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EDITOR’S NOTES

There are seven fascinating articles in this issue: one each for aesthetics, Critical Discourse Analysis, early modern philosophy, environmental ethics, epistemology, philosophy of mind, and political philosophy.

It is fascinating that something ugly or imperfect can be made an object of beauty. Leni Garcia, in her “The aesthetics of Wabi-Sabi: Beautiful imperfection,” argues for “beauty that reveals the imperfect nature of life and serves as a guide to joyful living.” She thinks that crafts should have a place in the art museum.

CDA, or Critical Discourse Analysis, is an activity that investigates “ideology and power struggle” implied in the texts and sounds of discourse and language. In “Philosophical foundations of Critical Discourse Analysis: A diachronic sketch,” Willard Enrique R. Macaraan tries to extract the “very foundation” of CDA’s theoretical claims. This diachronic sketch tries to legitimize these claims as it “rests on the more popular and stable conceptual skeleton of major prominent thinkers of critical theory, poststructuralism, and postmodernism.”

In “Husbandry tradition and the emergence of vegetable philosophy in the Hartlib Circle,” Oana Matei tries to “analyse the transformation of a tradition of husbandry from moral and political philosophy to natural magic and technology.” She contends that the emergence of the discipline of vegetable philosophy, although it has a connection with the Baconian tradition of experimentation, is still grounded on some metaphysical assumptions.

Mark Omorovie Ikeke maintains in his “Ecological ethical perspective on infrastructural development: The Nigerian experience” that the requirement of constructing infrastructural projects, though necessary to provide goods and services to the people, should have a well-thought-out “environmental impact assessment.” He argues that for any construction of an infrastructural project to be sustainable should carry with it the “values of ecological ethics.”

It is interesting that a debate ensues as to whether God is necessary in Cartesian epistemology. Michael Della Rocca takes the negative position that God is “peripheral and in the fringe of Descartes’s account of knowledge.” In “Descartes and epistemology with or without God,” Edwin Etieyibo takes the affirmative position that God is necessary. The whole article tries to show why the position of Della Rocca is in error.

Against computationalism, John Searle and Roger Penrose believe they can naturalize the mind. In his article, “Searle’s and Penrose’s noncomputational frameworks for naturalizing the mind,” Napoleon M. Mabaquiao Jr. argues that both authors fail in their projects to naturalize the mind. Searle, on the one hand, fails to resolve the incompatibility between the publicness of scientific knowledge and the privacy of psychological knowledge. Penrose, on the other hand, while attempting to resolve the issue between “the noncomputationality of the psychological process and the computationally of the scientific process” through quantum physics, seems to trivialize the distinction between science and nonscience and, in addition, appears dubious in view of the “mysteries that still surround quantum physics.”
Jeffry Ocay in his “Hegel reframed: Marcuse on the dialectic of social transformation” tries to contribute to the transformation or emancipation themes of critical social theory. In particular, he analyzes “Herbert Marcuse’s attempt to socialize Georg Hegel’s ontology,” that is to say, by showing “how Marcuse explains social transformation by appropriating” Hegel’s key concepts in the latter’s Logic and The phenomenology of mind.

We have one book review and one book note.

Danilo S. Alterado reviewed Kevin B. Anderson and Russell Rockwell’s book titled Dunayevskaya-Marcuse-Fromm correspondence, 1954-1978: Dialogues on Hegel, Marx and Critical Theory. It is fascinating to read the insights and disagreements of a Marxist Humanist, a Hegelian Marxist, and a Socialist Marxist as to their “perspectives in Critical Theory.”

Finally, Peter S. Collins’s book note on historian Paul Johnson’s Socrates: A man for our times, shows the essential link of history and philosophy. In this particular work, among Confucius, Ezra, and Socrates during the fifth century B.C., Johnson portrays Socrates as “the most important philosopher” in “terms of influence” and in being “the first seer...who pondered deeply on what makes humans happy and how such a blessing can be acquired.”

With these fascinating and interesting articles, we hope the readers will enjoy them as much as we do.

Rolando M. Gripaldo
Editor
THE AESTHETICS OF WABI-SABI: BEAUTIFUL IMPERFECTION

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This paper puts forward Wabi-Sabi aesthetics as one possible philosophical anchor for museum exhibits that focus less on beauty as perfection and more on beauty that reveals the imperfect nature of life and serves as a guide to joyful living. There is a growing trend in contemporary museums to feature not the usual paintings and sculptures, but crafts—traditionally looked upon as objects for the hobbyist, not the artist. The mixed reactions from the art world show that this new practice requires a philosophy of beauty that, to begin with, did not look for the beautiful in that which is perfect as inspired by the Platonic ideals. The philosophy of Wabi-Sabi is founded on the metaphysics of Buddhism, and is here offered as one such foundation, questioning the idea of beauty and art, and blurring the distinctions between art and life, as well as between art and crafts.

INTRODUCTION: ART VERSUS CRAFT

The long standing battle between art and crafts, although far from coming to an end, seems to have gone mellow with contemporary (controversial) practices that appear to blur what used to be a clear-cut distinction between art objects—perfect creations for purely aesthetic pleasure (the fine arts of painting, music, sculpture, architecture, and poetry)—and craft objects—handmade and, thus, not perfect objects that are functional (blankets, tapestry, baskets, furniture, and earthenware, among others). Art is what artists do, while crafts are merely for the hobbyist or amateur. Art is placed in the museum, crafts' proper place is at home. But as artists and designers start engaging in crafts and exhibiting works that cannot be easily categorized as either art or craft, these terms are now wanting a new definition.

In the October 2003 issue of Metropolis, Kristi Cameron (2003) quotes the 2002-2005 chair of the California College of the Arts (CCA), Simon Blattner, explaining the institution's change of name from "California College of Arts and Crafts" saying, "The artificial boundaries between art, design, and craft that were so important to the nineteenth-century academies no longer exist." It would seem a positive point for crafts, except for the fact that museums are dropping the word from their names. Cameron shows that the word "craft," although
"not a dirty word," is being redefined by practitioners, with more art and design works incorporating in the handcrafts of their creation.

Sarah E. Condon (n.d.), curator of The Eclipse Gallery in Algoma, Wisconsin, explains that if a museum uses the word “craft,” “there is sometimes a slight fear that the museum won’t be taken as seriously as other art museums.” Although she reports that whereas some museums, such as the CCA mentioned above and the Museum of Arts and Design (formerly American Craft Museum) have dropped the word “craft” from their names, others are putting it in, like the Fuller Craft Museum (formerly Fuller Museum of Art) and the San Francisco Museum of Craft + Design.

Added to this issue is the commercial and taxation policies that differ for art and for craftwork. Master goldsmith Charles Lewton-Brain (2004) writes:

Art and craft are differentiated by customs and border control laws by practical function. If you can wear it or put peanuts into it, [it] is craft. Or if there are more than 49 of them—prints, both photographic and other[s] done in editions [they] magically turn from fine art into product if there are 50 or more of them.

Lewton-Brain (2004) relates an experience before the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1994, where crafts were imposed a 50% duty when going into the United States, while fine art was duty-free. One should apply to the US to be proved as an artist to circumvent taxation, by showing one’s “aesthetic decisions” in the process of making a piece. Subjecting himself to this process, he was proclaimed an “artist,” but it did not save him from paying duties: “I still had to pay the duty on my work because it was still functional, you could still wear it or use it for things other than just looking at” (italics supplied).

A lot of these issues still stem from the “art for art’s sake” versus “functional art” valuations, which is problematic because of the traditional notions of art. Artworks have been put in museums apart from everyday life because they are “perfect” or out-of-the-ordinary objects. They are too pure to be identified with use or function. Crafts have been precluded from this space because their materials and handmade quality are never perfect. Their identification with the body—being worked by hand and is usually objects made to suit bodies, such as mugs, tapestries, and chairs—denigrates their status as art. Moreover, crafts have always been identified with their use or function. It is, therefore, not surprising that there are mixed feelings among practitioners and museum board members, as well as contradictory moves spurred by these reactions. These are evidences that the art world, although it might be opening its doors to crafts, is still at a loss when defending the inset of crafts into the space that is formerly devoted only to art. A clear foundational philosophy, therefore, is needed in order to legitimize this inclusion.

The aforementioned are just some of the issues that the contemporary art practitioners and administrators are grappling with. Deriving from expositions of some contemporary designers and philosophers of crafts, this paper aims to focus on an aesthetics that originated in Japan called “Wabi-Sabi,” that may not solve all the problems in contemporary art but might inspire the rethinking that is called for. Outlining the worldview on which the design principles of Wabi-Sabi are based, this essay offers Wabi-Sabi aesthetics as: first, providing an alternative to some of the prevailing notions of beauty as perfection or idealization; second, a practice that fuses art and life; both of which hopefully lead to the third: Wabi-
Sabi aesthetics as one possible ground within which to resolve some issues regarding the accommodation of crafts into spaces typically reserved for art.

**ART AS BEAUTY SET APART FROM LIFE**

Early Greek culture was pervaded by two differing philosophical systems: the Platonic and the Aristotelian. Plato was suspicious of anything material, having put emphasis on the imperishable Forms. In the *Republic*, he (2012, bk.X) chose to banish the artists for their work, *merely imitating* this world which is already imperfect, lead only to attachments to passions that lead away from the truth. In the *Symposium*, Plato (2013a) prescribed contemplation on Beauty as such rather than on beautiful things. In contrast, although agreeing with his teacher that art is imitative, Aristotle did not think it unbefitful to engage in it. In *Poetics*, he (1954, chaps. IV and VI) affirmed that human beings learn through imitation and art has some entertainment and relaxation value that allows one to think clearly afterwards. Thus, unlike Plato, who would not give any other standard of beauty apart from the perfection of Form (Beauty as such), Aristotle gave “order and symmetry and definiteness which the mathematical sciences demonstrate in a special degree” (*Metaphysics* 1994-2000, pt. 3) and having the “proper magnitude or size” (*Poetics* 1954, chap. VII) as standards for beauty.

Although dissimilar, Plato’s and Aristotle’s views on art have led to the idea that beauty is something to be sought outside of the ordinary. That it is special because it stands out. Plato has removed Beauty completely out of the material and intellectualized it, making it part not of the mundane but of the Ideal. Aristotle, on the other hand, gave it precision which is not something usually found in ordinary or natural objects. Some sort of synthesis between these two was achieved in Plotinus, a neo-Platonist who claimed that art objects became valuable as *symbols*, making “the beauty of a man-made object...an imitation of Beauty and ultimately of the Good...Art is a symbol in a double sense: of that lower reality which it perfects and that ultimate reality which it mirrors” (Hofstadter and Kuhns 1976, 140-41). This influenced early Christian philosophers, like St. Augustine who justified art as long as it does not run contrary to the teachings of the scriptures (Sporre 1990, 189). These ideas on art as reflecting beauty that points to something “higher” and more perfect (in terms of it being set apart from the mundane) than ordinary things continued through the Medieval Ages.

During the Renaissance period, however, transformed by the spirit of humanism and excited over the rediscovery of classical antiquity, the great artists of the time claimed divine inspiration and created lifelike images in grand scales. Their works were not copies of reality but an elevation of something mundane to the Sublime (Sporre 1990, 259-60) and has perpetuated the idea of art as primarily *intellectual* and, thus, the eventual classification of the *fine* arts (painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry) as opposed to the lesser or minor arts, primarily craftwork (Greenhalgh 1997, 27). Also, at around the fifteenth century, precious materials became more important than skill. Painters, for instance, were paid more for aquamarine and gold paints than for their “brush” (their strokes), and, therefore, only the wealthier patrons were able to afford their work (Fariello 2005, 8). The Italian painter and historian, Giorgio Vasari [1511-1574] (see Fariello 2005), recorded the lives of his contemporary artists and his work helped define the artist as genius. Anna Fariello (2005, 9-10) writes:
Ostensibly, Vasari set out to record the lives of his contemporaries, but he embellished them as he saw fit, providing a mythological version whenever convenient or entertaining. Perhaps without intending to, Vasari prescribed a methodology for art historical practice that depended heavily upon biography and a celebration of individual genius....In its deification of the artist, Vasari's work influenced subsequent art historical interpretation and laid the foundation for an aesthetic pyramid that glorified the few and the famous.

By then, art has become completely separated from crafts. Apart from having the notion of beauty as perfection or idealization, a reaching into the Sublime and a primarily intellectual pursuit, art also became identified with the individual artist, using precious materials that are not readily available to the masses. In other words, art was removed from life. The institutionalization of museums, from private collections usually reserved for select people of the same high status as their owners, further widened this gap and perpetuated the idea that art is something special that is not easily accessible. It became the privilege of the intellectual and wealthy classes.

The work of craft—like pottery, basketry, furniture, and tapestry—became more and more neglected, marginalized, and taken out of the sphere of art. Unlike art, crafts is ordinary and made usually anonymously in guilds. The poverty of their easily accessible materials, like clay and fabric, relegates them as pastime to the lowly class—what the poor can afford to put in their homes for decoration. The functional nature of crafts identifies them not only with the material world, but more specifically, with the material body. As Howard Risatti (2007, 108-109) emphasized, they are "somatically oriented." They accommodate the body in their formation—cups must fit into the hands, chairs cannot be too big or too small, and blankets must be able to comfortably cover the body. The identification of art with the intellect ever since Plato's denigration of the body made art history about "great" works that are mostly optical ("just for looking") and ignored crafts that are closely associated with this messy materiality of the human body.

Although modern and some contemporary art movements did question the lofty notions of art, including the question of whether art ought to be beautiful, questions still focused on pieces hallowed in museums and forgot about the commonplace crafts. The closest to a defense of crafts came in the 1800s, with the Arts and Crafts Movement of William Morris and John Ruskin. But Ruskin's (see Metcalf 1997, 67) assertion of crafts as art still hinges on the similarities of craft objects with art pieces, and they remain problematic, as evidenced by the current issues faced by contemporary artists and museum curators, as well as by craftspersons.

CONTEMPORARY ART: CRAFT ART?

The problems that arise because of crafts' intrusion into spaces traditionally reserved for art can be gleaned from Glenn Adamson's (2007, 4-5) discussion on the similarities and differences between Piet Mondrian's painting and Anni Albers's weaving. The former is easily identifiable as art, while the latter as craft. They are both modern and are similar in their design. He (2007, 4-5) writes:

...
...The difference between them seems, on one level, to be rather arbitrary—one is a textile, the other a textile with paint on its surface. It is easy enough to hang an Albers weaving on the wall and call it art, and indeed museums have done so many times. It would be more difficult to upholster a chair with Mondrian’s painting, but certainly not impossible. And yet there are good (if only relative) reasons to attach the term “craft” to only one of these objects.

Adamson explains that Mondrian’s painting is meant to stand on its own and has been considered a work of art with great value, with Mondrian’s status as an artist, while Albers’s weaving was originally intended to be decorative. The former invites only visual focus, while the latter invites the perceiver to also touch the textile. While Modrian certainly used some painting techniques, he did not require a highly developed skill that Albers did at the loom.

Mondrian’s (Cordon 2012; Adamson 2007) painting exemplifies art, as earlier discussed, as made by an individual artist of some renown, fit for aesthetic contemplation, hangs in a space segregated for similar works away from ordinary life, and completely removed from any kind of utility. Albers’s weaving fulfills the elements of crafts. It is made of everyday material, associated with the body through touch, made by a skilled craftsperson, and is originally decorative in nature. When objects like Albers’s (Esaak 2009; Adamson 2007, 5) Hanging are placed in museums, with “overtones of amateurism,” these notions of art and crafts and the museum are called into question. As evidenced by current issues mentioned in the beginning, some members of the art-and crafts-world are comfortable with the blurring of the lines between these categories, but some are not. For those who embrace the collapse of the categories, the simple solution is to make “art” and “crafts” interchangeable or adopt the term “craft-art.” In a way, art always involves crafts, whether as an add-on (a sculpture stands on a wooden base or furniture, for example) or as a preliminary stage in the process of producing the work of art (for instance, the craft of writing, to produce a poem). In any case, this attitude ignores the issue which could actually be philosophically significant. For the others who feel ill-at-ease in this contemporary phenomenon, the discomfort stems from the feeling of shame: the encroachment of the amateur into an exclusive space is not to be suffered.
While there have been attempts to redefine the aesthetics that has privileged art and marginalized crafts in order to resolve these issues, the best ones, perhaps, are those that directly question the binary opposition between the two. One such aesthetics is the Japanese philosophy of Wabi-Sabi.

**WABI-SABI: ZEN AND TEA CEREMONY**

Wabi-Sabi has become a cultural icon in Japan and nowadays refers to something that is imperfect, unpolished, or simple and natural. They are more identified with crafts than with art found in museums. Taro Gold (2004, 16), relating his life-long lessons on Wabi-Sabi, describes it as “imperfection, or more fully, appreciation of the value and beauty of imperfection. Wabi-Sabi celebrates the preciousness of all things imperfect, which is truly all things.”

Gold (2004, 19) continues to explain that “Wabi,” written as a character more than 3,000 years old, originally meant “empty,” “lonely,” or “basic.” “Sabi,” on the other hand, referred to something “worn,” “weathered,” or “ decayed.” The “Wabi” part of wabi sabi, refers to an inner life, while the “Sabi” part, the external life, particularly the state of things. The term was born out of the very difficult living conditions some Japanese had to contend with throughout their nation’s history. Thus, Wabi-Sabi’s identification with the unpredictable, the unpolished, the incomplete, and the imperfect. This sentiment also aligned itself with certain traditions in Japan, specifically Zen Buddhism.

**Zen Buddhism**

Zen is a kind of Buddhism that was imported from China, which in turn, was imported from India. The Buddha of our aeon, Siddhartha Gautama, was born as a Ksatriya into the warrior class of the Sakhya clan. His father, Sudhodhana, was grooming him to be a king, but Siddhartha somehow escaped this destiny and worked towards enlightenment instead. His first and most important teaching revolved around the Four Noble Truths: Life is suffering, suffering is caused by desire, desire can be eliminated, and the practice of the Eightfold Path leads to the elimination of desire. These, in turn, are expounded on in the Three Dharma Seals: All phenomena are impermanent; all phenomena do not have a substantial existence; and Nirvana is perfect tranquility. The 48th Patriarch of Rinzai Buddhism, the Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2006, 44), says:

> The meaning and significance of the Three Dharma Seals is close to that of dependent origination, which is most representative of the teachings of the Buddha. They are another way of looking at truths that are fundamental to reality. Therefore, if we can fully understand them, we will be able to grasp the fundamental philosophy of Buddhism.

Everything happens because the right causes and conditions support it. For instance, for there to be this piece of paper in front of me, a seed had to become a tree and a tree had to be chopped down by a lumberjack, and the lumber to be sent to a paper mill, and for certain processes to be done by several laborers to make this piece of paper. Then, the
paper product had to be brought to dealers, who brought them to retailers. I, too, had to walk over to the bookstore to buy it and bring it home to fulfill this need of writing. Causes and conditions are one side of the Buddhist concept of "dependent origination." They also explain the first Dharma Seal.

The first Dharma Seal revolves around the idea that everything is temporary. Nothing is eternal. Causes and conditions are processes and they are always changing. Things that exist now have no substance. When causes and conditions change and disappear, that which they have given rise to will also change or disappear. As the example goes, if it were not for the seed that grew to be a tree, for the lumberjack that cut the tree, and all the other people and processes involved in making paper, this piece of paper would not exist. It does not have a substantial existence that will allow it to exist on its own. Life is full of suffering because the mind does not comprehend this impermanence and lack of substantial existence. The mind tends to hold on to things that exist now as if they were permanent. Because everything is in flux, the mind becomes frustrated and cannot accept change. Therefore, understanding that everything is impermanent can lead to the state of tranquility or Nirvana.

When Buddhism reached China, it mixed very comfortably with another school of thought, Taoism. Taoism follows the watercourse. Like Buddhism, it seeks to be in the world with "open eyes," meaning, seeing the world as it is, without imposing dualistic thinking that discriminates one thing from another. Dualism and opposition is illusory. Everything, when pushed to one extreme, reverses to its opposite—the Yin and the Yang are dynamic parts of the same whole. The way to understand it is to live by letting go: wei-wu-wei. Chapter 24 (Mitchell 1995) of the Tao te ching says:

He who stands on tiptoe doesn’t stand firm.
He who rushes ahead doesn’t go far.
He who tries to shine dims his own light.
He who defines himself can’t know who he really is.
He who has power over others can’t empower himself.
He who clings to his work will create nothing that endures.

If you want to accord with the Tao, just do your job, then let go.

This combination of Indian Buddhism and Taoism became what is now known as Zen Buddhism in Japan. It is here that we find the thicker roots of Wabi-Sabi. Design gallery owner Andrew Juniper (2003, 10) says that it was the Zen temples in Japan that defined Japanese aesthetics. Usually lacking funds, the Buddhist monks who did not own any fine art objects made use of whatever they found in their environment that was aesthetically
pleasing. They used bamboo for vases and picked wildflowers, as well as old, tarnished iron kettles and unglazed teacups for their tea when entertaining guests. With this practice, Juniper (2003, 11) shows that

...they were focusing on the natural, the impermanent, and the humble, and in these simple and often rustic objects they discovered the innate beauty to be found in the exquisite random patterns left by the flow of nature. The small nuances of color, the curve of an opening petal, the crack in a bamboo vase, or the decay of a knot in old timber all came to symbolize mujo, which is the Buddhist tenet of impermanence and continuous flux.

The Zen monks of old knew then that these simple aesthetic “pleasure” of irony, the aesthetics of mujo that lead to heightened awareness of the basic characteristic of life as transience, can be put together quite easily by finding objects from one’s immediate environment. Thus, Wabi-Sabi aesthetics which focused on the fleeting nature of life, impermanent and imperfect, flourished as the Zen monasteries spread all over Japan.

THE TEA CEREMONY

The tea ceremony is another cultural aspect of Japan that is closely related to Zen. In discussing the origins of Wabi-Sabi design for artists and philosophers, Koren (2008, 31-32) writes of the tea ceremony: 12

Variously called sado, chado, and chanoyu, the tea ceremony as it evolved became an eclectic social art form combining among other things, the skills of architecture, interior and garden design, flower arranging, painting, food preparation, and performance. The accomplished tea practitioner was someone who could orchestrate all these elements—and the guests in attendance—into a quietly exciting artistic event that thematically cohered. At its artistic zenith, realizing the universe of wabi-sabi in its fullness was the underlying goal of tea.

Koren claims that it was the Zen monk Murata Shuko13 [1423-1502] who is the first recorded tea master. Juniper (2003, 34), however, shows that earlier than Shuko, there was the eccentric monk Ikkyu [1394-1481] who, aside from furthering Zen in Japan, also contributed greatly to the development of a wabi-sabi style tea ceremony. Juniper (2003, 37) also writes of this monk, “In his love of life and disdain for formality and rules, Ikkyu promoted the tea ceremony and even went so far as to suggest that it could be more productive than hours spent in solitary meditation.”

Before these monks, tea ceremony had reached its height in the secular society, which had a penchant for fine Chinese porcelain and other imported tea-related objects. The wealthier households hosted the tea and invited important guests, mostly, it is said, to show off their “fine China.” These monks directed it, instead, toward simplicity by preferring to use ordinary, understated tea utensils. Authors (Koren 2008, 32; Juniper 2003, 40; and the website on “The Japanese tea ceremony,” n.d.) agree, however, that it was Sen no Rikyu [1522-1591] who put the distinctly Zen stamp on the tea
ceremony, and became known as the “master of masters” in chado. Rikyu’s promotion of the philosophy of tea as simplicity and “absence,” rather than ostentatious and abundant, seems to have come from his disgust over the practice of tea that became a way of displaying material wealth.

Similarly, contemporary potter and founder of the Japan Folkcraft Museum (Nihon Mingei-kan), Soetsu Yanagi (1989, 150), reflects on the tea ceremony and tea-related objects such as cups, as he promotes vernacular crafts. He shows that they are always appearing to be incomplete or unfinished. But in their incompleteness, they point to something beyond themselves, unlike polished, perfected objects which, “having shown all that they are and having nothing further to suggest, they give an impression of rigidity and coldness.” This is why, Yanagi explains, it is often the roughest and most imperfect looking bowls are used in tea ceremonies. These are sacred to the practitioners of tea, not because the ceremony makes these objects special, but precisely because they are most ordinary. They represent the essence of Zen, which is also Wabi-Sabi.

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF WABI-SABI

Having been a result of life experiences and furthered by spiritual pursuits such as Zen Buddhism, Taoism, and the tea ceremony, Wabi-Sabi is not just an aesthetics, but a whole worldview. Before its aesthetic principles are laid out, therefore, an understanding of this worldview is necessary.

Koren (2008, 40-41) shows that Wabi-Sabi is a complete universe. It abides by a metaphysics that guides its spiritual values and moral qualities, apart from the material foundations of its aesthetics. The generally Buddhist worldview of Wabi-Sabi shows that one of the most important truths to understand is the idea of Emptiness. Emptiness often gives a negative feeling because we are used to having something to hold on to in this life. We forget, however, that this something was made possible only because in the first place, there was nothing. Nothingness or Emptiness is therefore good, because without it, we will not have anything. Emptiness is like space in the sense that without it, nothing could be. However, to understand this requires that we also understand that all that there is, this something that exists, are never permanent. They are borne out of Emptiness, and to Emptiness they will all go back. Wabi-Sabi is this understanding. It is its metaphysical foundation: that everything is in a state of motion (very much like the Heraclitean flux), and everything changes. Wabi-Sabi captures this by reminding us of the way of things—they come and go—and holding on to anything as if they were eternal would only cause us suffering.

This “metaphysical truth,” however, is a product of observation of the way of Nature. Like Taoism that follows the watercourse, Wabi-Sabi shows that Nature is our greatest teacher. If we contemplate the natural processes that happen around us, we will realize that such is the Way and to obstruct it, again, will only bring us sadness. It is true that the natural is prone to decay. It is often murky and dark. But we can find in it a beauty that is simple, and yet profound. The lotus flower has become the symbol of Buddhism precisely because of this. The lotus grows out of mud and cannot be disconnected from that. Yet, it is beautiful, and remains unaffected by the filth under the water. This is what it means that something beautiful can come out of something ugly and imperfect.
The simple act of finding beauty in imperfection can be cultivated so as to bring joy. To accept that the world and life are in a state of constant flux allows us to let go. Detachment, as the Buddhist would say, may be the single greatest cure to the suffering of the world. To let things be, as the Taoist would say, on the other hand, is the source of happiness. By letting things be, by letting go, we are opening ourselves to the Way of Nature and this can only bring serenity. To achieve this, however, we have to cultivate what the Buddhists call “no-mind,” or the absence of intellectual categories, that give rise to dualistic thinking: life versus death, good versus bad, permanent versus temporary. When we think in this manner, we always engender oppositions, even within one’s mind and therefore we suffer. No-mind, or bodhicitta, is the cure to dualistic thinking. It rids the mind of all intellectual concepts that produce a biased, illusory view of the world. The “no-mind” is the mind that is open to Buddhahood or enlightenment. Disengaging in things, Wabi-Sabi is one way of cultivating such.

...The word bodhicitta describes a state of mind that is awake to the unity of itself with all things and clearly understands the path to enlightenment. Bodhicitta is sometimes also called the “supreme mind,” “thought of the way,” “unsurpassed mind of the way,” and “the supreme intention to follow the right way.” (Hsing Yun, 2002)

As a reflection of “no-mind,” one must then cultivate what is known in Zen as mushin or “no-heart” or the absence of desire. As one of the Noble Truths shows, desire is the cause of suffering. Having no desire is the beginning of joy. Wabi-Sabi living, therefore, requires to let go of all unnecessary possessions. Living simply and with only the basic necessities is of utmost importance.

Further, looked upon from the environmental lens, Wabi-Sabi ethics does not care only for human Others, but for all sentient beings. By living without desire, we are not likely to harm others. By living simply, we are not likely to occupy space in the natural world. Most importantly, we limit our carbon footprint and, thus, our compassion goes beyond the usual recipients and extends to the whole world. Gold (2004, 19) aptly writes,

In the narrow view, Wabi Sabi fosters a bohemian sense of beauty that celebrates the basic, the unique, and the imperfect. In the wider sense, Wabi Sabi is a worldview that supports ecocentric living and compassionate humanism.

Ecocentric living avoids not only taking so much from the world but also avoids anything synthetic that eventually harms it. Living Wabi-Sabi on the outside—that is, expressed in material things that we still cannot help using and having—requires the use of natural materials only. As pointed out earlier, these natural materials tend to be rough, unpolished, prone to decay and deformity. But these are the seemingly “ugly” characteristics that, with “no-mind,” can turn beautiful. The unpretentiousness of these materials can help the mind focus on more important values, undistracted by elaborate designs of what is usually considered “pretty.” Their simplicity and effervescent nature can also remind us of the impermanence of life. In this way, “great” results will be born out of the ordinary and unimportant.
AESTHETICS OF WABI-SABI

What, therefore, are the design principles of Wabi-Sabi? From the elucidation of the philosophical foundations of Wabi-Sabi, we can define its design principles. Juniper (2003) identifies eight principles of Wabi-Sabi aesthetics: organic, freedom of form, texture, ugliness and beauty, color, simplicity, space, and sobriety.

To reflect impermanence, or the continuous evolving from and devolving into nothingness, Wabi-Sabi objects have to be organic. These are things that are found in Nature, or one’s immediate environment. A tea house, for instance, will not shelter anything that is synthetic or nonbiodegradable. Everything in it, from the bamboo vases, rough mud walls, wooden tables, and stoneware or terra cotta utensils are derived from living matter. They show signs of decay and deterioration. But it is precisely this unpredictable path that slow decomposition takes that produces the aesthetic effect in these objects. Bamboo vases leak and watermarks on them give a glaze-like effect. Wooden tables get worn out at the edges; it gives that look of being used and, yet, lovingly cherished. Mud walls crack and crumble down but the impermanence of the structure gives that certain melancholic acceptance that things will not last, but for the present moment, they are here, and they are beautiful.

There is absolute freedom of form in Wabi-Sabi objects, but not one that is imposed by the artist. Because things are taken from Nature, they are living matter whose form was unpredictable as it came to be and whose form remains unpredictable as it ceases to be. Unlike mainstream art, where symmetry is an important element, Wabi-Sabi aesthetics play up the asymmetrical forms of organic things found in Nature, because they are the reminders of how Nature actually works.

For instance, when Yanagi speaks of the tea utensils, he emphasizes the unique character of the bowls used in the tea ceremony. They are often plain and unpolished, shows signs of cracking, and irregular in their form. The potter’s work mimic Nature in that there is hardly anything symmetrical and regular in nature. Yet, when we are confronted with a natural landscape, we experience aesthetic pleasure. Yanagi makes these qualities the stamp of Oriental art. He (1989, 124) says that “The ideal of Greek beauty hardly permits of irregularity or asymmetry, for it was founded upon the symmetry of the human body. By contrast the Oriental found irregular beauty in nature outside the human form.”

Texture in Wabi-Sabi is usually rough. Again, this is because things in Nature are hardly manicured or polished. They are naturally, but not uniformly variegated that gives them an unpredictable design. The natural processes produce in them texture that point to both life and death. Corrosion and tarnishing in an iron tea kettle, for instance, produce hues that are difficult to copy synthetically. The grains of the unpainted wooden table serve as a natural pattern that vary from one corner to the other. This lack of uniformity in these objects are the source of their uniqueness and individuality.

Wabi-Sabi objects, although they bring aesthetic pleasure, which we always identify with the beautiful, actually defy the boundaries of ugliness and beauty. Juniper (2003, 110) says:

It has been said that wabi sabi is the coaxing of beauty out of ugliness, but this seems to suggest that the two ideas are opposing absolutes. Zen would
maintain that the two are one and the same and only divided by learned perceptions... The real beauty that we can enjoy in true and pure aesthetics is neither beautiful nor ugly, it is the magical state that happens before any of the concepts have found voice in the intellect.

In terms of colors, those found in Wabi-Sabi are never strong. They are, as Nature's colors are, subdued. As such, Wabi-Sabi objects tend to be dark or gray, but warm as earth colors are warm. Any color applied to it must also come from natural dyes. Because these dyes tend to bleed or fade, they remain true to the basic principle of Wabi-Sabi as the representation of impermanence and nothingness. They also tend to dissolve into, rather than stand out, of the background, which is Nature.

Wabi-Sabi art must, therefore, remain simple. Ostentatious decorations are avoided at all cost and all unnecessary things are eliminated. For example, one will usually find a single flower, instead of a bouquet, thrown in a bamboo vase standing alone on a wooden table inside a temple or a teahouse. A stoneware bowl used in the ceremony has, perhaps, a slip of white here and there but retains the variegations of the original dark clay from which it is made, or else it remains unadorned. See images below.

With simplicity, however, is the emphasis on space. Japanese brush paintings capture this principle very well. We usually see a loose image of a bird perched on a branch, or a
sprig of cherry blossom, on one corner of the canvas. The rest of the canvas is simply empty space. Zen temples and teahouses also portray this in that their spaces are never cluttered. Tatami mats and ordinary tea utensils are all that are needed there. The emptiness around the objects is supposed to remind viewers of the nothingness that surrounds everything, without which nothing would be.

