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THE 2015 ISSUE IS THE SECOND VOLUME OF TALISIK. THIS ISSUE COVERED AN EXTENSIVE RESEARCH ON MODERN PHILOSOPHY PARTICULARLY THE WORKS OF THE GREAT EMPIRICIST JOHN LOCKE AND DAVID HUME. FURTHERMORE, IT ALSO COVERED THE WORKS OF THE GREAT RATIONALIST BARUCH SPINOZA. ASIDE FROM MODERN PHILOSOPHERS, THE 2015 ISSUE ALSO COVERED THE WORKS OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, GABRIEL MARCEL AND MICHEL FOUCAULT.

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Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of Talisik is modelled to the normative organizational structure of the already established academic journals around the world. However, since the editorial board of Talisik is only consisted of undergraduate students and thereby not authorize to peer review the submitted researches, the task of the editorial boards is limited to copy-editing and proofreading. Aside from copy-editing and proofreading, the editorial board is also in charge of facilitating the entire operations of the academic journals.

Editorial Board for the School Year 2014 – 2015

The Division of Task

The aforementioned positions don't correspond to any rank or order. Each position is equal in terms of authority in facilitating the entire operations of the academic journal. They are all in charge of the strategic planning, operational oversight, financial management, journal site maintenance and the promotion of the academic journal. However, even though each position is equal in terms of authority the editor in chief is the one in charge in delegating the task among the editors.

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A Letter from the Editorial Board of 2015

Dear Reader,

It is with great excitement that we present the second volume of Talisik: An Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy. By providing an interdisciplinary platform for the exchange and dissemination of undergraduate research, we hope to foster the investigative spirit among the undergraduate student of philosophy. The articles in this volume reflect the intellectual vitality of the undergraduate researchers of the University of Santo Tomas, Manila. The second volume of Talisik encompasses a wide spectrum of knowledge in which a reader will encounter various ideas and philosophers across the ages.

Our reader will explore the works of the great empiricist philosophers John Locke and David Hume. They will also encounter the works of the great rationalist philosopher Baruch Spinoza. Aside from modern philosophers, the 2015 issue also covers the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, Gabriel Marcel and Michel Foucault. For this volume, we encourage our reader to immerse themselves to the diverse field of philosophy by encountering different thinkers across the ages.

None of this will be possible without the support of our department head Dr. Paolo Bolaños and Sir Roland Theuas Pada. The direction and diligence they provided were crucial in the redesign and production of the journal. We would also like to express our gratitude for the support of our authors, the Department of Philosophy and the Concilium Philosophiae. We would also like to thank the many students who submitted their papers to the journal. Our editorial staff was impressed by the diligence and creativity reflected in each of the papers we received. On behalf of the entire 2014-2015 Editorial Board, we would like to thank you for reading this journal and we hope you enjoy the wonderful work of the undergraduate students of philosophy.

Many thanks and regards,
Editorial Board of Talisik 2015

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Comparison of Descartes's and Hume's Ideas of the Self

Julia Anne Mari R. Catalan

Abstract: The Father of Modernity, Rene Descartes (1596-1650), has been labeled as such because of the focus he gave to man, straying away from the trend of thought preceding his time which was theocentric. Through a very systematic method, he arrived at the certainty of the existence of the cogito—the 'self'—which he used as the starting point in his philosophy, claiming it to be that which he is most certain of. After some years comes the Scottish philosopher, David Hume (1711-1776), debunking Descartes confidence in his first certitude saying that the 'self' per se does not really exist. This paper aims to compare the ideas of the Self of two of the greatest thinkers of the Modern Period. This will be done by expounding both philosophers' ideas and thereafter converging their ideas in comparison and contrast. I shall exhaust different sources, both primary and secondary, to find information on this matter.

Keywords: Descartes, Hume, Self

"Who am I?"

In at least one point in our lives, we get to ask ourselves this question. In a speech delivered by John Jacob Scherer, he compared this with a ladder leaned on a wall., it is when we come to realize that we are bounded in the constantly-running time—that we are moving towards our end. Yet, we cannot still be certain of how we would want our lives to be before we leave this world. He says, "A mid-life crisis is when you get to the top rung of your ladder only to realize that you leaned it against the wrong wall."[1] This realization is brought about by that question—"who am I?"

The question of "who" is the question of the identity of the inquirer. It can either be as superficial as the mere name, or as deep as the being and purposes in life of the person being asked. Whatever this question begs the person is a characteristic or a property of that person. The questioning of the properties of an object is a presupposition of the object's existence. Hence, the question, "Who am I?" presupposes the existence of the *I*.[2]

In this paper, I shall present a discourse on the notions of the *I* in the Modern Period, particularly that of Rene Descartes and David Hume. I find these philosophers' ideas of the *I* contradicting, and hence find it interesting for both of their beliefs of the self be put in a dialogue. For Descartes, I shall begin my discussion with his methodic doubt and the transition of his thought to his first certitude that is the existence of the *cogito*. Meanwhile, for Hume, I shall briefly discuss first the bases of his empiricist thought to found my exploration of his notion of the *identity*. After these explications, I shall put their ideas side by side on some specific topics that are pertinent to the

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intent of this paper for comparison and/or contrast. It should be expected for some points discussed in the two former parts to be repeated in this part of the paper for emphasis of argument.

Descartes's Cogito

The shift from the theocentric thought in the Medieval Ages can greatly be contributed to the rise of the anthropocentric trend kindled by the philosophy of René Descartes, making him the Father of Modernity. The precursors of his philosophy include Francis Bacon, Nicolas of Cusa, and Galileo Galilei. Indeed, Descartes exemplifies the then concept of the new scientific man.

