aesthetic supports by which a memory of the State, economic ruse, and authoritative subterfuges all come together to create the postcolonial subject. The question of Beauty will be not only a matter of philosophical Metaphysics but also the way people evaluate the lacks and misunderstanding within the public sphere. This paper will show that political concerns are contiguous to all concerns of the State, and that the State's presence is none but a political mode. Recognizing the political link between representation and the represented in the politics of emblems is essential (I). The questions pertaining to the links between narratives and perception/the visible are the second step (II) of this paper. The aim is to underline the aspect of consumption seen from a perspective of political aesthetics. By consumption, we will borrow from Baudrillard's understanding of the word: "neither the volume of goods nor the satisfaction of needs will suffice to define the concept of consumption. . . consumption is neither a material practice nor a

phenomenology of abundance, it cannot be defined by food that is digested, nor by the garment that is used to clothe, nor by the car that is used, nor by the oral and visual substances that make up our images and messages, but rather by the organization of all of this into a meaningful substance. Consumption . . . is the activity of systematic manipulation of signs . . . in order for an object to become an object of consumption, it must first become a sign."[1] The juncture between philosophy and aesthetics will first take place during *the consumption of signs,* among which emblems can be found. Next, we will discuss the narratives without which any understanding of politics of the sign would be impossible.

POLITICS OF THE SIGN …

I. Preamble to the Emblem

Any discussion of Politics should first begin with a discussion of identity. The question of identity arises across at least three postcolonial *moments*. First, there is the confusion of identities, next their intersections, and finally the gaps and displacements of these identities. In order to speak of identity, we must take into account Ricoeur's distinction between commutative identity (*identité-idem*) and identity that is formed by and during its own decomposition and transformation due to a narrative (*identité-ipse*)[2] The act of colonization was able to blur the identities of both the colonizer and the colonized, and both of them, in taking ownership of the story – either to justify it theoretically or anthropologically (the colonizer), or to emphasize its circles and vicissitudes (the colonized) – have deeply distorted their relationships to themselves, to others, and to their institutions. Who am I? What am I? These two aspects of the question of identity (the *who* and the *what*) will from now on arise only relationally. After the adventure of colonialism, the discourse about the post-colony entered an "overlapping of narratives." When one "holds" a discourse on the post-colony, one often leaves aside this tremendous fact: *identity* is a *mirror* by which individuals, groups, peoples, and nations reflect themselves in order to dispel doubts and fill in gaps, but this mirror is broken! These tiny myriad mirrors reflect an image of the self that is broken, fragmented, deformed, and often comical. Not only the identity of our own images (we, who ask the questions of the post-colony and cosmopolitanism), but also the identity of our discourse about post-colonies is largely affected by an *autonomization* of ideological nature. Our discourse on the post-colony (whether it be qualified philosophically, politically, anthropologically, et cetera) often forgets that the act of thinking – consisting of selecting and recycling – lacks a real examination of the question of emblems. How is this important? How can we explain its absence in the discourse and criticism of the post-colony?

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1 Jean Baudrillard: *Le système des objets*, Paris, Gallimard,1968,p 276-277

2 Paul Ricoeur; *Soi-même comme un autre*, Paris , Seuil, 1992

And how can we insert the question of the emblematic into the general chatter of the post-colony?

II. Importance of the Emblem

Finding himself in a sunny spot, the biped that is man experiences (despite its banality) the connection he feels to his double. We are all doubled by our shadow, which either follows or leads us. The shadow which is next to us shows us that the image – be it our own, or that of our fellow men, or that of our attachments or of our genealogical uprooting – is actually what we are made of once we stand up straight. Let us not forget that to stand erect, Stare, next leads us to the word status (*statut*), and even better, the state (*état de quelque chose*) of being. Thus, the notion of "standing up straight" is inseparable from the image/shadow. This consubstantial alliance between the state of being of a thing (*état d'une chose*), its position (*stare*), its projection and its representation (*image*) reminds us that one cannot discuss the post-colony – either from the seat of power, or behind closed doors, or behind the scenes – without referring to the question of image. The State (*status*) is an intimately writhing mass of images. The *imaginal* dimension, such as that of the body, cannot be avoided when we speak of the postcolonial States. Let us mention that by the term aesthetic, I mean literally the "sensorial apprehension" of thought which signifies the necessity of borrowing the poetic bend. Whether this is a question of the liberation of peoples, of the creation of a memory that often erases the question of history, or a question of gender, territory, nation, or cosmopolitanism, it is always the case that we cannot avoid an examination of various rituals. The first ritual – before those provided to us by society and states – is the ritual whereby we put the postcolonial question into discussion. In our relationship to critical, analytic, or synthetic writings on the post-colony, how do we address the question of the *mise*-en-scène, and the theatricality? In other words, under what conditions can we bring to light the undercurrents, which pull the strings of our denunciations of the postcolonial State, for example? The theater presupposes, among other elements, *a stage* (the place where characters and images come and go), the *wings* (the half-lit part where the prompters, the light technicians, and the costume-designers do their work), and between the audience, the stage and wings, there is the *intrigue* – the plot – of the play. What kind of plots do our observations about the post-colony carry? Considering that the relationship to Writing is also the relationship to the Emblem as veil, the unveiling of deceptions in postcolonial questions cannot adequately underline the importance of the emblem. The emblem thus designates the falsely innocent representation that makes man and his institutions stand erect: the emblem concentrates power and forces entry.