This is the distinct aesthetics of Wabi-Sabi. Unlike typical (Western) art that aims to stand out, Wabi-Sabi is subdued. It melts away into its background, into the emptiness of its location. It draws the mind to nullify, rather than glorify, its existence. Most of all, it upholds and respects the unpredictable processes of Nature, and delights in the small, seemingly unimportant elements in it where spiritual greatness can be found.

Yanagi (1989, 110) writes poignantly about this and refers to it as seeing beauty intuitively:

To “see” is to go direct to the core; to know the facts about an object of beauty is to go around the periphery. Intellectual discrimination is less essential to an understanding of beauty than the power of intuition that precedes it.

**WABI-SABI AS ART, WABI-SABI AS WAY**

While the aesthetics that developed in (Western) art history see art as something that is apart from life, a product of “great genius,” symbolizing a special social, economic, or intellectual status, and reflecting beauty as perfection or idealization, Wabi-Sabi emphasizes that which is ordinary, simple, and anonymous. Beauty is here seen as doing downward rather than ascending to heights of perfection. Wabi-Sabi is all about devolution, self-effacement, and regression. Instead of aiming for the eternal, it retreats back into nothingness. It is born out of life and is produced to serve life. Its function is its essence and it is intimately related to the human body and the natural environment. Wabi-Sabi’s roots in life have easily identified the beautiful with crafts. And because they are part and parcel of life (as in the utensils in the tea ceremony), they acquire a kind of beauty that is not found in commercialized art or in “fine arts” that are made without any view to function. They are craftworks that are cherished, held, handed down from generation to generation, and they acquire a history of their own.

Wabi-Sabi sees crafts as art that does not want to stand out. Instead, it is art that wants the spectator to remember that most of what we believe are mere illusions. In reality, we come to be and, then, we will come to pass. There is no stopping this cyclic process of evolution and devolution. To hang on to what exists now as if it could last forever will only bring us sorrow. Wabi-Sabi then resides in the simple and the ordinary, and most of all, the natural. These are the things that will represent for us the continuous process, although very slowly, of decay into nothingness. It behooves us to go our humble joys in the fleeting moments and to let them go of them willingly, because this is the only way we can “have” them. In this sense, since Wabi-Sabi is not just never removed from life, but also defines what life is. As such, it is—even before it is an aesthetics—a way of living.

We can, therefore, say that Wabi-Sabi living is a way of life that finds joy in life’s imperfections. Life is messy, murky, often dark, and incomprehensible. Life is a process toward death. Yet, as long as we are aware of this truth and do not dichotomize between the
seemingly positive and the seemingly negative, we will find serenity. Accepting life’s imperfection means that just like Wabi-Sabi objects, it is unpredictable and never smooth. But it can, nevertheless, give us great surprises. Gold (2004, 16) succinctly captures it when he says:

The way of Wabi-Sabi honors the quirks, the oddities, the perfectly imperfect uniqueness of you and me and everything. Wabi-Sabi highlights the value of objects, events, and the entirety of your life “as is,” unpolished, unpredictable, and natural.

FROM BINARY TO PLURALITY

Wabi-Sabi, as an alternative to the typical notions of beauty as defined in art history—which separates the beautiful as something special, away from the ordinary mess of life—and as a creative practice that fuses art and life, may therefore offer a different paradigm in which to resolve issues about the “intrusion” of crafts into the space of art. Wabi-Sabi presents crafts as a different kind of art, bearing a different kind of beauty, or to follow the Zen way of coining words, “non-beauty,” or that which goes beyond the beautiful and the ugly.

Understanding the foundations of Wabi-Sabi aesthetics may thus change the nature of the craft-art issues mentioned earlier. For instance, Kristi Cameron’s reference to “crafts” as a “dirty word” may now be taken in a new light. “Crafts” is “dirty” only insofar as it reflects the rough edges of life. As such, it is also beautiful. Dropping the word “crafts” from museum names, therefore, may mean only that the binary between art and crafts has given way to a more plural way of seeing beautiful objects, now all encompassed in the word “art.” The same may be said—although the other way around—of Sarah E. Condon’s report that other museums are putting in the word “crafts” in their names. It may now be understood as artists and curators giving the same value to crafts that has always been given to art. There is no need to be ashamed of the word because, as a reflection of life and a reminder of its nature, crafts is inherently valuable, even before its function and its material (inviting touch and associated with the body) are considered. While comprehending the importance of crafts’ utility and its position in daily living might lead to new policies that will save craft-artists like Charles Lewton-Brain from oppressive taxation on their creations. Finally, works like Mondrian’s painting and Albers’s weaving can now hang side by side in a museum or inside a house, to provide a more holistic aesthetic experience of looking and touching. Inevitably, Wabi-Sabi aesthetics also invites a rethinking of the concept of a museum: when the ordinary enters the special space of the museum, does the ordinary (object) become special? Or does the special (space) become ordinary? If any of these is the case, will we still need museums?

Beyond these issues, Wabi-Sabi aesthetics can also proffer a change of perspective when it comes to issues of crafts’ general absence from art history. If art is what the art-world says is art, then an infusion of Wabi-Sabi aesthetics can widen the scope of what art is. By virtue of its “poverty” (as wabi and sabi) it can less the socio-cultural, economic, and even gender biases that pervade the existing art paradigms.10
CONCLUSION

The issues that inspired a look into the non-Western aesthetics of Wabi-Sabi are complex and are not easily solved, especially with the continuing development of various practices, and innovations in method and technique in the art world. Definitely, the problems that are being discussed regarding museum trends are not all covered by Wabi-Sabi aesthetics, nor do art and craftworks that brought about these issues all follow the principles of Wabi-Sabi. However, Wabi-Sabi aesthetics has been offered here as one possible ground for rethinking ideas about art and crafts, and their connections to life.

Wabi-Sabi has been shown as a counterargument to the age-old idea of beauty as perfection and of museums as dedicated to art objects that are removed from life. Its preference for natural materials that are subject to decay show that imperfect things could be beautiful, too, although that beauty lies beyond the usual opposition between beauty and ugliness. Its preoccupation with craft objects that serve a function in day-to-day life points to an idea of art that cannot be removed from actual life, but that its beauty lies in its being able to dissolve in the background of the natural course of life. It serves as a reminder of the true nature of life—fleeting and constantly devolving into nothingness—and thus instills a proper attitude that avoids suffering. And finally, because it redefines beauty, at least for some practitioners, the Wabi-Sabi worldview may be used as a framework for the comfortable entrance of the not-so-perfect, functional crafts into the museum. Either that, or within the Wabi-Sabi view, the concept of the museum—a special space dedicated to the display of art—may have to be questioned or, at least, redefined.

NOTES

1. In a way, the hand contributes to everything that is made, even in paintings or musical compositions—works considered to be “fine arts.” In this sense, crafts is “handmade” as opposed to things that are massed produced through technology and requires skill which is not a priority in considering “great” works of art. Glenn Adamson (2007) devotes a chapter on this element on crafts.

2. In Ancient Greece, the word techne meant both “art” and “craft” and even in Plato and Aristotle, technical skill was closely related to knowledge or episteme. For Plato, however, it is only knowledge that can lead away from the false, while for Aristotle, all technical work is still guided by reason and, therefore, can lead to intelligent action. See also Martin Heidegger’s (1977) discussion of techne in The question regarding technology.

3. Interestingly, in Timaeus, Plato (2013b) assigns the molding of the Kosmos or the ordered universe to the Demiourgos who, therefore, acted like a craftsworker. However, the material world he created, although beautifully ordered, is only a copy of the Ideal world.

4. Here, again, Aristotle mentions “order.”


6. This is not to say, however, that the great artists of the Renaissance agreed on the standards of beauty, but they were all led to their respective artistic pursuit, influenced by the virtues of Classical Antiquity.

7. Greenhalgh also discusses issues of when—sixteenth or eighteenth century—the actual classification between fine arts and minor ones was codified.
8. For instance, Abstract Art that is now so far removed from the idea of art as imitation, and art movements generally labeled, correctly or incorrectly, “avant-garde” that defy traditional definitions of art altogether. Michel Duchamp’s Fountain scandal in the early 1900s still remains a favorite example when discussing the definition of “art.”

9. Fariello (2005), in “Regarding the history of objects,” explains that this movement is primarily a reaction to industrialization and the exclusivity of art, catering only to the wealthy. Ruskin and Morris both moved for the “privatization” of the aesthetic experience, emphasizing the value of handmade objects that are placed in the homes rather than the museums.

10. Adamson (2007) terms this “supplemental.” Crafts is supplemental to art.

11. Theodore Adorno (Adamson 2007, 8-11), for instance, from a Marxist framework, insists that art critiques itself, while Mikel Dufrenne and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (Sanders 2005, 90) push for an aesthetic that involves the whole body as well as a perceptual unit. These are attempts to address the issue of crafts as only being associated with the body (unlike art which is primarily associated with the mind).

12. For a history, utensils, procedure, kinds of tea houses, and different schools of the tea ceremony, see “The Japanese tea ceremony” (n.d).

13. See also “More than one thousand years of tea” in “The Japanese tea ceremony” (n.d).

14. See Koren (2008, 32), Juniper (2003, 40), and the website on “The Japanese tea ceremony.”

15. Wabi-sabi teacup (n.d.).


17. Wabi-Sabi house interior (n.d.)


19. These are equally interesting and serious issues related to the binary opposition between art and crafts that will have to be discussed in another paper.

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Critical Discourse Analysis, or more popularly known as CDA, reflects the trend on the investigation of ideology and power struggle that is implied in the text and sound of discourse and language. With Norman Fairclough and the group in Lancaster University as the leading theorists of this discipline, this paper deals on extracting the very foundation of its theoretical claims in hope of unearthing the rich philosophical ideations and nuances that may have contributed towards its creation and formation through the years. In this way, this would not only expose its philosophical framework but also would provide its readers and its practitioners a theoretical base and scope of related disciplines for the furthering of their interests and practices. This diachronic sketch legitimizes the claims of CDA as it rests on the more popular and stable conceptual skeleton of the major prominent thinkers of critical theory, poststructuralism, and postmodernism.

INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary study of discourse that views language as a form of social practice. Its focus is on the ways social and political ideological domination are recontextualized by text and talk. Several theorists have been associated with it but the most notable school comes from the group in Lancaster University, the most prominent of whom is Norman Fairclough. Its multifarious form is suggestive of its variations and multiplicity even in the incorporations of specific methodology and analytical template. There is “not one single or specific theory, and not one specific methodology is characteristic of research in CDA” (Weiss and Wodak 2003, 12; see Rogers et al. 2005, 375-76.). Studies in CDA are multifarious. They are derived from quite different theoretical backgrounds and are directed towards very different data and methodologies. Even the type of grammatical approach that will be incorporated varies with each CDA researcher.1 There is even a distinction between the capitalized term “Critical Discourse Analysis” (CDA) and “critical discourse analysis” in lowercase letters.2 Thus, it is very important for any analyst to always specify which research or researcher is to be used as CDA cannot be viewed as a holistic or closed paradigm.3
Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak (2003, 8-9) even add that “CDA and its conceptual tools do not represent a self-contained edifice of theories and are eclectic in a positive sense.” It means that the theory formation of CDA is not a process leading up to a final product valid for all times but rather a mere continuation of developed tools and resources to help understand the world. CDA’s interdisciplinary character reflects its integration of instruments or tools from different theories, towards a productive theory formation. The fact that CDA has adopted various thoughts and ideas from the rich history of philosophy and its constant application to a variety of social milieu explains the difference (and eclecticism) in methodologies and approaches. Notwithstanding its impressed eclectic character, the thing that is common to all is its particular interest in the relationship between language and power. CDA focuses on how language as a cultural tool mediates relationships of power and privilege in social interactions, institutions, and bodies of knowledge. More specifically, CDA refers to the critical linguistic approach of scholars who acknowledge the larger discursive unit of text to be the basic unit of communication and find more or less overt relations of struggle and conflict in all concerned domains of life: gender, hierarchy, race, etc. It is this shift of language analysis without isolation from social context where CDA fundamentally differs from mere discourse and textual analyses. Its “critical” component highlights the primordial thrust towards “enlightenment and emancipation” (Wodak 2006, 3), which is historically understood to be the normative direction embraced by progenitors of critical theory that originated from the Frankfurt School.

Based on this initial inquiry as to the nature of CDA, it is important to note that CDA is an interdisciplinary discipline that has a variety of approaches, orientations, and even influences and has become an established discipline with the same rituals and institutional practices as all other disciplines despite its eclectic impression. Mapping out the theoretical history of CDA requires a thorough presentation of the various influences that have contributed to the formation of CDA. Henceforth, this paper attempts to construct an integrated and logical historico-philosophical presentation of CDA citing major schools of thought that may have influenced or at least have become significant in the formation of CDA. Arising from various theoretical constructs, questions abound. Is it more a linguistic method or a social theory? In what part of the entire language turn in philosophy is CDA situated? How is it different from other movements in the field of linguistics or in the field of critical theory? These are just some of the pressing questions that may hopefully be addressed (though not limited to them) in the exposition of the CDA’s theoretical framework.

Since CDA is not a specific direction of research, it does not have a unitary theoretical framework. But given the common perspective and the general aim of CDA, as particularly defined by Fairclough (1989, 1), “to explore and articulate how language and power are related, or perhaps more accurately, to examine connections between language use and inequal [sic] relations of power,” it is feasible to ground CDA’s philosophical foundations in terms of (but not only in) its own titular elements as an analysis that is critical and discoursal with theoretical implications to some of CDA’s foundational constructs, particularly to ideology and power. Initial suppositions will place CDA’s “critical” feature as mainly influenced by critical theory while its “discoursal” character traces nuances from poststructural to postmodern philosophies and theories (Threadgold, n.d.).

In brief, the initial impression that CDA’s major theoretical foundations are on critical theory, poststructuralism, and postmodernism may suggest CDA’s strong resistance to the
status quo and the shortcoming of positivism as these three theories offer related perspectives on such previous predicament of ideology, metanarratives, and taken-for-granted assumptions.

The paper begins to inquire about these fundamental notions in CDA by mapping a sketch of its theoretical sphere or what Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953) refers to as “family resemblance.” Admittedly, the key ideas of CDA as mentioned earlier have rich scholarly narrative in the fields of critical theory, social constructionism, poststructuralism, social linguistics, and pragmatics, among others. There is no single theory to base upon as all these fields and many others may have something to say about the tenets embraced by CDA. As a discipline, CDA may have absorbed an idea from a linguistic theory, or from a cultural theory, or any other. Its eclectic nature, however, does not make CDA a less-stable and weakly-founded discipline. Its accumulation of “best” features of many other theories speaks about its interdisciplinary character and practicality. The key constructs of CDA may have neither been original unto itself nor grounded in a conflict-free transition of ideas from recent yet opposing theories (e.g., structuralism vs. poststructuralism). Nevertheless, its impressed ambiguity as a theory and method does not hinder the fact that CDA is an established discipline like any other. There is no one theory which could be said to ground CDA’s foundational constructs. Any theory, for example, that claims to influence CDA may share some characteristics with others, but that they have nothing in common. This justifies the reference to Wittgenstein’s “family resemblance” in mapping out the theoretical framework of the key constructs of CDA.

THE “CRITICAL” IN CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: CRITICAL THEORY OF THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL

As a discipline or method of analysis, CDA’s immediate frontrunner was critical linguistics (CL), a largely linguistic approach to text analysis developed in the United Kingdom by Gunther Kress, Roger Fowler, Bob Hodge, and other students of M. A. K. Halliday in the 1970s (Huckin et al. 2012, 107-29). CDA evolved beyond CL by the former’s incorporation of social, cognitive, and rhetorical theories; hence, broadening its scope of analysis. It is largely this inclusion of social context by CDA, apart from mere semiotics and nuances of text, and the consideration beyond grammar, syntax, and semantics of text so as to include the stages of its production, interpretation, and the wider context of both its discursive and nondiscursive elements that delineate the line between CDA and mere DA, or discourse analysis.

Its critical dimension suggests, therefore, a strong philosophical foundation from critical theory, which has long been identified with the analytic tradition of the Frankfurt School. As a school of neo-Marxist interdisciplinary theory, its thinkers, particularly Max Horkheimer, veered away from viewing Marxism as a new kind of positive science (or a template for Lenin’s communist model of governance). Rather, they based their work on the epistemological basis of Marx, as a critique, as in Marx’s (1887) Capital: A critique of political economy. Critique as a method in the Marxian sense is understood as taking a particular ideology of a society (e.g., free market under capitalism) and critiquing it through the lens of the social reality of that very society (e.g., exploitation). This method, for Marx, is achieved by “becoming aware of the dialectic of such opposing forces, in a struggle for
power, that individuals can liberate themselves and change the existing social order" (Seiler, n. d.). The character of critique as method dates back to Immanuel Kant's (1929) *Critique of pure reason* in the eighteenth century and to Marx's *Das kapital* as a "critique of political economy." In the preface of the first edition of his *Critique of pure reason*, Kant (1781) explains the meaning of "critique of pure reason": "I do not mean by this a criticism of books and systems, but a critical inquiry into the faculty of reason, with reference to the cognitions to which it strives to attain without the aid of experience..." Marx's (n.d.) usage of critique is more developed as he referred to it in a critique of ideology and linked it with the practice of social revolution.

The critique as method is not only epistemological by procedure as it is also emancipatory by objective. These twofold senses of Marxian critique as enlightening and emancipating (or transforming) echoes Marx's (n.d.) famous statement in his *Theses on Feuerbach* that "philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it." Such opposition to the status quo is very important for the work of critical theorists, such as Horkheimer and Jurgen Habermas, among others. The critical task is not only to determine what is wrong with society, but also to identify aspects that can help transform society for the better. Whereas traditional theory can only mirror and explain reality as it presently is, critical theory's purpose is to change it; in Horkheimer's (1976, 219) words, the goal of critical theory is "the emancipation of human beings from the circumstances that enslave them."

This optimism at the start of the Frankfurt School, however, did not last, as after a decade or so, pessimism dominated the original program. Horkheimer and Theodor Adomo's (2002) *Dialectic of enlightenment* steered the whole enterprise into a skeptical cul-de-sac. They got stuck in the irresolvable dilemmas of the "subject" and the reduction of its program into a negativistic practice of critique that eschewed the very normative ideals on which it implicitly depended (see Kompridis 2006, 236).

The next generation of critical theorists, led by Habermas who is generally considered as the first to have diverged from Horkheimer's research program and his work on the intersubjective bases of communicative rationality (or communicative reason), is—according to Nikola Kompridis (2006, 256)—the Ausgang (exit) from the pessimism of his predecessors. By locating the conditions of rationality in the social dimension of language use, Habermas (1987, 140) shifted the locus of rationality from the autonomous subject to structures of interpersonal linguistic communication. For him, all speech acts have an inherent purpose towards mutual understanding and that human beings possess the communicative competence to bring about the goals of human emancipation. This Habermasian framework that rests on the speech-act philosophy of Wittgenstein (1953), John L. Austin (1962), and John Searle (1969, 1971) strengthens the performative function of language and communication towards the goal of social emancipation and transformation.

With Habermas's shift of emphasis to language and the critical theory's influence in language studies, a gradual interest developed in language as a social phenomenon and an instrument that express and determine societal and cultural identity. However, the two normative components of critical theory as both "diagnostic and remedial" (see Finlayson 2005, 4) have proved to be a challenging task in many disciplines that have adopted critical theory, including CDA, where there has been much debate as to what extent an approach such as CDA can actually bring about changes in society. For Gavin Kendall (2007), CDA has been successful in offering more inclusive paradigms towards suggestions regarding
non-sexist guidelines, educational reform, communication strategies in institutionalized settings, etc. However, general observation on CDA research projects finds a clear gap between its wide-ranging objectives and the actual outcomes.

As a discipline that emerges from critical theory and its normative base for social inquiry aimed at decreasing domination and increasing freedom in all their forms, CDA’s “critical” component demands that its analytic model and framework is aimed towards revealing structures of power and unmasking ideologies through the study of texts. The goal is to “produce and convey critical knowledge that enables human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection” (Wodak and Meyer 2012, 7). CDA’s reflexive nature, a strong influence of critical theory, demands that CDA analysts be inherently self-aware of the social context that gave rise to the theory or practice.

In sum, the influence of critical theory in CDA is the twofold orientation on explaining and emancipating a social situation or predicament through analysis not only of the text but also of the discursive and nondiscursive practices and social contexts that produce and interpret the text.

THE “DISCOURSAL” IN CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: FROM POSTSTRUCTURALISM TO POSTMODERNISM

The word ‘discourse’ comes from the Latin discursus, which means “to run to and fro” (Rogers et al. 2005, 369). Within the CDA tradition, discourse is understood as a language use in social practice. It means that as discourse moves to and fro, that is, between reflecting and constructing the social world, language cannot be seen as neutral as it is always caught up in political, social, racial, economic, religious, and cultural formations. As when a mother tells her young son, “Get me that spoon.” This statement, as represented in the symbol of sounds/words (language) and expressed as a discourse and situated in a social context of familial (domestic) structure, cannot but mask power relations of authority and impress upon social roles of motherhood and sonship. Even without the social actors being aware of such, the social orientation of language has presented its ideological characterization despite its commonsensical ordinariness. The social aspect of language grounds the dialectic of discourse both as socially constitutive and socially conditioned, that is, it constitutes situations and social identities, among others, while at the same time conditioned by the social context from where it occurs—either sustaining the status quo or creatively reproducing it.

In philosophical circles, this eventful development of acknowledging the role of language as a major aspect in philosophizing is more popularly known as the “linguistic turn.” Popularized by Richard Rorty’s (1967) anthology The linguistic turn, which is taken to mean as the turn towards linguistic philosophy, various intellectual thinkers (Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell, among others) have been associated with it but the most notable progenitor, in so far as the social character of language is concerned, is Wittgenstein. Though considered a prominent figure or representative of the field of analytical philosophy, his ideas are for a large degree, poststructural. In his posthumously published book, Philosophical investigations, Wittgenstein (1953) introduces his philosophical concept “language-games.” He views the tools of language as fundamentally simple but that philosophers have obscured this simplicity by misusing language and asking meaningless questions. For him, meaning associated with language is defined by how it is used. For example, the word beautiful is neither defined by
its reference to a designated object nor by any mental representation associated with it. It is not necessary for one to postulate that there is something called beautiful that exists independently of anything beautiful. In "language-games," Wittgenstein recounts that a word may be used in multifarious ways and its meaning also changes as to how it is used in a given context (or language-game). When one speaks of "gas," for instance, it refers to various kinds: air, body excretion, car fuel—flammable or toxic—carbon dioxide, etc. These are all different uses of the word "gas" and its meaning is dependent upon the context or language-game in which it is used. Wittgenstein's theory is central to the theoretical evolution of the social character of language.

Drawing upon the concept of Wittgenstein's "language games," Jean-Francois Lyotard develops his own concept of metanarratives. From Wittgenstein's exposition of the plurality of language-games or the range of activities that language users may engage, Lyotard's primary focus is on the context of authority, power, and legitimation. In his work, The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge, Lyotard (1999, xxiv) describes the postmodern condition as increasing skepticism to metanarratives:

Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity toward metanarratives. This incredulity is undoubtedly a product of progress in the sciences: but that progress in turn presupposes it. To the obsolescence of the metanarrative apparatus of legitimation corresponds, most notably, the crisis of metaphysical philosophy and of the university institution which in the past relied on it. The narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal. It is being dispersed in clouds of narrative language elements—narrative, but also denotative, prescriptive, descriptive, and so on.... Where, after the metanarratives, can legitimacy reside?

With the decline of metanarratives, truth-conviction and the advent of postmodern condition, Lyotard proposes to replace the grand narratives with small and local narratives as grounded on the diversity of human experience and development in history. Advocates of postmodernism argue for the existence of "multiplicity of theoretical standpoints" rather than grand, all-encompassing theories (see Peters 2001, 7). For the advocates of poststructuralism, this is a positive development for a number of reasons. First, Lyotard's emphasis that grand theories dismiss the naturally existing chaos in the world promotes the idea of a poststructuralist notion of language meaning in constant flux. Second, Lyotard's exposition of the hidden power structures in the metanarratives helps in the poststructuralist notion of language/discourse as a site of power relations and is therefore ideological. Last, Lyotard's import of multiplicity of narratives through local ones over the grand and universal ones highlights the social character of language to which poststructuralist thinkers adhere to as based on the social as well as the historical characteristics of language orientation.

However, this postmodern (and poststructuralist) ideas are not without opposition. Habermas has been a vocal critic of the postmodern world's "incredulity toward metanarratives." Habermas (1981) argues that the theory proposed by Lyotard is internally inconsistent that by the postmodern call for universal skepticism toward metanarratives, such universal skepticism is in itself a contemporary metanarrative. By refuting the universal narrative of "truth," "knowledge," "good," "evil," he believes that there is no basis for the
postmodern "truth" that metanarratives cannot be trusted. The postmodern condition then tends to refute itself of its own narrative.

This Habermasian critic of postmodern condition is understood as valid from the lens of the modernist perspective itself. Meaning, to destroy postmodern using the totalizing metanarrative of modernism, understood from its linear categorical logic and epistemology, appears to be insignificant since postmodernism makes use of categories of logic in a contingent fashion, way different from the lens that Habermas uses. To criticize one thing using the critic’s own tools is relevant unto itself alone but not entirely significant to necessarily conclude the other as self-refuting or paradoxical. Postmodern does not subscribe to universalizing narratives and maintains the multiplicitous nature of language-games. Habermas’s criticism and the insistence of Lyotard’s postmodern condition may in itself appear as a legitimate incident of what Wittgenstein refers to as different "language-games."

While much of the "language" element in CDA is patterned after the tenets of social constructionism by which it is safe to treat it as the umbrella of CDA, notable influence is also traced from the formal debate between structuralism and poststructuralism. Structuralism per se means different things to different disciplines, but for the purpose of this paper’s discussion, it refers to the ideas which originated with Ferdinand de Saussure’s study of structural linguistics. From a social constructivist understanding of language to mean not as the mere reflecting mirror or labeling that belongs to traditional (Western) humanist philosophy, but which now produces and constructs the person and even his experience of the world. Saussurean linguistics asserts that the link between the signifier (spoken sound) and the signified (concept) is an arbitrary one. For example, the word “dog” qualifies as a “sign” not because it points to the concrete animal but because it refers to the concept “dog” and the meaning that this term embodies. That when a toddler points his finger to a dog, the mother says, “Dog,” and the child repeats, but when later the child points to a cat and says, “Dog,” the mother replies, “No, that's a cat.” The child gradually learns to associate the features and characteristics that the concept “dog” encompasses. In the wider picture, this constant signification of things (“dogs,” “cats,” “pigs,” etc.), understood as arbitrary (not accidental or random), has divided up the world into arbitrary categories. It is arbitrary simply because people may have, in principle, divided up the world differently or assign different categories to what it is today. For instance, the word “dog” may be referred to what today is called “laptop,” or vice versa. That when someone says (in a different world), “Is your dog wi-fi ready?” or “I’ll just walk the laptop outside,” the signs may have become different but the features attached to the concepts remain. Fundamental to the character of Saussure’s sign is that it acquires its meaning by its difference from other signs as explicated in the metaphor of a fishnet.

One of the limitations of Saussurean theory is the notion of “fixed meaning” once a word has been attached to a particular meaning. Although arbitrary, the relationship between the signifier and the signified is fixed and that a certain word has always the same meaning. It is at this point that writers after Saussure have been referred to as "poststructuralists." Rather than seeing language as a system of signs with fixed meanings upon which everyone agrees, as De Saussure (1983, 14-15) argued, this group understands meaning as never fixed.

Words, sentences, poems, books, jokes and so on change their meaning over time, from context to context and from person to person. Meaning is always contestible; the meaning of a term, a passage in a book, or a question addressed.
to us is always “up for grabs”...it is a site of variability, disagreement and potential conflict. And when we talk about conflict, we are inevitably dealing in power relations. So with the poststructuralist view of language we are drawn into a view of talk, writing and social encounters as sites of struggle and conflict, where power relations are acted out and contested. (Burr 1995, 28)

For them, signs still acquire their meaning by being different from other signs, but those signs from which they differ can change according to the context in which they are used. For example, the word “swim” in certain situations may have the associated meaning of fun and leisure when going to a beach during summer; whereas, during winter, “swim” may have contextually the associated meaning of not being fun and could be physically punishing and cold. It is a non sequitur to believe that since words are open to all meanings, they could make communication impossible. The stress is on the view that words cannot be fixed with one or more definitive meanings. Jorgensen and Philips (2002, 11), in reference to the fishnet metaphor for Saussurean structuralism, prefer the word internet as a model for this observation.

Two key figures in the early poststructuralist movement are Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes. In Barthes’s (1998) “The death of the author,” he argues that interpretation of a literary text in terms of its semantic content is based not on the author’s context, hence, the “decentering” of the author; on the contrary, interpretation has to come from the reader from his own context. Barthes (see Heath 2010, 52) maintains that the “death of the author” leads to the “birth of the reader” as source of meaning in text and, henceforth, the possibility of multiplicity of meanings.

...there is no impartial choice of a system of interpretation and objectivity is a choice of language institutionally sanctioned as such; what counts is the rigor with which the language chosen is applied, not the meaning of the work but the meaning of what the critic says of it...

Interestingly, poststructuralism may have its roots as a critique of structuralism in France and has been started by prominent French philosophers like Barthes, Derrida, Jacques Lacan, and Michel Foucault. However, “the word ‘poststructuralism’ was coined by US academics when Derrida delivered his lecture in Johns Hopkins University in 1966 with the title, “Structure, sign, and play in the discourse of the human sciences.” It is said that the conference was held to introduce to American academics the ideas of structuralism which is at the peak of its influence in France but has only started to gain attention in the United States. Different from other participants by his lack of commitment to structuralism, Derrida exposed the internal limitations of structuralism that when the conference proceedings were published, the title of the document had become The structuralist controversy (see Macksey and Donato 1970). At that time, structuralism has gained considerable popularity that it has become an increasingly fashionable movement. Structuralism was even widely considered to be the successor of phenomenology as started by Edmund Husserl several years back. Derrida intelligently reframed the discussion to become more like a debate between phenomenology and structuralism. While phenomenology is understood to be a philosophical inquiry that rejects the Western rationalist bias since Plato in favor of a method of reflective attentiveness to one’s lived
experiences, structuralism on the other hand is deemed a reaction to what phenomenologists claim as it argues that experience is an effect of structures which are not in themselves experiential. With this, Derrida proposes his critical theory of “deconstruction” that proffers to expose and undermine the (binary) oppositions and paradoxes on which particular texts are founded.

If phenomenology seeks meaning from lived experiences (phenomena) and structuralism from the structure of the signifier (word), Derrida (see Burr 1995, 72) maintains that “meaning of one word can only be determined retrospectively, as later words form the context for it.” It is not enough to stop at the structural level (word); there is still its own history to draw by. Even the structure itself is a product of continuous structuration from which even the origin point (genesis) is also structured. It is with this predicament that Derrida argues for a diachronic (historical) process (as opposed to synchronic or descriptive presentation) of reading the text and discourse. To illustrate, when a phenomenologist, structuralist, and poststructuralist are faced with a dog that barks, the phenomenologist grounds knowledge and meaning in how the event has appeared to him as a “lived experience,” that is, as encountered in ordinary and untutored experience—a return to its “fundamental description that is devoid of prejudices, biases, and theoretical assumptions.” For a structuralist, he looks for elements or features of what is in front of him like sounds, odor, appearance, and assumptions to which all the said features correspond. Once this structure is discerned, he would say, “The dog is barking.” For a poststructuralist, who hears the structuralist’s the “dog is barking,” goes beyond the mere structural description of the event. He will be critical of the historical character of the structure or system of the signifiers (“dog,” “barks”) and also identifies the context and circumstance of the activity. Does the dog bark because there is a stranger outside or does it bark because of hunger and pain? In addition to the need of discerning the word’s genesis, Derrida emphasizes that even in the course of one word’s historical (diachronic) production, some hidden ideological assumptions may need to be exposed as well.

This foundation of viewing language as a social construction/phenomenon veers away from theories that define language as primarily biological (Chomsky 2006) or psychological (Clark and Haviland 1974). This major turn in the understanding of language is reflective of what Thomas Kuhn (1996) refers to as “paradigm shift.” This, however, is not exclusively original to the CDA school, but is one of the major premises of “social constructionism,” considered as a major influence in the formation of CDA, specifically in its premise on the “performatives” role of language towards social action. Burr (1995, 5) explains this as one of CDA’s distinct traits vis-à-vis traditional psychology:

By placing centre-stage the everyday interactions between people and seeing these as actively producing the forms of knowledge we take for granted and their associated social phenomena, it follows that language too has to be more than simply a way of expressing ourselves. When people talk to each other, the world gets constructed. Our use of language can therefore be thought of as a form of action, and some social constructionists take this “performatives” role of language as their focus of interest. As pointed out above, traditional psychology has typically regarded language as the passive vehicle for our thoughts and emotions.
To highlight the active role of language backgrounds, the traditional view that language is a mere reflection of reality, a passive character that has long been enshrined in the annals of traditional positivism and empiricism, grounds knowledge as based upon objective and unbiased observation of the world. It is this assumption that the nature of the world can be revealed by observation, and that what exists is what we perceive to exist. To challenge this view, social constructionists caution people to ever be suspicious of the assumptions about how the world appears to be. The categories of division, for example, may not in fact be real but only apprehended as something that appears to be. For instance, just because there are categories of tenured and nontenured among teaching faculty members do not mean that people should assume there is something in the nature of being a "teacher" per se that can be divided in that particular way. Social constructionism may explain the situational context of the division based on the nature of tenure and not on the nature of being a teacher.