Descartes started his line of thought by emptying his mind of everything that it contains. He aimed at certainty. To reach that, he knew that he should, first and foremost, consider as false all of his existing knowledge. In his first principle he stated that, "in order to seek truth, it is necessary once in the course of our life, to doubt, as far as possible, of all things."[3] His desire to found his entire system of knowledge on a solid ground involves him in foundationalism. This begins the pursuit of knowledge with self-evident beliefs which do not depend on any other knowledge but rather, can justify the rest of what we know.[4] We cannot arrive at the truth if we start at a wrong point in our journey towards it, in the same way that we cannot reach a certain destination if the route that we are following is unsure. We can keep on turning left or right in the entire duration of our whole journey but we can never arrive at our destination when we do not know the directions to it, even if we travel to reach it for our whole life.

Hence, Descartes, in his pursuit of certainty, doubted all that he knows. This is his famous methodic doubt.[5] He considered everything whose source is either the senses or the intellect as false. For, countless are the moments that he is being deceived by the senses, or those that he thought to be real but are really just in his dreams. Furthermore, it is possible that for all he knows, he might have just been deceived by an evil genius all along.[6] He saw both mentioned sources of knowledge—senses and intellect—as uncertain and cannot therefore be fully trusted to give him any certainty. This means that no knowledge can be exempted from this elimination, for, where else, except for the senses or the intellect, can knowledge come from? However, when all knowledge coming from the senses or the intellect are considered as false through doubting, we are left with nothing—no knowledge that holds certainty. At this point, Descartes exempts one thing that is, doubting itself. Whatever is occurring is necessarily existing. Therefore, while the doubting or the thinking is taking place, it necessarily exists. This is what is called occurrent existence.[7] Doubting or thinking exists, for without its existence, this entire process of methodic doubt will be nonexistent.

At this point, we have regarded as false all the existing knowledge coming from the sources that hold no certainty, i.e. the senses and the intellect, and so there is nothing left but the existence of doubting or thinking itself. The thinking, for Descartes, exists, but not substantially. Substance, in his context, is that which is taken to be as real and whose existence is independent of any other object.[8] Thinking, therefore, though proven to have an occurrent existence, does not have an independent existence. It is a property that needs a substance to be a property of.[9] We do not have an immediate knowledge or perception of the substance; we only perceive certain forms and qualities that we ascribe to a substance that these attributes exist in.[10] Hence, in the same

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way that no piano music can be heard without a piano being played, this substance that thinking is an property of necessarily exists.

This substance that thinking is an essence of is none other than the *mind*. Thus is the very famous line, "I think, therefore I am."[11] His thinking insinuates something, or rather someone that does the thinking, and thence affirms his existence. As he says,

I am nothing so long as I shall think that I am something. Thus, after everything has been most carefully weighed, it must finally be established that this pronouncement "I am, I exist" is necessarily true every time I utter it or conceive it in my mind.[12]

His existence - that was what he was very sure of; his first certitude. His *I* exists, more certainly than any other else's existence. The knowledge that inferred from thinking to existing is a kind that is a product of intuition and not of reasoning.[13] It is not a deduction from a premise because the premise—that he thinks—is self-evident, that he had simultaneously concluded his existence from it intuitively.

After providing the existence of his self as the solution to the problem of what he can hold most certain to found succeeding knowledge that he can trust to be sure of, he then inquires, "But what then am I? A thing which thinks. What is a thing which thinks? Is it a thing which doubts, understands, [conceives], affirms, denies, wills, refuses, which also imagines and feels."[14] With Descartes saying this, some would jokingly say that he is a floating mind, alone in a vacuum.

He exists. But what is he that exists? In the process of doubting everything, he had also doubted himself, including what he is. However, he recalls what he was assumed he was before the doubt: he is a man. He went on to enumerate that he has parts—he has organs, bones, flesh, etc.,—to which he calls his body. Therefore, the mind, to which he had attributed the certainty of existence form the beginning, has something along with it to constitute a man—that something is the body. Some of the characteristics that he has ascribed to the body are (1) those which occupy a certain form—as aforementioned, this is caused by its corporeal properties. (2) What follows from this is that the body can be perceived by the senses, (3) and in return, it is also what gives us perceptions through the senses. (4) Last one is that it cannot move on its own, i. e., it needs something separate from it to drive it—this is where its connection to the mind lies.[15]

It can be inferred from these characteristics that the body is composed of corporeal attributes. Meaning, it cannot be safe from the doubt. Our senses are not infallible. I may perceive something as another and not even be aware of the mistake in my perception. Say, I may think that what I am eating right now is yoghurt when in fact; it really is just my roommate's cow milk that had gone bad. Or, for all I know, I am really just imagining eating something because I am really craving for a yoghurt, but I cannot go down to buy one because it is already three in the morning. In whichever case—either perception or imagination, the mind functions. When I eat, it is the mind that processed the information brought to it by my sense perception, concluding that I am eating yoghurt. It is the same mind that faults when I perceive wrongly of what I eat. It is also this mind that imagines that I am eating. Therefore, nothing can be brought to the understanding without the comprehension done by the mind. He goes on to say that:

Indeed, I do not even know whether I have a body; you have shown me that it is possible to

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doubt it. I might add that I cannot deny absolutely that I have a body. Yet even if we keep all these suppositions intact, this will not prevent me from being certain that I exist. On the contrary, these suppositions simply strengthen the certainty of my conviction that I exist and am not a body. Otherwise, if I had doubts about my body, I would also have doubts about myself, and I cannot have doubts about that. I am absolutely convinced that I exist, so convinced that it is totally impossible for me to doubt it.[16]

It follows as well that every thought or idea resulting from the idea of the yoghurt exemplify the certainty of my existence for, the more idea I process; the more idea I process, the more I am thinking—the more I am sure that I am.