The emblem is a concentrate in that it combines the symbol and the currency. "The modern money that financial language calls currency is an example. Going further, we reveal the emblem as a generalized religious form, a show-of-authority ritual which is spread to all levels of society (communities, associations, political parties, businesses), primarily at the sovereign level of national States by the

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ceremonials of flags"[3]. The strength of the emblem is that it penetrates the subject, speaking and imagining: "literally, what is the emblem? Coming from Greek by way of Latin, *emblema* referred to a plated ornament (on wood, on a vase), the substantive is formed from the verb . . . (*emballô*) meaning to throw inside. An emblem is just that: the subject of language is worked on like material by the language. The emblem is an inlaying of the sign in man"[4]. The emblem forces the speaking man to enter a fantastic universe without which institutions cannot function.

The enumeration of emblems, and the activity of sense that becomes accustomed to it, inform postcolonial research that it cannot ignore the fantastical domain. It would be quite useful to find out in African societies symbolic and material production of dreams, images, fears, loves and emblems.

Flags. Held up to indicate surrender during war, the flag is always a concentrate by which one reads the relationship of a history to its own unfolding and its own representation. The flag marks the moment of an entity's institution. In order to have institution, there must be an event, a story, or a gesture, more than a written text; the flag condenses all these through the colors, the bestiary, the stars, the tools, and the human images it portrays. The flag is thus intimately linked to time and action. A figure of anamnesis, the flag refers to the past as establisher. "Throughout the process, it seems to tell those who wave it never to forget the moment of its foundation and of its gestation." The flag is also a real call to action; one waves it like a sign of belonging or of recognition, and it can symbolize both victory and defeat. From the flag, we can move on to a critique of "political economy of the sign" in post-colony. What do these show us, these flames, stars, knives, crescent moons, lions and leopards that can be found on certain postcolonial flags? How can we explain this denial of postcolonial States who often accept nuclear waste on their territories, yet keep these elements of nature (fauna and flora) on their flags? One can also read international politics and relationships of domination – whether real or symbolic – across these flags: one can ask the question, why did the flag of the now defunct Popular Republic of the Congo feature the "hammer and sickle" in a country where farmers had never used a sickle? Why do certain countries whose constitutions affirm that they are secular use the Muslim crescent? How can we reconcile the declared universalism of certain states with the nationalist character evoked by the devotion to a flag? The moment cosmopolitism comes back into style, what will then be the importance of this archetypal symbol of nationalism, the flag?[5]

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3 Pierre Legendre; *De la société comme Texte,* Paris, Fayard, 2001, p124-125

4 Ibidem, p 127

5 Albert Boime. *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, Cambridge University Press, 1998. The author analyzes how behind the Statue of Liberty and the American flag, a political agenda that is nationalist, protectionist, and sometimes racist has been deployed.

Coins and bills

Historians date the invention of minting money with the development of cities whose leaders began to codify and publish their laws in order to shield them from the arbitrariness of interpretation. The Greek word *nomisma,* which referring to currency signifies the "legal object," that is, the only coins accepted as payment due to their being approved and guaranteed by the issuing authority.[6] In this way, currency has a very close connection to the State. We are interested in emphasizing the State as the issuer of currency. In this issuance we can now examine not the monetary policies of postcolonial countries, but we can study who is represented on the metal coins and paper bills and why. Why is it that in Francophone African countries where the Bank of France guarantees currency values, the CFA francs are adorned with the heads of African chiefs of State? France guarantees the monetary value, but the local states guarantee the iconographic representation. All of this plays out in the space between the body that controls material power and that which controls the ornamental power. Three elements testify to the schism that exists between infrastructural production and native superstructures. They are first, the iconographical analysis of paper-money motifs through contrasting colors, second, the narcissistic rendering of political leaders on both bills and coins, and third, the bestiary used in designs--bestiary which reassert the value of the culture of the country in question. These elements all attest to that postcolonial gulf between foreign infrastructures and manifestly native superstructures. What is the status of these states who, in a drama that is played for their position and permanence in the international arena, only master the decoration of the stage while ignoring/covering their lack of power?

Philately

We are not going to go through the history of the stamp, nor that of seals stuck to postmarked letters or Papal Bulls. We will say, however, that the stamp is also part of these prostheses by which the question of the post-colony can arise. A stamp, like a seal placed on a letter, points to the relationship that each message recorded in that letter (signed or not!) has with the norm. Medieval Latinists stress that etymologically, the word *norma* means square[7]. A letter pressed by the stamp repeats, at each passage from hand to hand, that it is carrying a message that presents itself as normal through its outward decoration, even if the message goes against institutional constructions; in other words, it has undergone the squaring demanded of it by the legitimate authority.