If knowledge (truth) of the world and how people understand it are not derived from the nature of the world (as what essentialists claim), social constructionism believes that people construct this knowledge between and among themselves. From the daily interactions of people in society, versions of knowledge are generated and these "negotiated" understandings could point to numerous possible "social constructions" of the world. But what is important in all these is that "each social construction brings with it an invitation towards a kind of social action from the people" (Burr 1995, 3). For example, traditional Christianity and the ideas formulated particularly from the Medieval and Counter-Reformation periods treat "homosexual" behavior as immoral and sinful based on the Catholic understanding of natural law and traditional interpretations of certain passages in the bible. A typical response is therefore punishment; in an extreme case, excommunication. This situation may lead to suppression of symptomatic tendencies on the part of "homosexuallyinclined" individuals for fear of punishment. Later researches, however, especially on the field of psychology, reveal a certain biological and psychological predisposition coupled with the environmental factors for such a behavioral tendency. This fact does not seem to justify viewing homosexuality as a sin, but something to be considered "normal," just like any heterosexual tendency. The social action appropriate to understanding homosexuals in this way is to accept them as they are and not to discriminate them.

Social constructionism became prominent in the US through Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's (1966) book, The social construction of reality. They both argue that all knowledge, including the most basic taken-for-granted commonsense knowledge of everyday life, is drawn from and sustained by social processes and practices through social interactions and discourses. This theory is anchored on their proposed three fundamental processes of externalization, objectivation, and internalization (see Burr 1995, 7). To illustrate, Pedro has this idea that "long exposure to sun after 10 A.M. can cause skin cancer." This idea is "externalized" by Pedro's telling it to others or by writing a book about it. This then enters the social realm as other people re-tell the idea or read the book, and in this process, the idea has become an "object" of consciousness for people in society. Later, it will develop into a kind of factual existence or truth, apparently "objectified," and become a feature of the world as something "natural," thereby losing its "genesis" as a mere construct and a result of interaction with human beings. Finally, future generations who are born into this world where this idea has already taken root will eventually
“internalize” it as part of their consciousness and knowledge of the nature of the world. By this account, Berger and Luckmann (see Burr 1995, 7) show how the world can be socially constructed by the social practices of people, but at the same time be experienced by them as if the nature of their world is pre-given and fixed. Hence, the antiessentialist angle of social constructionism rejects the fixed state of social processes and rejects likewise the antihumanist perspective that human beings are essentially permanent and that the results of human behavior and cognition are all pre-designed and structured.

The antiessentialist direction of social construction is also reflected in the area of psychoanalysis, particularly that of Jacques Lacan whose ideas are in fact influential to the formation of social constructionism. A “self-proclaimed Freudian,”¹⁰ Lacan (see Macey 1994, xxxiii) has devoted himself to rereading Freud and to emphasize, among others as a psychoanalyst, the role of language and culture in psychosexual development. He has introduced quite a number of concepts like, “mirror stage” and “symbolic order” that are especially constructed in his account of human (infant) formation in terms of what he refers to as the loss of “self” in one’s entry into the world of language or “symbols.” Briefly stated, during the early months of an infant’s life (6-18 months), the infant has no sense of separateness from the world or from the mother. But during the time of the child’s first year, the child enters into what Lacan refers to as the “mirror stage” where the infant catches sight of the reflection coming from people around him and gradually internalizes the “messages” uttered by others. Eventually, this sense of separateness fully comes about only in the child’s acquisition of language: the child’s entry into what Lacan calls the “symbolic order” of culture and language. In psychoanalytic perspective, this “journey” of the child entails the “presence of the unconscious as constant reminder of what has been lost” (Burr 1995, 108).

Lacan’s contribution to social constructionism is highlighted by his account of the human being’s subjectivity, which attempts to explain how cultural forces come to operate at the deepest levels of a person’s experience. That a person’s desire is by nature in conflict speaks about its anti-essentialist definition of a human being; of knowing that something which is bad but desired by you anyway proves that “humans are split, conflicted and therefore non-unitary beings” (Burr 1995, 106). By being incoherent, the language and the discourse that is produced by the human being in its interaction with the other have “ritualized” the desires in a symbolic character of language; hence, inscribed in language are the unavoidable ideological assumptions and intentions. These are basic to the theory of social constructionism. From this ideological dimension of language, the focus has now turned from the language character of discourse into its ideological and power dimensions.

If language is seen as action in social context, then interactions with it always involve power and ideologies. “No interaction exists where power relations do not prevail and where values and norms do not have a relevant role” (Wodak and Ludwig 1999, 12). In terms of the “power” dimension of discourse, Foucault commands a prominent mention, particularly his view on knowledge and power. For Michel Foucault (1976), knowledge, or the particular commonsense view of the world prevailing in a culture at any one time, is intimately bound up with power. For example, the Catholic Church’s conservatism on the stand against artificial contraception brings in the potential for a social practice of any given set of people in a certain society. To act in favor of using condoms and the like, say
in the 1970s or 1980s in the Philippines, would be met by a lot of condemnation not only from the ecclesial hierarchy, but also even enmity and hostility from among members of one’s own family and community. But this story is very much different now as it was before. With the support of the most powerful venue of discourse nowadays—the media, coupled with the decreasing influence of the clerics and hierarchy of the Church, and instigated by globalized tendencies of culture towards moral relativism—the debate on artificial contraception has now become less of a religious issue than an expression of one’s personal choice/freedom. As a result, not too many Filipinos now would want to accept or reject the proposed RH (Reproductive Health) bill from the perspective of religious obedience but from personal gains and utility. This situation marginalized or discriminated against the conservative positions of faithful Catholics and once “obedient” conservatives. The locus of discourse has changed and the axis of power has tilted, an event that Foucault’s proposition on the “particularity” of truth is a focal point.

For Foucault (see Wolin 1988, 191-92), truth is not a knowledge claim that has been validated by procedures or conventions recognized by some appropriate community of inquirers. “Truth,” for Foucault, is always accompanied by quotation marks to signify that it is being unmasked as it is being described: “truth” is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements. It is linked in a circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it. Truth then is literally and ambiguously a construction.

This account has been the effect of a “dominant” discourse/knowledge prevailing in a given society and milieu; it can marginalize alternative ways of acting. To act against the prevailing discourse is to be punished and to act based on the dominant discourse merits acceptance; it is an exercise of power that highlights the unequal power relations. Foucault, therefore, sees power as an effect of discourse. When one defines or represents something in a particular way, say good or bad, one is producing a particular knowledge which brings power with it.

However, Foucault (1976, 86) also reiterates the apparent obfuscation of this power exercise in a discursive event. In other words, the reason people do not go against the practice of the dominant discourse is due to the “mask” character of discourse in wielding its power. “Power is tolerable only on condition that it mask[s] a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms.” The assumption, therefore, is that if only people really know they are being controlled, they would not stand for it. However, the observation is that people are not always aware of such marginalizing; hence, the ideologizing character of language and discourse. The constant exchanges in society of the discourses that have been an exercise of power control has ritualized the discourse as part of nature (of the world). It has achieved a common-sense status, a taken-for-granted knowledge.

It is with this narrative of the roots of foundational constructs of CDA (discourse, ideology, and power) that grounds the theoretical framework of the discipline.

CONCLUSION

The historical sketch of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has provided the readers with a more or less comprehensive presentation of the relevant philosophical
underpinnings that have influenced the formation of such analytical discipline. It has not merely validated the theories proposed by most of the critical theorists like Foucault, Derrida, Wittgenstein, Lyotard and others, but has also legitimizes the need for a critical analysis of social events and practices not merely on the level of pragmatics but also and initially on its discursive aspect—on the levels of text and talk. By providing the so-called “family-resemblance” of the tenets of CDA with many critical theorists of contemporary time, an invitation or even an exhortation to assume a critical attitude is exended. This critical stance towards anything becomes a necessity in today’s structures, practices, and paradigms, as cued and traced in language. This will unmask and reveal certain ideologies and the possible locus for power struggle to shift its axis.

NOTES

1. Norman Fairclough (1989) incorporates for his three-dimensional CDA framework the textual analytical template of Michael Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). SFL theorists posit that every interaction can be understood at three levels: textually, interpersonally, and in a wider societal context (see Rogers et al. 2005, 369).


3. In contrast to “total and closed” theories like, for example, Chomsky’s (1995) generative transformational grammar or Michael Halliday’s (2002) systemic functional linguistics, CDA has never had the image of a “sect” and does not want to have such an image (see Wodak 2006, 2).

4. Burr (1995, 2) explains:

Members of the same family differ in the family characteristics that they share. Mother and daughter may have the typical “Smith nose,” while father and son may have inherited from grandma Smith, who also has the Smith nose, their prominent ears. Cousin George may share the prominent ears, and also, like his aunt Harriet, have the Smith thick, curly hair. There is no one characteristic borne by all members of the Smith family, but there are enough recurrent features shared amongst different family members to identify the people as basically belonging to the same family group.

5. The Frankfurt School is an informal reference to describe the thinkers affiliated or associated with the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany.


In the Saussurian tradition, the structure of language can be thought of as a fishing-net in which each sign has its place as one of the knots in the net. When
the net is stretched out, the knot is fixed in position by its distance from the other knots in the net, just as the sign is defined by its distance from other signs. Much of structuralist theory rests on the assumption that signs are locked in particular relationships with one another: every sign has a particular location in the net and its meaning is fixed.

7. The metaphor of the fishing net is no longer apt since it cannot be ultimately determined where in the net the signs should be placed in relation to one another. Remaining with the metaphor of “net,” we prefer to use the internet as a model, whereby all links are connected with one another, but links can be removed and new ones constantly emerge and alter the structure.

8. Michael Payne (2010, 576) remarks:

The word was coined to refer to the intellectual movements that emerged from the International Colloquium on Critical Languages and the Sciences of Man, which was held at Johns Hopkins University in 1966. Perhaps the most influential paper delivered at that conference was Derrida’s “Structure, sign, and play in the discourse of the human sciences,” which was subsequently published in the proceedings of the conference (The structuralist controversy) and as a chapter in [Derrida’s (2001)] Writing and difference, with an important epigraph from Mallarme’s Un Coup de des that anticipates poststructuralism.


Derrida adopts a strategy of reading which questions the assumptions and limitations of textual meaning by revealing how the polarities and certainties a text has proposed have actually been constructed through a series of preferences and repressions which have privileged certain ideas, values, and arguments above others. Derrida’s point is that what has been presented as a dichotomy in Western thought such as man/woman, is in fact merely a difference which has been manipulated into hierarchy.

10. In one seminar that he has delivered, Lacan confessed, “I am a self-proclaimed Freudian...It is up to you to be Lacanians if you wish. I am a Freudian” (Macey 1994, xxxiii).

REFERENCES


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HUSBANDRY TRADITION
AND THE EMERGENCE OF VEGETABLE PHILOSOPHY IN THE HARTLIB CIRCLE

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The aim of this paper is to analyse the transformation of a tradition of husbandry from moral and political philosophy to natural magic and technology. In the early 1640s there was a shift of approach in the Hartlib Circle from the ecclesiastical peace projects to the more experimental and practical projects of husbandry and vegetable philosophy. The discipline of vegetable philosophy defined a new field of interest, which could connect the Baconian tradition of experimentation, the desire to compile natural histories, and the dedication to the open character of knowledge and human benefits. I will claim that vegetable philosophy, although operational and practical, and based on the production of transferable technologies, is still grounded on a set of metaphysical assumptions.

INTRODUCTION

The interest for husbandry in mid-seventeenth century Hartlib Circle is evident, in view of a significant number of writings issued on this topic. Members of the Hartlib Circle devoted a great deal of attention to the topic, even developing a new type of philosophy, called "vegetable philosophy" (Austen 1658, "Dedication..."). What exactly is vegetable philosophy? And what it is its relation to the tradition of husbandry? This field of study does not have a place in today's classification of knowledge. It is not botanic, because its objectives are diverse (metals, stones, natural ores). It is not just agriculture, because it has a manifested inclination for alchemical experiments. And, to complicate things even further, it is not simply natural philosophy, because it has a practical and operative side, concerned with technological advancement and amelioration.

In this paper I will analyse the transformation of a tradition from moral and political philosophy to natural magic and technology. The shift in approach inside the Hartlib Circle during the early 1640s from the ecclesiastical peace projects led to the more experimental and practical projects of husbandry and vegetable philosophy. The concept of vegetable
philosophy emerged in the Hartlib Circle and created a new field of interest, which could connect the Baconian tradition of experimentation, the compilation of natural histories, and the interest in the open character of knowledge and the common good of mankind. Here is a passage from Ralph Austen ("Dedication," 1658), a member of the Hartlib Circle, who makes a direct reference to the concept of "vegetable philosophy."

The Learned, and incomparable Author Sr Francis Bacon hath left unto men such Rules, and helps in all kinds of Learning, that they will be much wanting to themselves, if Arts, and Sciences improve not, very much above what they have been in former ages: And as the foresaid worthy Author was eminently seen in all Arts and Sciences, so his delight was especially (as is recorded of him) in Vegetable Philosophy, which was as it were, his darling delight, having left unto us much upon Record in his Natural History; some part whereof referring to Fruit-trees, Fruits, and Flowers, I have, (by encouragement from himself) endeavoured to improve unto publique profit, according to what understanding, and experience I have therein.... And seeing I perceive (since you have been pleased to honour me with your acquaintance) that your Genius is towards things in nature, to promote them, in order to the Common good, and that I have encouragements in my labours thereabout, (both as to the Theory and Practise) I humbly, present these following Observations into your hands, and am (for all your favours).

What is the relation between husbandry and vegetable philosophy? Is vegetable philosophy just a subdomain of husbandry (along with other subdomains such as botany, agriculture, metallurgy)? Or is knowledge of husbandry a prerequisite for vegetable philosophy?

In this paper, I will argue that members of the Hartlib Circle extended the domain and the applications of husbandry, integrating in "vegetable philosophy" elements coming from various domains, such as alchemy, cultivation of the land, natural magic, and Baconian experimental philosophy. This vegetable philosophy appears to be technological and antispeculative, experimental, and operational (Anstey 2005, 215–42). It is oriented towards the production of specific results, of technologies transferable from one domain to another, from one situation to another. Members of the Hartlib Circle reformulated the traditional approaches of husbandry and transformed this discipline into an integrated science, able to ameliorate both plants and humans. But, although "vegetable philosophy" has a practical, operational character and uses transferable technologies, this new discipline is based on a set of metaphysical assumptions, such as the macrocosm-microcosm unity and a theory of matter of both alchemical and Baconian provenance. Of course, a special position is held by the metaphysical assumption in accordance to which vegetable philosophy represents the modality to regain the natural knowledge man possessed prior to the biblical Fall. Vegetable philosophy introduces a very interesting concept of husbanding Creation and technological improvement, seen as a process of amelioration of the material of Creation (plants, soil, humans). In order to clarify what I understand by vegetable philosophy, I will first present the tradition of husbandry in the mid-seventeenth century Hartlib Circle (as a very interesting combination of classical husbandry and the Renaissance tradition of natural magic). Then I
will argue for vegetable philosophy's experimental and operational character by presenting the Baconian tradition of experimentation as it has been inherited by the members of the Hartlib Circle and, finally, I will clarify some of the metaphysical assumptions that ground the concept of vegetable philosophy.

THE HARTLIB CIRCLE AND THE TRADITION OF HUSBANDRY

The concept of vegetable philosophy that emerged in the mid-seventeenth century Hartlib Circle is based on several traditions. First, there is the ancient tradition of *historia naturalis* developed by Theophrastus (following Aristotle) on the two fundamental books: *Historia plantarum* (Enquiry into plants) (1916) and *De causis plantarum* ( Causes of plants) (1976-90). This tradition of "botany" became extremely popular in the Renaissance and influenced numerous natural histories of plants [organized thematically or alphabetically, descriptive works, sometimes massive, sometimes encyclopaedic (see Gesner 1542)]. A second tradition is the one associated with Pliny the Elder's (1940-67) *Natural history*. This tradition is closely related to the previous and it has represented the starting point for an entire generation of botanists from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first generation of Renaissance naturalists [identified by Brian Ogilvie (2006) as the 1490-1530 generation] has been particularly preoccupied with identifying medicinal plants described by ancient sources and with the reformation of medical education. A third tradition is the Roman tradition of *de res rustica* (husbandry or the Greek *oeconomics*): a discipline midway between politics (the family and its farm being an economic and political "unit" as well as a place of cultivation) and agriculture. The relevant authors here are Marcus Porcius Cato, Marcus Terentius Varro, Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella, and Rutilius Taurus Aemilianus Palladius. A fourth tradition is the one associated with natural magic. In addition to the previous ones, according to Laura Orsi (2005, 11-66), there is a fifth tradition, halfway between husbandry and literature, the tradition of the Italian villae (treatises on farming, good manners, morals, Virgilian echoes—combining Columella and Varro with Pliny, Aristotle, Virgil—moral philosophy, and manners). Della Porta's (1592, 2010) *Villae* belongs to this tradition. What is also interesting to point here is the utopian character of villae. Villae is a place for producing moral, political, and economic growth. In addition to Bacon's (1627; reprint 1857-74, SEH, vol. III) famous *New Atlantis*, we have one important key figure of the Hartlib Circle, Gabriel Platter (1641, 5-6), depicting a utopian society, living "in great plenty," happily and healthily husbanded. To all these it could be added the Baconian tradition of experimentation.

Interestingly, however, is how members of the Hartlib Circle mix these traditions. Although often quoting Theophrastus and Aristotle, their works are not Aristotelian natural histories. They are not interested in classifying plants/species. They share an interest in transforming natural species, but this interest is focused on amelioration and not on altering species and transforming them into something entirely new (as Della Porta has done). Their interest has manifested mostly regarding the methodological possibilities and the extensions they allowed but still in regard to a moral dimension. In this respect, the traditions of natural history, of husbandry, and the late sixteenth to early seventeenth-century traditions of experimentation are of great influence on the attitudes shared by the members of the Hartlib Circle, with regard to both the methodological and moral dimensions. For
example, Pliny explicitly states that grafting has to be carefully limited (religiously and morally), that only some things can be tried, that no new fruits can or should be produced, etc. It is a very interesting moral attitude: on the one hand, nature tells us what we need to know. On the other hand, man’s ingenuity can go a step further, imitating nature. But there are clear limits as to what we can (or are allowed to) do. There are moral overtones all over the place on the books on plants. Similarly, Varro and Columella have a practical and moral attitude towards agriculture. By contrast, Della Porta’s techniques are directed towards obtaining new and wonderful things (Della Porta 1581, 1658, 3, 58-64). In many places the string of examples and experiments is getting outside the specified field (botany, husbandry, etc.) into “mirabilia” or exploration of secrets, generalizations (sometimes he formulated general rules and “laws”).

Another important factor influencing the emergence of vegetable philosophy is the Baconian tradition of experimentation, which places the study of nature in its very core. The Baconian scheme combined, in a very particular way, the classical economic and political approaches (Theophrastus, Aristotle, Pliny) with the Renaissance tradition of wonder and natural magic, and proposed a specific interpretation of the Fall, adding moral weight to the idea of the advancement of knowledge and dedication to its open character. Emphasizing the practical aspect and experimentation, Bacon insisted that man, under God’s benevolent eye, should reconsider his position towards the natural world and start a long process of natural knowledge acquisition, with almost no limits attached (Bacon 1857-74; reprint 1961-63, *The great instauration*, SEH, vol. IV), that would finally bring human advancement and prosperity (Law 1985, 142).

Apart from the moral implications, another thing Bacon (1857-74; reprint 1961-63, II) brings new in *Sylva sylvarum* is a much more critical and evaluative attitude toward the ancient examples or experiments. While Della Porta adds more examples, Bacon sometimes compares examples, and proposes new and better ways of doing the same thing. Another important “new” thing is that the “technological” attitude becomes even more pronounced: Bacon treats plants, fruits, etc., as instruments of knowledge—sometimes as laboratories. There are different approaches on Bacon’s experiments presented in *Sylva sylvarum*. They have been interpreted to serve as a good representation of Bacon’s (Rees 1981, 377-412; Giglioli 2010, 149-67) theory of matter or to present a model for natural histories and serve methodological purposes (such as the exemplification of the control group, the variation of several parameters, and the possibility of table designs) [see also Jalobeanu 2012, 5-27; 2014a and 2014b (forthcoming)]. One of Bacon’s (see Rusu 2014) intentions has been to use experiments from *Sylva* in order to transfer knowledge from plants to animals and humans. These methodological extensions have been used to serve amelioration purposes. This line of interpretation has been very influential for the first generation of Baconians, especially for those associated with the Hartlib Circle. They criticized the traditional approaches of husbandry (for not having an experimental basis) and embraced the operational dimension developed by Della Porta and Bacon. Particularly, from a methodological point of view, they manifested the desire to continue and rewrite the Baconian tradition of experimentation. In the following section of the paper we will look into how members of the Hartlib Circle developed the concept of vegetable philosophy and how they framed its experimental and operational character.
VEGETABLE PHILOSOPHY—AN EXPERIMENTAL DISCIPLINE

Vegetable philosophy, regarded as an experimental discipline able to ensure abilities in ameliorating plants (and not exclusively), far exceeded the botanists' burden with theoretical knowledge, is based on first hand experience and current practice. All the recipes for bettering the soil or the plants are derived out of the personal practice and this is reflected in the new writings on husbandry. Members of the Hartlib Circle criticized former writings on husbandry because they presented speculative information and failed to provide a "rational" and "experimental" basis for their practice (Austen 1665, 165-66; Blith 1653, "The epistle dedicatory").

Deficiency is that we not have a Systema or compleat Book of all the parts of Agriculture. ... Lately divers small Treatises have been made by divers, as Sir Hugh Plattes, Gab. Plattes, Markham, Blith and Butler, who do well in divers things, but their books cannot be called compleat Bookes, as you may perceive by divers particular things, not so much mentioned by them. ... Deficiency is that Gentlemen try too few Experiments for the advance of this honest and Laborious Calling; when as many Experiments might be made for a small matter. (Hartlib 1651, 105)

Quite the contrary, the new discipline found inspiration in the late Renaissance tradition of natural magic and in Bacon's experimental philosophy, and the new authors have consciously attempted to frame their writings in these terms. The new concept of vegetable philosophy first rejects the classical views on husbandry ("the ill husbandry"), responsible for the bad situation (see Blith's "The epistle dedicatory," 1653)—on the basis of their impossibility to provide information coming from direct experience). Secondly, it gives credit to "men that have experience" to be able to see more than "notions" (Austen's "To the reader," 1658), postulating an operational approach, based on gathering information provided as a result of direct experience.

And likewise I have set my self to the Practise of this work about Thirty and seven years, endeavouring to find out things of use and profit by Practice and Experience, that I might speak upon better and surer grounds, than some others who have written upon this Subject for Experience guides, and informs Reason in many things in which (without Experience) it would often erre. Some who have taught the Art of Planting Fruit-trees, have been in it only Contemplative men, having little or no Experience in it; so that in many things they have erred, and that grosly, as shall appear in due place. (Austen’s “To the reader,” 1665)

What is particular for the members of the Hartlib Circle is their devotion to the Baconian way of experimentation and to the Baconian program (Giglioli 2012, 27-54). Ralph Austen (1658) even composed a brief tract based on Bacon’s (1627, Centuries V, VI, and VII) experiments on husbandry presented in Sylva sylvarum. In fact, the late Renaissance tradition of natural magic could be rediscovered in Bacon’s experiments with germination, spontaneous generation, grafting, acceleration of growth, maturation, and putrefaction (in fruits). These
experiments constitute a large part of Sylva sylvarum, a very popular book in those days. A prominent source of many of the experiments presented by Bacon seems to be Della Porta’s Magia naturalis. Or, at least, many of them feature prominently in Books II, III and IV of Della Porta.

In order to argue for the vegetable philosophy’s operational and experimental character, I will try to show that what the generation of the 1640s to 1660s did was to closely follow the Baconian program of natural philosophy. Without trying to argue for the clarification of the Baconian relation between natural philosophy and natural history (Anstey 2012, 11-31), I will say that this generation of experimentalists paid less attention to the interpretation of this relation and more to the practice of experiment. Their aim has been to continue the Baconian enterprise of the advancement of learning and their contribution rested mainly in their experimental endeavours. Their efforts have not only been directed to experimentation, but they devoted a great deal of attention to compiling natural histories. In fact, as it has been previously mentioned in this paper, vegetable philosophy embraces the methodological perspective of the Baconian tradition of experimentation, the desire to compile natural histories, and the dedication to the open character of knowledge. Interestingly enough, the Hartlibians closely continued Bacon’s program with particular attention to both theoretical and practical aspects. Vegetable philosophy had the intention to theorize, to issue general rules out of experimental practice. If we take another look at the first passages taken from Austen’s “Dedication” in Observations upon Sr Francis Bacon’s Natural History we will see that the author clearly specifies his dedication to both aspects of the Baconian program: theory and practice.

The Hartlibians regarded Sylva as an unfinished enterprise, with no axioms and rules that could be drawn yet. Their call was to continue Bacon’s program (emphasizing also the open character of knowledge) and to verify the experiments before including them in natural histories (Blith’s “The epistle dedicatory,” 1653). Vegetable philosophy has equally assumed the purpose of compiling natural histories and to find technologies of amelioration. These technologies have a transferable character, working for plants, animals, and humans as well. Vegetable philosophy allows translations from one domain (such as the vegetal one, easy to explore) to another (such as the human soul, difficult to explore). This capacity points to other Baconian elements. A considerable portion of Bacon’s Sylva discusses experiments with plants, with the aim to transfer knowledge to animals and humans. But these translations are also allowed by the Baconian method of experientia literata. The application of chemistry in the process of experimentation would provide “scientific” methods and technologies able to deliver predictable results but the same methods and technologies would ameliorate (as a process of cultivation and nurse) the human virtues. Here is what Austen (1658) says in his “Dedication” to Robert Boyle:

...of Learning, and studiousnesse, in all profitable knowledge, your diligent search, and indagation into the noble Art of Chymistry (as it relates to Vegetables and Animals) having already produced many excellent effects, and been profitable unto many.

An undulating line can be traced between the 1640s Hartlib Circle and the beginnings of the Royal Society [1660s] based on the interest for husbandry and vegetable philosophy.
If in the years preceding the 1660s vegetable philosophy focused more on technological projects of amelioration of the fallen nature (soil, plants, human beings, as well), starting with the beginning of the Royal Society, the accent has been moved from spiritual salvation to experimental purposes. I have been able to identify three different approaches associated with three different stages.

The first stage (the period until 1650) is dominated by the figure of Gabriel Plattes. He is the first member of the Hartlib Circle expressing his vision upon husbandry and, subsequently, on vegetable philosophy, which he regarded as methodological projects of ameliorating the material of creation (soil, plants, human beings). Inspired from Bacon, Plattes considers amelioration as a process of experimentation and technological improvement of the material of Creation. Plattes reformulates the view on husbandry, promoting a new type of “integrated science” able to cultivate the land and the human soul as well. Apart from other tracts on husbandry published before, Plattes used the alchemical tradition, but he committed the application of chemistry to a moral end. He developed his own experimental view on vegetable philosophy, placing at the very core of amelioration the idea of technological advancement (a project based on transmutation experiments and cyclical chemical change). Plattes’s contribution rests in providing a number of “technologies of amelioration” for the material of Creation (soil, plants, human beings), technologies of salvation compatible with both economic advancement and religious salvation.

The writers of the second stage (1650-1660)—Austen, Blith, Cressy Dymock, Robert Child, John Beale, Richard Weston, and even later John Evelyn—are influenced in a great deal by the figure of Gabriel Plattes in their works. All the writers on vegetable philosophy and husbandry mention Plattes and his contribution to the field. A certain degree of millenaristic beliefs could be associated with writers of this stage (Webster 1975; Roper 1984, 253). They continue the line imposed by Plattes, of technological experimentation and of amelioration of the material of Creation but add grafting experiments. In this stage, we can identify an emphasised attention given to gardening in favour of alchemical transmutation, to experiments with plants in favour of experiments with minerals. A part of Evelyn’s activity could be included in this stage, the one chronologically associated with the Civil War. Due to his aristocratic affiliation, Evelyn experienced social isolation and he imagined different hortulan societies, living in perfect harmony with nature, sharing interest for the study of nature and for exploring the practical and spiritual possibilities of vegetable philosophy (pointing to the Virgilian influence evident in this stage).

The third stage (the period after 1660), associated with the beginnings of the Royal Society, is characterized by amelioration accents only in a small deal. If Evelyn’s (2001) Elysium britanicum (started in the late 1650s) begins with his personal interpretation of the Genesis, the accent embedded in his 1660 works (such as Sylva and Pomona; see Evelyn 1664) is more “scientific” than religious. Austen (1653, 1665), for instance, republished his Treatise of fruit-trees and rededicated it to Royal Society Fellow Robert Boyle. The first edition had been dedicated to Samuel Hartlib. The Royal Society revealed the so-called closely guarded secrets, and the spiritual reformation, so much embraced by Hartlib, was downplayed (Di Palma 2004, 165).

In sum, vegetable philosophy has an operational and experimental character. The new discipline criticised the traditional approaches on husbandry for their
speculative character and proposed a new perspective, influenced in a great deal by the Baconian method of experimentation. This new discipline has a technological character, being concerned with transferring knowledge from one domain to another, but it still intends to draw rules and axioms. In other words, it manifests interest both for practical and theoretical aspects.

**VEGETABLE PHILOSOPHY AND ITS METAPHYSICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS**

Although having a highly operational character, this new discipline is based on a series of metaphysical presupposition, such as the macrocosm-microcosm unity, a theory of matter of alchemical and Baconian inspiration, and the desire to restore the natural (vegetal) knowledge man possessed prior to the biblical Fall.

Vegetable philosophy uses technologies that can be transferred from one domain to another. One of the reasons enabling these transfers is a unified macrocosm-microcosm vision. Pleading for experimental activities and questioning the true causes of fertility, Weston [or Hartlib? (authorship debatable)] (1653) expresses an alchemic (as well as Aristotelian, vitalist, magical) view upon the causes of generations of all things. He mentions the three alchemical principles (mercury, sulphur, and salt), the four elements (water, earth, fire, air), and at least two different divisions of the universe: the visible and invisible, the material and immaterial, and the corporeal and spiritual. As for the causes of generation, the author enunciates several theories: the vapors of the earth, the spermatic vapor arising from the center of the earth, the indigested lump, the divine seeds of all things. Several notable alchemists are indicated to emphasize once more the alchemical influence that can be easily noticed: Michael Sendivogius, Johannes Baptist Van Helmont, Kenelm Digby, Thomas White, Johann Rudolf Glauber, Hugh Plat. Nevertheless, Aristotle, Descartes, and, later, Bacon complete the list. Aristotle and Descartes are only mentioned as two of the philosophers that have tried to answer the question regarding the nature of our universe, while Bacon is credited to have laid the foundation for unlocking the Nature’s treasures.

It is a main deficiencie in Husbandry, that though we by experience finde that all the foresaid materials, and diverse others, as oft-tilling. Husbandry, seasons, &c. change of seed the Land, resting of Lands, fencing &c. do cause Fertility: yet we are very ignorant of the true causes of Fertility, and know no what Chalk, Ashes, Dung, Marle, Water, Air, Earth Sun &c. do contribute: whether something Essential, or Accidental; Material or Immaterial; Corporal or Spiritual; Principal or Instrumental, Visible or Invisible; whether Saline, Sulphureous or Mercurial; or Watery, Earthly, Fiery, Aereal: or whether all things are nourished by Vapours, Fumes, Atoms, Effluvia: or by Salt, as Urine, Embrionate or non-specificate? or by Ferments, Odours, Acidities? or from Chaos, or inconfused, indigested, and unspecificated lump? or from Spermatick, dampish vapour which ascendeth from the Centre of the Earth? Or from the influence of Heaven? or from Water onely impregnated, corrupted or fermented? or whether the Earth, by reason of the Divine Benediction hath an Infinite, multiplicatie Vertue, as Fire, and the Seeds of all things have? or whether the multiplicity of Opinions of learned
Philosophers (as Aristotle, Rupesc, Sendivog, Norton, Helmont, Des Cartes, Digby, White, Plat, Glauber) concerning this Subject sheweth the great difficulty of this question, which they at leisure may persue. I for my part dare not venture on this vast Ocean in my small bark, lest I be swallowed up; yet if an opportunity presents, shall venture to give some hints, that some more able Pen may engage in this difficult Question which strikes at the Root of Nature, and may unlock some of her choicest treasure. The Lord Bacon hath gathered stubble (as he ingenuously and truly affirms) for the bricks of this foundation; but as yet I have not seen so much as a solid foundation plainly laid by any, on which an ingenious Man might venture to raise a noble Fabrick: I acknowledge the burthen too heavy for my shoulders. (Weston [Hartlib?] 1653, 16)

Apart from the macrocosm-microcosm unity, vegetable philosophy is grounded on a matter theory of both alchemical and Baconian provenance (see n. 6). Some of the alchemical matter theory elements have been mentioned in relation to the previous passage (such as the tria prima, the spermatick vapor arising from the center of the universe, vapors that can generate and waters that can ferment). By contrast, the following passage, contains elements that can relate to the Baconian theory of spirits (Bacon’s name is specifically mentioned). Austen (1665, 199) claims that there is an innate spirit in all animate and inanimate bodies and has a “flammeous and aerious” nature. This spirit moves upwards and downwards and, the spirit’s movements determine the plant to draw nourishment and to grow branches, twigs, buds. Interesting is also Austen’s (1658, 9, expt. 427) determination to say that the sap is also moved by the innate spirit’s movement but, contrary to Bacon (Sylva sylvarum, 1857-74; reprint 1961-63, II, 482, expt. 427), the sap has an upward appetite and it can only ascend and never descend.