The nature of the *I* is constituted by *cogitationes* or thought. As demonstrated earlier, thinking is positing the existence of the thinking mind. Thought, as an essence, includes imagination, sensation, and will as its modes. This, being the sole function of the self has two kinds: Will, the actions of the soul, and Passion, all kinds of perceptions or thoughts. [17]

In conclusion, Rene Descartes, being the Father of Modernity that he is, spearheaded philosophy's journey of exploring the self. He did so by affirming its existence. Furthermore, he gave weight to its importance metaphysically by saying it exists and epistemologically by making it the solid foundation on which all the rest of his proceeding knowledge center on.

The certainty that Descartes holds for the existence of his *I* got a lot of approval and criticisms in the realm of philosophy following his. One of the most prominent of those who criticized his thought, specifically his notion of the self, is the Scottish, David Hume.

Hume's Personal Identity

David Hume's line of thought springs out from the empiricist tradition. He is often labeled as the most acute and consistent of the empiricists. The accounts of his stance on the 'self' or 'identity' are found in a part (IV) in a section (VI) in the first book of *A Treatise on Human Nature* and in the appendix of its third book.

Rule No. 1 in Hume's philosophy: *All knowledge is to be traced back from an impression.*[18]

Hume divided our perceptions into two classes: Thoughts or ideas and Impressions. These two are differentiated according to the force or the liveliness with which they function to give knowledge. 'Ideas' are, as he describes it, the results of the creative power of the mind through the things given to it by the sense perceptions or the impressions. Meanwhile, 'Impressions' are those vivid experiences arising from the senses.[19] As had been said in the Rule No. 1, all that we know are derived from sense experience. With this, one might ask, how come, then, can I have an idea of a unicorn when I have not perceived such in reality? This is a common refutation against empiricism. Hume would just argue that it is because we have an idea of a horse and a horn, as they came from experience, and, through our imagination, we puzzle all the pieces of knowledge together to create an image of unicorn. This reaffirms what I dubbed as his Rule no.1 as being really a Rule no. 1.

These impressions—these lively perceptions—are distinct from each other. Thus, we tend to ascribe connections between the separate perceptions through our imagination. The connections exist only in our minds for nothing really is connected; only conjoined.[20] When two things are connected, it means that there exists a real relationship or link between them. For

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example, claiming that A and B are connected is claiming that they are linked with each other; that A is interdependent to B, or vice versa. Meanwhile, to say that A and B are conjoined is to say that they are just put together; put next to each other, with no real link or relation. We associate distinct ideas through three ways: resemblance, contiguity, and causation or cause and effect.

These principles of connections are also those that we apply to our claim of an identity or the idea of the self. The impression that gives rise to the idea of the self is one that "must continue invariably the same, thro' the whole course of our lives; since self is suppos'd to exist after that manner."[21] This purports that Hume's idea of the self that which is permanent and in line with the dictionary definition of it which is the "sameness of essential or generic character in different instances." [22] Identity, then, is that thing which remains as is despite the many changes that one go through. However, Hume found it perplexing because, if we go back to our rule number one, from what impression can we trace the existence of an identity? Nothing, perhaps, argued Hume. Therefore, Hume disagrees of the dominating idea of the self and goes on to say that the so-called "self" is nothing but a *bundle* of a variety of perceptions which succeed each other with the rapidity that is impossible for us to conceive.[23] Moreover, he holds that even the slightest of change can destroy this posited identity. Thus, we are all but a fleeting moment.

Among the three principles of connections that have been mentioned, Hume held two of those as that which projects to us the illusion of an identity, i.e. resemblance and causation. (1) Resemblance does so by imposing a similitude between distinct but succeeding perceptions and thus making us think that that chain of impressions which we see are but one, unchanging identity. (2) Meanwhile, Hume explained causation as that moment when we ascribe as one impression what actually were two distinct impressions. This is a very important ingredient in our construction of the self through the connections we make is memory. As Hume precisely forwarded:

As memory alone acquaints us with the continuance and extent of this succession of perceptions, 'tis to be considered, upon that account chiefly, as the source of personal identity. Had we no memory, we never should have any notion of causation, nor consequently of that chain of causes and effects, which constitute our self or person.[24]

This explanation provided by Hume explains the whole process in which we ascribe as a self what really is but a bundle of impressions operates in our imagination. He elaborated in this quotation the importance of memory in our formulation of an account of causation and thus, of personal identity.

We cannot be, in our waking state, without a perception—not even for a single moment. Our perceptions, as Donald Baxter explains it, are those that are objects of our direct awareness, be it sensory or anything else.[25] Perceptions are constantly changing but the interruptions or the successions from one point to another are so little that we do not notice it. Changes can make something appear differently to our senses. However, if these changes are not great enough a proportion to the whole, it cannot really be noticed. And therefore, the interruptions will fail to make that object appear differently. Following this is the illusion of consistency and identity are projected.

Another possibility that he explored, is that although changes may be great (as proportioned

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to the whole of the object), it still is not as apparent because they appear so gradually—little by little, making a difference that we could not even notice it occurring. We will just then become aware of what change took place when we are able to compare the object from its starting point to its latest point. An example of this is when you see yourself in a picture from ten years ago. You see how vastly you have changed; how greatly you have grown. Maybe, you wished you still look as young, or thanked the heavens that you do not look like that anymore. Perhaps, you would not even believe that you once looked like that! However, when you are taken back to that moment when the said picture of you was taken, you could not even have imagined how things would change ten years from that moment; that a decade ago, you did not even have the slightest idea that you would end up being at this moment in the present.