In his exploration of the concept of *destinerrance,* Derrida underlines the fact that a postcard or letter

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6 Elayi J. et Elayi A.G., *La monnaie à travers les âges*, Paris, Editions Idéaphane, Paris, 1989, p. 25.

7 Pierre Legendre, *La 901è Conclusion. Etudes sur le theatre de la Raison*, Paris Fayard, 1998, p 251

never truly arrives at its destination. Let us, however, fill in what is lacking in this Derridian study: that is, the importance of the stamp on the postcard or letter is due to the fact that the stamp – this ornament – signifies that the letter belongs to the chain of authority. Our private messages – our subversive letters against the State, the capital, the authorities, against sexism, cosmopolitanism, identity, racism or violence – these are all decorated with the stamp, warning us that whether our messages be private, harmless, or critically subversive, the authorities will creep into them.

What about the representations that can be found on the stamps themselves? The issued State stamp can be totalitarian, democratic, liberal, colonial, postcolonial, communist, or cosmopolitan in nature. It has an insistent presence, because stamps are used not only on letters, but also on documents that define our administrative identity: birth, death, and marriage certificates, drivers' licenses, and up until recently passports, are all adorned with stamps. In issuing this stamp, the State reflects perfectly the system of appearance and the imaginary.

In the invisibility of the stamp – postal or tax – the State shows itself and introduces itself into our private lives by becoming the shadow that accompanies us wherever we go.

THE POLITICS OF NARRATIVE AND PERCEPTION

I. Living together in the public sphere. The role of narrative

Once political thought frees itself from the stranglehold of religion- in the usual sense of the term- it becomes centered upon itself as the sole origin of truth. It is self-creating, and the question is consequently how do republican states who have in their secular nature dismissed religion and myth secure sociopolitical thought upon itself? Is it possible to guarantee and to produce social connections merely through law? Constitutionalists and politicists would give this response: once all searching for a hidden essence in politics has been dismissed, the self-creation of politics consists in grasping that which shows itself - the reality of society - and that which is done - the technology of power. But this "positivism" which limits itself to facts ignores one fundamental parameter to a city's or a community's constitution - "the word that connects." The political community is above all a dialogical sphere where utterances circulate. Action is sometimes only possible because it is orchestrated by performative utterances. The word - or speech - is an essential component to the constitution of the democratic sphere.

In addition, the arrival of the Greek 'polis' coincides with the rise of public speech. We are assured that there is no community (*koinonia*) without justice (*dikè*), without laws (*nomoi*), without equality before the law *(isonomia)*, without the right of each citizen to present himself in front of the people's assembly

(*isegoria*), and finally without freedom of speech. "That which implies the system of the polis is above all an extraordinary preeminence of the word over all instruments of power."[8]

This theme of the word – or speech – and its close relationship to the constitution of the political sphere reappears in African traditions. In Africa, the word constitutes, imposes, establishes, separates, curses, reunites, and questions but does not die. The word delivers past traditions to the individual - Calame Griaule reminds us that among the Dogons of Mali there is a connection between tradition and speech - and he who joins tradition "knows the word."[9] But the word - or speech - is not merely the simple emission of sounds, it follows a certain "*mise*-en-*ordre*" or ordering - to speak means to obey rules. We are inspired by the palaver as an instance of combative speech which exemplifies the double-nature of the act of speech in the tribal sphere: respect for word exchange - implying the non-monopolization of the speech sphere - and the formulation of the topic of discussion (in the palaver, there is an entire deontology in the use of the word). Studies that take the palaver either as a model of "African-style democracy" or as an inaugural moment of a consensus to come, forget that despite the abundance and vigor of subject matter in a palaver there is also a "dis-sensus" at work. Beyond its ritual nature (ordeal, staging, narration, conciliation), the palaver brings into the view the concepts of words, speech and narrative.

This notion of narrative is important to the constitution of the democratic sphere because "To be subject to law is to see oneself defined by a word: that which separates, and which accompanies and reconciles."[10] Moreover, democracy is above all a narrative, as it is there that the subject speaks, and narrates the arrival of law, discord, and connection. This is the task that the palaver invites: to say and to narrate in a free space the foundational stories of democracy. The palaver - with its handicaps and inherent imperfections - may serve temporarily as a democratic paradigm in that it articulates the notions of tolerance, justice, self-expression, and the act of listening to others.

The formulation and the dimension of the visible.

The formulation of that which is social does not primarily concern discussion, but it would also require an "ethic of seeing" (*une éthique du Voir*)
Narrative is most commonly accompanied by the gaze. What does it mean to look upon an institution?

8 J.P. Vernant *Les origines de la pensée grecque* (Paris: PUF 1975) p. 44

9 Geneviève Calame-Griaule La parole chez les Dogons, Paris, Gallimard, 1965, p 26

10 There are, for example, forbidden words; certain objects and persons (the chief, the father, the ancestors) cannot be named in some cultures. To say something implies circumlocution and regulation, and in a democracy to have freedom of speech signifies regulating what is said.