There is an innate Spirit in Trees and all Vegetables, (which some call the Soul of Plants) yea, in all bodies animate and inanimate; this Sir Fran. Bacon hath abundantly set forth: This Spirit (as he shews) is (as it were) a compound of flame and aire, is of a flammeous and aerious Nature. Now, this being the Vehicle or means of conveyance of the Sap unto all the parts of the Tree, (every Twig and bud of it) its appetite is upwards, because it is a light body, and all light things naturally ascend upwards, as was said, and not downwards, unless it be to observe a Law in Nature in avoiding a Vacuum at any time. The greater quantity of Spirit there is in any creature, the leighter it is, either animate or inanimate, especially if it be the lively spirit. If it be said this Spirit in Trees exerts it self downwards in the Roots, as well as upwards. It is true, so much and so farre as is necessary to make a foundation to support the body and branches, and to draw nourishment for seedling & increase thereof, which it doth but only in a subserviency to the body and branches, and though the Roots spread wide, yet depth is but little to the height of a Tree; the Roots spread, and sun as near the superficies and top of the Earth, as may be, as having still an appetite upwards, as near the Sun as may be; and all the sap and moisture which this Spirit carries upwards, (which is by far the greatest part) it never carries down again; being against its nature to descend, as it is a leight body. (Austen 1665, 199-200)
A third metaphysical presupposition holds that vegetable philosophy represents the way to attain natural (vegetal) knowledge man possessed prior to the Fall. Abilities and technologies in treating and ameliorating plants are able not just “to heal” the land, but also to ensure “the healing” of the fallen human being. There has been a providential time when God was willing to allow human beings to heal their condition and this was interpreted by members of the Hartlib Circle as a process of cultivation and improvement of the material of Creation (soil, plants, human soul). Husbandry was a most valuable activity in the Garden of Eden and Adam was employed “in his innocency to keep and order the Garden of Fruit trees” (Austen 1665, 22). Plants were the first animate bodies that God created and the sole source of food in the prelapsarian estate. By cultivating, grafting, improving plants (as a main source of food in his fallen condition), man will also improve his condition (his health, the prolongation of life, and his soul) (Austen 1665, 40; see Bacon 1857-74; reprint 1961-63, *Historia vitae et mortis*, II, 179-80, 183, 207-208, 236). In this new interpretation of Genesis, the accent has moved from the emphasis on importance of work to the emphasis on the importance of “amelioration” of the “cultivated material,” because the latter will bring salvation. The goal of “amelioration” is then the main reason why vegetable philosophy required improved technologies. The truths of Scripture were to be extracted by experimental science from the prophetic books of the Bible. Therefore, in a sense, the Baconian science was adequate to the expectation of the Millennium (Roper 1984, 253). In the Millennium, man would be restored to his original perfection and enjoy once again the paradise estate that Adam had forfeited. The knowledge of gardening becomes a very important piece of knowledge in the millennial context because gardening and husbandry were the major prelapsarian occupations (Parry 1992, 130-50). The blessed, Edenic prelapsarian estate could be recaptured in the garden and in the practice of gardening. Plants were the first animate bodies that God created (Austen’s “The title page,” 1658). And also plants represented the only source of food provided in the prelapsarian estate. Austen (1657) depicted an orchard as a supreme place of pleasures, the place where can be found the goodness on earth for body, mind, and spirit.

God planted a Fruit-garden, That is, He caused a parcel of ground to bring forth Plants and Trees most exquisite and usefull for man, and enriched that place with more fruit-fulnesse and beauty, then any other part of the Earth, and called it Eden, that is, a place of Pleasures. (Austen 1665, 24)

And if an orchard was like Eden, the husbandman was like Adam. [God] makes him [man] Lord of all until the fall; And after that God intending the preservation of what he made, notwithstanding the great curse upon Adam, Eve, and Serpent, the Earth not going free, but a curse of Barrennesse cast upon it also, yet Adam is sent forth to till the Earth, and improve it, in the sweat of his face he must bread untill be returned to the Earth again. (Blith 1653, 4)

No natural knowledge was hidden from Adam in the Garden of Eden. God was considered the Husbandman of the Universe and He shared His goodness with His first
creatures in Paradise (Blith 1649). Those who touch and work with seeds and soil, plants and fruits, touch the Hand of God. Husbandry seemed to be the activity which was as close as possible to the activity of Adam in the Garden of Eden. Hartlib (see Dymock’s “To the reader,” 1651c, sig. A2v.) wrote that that husbandry was “the most profitable Industry unto Humane Society; wherein the providence, the Power, the Wisdom and the Goodness of God, appears unto man more eminently then in any other way of Industry.” Thus, vegetable philosophy (based on the acquisition of first hand knowledge of husbandry) could bring religious and economic salvation as well.

...and I know more and more intend to express by the grace of God, for the universal good of the whole Nation; yet posterity perhaps may, when they shall consider how instrumental you have been not only to contribute to the building of many Colledges of Piety and Learning; but also to set forwards the best means, that can be held forth to any industrious or ingenious people, of livelihood and outward riches, by a reformed way of Husbandry. (Dymock 1651a, 3)

Although operational in essence, vegetable philosophy is based on a series of metaphysical presuppositions. The operational process of cultivation and amelioration opens very interesting theological interpretations. God is willing to allow the “healing” of some parts of the fallen nature and technological improvements are designed to help the amelioration process. Using transferable technologies, vegetable philosophy can provide rules, methods of helping, speeding, and improving the germination of the seeds and also of the human virtues. Fertilization with manure is regarded as a precautionary process, as a preventive and curative medicine, offering proper nourishment for the spirits enclosed in seeds, soil, and humans. All of them are operating with the same material of Creation, aiming to improve the “chemical” process of generation, the reason why the same technologies could work for soil, plants, and human beings as well.

CONCLUSION

The members of the 1650s Hartlib Circle extended the domain and the applications of husbandry, integrating in a new discipline, called “vegetable philosophy,” elements coming from different domains, such as alchemy, cultivation of the land, and Baconian experimental philosophy. Vegetable philosophy criticized classical approaches to husbandry for not being able to provide accurate practical information and reframed the tradition of husbandry into Baconian experimental terms (equally aiming to contribute to the advancement of theory and practice of the knowledge in the vegetal domain). Although vegetable philosophy has a highly operational character, it is based on a set of implicit metaphysical assumptions. The new discipline is mainly concerned with delivering technologies able to produce amelioration. Due to the metaphysical assumptions grounding the discipline and to the extensions allowed by the Baconian art of experimentation, the technologies provided by vegetable philosophy can ameliorate plants and humans as well and can bring salvation in a religious and economic manner.
NOTES

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2. Here is a list introducing the works on husbandry issued by the members of the Hartlib Circle: Gabriel Plattes (1639a, 1639b, 1641, 1655); Walter Blith (1649, 1652, 1653); Richard Weston (1650); Cressy Dymock (1649, 1651a, 1651b, 1670); Dymock [Samuel Hartlib?] (1653); Hartlib (1651, 1652, 1659a); Richard Child (1651); Virginia Ferraro et al. (1652); Gerard Boate (1652); Ralph Austen (1653, 1657, 1658, 1665, 1671(6)); John Beale (1657); and John Evelyn (1664, 1679). The Hartlib Circle was initiated by Samuel Hartlib in the mid-seventeenth century.

3. Evidence for this shift of attention is the considerable interest manifested by Hartlib in his journal, *Ephemerides*, but also the publication of a significant number of tracts, pamphlets, and other works on this topic. See note 2.

4. Austen is the first author to specifically use this concept.


6. There are arguments in favour of alchemical influences that can be discovered in Bacon’s own theory of matter. See Graham Rees (1975, 81-10; 163-73).

7. For more details regarding the concept of “husbanding Creation,” see Oana Matei (2013, 84-102).

8. Sometimes these works were published together under the name *De res rustica* by Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella (1595) in *Rei rustice auctores Latini veteres, M. Cato, M. Varro, L. Columella, Palladius*. See also Columella (1941); Marcus Porcius Cato et al. (1537, 27, 217; 1533, 54, 295); Rutilius Taurus Aemilius Palladius (1549, 8); Giovanni Giocondo et al. (1514, 34). I used Marcus Porcius Cato et al. (1533; 1537); Rutilius Taurus Aemilius Palladius (1549; 1807); and Marcus Terentius Varro (1912).

9. The most important figure of this type of tradition is Giambattista Della Porta, with his *Magia naturalis* first published in Naples in 1558. I used *Magna naturalis* (1581). Translated into English as *Natural magik* (1658).


11. Bacon’s complete works will be abbreviated as SEH. For Bacon’s moral view on natural knowledge, see Bacon (1857-74; reprint 1961-63, *The advancement of learning*, vol. III; *The great instauration*, vol. IV; *The new organon* or *True directions concerning the interpretation of nature*, vol. IV; *Valerius Terminus*. Of the interpretation of nature, vol. III; *A confession of faith*, vol. XIV); see also Peter Harrison (2007) and Laura Georgescu (2010, 75-89).

12. D. C. Rusu (2014) emphasized the methodological aspects of *Sylva* but argued that its main purposes have been to present a model of natural magic rather than a model for natural histories.

13. W. Blith (“The epistle dedicatory,” 1653) says: “…compared with our weighty and present affaires, may in some measure be an accidental cause that Improvements of our
Lands go on no better, although materially the cause is in our froth, Prejudice and ill Husbandry.”


15. Jalobeanu (2011, 88-103) and Georgescu (2011, 104-20) state that experientia literata functions as a way to construct new experiments and not to transfer the theoretical results. Rusu (2014) argues for the possibility of methodological translation in accordance with Bacon’s theory of matter. For methodological translation and its implicit religious dimension, see Stephen Clucas (1994, 51-74).

16. Although I have not been able to identify in Platten’s works any direct use of the term “vegetable philosophy,” he (1639a and 1639b) is the first member of the Hartlib Circle to express a vision on husbandry as a more sophisticated discipline.

17. Such as Sir Hugh Plat’s (1594) J ewell house of art and nature. Although he had a deep interest in alchemy, medical alchemy, and ways to improve the barren soil, Plat was more influenced by the alchemical tradition (Paracelsus, John Hester, Bernard Palissy) than the desire to ameliorate the human estate.

18. John Evelyn’s (2001) Elysium britannicum, or the Royal gardens was completed in several stages. According to Ingram (2001), Evelyn started to work on the Elysium in the 1650s and continued through the early mid-1660s. Webster (1975, 138) locates Elysium in the year of 1657. In Hartlib’s (1659b, 71A) correspondence there are several direct references to Evelyn’s Elysium: “It is a very gentle & vsefull vndertaking of Mr. Evelyn, to compose such an Elysium, as you have sent me the summary of.” See also Hartlib letter to Evelyn (1659c, 66B). In a letter to Hartlib, Beale (1659, 62/25/3B) says: “But because Paradise had rivers for fish, & Mr Evelyns Elysium allows the care of all animals. Fish, Birds & beasts, Aviaria, & Vivaria, I intend at Gods.”

19. Austen (1665, 22, 40) also asserts: “It was Adam employment in his innocence to keep and order the Garden of Fruit-trees, Gen. 2.15. And the Lord God put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it, and to keep it. God, who is wisdom itself, saw that a Garden of Fruit-trees was the meest place upon all the earth, for Adam to dwell in, even in his state of perfection. And therein assigned him an employment for his greater delight, and pleasure: so that this employment, as it is ancient, so it is honourable.”

20. Austen (1658, the title page) says: “And God said: Behold I have given you every heare bearing seede, which is upon the face of all the Earth, and every Tree, in which is the fruit of a tree bearing seed, to you it shall be for meate, Gen. 1.29.”

21. For instance, when the fertilizing properties of nitre had been discovered, members of the Hartlib Circle started to use nitre as a medicine for the prolongation of life.

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ECOLOGICAL ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

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Continuous massive infrastructural development is necessary if a nation is to remain on the pathway to development and be considered a developed nation. Infrastructural development involves the building of roads, dams, bridges, power plants, health facilities, schools, etc. These infrastructures help in adequate provision of goods and services to the people. Provision and maintenance of social infrastructures often could have impact and effects on the natural environment. Some of these effects at times are negative and could damage the ecosystem. Some infrastructural development projects are carried out without environmental impact assessment. This paper argues that infrastructural development projects should be carried out within the framework of the values of ecological ethics. It uses a critical analytic method and finds out that the values of ecological ethics are necessary for sustainable infrastructural development in Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, like every other country in the so-called developing world, is battling with a crisis of development and social progress. If she is to become a highly developed, industrialized, scientifically and technologically advanced nation of the world, she cannot but embark on rapid and massive infrastructural development programs. Such programs will include the continuous building of roads, bridges, power plants, dams, airports, seaports, health facilities, schools, and other social amenities. These and other human activities have ecological footprints on the land. These footprints often, without appropriate environmental impact assessment, have negative impacts as they damage both flora and fauna on the land. Even when there is impact assessment the consequences are not adequately taken care of and the necessary regulations are not implemented. Infrastructural development should be carried out within the limits of ethical restraints if the ecosystem is to be protected.

From the perspectives of ecological ethics and philosophy, infrastructural development should take not just the human interests into consideration. They should
consider the well-being of nonhumans. Infrastructural development does a lot of damage to organisms in the soil, flora and fauna, natural waterways, natural landscape, sacred groves, sacred trees, cultural totems, and other parts of the ecosystem. In the light of the environmental crisis that Nigeria and other nations are facing, it is no longer enough to build infrastructures, the natural environment should be protected and little damage if at all should be allowed. The significance of taking the health of the environment into consideration cannot be overemphasized. It is vital to note that:

The matter of protecting the physical environment during construction and operation of infrastructure systems is an increasingly challenging issue. Most of the major environmental battles of the past have revolved around highway projects, major sewage systems, solid waste disposal sites, and water containment projects, with the conflict extending to include school sites, hospital expansion, and even mass transit lines and stations. (Encyclopaedia of American History 2006, par. 26)

In examining the above issues, this paper makes some conceptual clarifications and discussions, looks at the values in ecological ethics, assesses the consequences of infrastructural development without ethics, and makes some concluding reflections.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

The fundamental concepts in this discussion are ecological ethics and infrastructural development. “Ecology” can be defined as:

The study of the interactions between organisms and their environment. There are two distinct components to the “environment”: the physical environment (comprising such things as temperature, water availability, wind, speed, soil acidity) and biotic environment, which comprises any influences on an organism that are exerted by other organisms, including competition, predation, parasitism and cooperation. (Mackenzie et al. 1998, 1)

Ecological ethics has to do with perceiving the domain of ethical concerns as having to do with all organisms and their interactions with the environment. Human behaviour with regard to ecosystems and nonhuman life in the natural world is an ethical issue not only because human life depends on it, but because all life on earth depends on it. What human beings do to the planet determines the kind of human beings that live on the planet. Though controversial, ethics has to do with human behaviour and how human persons ought to live their lives. How human persons should live their lives is no longer confined to the relationship among human persons, it includes how they should treat animals and the entire natural world. It is this new dimension of ethics that ecological ethics is about (Curry 2006, 1). It is true that “in the context of the ‘Western’ philosophical tradition, this is a very recent suggestion indeed. (The idea is not new, but the idea of taking it seriously is.) It has only come to the fore in the past thirty years” (Curry 2006, 1-2). This paper is in consonance with the idea that
value is to be located in the entire ecological community (the ethical community), not simply only in human persons.

This being the case the focus of this paper is that in pursuing infrastructural development projects concern should be placed not just on what benefits human persons may have but on what benefits the well-being of the entire ecological community may obtain.

What is infrastructural development? Infrastructures are “the basic facilities, services, and installations needed for the functioning of a community or society, such as transportation and communications systems, water and power lines, and public institutions including schools, post offices, and prisons” (The American Heritage Dictionary 2007, par 1). The dictionary says its usage, used since 1927, includes “collectively...the roads, bridges, rail lines, and similar public works that are required for an industrial economy, or a portion of it, to function” (The American Heritage Dictionary 2007, par. 2). A Dictionary of Geography (2004, par. 1) sees it as

The framework of communication networks, health centres, administration, and power supply necessary for economic development. Geographers and economists do not agree over the extent to which this underlying structure, also known as social overhead capital, should be provided before development takes place, and politicians argue over whether the state, the private sector, or both, should provide the infrastructure.

In the Dictionary of Finance and Investment Terms (2010, par. 1) it is perceived as:

A nation's basic system of transportation, communication, and other aspects of its physical plant. Building and maintaining roads, bridges, sewages, and electrical systems provide millions of jobs nationwide. For developing countries, building an infrastructure is a first step in economic development.

"Infrastructure" refers to all the social, economic, political, and cultural amenities, especially in physical and tangible form that is necessary to a nation’s development.

The term “development” is another crucial term here. It could be:

The use of resources to relieve poverty and improve the standard of living of a nation; the means by which a traditional, low-technology society is changed into a modern, high-technology society, with a corresponding increase in incomes. This may be achieved through mechanization, improvements in infrastructure and financial systems, and the intensification of agriculture. This definition is based on the more obvious distinctions in living standards between developed and less developed countries, but it may be that a change to “western” conditions is not in the best interests of a Third World nation. (A Dictionary of Geography 2004, par. 1)

The term “development” should not be limited to its economic definition, which has to do with “per capital Gross National Product, production, consumption, and
investment.” Development “includes improvements in social justice; for example, in a more equitable distribution of income, or in an improvement in women’s and minority rights” (A Dictionary of Geography 2004, par. 2). Infrastructural development is the process of the growth and expansion of the infrastructures, such as roads, bridges, electricity, health facilities, and educational amenities, to improve the lives and well-being of the people of a given community or nation. Expansion of infrastructures bring the good life to the people. We should take cognizant of the fact that the purpose of public governance is to make abundant life available for the people. Development is about people. But development is not only about people. The discourse on development cannot ignore the environmental question. This is why today, development is also about the environment. Development that destroys the environment is not worthy of the term development. This is why the need for a comprehensive notion of development. The description of development given by Onunwa (2005) to a great deal captures this comprehensive notion. He argues that development implies the total upward movement of a social system and is more than institutional progress. He (2005, 24) further avers that

It means on one hand, that such elevation in the social system is for the well-being of man and the improvement of his environs. In many cases, development has been understood to be synonymous with industrialisation, urbanisation and modernization as we see them today in many countries. These are quite good if they serve the physical, moral and intellectual as well as spiritual well-being of humans in society, but would mean nothing if they create a situation where humanity is crushed in the wheel of individual or group manipulation and tyranny. Technological progress means nothing if it is turned into an industry for production and implements that would lead to mass destruction of life and property in a world where hunger and disease threaten a sizable percentage of human population. But if it is used to produce implements that can improve life expectancy, food, shelter and health care, then technology is a mark of human and social development. Thus development understood in this sense should not be turned into an instrument of destruction of the world and human life in it.

This paper is all for infrastructural development, but that development should enhance the well-being of the entire people and the protection of the natural environment. This is why the environmental impact of infrastructural development projects should be assessed.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

All infrastructural development takes place on the land and its environment. All infrastructural development has ecological footprints. The building of roads, constructions of railways and waterways, establishment of electricity plants, creation of factories and industries to provide goods and services make an impact on the land,
its organisms, flora, and fauna. This impact often is damaging and negative as it destroys endangered species, biological diversity, harms medicinal and pharmaceutical resources, pollutes the air and atmosphere, causes soil erosion and deforestation. That infrastructural development has ecological consequences and implications is noted in the US Clean Water Act of 1970.

Another federal program that had a major impact on urban infrastructure systems is the one based on section 208 of the Clean Water Act of 1970. This program required that the sewage of all urban areas be cleaned before its emission into streams, rivers, and lakes. Federal assistance was in most cases up to 90 percent of the cost of each project. As a result of this program, the level of impurities in streams, rivers, and lakes in the United States improved dramatically. Primary sewage treatment became universal, removing about 65 percent of all impurities. Secondary and tertiary treatments were expanded on a scale that removed 90 to 95 percent of the impurities (and in some cases, up to 98 percent). By the end of the century, U.S. urban areas were disposing of effluent in streams, rivers, and lakes that was typically cleaner than the natural flow of their waters would produce. (Encyclopaedia of American History 2006, par 12)

In a country like Nigeria the Federal Government has acknowledged through its various environmental agencies and policies that infrastructural development has impact on the environment. The problem with Nigeria is with the implementation of its environmental regulations. The benefits of environmental regulations and their implementation cannot be over-emphasized. Nigeria ought to learn from other countries like the United States. In the United States:

The National Environmental Protection Act of 1969 (NEPA) introduced sweeping measures for cleaning up the American natural environment, making the thirty years between 1970 and 2000 a historic period in the environmental and infrastructure history of the country and of the world. (Encyclopaedia of American History 2006, par. 13)

There is no doubt that development projects precipitate environmental problems and challenges. It will be correct to note that

To a large extent, the current concern with the environmental issues has emerged out of the problems experienced by the industrially-advanced countries. Such problems include those of massive urban conglomeration, pollution, land and atmospheric degradation and exhaustion of nonrenewable resources. These problems are themselves largely the outcome of a high level of economic development. The creation of large productive capacities in industry and agriculture and the growth of "complex system of transportation and communication have been accompanied, in one way or another, by disruptions to the human environment. Such disruptions have
indeed attained major proportions that, in many communities, they already constitute hazards to human health and welfare. In some ways, the danger extends beyond national boundaries and threaten the world as a whole. (Awosika 2004, 176)

The reality is that in the process of building infrastructures to meet the needs of the people, forests have to be felled, the land to be excavated, old buildings to be reconstructed, and natural waterways to be rechanneled. All these have an impact on the environment. Many organisms are destroyed in the process. The air is polluted. But very often, this destruction of nonhuman lives and organisms are ignored. Tobi (2012, 63) writes that

Critical reviews of the national philosophy of environmental management in the country over the years have, however, pointed out that environmental problems have not been given the due consideration they deserve. For instance, policies for controlling the emission of smoke from houses and cars, preventing industrial pollution of the environment and rivers, restricting the use of dangerous chemicals, etc., have not been pursued as matters of priority.

The natural environment is often ignored in the development of projects in Nigeria. Environmental impact assessments are hardly carried out and even when they are carried out, the consequences are hardly implemented. Nigeria has many environmental laws that can guide in the development of infrastructure. These include the policies and actions of the Federal Ministry of Environment, the 1989 National Environmental Policy, the 1988 Harmful Waste Decree, the 1992 Environmental Assessment Decree, the 1992 National Guidelines and Standards for Environmental Control, the 2006 National Housing and Urban Development Policies, etc. To show that environmental concerns are not taken into consideration in Nigeria, private buildings spring up everywhere and their construction facilities pollute the environment. More importantly, there seems to be no public officer to be held responsible. Along most Nigerian roads are burrow pits excavated to construct roads. These burrow pits often get flooded and result in soil erosion causing health hazards to both human and nonhuman lives. In the construction of roads and railways, trees are often destroyed without concern for the wellbeing of animals and birds that live on them. Commenting on the dilemma between developmental infrastructure and environmental well-being, Adewusi (2011, 26) avers that “the greatest challenge in Nigeria today is to design development which, while satisfying basic needs, is equally environmentally realistic and does not transgress the limits imposed by the absorptive capacity of the environment.”

ECOLOGICAL ETHICAL VALUES AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

What are some values that should inform infrastructural development and their maintenance? There is need to bring in ecological values to regulate the development of
social infrastructures in Nigeria. One of the key values that is needed is the value of sustainable development. The term “sustainable development” is certainly not a perfect term but it can contribute to building and conserving the environment. Sustainable development is a kind of development that is not only concerned about human needs but enhances the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development 2009, 199). Some authors have critiqued that the term is a camouflage for those who believe in development to continue developing without a concern for the environment. Though the term is weak, the reality is that it gives the idea of sustainability. The human person should develop but not at the expense of humanity, the future generations, or the needs of the natural world. The United Nations Development Programme administrator states that “sustainable human development is development...not only [to] generate economic growth but also [to] distribute its benefits equitably; [to] regenerate the environment rather than [to] destroy it” (Awosika 2004, 182). Tobi (2012,70) is right in noting that “Sustainable development also requires a transformation of values and principles that directly influence development strategies and lifestyles. Conscious efforts must therefore be made to integrate environmental concern into sectoral, economic, social, technological and all forms of development effort especially in the process of implementing Nigeria housing and urban development promises and programmes.”

At the heart of ecological ethics is the values for all lives for “every form of life is unique, warranting respect regardless of its worth to man, and, to accord other organisms such recognition, man must be guided by a moral code of action” (United Nations 1982, Annex). It is not just human lives that count. What about the trees, the plants, the organisms, the endangered species, the rivers, and the mountains that are endangered and affected by human infrastructures? This is why it is very important that there are environmental impact assessments before developmental projects are undertaken. The development of infrastructure can cause environmental damage. While in “Advanced countries, it is appropriate to view development as the cause of environmental problems, badly planned and unregulated development can have a similar result in developing countries” (Awosika 2004, 177). What is needed is an ethics that care for and protect all life in the planet. Such an ethics considers human persons and nonhuman entities as carriers of life and are vital in the ecosystem.

The ecological ethics proposed here will also privilege environmental impact assessment before the establishment of developmental projects. The purpose of environmental impact assessment is not for its own sake but to ensure that the environment is protected. The outcome of environmental impact assessment should not be that the project must be carried out. A project can be delayed or even cancelled if the negative impact is too much for the environment. It is worthy to note that Nigeria in 1992 came up with Environmental Impact Assessment Act. The goal of the Act is to ensure that, before undertaking activities that may likely have significant environmental effect, there should be environmental impact assessment. The assessment is necessary to protect the environment. Activities that may have grave impact on the environment beyond remediation should not be undertaken. It is painful to note that although Nigeria has this act, it is often ignored. It is violated by many corporate bodies and due to poor implementation of environmental regulations, they are often left unpunished.
A country that values the natural environment not merely for the goods and resources it produces but also for its own sake will insist on this environmental impact assessment. The challenge is that there is no ecological ideological foundation that underpins the Nigerian Environmental Impact Assessment Act. Even though the act speaks of the impact assessment being done in the light of the consequences on the environment, the paradigm for which it should be done is not stated. Is it from an anthropocentric, ecocentric, biocentric, or theocentric paradigm? This is something by which the Act must be very clear about. The function of environmental impact assessment is to ensure that “before an environmental project is undertaken, impact of such project on the environment should be assessed and adequate provisions made for the elimination of suspected injury or damage” (Adewusi 2011, 29).

Ecological ethics must critique a style of development that emphasizes growth at all cost. The way to development must not necessarily follow the Western model wherein the development image championed by the World Bank only promotes a particular kind of economic development. The World Bank funded the Trans-Amazonia Highway or the Indian Sardeer Sarovar and Marmada Sager Dames which did not care about the environment. The only interest the World Bank has is economic growth (Oyeshola 1998, 14). Infrastructural development must not be a free-all but should be brought within the ethical restraint. The reality is that construction of developmental infrastructure causes deforestation and pollution. This is so because

Construction of developmental projects, their implementations and related activities leading to industries, airports, recreational places, parks, mechanized farming, housing estates, and so on, also contribute to deforestation because they take and occupy space. One of the consequences of deforestation is that...an estimated 484 plant species as well as a certain wild life [were] being threatened with extinction. (Oyeshola 2008, 24)

The construction of infrastructures involves the building of industries. Industrial activities result in a lot of industrial pollution. In Nigeria, there are many such industrial facilities and small-scale industries—ranging from textile, tannery, paint making, etc.—that produce chemicals which have adverse effects on the environment (Oyeshola 2008, 24-25). Infrastructural development also generates a lot of industrial waste. These include solid wastes such as paper, food remnant, mental scraps, plastics, bottles, and poisonous chemicals that are often dumped into open grounds and rivers.

Ecological ethics does not discuss the natural world to the detriment of human interest. Humans are an important part of the ecosystem and so it is also important to take into consideration the wellbeing of humans. This is why the following statement can be helpful. It should be realized that

Sustainable land use policies permit enough development to meet human needs but also include safeguards to protect and preserve the environment. Determining the level of land use that is sustainable is a complex task because it may be affected by many factors, including technology, degree of urbanization, agriculture, infrastructure, manufacturing, as well as geology, topography, habitats, weather, and ecology. (Resnik 2012, 166)
Ecological ethics relevant to Nigeria must be rooted in the values of *Ubuntu*, *Ukama*, and African theism. The African ethical value of *Ubuntu* affirms that you are a human person because of others, your being and identity are rooted in the community. It is a principle of wholeness that implies the human person is related to others and to the entire natural world; and caring for human persons also implies caring for physical nature (Mogobe 2009, 309). In critiquing how technological advancement can cause damage to the environment, there is need to affirm *Ubuntu* which can counter the threat of ecological disaster (Mogobe 2009, 313). In the midst of environmental air pollution, climate change, and the destruction of the ozone layer, “the indigenous African people’s philosophical aphorisms, *motho ke motho ka batho* (“a person is human only through the humanity of others”) and *jeta kgomo o tshware motho* (“the life of a human person is preferable and comes before wealth”), can make a significant contribution to world peace by leading the way to the restoration of *Ubuntu*” (Mogobe 2009, 313). Related to the concept of *Ubuntu* is *Ukama*. *Ukama* means that your humanity is rooted in your relationship with the entire cosmos. The following statements make *Ukama* imperative in Africa:

While industrialized countries are responsible for massive pollution, much of the African continent is experiencing a level of environmental degradation and wildlife depletion equally alarming for the welfare of future generations. Yet traditional African ethics recognizes the existential bond between people and the environment, the debt any generation owes its forebears and its consequent responsibility to posterity.

Environmental degradation is an ethical problem that should therefore look to ethics for its solution. Distrusting contemporary western ethics, which has failed to halt pollution in technologically advanced countries, Africa yet possesses in its own traditional culture the roots of an ethical paradigm to solve the current environmental crisis. This is an ethic of the interdependence of individuals within the larger society to which they belong and to the environment on which they all depend. This ethic is based on the concepts of *Ukama* (*Shona*) and *Ubuntu* (*Botho*). (Murove 2009, 315)

This type of relationship implies responsibility to protect and care for creation. Infrastructural development needs to be linked to these two great ethical values. Infrastructure should be developed not only to enhance human flourishing but also the ecosystem flourishing.

Ecological ethic must be rooted in socioeconomic environmental justice. In speaking of socioeconomic-environmental justice, concern must be placed on vulnerable populations, people living in poverty, racial and religious minorities. There can be no justice when underprivileged populations are deprived of access to social amenities or when they solely bear the burden of the construction of social infrastructures. It is unjust and unfair in a place like Nigeria that people in the Niger Delta or people in places where solid minerals are extracted bear the burden of extraction, and the subsequent pollution, while depriving them with a large percentage of benefits. Resnik (2012, 208) says that
Justice can be conceived in distributive or procedural terms. Distributive justice addresses the fair distribution of benefits and burdens in society, while procedural justice addresses the fairness of rules and processes used to make social policy. If we think of social justice as basically a problem of dividing up the proverbial pie, then distributive justice deals with the question of how much pie each person should get, and procedural justice addresses questions concerning how the pie is sliced. Distributive and procedural [types of] justice are both necessary to achieve social justice.

Infrastructural development can also bring about habitat loss which in turn can result in species extinction. According to Resnik (2012, 159), “habitat loss” refers to “an area in which a population or species normally live, such as a forest, is destroyed or radically changed.” There can also be habitat fragmentation as a result of infrastructural development, that is, the “habitat is broken into discontinuous pieces.” Infrastructural development that leads to habitat loss or fragmentation can be the result of human activities like “agriculture, industry, mining, urban development, road construction and water management.”

An aspect of infrastructural development that should not be neglected pertains to mining and manufacturing facilities. In a bid to develop, many developing countries like Nigeria depend mainly on extractive industries for their main source of income. Ninety percent of Nigeria’s national income comes from extraction of oil and gas resources from the environment of the Niger Delta. In the process of this extraction, pipelines, oil wells, residential houses, and airfields have to be constructed to facilitate the production of oil. In many places in Nigeria, there are also manufacturing facilities that generate goods and other products for the growing population. Both mining and manufacturing can have a great impact—positively or adversely—to the natural environment.