We are all familiar with this feeling. And this is what Hume questioned. That, despite the vast changes in the body or the physical make up of an object or a person, we still tend to attribute to them a single and constant identity that we had ten minutes or ten centuries ago. Hume explained:

[W]e may farther observe, that where we do not give rise to such a fiction, our propension to confound identity with relation is so great, that we are apt to imagine something unknown and mysterious, connecting the parts, beside their relation; and this I take to be the case with regard to the identity we ascribe to plants and vegetables. And even when this does not take place, we still feel a propensity to confound these ideas, tho' we are not able fully to satisfy ourselves in that particular, nor find any thing invariable and uninterrupted to justify our notion of identity. [26]

Meaning to say, he purported that our ascription of identity to a person, as it is but the same kind as that which we do to plants or animals, is for our own convenience; for the sake of keeping to ourselves a simple idea with which we can easily remember or think of an object.

In a nutshell, Hume thought that our conventional idea of a personal identity is fictitious for we are, for him, but a 'bundle' of several distinct impressions that just so happened to be at the same location at the same time creating an illusion that they are all one and the same. Alas, Hume concludes, "the question concerning the substance of the soul is absolutely unintelligible."[27]

Comparison

As the accounts of the self or personal identity of the two philosophers at hand have been established, I shall now compare their philosophies. The comparison that I am attempting to make is one that will consider the aspects of their accounts with similarities and differences, and trace down what could have caused them.

The weight that Descartes had given the mind has inevitably caused his successors to give as much importance to the discussion of the mind. The two main schools of thought that arose from his innovation are the Rationalist and the Empiricist School. He is classified under the former because of his distrust to how the body (i.e., the senses) perceives without the mind. However, I would like to believe that there is a slight hint of empiricism in the philosophy of Descartes because the methodic doubt that he so believes in depends on ones experience of it. Meaning, its effectiveness is only based upon the personal experience of the person to it. On the contrary, Hume, as had been mentioned, is

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of the best empiricists there is. That fact can be upheld without any contest. He was faithful in following the empiricist tradition.

The distinction of their thoughts starts from their approach to thinking. Descartes dwelled on what exists. His attempt to the advancement of knowledge only comes after his discovery of where it could found on. He aimed at discovering an indubitable truth, which he did through the methodic doubt. At the conclusion of his doubt, he realized that he thinks, and therefore he is—that he exists. The action, that is thinking, is impossible to be without an actor. This actor that he sees is a substance—the cogito. His necessitation of a substance to be behind the essence proves his claim of its existence to be a metaphysical one. That, there needs to be *something* to justify the action. It can therefore be concluded that his approach to it is tending toward a metaphysical one.

On the other hand, Hume's main agenda was to advance our understanding on the acquisition of knowledge. He even applied this to his notion of the understanding the self. He holds that the kind of self that Descartes and those others who claim it as something substantial is but a fabrication of our mind. For him, the self is not a matter of what exists or not but rather, of the impossibility of knowing something that constant that is the identity of a person. Many interpretations of Hume mistake his account in the "Of Personal Identity" as an attempt to explain affirmatively what it is that we have in an existing 'identity'. But, in reality, Hume devoted his effort in this particular chapter in denying such possibility. Hence, this account is, in truth, but a negative explanation of the possibility of knowing the *self*. Hence, we can say that his approach is epistemic. Epistemic in a sense that he is concerned with what we are capable to know; with what we *can* know.

Their accounts of the self—the affirmation and the denial, for that matter—pertain to the Classical notion of a substance. This is the unchanging stuff that holds its constantly-changing properties together. In those Ancient times, the discussion of it is universe or world-scale. These two, however, reduced the discussion to the substance of a person. Descartes faithfully followed this tradition. The idea that there must be something underneath in order to support what will come above that comes from the Ancient pursuit of the 'urstoff' or the ultimate stuff. This became his presupposition to his pursuit of the one immutable truth. It is as though demonstrating through the usual pyramid wherein there is a base which founds the ascent to the one thing on top, but inverted.[28] In Descartes's demonstration, the world that is filled with complexities should have bedrock from which it can base its certainty.

This, of course, goes on differently in Hume's account. His is more of like lego pieces which are distinct and originally separated from each other. If a kid assembles it—put together different pieces, different colors—and show it to you, saying that it is something, say, a house, you would tend to agree to it, when in fact, you know for yourself that those are just lego pieces stuck together in a manner that would 'look' like a house! The lego pieces being talked of on the said example are the perceptions that bundle together to create an illusion that there exists a single, unchanging identity. Without these lego pieces, there cannot be any house or figure created. Similarly, in the absence of perceptions, we cannot make any conclusion of a self. However, as Hume argues, we can never be without a perception, in our waking state. Therefore, when in a deep sleep, for all we know, we might even cease to exist!

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Alan Tom have, in his article correlating the notions of the self of Descartes and Hume to that of the Buddha, dubbed Descartes's cogito as a "robust *I*."[29] This description of the mind is very insightful for it is very much along with the Cartesian doctrine. The mind in this notion is immensely active. Aside from it being the source of existence, it is also the basis of all the succeeding knowledge that I can attain. Contrary to this is Hume's I, which, in probably its shortest explanation, is non-existent.

Conclusion

The pursuit of the self in the question of "Who am I?" was taken differently by Descartes and Hume. From a mere existential conundrum whose answer is immensely searched for by us in at least once in our lives, these two elevated it to a metaphysical and an epistemological one, consequently. From searching for our purpose in life, they have asked whether it is possible to know it.

The tradition of thinking spearheaded by Descartes has opened so many doors in raising different essential questions that had consequently triggered different stances from different standpoints. All of which are to be given merits for the prowess of argumentation that they have shown. As had been discussed in this paper, one of which is David Hume, whose philosophy, for many, exemplifies the essence of the empiricist thought.