Session 4

But first, what is this verb to institute? What is the role of investment in the act of instituting? And how does this interweaving of investment and foundation come to pass? The gaze. According to philosophical theory, that which transfixes the Other - and, to a certain extent, reveals the Other to himself - can be found in the Subject. But the gaze is also a kind of division. In the act of introspection, the Subject splits – or doubles – himself in order to produce a split-scene (composed of one side where he is the gazer, and one where he is gazed upon). These two sides of the gaze are relevant to the Subject, but when the Object is in play, it then becomes a question of looking at the dynamism offered to the Subject's gaze by the Other. Merleau-Ponty provides us with an excellent distinction to aid in the poetic evaluation of the gaze. The voir ceci is distinct from the voir selon. *Voir ceci* is a gaze directed upon the chosen object, while the *voir selon* is the addition of intentionality and perspective. To gaze – or to look upon – thus becomes a political act.

To invest: We invest in the *representation* of objects and subjects just as much as we invest in the objects and subjects themselves. Etymologically, the word *"invest"* means to put on a vestment, or tunic. While looking an object that has been sculpted, printed, or painted by the State, we clothe it –or in-vest it – in three ways: a) with love, by which it is transformed into an adored fetish. Here, we dress the object with a part of ourselves; b) with a hatred that transforms the object into a scapegoat of our own repulsions and hang-ups; and c) with indifference that leaves whole – that is, intact and unquestioned – the fetish of interest. Faced with a banknote issued by the State, the individual will adopt the method of fetishization (*fétichisation*) according to which the act of destroying this bill would be considered sacrilege, if not madness. Looking at the photograph of a politician, our negative emotions will often emerge to transfer our hatred onto the image. We thus invest in – that is, we give our negative affects to – the image. Stated another way, we clothe the image in the rags that inhibit us. And finally, when faced with a revenue stamp, a seal, or a postage stamp, we tend to pay little or no attention – we are indifferent – to its demonstration of political power. This non-investment is symptomatic of the confused relationship we have with this shattered mirror through which we see the face of power, multiplied by the cracks to create manifold smaller faces. Investment – be it positive or negative or operating in the form of denial within the framework of indifference – reminds us that, before its status as a composition of elections, of forms of government and of models of justice, the political life is a series of negotiations with the symbolic. Anthropological structures of the imagination (*"Les structures anthropologiques de l'imaginaire"*) – to use the title of Gilbert Durand' book – are indispensible to understanding the relationship between emotion and politics. Subjects of the law (*Sujets de Droit*), Subjects laying claim to human rights do not have an immediate connection to the real. In order to reach reality, the Subject must first go through representation, because one cannot take a stance on Reason without also calling upon narratives and images. Investment in the imagination is often dubious territory for the African philosopher, too engrossed in the important issues of rationality, method, knowledge, aesthetic categories, cultural diversity, and more

recently cosmopolitanism. What we forget here is that a life of Reason cannot simply cast aside myth, rite, and liturgy. We are only Subjects because we are already anticipated as thus by a preset symbolic game. In other words, our subjectivity is also developed from this symbolic game which is called "Culture".

CONCLUSION

The aesthetic must be reexamined starting with its *etymology* – meaning the sensual apprehension of thought, already implying a type of understanding. The Greek verb *Aisthanomai* means to perceive through the senses, to feel and understand. We cannot understand the dynamics of the institutions if we are not aware of the emotions – or affects – that weave the network of the "make-believe" (*le faire croire*) and, furthermore, we cannot understand African politics if we are ignorant of its aesthetic envelope. Whether prerequisite or complementary, a critique of the postcolonial State will include the element of social iconostasis. This "social iconostasis insists in this way upon the fact that the system of images crafted by the aesthetic is not an epiphenomenon but rather a force that literally makes society exist and stand up straight, as if society were a singular subject."[11]

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11 Pierre Legendre; *De la société comme Texte*, Paris, Fayard 2001, p138

Inspiring Ethics: Can Poetry have a Role in Moral Debates?

Bridget Vincent
University of Cambridge

This paper takes as its starting point philosopher Martha Nussbaum's suggestion that moral concepts cannot be adequately conveyed using traditional philosophical examples (which tend to be simplified and unrealistic), and that this problem can be remedied by using examples taken from literary texts, in which moral questions are embedded in a detailed narrative context.[1] Might we, she asks, learn something valuable and unique about, for example, familial responsibility, by reading a Henry James novel? Or discover new ideas about justice by reading Dickens?

While ethical criticism is a movement that has had wide-reaching significance for philosophy and literature alike, it is beset by a large methodological problem – it has ignored, almost completely, forms of writing other than the novel. Very little attention has been paid to drama, non-fiction prose, or poetry. It is this gap that my research – the first major study of poetry in this field – is starting to fill.