Mining and manufacturing technologies are those that have most frequently been portrayed as threats to the environment because they have most dramatically illustrated the capacities of human technologies to create environments that are hostile to many life-forms, human included. Their development is also intimately intertwined with the development of energy and transport technologies. Mining is a paradigm example of an activity that is locally unsustainable, exploitative and hugely disruptive of the natural and social environments in which it begins to operate. Mineral deposits occur in limited quantities that will sooner or later be exhausted and the extraction of which becomes increasingly uneconomic. Extraction, whether open-face or by tunnelling, wreaks dramatic physical changes on the landscape. Communities of miners and their associated equipment move into regions that may have been sparsely populated and largely agricultural or pastoral. Roads or waterways have to be built to supply the mines and to transport materials to and from them. (Tiles 2009, 236)
CONCLUSION

There is no way that infrastructural development in its various forms can take place in a society without adverse impact on human persons and the natural environment. The argument is not that there should be no infrastructural development. Human persons are people of culture and civilization. The human person right from the beginning of human civilization must build and develop its environment by adjusting and adapting to it. Humans are like other nonhuman animals that make use of what is available to them to sustain their lives in the planet. The human person has a right to development but this right should be exercised taking into consideration the wellbeing and health of other nonhuman animals and the whole of nature. We should recognise that a healthy environment and one that teems with life enhances human mental and physical wellbeing. What this paper calls for is an infrastructural development, not its abolition, that is based on Nigerian ecological ethics.

A sustainable environment in Nigeria is threatened with infrastructural development projects without adequate environmental impact assessment. Focusing on economic growth alone without taking into consideration its heavy ecological footprint will sacrifice in the long run human and other lives in the environment. Even from a humanocentric perspective, the impact of infrastructural projects on poor and vulnerable human communities should not only ethically dwell on a distributive and procedural justice to the wellbeing of humans and the nonhuman elements of nature, but also on the issue of well-balanced socioeconomic environmental justice. It belongs to the discipline of environmental ethics to enunciate the vital principles necessary for regulating infrastructural development if there is to be a sustainable society.

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DESCARTES AND EPISTEMOLOGY
WITH OR WITHOUT GOD

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The conventional understanding takes God to play a pivotal philosophical role in Descartes's epistemological project. Michael Della Rocca disagrees with this interpretation. In a recent article, "Descartes, the Cartesian Circle, and epistemology without God," he forcefully argues for the view that takes God to be peripheral and at the fringe of Descartes's account of knowledge. He argues that Descartes renders God less important in his epistemology simply in virtue of having normative certainty of occurrent clear and distinct ideas or perceptions prior to his theological argument. This paper generally argues that although it could be said that Descartes has normative certainty of some claims before his arguments for God's existence, it is misleading to claim that God plays no pivotal philosophical role in Descartes's epistemological project. In particular, it argues that since the relevant conditions for scientia for Descartes include normative certainty of clear and distinct perceptions and understanding of the metaphysical foundations of cognition it is mistaken to suppose that God takes on a less than central role in Descartes's epistemology.

INTRODUCTION

What is the significance of God in Descartes's epistemological project? What role does he play in Descartes's account of knowledge? These are pressing and important questions for any one that reads, scrutinizes, and peers into Descartes's works, in particular his Meditations. The orthodox view is that God plays a significant role in Descartes's epistemology. However, only recently, this view has been challenged by Michael Della Rocca (2005, 1-33) in the paper "Descartes, the Cartesian Circle, and epistemology without God." In this paper, Della Rocca proposes an interpretation of Descartes according to which he can be read as taking important steps towards doing epistemology without God. This reading challenges and puts to test the traditional story which sees Descartes as assigning God a pivotal philosophical role in his epistemology. Let us call Della Rocca's reading "Descartes's nontheological epistemology" (hereinafter "E minus God" view) and the alternative orthodox account "Descartes's theological epistemology" (hereinafter "E plus God" view). On the latter reading, whereas God, for
Descartes, is central to *scientia* (or knowledge in the fullest sense) in particular and to epistemology in general, on the former, God is not.

The principal claim of the "E minus God" view is that Descartes does not accord God an essential philosophical role in his epistemological project (hereinafter EP). This claim is drawn from three main ideas: that Descartes takes normative certainty of currently perceived clear and distinct ideas or perceptions (CDIP) (cogito-like experiences or occurrent CDIPs) to be sufficient for *scientia*; that he has such certainty prior to the conclusion of the theological argument in the Third Meditation; that he only appeals to God (or the author of one's nature) only in respect of "retrospective certainty" (non-cogito-like experiences or non-occurent CDIPs) (Della Rocca 2005, 12). This interpretation has several virtues. Firstly, if it is right it helps Descartes circumvent the troublesome and problematic Cartesian Circle (CC) that has bedeviled his EP. And secondly, it shines a bright light on the debate as to whether Descartes is an externalist of some sort or at the very least points us to the possibility that Descartes could be an externalist. Della Rocca (2005, 12) does suggest this line of reasoning in a few places in his article.

On the "E minus God" view one could take Della Rocca as saying that Descartes does not explicitly hold that God is not central to epistemology, but that if we piece together his view, God is not central to epistemology in the Cartesian system, whether Descartes says so or not. I am not sanguine about the textual soundness of this interpretation given that some of the important passages in Descartes’s texts where he distinguishes between different degrees of certainty seem to suggest the centrality of God to knowledge (at least in Descartes’s EP). Moreover, given that Descartes does take God to be important in his philosophical system it is unlikely that the divine being would have a diminished status or play a smaller role in his epistemology. John Carriero (2009) aptly reminds us that one significant difference between the empiricist tradition (represented by Locke and Hume) and the rationalist tradition (represented by Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz) is the central place that the latter gives to philosophical theology. Carriero (2009, 9) notes that Descartes’s particular “approach to philosophical theology, as well as the centrality that he gives to it for metaphysics and epistemology” is one of his legacies for subsequent pre-Kantian rationalist tradition. For example, philosophical theology shows up in the Third and Fifth Meditations’ discussions of God’s existence, in the Fourth Meditation’s validation of reason or intellect and account of error, and in the Sixth Meditation’s explanation of failure of instinctual reactions. It also figures prominently in his accounts of physics and the doctrine of the creation of eternal truths. If Descartes’s philosophical system is colored by the divine being, then it seems more unlikely that epistemology would have a different and unique status, one that is not colored and circumscribed by God.¹

Della Rocca’s project is indeed laudable. One ought to be enthusiastic about it. There has been much debate about the CC; it has generated an enormous amount of discussions right from Descartes’s time when Antoine Arnauld and others first raised the problematic. Therefore, we have reasons to embrace Della Rocca’s project since it is one of the very few attempts that provide an interesting and novel way of sidestepping the CC. But as admirable as his project is, is it plausible? More importantly, is it consistent with Descartes’s texts in general and the gamut of his EP in particular? I suggest that it is not. I claim that although the “E minus God” view seems capable of undermining the force of the CC, it is mistaken in
at least two areas. Firstly, in the claim that the normative certainty of occurent CDIPs that the meditator (Descartes) has prior to the conclusion of the theological argument is sufficient for \textit{scientia}. Secondly, that God plays no essential philosophical role in Descartes’s EP. Descartes’s EP is concerned with \textit{scientia} where \textit{scientia} for him requires some comprehension of the author of one’s nature or what Carriero (2009, 348) calls the “metaphysical foundations of knowledge” (hereinafter MFK). Insofar as this is the case for \textit{scientia} one has reasons to think that God is central to Descartes’s EP.

To make a case for why one might think that the “E minus God” view is misguided in these two areas I shall be arguing for two related claims: First, on the one hand, that the normative certainty of occurent CDIPs that Descartes has in the Second Meditation and prior to the conclusion of the theological argument in the Third Meditation already presuppose the existence of God; and on the other, that he needs the conclusion of the argument to validate his normative certainty of occurent CDIPs. For it is only because God exists, has power over eternal or necessary truths, and has created us the way we are that we can have normative certainty of occurent CDIPs. Second, that given Descartes’s view of knowledge, the meditator can only have \textit{scientia} if he acknowledges MFK in addition to having normative certainty of occurent CDIPs. If I am successful in arguing for both claims, I believe I would have succeeded in showing that the “E minus God” view is mistaken and consequently that the “E plus God” view is plausible.

This is how I will proceed. I shall begin by examining Della Rocca’s argument for the “E minus God” view (Section I). Besides engaging with the view I will briefly highlight how it offers a way of circumventing the CC. Next, I shall make a case for why we may think that this reading although laudable is mistaken, focusing especially on its failure to take into account the distinction between the different degrees of certainty that Descartes outlines, in particular, the connection that he makes between the author of our nature and \textit{scientia} (Section II). Immediately following this I will try to show why textually the “E plus God” view seems more credible than the “E minus God” view (Section III). I will do this in a somewhat roundabout way by presenting and defending some ideas and passages in Descartes’s writing that I think support this view.

\section{I. DELLA ROCCA AND THE “E MINUS GOD” POSITION}

At the beginning of his paper, Della Rocca (2005, 2) announces enthusiastically his project and aim thus:

In this paper, I will challenge this story. I will show that Descartes does take important steps toward seeing how to do epistemology without God and that, most surprisingly, he does this precisely in his response to the problem posed by the Cartesian Circle.

Other comments that Della Rocca makes about the “E minus God” view include:

Descartes’s strategy is to maximize God’s power over our clear and distinct ideas and yet to claim that these ideas are normatively certain simply by virtue of being apprehended and, in particular, without our having to conduct an
independent check on whether or not God is deceiving us with regard to clear and distinct ideas. (Della Rocca 2005, 25)

Nonetheless, we can see in Descartes crucial steps toward a view that makes God irrelevant to epistemology. In this way, Descartes is a surprising and important precursor of the kind of God-detached epistemology that one will find in different ways in Hume and Kant and so much of later epistemology. (Della Rocca 2005, 30)

And at the end of his paper, he (2005, 30) submits:

Descartes is starting to make room for the view that epistemology can proceed without concerning itself with God... and he does this precisely in his treatment of the problem of the Cartesian Circle—that aspect of his epistemological views that might seem most bound up with God.

Della Rocca (2005, 30) calls his interpretation "an intriguing and potentially very illuminating attempt" which upends "the traditional story about Descartes’s epistemology that we all know." This reading has different versions: one of those is defended by Louis Loeb. Loeb’s version is premised on the dissimulation hypothesis, the view according to which Descartes (deliberately) misrepresented important aspects of his philosophy, in particular with regard to the place of God in his philosophy. The central gist in Louis Loeb’s (1996, 242-70; 1988, 377-405) argument is that Descartes was not sincere either about his proof of the existence of God or his appeal to Divine veracity in the Meditations.

Della Rocca’s reading of the “E minus God” view is premised on a couple of main ideas. First and foremost, the distinction between psychological and normative certainty, where Descartes is claimed to have the latter with regard to occurrent CDIPs, and where normative certainty refers to certainty that is not open to metaphysical doubt and psychological certainty to certainty “in which metaphysical [or the evil genius] doubt” is still possible. Alan Gewirth (1941, 386) is credited with introducing into Cartesian literature the phrase “psychological certainty.” Carriero (2009, 342-56) has argued that the phrase “psychological certainty” is a misnomer since “if metaphysical doubt is still open to the meditator,” then such doubt is one “that she can take up (and perhaps should take up).” Second, that Descartes was normatively certain of occurrent CDIPs prior to the conclusion of his theological argument “simply in virtue of [their] being apprehended” (Della Rocca 2005, 25). And third, that such certainty constitutes scientia. From these claims Della Rocca (2005, 25) draws the conclusion that Descartes begins to disentangle God from epistemology since he does not have “to conduct an independent check on whether or not God is deceiving [him] with regard to” such experiences.

The claim that Descartes is normatively certain of occurrent CDIPs prior to the theological argument and the conclusion that Descartes does epistemology without God seem to be based on a number of key passages in Descartes’s writings. The notable ones are Descartes’s conversation with Frans Burman (which is partly quoted below), the Third and Fifth Meditations, the Principles, and the Second and Seventh Replies (Descartes 1996, AT V 178, VIII A 13, VII 45, 460, 546; 1991, CSMK 353; 1985, CSM 197, II 45, 100, 309).
The argument for the “E minus God” reading can be outlined as follows:

1. Descartes is normatively certain of occurent CDIPs prior to the conclusion of the theological argument.
2. Descartes appeals to God only with regard to non-occurent CDIPs.
3. Descartes takes normative certainty of occurent CDIPs as sufficient for scientia.
4. Therefore, God has no pivotal philosophical role in Descartes’s epistemology.

To understand what is going on here let us state the general argument that Della Rocca is attacking in his paper. Descartes is accused of having engaged in questionably vicious circular reasoning—the so-called CC—because in the Meditations he appears to argue that we are certain that what we clearly and distinctly perceive is true because a benevolent and veracious God exists and we are certain that a benevolent and veracious God exists because we clearly and distinctly perceive him. The discussion of the CC and Descartes’s attempt to address it appears in several of his writings, but notably in his conversation with Burman (see Wilson 1978b; Descartes 1996, AT V 148, VII 24, 125; 1991, CSMK 334; 1985, CSM II 89, 150):

[Burman] It seems there is a circle. For in the Third Meditation the author uses axioms to prove the existence of God, even though he is not yet certain of not being deceived about these.

[Descartes] He does use such axioms in the proof, but he knows that he is not deceived with regard to them, because he is actually paying attention to them. And for as long as he does pay attention to them, he is certain that he is not being deceived, and he is compelled to assent to them.

One form that the criticism of circular reasoning takes is the “ineffectuality argument,” that is the claim that Descartes’s argument for the certainty and truth of occurent CDIPs and the existence of God is ineffectual (Della Rocca 2005). The “ineffectuality argument” states:

1. Descartes argues that some of his occurent CDIPs are true simply because he is in a cogito state when he had the experiences.
2. But this argument starts with premises that are to lead to the conclusion that occurent CDIPs are true.
3. These premises themselves are doubtful and fall within the scope of the various doubts that Descartes has already taken up.
4. Therefore, Descartes is not entitled to believe or to rely on the premises.
5. Therefore, Descartes is not entitled to the conclusion to which the premises lead.
6. Therefore, Descartes’s argument is inevitably ineffectual since he has not succeeded in removing the doubt about his occurent CDIPs.
In a nutshell, the “ineffectuality argument” (Della Rocca 2005, 4) claims that

(A) If Descartes is, prior to the conclusion of his theological argument in the Third and Fourth Meditations, at most merely psychologically (and thus not normatively) certain of propositions in general, then Descartes cannot by means of argument go on to acquire normative certainty of some proposition.

Where other attempts at dissolving the criticism have largely been ineffective, Della Rocca sees his as successful. His solution to the CC, although not entirely unique in its general strategy, is nonetheless attractive. Its broad strategy agrees with some other interpretations that deny the antecedent of (A), i.e., those that hold that Descartes starts off with more than psychological certainty of at least some claims. And in its basic strategy it is similar to those of John Cottingham (1986) and James Van Cleve (1994, 58-62). It agrees largely with the interpretations of Janet Broughton (2002, 1-217), Keith DeRose (1992, 220-38), and John Etchemendy (1981, 5-42).

Although there are similarities between Della Rocca’s interpretation and those of Broughton, DeRose, and Etchemendy, there are differences as well between them. Della Rocca’s interpretation does not assign much role to the argument for the existence and veracity of God, but Etchemendy’s does. Etchemendy’s emphasis on memory is also a point of departure between the two. DeRose’s solution denies that all CDIPs initially have a complete-blown normative certainty, but Della Rocca’s solution argues that they do. And finally, whereas Broughton’s interpretation claims that the meditator is not initially normatively certain of some (and perhaps many) CDIPs and require the theological argument in order to achieve that status, Della Rocca’s interpretation claims that the meditator is initially normatively certain of all CDIPs insofar as he attends to them.

Della Rocca’s strategy roughly has three parts. In the first part, he presents and analyzes textual passages that he claims support the view that the antecedent of (A) is not violated in Descartes’s thought. In the second part, he argues for how the textual passages prove that Descartes regards the antecedent of (A) as false and that Descartes sees himself as being at the outset normatively certain of occurrent CDIPs (Della Rocca 2005, 8). And in the third part, he draws two conclusions from the first two parts. The first (which we shall call C1) is that if Descartes has normative certainty of occurrent CDIPs prior to the conclusion of his theological argument, then God is not part of the “framework” for establishing the necessary truth of these experiences, although the experiences themselves provide the “foundation” for establishing the existence of God. The second (let us call this C2) is that if God is not necessary to establishing the necessary truth of occurrent CDIPs, then Descartes accords God no pivotal philosophical role in his epistemology; therefore, Descartes can be interpreted as taking steps of disentangling God from epistemology.

About the normative certainty of CDIPs and scientia, Della Rocca (2005, 8) writes:

It is because we do not have normative certainty of the claim after we perceive it clearly and distinctly that Descartes says that our
apprehension of this claim does not yet amount to \textit{scientia}, an awareness that is not vulnerable even to retrospective reasons for doubt. It is for the same reason that, for Descartes, an atheist (who, \textit{qua} atheist, lacks a proof that his remembered clear and distinct ideas are true) can never achieve \textit{scientia}.

Let me examine Della Rocca's strategy in more detail, using as my point of discussion C1 and C2. I begin with C1. At \( t_1 \) (this very moment), in the cogito state, when Descartes (the meditator) is having occurrent CDIPs he has more than mere psychological certainty of the truth of those experiences—\textit{he is normatively certain of them}. That is, he is compelled to accept the truths of occurrent CDIPs because of the nature of the experiences themselves or, as Margaret Wilson (1978a) puts it, it is because "it is a \textit{feature} of \( p \)'s [occurrent CDIPs] being 'most manifest' to him [Descartes] that he \textit{knows} he's not being deceived." However, after the fact, say at a later time \( t_2 \), in the noncogito state and when \( p \) is no longer having occurrent CDIPs, and thus no longer has the kind of certainty that the experiences afford him while he was in the cogito-like state, he may wonder whether his previous occurrent CDIPs are necessarily true (Della Rocca 2005, 12). If the meditator is normatively certain of his CDIPs at \( t_1 \), prior to the theological argument, then the supposed circular reasoning, according to which the certainty of his CDIPs depends on the existence of a veracious and benevolent God and the existence of this type of God, which depends on the certainty of his CDIPs, disappears.

Della Rocca is not satisfied with C1, however. Unlike others that have drawn a similar conclusion, he takes his project a step further—he draws C2. He (2005, 30) claims that the project's resolution of the ineffectuality argument/CC establishes the point at which Descartes begins to loosen the ties between God and epistemology. The nub of the argument for C2 is this: if the meditator is normatively certain of CDIPs and prior to any sort of cognition of God, then the fact that he only needs to check up on God for retrospective certainty with regard to his nonoccurrent CDIPs and not with regard to occurrent CDIPs entails that Descartes takes important steps to disentangle epistemology from God.

Thus, in Della Rocca's strategy, C1 dissolves the ineffectuality argument/CC and C2 gives us a reading of the "E minus God" view. As attractive as Della Rocca's project is, I think, that there are areas where it had gotten Descartes wrong, particularly in the claim that God plays no pivotal role in Descartes's epistemology. I think that Della Rocca is right that occurrent CDIPs have a confidence-inducing character, i.e., they compelled our will to assent to their truth. Thus we are in agreement on the issue of the meditator having normative certainty of occurrent CDIPs prior to the conclusion of the theological argument in the Third Meditation. However, I do want to suggest in my own reading and account that the meditator needs the conclusion of the argument to validate his normative certainty of occurrent CDIPs. Although I am in agreement with Della Rocca with regard to the normative certainty of occurrent CDIPs, I think he is wrong to claim that Descartes accords God no essential philosophical role in his epistemology. I believe that Descartes's texts do not support this view. Given what Descartes's texts say about knowledge,
and the relationship between \textit{scientia} and MFK, it does seem that he takes God to be central to epistemology. I take up this issue in the next section.

II. WHY THE EPISTEMOLOGY WITHOUT GOD VIEW IS MISTAKEN

I begin by outlining three key claims for my argument that the “E minus God” view is mistaken. Firstly, that although Descartes can be said to have normative certainty of occurrent CDIPs prior to the conclusion of the theological argument, this certainty is not \textit{scientia}. Secondly, that Descartes takes \textit{scientia} to be knowledge in the fullest sense. Thirdly, that knowledge in this sense involves recognition of MFK.

My showing that the “E minus God” view is wrong should at the same time provide me (so I hope) a way of shedding some light on the claim that the “E plus God” view is a plausible reading of Descartes’s EP, insofar as his project is concerned with \textit{scientia} and insofar as an acknowledgment of MFK is antecedent to \textit{scientia}. Thus I shall argue generally that for Descartes, God plays an essential philosophical role in his EP given that normative certainty of occurrent CDIPs is necessary, but not sufficient for \textit{scientia}, and \textit{scientia} requires an understanding of MFK. The basic form of my argument is this: Descartes starts off with a rigorous conception of knowledge according to which the meditator’s claims and convictions are indefeasible, i.e., so firm that they are incapable of being destroyed. He then claims that the meditator is normatively certain of his occurrent CDIPs because he knows and accepts them or he is compelled to assent to their truth both because of the essence of the occurrent CDIPs themselves and the nature of his being. Next, he suggests that, although the meditator is normatively certain of occurrent CDIPs prior to the theological argument, he lacks \textit{scientia} because he is yet to comprehend MFK. He then concludes that once MFK is established, the meditator can now be said to have \textit{scientia}. So although occurrent CDIPs are not vulnerable to metaphysical doubt, acknowledgement of MFK is necessary if one is to have \textit{scientia}. By establishing the existence of God, which the meditator does in the conclusion of the theological argument in the Third Meditation, he “validates” his normative certainty of occurrent CDIPs which then secures him knowledge in the fullest sense.

Two of the central claims in Della Rocca’s “E minus God” view which I am in agreement with are that the meditator is in a higher normatively valuable epistemic position with regard to occurrent CDIPs in general and that he has such certainty prior to the conclusion of the theological argument in particular. Looking closely at the structure of the “I am, I exist” experience which Descartes described in the Second Meditation, it is clear that these are claims that are not alien to him. One thing that seems clear about the cogito experience is that it exhibits certain features that make its truth necessary. Descartes (1996, AT VII 25; 1985, CSM I, 17) says this with regard to the experience: “[T]his proposition, \textit{I am, I exist}, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind.” Just before this, he (1996, AT VII 25; 1985, CSM II 17) had remarked about the impossibility of being deceived when he is in the cogito state: “[L]et him deceive me as much as he can, he will never bring it about that I am nothing so long as I think that I am something.” The point then is that the “I am, I exist” experience is such that it by itself provides the meditator normative certainty of his existence and the feature of his thoughts. Being in the experience Descartes cannot
but fail to be normatively certain of the CDIPs that he attends to. For some articulation of the connection between the meditator’s CDIPs and his certainty, see Della Rocca (2005, 20-21). For whenever he attends to the proposition or has occurrent CDIPs his mind is compelled to assent to their truth. Thus the cogito experience can be said to give Descartes immunity from any metaphysical doubt whatsoever. And thus one could say of the experience as generating some basis for Descartes’s EP or as Peter Markie (1997, 34-36) puts it, as providing some support for Descartes’s epistemology and metaphysics.

The reading that the meditator is in a higher normatively valuable epistemic position with regard to occurrent CDIPs is in general agreement with the interpretation provided by some other scholars, notably Broughton and Carriero. On both of these scholars’ reading, the “I am, I exist” experience ferries the meditator away from metaphysical doubts to the vicinity of knowledge. That is, the structure of the “I am, I exist” experience provides him a basis for rejecting the antecedent of (A) or at the very least reasons to be skeptical of its truth. For Broughton (2002, 84-185), given what the meditator has accomplished with the experience in the Second Meditation he has strong reasons to reject the antecedent of (A). According to her, if all that Descartes has at the conclusion of the “I am, I exist” experience is some certainty that still leaves his occurrent CDIPs open to all the skeptical and hyperbolic doubts that he has already taken up in the First Meditation, then not much is accomplished in the Second Meditation, which seems clearly not the case given what Descartes says about the “I am, I exist” experience in the Second Meditation. As for Carriero (2009, 41), he argues that the antecedent of (A) is false because it implies, firstly, that Descartes was not certain of the cogito experience and, secondly, that what he establishes with the experience is something like this: “I am not all-but-certain that I exist, I am certain that I exist.” He claims that it is not that the meditator fails, in the “I am, I exist” experience, to accept the possibility of some metaphysical doubt but that such doubt does not faze him because he can clearly see that he exists and is something.

However, to say that Descartes is in a higher normatively valuable epistemic position with regard to occurrent CDIPs and that he goes into the theological argument with such certainty does not entail that he has scientia, and that God plays no pivotal philosophical role in his epistemology. This is especially clear when we consider Descartes’s conception of knowledge. Descartes defines knowledge in terms of doubt. He portrays knowledge as enduring: as convictions that are “so strong that they can never be shaken,” as “incapable of being destroyed,” or “so firm that it is impossible for us to ever have any reason for doubting” (Descartes 1996, AT VII 144-45; 1985, CSM II 102-103).

In the Second Reply, Descartes (1996, AT VII 145; 1985, CSM 10) elaborates a bit more about these ideas:

First of all, as soon as we think we correctly perceive something, we are spontaneously convinced that it is true. Now if this conviction is so firm that it is impossible for us to ever have any reason for doubting what we are convinced of, then there are no further questions for us to ask: we have everything that we could reasonably want.... For the supposition which we are making here is of a conviction so firm that it is quite incapable of being destroyed; and such a conviction is clearly the same as the most perfect certainty. [Emphases mine.]
And in a 1640 letter to Henricus Regius, he (1996, AT III 64-65; 1991, CSMK 147) distinguishes between rigorous knowledge or knowledge in the fullest sense (i.e., *scientia*) and lesser grades of conviction or certainty.

I distinguish the two as follows: there is conviction when there remains some reason which might lead us to doubt, but knowledge is conviction based on a reason so strong that it can never be shaken by any stronger reason. *Nobody can have the latter unless he also has knowledge of God.*

[Emphases mine.]

Notice the emphasis here on God and its relationship to *scientia*, which Descartes calls second or higher degree of conviction. One that has no comprehension of God can only have what Descartes calls first degree conviction, but one that comprehends God certainly has *scientia*. These passages take Descartes to be clearly making the point that knowledge excludes any strong or slight reason for doubt, that it is conviction *so firm that it is incapable of being destroyed*, that it is *the same as the most perfect certainty*, and that one can only have this type of knowledge if one *comprehends God*. Simply stated, for Descartes, to have *scientia* is to possess the *most perfect certainty* which is the same thing as to have a conviction that is *so firm that it is incapable of being destroyed*, and to possess this requires an understanding of God.

These passages (and others), according to Lex Newman, suggest that Descartes understands doubt as the contrast of certainty. Newman notes that on this view, as the meditator’s certainty increases, his doubt decreases; conversely, as his doubt increases, his certainty decreases. Thus for Descartes, “The requirement that knowledge is to be based on complete, or prefect certainty, amounts to requiring a complete absence of doubt—and *indubitability*, or inability to undermine one’s conviction” (Newman 2000). Or as Markie (1997, 33) puts it: “Descartes goes looking for something absolutely certain, beyond even the slightest, most unreasonable doubt to serve as the foundation for his knowledge.”

To help us understand this view of knowledge and the distinction that Descartes is making between weak conviction (or doubt) and strong conviction (or most perfect certainty) let us turn our attention to the different types of certainty that he discusses in the *Meditations*. Carriero claims that Descartes makes a clear distinction between two modes of cognition: plain certainty and full or metaphysical certainty. First Carriero (2009, 345-46) says:

Evidently, there are two types of certainty, both involving truth—plain certainty and full certainty. This is confirmed later in the Fifth Meditation, when Descartes implies that there are different “grades [gradus]” of certainty.

Then later Carriero (2009, 348) adds:

Clearly perceiving by itself...entail only lower grade of certainty, the one I’ve called plain certainty...as opposed to metaphysical certainty. So cognition...especially clear cognition...(knowing in the sense of being acquainted with) belong to [full or metaphysical certainty].
What Carriero takes as plain and full certainty, Newman (2000) calls “minimum standard of justification” and “highest standard of justification.” The former he says “targets the level of certainty arising when the mind’s perception is both clear and distinct,” where such perceptions is different from scientia and the latter targets certainty that is totally indefeasible, that is, “incapable of being destroyed,” where such indefeasibility implies more than mere stability and is the same as scientia. Thus although Descartes, according to Newman, allows judgments grounded in CDIPs he “wants a brand of certainty/indubitability that is of the highest rank, both in terms of degree and durability,” namely, “knowledge that is utterly indefeasible.”

Given the distinction between the different types of certainty we can conclude this about normative certainty: that insofar as both plain and full certainty involve the notion of clearly perceiving and that normative certainty is not scientia, then normative certainty turns out to be exhausted by plain certainty. In the remaining part of the paper I shall simply be using “certainty” to stand for “perceiving clearly” or “normative certainty” and when I refer to “full certainty” it should be taken to mean scientia.

Carriero has articulated, clearly in my view, the idea of how certainty in and of itself does not amount to scientia and how certainty takes on a different meaning and significance once MFK is factored into the equation. The following long quote suggests this line of reasoning.

Keeping firmly in view the difference between clearly perceiving and scientia helps us to see why Descartes does not hold that I know everything I know through knowing the foundations of my knowledge, and so why there is no foundational circle. Perceiving works clearly whether or not I have reached scientia. To be sure, once I have reached scientia (by perceiving clearly the metaphysical underpinnings of knowledge), I will view my clear perceiving differently.... [Without a doubt], it is not true for Descartes that knowing the foundations is necessary for any cognitive success. Perceiving clearly works without my understanding the metaphysical underpinnings of cognition. When I perceive clearly, the truth is revealed to me and I am aware of its being so revealed. However, simply perceiving clearly does not yield knowledge in the fullest sense, full certainty is scientia. (Carriero 2009, 354-56)

If Carriero is right, then the claims that in clearly perceiving the meditator does not have to understand MFK in order to grasp the truth of those perceptions since the truth is revealed to him simply by virtue of having the perceptions. On the other hand, that the certainty in and of itself is not scientia should lead us to reject the claim that God plays no essential role in Descartes’s EP. Later, I will come back to Descartes’s discussion of the different types of certainty and scientia and show how this provides further support to the view that God is central to his EP.

III. THE EPISTEMOLOGY WITH GOD VIEW

I now want to argue that God plays an essential philosophical role in Descartes’s epistemology even though the meditator has certainty of occurrent CDIPs prior to the conclusion of the theological argument. I will argue this by showing that (i) the certainty of occurrent
CDIPs that Descartes has in the Second Meditation and prior to the conclusion of the theological argument in the Third Meditation already presuppose the existence of God, and (ii) he needs the conclusion of the theological argument to “validate” both his certainty of occurent CDIPs and to have *scientia*.

How does the certainty of occurent CDIPs that Descartes has in the Second Meditation and prior to the conclusion of the theological argument in the Third Meditation presuppose the existence of God? They do simply in virtue of the meditator being compelled to assent to their truth or by their confidence-inducing feature. This is what Newman and Alan Nelson (1999, 381) call the Certainty Thesis, “I am certain that God exists only because (I am certain that p, if I clearly and distinctly attend to p and its proof).” The meditator is compelled to assent to occurent CDIPs because of this feature and the way his nature is, both of which presuppose God as the author of eternal verities and of his nature.

I should like to point out that there is a difference between the claim that the meditator’s certainty of occurent CDIPs depends on God and the claim that God does or does not have the power to make false normatively certain CDIPs. The latter claim concerns the confidence-inducing feature of occurent CDIPs, which falls under the territory of eternal truths and their relationship with God, and the former is about the condition that makes possible the meditator’s having certainty of occurent CDIPs. A different way of cashing out the difference is that the former is about meditators, or the “subjects” of those perceptions, whereas the latter is about CDIPs themselves, or the “objects” of such perceptions.

As for the issue of eternal truths and the necessary truth of CDIPs and whether or not God can make them false, it is clear that Descartes thinks that God can. There are passages where Descartes gives clear indication of this. In his Letter of 27 May 1630 to Mersenne, Descartes (1996, AT 1152; 1991, CSMK 25) says that God is the “author of the essence of created things, no less than of their existence; and this essence is nothing other than the eternal truths.” Some other representative passages where Descartes says that God has the power to make eternal truths false include:

> You...ask what necessitated God to create these truths; and I reply that he was free to make it not true that all the radi of the circle are equal—just as free as he was not to create the world”; “I turn to the difficulty of conceiving how God would have been acting freely and indifferently if he had made it false that the three angles of a triangle were equal to two right angles, or in general that contradictories could not be true together. It is easy to dispel this difficulty by considering that the power of God cannot have any limits. [Descartes, Letter to Mesland (2 May 1644), 1996, AT IV 118 & 1991, CSMK 235]

> I do not think that we should ever say of anything that it cannot be brought about by God. For since every basis of truth and goodness depends on his omnipotence, I would not dare to say that God cannot make a mountain without a valley, or bring it about that 1 and 2 are not 3. [Descartes, Letter to Arnauld (29 July 1648), 1996, AT V 224 & 1991, CSMK 358-59]

If this is so, then it is problematic to make sense in talking of the necessary truth of CDIPs. For if these are by nature normatively certain and thus true, then clearly they cannot
be made false not even by God. And if God can make them false, then they are not by nature normatively certain and true. Wilson (1978a, 134; 1978b, 453-56) puts the problematic thus:

If it is a feature of p’s being “most manifest” to him that he knows he’s not being deceived, then it is not “easy” for God to bring it about that he’s deceived “even in his most distinct intuitions.” But this proposition is not one that Descartes can nonchalantly abandon as a temporary misconception. To deny it would surely be to acknowledge a striking limitation on God’s power.