I would like to end this paper by differentiating once more the view on the self of the two philosophers at hand by stating their thought from my own point of view:

Descartes. "I think, therefore I am." Thinking is an action. The fact that there is an action being done affirms an actor. Thinking, then, presupposes the existence of a thinker—a mind. The mind is the substance to which thinking is the essence of. I am my mind. I exist. This, now, I can be sure of. To say otherwise is still an affirmation of my existence for to do so is still thinking. Indeed, I exist!

Hume. The *I* does not exist. In fact, it would even be invalid to say "I," for it would be presumptuous of me to say so. I do not exist as a single unit of being, for I am but an aggregate—a compound—of several different perceptions. The perceptions that compose me are in a constant flux and therefore I am not the same as I was one millisecond ago. If you point into my direction, you are not really pointing at something. I am but a fleeting moment.

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[1] John Jacob Scherer, Commencement Speech to Roanoke College Graduates, in *Graduation Wisdom*, NA, Accessed December 1, 2015, http://www.graduationwisdom.com/speeches/0053-scherer.htm.

[2] Also called *cogito*, *mind* or *self*, *identity,* or in a more religious context, *soul.* (All the I's in italics in this paper from here onwards shall be taken as synonymous to self).

[3] Rene Descartes, *Selections from the Principles of Philosophy,* Translated by John Veitch, PDF File, Accessed from Project Gutenberg, 15.

[4] Peter Markie, The Cogito and Its Importance, in *The Cambridge Companion to Descartes,* ed. by John Cottingham (Cambridge University Press, 1992), 51.

[5] It is worth noting that the methodic doubt is subjective, that is, it comes from a first hand experience. That, even if he proclaim with conviction what this method will end up to, i. e. finding the certainty of the existence of the self, he still encourages everyone to do it on their own for it will be in their personal experience that they will find the value and the authenticity of the method.

[6] René Descartes, "Meditations on First Philosophy", in *Meditations, Objections, and Replies*, trans. by Roger Ariew and Donald Cress (Indianopolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2006).

[7] C. G. Prado, *Starting with Descartes* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2009, 67-69).

[8] On the latter part of his *Meditations*, he will reveal that as beings created by God, we cannot be fully independent of God's creating and sustaining will. Therefore, we are substances whose existence is free from

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any other thing except for God. See Prado, *Starting With Descartes*, 10-11.

[9] *Ibid.,* 11.

[10] René Descartes, "Reply to Objection IV," in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes,* Vol. 2, trans. Elizabeth Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 98.

[11] Descartes, *Meditations*,

[12] René Descartes, "Meditations on First Philosophy," in *Meditations, Objections, and Replies*, trans. by Roger Ariew and Donald Cress (Indianopolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2006), 13.

[13] Peter Markie, *The Cogito and Its Importance*, 55.

[14] Descartes, *Meditations*, 10.

[15] Descartes, *Meditations*, 9.

[16] *Ibid*., 52.

[17] E. Rhodes, "A View of the Philosophy of Descartes." in *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy,* Vol. 18, No. 3., July 1884, Accessed from JSTOR. 229, 233.

[18] Emphasis mine. Hume has made clear this condition for the acquisition of knowledge and furthers it in the latter part of the same section saying: "When we entertain, therefore, any suspicion that a philosophical term is employed without any meaning or idea (as is but too frequent), we need but enquire, *from what impression is that supposed idea derived?* And if it be impossible to assign any, this will serve to confirm our suspicion." David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning the Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals, 2nd edition,* trans. by L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902) in Section II*,* 19.

[19] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature,* trans. by L.A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), 50.

[20] *Enquiries*, Section VI, Part III, 76.

[21] *Treatise*, Section VI, 133.

[22] Merriam-Webster Dictionary

[23] Emphasis mine.

[24] *Treatise*, Section VI, 133.

[25] Donald Baxter, *Hume's Difficulty, Time and Identity in the Treatise* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 105.

[26] *Ibid.,* 135.

[27] *Ibid.,* 133.

[28] *Starting with Descartes*, 37-38.

[29] Alan Tomhave, "Cartesian Intuitions, Humean Puzzles, and the Buddhist Conception of the *Self,*" in *Philosophy East & West*, Vol. 60, No. 4, October 2010 (NA: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 445.

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Question of Knowledge: On a Humean Analysis of Space and Time

Andrea Nicole V. Fabregas

Abstract: This paper aims to demonstrate the characteristics and direction of knowledge that David Hume legitimizes from his spatial and chronological standpoint by discussing how Hume projects a topology of reality. It is from the notion that one's surroundings affect very well the generation of ideas that Hume's view of space and time becomes significant. Hence, this discussion attempts to present a more coherent and specific organization of Humean empiricism by relating it to how he characterizes physical reality.

Keywords: Causality, Indivisibility, Space and Time

"The infinite divisibility of space implies that of time, as is evident from the nature of motion. If the latter, therefore, be impossible, the former must be equally so."