Even a preliminary engagement with defences of literary examples in philosophy reveals a consistent focus on narrative rather than poetic or dramatic forms. As critic Gerald Bruns writes, 'the common thread that ties these philosophers [those interested in literary exemplarity] together is the assumption that what counts as literature is narrative.'[2] Sometimes poetry is excluded by default rather than by design, sidelined simply because it lies outside the remit of a critic's project: Nussbaum's concentration on the particular idiosyncrasies of James is not a disavowal of the equivalent questions surrounding Yeats. In other cases, the specific potential of verse has come to be ignored because of the capacious, Platonically-inflected history of the term 'poetry': critics who might nominally treat poems as examples fail to explore how the

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1 Martha Craven Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

2 Gerald Bruns, *The Material of Poetry: Sketches for a Philosophical Poetics* (Athens, Georgia: Georgia University Press, 2005) 16.

poems in question might differ from narrative or dramatic pieces because 'poetry' is being used as a catch-all term for 'literature.' In many accounts, 'poetry' is used to refer to anything from a specific form of writing (defined against drama or fiction, for instance), to literary writing in general, to, indeed, all forms of aesthetic endeavour.

I will begin by introducing some of the details attending Nussbaum's advocacy for literary example-use, pointing out the particular features she associates with those literary texts used in moral philosophy. For Nussbaum, moral-philosophical thought cannot be considered complete without the forms of reflection made available by literature. She writes that in the study of Aristotelian ethical works, 'we should add the study of certain novels to the study of these works, on the grounds that without them we will not have a fully adequate statement of a powerful ethical conception.'[3] Put another way, Nussbaum describes one of her aims as: 'to establish that certain literary texts (or texts similar to those in certain relevant ways) are indispensable to a philosophical inquiry in the ethical sphere: not by any means sufficient, but sources of insight without which the inquiry cannot be complete.'[4]

What is it, for Nussbaum, that makes literary works such a useful resource for investigations of Aristotle? Three main justifications emerge. First, in an Aristotelian framework, ethical behaviour is defined not by a person's adherence to predetermined rules but by the way the person responds to circumstances. Crucially, it is this process of response to contingent events, contingent events that unfold over time, which narrative structures are able to show in ways that philosophical argument cannot. Second, Aristotelian ethics, as Nussbaum characterises them, place a great deal of importance on perceptiveness. Indeed, the ability to reject predetermined rules in favour of ethical principles which are adaptable to new circumstances *requires* us to be perceptive, to 'discern, acutely and responsively, the salient features of one's particular situation.'[5] Third, Nussbaum sees a link between the role of familial love in Aristotle and the exploration of love in novels, particularly in the novels of James. She binds these last two concepts together by stresses that love is closely implicated in perceptiveness: 'the Aristotelian view stresses that bonds of close friendship or love… are extremely important in the whole business of becoming a good perceiver.'[6]

It is these three features of the Aristotelian ethical framework – its emphasis on perceptiveness, responsiveness, and the role of familial love which, in Nussbaum's view, makes James' works such a valuable source of examples for students of Aristotle. I propose that these same emphases in Aristotle also give poetic examples relevance. Just as Nussbaum doesn't claim that all novels illustrate Aristotelian

principles equally fully and clearly, I am not making this claim for poetry as a category, but rather, for certain individual poets. In order to delimit the paper's scope, I have grounded my readings in the work of one particular writer – Seamus Heaney. In suggesting that Heaney's work might speak to Nussbaum's concerns, I'm not proposing that we can generalise outward to include all poetry, but rather, trying to open the way for the pursuit of equivalent – equivalent rather than identical – reflections on other poets. I chose Heaney because the ethical emphases of his poetry are tightly bound up with questions of perceptiveness, familial love and the marking of time passing in a way which makes them strikingly relevant to Nussbaum's Aristotelian project.

I will give a little background on Heaney's own engagement with the exemplary dimension of writing. Heaney is, of course, interested not in how a poem can provide a literary example for moral philosophers but rather in the question of how poetry might itself form an example, good or bad, to its readers. It's worth pointing out also that the emphasis here is on Heaney as a poet for whom ideas of the exemplary are a preoccupation, as distinguished from the more subjectively-designated category of the 'exemplary poet'. While Heaney might indeed be seen to belong in this admirable latter group, it is his deliberate engagement with, and investment in, ideas of the exemplary – the objective phenomenon of this ambition rather than the subjective phenomenon of its achievement – which renders him especially valuable here.

Exemplarity emerges as a strikingly pervasive and rhetorically flexible concept in Heaney's prose, appearing in his moral, aesthetic and relational vocabulary alike. I will here give an outline only of the figures involved in Heaney's treatment of his predecessors as exemplars, given that Neil Corcoran has offered a very comprehensive discussion of this process in 'Seamus Heaney and the Art of Exemplary'.[7] Heaney frequently casts the relationship between earlier and later poets as one of exemplar and follower, rather than one of, for instance, Bloomian rivalry. One of the most frequently cited of his comments about exemplarity as a form of *interpoetic* influence is the remark made in his *Crane Bag* interview with Seamus Deane: 'I think that every poet in earnest in this country is scanning for an exemplar...'.[8] Similarly, he proposes that Yeats and Hardy had each served as a 'master' for Larkin, and cites Hughes' identification of Crowe Ransom as 'the one who gave me a model.'[9] For Mandelstam, likewise, Dante was not only

7 Corcoran, 'Art of the Exemplary,' 117-127. This article has proven seminal, cited by such later works as Cavanagh's book-length study of Heaney's prose, *Professing Poetry*). Indeed, the word 'exemplary' as a term for Heaney's interpoetic inheritance has become so closely associated with Corcoran's discussion that Cavanagh refers to it as 'Corcoran's...word'. Cavanagh, *Professing Poetry* ix.