Della Rocca (2005, 21-25 and fn. 38) has suggested various ways in which we might think that for Descartes there is no genuine incompatibility between God’s power over CDIPs and the fact that they are necessarily true or normatively certain. One of such ways would be for Descartes to reject any inference from the power of God over the truth of CDIPs to the claim that, therefore, CDIPs are not necessarily true or that by nature are not normatively certain. Stated differently, Descartes could simply deny that the fact that “God has power over the truth of [CDIPs] does not entail that it is not necessary that [CDIPs] are true and normatively certain” or that CDIPs are not by nature true and normatively certain. Thus, although Descartes holds the view that the essences of things are not independent of God’s power and will, Descartes could claim that despite God’s power over the truth (and certainty) of CDIPs, such ideas can nevertheless by their very nature be necessarily true and normatively certain.

On Della Rocca’s interpretation it seems then that not only is it that such ideas presuppose the existence of God because they are necessarily true but also the importance of God to their being necessarily true. The ideas presuppose God’s existence simply because they are necessarily true. Another way of putting this is that it is because God has given them a particular essence, an essence of being necessarily true that they are necessarily true. This would be the case if God has power of their essences and their being necessarily true. Given that God has given them such and such a nature, a nature that makes them necessarily true they cannot be otherwise—they must have to be necessarily true. However, insofar as our cognition of these ideas and of their necessary truths points us to their essences, which God has given them, it is thus not simply the case that this puts the power of God over them on display but the fact that their truth does firmly depend on God. For if God were to give them a different essence we may suppose that they would cease to be necessarily true. If this is right, then Loeb’s dissimulation hypothesis is suspect and the claim that Descartes either knowingly or unknowingly takes significant steps towards disentangling God from epistemology, beginning with his rendering of him less important with regard to some claims—namely, necessary truths or normative certainty of occurrent CDIPs—is questionable, if not egregiously misleading.

A similar argument can be made with regard to the claim about the condition that makes it possible for our being normatively certain of occurrent CDIPs. Again, the focus is on essence, but in this case the essence of humans or our cognition. The simple idea is that our nature qua human or the essence of our cognition is such that it is naturally compelled to assent to occurrent CDIPs, or to be normatively certain of them, for we can imagine some possible worlds where our nature is not naturally compelled to assent to
their truth or certainty. For if we were to have a different essence or if God (for Descartes) has given us different cognitive powers we may fail to have normative certainty of CDIPs.

The plausibility of the above claim is accentuated if we consider Descartes's account of judgment and error, where truth and falsehood result from the joint operation of both the faculties of intellect and will, and a judgment is made when the will assents to an idea that is in the intellect. For Descartes, God is not the source of the error in judgment that we make since he has given us the right sort of faculties for knowledge. The point is that error is at least in principle discoverable by us and that since God has created us with the right sorts of faculties we are capable of avoiding error if the faculties are used correctly.3

In thinking about being compelled to assent to truth and about our cognitive powers, we can think of an analogy between the claim that it is because we have such and such a nature that we are compelled to assent to the truth of CDIPs and to our natural desire or instinct for survival. Humans naturally gravitate towards things that enhance their survival or self-preservation just as they move away from things that seem to diminish it. Thus, when an individual's survival is threatened such individual is naturally compelled to, first and foremost, seek his or her self-preservation. There is nothing much that we can say about this desire other than that we just happen to have such a nature. Given our knowledge of biology our explanation of why we have such a desire or such a nature or why we are what we are with regard to the natural compulsion for self-preservation simply boils down to the way our bodies and minds are and work. As simplistic as this may appear there is nothing more that we can add by way of explanation. Since it is just about our biology we certainly can imagine some possible worlds where our nature is such that we do not naturally seek our self-preservation.

Descartes's account of true and immutable natures (specifically concerning the idea of a triangle) in the Fifth Meditation seems to point to the view I am suggesting here that the idea of necessary truths or our normative certainty of CDIPs presuppose God.

When, for example, I imagine a triangle, even if perhaps no such figure exists, or has ever existed anywhere outside my thought, there is still a determinate nature, or essence, or form of the triangle which is immutable and eternal, and not invented by me or dependent on my mind. This is clear from the fact that various properties can be demonstrated of the triangle, for example that its three angles equal two right angles, that its properties are ones which I now clearly recognize whether I want or not, even if I never thought of them at all when I previously imagined the triangle, it follows that they cannot have been invented by me. (Descartes 1996, AT VII 64; 1985, CSM II 44-45)

The point here is not that from the idea of a triangle the meditator arrives at or "builds" such truths as the Pythagorean Theorem, but rather that by examining and going over the idea of the triangle he discovers that the theorem (and all other truths about such geometrical figures) is latent (or inherent) in the idea. And as it applies to CDIPs we discover through our examination (following along in the Meditations) that the divine guarantee is inherent in our CDIPs or that God is presupposed by our being compelled to assent to their truth. This can be further illustrated with the example of the experience of
a body in motion. One's experience of a body in motion presupposes space and time, and so one does not "build" the concepts of space and time from the ground up or the experience of a body in motion; rather one discovers by an examination of the experience that space and time are already present.

So what I am suggesting here is that for Descartes, the initial CDIPs that he discovers by meditating (such as the cogito) turn out after examination to presuppose the existence of God. However, although the notion of God is latent in the meditator's occurrent CDIPs, he does need to validate the CDIPs as well as his nature in order to have scientia. A different way of saying this is that the certainty that the meditator has prior to the theological argument or acknowledgement of MFK is unstable. There are at least two ways in which something, an idea or certainty of CDIPs, can be considered unstable. Firstly, when it is open to be falsified, that is when there are doubts that could undermine it. Secondly, when such an idea has not been validated and thus leaves one wondering now and then if it is falsifiable (in principle or practically). The sense in which the meditator's normative certainty of CDIPs is unstable is in the second sense—the sense that it has not been validated. Such validation requires comprehending facts about the author of his nature which he does not yet comprehend from the idea of God that is presupposed by his certainty of occurrent CDIPs. He does such validation by arguments or formal proofs of the existence of God (which the meditator does in the Third and Fifth Meditations). By carrying out the validation the meditator gives his certainty of the CDIPs firm stability and elevates it to scientia. Thus, it could be said that God is no less pivotal or essential in Descartes's epistemology insofar as, on the one hand, God is presupposed by the meditator's being compelled to assent to the truth of occurrent CDIPs, namely, God's place in the nature of necessary truths, and his centrality in our nature that is so compelled to assent; and, on the other hand, given that Descartes's epistemology aims for scientia and scientia requires comprehending MFK.

I now want to come back to Descartes's discussion of the degrees of certainty and scientia focusing on how this distinction provides further support for the view that God is central in epistemology. I will be looking at passages in the Meditations where Descartes both draws a distinction between certainty and full certainty and shows that only the latter constitutes scientia. The first is in the Third Meditation (let us call this MIIIId):

And since I have no cause to think that there is a deceiving God, and I do not yet even know for sure whether there is a God at all, any reason for doubt which depends simply on this supposition is a very slight and, so to speak, metaphysical one. But in order to remove even this slight reason for doubt, as soon as the opportunity arises I must examine whether there is a God, and, if there is, whether he can be a deceiver. For if I do not know this, it seems that I can never be fully certain about anything else. (Descartes 1996, AT VII.36; 1985; CSM II.25; emphases mine)

And the other is in the Fifth Meditation:

Thus I see plainly that the certainty and truth of all knowledge depends uniquely on my awareness of the true God, to such an extent that I was incapable of perfect
knowledge about anything else until I became aware of him. And now it is possible for me to achieve full and certain knowledge of countless matters, both concerning God himself and other things whose nature is intellectual, and also concerning the whole of that corporeal nature which is the subject-matter of pure mathematics. (Descartes 1996, AT VII 71; 1985, CSM II 49; emphases mine)

Descartes is here expressing the view that the certainty that he has before his "awareness of the true God" falls short of scientia. Notice that in both passages Descartes identifies that what the meditator lacks is perfect knowledge at this stage of the meditation because he is unaware of MFK. The lack of comprehension of MFK prevents him from being able to justify to himself his nature that has such occurrent CDIPs, and consequently to validate their certainty. Until he does such validation he would simpliciter have certainty and not scientia. Here my views agree with those of Carriero with regard to the various kinds of certainty and the difference between certainty and scientia in Descartes's Epist (Carriero 2009, 354-56).

MIIId comes right after three other passages in the same Meditation. The first passage concerns propositions that are perceived clearly in mathematics. We shall call this MIIId.

But what about when I was considering something very simple and straightforward in arithmetic or geometry, for example that two and three added together make five, and so on? Did I not see at least these things clearly enough to affirm their truth? (Descartes 1996, AT VII 35-36; 1985 CSM II 25)

The next, which we shall call MIIBb, concerns the possibility of God deceiving him when he perceives clearly.

And whenever my preconceived belief in the supreme power of God comes to mind, I cannot but admit that it would be easy for him, if he so desired, to bring it about that I go wrong even in those matters which I think I see utterly clearly with my mind's eyes. (Descartes 1996, AT VII 35-36; 1985, CSM II 25)

And the third, which we shall call MIIIC, is about immunity from doubt of CDIPs.

Yet when I turn to things themselves which I think I see perceive very clearly, I am so convinced by them that I spontaneously declare: let whoever can do so deceive me, he will never bring it about that I am nothing, so long as I continue to think I am something; or make it true at some future time that I have never existed, since it is now true that I exist; or bring it about that two and three added together are more or less than five, or anything of this kind in which I see a manifest contradiction. (Descartes 1996, AT VII 35-36; 1985, CSM II 25)

The main idea expressed in passage MIIIC is similar to other passages where Descartes talks about the immunity to doubt of some occurrent CDIPs. These CDIPs are immune from
doubt and he has certainty of them simply because they are revealed to the meditator by natural light (Descartes 1996, ATVII 13, ATV 148, 178, 460, ATVII 38, 65; 1991, CSMK 334, 353; 1985, CSM II 27, 45, 197, 309).

Della Rocca (2009, 9-15) takes MIIIc and some other passages to establish the claim that Descartes “is in a normatively valuable epistemic position” with regard to all CDIPs. I am in agreement with him here. However, where he goes amiss is to then claim that these passages sanction the view that the meditator has scientia and that God occupies no central role in Descartes’s epistemology. As our discussion of the necessary truths of CDIPs has shown not only is God presupposed by the meditator being compelled to assent to their truth, he acquires scientia when he acknowledges MFK. This is clearly brought out in those passages where Descartes both distinguishes between scientia and lesser grades of conviction, and highlights the relationship between scientia and God.

That this view is right can be seen from the order of presentation of passages MIIIa to MIIId in the Third Meditation. In MIIIa, the meditator is concerned about what to make of propositions (see n. 4) in mathematics like 2 + 3 = 5 that he clearly perceives. In MIIIB he expresses some reservation about occasional CDIPs given that God can bring it about such that he goes wrong even with such experiences. MIIIc shrugs off this idea by affirming that his certainty of occasional CDIPs can withstand any attempt by anyone that so desires to deceive him about them. In other words, MIIIc establishes the point that he has certainty of occasional CDIPs for which there remains no metaphysical doubt. MIIId acknowledges that God may not be a deceiver, but given that the meditator does not fully know this yet, he cannot have scientia until he examines “whether there is a God, and, if there is, whether he can be a deceiver.” Since God, for Descartes, is the ground of the eternal verities and has the power and will over necessary truths as well as over our nature, the offer of formal proofs for his existence and nature validates the meditator’s certainty of CDIPs and the meditator’s nature. The point then is that no matter the amount of certainty of occasional CDIPs that the meditator has he still does not have knowledge in the fullest sense, not until he establishes facts about the author of the eternal verities and about his nature. He establishes these facts when he comprehends MFK.

It is important to remember that MIIId comes right after MIIIa, MIIIB, and MIIIc. Notice the claim that Descartes makes at the end of MIIId: “For if I do not know this [whether there is a God, and, if there is, whether he can be a deceiver], it seems that I can never be fully certain about anything else.” He makes a similar point in the Fifth Meditation: “Thus I see plainly that the certainty and truth of all knowledge depends uniquely on my awareness of the true God, to such an extent that I was incapable of perfect knowledge about anything else until I became aware of him.” Notice as well that he says “the certainty and truth of all knowledge” and not “the certainty and truth of some knowledge,” which is the same point he makes to Regius when he notes that “Nobody can have the latter [scientia] unless he also has knowledge of God.” So all in all, it seems that, for Descartes, even with the certainty that the meditator has of occasional CDIPs, if he does not recognize MFK he would never have true and perfect knowledge.

At this junction, it will be helpful to consider some of the ways in which the meditator may lack certainty or knowledge. He may lack certainty or knowledge in any of the following four areas, if he
(1) relies on his senses and is deceived by them;  
(2) is deceived variously by the evil genius;  
(3) is deceived by God;  
(4) has a nature that is prone to error even when he seems to clearly perceive.

The First Meditation simply shows the folly of relying on the senses; hence, Descartes considers (1) a nonstarter. As we have seen, the cogito experience in the Second Meditation rules out (2). With regard to (3) God can deceive him in many matters such as those pertaining to retrospective certainty. The theological arguments in the Third and Fifth Meditations are meant to prove that a benevolent and veracious God could do no such thing. And with regard to occurrent CDIPs God cannot deceive him with regard to their necessary truth since such truth unravels and points to the very existence of God who is the author of eternal verities. Point (4) is the crux here. For since the meditator needs to have scientia he must go beyond certainty of CDIPs since such certainty does not give him scientia. For although CDIPs have a confidence-inducing character he needs the conclusion of the theological argument to both validate this certainty and have scientia. The conclusion of the argument establishes the author of his nature in general and the facts about his nature in particular.

Descartes (1996, AT VII 77; 1985, CSM II 53) says this about his nature: “I saw nothing to rule out the possibility that my natural constitution made me prone to error even in matters which seemed to me most true.” Descartes is here making a very important point with regard to how we cognize our essence in terms of clearly perceiving. That is, how we know that our nature or faculty of intellect is not designed to be compelled to assent to the truth of ideas that may be false. Put differently, how do we know that error in judgment is not due to the nature of the faculties but to our use of them? Since Descartes believes that our cognitive faculties are given to us by God, an examination of one’s natural constitution or establishing that our cognitive faculties are not naturally prone to error even in matters that seem to us most true is invariably and inevitably an examination of the author of our nature. Such an examination is one that is important in his entire EP. For if we are aware that the author of our nature is benevolent and veracious, then we can have good reasons to believe that he has not given us a nature that is naturally prone to error even in matters that seem to us most true, or that our being compelled to assent to the truth of CDIPs is as they are. This is what Carriero (2009, 354-56) refers to as seeing perceiving differently or our clearly perceiving something different meanings. Thus, we could say that the examination is not just a validation of our certainty of CDIPs, but also a vindication of our cognitive faculties.

It is for this reason that Descartes says that the atheist mathematician does not have scientia although he may have certainty of occurrent CDIPs.

The fact that an atheist can be “clearly aware that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles” is something I do not dispute. But I maintain that this awareness [cognition] of his is not true knowledge [scientia], since no act of awareness that can be rendered doubtful seems fit to be called knowledge [scientia]. Now since we are supposing that this individual is an atheist, he cannot be certain that he is not deceived on matters which seem to him to be very evident... And although this doubt may not occur to him, it can
still crop up…. So he will never be free of this doubt until he acknowledges that God exists. (Descartes 1996, AT VII 141; 1985, CSM II 101)

Note the three important features in this passage. First, Descartes concedes that it is possible for the atheist to be clearly aware that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. An atheist mathematician, or one that attends to any demonstration, is in a cogito state; she has certainty of CDIPs. Second, Descartes claims that this type of certainty is not the most perfect certainty and, consequently, not scientia. Finally, Descartes provides the reason as to why the certainty of the atheist is not scientia—she is unaware of MFK.

There is an additional reason why the meditator would want to (and ought to) understand the author of his nature. Descartes discusses this in the Fifth Meditation:

But my nature is also such that I cannot fix my mental vision continually on the same thing so as to keep perceiving it clearly; and often the memory of a previously made judgment may come back, when I am no longer attending to the arguments which led me to make it. And so other arguments can now occur to me which might easily undermine my opinion, if I were unaware of God; and I should thus never have true and certain knowledge about anything, but only shifting and changeable opinions. For example, when I consider the nature of a triangle, it appears most evident to me…that its three angles are equal to two right angles; and so long as I attend to the demonstration, I cannot but believe this to be true…. But as soon as I turn my mind’s eye away from the demonstration, then in spite of still remembering that I perceived it very clearly, I can easily fall into doubt about its truth, if I am unaware of God. (Descartes 1996, AT VII 70; 1985, CSM II 48)

There are two points that we want to take away from this passage. Firstly, that insofar as the meditator has occurrent CDIPs he cannot but have certainty of them. And secondly, because the meditator cannot remain in the cogito-like state in perpetuity he has to worry about retrospective certainty. Note that the claim about retrospective certainty applies to clearly perceiving—namely, of any CDIPs—demonstrative and nondemonstrative. Take the former.

If we think of a demonstration in geometry or logic, its various and connected parts, and the fact that we are not able to attend to all of the parts continually, then demonstration for Descartes seems to serve as a set of reminders for bootstrapping our understanding. To be sure, we are not able to attend to all the elements in a demonstration. Since we cannot always attend to all the parts of our demonstrations—no matter how clearly we perceive the various parts—or indeed any of our CDIPs, the issue of how we guarantee their certainty and truth will always arise. Descartes’s strategy is to place such guarantee at the doorstep of God. For with the recognition of MFK we are able to fix our clearly perceiving or the nonoccurent CDIPs in our mind and to have retroactive certainty of them. Thus, unlike the atheist mathematician or the meditator that is unaware of the author of his nature, one that recognizes MFK is
not going to be fazed about the possibility of his natural constitution being prone to error or leading him to error even in matters which seemed to him most true. Whereas he is unfazed not only by the possibility of acquiring retrospective certainty of nonoccurrence CDIPs, he is secure in the certainty of his occurrent CDIPs in virtue of having validated them though the acknowledgment of the author of his nature. And if wherever any skeptical doubt whatsoever or worry about the possibility of their being falsifiable (in principle and in practice) were to and should arise again, he can now easily defeat and turn them back by considering MFK.

**CONCLUSION**

Without doubt questions about the role and significance of God in Descartes’s EP and the answers we give are pressing and important for anyone who engages with Descartes’s works. In this paper I have examined one answer to these questions against the backdrop of the traditional answer according to which Descartes assigns God a pivotal philosophical role in his epistemology. The alternate answer, Della Rocca’s “E minus God” reading takes God to play less than an essential philosophical role in Descartes’s EP. I have shown that this view contains several claims that are textually justified. Two of such claims are that the cogito experience provides Descartes certainty of some claims and that he has certainty of occurrent CDIPs prior to the conclusion of the theological argument. However, where the view is misguided is in the claim that certainty of occurrent CDIPs is sufficient for scientia and that God is peripheral in Descartes’s epistemology. I have argued that God is central to Descartes’s EP, insofar as such project is concerned about scientia. and scientia, for him, requires an acknowledgement of MFK in addition to being normatively certain of CDIPs. I argued against the “E minus God” view and consequently for the “E plus God” view by arguing for several related claims: that the certainty of occurrent CDIPs that Descartes has prior to the conclusion of the theological argument already presupposes in some form the existence of God; that for Descartes, scientia requires more than certainty of CDIPs; that the meditator needs the conclusion of the theological argument to validate his certainty of CDIPs; that such validation elevates the meditator’s certainty from just certainty to scientia.

Although the “E plus God” view differs from Della Rocca’s reading, it has some of the virtues and laudable aspects of the latter. Like the “E minus God” view it is able to dissolve the problematic of the CC since it takes the meditator to (a) have certainty of occurrent CDIPs prior to the conclusion of the theological argument, and (b) presuppose the existence of God. The meditator discovers through his examination (following along in the Meditations) that the divine guarantee is inherent in his CDIPs and does not begin with a CDIP (such as the cogito) and then “builds” the proof for the reliability of the CDIP by proving God’s existence, that God is not a deceiver which would be circular.³

**NOTES**

1. For some discussion of the prominence of God to Descartes’s philosophical system, see Daniel Garber (1992, 298; 2003); Carriero (2009, 240-78); Martial Gueroult

2. For a clear articulation of some of the ideas that point to the sort of argument I am presenting here, see Gary Hatfield (2003, 225-26).

3. For discussions of Descartes’s account of freewill and the nature of error that took him to locate error in our use of the faculties, see Carriero (2009, 240-78); Gueroult (1995, 203-36); Hatfield (2003, 183-202).

4. Rolando Grippaldo (2011, 67-15) has replaced the concept of the “proposition” with the “constative.”

5. See Newman and Nelson (1999, 370-404) for a different version of this interpretation of dissolving the CC. See also Carriero (2009, 355) for his claim that the interpretation of Descartes as not defending one sense of knowing may be seen as helping him avoid the CC.

REFERENCES


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Searle's and Penrose's Noncomputational Frameworks for Naturalizing the Mind

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John Searle and Roger Penrose are two staunch critics of computationalism who nonetheless believe that with the right framework the mind can be naturalized. While they may be successful in showing the shortcomings of computationalism, I argue that their alternative noncomputational frameworks equally fail to carry out the project to naturalize the mind. The main reason is their failure to resolve some fundamental incompatibilities between mind and science. Searle tries to resolve the incompatibility between the subjectivity of consciousness and the objectivity of science by means of conceptual clarification. He, however, fails to deal with the concepts crucial to this incompatibility, namely, the publicness of scientific knowledge and the privacy of psychological knowledge. Penrose tries to resolve the incompatibility between the non-computationality of psychological process and the computationality of scientific process by expanding the scope of science through some radical changes in quantum physics. His strategy, however, has the danger of trivializing the distinction between science and nonscience thereby putting into question the very value of the project to naturalize the mind. In addition, the feasibility of this strategy remains dubious in light of the mysteries that still surround quantum physics.

Introduction

The computational theory of mind (henceforth, computationalism) is one dominant framework for the naturalization of the mind or the assimilation of the mind into the scientific worldview. This framework is in fact what is adopted in cognitive science—the interdisciplinary scientific study of the mind. As Jay Freidenberg and Gordon Silverman (2006, 2-3) explain: "In order to really understand what cognitive science is all about we need to know what its theoretical perspective on the mind is. This perspective centers on the idea of computation, which may alternatively be called information processing" (see also Gardner 1985, 384-85; Harnish 2002, 2-7; Simon and Kaplan 1990,
2). Let us call the project to naturalize the mind the \textit{naturalization project} and their proponents \textit{naturalists}, while the project to carry out the naturalization project using the computational framework the \textit{computationalist project} and their proponents \textit{computationalists}.

It shall be observed that the failure of the naturalization project necessarily implies the failure of the computationalist project, but not vice versa; or the success of the computationalist project necessarily implies the success of the naturalization project, but not vice versa. In this consideration, we can divide critics of the computationalist project into two types: (1) those who believe that the mind is scientifically inexplicable and thus reject the feasibility of the naturalization project in all its possible forms, and (2) those who believe otherwise and thus maintain the feasibility of the naturalization project but only in its noncomputational form (that is, the use of a noncomputational framework to carry out the said project). We can call the former \textit{nonnaturalists}, while the latter \textit{noncomputationalists}. Nonnaturalists include the idealists, substance dualists, and natural mysterians;\textsuperscript{1} whereas noncomputationalists include both nonrealist materialists,\textsuperscript{2} under which we can classify the identity theorists, behaviorists, eliminative materialists, and instrumentalists, and realist materialists, under which we can classify the biological naturalists and proponents of Penrose's theory of mind—which I shall call the \textit{quantum view of consciousness}.\textsuperscript{3} By our lights, computationalists and noncomputationalists are hence both naturalists—both subscribe to the naturalization project and they just differ as regards the appropriate framework to carry out the said project. Now while the success of the noncomputationalists in naturalizing the mind will necessarily prove the nonnaturalists wrong, their failure to do so will not necessarily prove the nonnaturalists correct (unless we grant their success in proving the computationalists to be wrong). Be that as it may, their (the noncomputationalists') failure to naturalize the mind will definitely strengthen the case of the nonnaturalists.

In this essay, I will examine the case of two noncomputationalists, namely, John Searle and Roger Penrose. What makes their case quite unique and interesting is that after arguing vigorously against the computationalist project both have advanced noncomputational frameworks to carry out the naturalization project. I argue that while both may be successful in showing why the computational framework will not work (in carrying out the naturalization project), they fail to show how their alternative frameworks in turn will. And this, in the main, is due to their failure to resolve or overcome some fundamental incompatibilities between science and mind. I will show that Searle fails to resolve an incompatibility arising from the nature of psychological and scientific knowledge, while Penrose fails to resolve an incompatibility arising from the nature of psychological and scientific processes. The essay is divided into two parts. In the first part, I put in proper perspective the views of Searle and Penrose by situating these views in the developmental stages of the naturalization project. In the second part, I examine the plausibility of their arguments for securing the possibility of the naturalization project.

\textbf{NATURALIZATION PROJECT AND COMPUTATIONALISM}

With computationalism as the reference point, the development of the naturalization project can be divided into the \textit{precomputational}, \textit{computational},
and postcomputational stages. These stages are distinguished primarily in terms of how the realization of the naturalization project is conceived. These stages are doctrinal and not historical in orientation, as some theories that will be classified under different stages may have been conceived in roughly the same historical period.

The precomputational stage. The precomputational stage is basically a reaction to Cartesian dualism, which divides reality into two qualitatively different types of substance: mind, the thinking but nonspatially extended substance; and matter, the spatially extended but unthinking substance. This dualism puts the mind outside the purview of science, thereby rendering a science of the mind impossible. For this reason, the precomputational theories of mind are bent on showing the mistake of Cartesian dualism and on demonstrating that the mind, being a physical phenomenon, is very much within the compass of science. These theories argue for the nonexistence of the nonphysical Cartesian mind in two ways: by reducing mental phenomena to some form of physical phenomena, and by showing that the theory that postulates the existence of mental phenomena is either erroneous or held solely out of convenience or practical necessity.

Foremost of those that utilize the first method are identity theory, which reduces mental states to neural states (see Smart 1991, 169-76), and behaviorism, which reduces mental states to behavioral dispositions. On the other hand, foremost of those that utilize the second method are eliminative materialism (of Paul and Patricia Churchland), which shows that the theory that postulates the existence of mental phenomena—called “folk psychology”—is wrong and outdated (see Churchland 1991, 601-12), and instrumentalism of Daniel Dennett (1991, 613-33), which shows that the attribution of mental states to an entity is just a convenient device for predicting its behavior. All these theories, after rejecting the existence of a nonphysical mind, redefine the concept of the mind in physical terms. While for behaviorists the future science of the mind will be the same as a completed science of behavior, for the identity theorists, eliminative materialists, and instrumentalists, it will be the same as a completed science of the brain or neuroscience.

The computational stage. The computational stage develops as computer technology is utilized in the pursuit of the naturalization project. This technology is not only presently the most sophisticated, it also proves to be powerful and flexible enough to simulate complex human cognitive processes (see Pylyshyn 1990, 52; Rumelhart 1990, 133). The result of this utilization is computationalism, whose general thesis is that cognition is “a species of computing” (Pylyshyn 1990, 51) or, more specifically, that the mind is a kind of computer program that is realizable by appropriate pieces of computer hardware such as the human brain. Under this general thesis are the specific theses that human mental states and processes are computational states and processes, and that computers, believed to be capable of simulating human thought processes, are cognitive systems. In this stage, mental states are regarded neither as the states of some nonphysical substance nor as the physical states either of the brain or the external body, but as higher-level physical states realizable by the causal or functional organization of a physical system such as the computer and the human brain. In this
regard, the computational stage is a reaction to both Cartesian dualism and the precomputational theories of mind.

Two disciplines are directly involved in the development of computationalism: philosophy and artificial intelligence. In the area of philosophy, the functionalism of Hilary Putnam (1991, 197-203), which basically grew out of the weaknesses of identity theory and behaviorism, provided the impetus for the development of computationalism. The functionalist conception of the mind, however, was further solidified by the causal theory of mind developed by David Lewis (1991, 204-10) and D. Armstrong (1991, 181-88), according to which mental states are definable in terms of causal relations—that they are caused by some inputs and that they cause some outputs. There are two features of Putnam’s functionalism that made the development of computationalism its natural consequence. The first is the principle of multiple realizability, which states that functional states are realizable in various physical systems that have the appropriate functional or causal organization. The second is the use of the concept of the Turing machine—the theoretical forerunner of the present-day digital computer—as the model for demonstrating the said principle (it is in this regard that Putnam’s functionalism is sometimes qualified as “machine functionalism”). Accordingly, as minds are like Turing machines, they can also be realized by inorganic or mechanical physical systems like digital computers. This view culminated in the language of thought hypothesis of Jerry Fodor (1979), which argues that human cognition as a process of manipulating symbols uses a system of representation inherent in the human brain.

In the area of artificial intelligence, a subfield of computer science devoted to the construction of intelligent machines, the clearest expression of computationalism can be found in Herbert Simon and Allen Newell’s physical symbol system hypothesis, which regards intelligent systems as physical systems that manipulate symbols. Later on, two approaches to computationalism are distinguished: the classical (or the symbolic) model and the connectionist (or artificial neural network) model. The classical model, identified with Jerry Fodor (1979), Zenon Pylyshyn (1990), Herbert Simon (1995), and Allen Newell et al. (1990), regards computing as symbol manipulation happening in a serial manner; while the connectionist model, identified with David Rumelhart (1990), James McClelland et al. (1995), and Paul Smolensky (1993), among others, regards computing as activations of (or the exchange of information among) the various units in neural networks happening in a parallel manner.

The postcomputational stage. As computationalism raises objections to precomputational theories of mind, postcomputational theories of mind in turn raise objections to computationalism. Postcomputational theories of mind, to begin with, share with computationalism the view that mental states are higher-level physical states; but they disagree with computationalism that these higher-level physical states are computational states. There are thus two sides to the arguments of the postcomputational theories: a negative side, where the weaknesses of computationalism are shown; and a positive side, where an alternative model for the naturalization project is advanced. In current literature, two postcomputational theories of mind stand out: Searle’s biological naturalism and Penrose’s quantum view of consciousness.
Searle’s and Penrose’s negative arguments hinge on a putative fundamental difference between the thinking process of humans and the computing process of machines/computers. Searle, through his *Chinese room argument* (see Searle 1980, 417-57), shows that this difference refers to the fact that human thinking process is inherently intentional, in that humans are aware of what their thoughts mean or represent in the world; while the computing process of computers is not, in that computers are not aware of what the symbols that they manipulate mean or represent in the world. Another way of saying this is that for human thinking both the semantics and syntax of its thoughts are necessary, while for the computing process of computers only the syntax of its symbols is necessary. As Searle (2004, 91) explains: “the computer operates by manipulating symbols. Its processes are defined purely syntactically, whereas the human mind has more than just uninterpreted symbols, it attaches meanings to the symbols.” Searle (2004, 92) later on also argues that the property of computationality is observer-relative, meaning, computationality is not an inherent property of things, even of computers, but an imposed one such that “you could not discover that the brain is a digital computer, because computation is not discovered in nature, it is assigned to it” (see also Searle 1990). Consequently, it is trivial to say that the mind or the brain is a digital computer for anything (such as a wall or a pail of water) can be a digital computer if it can be described as implementing some computation or algorithm.

On the other hand, Penrose, using insights derived from Gödel’s incompleteness theorem, shows that the putative difference refers to the fact that the human mind can transcend the rules of a formal system whereas the computer is necessarily bound by such rules. Penrose (1994, 64-65) writes: “...Gödel indisputably established...that no formal system of sound mathematical rules of proof can ever suffice, even in principle, to establish all the true propositions of ordinary arithmetic...his results showed something more than this, and established that human understanding and insight cannot be reduced to any set of computational rules.” To elaborate, a formal system, such as arithmetic, has propositions of two types. The first type refers to those whose truth is derivable from the rules of the formal system, and the second type refers to those whose truth is not derivable from the rules of the formal system. The human mind can recognize the truth of propositions of both types while the computer can only recognize the truth of propositions of the first type.

For their positive arguments, Searle turns to the discipline of biology while Penrose turns to that of physics. Accordingly, Searle’s biological naturalism argues that mental states are higher-level biological states whose properties (such as consciousness, qualia, and intentionality) are caused by the biological properties of the brain during the course of evolution. But though caused by these biological properties of the brain, mental properties, however, are not reducible to these same biological properties of the brain. Searle thus disputes the principle of multiple realizability, arguing that the biological makeup of the human brain is also essential for the production of mental properties. As Searle (2004, 113) writes: “Conscious states are realized in the brain as features of the brain system....” In other words, it is important for the system that realizes conscious states to be a brain system. On the other hand, Penrose’s quantum view of consciousness argues that consciousness, together with other properties of the mind such as intentionality and qualia, arises from the quantum activities in the cytoskeletal microtubules in the neurons of the human brain. Penrose (1994, 367) remarks:
I am contending that the faculty of human understanding lies beyond any computational scheme whatever. If it is microtubules that control the activity of the brain, then there must be something within the action of microtubules that is different from mere computation. I have argued that such noncomputational action must be the result of some reasonably large-scale quantum-coherent phenomenon...

In this connection, a revised quantum physics is what is needed to scientifically explain the workings of the mind. It has to be quantum physics since mental states are quantum states of the brain, and it has to be a revised quantum physics to accommodate the noncomputational nature of mental states.