Introduction

Hume refrained from giving his definite account of reality, although some may take his skepticism as a plausible linkage to building some kind of a metaphysical realism. [1] On the one hand, regardless of whether Hume is arguing merely from an epistemological standpoint or is creating a construct of reality, what consequently becomes significant, is the question of what features belong to the sort of knowledge that would prevail in such perspective. In line with the latter, one must be mindful of the fact that Hume allotted half of the first chapter of *Treatise of Human Nature* for the discussion on space and time. This account will then situate the scope of reality entitled to human knowledge. Knowledge, to be understood more clearly in this context, necessarily has to lean onto a particular framework for it to be conceptualized. This can be evident from the varying and contrasting theories that have been attributed to knowledge throughout history. Most likely unaware of this fact, Ancient Epistemology and Physics spearheaded by Aristotle passively transformed into the Cartesian mechanics[2] to the absolutist Newtonian and relational Leibnizian views of reality.[3] What consequently became of the tune embraced by thinkers from the middle of the 18th century development of Scottish Enlightenment was skepticism which primarily attended to the rejection of Cartesian metaphysics. In 1739, the release of Treatise of Human Nature purported a 'new version' of skepticism which as described by Klemme in his text, 'marked the turning point in the history of modern epistemology'.[4] Klemme identifies two significant reactions to this revolutionary model of reality given by Hume. One of which who is Immanuel Kant in his Critique of Pure Reason (1781), indirectly argued against Hume's account of space and time by his theory of the pure forms of intuition. Inarguably, it is Kant who supplemented the seeming open-endedness of Hume's theoretical philosophy. One of the most famous collaboration that can be

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attributed to both would be Kant's remark in the Preface of the Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics saying that Hume awakened him from his 'dogmatic slumber'. This awakening apparently regarded Hume's philosophy to be excessively skeptic that in the history of philosophy, it needed Kant to provide for its shortcomings.

This paper will furthermore give focus to the theoretical development of Hume's philosophy by justifying its place in the contemporary times, specifically as a contribution to the field of Quantum Mechanics through elucidating space and time as the substratum on which the theoretical application of Hume's epistemological theories lies. [5]

Causal Relation

The so-called Humean Revolution[6] traces its roots from Locke's empiricism that ultimately rejects the possibility of innate knowledge as it has been argued by Descartes. Hume also followed Locke's theory with regards to the origin of ideas however by distinguishing '*impression as lively perceptions and idea that should stand for all our perceptions*' in which according to him was, on the contrary, conceptually 'perverted by Mr. Locke'. [7] Nonetheless, it can be pinpointed from these concepts, including the impossibility of innate ideas that knowledge is only formed through experience or factual discovery. Immediately, the field of experimentation for Hume becomes situated to a particular sphere: experience. Still constant with empiricism, Hume further denies that same intelligibility contested by Berkeley. This is most apparent in his renowned argument against the intelligibility of causation which argues that although it is established that knowledge only begins and can be created from experience, it does not give any insight into causal laws and to its operations. The basis of 'factual reasoning' [8] or matters of fact, additionally devises a new question: *But if we still carry on our stifling humour, and ask*, *What is the foundation of all conclusions from experience*? (E 4.14). Upon our encounter with a particular experience, we are confined into thinking that such necessarily followed from another, at the same time that from such thinking, something will also be following one's experience. According to Hume, such belief is created by our notion of causality. Therefore, it follows that our principle of causality binds us into making an extrapolation [9] that the *future will resemble the past experience* (E 4.19, 4.21). The challenge for Hume is to identify the foundation of the successive and uniform construct attributed to experience. He then concludes that *it is not reasoning which engages us to suppose the past resembling the future, and to expect similar effects from causes, which are to appear similar* (E 4.23), but the *principle of CUSTOM or HABIT that for wherever the* ***repetition*** *of any particular act or operation produces a propensity to renew the same act or operation, without being impelled by any reasoning or process of the understanding* (E 5.5). He further explains, *that the necessary connexion, which we feel in the mind, this* ***customary transition*** *of the imagination from one object to its usual attendant, is the sentiment or* ***impression****, from which we form the idea of power or necessary connexion* (E. 7.28). Causal relation, commonly classified as a source of credible knowledge, is then relegated to be no more than a probability.[10] This stems from the fact that connection between events cannot be literally established[11]. On the 7th chapter of the Enquiry, Hume finally gave a definition of how cause is perversely taken:

1) *An object followed by another, and where all the objects, similar to the first, are followed by objects similar to the second.*

2) Where, if the first object had not been, the second never had existed.

3) An object followed by another, and whose appearance always conveys the thought to the other. [12]

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Millican considers this response from Hume 'as probably the most famous argument in English language philosophy'. [13] But to pinpoint the significance of his causal theories, it must be contributive to review the aims of the Enquiry. Hume did intend to present a 'mental geography' that would situate knowledge to a particular realm. Such objective is then responsible for the delineation of some faculties of the mind.[14] This argument precisely casts doubt to sciences, primarily to those who uphold absolute certainty. On the same chapter, Hume maintains that 'sciences will remain uncertain and chimerical' in their own notions 'unless skepticism is applied to it' (E 1.14).

Significance of Skepticism with Space and Time

Even at its elementary, the manner of Hume's classification of ideas and how they are associated, projects a molding of how far knowledge can be dealt with by the mind. This is apparent in his argumentations for instance, when he mentions that necessary connection is created from the habitual relation of repetitive experiences or a customary transition is imagined by the mind whenever it conceptualizes its experiences. Chronology, in this sense can be implied to be confined within a spatial framework. His skepticism towards 'mental geography' and its tendency towards the extrapolation of knowledge insinuates the significance of space and time which according to him, is the manner and order in which objects appear (or exist)[15], more importantly in characterizing the structure of Hume's theoretical philosophy. On the hand, Baxter claims that in order to reveal the success of Hume's account on space and time, it must be understood as a consequence of this Pyrrhonian Empiricism.[16]

Space

There have been widespread criticisms ascribed to Hume's account of space and time. These negative evaluations however are expected to retract especially when its coherence with the skeptical approach of Hume is identified. [17] As mentioned, the second of the first book of the Treatise was dedicated for the discussion of space and time. It is not much given emphasis on the Enquiry although a further refinement about the ideas of extension can found in (E 12.15) and time (E 12.20).