8 Seamus Deane, 'Unhappy and at Home: Interview with Seamus Heaney by Seamus Deane,' *Crane Bag* 1.1 (1977): 64. This is also cited in Neil Corcoran, 'Seamus Heaney and the Art of the Exemplary,' *The Yearbook of English Studies* 17 (1987): 120.

9 Heaney, 'Englands of the Mind,' *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-78* (London: Faber, 1980) 156.

an influence but an 'exemplar of the purely creative, intimate, and experimental act of writing itself.'[10] Heaney's tendency to treat influence as a process of admiration and emulation as well as Bloomian rivalry is not, then, restricted to one individual or group of writers, but is a consistent trope; a long-standing and evolving preoccupation.

Having introduced the significance of exemplarity as a concept in Heaney's prose, I'll now consider how Heaney's poetry might offer an equivalently helpful kind of literary example to that found by Nussbaum in James. Given the limited scope of this paper, I'll focus on Heaney's most recent collection, *Human Chain,* in part because little work has been done on this so far, and in part because this collection is an especially rich resource for the questions at hand.[11] Human Chain is useful here because the concept of perception (and shifts and adaptations in perception) runs throughout the collection and is crucial to its adumbration of ethical ideas. Many of the poems focus on lost loved ones, and some of these involve him revisiting scenes from his family life now past and superimposing his present perceptions on his more limited childhood awareness. Poem IV in a sequence called 'Album' remembers various moments at which the speaker embraced his father, and revisits a time, 'that summer before college' where he missed an opportunity to express affection – a lost opportunity he now regrets: 'That should have been the first, but it didn't happen'.[12] This moment of return forms part of the collection's larger habit of registering a difference between the perception involved in present remembrance as against that in the lived moment. In the first poem of 'Album', he recalls moments where he would spend time with his parents, 'stand with them on airy Sundays / shin-deep in hilltop bluebells'. He explicitly registers the slippage between the past moment and the vocabulary he now has for describing that scene: 'too late, alas, now for the apt quotation / about a love that's proved by steady gazing / Not at each other but in the same direction.'[13] Similarly, in recalling the day his parents dropped him off at school for the first time, he emphasises the difference between the day itself and his later understanding of it: 'seeing them as a couple, I now see, / For the first time, all the more together / For having to turn and walk away…'.[14] In 'Uncoupled II,' in which he remembers watching his father at work, he makes the difference between childhood experience and the adult words for it particularly clear: in the moment when 'his [his father's] eyes leave [his]', he 'know[s] the pain of loss before [he] know[s] the term.'[15] These poems speak to Nussbaum's concerns not only because they involve – and sometimes draw explicit attention to – shifts of perception, but also because

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10 Heaney, 'Envies and Identifications: Dante and the Modern Poet, 'Finders *Keepers* (London: Faber, 2002) 176.

11 Heaney, *Human Chain* (London: Faber, 2010).

12 Heaney, 'Album,' *Human*, 7.

13 Heaney, 'Album,' *Human*, 4.

14 Heaney, 'Album,' *Human*, 5.

15 Heaney, 'Uncoupled,' *Human*, 11.

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they do so in a context where familial interaction is a site of significant ethical reckoning.

While any of the above pieces could be considered poems about perception in so far as they record a readjustment in the speaker's vision, some of his pieces involve the direction of the reader's perceptive attention. For example, in 'Miracle', in which he writes about the people who carried him on an ambulance stretcher, he points quite specifically to his stretcher-bearers and marks them out for our care: 'be mindful of them as they stand and wait…'.[16] In 'An Old Refrain', he uses repeated imperatives to tell readers to listen out for overtones of particular words: 'in seggins / Hear the wind / Among the sedge' … 'in easing / Drips of night rain from the eaves.'[17] '"Lick the Pencil"' uses the term 'behold' for similar purposes. After setting up an association between his father and the copying pencil he would characteristically use, Heaney writes: 'in memory of him, behold those pigmentations.'[18] Functioning as a kind of self-reflexive overlay to this demarcation of readerly focus, some poems reflect explicitly on how the adoption of certain specific sensory postures allow for new forms of understanding. In his 'Herbal' written after Guillevic, for instance, after describing the sensation of smelling a leaf, he writes: 'If you know a bit / About the universe // It's because you've taken it in / Like that, // looked as hard / as you look into yourself / into the rat hole…'.[19]

Regardless of whose attention is being seized or shifted, all of the poems mentioned so far help to raise new questions about the nature of Nussbaumian moral exemplarity. Such questions might include: where is the example coming from? The speaker or narrator of the novel or poem, or the characters? If we're looking up to anyone, are we looking up to James himself or to his creation Maggie Verver? Similarly, is Heaney's model to be found in the poetic speaker or in the people the poem describes, or in both? In the poems above, the exemplars seems to be the poetic speakers themselves – the speakers give us a model of how we might correct our own vision and see our pasts anew, and sometimes they adjust our own perceptions as we read.