Securing the possibility of the naturalization project

In telling us how they intend to carry out the naturalization project—as an alternative to the computationalist project—Searle and Penrose have not yet secured the possibility of this project. This is because they have yet to address the main obstacle to this project, namely, that there is something fundamentally incompatible between mind and science. This incompatibility, on closer inspection, is precisely what has given rise to what has been called the “explanatory gap” by Joseph Levine (1983, 354-61) and the “hard problem” by David Chalmers (1995, 200-19) concerning the study of consciousness or the mind in general. This incompatibility comes in a specific form in the context of the respective frameworks proposed by Searle and Penrose. For Searle, it is how the subjectivity of consciousness can be studied using the objective methods of science. For Penrose, it is the noncomputational nature of how the mind works that can be accommodated by science given the computational nature of its methods or procedures. On closer inspection, these two forms of incompatibility are closely related, if not interdefinable, for the subjective correlates with the noncomputational whereas the objective correlates with the computational. In what follows, let us look into how Searle and Penrose try to resolve the putative incompatibilities between mind and science.

OBJECTIVELY STUDYING THE SUBJECTIVE

After arguing that the computationalist project fails for leaving out the intentional feature of consciousness in its explanation of the workings of the mind, Searle proposes that consciousness be regarded as a higher-level biological phenomenon. This, however, does not yet address how consciousness given its subjective nature can be studied using the objective methods of biological science or of science in general. For his biological naturalism to be a viable alternative to the computationalist framework, he has to deal with this problem. Now Searle believes that he can resolve this difficulty simply by means of some conceptual clarification. Thus Searle (1999, 43) explains:

It is often argued that subjectivity prevents us from having a scientific account of consciousness, that subjectivity puts consciousness beyond the reach of scientific investigation. But typically, the argument rests on a
had syllogism. By exposing the fallacy in this syllogism, I believe we can come to understand subjectivity better. Here is how the argument goes:

1. Science is by definition objective (as opposed to subjective).
2. Consciousness is by definition subjective (as opposed to objective).
3. Therefore, there can be no science of consciousness.

Searle regards the above argument as a fallacy (particularly, an instance of *equivocation*) for containing ambiguous terms: the terms “objective” as ascribed to science and “subjective” as ascribed to consciousness. According to Searle’s analysis, these terms belong to different categories and are therefore not direct opposites. More specifically, the subjectivity of consciousness here, explains Searle, refers to the kind of existence attributed to consciousness; while the objectivity of science here refers to the kind of knowledge attributed to scientific knowledge. Since subjectivity refers to existence, Searle calls it “ontological subjectivity”; and since objectivity refers to knowledge, Searle calls it “epistemic objectivity.” Given these significations of the concepts *subjectivity* and *objectivity*, there is thus no contradiction in saying that there can be an objective study of a subjective phenomenon for what this really amounts to is that there can be an *epistemically objective study of an ontologically subjective phenomenon*.

In direct contrast to epistemic objectivity is, of course, epistemic subjectivity. As this dichotomy concerns knowledge, the question then is: What kind of knowledge is considered as subjective and what kind as objective? Searle (1999, 44-45) explains that if our knowledge is dependent on or is significantly affected by our attitudes and preferences, our knowledge is epistemically subjective; otherwise, it is epistemically objective. A paradigm example of epistemically subjective knowledge is the kind of knowledge involved in evaluative statements. If I judge, for instance, that Baroque music is better than pop music, I do so because of my attitudes and preferences. In contrast, a paradigm example of epistemically objective knowledge is the kind of knowledge involved in descriptive or factual statements. If I say, for instance, that “Jesu, joy of man’s desiring” was composed by Johann Sebastian Bach, I do so independent of my attitudes and preferences; that is to say, independent, for instance, of whether or not I prefer Baroque music to pop music. For whether I like it or not, such musical piece was composed by such composer. As scientific statements are factual and descriptive, such statements are thus epistemically objective.

On the other hand, in direct contrast to ontological subjectivity is ontological objectivity. And as this dichotomy concerns existence, the question then is: What type of existence is regarded as subjective and what type as objective? Searle (1999, 44-45) explains that the existence of something is subjective if it depends on some subject, while it is objective if it does not. The existence of conscious states is ontologically subjective in this regard since it is only meaningful to say that conscious states exist if there is some subject that has, experiences, or is conscious of them. For instance, pain and beliefs can only be said to exist if there is some subject that has or experiences them. It is absurd to say that there are pains and beliefs but no one has them. In contrast, the existence of physical and abstract entities is ontologically objective for it
is meaningful to say that they exist even if there is no subject who is conscious of them. God, mountains, and chairs, for instance, can still be said to exist even if there is no subject who is conscious of them.

Based on these clarifications, it is thus clear why epistemic objectivity and ontological subjectivity are not direct opposites (and so are ontological objectivity and epistemic subjectivity). Each of these concepts belongs to a different category—the former to the category of knowledge while the latter to the category of existence. To understand them as direct opposites is thus to commit what Gilbert Ryle (1965) has called a category mistake. Given that scientific knowledge is epistemically objective while consciousness is ontologically subjective, Searle argues that there is nothing contradictory in having a scientific study of the nature of consciousness, for, again, what this really means is an epistemically objective study of an ontologically subjective phenomenon. Searle (1999, 45) explains:

So the fact that consciousness has a subjective mode of existence does not prevent us from having an objective science of consciousness. Science is indeed epistemically objective in the sense that scientists try to discover truths that are independent of anyone’s feelings, attitudes, or prejudices. Such epistemic objectivity does not, however, preclude ontological subjectivity as a domain of investigation.

The question, however, is whether this is really what the objectivity of science and the subjectivity of consciousness mean for those claiming that these two concepts are fundamentally incompatible. In the context of the significations attached by Searle to these concepts, the incompatibility will arise only if these significations are attached to these concepts consistently. That is to say, in explaining away the incompatibility between these two concepts (the objectivity of science and the subjectivity of consciousness) by understanding one epistemically while the other ontologically, Searle supposes that those who believe that such incompatibility exists either understand both concepts epistemically or understand them both ontologically. More clearly, if Searle argues that there really is no incompatibility between A and B since A is actually X while B is actually Y, Searle supposes that the perceived incompatibility between A and B results from (mistakenly) regarding either A as X, and B as non-X, or A as Y, and B as non-Y. Now let us see whether Searle is correct in this supposition.

On the one hand, understanding both concepts epistemically (in Searle’s sense) would mean that we understand a science of the mind as “an epistemically objective knowledge of an epistemically subjective phenomenon.” The subjectivity of consciousness here would mean that our knowledge of consciousness would always be dependent on or would always be significantly affected by our attitudes and preferences; or that we can never have a factual or descriptive judgment about consciousness for our judgment about it would always be evaluative. This, however, does not seem to be what is at issue with regard to the subjectivity of consciousness. On the other hand, understanding both concepts ontologically would mean that we understand a science of the mind as “an ontologically objective knowledge of an ontologically subjective phenomenon.” The objectivity of science here would mean
that the existence of science or scientific knowledge is independent of some subject. Again, this does not seem to be what is at issue with regard to the objectivity of science. In light of these considerations, it is therefore dubious whether those who claim that there is a fundamental incompatibility between the concepts of objectivity of science and subjectivity of consciousness attach the same significations that Searle attaches to them, that is, epistemic and ontological significations.

There is, however, another type of signification that can be attached to the objectivity of science and subjectivity of consciousness not considered by Searle which gives rise to a fundamental incompatibility between these two concepts. This refers to the public nature of scientific knowledge and the private nature of psychological knowledge. (Generally, as this distinction also concerns knowledge this is also classified as an epistemological distinction; but this is different from the distinction made by Searle between epistemic subjectivity and epistemic objectivity.) The private nature of psychological knowledge (knowledge of conscious states) refers to the fact that one can only have a direct knowledge of one's own conscious states. For instance, my knowledge of my own toothache is private since I am the only one who is directly knowledgeable about my own toothache; other persons' knowledge of my own toothache is merely indirect for it is based only on inferences from my verbal report and behavior. This is the sense in which consciousness is subjective. On the other hand, the public nature of scientific knowledge refers to the fact that the objects of this knowledge can in principle be directly known by everyone, or that in science what I know directly can in principle also be known directly by other people. For instance, if it is known in science that water is H₂O, this can be directly known by everyone. And this is the sense in which science is objective.

Another way of putting this sense of the objectivity-subjectivity distinction is as follows. The objectivity of science and the subjectivity of consciousness both concern knowability. The objectivity of science refers to the fact that the objects of scientific knowledge are directly knowable by everyone; while the subjectivity of consciousness refers to the fact that conscious states are directly knowable only by the person who has them. Seen in this light, there is thus a clear inconsistency in saying that we can have an objective knowledge of something subjective. Saying that there is a science of the mind would mean here that we have a public knowledge about something we can only know subjectively. And needless to say, this is a contradiction.

Searle tries to dissolve the contradiction in having an objective study of a subjective phenomenon by showing that subjectivity and objectivity here belong to different categories. I have shown, however, that the categories that he considers, namely the epistemic and the ontological, are not really what are at issue. The concepts subjectivity of consciousness and objectivity of science is an issue but not because of the significations Searle attaches to these concepts. To make philosophical sense of this incompatibility, what is therefore needed is an understanding of the said concepts in light of another category. And this category, as I have shown, refers to the accessibility of knowledge, where the subjectivity of consciousness refers to the private nature of psychological knowledge and the objectivity of science refers to the public nature of scientific knowledge. Searle's conceptual distinctions fail to consider this category; as a result, his conceptual distinctions have failed to dissolve the incompatibility between the subjectivity of consciousness and the objectivity of science.
EXPANDING THE SCIENTIFIC DOMAIN

For his quantum view of consciousness to be a successful alternative to computationalism, Penrose still has to show how the noncomputationality of the mind can be explained using the computational methods of science. To fully appreciate the nature of this difficulty, we need to clarify that in saying that the method of science is computational, we mean that the scientific method proceeds according to step-by-step effective procedures. Given this, in saying that Penrose offers a noncomputational framework to naturalize the mind, we do not mean that the scientific method that he will use to explain the mind is noncomputational. What we mean, rather, is that his theory of mind regards the mind as noncomputational (that is, the mind does not proceed according to step-by-step effective procedures) but he nonetheless believes that we can have a scientific study of the mind. Thus the incompatibility arises: how can we account for something that does not proceed according to step-by-step procedures by a method that proceeds according to step-by-step procedures? Now Penrose thinks he can resolve this incompatibility by expanding our conception of science through some radical changes in quantum physics. What follows are three sets of remarks from Penrose to this effect:

[1] Does present-day physics allow for the possibility of an action that is in principle impossible to simulate on a computer? The answer is not completely clear to me, if we are asking for a mathematically rigorous statement. Rather less is known than one would like, in the way of precise mathematical theorems, on this issue. However, my own strong opinion is that such noncomputational action would have to be found in an area of physics that lies outside the presently known physical laws. (Penrose 1994, 15)

[2] For physics to be able to accommodate something that is as foreign to our current physical picture as is the phenomenon of consciousness, we must expect a profound change—one that alters the underpinnings of our philosophical viewpoint as to the nature of reality.... (Penrose 1994, 406)

[3] The conclusion is that whatever brain activity is responsible for consciousness (at least in its particular manifestation) it must depend upon a physics that lies beyond computational simulation. (Penrose 1994, 411)

In the first set of remarks, Penrose claims that what is needed is "an area of physics that lies outside the presently known physical laws." In the second one, he says that physics has to undergo a "profound change—one that alters the underpinnings of our philosophical viewpoint as the nature of reality." And in the third one, he says that this revised physics must be one which "lies beyond computational simulation." He later clarifies that the revision that has to be made with quantum physics to account for consciousness will be the same revision that will be required of quantum physics in order to reconcile it (quantum physics) with the general theory of relativity. He (1999, xxii) writes:
I argue that a new theory will indeed be needed in order to make coherent sense of the “reality that underlies the stop-gap R-procedure that we use in present-day quantum mechanics,” and I try to argue that it is in this undiscovered new theory that the required noncomputability will be found. I also argue that this missing theory is the same as the missing link between quantum theory and Einstein’s general relativity. The term used in conventional physics for this unified scheme is “quantum gravity.”

Penrose adds that he differs from most physicists who think that the required fundamental revisions to achieve quantum gravity have to be made only in the area of the general theory of relativity. For Penrose (1999, xxii), the fundamental revisions have to be made in the area of quantum mechanics as well. Surely, Penrose cannot agree with these other physicists, for if we grant the view of these other physicists then the changes that Penrose requires for quantum physics in order to accommodate the noncomputationality of mental states would most likely not be effected. For why should these changes be effected when they are not necessary to achieve quantum gravity?

We can identify at least two problems concerning the project of Penrose. The first concerns the consequence of the revisions required by Penrose for science to accommodate the noncomputationality of the mind. If science is to radically change such that what is at present considered nonscientific would later on become scientific, what happens in effect is that science extends its scope. It must be noted, however, that it is different when science extends its scope because of further scientific researches and when science extends its scope because it undergoes fundamental changes in its core principles. But in extending its scope because of radical changes in its principles surely it will not only be consciousness or mind that will be accommodated in its domain. In extending the scope of science to accommodate noncomputationality in its domain, the floodgates are, so to speak, opened. This would mean that other phenomena that do not presently fit into the scientific worldview, such as magic, paranormal phenomena or skills, and mystical experiences, in addition to consciousness, would possibly be accommodated as well by the extended science. One critical consequence of this is the demarcation problem: how can science be so radically changed to accommodate the noncomputational and yet manage to retain its meaningful distinction from nonscience? As this problem threatens the general value of being scientific, it also questions the very point of the naturalization project. For what then would be the advantage of having a scientific understanding of the mind when science has weakened its standards, if not lost its rigor?

The second concerns the very nature of the revisions that Penrose requires of quantum mechanics to give room for the noncomputationality of the mind. Penrose, it will be recalled, claims that these revisions are the very same changes needed to achieve quantum gravity. But as Penrose himself pointed out, his idea that it should be in both areas of quantum mechanics and general theory of relativity that the scientific changes would have to be done parts ways with the idea of most physicists that such changes would have to be done only in the area of general theory of relativity. What this means is that Penrose still has to prove that the other physicists are mistaken in their hypothesis. The argument of Penrose is at best a hypothetical one. The radical changes required for
quantum mechanics to pave the way for quantum gravity may indeed be our best hope for a science of the mind given that present-day science cannot account for the noncomputationality of the mind; but still this is just a hope, not a guarantee. We are still grappling with the mysteries of quantum mechanics—how to make sense of the world we live in given the findings in quantum mechanics. As Chalmers (1997, 333) writes:

The problem of quantum mechanics is almost as hard as the problem of consciousness. Quantum mechanics gives us a remarkably successful calculus for predicting the results of empirical observations, but it is extraordinarily difficult to make sense of the picture of the world that it delivers. How could our world be the way it has to be, in order for the predictions of quantum mechanics to succeed? There is nothing even approaching a consensus on the answer to this question.

That being the case, we do not yet know exactly how this theory of quantum gravity would be possible, much less how this theory would pave the way for a science of the noncomputational mind. As it is possible that this quantum gravity may not take place at all, it is equally possible that even granting that this quantum gravity is already in place, still we do not have a science of the mind.

CONCLUSION

The naturalization project has encountered various difficulties in each stage of its development. Either some type of incoherence arises, something essential about the mind is left out in the explanation, or the mysteries surrounding the mind remain. To date, there is no proposed science of the mind that has not encountered at least one of these forms of difficulties. What is perhaps needed are further ingenuity in theory building and further sophistication in our scientific tools. But all these will only matter if there is nothing fundamentally incompatible between science and mind. To secure the possibility of a future science of the mind, this incompatibility, first and foremost, has to be ruled out.

In this light, Searle and Penrose may be successful in demonstrating the weakness of the computationalism as a framework for the naturalization project, but their alternative noncomputational models can only be successful if they are able to overcome the putative fundamental incompatibility between science and mind. And we have shown that they are not able to do so. Searle tries to resolve the incompatibility between the subjectivity of consciousness and the objectivity of the scientific method by means of conceptual clarification. But he fails to consider the very antithetical concepts that have given rise to this incompatibility, namely, the publicness of scientific knowledge and the privacy of psychological knowledge. Penrose, on the other hand, tries to resolve the incompatibility between the noncomputationality of the mind and the computationality of the scientific method by expanding the scope of science through some radical changes in quantum physics. Penrose's strategy, however, has the consequence of trivializing the distinction between science and nonscience, thereby undermining the very value of pursuing the naturalization project. Moreover, the
feasibility of this project remains dubious in light of the mysteries that still surround quantum physics.

Finally, the question about the possibility of naturalizing the mind is not just a question of whether science will be able to complete its account of nature— as the mind is said to be the last piece in the grand puzzle. There is a larger question at stake. Our probing into the nature of the mind is precipitated by our desire to understand who we are and to determine our proper place in the grand scheme of things. And we turn to science in the hope of giving rigor to the way we handle this inquiry. But given the failure of both computational and noncomputational models to naturalize the mind, perhaps it is not really the rigor of science that we need to have a deeper insight into the nature of our minds or of who we really are.

NOTES

1. For an explication of the position of natural mysterians, see Colin McGinn (1997, 529-42). McGinn maintains that what will explain the nature of consciousness is some physical feature of the brain but he claims that such an explanation is not cognitively accessible to us. According to him, we are “cognitively closed” to such an explanation.

2. Generally, nonrealist materialists reject the nonphysical existence of mental phenomena and define the physical existence of such phenomena in terms of the neural states of the brain or the behavioral dispositions of the body. On the other hand, realist materialists also reject the nonphysical existence of mental phenomena but they also reject the view that the physical existence of mental phenomena is definable in terms of the neural states of the brain or the behavioral dispositions of the body. For according to the realist materialists, mental phenomena are higher-level physical phenomena.

3. Functionalists, who are definitely naturalists, can either be computationalists or noncomputationalists depending on the version being regarded. Computationalism is in fact regarded as just one form of functionalism, as it is sometimes also called “computational functionalism.”

4. This view is often associated with Gilbert Ryle (1965).


6. For a good discussion of this point, see Jack Copeland (1996, 335-59).

7. Gripaldo (2011) has rejected the mathematical and logical concept of the proposition.

8. This sense of the privacy of knowledge is what Ludwig Wittgenstein (1958) deals with in his famous private language argument.

9. Another way of saying this, based on the Church-Turing thesis, is that the scientific method is Turing-machine implementable.

REFERENCES


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HEGEL REFRAMED: MARCUSE ON THE DIALECTIC OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

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The prevalence of social pathologies in contemporary societies has triggered many critical theorists to challenge or even disrupt the status quo in the hope for a better society. Thus, the notion of social transformation or, better yet, emancipation has become one of the central themes in critical social theory. This paper aims to contribute to this scholarship through an exposition of Herbert Marcuse’s attempt to socialize Georg Hegel’s ontology. In particular, this paper aims to show how Marcuse explains the possibility of social transformation by appropriating key concepts in Hegel’s huge philosophical system, most particularly from Hegel’s Logic and The phenomenology of mind.

INTRODUCTION

Radical action and social transformation have been two of the recurring themes in Herbert Marcuse’s brand of critical social theory. In fact, his (1964) diagnosis of contemporary society, which he famously calls a one-dimensional society, is primarily aimed at the possibility of social transformation. However, for Marcuse, social transformation requires a historically and critically conscious individual who is disposed to radical action, that is to say, an individual who can oppose repressive capitalist society. His pre-1964 work Eros and civilization (1955) shows an affirmation of some of the important themes in Marxism: that capitalism will necessarily self-destruct and that the proletarians are the most potent agents of social change. For Marcuse (1955), as for Karl Marx, it is the proletarians who can arrest capitalism’s self-destruction and effect social transformation. But if we recall some of the political events of the twentieth century, we can observe that Marx’s prediction that capitalism will self-destruct did not happen. What happened instead were the integration of the proletariat into the status quo, the stabilization of capitalism, the bureaucratization of socialism, and the absence of a revolutionary agent for progressive social change. And yet Marcuse, unlike most of his colleagues at the Institute for Social Research, especially Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, remained hopeful about the possibility of social transformation. It is here where Hegel becomes particularly relevant—with Georg Hegel, Marcuse is reminded that social transformation
always has the possibility of becoming a reality. This is because Hegel's dialectic, and the famous master-slave relations, provides Marcuse with the formal conceptual structure to think the historical necessity and future potentialities of social transformation. With this Hegelian notion of historicity, Marcuse was able to clarify the problems of radical action and social transformation. This is the aim of this paper: to show how Marcuse explains the possibility of social transformation by appropriating key concepts in Hegel's huge philosophical system, most particularly from Hegel's *Logic* (1975) and *The phenomenology of mind* (1949).

Although Marcuse wrote extensively on Hegel during the prewar period I will only focus on those aspects that are most important in Marcuse's engagement with Hegel's philosophy—the dialectic and the master-slave relations. These key Hegelian concepts showed to Marcuse that radical action is indeed possible inasmuch as it accompanies the historical movement which the dialectic has shown to be inevitable and logically at least justified. As Morton Schoolman (1980, 17) contends, the main purpose of Marcuse's appropriation of Hegel's philosophy is to establish the fact that the individual is an active and reflective subject, a subject that is indeed capable of radical action. This paper, therefore, will address only on Marcuse's engagement with Hegel's dialectic found in the early part of *Logic* and the master-slave relations found in Chapter IV of *Phenomenology*.

At the heart of Marcuse's interpretation of Hegel's *Logic* is the concept of dialectic. According to this concept, every being is contradictory in itself. In other words, everything that exists contains within itself its own negation and the "seeds for its own ineluctable destruction and transformation" (Schmidt 1988, 15). For Hegel, as Marcuse (1941, 147) notes, the "dialectic" is the formal structure of reality, that is to say, it is the Essence and truth of all things.

The notion of "essence" is particularly important in Marcuse's appropriation of the Hegelian dialectic. In Marcuse's (1941, 146) analysis, essence denotes the unity or identity of being throughout the actual process of change. Marcuse (1941, 146) understands Hegel's concept of unity or identity not as a permanent substratum that defines being, but "a process wherein everything copes with its inherent contradictions and unfold itself as a result." Marcuse (1941, 146) writes: "Conceived in this way, identity contains its opposite, difference, and involves a self-differentiation and an ensuing unification." The concept of unity or identity, therefore, is nothing but the negation of every determinate being. According to Marcuse (1941, 141-42), Hegel calls this concept "universal contradiction" or negative totality.

The concept of negativity which is internal to all beings does not only involve mere contradiction. Negativity as the essential character of every being implies that being is always in the process of becoming, that is to say, the process of developing all relations to what being is not. In this process, Marcuse (1941, 141-42) notes, being actualizes its potentialities by turning itself into its opposite, that is, by negating itself. In the act of negating itself, being perishes but at the same time develops its true potentialities by moving into a higher stage. This movement is what Hegel famously calls *Aufhebung* or sublation: the perishing of the old and the birth of the new where the new, however, is just the actualization of the potentialities inherent in the old. As Marcuse (1941, 141) writes:
A given form of existence cannot unfold its content without perishing. The new must be the actual negation of the old and not a mere correction or revision. To be sure...the new must somehow have existed in the lap of the old. But existed there only as potentiality, and its material realization was excluded by the prevailing form of being.

The process of becoming explains what Hegel calls the transition from mere potentiality to actuality. As Marcuse (1941, 148) writes: "When something turns into its opposite, Hegel says, when it contradicts itself, it expresses its essence." For Marcuse (1941, 142), this is the moment of being's self-realization—being becomes actual. Indeed, this is the moment when being and nonbeing unite, that is to say, when contradiction is resolved and gives way to another higher form of determinate being.

From this Hegelian notion of dialectic, Marcuse extracts a model of social transformation by translating the ontological structure of Hegel's dialectic into sociohistorical terms. Marcuse (2007, 63) appropriates Hegel's concept of negativity and uses it as a conceptual tool to critique the given socioeconomic organization: capitalism. Marcuse (2007, 64) writes:

The negation which dialectic applies is not only a critique of a conformist logic, which denies the reality of contradictions; it is also a critique of the given state of affairs...of the established system of life, which denies its own promises and potentialities.

In this way, _negativity_, as an ontological principle that transforms being into nonbeing and then into becoming, is applied to society. It has basically become a sociological principle which Marcuse thought could help people understand how the existing pathological society could be transformed into a more humane and just society. In particular, this new conceptual tool provides Marcuse with a precise and sophisticated model to describe the capitalist society as contradictory in itself. Following Marx, Marcuse believes that by virtue of this contradiction, capitalism will eventually self-destruct and will give way to a new form of society, one that embodies the potentialities inherent in the old (capitalist) society. Hegel's category of becoming is understood by Marcuse as one that helps people get a better grasp of the notion of emancipation, as the full realization of the potentialities of human beings and the society as a whole. In particular, the inevitability of becoming as a result of the necessary contradictions of social forces seems to provide logical and ontological backing to the idea of the self-destruction of capitalism and the rise of socialism. Marcuse thus found in Hegel's abstract notion of becoming the source of hope for his vision of a free and happy society.

However, there is another key dimension to the Hegelian dialectic, which Marcuse found to be antithetical to the idea of social transformation that the dialectic harbors, namely, Hegel's absolute idealism. Absolute idealism is Hegel's way of explaining that reality can ultimately be reconstructed as an all-inclusive logical, or conceptual, totality. Kant's fundamental argument, at the heart of his "Copernican revolution," was that the structures that underlie the law like behavior of natural phenomena were in fact nothing
but the cognitive structures of the human being applied to “phenomena.” In other words, the human mind “constructs” Nature as a meaningful system of laws, through the application to the natural phenomena of its own cognitive structures. This, for Kant, was the only way to account for the “a priori” nature of scientific knowledge, the fact that it delivers universal and necessary truths. The very strong proviso that Kant added, of course, was that this “construction” of Nature was only that of Nature as it appears to us, phenomenal Nature, not Nature as it is “in itself.” Still this revolution in metaphysics and epistemology entailed a fundamental new insight, which opened the path for all subsequent philosophy and more particularly Hegel, namely that the knowledge of Nature involves the knowledge by the human mind of its own conceptual powers. This is the basis of Kant’s “transcendental idealism.”

Hegel’s “absolute idealism” simply radicalizes Immanuel Kant’s gesture, by erasing the distinction between the thing as it appears to us and the thing “in itself.” What reason knows is all there is to know. But if that is true, then the implication is that once reason has mapped and charted the entire field of its own cognitive powers, then it has also charted the logical structures of all that can exist; reason can know reality “absolutely,” that is to say, reason can account for all the logical features of reality and the knowledge of such reality (Rockwell 2004). As Marcuse (1941, 162) puts it, Reason can realize the Notion, which “designates the general form of all being, and, at the same time, the true being which adequately represents this form.”

For Marcuse, this “absolute idealism” is deeply ambiguous. On the one hand, it provides the very model that Marcuse requires to think the history of the human species as a history of full emancipation. Hegel’s Logic describes a process whereby the notion of all things is “realized,” that is, becomes reality in the concrete world. This can be taken as a model for the full realization of humanity’s potentials for freedom. Indeed, Hegel himself defines the full realization of reason as realization of freedom. On the other hand, Hegel’s absolute idealism is deeply problematic because instead of showing how the historical realization of reason occurs through collective and individual practice, Hegel puts the dialectic on its head and makes the realization of reason in the world the product of the Idea itself.

As Marcuse (1941, 161; see also Rockwell 2004, 146) writes, “The entire doctrine of the notion is perfectly ‘realistic’ if it is understood and executed as a historical theory. But...Hegel tends to dissolve the element of historical practice and replace it with the independent reality of thought.” For Hegel (Marcuse 1941, 164), therefore, only “thought” can fulfill the realization of the Notion, that is, the realization of perfect freedom and the rational organization of society. On the contrary, Marcuse, who follows Marx closely on this point, believes that the realization of freedom and the rational organization of society can be achieved only through collective, transformative action. Interpreted in this way, Hegel’s Logic does provide the model that Marcuse (1941, 161) is looking for: “the penetration of the world by reason or the realization of the Notion of all notions would mean the universal mastery, exercised by men having a rational social organization, over nature.”

As a result of this idealistic inversion, the power of dialectic is not only transformed from a practical, historical process into a pure cognitive one. What is also repressed is the immense critical power of dialectic. As Marcuse (1941, 162) says:
Ever since Plato the idea has meant the image of the true potentialities of things as against the apparent reality. It was originally a critical concept, like the concept of essence, denouncing the security of common sense in a world too readily content with the form in which things immediately appeared.

In spite of the problem of idealistic inversion in Hegel’s official account, Marcuse will always remain deeply influenced by this notion that classical philosophy, notably in its “dialectical” tradition, from Plato to Hegel, is an inherently “critical” exercise. For him, it is this inherent critical power of philosophy, its capacity to distinguish what is really real underneath what is only apparently real, which makes it an essential component of any critical social theory.

Despite the critical potential of Hegel’s concept of dialectic, however, there are also aspects of the Logic that Marcuse finds inadequate. This is because, as Marcuse sees it, Hegel’s view of Life (the subject of dialectic) in the Logic remains in the realm of ontology. But for Marcuse, according to Schoolman (1980, 18), the dialectic is not just a change of anything else but change within the subject itself. For sure, the dictum that everything is in the process of becoming something else is a principle Marcuse used to explain or justify that Life is always in the process of change. Indeed, the Logic does provide the conceptual grammar of “becoming” but it needs to be shown in the process of actualizing reality. And this is the reason why Marcuse talks about it in Phenomenology. Thus, in Hegel’s ontology and the theory of historicity, Marcuse (1987) proceeds to the discussion of Hegel’s Phenomenology in order to show that the subject of the dialectic is nothing but the concrete Life of the living individuals and no longer the “Life” which Hegel discusses in the realm of idea in Logic. Marcuse’s engagement with Hegel now moves from Logic to Phenomenology, from a general conception of Life, understood as self-moving reason, to the concrete and specific way in which human life instantiates the concept of Life. In what follows, I will present briefly Marcuse’s articulation of the dialectic of life in Phenomenology and show how through a dialectical process the concrete forces of social transformation and radical political action are analyzed.

The concept of Life appears in Hegel’s Phenomenology as the first basic form of self-consciousness. Just as in Logic, Life in Phenomenology is considered as a process, but this time a process which results in a concrete acting “I.” In the process of individuation, self-consciousness begins with “desire,” which is twofold: the desire for real objects; and self-consciousness’ desire to realize itself through the realization of desire (Verene 2007, 58-59; see also Krasnoff 2008, 95-100 and de Laurentiis 2005, 48-49). First of all, desire is to be understood in the psychological sense, for example, as a craving for something that satisfies physiological needs. But this satisfaction of need also entails the attempt of self-consciousness to assert itself as self-consciousness, that is, as free. Thus, desire for Hegel means the original attitude of the “I” as self-consciousness toward the world. In other words, desire is the necessary tendency of the acting “I” to make itself actual; it is indeed the necessary self-showing of the acting “I.” The satisfaction of this desire is precisely the fulfillment of the actual Being of the “I.” However, the satisfaction of
desire cannot provide the attestation of the free status that it is seeking. This is where recognition is needed. According to Hegel, as Marcuse reads him, self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself only by being recognized by the other conscious self (Verene 2007, 229). For Marcuse, this process is a “we-like” process of Life. Here, there is an essential reciprocal dependence; there is an essential demand for reciprocal recognition (Marcuse 1987, 251). As Robert R. Williams (2007, 19; see also 1992) has shown in detail in his major studies on recognition, the “we” is a universal consciousness which results from mutual recognition, that is, when the “I” is recognized by the other “I.” But before the “we” can emerge as a full community of recognition, a specific dialectic has to be gone through which involves the famous concept of the struggle for recognition. At first, self-consciousness tries to assert its freedom as it does this by showing that it can abandon all of its natural determinations. But since all self-consciousness at first tries to make that same point, it necessarily engages in the struggle for life and death. Interpreted in social and political terms, this can point to the struggle between proletarians and capitalists since in the Marxist framework capitalism is a kind of natural state where social relations are naturalized. However, the struggle for recognition, as the struggle between proletarians and capitalists, is even better illustrated in the famous master-slave dialectic.