The neglect of this chapter can be warranted by its incongruity with Geometry and Classic physics. [18] Contrary to the Geometrical principle of infinite divisibility, Hume argues that *space and time cannot be divided infinitely for it is composed of finite number of parts which then are "simple and indivisible".*[19] This theory marks first on Hume's system of space and time. As a conclusion of the first part, his second argument claims *that these indivisible parts are inconceivable unless occupied by something real and existent, and so space and time must each simply be the manner or order in which objects exist.* [20]

Space 1.1 – Space cannot be infinitely divisible

Hume begins his theory of space by starting from his notion of ideas which can be best alluded to pixelated electronic photographs. [21] A file at its maximum can be viewed wholly as a picture, but with the zoom in and zoom out feature of an application, a photo can be magnified to the minutest pixel. In reality, the aggregation of these pixels unifies the photo. Hence, any photo necessarily has to be composed by these elements. According to Hume, *ideas which we form of any finite quality is not infinitely divisible.* This is because, for Hume, *the capacity of the mind is limited, and it can never fully attain a full and adequate conception of infinity*. Just as

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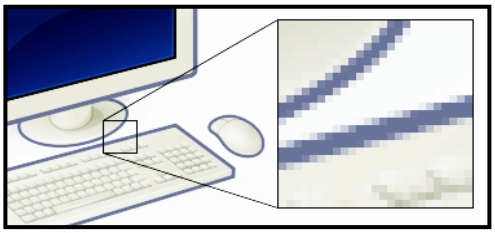
the quality of a photo is determined by its number of pixels (picture elements). The more number of pixels, the higher the resolution of the photo becomes. Nonetheless, having a specific number of pixels, a photo only assigned a limited magnification level and that going beyond that set limit would be impossible.

Progressively, the second premise of Hume argues that *whatever is capable of being divided in infinitum, must consist an infinite of number of parts and that 'tis impossible to set any bounds to the number of parts, without setting bounds at the same time to the division.*[22] However, by establishing that the mind is only finite, it consequently applies that there are no ideas which can be divided infinitely. Therefore, space can only be divided into a limited number of parts. The parts which then assemble space are those that remain indivisible. *'Tis therefore certain, that the imagination reaches a minimum, and may raise up to itself an idea, of which cannot conceive any sub-division, and which cannot be diminis'd without a total annihiliation.*[23]

Space 1.2 – Adequacy

It then becomes a confusion to argue for space through ideas. Nevertheless, if one reviews the first argument presented in the Treatise, it will be clearer to know that Hume, in arguing for space and time, is only being consistent with what he discussed about impressions. According to him, *the perceptions of the mind are composed of impressions and ideas, whereas impressions are the most vivid perceptions presented to our senses, and it always follow that ideas have less vivacity than that of the latter.* [24] Coherently continuing about his theory on space from this first principle, Hume then argues that these minimum ideas correspond to the more vivid perceptions of the minutest impressions from perception.

*pixel illustration [25]



As a further analysis of the pixel analogy, an illustration of is provided above to be zoomed in to a particular corner of the photo, exhibiting the pixelation of its parts. The magnified image can be seen to have been divided into cubes. Such counts as a pixel or a picture element. Each cube corresponds to the hue as it is visible when the photo is at its original size or when it is not magnified. Analogously, the original size of the picture parallels with a *complex idea* [26] the way it is known to the senses. On the one hand, the division of ideas resembles with the process of magnification to the most minimal ideas. The order in which Hume argues about ideas through space and time apparently appears only to be a substantiation of its existence. This seeming demand for affirmation is even more manifested when he claimed that *minimal ideas are the adequate representations of the most minute parts of extension.* [27] A plausible comparison that can be related to this principle of adequacy, is the concept of apprehension from the Mimamsa school of Philosophy in India. According to Mimamsa, knowledge is intrinsically valid or Svatahprāmayāna. They give emphasis on the immediacy and directness of knowledge or *anubhūti* in the process of cognizing a valid form of knowledge. For them, memory cannot be treated as a valid form of knowledge because it only rose from the impression (direct apprehension) of a prior cognition. Significantly, the validity of knowledge or apprehension are classified to be free from contradiction of any ***subsequent knowledge***, as a consequence, it must truly represent the object it is cognizing. [28] The proof of extension is justified by the

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correspondence of the impression with the object in reality just as Hume ascertains extension as an adequate representation of minimal ideas.

Therefore, turning back to Hume, it only implies that by the sole acquisition of any idea, it necessarily follows that there is space. Although consistency is much demonstrated, from the notion that the finitude of the mind is engendered from a limited source of knowledge, which is experience or the immediacy and credibility such kind of cognition, it cannot be avoided to see that Hume is becoming dogmatic in the correspondence he established.

The argument regarding ideas as being not infinitely divisible accords with the principle of adequacy in a way that it insinuates the notion that if one extrapolates on what has been directly apprehended, then one is swerving from reality/truth or validity.

This argumentation from Hume primarily rejects the indivisibility principle of Geometry. In this discipline, unrestricted proportioning of space is performed through mathematical equations.[29] The proportionality of a geometrical plane to an idea of a real plane permits Geometry to approximate measures for precision. Hume however objects to this by arguing that *they are not properly demonstrations, being built on ideas, which are not exact, and maxims which are not precisely true* (T 1.2.4.14). Given the copy principle, it has been established that ideas are less lively than impressions (which are immediate perceptions), hence the standards for measure or proportions are actually altered versions of ideas from impressions. Hume questions the legitimacy of the 'rule of standard' wherein all geometrical propositions and axioms are derived. Notably, most schools of rationalism are founded on such a system. [30] Therefore, it follows that the relation of geometrical maxims in order to come up with propositions, becomes vulnerable to error as it goes away from the adequacy of impressions. If a philosophical system is based on this kind of knowledge, then, as Hume mentions, *their first principles, tho' certain and infallible, are too coarse to afford any such subtile inferences as they commonly draw from them.*[31]