In many of Heaney's poems, it is not the poetic speaker, but one of the figures represented in the poem which offers an example. Of course, countless poets, from biblical parable parable-writers to wry twentieth-century elegists, have presented paradigmatic figures in their writings. Heaney's poetry is such a valuable addition to Nussbaum's project because the ideality of his model figures is located in an inherently time-bound form of goodness. In many cases, Heaney's models are models by virtue of their

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16 Heaney, 'Miracle,' *Human*, 17.

17 Heaney, 'An Old Refrain,' *Human*, 20-1.

18 Heaney, '"Lick the Pencil",' *Human*, 81.

19 Heaney, 'Herbal,' *Human*, 42.

stoicism and endurance; moral qualities which, crucially, can only reveal themselves over the course of time. They are therefore particularly relevant to an ethical framework which is temporally-determined rather than governed by atomporal principles. In 'Uncoupled I', for instance, Heaney's description of his mother reveals the stoicism in her character.[20] Importantly, as he does in his discussions of such diverse figures as eel fishers (who are 'straight-backed, / Standing firm')[21] and the ('eyes-front', 'straight-backed') charioteer at Delphi,[22] he draws attention to her upright carriage. This detail is significant because in many of the poems in which endurance is celebrated, moral steadfastness is figured as a physical uprightness or immovability. In this poem, his mother, carrying a pan of ash, is described as 'Walking tall, as if in a procession', and even in spite of the 'whitish dust and flakes still sparking hot / That the wind is blowing into her apron bib, into her mouth and eyes while she proceeds', she presses on 'unwavering, keeping her burden horizontal still, / Hands in a tight, sore grip.'[23] Heaney's veneration of endurance is particularly significant in this context because endurance is essentially an ability to continue as time passes, an ability to cope with more time spent in a given state.

While only brief moments of close reading are able to be accommodated here, I hope to have gestured towards some of the potential relevance which a poet like Heaney can hold for ethical criticism. I'd like to spend the final section considering how detailed discussions of literary exemplarity might speak more broadly to the questions governing this forum. Specifically, after considering the ways in which ethical criticism might be expanded from within (expanded, that is, to include poetry alongside novels), I will now reflect outward to explore the grounds on which ethical criticism tends to justify itself – it is in its grounding justifications that ethical criticism holds particularly rich resonances for the relationship between the just, the good and the beautiful. Indeed, it is also in these justifications that Heaney's own apologies for poetry chime closely and clearly, heightening his relevance to these discussions.

Recent advocacy for literary example-use is necessarily implicated in larger questions concerning the status of morality in literature, and many commentators explicitly position their contributions as responses to, in particular, the various strands of post-structuralist thought which assigns the ethical agency of a work or author the status of textual epiphenomenon. For many critics associated with ethical criticism, such as Samuel Goldberg, David Parker, Jane Adamson and Richard Freadman, thinking about literary examples

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forms part of a recuperation of a moral dimension in literature and literary study.[24] In challenging the idea that 'traditional 'humanist' critical study of English literature…is on its last legs', Samual Goldberg puts things particularly comprehensively when he argues that 'given a reasonably free, open and cohesive society, people are more likely than not to go on being 'humanist', at least in the sense of being interested in people, and intereste0d in them at least as much as in abstract theories and ideologies, or impersonal forces, or structural systems, or historical information, or even the play of signifiers.'[25] Other critics start by pointing out that certain of the poststructuralist lines of inquiry based in identity-politics are themselves, while disavowing normative or universal prescription, as Parker puts it, 'at the very least implicitly ethical.'[26] Richard Freedman insists that 'Marxism, Feminism and more recently Post-colonial studies – are nothing if not *moral projects*: they seek various forms of political, moral and cultural redress and change in the light of particular moral commitments.'[27] Parker, similarly, asserts that poststructuralist thought was 'always already crypto-ethical, if not explicitly so'.[28]

Many advocates for imaginative example-use are thus fuelled by an insistence on the moral agency of writers and writing, and Heaney's rhetoric of canon-defence speaks closely to their own. In 'Articulations', Heaney's 2008 acceptance speech for the Royal Irish Academy Cunningham Medal, he offers one of his most explicit defences of the moral agency of poetry, one which preserves the concepts of truth, subjectivity, and the enshrinement of both in poetry. In answer to an interviewer's question about 'what...poetry [had] taught' him, he maintains 'that there's such a thing as truth and that it can be told – slant' and 'that subjectivity is not be theorised away and is worth defending; that poetry itself has virtue, in the first sense of possessing a quality of moral excellence and in the sense of also of possessing inherent strength'.[29]

He urges readers to privilege celebration over scepticism, as indicated in terms like 'relishing': he recommends, for instance, 'reading and relishing lyric poetry in order to show how it embodies common

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24 S.L. Goldberg, *Agents and Lives*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Jane Adamson, "Against Tidiness: Literature and/versus Moral Philosophy", *Renegotiating Ethics in Literature, Philosophy and Theory*, ed. Jane Adamson, Richard Freadman, and David Parker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), Richard Freadman, "Disciplinary Relations: Literary Studies and Philosophy," *Border Crossing: Studies in English and Other Disciplines*, ed. John Barnes, *Meridian* 10.2 (1991): 24-35, David Parker, "Introduction: The Turn to Ethics in the 1990's," *Renegotiating Ethics*.