In the master and slave relation, the master has not recognized the slave as an essentially independent being because the master thinks of himself as the only independent being. For Hegel, according to Hans-Georg Gadamer’s (1976, 68) classical analysis, what the master is certain of is the dependency and inessentziality of the servile consciousness, that is, the dependency and inessentiality of the slave. However, Hegel shows that the self-consciousness of the master is a false self-consciousness because by not recognizing the slave it robbed itself of the recognition of the slave which it would need to be free. As is well-known, for Hegel, self-consciousness can be considered real if it is recognized as “self-consciousness” by the other self-conscious being. And because the self-consciousness of the master is not a recognized one through its own fault, Hegel (Gadamer 1976, 68) argues that “…the truth of self-consciousness will have to be sought, not in the consciousness of the master but in the servile consciousness…” Thus, it is the slave who can have real self-consciousness and not the master. In other words, it is the slave who can realize that it is himself who is free and independent and not the master. But this process of realizing one’s freedom occurs only through labor. As the slave produces through labor, he gradually gains mastery over things and appropriates his own powers, especially the rational ones, and thus gradually asserts itself over the master (Gadamer 1976, 68). As Gadamer (1976, 68) writes, “In bringing forth the product of its work, consciousness emerges for itself not as existent thing, but rather as ‘being-for-self’ for itself.” Thus, the slave, who in the beginning views his plight as legitimate, eventually realizes thanks to labor that it is himself who is truly independent and it is the master that depends upon him, especially on the fruits of his labor (Williams 2007, 19). It is clear that Marcuse reads this famous master-slave dialectic yet again as a philosophical model that can be interpreted sociologically and politically to conceptualize the passage to a just society.
CONCLUSION

Through Hegel’s master-slave dialectic, Marcuse sees labor as the basis of self-consciousness. As we have already seen, through labor, the slave is able to master things and appropriate his own powers. Labor therefore allows the individual to become aware of his own capability to creatively transform social realities, especially those that directly affect his own being. This is now the most crucial point in Marcuse’s engagement with Hegel and the answer to the question posed earlier: through labor, the individual attains a level of concrete consciousness that would make him disposed to radical action. Marcuse refers indirectly to Marx’s (1959) theory of labor in the Economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844. According to Marx, labor is a reflective activity upon which the development of the individual and the realization of his freedom depend. Inasmuch as this realization is viewed as the result of the dialectic of Life, that is, as historicity, Marcuse’s theory of historicity as his first theory of liberation is given a sound grounding; the abstract notion of “historicity” becomes concrete with the idea of “self-consciousness.” But the central point that can be drawn from Marcuse’s reframing of Hegel is that this self-consciousness disposes an individual to radical action which, if the law of the dialectic allows, results in social transformation.

NOTES

1. This can be seen in his Hegel’s ontology and the theory of historicity (1987) and Reason and revolution: Hegel and the rise of social theory (1941).

2. Marcuse later developed the idea of a Hegelian subject in his 1941 work Reason and revolution: Hegel and the rise of social theory. Here, Marcuse shows that the development of the subject of history, who is disposed to radical action, is also at the same time the unfolding of freedom.

3. It can be loosely understood as the desire of the individual to be free. Thus, as we can see in Hegel’s discussion of the master-slave dialectic, that the slave is said to have the desire to be free from the master and enjoy the fruit of his own labor. Yet, because he is attached to thinghood, to things that the slave also desires, the master continues to dominate the thing by dominating the slave. In the Phenomenology, Hegel demonstrates that the progression of consciousness begins with the experience of material objects as the generic content of consciousness. Allegro de Laurentiis (2005) calls this the sensing and perceiving stage. The experience of material objects is also considered “desire” in the strictest sense of the word. To Verene (2007), the drive of the “I” to know or possess the object is, in itself, “desire.”

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BOOK REVIEW


Critical Theory as a philosophical orientation has provided a radical stimulus to a contemporary generation of thinkers by combining the Hegelian and Marxian dialectical methods with Marx’s critique of ideology. This has given rise to a distinctively powerful lens of social analysis for the project of emancipation in the multifarious issues of power struggle, ideology, language, discourse, technology, instrumental reason, aesthetic industry, etc. in social, economic, political, and cultural spheres of contemporary society. The revolutionary insights of Hegel and Marx in Critical Theory, however, do not imply a closed system of thought among its practitioners; in fact, at times, it has been discordant, however vibrant. In this collection of correspondence, for instance, Marcuse disagrees with Dunayevskaya on the latter’s interpretation and application of Hegel’s dialectics and absolute idea/mind, while Fromm accused Marcuse of callousness towards moral qualities in political figures similar to that of Lenin (xviii), and Marcuse likewise attacked Fromm on his Freudian revisionism and liberalism regarding interpretations on Freudian psychoanalysis vis-à-vis Marxist social analysis. References to the disagreements between the Frankfurt School’s intellectual leaders Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno with Herbert Marcuse (xvii), on the one hand, and with Erich Fromm (xix), on the other hand, were also alluded to. Nonetheless, by and through persistent critical dialogue and exchange—truly a real practice of dialectics—the critical theorists in different perspectives of the Marxist-Humanist, Hegelian-Marxist, and Socialist Humanist standpoints, have preserved and has brought to greater heights.

This book is a collection of correspondence between Raya Dunayevskaya and Herbert Marcuse (1–93), and between Raya Dunayevskaya and Erich Fromm (119–91) edited by Anderson and Rockwell. It demonstrates the kind of intellectual dialectical exchange among three iconic figures of Marxist Humanism and Critical Theory. These correspondences between Dunayevskaya and Marcuse, and then between Dunayevskaya and Fromm give the readers a glimpse of how these Marxists and critical theorists individually and interactively wrestle with the revolutionary ideas of Hegel and Marx as they are employed in understanding the movements and issues of their time. Their agreements and disagreements on various issues manifest the theoretical development of Marxist Humanist thought in Critical Theory in the third quarter of the twentieth century (1950s-1970s) in the United States of America. Similarly, their letters reveal some intimation on how these revolutionary intellectuals and radical academics in diaspora struggled for their safety, in their career and political affiliations, e.g., looking
for publishers for their works, and split up with earlier intellectual-political activists and revolutionary allies.

The adept management and accounting of information in the introduction by Anderson and Rockwell situates these dialogues in context. It provides the reader with the necessary platform to frame in a big picture of the theoretical advancement of each of these thinkers. Notable in these correspondences is the demonstration of the convergence and divergence of ideas which are contributive of the shaping up of a theory. The inclusion of invaluable primary texts in the appendix—e.g., Marcuse’s preface to Dunayevskaya’s *Marxism and freedom* (217-21), Dunayevskaya’s review of Marcuse’s *Soviet Marxism* (222-26). Fromm’s foreword to the German edition of Dunayevskaya’s *Philosophy and revolution* (231-32)—magnify the brand of intellectual friendship among them as well as hints at the rough edges of the relation between Marxist Humanism and Critical Theory as a philosophical attitude over time. This makes the collection a crucial resource for anyone wishing to understand deeper such philosophical dynamics.

Herbert Marcuse, of Jewish descent, was a Marxist from his youth being an active member of the Social Democratic Party. His radical thoughts and writings being influenced by a wide variety of intellectual giants and movements—Marx, Freud, Heidegger, Hegel, and German Idealism to name a few—set a provocative impact on social-structural analysis and ideological critique of modern societies. Marcuse did not hesitate to take on board what he considered to be his major contribution to critical thinking, viz. writing that range from the dialectical critique of historical consciousness to the phenomenological critique of existential consciousness and the psychoanalytic critique of the libidinal unconscious. By these he was considered by many as spawning grounds for revolutionary ideas to the young generation as well as the key philosophical catalyst of the so-called New Left.

At the time of the publication of *Reason and revolution: Hegel and the rise of social theory*, Marcuse, now exiled in the US, was a core member of the Frankfurt School. He was then the specialist in dialectical philosophy of the research institute. This work of Marcuse was acclaimed as the first comprehensive analysis of Hegelian dialectics and the first treatment of the whole body of Marx’s work from the *1844 Manuscript* to the *Capital* that was ever written in English. Marcuse had also written on other themes which were associated with the Frankfurt School’s brand of Marxist sociology; however, in the view of some commentators, the increasingly “aggressive Marxist-revolutionary tone of Marcuse’s theses” (xvii), became repulsive to the Institute’s intellectual leaders, who thus replaced him as the philosophy specialist of the group.

Marcuse’s works—*Marx’s 1844 manuscripts, Reason and revolution: Hegel and the rise of social theory, Eros and civilization, Soviet Marxism, and One dimensional man*—which contained most of his radical and revolutionary ideas, converged with Raya Dunayevskaya’s revolutionary trajectory of thought. Some of these ideas were Marcuse’s declaration of the centrality of the Hegelian dialectic to Marx’s work, his stressing the fetishism of commodities, the explicit critique of positivism and implicit critique of pragmatism, the dialectic of negativity, critique of Sartrean existentialism, etc. Such largely Marxian-revolutionary tone of Marcuse’s theses brought him close to Dunayevskaya’s position. Nonetheless, Marcuse’s proposition of working out the revolutionary theory within communist parties, viz.,
the Stalinist Communist Parties, finds odd reception from Dunayevskaya’s anti-Stalinist’s left which eventually emerged into some acrimonious exchange between Marcuse and Dunayevskaya (xvi-xvii).

Raya Dunayevskaya, a Russian-born Jewish Marxist-Humanist intellectual, Marxist Feminism activist and revolutionary, initiated the dialogue with Marcuse at the time she parted ways with former political allies, while searching then for an intellectual ally for exchange (4). Prior to the intellectual exchanges with Marcuse, Dunayevskaya was involved in the split in the Socialist Workers Party. The split was basically rooted in her disagreement with Trotsky’s characterization of the Soviet Union as a “degenerated workers’ state.” Dunayevskaya’s contention is that the Soviet Union had neither become just a “degenerated worker’s state” nor “bureaucratic collectivist” but she argued that it had become a “state capitalist.” Dunayevskaya’s theory of state capitalism allowed her to form a group of Marxist intellectuals with whom she debated intensely on Hegelian dialectics. Such activities were all geared towards the project of writing a book on Marxism and dialectics. From here remains the impetus of the Dunayevskaya-Marcuse correspondence and debate on Marxist dialectics and Hegel’s absolute idea/mind (3-15).

After more than a decade of developing the theory of state capitalism, Dunayevskaya continued her study of the Hegelian dialectic by taking on a task the Johnson-Forest Tendency had set itself: exploring Hegel’s Philosophy of mind. She advanced an interpretation of Hegel’s Absolutes, holding that they involved a dual movement: a movement from practice that is itself a form of theory and a movement from theory reaching to philosophy. She considered these 1953 letters to be “the philosophic moment” from which the whole development of Marxist Humanism flowed.

Three of the most contentious ideas of Dunayevskaya’s that spurred a reaction from Marcuse were the theory of state capitalism, the positive reading of Hegel’s Absolute Idea, and the role of contemporary working classes. Marcuse objected to the theory of state capitalism because he sees the basic continuity between Lenin and Stalin (xxiv). He also distanced himself from Dunayevskaya’s what he termed as “glorification of the common people,” which was deemed “abstract and undialectical” (5). Marcuse—unlike the reading of Dunayevskaya—puts the creative force of negation not solely on the hand of labor. For him, Hegel’s idea of the absolute is the most nondialectical element in Hegelian corpus.

Dunayevskaya made a positive reading of the worker’s movement in Denver as embodiment of Hegel’s dialectics towards the absolute idea. She argued that the rank-and-file workers fighting against what she considered as the heightened alienation resulting to automation is a new stage of capitalist production. These were for her a manifestation of the “absolutes.” She elucidated that the twin pole of any fundamental work must have automation at one end and the absolute idea or freedom at the other end (xxiii, p. 5 and ff.). Likewise, she defended her theses on Hegel’s absolute mind, thus she argued:

For anyone bound for adventures of the Hegelian dialectic, the Absolute Mind lies beckoning, but, no, we go back repeating the old about the dehumanization of ideas that Hegel is reproached with, although I maintain that today we should see it as its innermost essence. (47)
Despite these theoretical disagreements, Marcuse commends Dunayevskaya's ways of concretizing Hegel's abstract philosophical notions. He also agreed to writing the preface of Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and freedom*. Likewise, in many instances Dunayevskaya sided on Marcuse's position against his detractors, e.g., she defended Marcuse from the attacks of Fromm and even Adorno. They supported each other in advancing the revolutionary ideas of Hegel and Marx in their critique of contemporary society towards a democratized world.

Dunayevskaya wrote what came to be known as her "trilogy of revolution," including *Marxism and freedom* and *Rosa Luxenburg, Women's liberation*, and *Marx's Philosophy of revolution* (1982). In addition, she selected and introduced a collection of writings, published in 1985, *Women's liberation and the dialectics of revolution*.

Erich Fromm was a German social psychologist, psychoanalyst, sociologist, humanistic philosopher, and democratic socialist. Fromm was one of the founding members of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory and was an important colleague of Horkheimer in the inception years of the Institute of Social Research. He was the only trained psychoanalyst among this group of intellectuals and thus credited the distinction as the first who attempted to reconcile Freud and Marx (xxxv). This turn to psychoanalytical Marxism was very much supported by their intellectual leader at Frankfurt School, Max Horkheimer.

However, Fromm's continuous espousing of a liberal tone and revisionist tendency in reading Freud vis-à-vis social critique pushed him away from the mainstream of critical theory. He was eventually shoved out of the Frankfurt School. Despite these, with his succeeding works, e.g., *Escape from freedom*, Fromm managed to catapult himself as an internationally celebrated social critic. Though he may have appeared to many as a less radical thinker, Fromm continued with his brand of psychoanalytic Marxist social critique. Such standpoint led him to develop a Socialist-Humanist psychoanalysis which in turn finds affinity with Dunayevskaya's interest (xxxvii).

Fromm and Dunayevskaya's intellectual exchange focused on issues arising from *Marx's Concept man*, from the discussion on the contemporary relevance of Hegel's *Phenomenology of the mind*, and questions on *Socialist humanism*, among others. Generally Dunayevskaya commended Fromm's Marxist-Humanist view; however, in a letter to Fromm dated 11 October 1961, Dunayevskaya criticized Fromm's *Marx's concept of man*. She deplored Fromm's affirmative reading of Marcuse's works *Reason and revolution* and *Soviet Marxism* as "brilliant and penetrating" (123) in reference to calling both works of Marcuse the "philosophical basis of Marx's thought." Though she commends Marcuse's *Reason and revolution*, Dunayevskaya particularly disagreed with Marcuse's *Soviet Marxism*. In her verdict of *Soviet Marxism* she wrote:

In reading your *Marx's concept of man* I noted that you referred to the works of Herbert Marcuse as if there were no difference between the period when he wrote his wonderful "Reason and revolution" and that in which he wrote his whitewash of Communist perversions in his "Soviet Marxism"... The reason I mention it is that it illuminates the pitfalls awaiting one if the Humanism of Marxism is treated abstractly, and the dialectic of the present development is analyzed on a totally different basis. (124)
She also opposed Fromm’s tendency of dealing with Marx’s early essays in “too general terms” (xl.). Despite these criticisms, there was a substantial core of agreement between Fromm and Dunayevskaya.

Dunayevskaya outlived both Marcuse and Fromm. In her *In memoriam* (1979 for Marcuse and 1980 for Fromm), Dunayevskaya paid tribute and saluted her intellectual friends and critics.

The death of Herbert Marcuse... marks a sad day on the historic calendar of young revolutionaries as well as old Marxists. How great is the void death has created can be gauged from his mature life-span which covered the 1919 German Revolution, the US New Left in the mid-1960s, to the very month of his death in Germany—the country of his birth, the land of both Hegel and Marx... (232)

She recalled her last discussion with him: “I thought: the 1919 German Revolution and Marx’s philosophy of liberation were precisely the point of the birth of Herbert Marcuse as Marxist Philosopher” (232-35). For Erich Fromm Dunayevskaya eulogized:

The many articles that poured forth in 1980 when Erich Fromm died... all praised him as a “famous psychoanalyst.” The press, by no accident at all, failed to mention that he was a Socialist Humanist. In writing “Marx’s concept of man”... he did so, not as an academician, but as an activist... In any case as he moved away from orthodox Freudianism to establish his own version, it was clear that he was breaking not only with Freud but with the famous Frankfurt School and its Critical Theory, and that, not because he was moving away from Marxism, but coming closer to it. (236)

She declared that by and through them, the revolutionary lives on!

This collection of correspondence between three notable intellectual figures—between Dunayevskaya and Marcuse, and between Dunayevskaya and Fromm—demonstrates the vibrancy of revolutionary ideas as they developed in Hegelian Marxist, Marxist Humanist, and Socialist Humanists perspectives in Critical Theory. To anyone who is a serious follower of Hegel, Marx, and Critical Theory, this collection is a “must read” book.

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Paul Johnson. *Socrates: A man for our times*


Three areas of investigation are coalescing in Paul Johnson’s *Socrates: A man for our times*. These are history, philosophy, and education. Actually, we might even add a fourth one, philosophy of education. Johnson (hereafter referred to as “the author”) “is an acclaimed historian of extraordinary range whose many bestselling books have been translated into dozens of languages” (iii). One might wonder why this book, written by a historian and appealing most likely to readers with historical interests, is reviewed in a philosophical journal. One very good reason, of course, is the essential link between history and philosophy. A second reason is that “In terms of influence, Socrates was the most important of all philosophers” (185), “the quintessential philosopher, the seeker and conveyer of wisdom” (8). A third reason pertains to the fact that education is indigenous to philosophy, as the educator is to the philosopher—at least in the case of Socrates—and the manner in which the author portrays this reality.

*Socrates: A man for our times* has a “Table of contents” listing seven chapters, “Further reading” (197-198), and an “Index” (199-208). Four unnumbered pages at the end of the book advertise the author’s books on Darwin, Jesus (*A biography from a believer*), Churchill, and Napoleon. The centrality of education as a theme of the book is clearly evident in the first four pages (5-8) of the first chapter. Herein the author, characterizing the fifth century B.C., refers to “three outstanding individuals who echoed one another in insisting that the distinction between their civilizations and the surrounding barbarism must be reinforced by systematic moral education” (5): Confucius (551-479 B.C.); Ezra, the Hebrew priest and scribe who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon in 458 B.C.; and Socrates (470-399 B.C.). Emphasizing the pedagogical theme, the author observes that

Despite... different backgrounds, the three men were united by their passion for education, to which they devoted their lives. To all three, education involved learning all that was most valuable in their societies. But beyond knowledge education was a process whereby virtue or the ability to lead a good life was acquired. And to cap it all, Socrates was in no doubt that education, by making one virtuous, was the surest road to happiness. He was the first seer we know of who pondered deeply on what makes humans happy and how such a blessing can be acquired. (7-8)

In this commentary on what unites Confucius, Ezra, and Socrates, the author is clarifying the coalescence of history, philosophy, and education. He also suggests that
Socrates was a philosopher of education, since he was characterized as “pondering deeply on what makes humans happy [concerning philosophy] and how such a blessing can be acquired” (applied to the process of education).

Since Socrates wrote nothing, sources for his life and thought constitute a persistent problem. While the author does consider this issue in various places in the book, I would like to refer only to a few of his comments on Plato, the primary source, to whom the first chapter, “Living man and ventriloquist's doll,” is partially and critically addressed. The author observes that “Plato was a genius, which is both our boundless delight and our misfortune” (9). The “delight” lies at least partially in two facts: the fact that he was a student of Socrates; and the fact that two documents (Socrates’ own verbatim defense while being tried for his life, and a record of his final hours prior to serving his death sentence) and the earliest dialogues “are authentic records of Socrates, the man, the historical seer at work” (9-10).

The “misfortune” of Plato’s genius, according to the author of Socrates: A man for our times, lies in the fact that Plato became an “academic,” the first one (with the establishment of an institution from which modern “academe” gets its name), who was followed by the second one (his student Aristotle), giving birth to “the characteristic pattern of academic life, competitive animosity” (10). In composing his early dialogues and the documents pertaining to the end of Socrates’ life, “Plato was still innocent enough, that is still enraptured by Socrates’ thinking and method, to reproduce both accurately” (10). However, the first academic became the first “intellectual,” “someone who thinks ideas matter more than people.” Since Plato’s ideas demanded propagation, “poor Socrates, whose actual death Plato had so lamented, was killed a second time, so that he became a wooden man, a ventriloquist’s doll [later referred to here as Platos], voicing not his own philosophy but that of Platos.” It was “the murder and quasi-diabolical possession of a famous brain...one of the most unscrupulous acts in intellectual history” (11), with the consequence that “the line of demarcation in Plato’s writings between the real Socrates and the monster is unclear...[being] argued about for centuries, without any universally accepted result...” (12).

Later in his book, the author contrasts Socrates and Plato as thinkers, saying that “the two men were very different in almost every respect, and it is one of the great paradoxes of history that they came together, the one to found, the other to record, the beginning of true philosophy” (93-94). What is this “true philosophy”? We get a peek at it through the author’s analyses of Socrates’ “mission” in life, a mission which took place, not incidentally, in Athens. According to the author, “Socrates was proud of being born an Athenian. He lived all his life in the city and never left it except in her service as a soldier” (19). “If ever a man was at home in the place where he was born, lived, and died, it was Socrates the Athenian” (34), for whom Athens “was the best of all city-states in which to live” (19)—so good, in fact, that one of the reasons why he would not consider banishment from Athens as a possible alternative to his death sentence was that it would be “a greater punishment than death” (166). Socrates: A man for our times, needless to say, provides substantial information concerning the Athens of Socrates by the author historian.

What, precisely, was the mission of this “Ugly Joker with the gift for happiness” (the title of Chapter II)? Whatever it was, its source was clear: “Socrates always felt bound to fulfill his mission. It was his duty to God, as well as his delight and the meaning of his entire existence” (172). More specifically, he “believed he had a mission from God to examine and improve people” (156). It should be noted that the divinity in question was not “the gods”; Socrates was a monotheist (107). Furthermore, according to the author, “It was
precisely because he believed in God that he devoted his life to philosophy, which to him was about the human desire to carry out divine purposes." "His practice of philosophy [and it was a practical endeavor—of education] could be defined as 'reflection on propositions emerging from unreflective thought' (106).

According to the author, "He [Socrates] believed... that by wandering around Athens and talking to people—'examining' them—and examining himself, he was doing as God told him" (106-07). The purpose of philosophy, Socrates' God-given purpose, was to seek the truth (42-43), not by telling and explaining (professing), but by questioning, proceeding to an "investigation of the internal world of man" (78), as distinct from scientists absorbed by the external world. Whom did he question in order to provoke and activate processes of reasoning? Certainly, the citizens of Athens, more precisely, tanners, metalworkers, shopkeepers, water sellers, hawkers, scribes, sailors, farmers, horse trainers, and on and on (78-79): "I believe God ordered me to live philosophizing, examining myself and others" (79-80). According to the author, "philosophy [to Socrates] was the theater of reason" (80), but, having no knowledge or wisdom except awareness of his own ignorance, Socrates assisted others by his questioning "to give birth to the truth they carry within their minds and hearts" (84), "The object... is teaching the people to whom he is talking how to think and not least, how to think for themselves." He was hostile not just to seeking a "right answer," but to "the very idea of there being a right answer" (92). Central to the method was the use of irony—defined in accord with three sources by the author (84)—exemplified by Socrates' own congenial and disarming claim to ignorance in approaching his clientele. Applying his philosophical method in pursuing truth "by refuting propositions he induces his interlocutors to put forward," what did this man who claimed to know nothing but his own ignorance really know? The philosophical enterprise which Socrates inaugurated was not merely method: there may not have been "right answers" in his nonsystem, but there were fundamental principles—without which Socrates was not the philosopher with whom the author (and the Western world) appears to have some familiarity.

First of all, "What he taught, in so far as he consciously taught anything, was goodness." Aristotle testifies that "Socrates occupied himself with ethics, and not at all with nature as a whole" (81), that is, with the internal world rather than with the external world, as already noticed. He spent much of his time pondering the Good Life and how to attain it because he held, as "the core of his belief, that only by striving to lead good [virtuous] lives did humans attain a degree of content in their existence and happiness in eternity" (109). Integral to the good life as a means to happiness was justice, not in the abstract, but "doing justly," which for Socrates "comes before any other consideration" (113). The just man is one who helps and assists not only his friends, but also his enemies, those who have harmed him or have attempted to do so. In other words, "Socrates sets his face against the entire theory and practice of retaliation" (114-15). The author follows this statement by asserting that "Socrates' rejection of retaliation was the most important practical event of his philosophical life" and "one of the most important events in the history of philosophy" (119). This principle (the rejection of retaliation) exemplifies vividly what the author calls Socrates "moral absolutism": "...if it is wrong, you must not do it. Even if it would win the whole world, you must not do it. Your life itself would not be worth living if you can preserve it only by wrongdoing others" (119-20). In fact, the "governing principle of his life was that a wrong could never justify a further wrong in response" (173).

As important as is Socrates' ethical absolutism for our times, it might be rivaled for its importance (in a somewhat different manner) by his distinction between the body and soul of
a human being—which, of course, is fundamental to his notion of virtue. Most simply, “The body was the active, physical, earthly aspect of a person and was mortal. The soul was the spiritual aspect and was immortal. The body was greedy for pleasure and material satisfaction...a seat of vice. The soul was the intellectual and moral side of the person...the seat of virtue.” The purpose of life, according to Socrates, was delineated in this context: “The most important occupation of a human being was to subdue his bodily instincts and train himself to respond to the teachings of the soul.” This was not just theory for Socrates either: “In his personal life, Socrates did everything he could to subdue his bodily cravings” (109-10). Concerning Socratic influence in this regard, the author observes that “Socrates’ notions of the body and the soul and of their relationship became, in time, standard” (111) (emphasis added).

One of the features of Socrates which made him “the most important of all philosophers” (185), according to the author, was that “he always concentrates on what matters most to us” (174)—and “what really mattered then and matters now is the one inescapable fact of human existence: death, and what follows it” (175). Socrates believed that “after death, the soul of the just man will be in the care of a god who values justice above all things and therefore will ensure that the still living soul of the dead man will be comforted and made secure. Death, then, is not to be feared but to be welcomed as the natural end to our life on earth and the beginning of something infinitely more glorious” (175-76). The author does not praise Socrates in this regard for providing apodictic arguments capable of convincing skeptics of the immortality of the soul and the reality of an afterlife, but rather for convincing us of “his own belief in both and of the steadfastness with which he approaches his own departure into the unknown” (176). The author emphasizes the fact that Socrates “embraced death not as a punishment but as a reward. It culminated, crowned, beatified, and made luminous his entire life” (177).

In concluding with some remarks concerning Socrates as philosopher, educator, and philosopher of education—as “A man for our times”—one must notice that he associates philosophy with knowing and doing, with recognizing the necessity of living the kind of life that is known to be most worth living. Secondly, philosophy cannot be disconnected from life: “...as soon as philosophy separated itself from the life of the people, it began to lose its vitality and was heading in the wrong direction” (193). The author begins the last paragraph of the book on this note: “For Socrates saw and practiced philosophy not as an academic but as a human activity. It was about real men and women facing actual ethical choices between right and wrong, good and evil [more generally, reality and illusion]. Hence a philosophical leader had to be more than a thinker, much more. He had to be a good man [or woman], for whom the quest for virtue was not an abstract idea but a practical business of daily living” (193-94). Socrates was a philosopher searching intellectually for the meaning of an authentically good life—not merely in order to know it, but in order to live it to be happy. Simultaneously, he was an educator, assisting others to know the truth, and to live the good life. Finally, in his efforts to know the truth and to live the good life, and to assist others to do likewise, he was engaging in philosophy of education, the application of philosophical reflection and values to the process of promoting the well-being of other persons. It seems clear that for Socrates, philosophy, education, and philosophy of education constituted a single, unified activity—which was his life. The Athenians needed him then—we need him now.

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BOOK NOTICES


In the so-called postmodern context in which today's culture likes to be situated, the Enlightenment and its meaning have become a highly controversial topic. Some are swearing by it, others are demonizing it as being responsible for many perceived evils that are affecting contemporary culture. Actually, whether one is in favor of it or not, the Enlightenment is difficult to define. It seems first of all a European phenomenon, even as the national contexts in which it has developed—French, or German, or English, Italian, Spanish...—seem to have produced different varieties of the same. The Enlightenment seems to be associated with rationalism and universalism, but one could find striking examples of the opposite as well, like David Hume. Through its critical spirit, the Enlightenment found itself inevitably at odds with established religious beliefs and practices. Here again, a few exceptions can be identified, initially leaving some place for a “rationally conceived” deistic deity, or for a suitable substitute like the “natural law.” If the Enlightenment took on religion, it was primarily because of the deemed dogmatic imperialism by which it deprived individuals of the right to form their own opinion. In still another sense, the Enlightenment may be perceived as a primarily intellectual affair. However, there were also attempts by intellectuals to share their insights with wider scores of people, especially in the middle class. The many-sided scholar Anthony Pagden offers a brilliant analysis in a vivid and accessible discourse on one of the most captivating themes of Western history. He also honors the subtitle of the book, not only by finding the Enlightenment a suitable topic to dedicate a book to, but also by expressing his personal support for its legacy. (W. M. A. V.)


This title by Ali Zain spurs the curiosity of potential readers because of the somewhat unusual connection it offers, not only between faith and philosophy—a classic!—but also (and especially) between these two and Islam, represented through the “reflective Muslim,” a term that breaks with the widespread association of Islam with fundamentalism in the West. Did, indeed, the last Islamic philosopher of major importance—Ibn Rushd or Averroes—not die more than eight hundred years ago? Upon a closer look at the book, it soon becomes obvious that it addresses the question whether the reflective Muslim could associate with the account of faith proposed by William James, who held that faith always includes a step beyond evidence. The answer to this question partly depends on what is exactly meant with “reflective Muslim.” Zain uses here the eleventh century Sufi mystic Al-Ghazali as the paradigm and source of inspiration, being aware of the risk involved, as Al-Ghazali is known for his skepticism and critique of traditional philosophy. He also acknowledges widespread perceptions of philosophy imposing its own viewpoint on religion.
and, therefore, undermining the divine authority of the Qu’ran and the orthodoxy of faith. On the other hand, the Qu’ran calls for an intellectual investigation of the truth, in view of the rejection of falsehood. The author also engages with contemporary evidentialism: if a belief should always comply with the subjective principle of sufficient reason, which presupposes adequate empirical evidence, the Jamesian account of faith appears unsustainable, given that every act of faith starts, indeed, from an internal truth-claim. On the other hand, religious ambiguity may still lead to faith, if it can be based on passionate grounds, according to James. The author shows, then, how this position may justify religious pluralism, in spite of possible objections of philosophical, psychological, and religious (Islamic) nature. The book will particularly satisfy analytic minds who are interested in a contemporary apologetic of religious faith, written from a non-Christian perspective. (W. M. A. V.)


Few topics may appear to teachers and students of philosophy as trivial, and still as familiar as disagreement. Bryan Frances dedicated a refreshing book to this theme, divided in two parts: the first offers a basic analysis of the problem and its ramifications, while the second is more practically oriented, focusing on one’s behavioral stand upon discovering a case of disagreement: to change one’s personal belief or not? That’s the question each human person faces at some point in ordinary life. Frances, a professor at Fordham in the USA, manages to keep the text light and easy to read, with the support of the not-so-stern layout, and the presence of plenty of concrete examples, taken from daily-life situations. From the start, the author is hitting the reader’s interest by stating that a lot of cases of disagreement are not really what they appear to be, but just cases of differences in the understanding of terms and norms. He clarifies his stand step-by-step, in a series of (sometimes very short) paragraphs aiming at the enablement of the reader to properly judge and deal with cases of disagreement (including the assessment of the other’s “epistemic” position compared to one’s own, and the distinction between disagreement about facts or values). While the first part had yielded some rules of thumb, the second part comes up with a revision, also affecting the criteria for identifying someone as “authoritative” in a particular matter. Touching also the subtle difference between disagreement among individuals and disagreement among groups, the author intends to come up with a definition of (what is perhaps) the most reasonable stand in a disagreement case. The author manages throughout the book to illustrate how complicated such can be, not to the least in religious matters... or is it not reasonable, perhaps, to disagree in some situations? The book will surely appeal to students in philosophy, especially in logic, epistemology, and philosophy of language, and appeal to anyone with some intellectual background and interest in philosophical matters. (W. M. A. V.)

François Jullien. 2014. On the universal, the uniform, the common and dialogue between cultures. Cambridge (UK)-Malden (USA): Polity Press.

What is more typical of today’s society than the “global” dimension of most processes and events? Whether it’s climate change, terror threats, economic crises, or the Internet,
most social and political developments have a global origin or impact. Would it be correct to say, therefore, that these problems are “universal”? Are uniform standards and criteria in social and economic relations sufficient to make these “universal”? Can the “universal” be discovered or reconstructed from a dialogue between world cultures? Is pluralism a realistic goal to pursue, or does it forsake the “universal”? Making profuse use of technical terms and their etymology, the author sketches the historical development of the “universal” from the Greek-Roman culture to Christianity—especially the work of Saint Paul and his paradigmatic mission to announce the truth of the gospel all over the world—which seems to turn the “universal” into a Western trademark. The author, then, engages in an exploration of “universalist” interests in other cultures, beginning with Islam and Indian cultures. His analysis reveals that those cultures are not as “universal” as Christianity, or at least not in the same way; neither is the Japanese culture, nor even Confucian Chinese culture, the author’s field of expertise. Chinese terms and concepts may be translated in “Western” metaphysical language, but such translation nearly always implies a violation of specific connotations. The author illustrates this by referring to the Western concept of “Universal Human Rights,” which finds only a very vague and eventually inadequate equivalent in the Indian dharma. The author concludes that dialogue among cultures should not assume a vertical universality, which turns cultural differences into just secondary features that can be translated in “universal” terms through mutations or reconfiguration. A rational culture of meaningful communication should implement a shift from the perspective of a (single) mankind to the (multiple) human. The book of Jullien is definitely worthwhile reading for anyone concerned by intercultural dialogue, ethics, political science, and metaphysics. (W. M. A. V.)
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Errata


(2) The author’s middle name “Olowasyeli” in “African feminism: Some critical considerations,” “Table of contents,” and “Notes on contributors” [Philosophia 15 (1), January 2014: 1, iii, and 134, respectively] should be spelled as “Olowasyeli.”
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