25 Goldberg, *Agents*, 1.

26 David Parker, 'Introduction,' 3.

27 Richard Freadman, 'Disciplinary Relations: Literary Studies and Philosophy,' *Border Crossing: Studies in English and Other Disciplines*, ed. John Barnes, *Meridian* 10.2 (1991): 27.

28 Parker, 'Introduction,' 9.

29 Heaney, 'Articulations: Poetry, Philosophy and the Shaping of Culture,' (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2008)19.

socio-political predicaments in an unforeseen personal idiom...'.[30] Many of Heaney's critics, likewise, have characterised his prose as belonging to the kind of 'appreciative' critical lineage sustained by one of his most vocal supporters – Helen Vendler. Neil Corcoran sees in Heaney's own prose a similar 'defence of the possibility of Romantic persistence'[31], or 'critical magnanimity', as David Wheatley puts it.[32] 'Articulations' provides a larger context for this 'magnanimity' and 'relishing': he characterises not only writing but the enterprise of the humanities more broadly as one of 'affirmation': 'The humanities...are as much a faith as a discipline. When I talk about them I am more like somebody affirming a belief than somebody demonstrating a proof.'[33] The affirmative cast of Heaney's approach to the humanities derives, he suggests, from his status as a poet-critic, as, for him, '...a creative writer's *modus operandi* differs significantly from a scholar's'.[34] His faintly Ricardian, pseudostatement-tinged opposition between poetic faith and discursive logic is worth highlighting here because it holds further resonances for the tension between philosophical prose and literary expression guiding the example-use debate, especially given his insistence on the dichotomy between 'artistic and scholarly disciplines' and their respective reliance on 'the sixth sense' as against 'research and evidence.'[35]

In his later prose, Heaney's resistance to poststructuralism not only emerges as a general concern, but terms from deconstructive theory are woven into his discussions of individual poets. In the following discussion of Milosz, for instance, he shows how a humanistic sense of selfhood ultimately wins out against deconstructive fragmentation. This victory is traced on the rhetorical surface of the writing, in that he cites, with almost archly mimetic exactitude, cartoonishly postmodern terms which then fall away as he asserts the inadequacy of the concepts they describe: '[H]is poetry concedes the instability of the subject and constantly reveals human consciousness as a site of contending discourses, yet he will not allow these recognitions to negate the immemorial command to hold one's own, spiritually and morally.' Given that to 'hold one's own' is an established Heaneyism (and, furthermore, one which he uses to underline the ultimate social force of poetic autonomy: poetry, he asserts in 'Redress,' can 'hold its own and balance

30 Heaney, 'Keeping Time: Irish Poetry and Contemporary Society,' *International Aspects of Irish Literature*, ed. Toshi Furomoto (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1996) 259.

31 Neil Corcoran, *The Poetry of Seamus Heaney: A Critical Study* (London : Faber, 1998) 230.

32 Wheatley, 'Professing,' 134. As Wheatley (among others) points out, this celebratory approach finds its limits in Larkin's 'Aubade', which stands out as one of the few works to receive a sustained negative evaluation.

33 Heaney, 'Articulations: Poetry, Philosophy and the Shaping of Culture,' (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2008) 18.

34 Heaney, 'Articulations,' 18. Edna Longley makes a similar point about 'Poetry and Professing.' She argues that in this essay, 'Heaney defends tradition: 'Poets are [...] more likely [than academics] to attest without self-consciousness to the living nature of poetic tradition and to the demotic life of 'the canon'.' Longley, ''Altering the past': Northern Irish Poetry and Modern Canons,' *The Yearbook of English Studies* 35 (2005) 7.

35 Heaney, 'Articulations,' 18.

out against the historical situation'), this quotation ultimately shows Heaney himself, in superseding deconstructive with personal terminology, 'holding his own' on a discursive level alongside Milosz.[36]

I'd like to end by coming back to Martha Nussbaum's own words, and in particular, to a remark she makes about poetry. She has suggested that the questions poetry raises in this context are, quote 'important to the continuation of the larger project', and then adds 'I leave them to those who are more involved than I am in the analysis of poems.' While what she calls 'the continuation of the project' – that is, providing an adequate account of the poem's potential as a moral-philosophical example – is much too large a task to accomplish in fifteen minutes, I hope to have started to show what a poetry-inflected definition of literary examples might look like and yield.[37]

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36 Heaney, 'The Redress of Poetry,' *The Redress of Poetry* (London: Faber, 1995) 3.

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