Space 1.3 – Space as an Idea

This idea of Hume belongs to the school of Relational view on space and time. Pooley defines Relationalists as those who maintain that space-time does not have the basic, non-derivative or sourced existence. According to them, claims about space-time are ultimately *to be understood as claims about material entities and the possible patterns of spatiotemporal relations that they can instantiates.* [32] It therefore is a plausible consideration to brand Hume as becoming dogmatic with his correspondence theory (of impressions and ideas to objects) as he admits that *space or extension is merely an idea, an abstract idea merely on the disposition of points, or manner of appearance, in which they agree* (T 1.2.3.5). This conclusion maintains the sense of particularity or the significance of experience in representing such idea from reality. Hume therefore is not becoming dogmatic, in his characterization of how human nature views reality. Rather, his skepticism still accounts for his conclusion. According to Hume, abstract or general ideas are nothing but particular ideas. Contrary to the common Aristotelean notion of abstraction, Hume emphasized that they truly are distinct ideas but their generality is only created from representation.[33] Baxter has given an elucidation of this by saying that the skeptic treatment of Hume to his idea of space is that from neither agreeing or disagreeing to the notion of space being absolute, while acquiescing on the idea of space as being relative to the manner in which how it appears to a person.[34] Therefore, Hume is not presenting any specifications of space nor of its quality neither its tangibility. His skeptic

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approach warrants the idea of space the way common people would take seeing as believing. Having this idea of space in mind prevents us from maintaining a specific ground or manner wherein knowledge is situated but only permits us to infer that we may be able to trace its patterns through experience.

Time

Hume's account on duration can be evident in his skeptical conclusions. Such that *we cannot be certain that the past will resemble the future*, which also can be seen from the comparison to Mimamsa school of Indian Philosophy which claims that the *validity of knowledge is measured if it is not affected by any contradiction of a subsequent knowledge*. The significance of impressions is acknowledged as those that bear the most force or vivacity whenever presented to the mind. In the development of ideas, duration becomes an important concept in validating whether the transformation of impression to idea is adequate. Nonetheless, Hume argues that time or duration is as well an abstract idea. If space is to the manner of appearance, the concept time, on the one hand, is created from the order or succession in which objects appear.

The idea of time, being deriv'd from the succession of our perceptions of every kind, ideas as well as impression, and impressions of reflection as well as of sensation will afford us an instance of an abstract idea, which comprehends a still greater variety than that of space, and yet is represented in the fancy by some particular individual idea of a determinate quantity and quality. (T 1.2.3.6)

Knowledge 1.1 – Relation to Space and Time

These two concepts became fundamental to Hume's theory of custom and habit. As a conclusion, Hume argues that it becomes impossible to conceive space without objects that would give impression to us. There can be found no correspondence of the idea of a vacuum to extension. [35] The same conclusion is applied to the concept of time as it cannot be conceived without change. [36] It only follows that our knowledge from experience or from relations of ideas are framed by the manner or succession in which objects appear. Therefore, the rigid construal that reality is arranged in a particular manner insinuates that custom has successfully penetrated to the knowledge of other possibilities. Hence, the empirical foundation of knowledge is advocated by Hume in order to keep the sense of particularity in interpreting the different objects or instances in the distinct manner or order they appear.

Knowledge 1.2 – Hume, Immanuel Kant and Quantum Mechanics

The Humean Revolution led to the rejection of causality. It however constituted the source of knowledge to a relegated form of experience by avoiding any form of extrapolation. Together with the establishment of his notion of space and time and this mode of skepticism, Hume then situated knowledge in the finiteness of the human mind in which would later be referred to by Immanuel Kant as the Phenomenal world in which according to him are *appearances, to the extent that as objects they are thought in accordance with the unity of the categories*. [37] However, as Hume may appear to be remarkably lacking to Kant, he went beyond the confines of the human mind by arguing that:

For if the senses merely represent something to us as it appears, then this something must also be in itself a thing, and an object of a non-sensible intuition, i.e., of the understanding, i.e., a cognition must be possible in which no sensibility is encountered, and which alone has absolutely objective reality, through which, namely, objects are represented to us as they are, in contrast to the empirical use of our understanding, in which things are only cognized as they appear. [38]

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Kant's account of Space and Time will then be fundamental in proving that there may be knowledge of apart from what we cognize in experience or synthetic a priori judgments.

For Kant, Space and Time are not empirical concepts abstracted from experience in the way Hume argues about it. Furthermore, space is presupposed in referring sensations to something external and that external experience can only be possible through the presentation of space. He concludes that space is different (independent) from the concept it instances. Therefore, it is not a concept but a *form of intuition*.[39] One the one hand, Kant argues for Time as also necessarily to be presupposed in order to represent the appearance and changes among objects. Time is therefore given *a priori* as the grounds for intuition. [40]

By asserting the empirical reality of space and time [41], Heisenberg, one of the key pioneers of Quantum Mechanics, argues that it would have been logically consistent if Kant followed Berkeley and Hume in rejecting notion of substance. According to him, Kant still observed reality from the assumption that there is a foregoing event and considers it as the basis of all scientific work. This however is not anymore true of Atomic Physics. Heisenberg further mentions that the theory of relativity has given a significant change on how modern physicists think. As an example, Heisenberg considered radium atom. The time of emission of a particular particle cannot be predicted or be found determinately. In such experiments there is always a room left for uncertainty, which according to the book is brought by the interaction between the nucleus and the rest of the world. Nonetheless, the way Kant thinks did not make any contribution to it, as contrary to what he declared that his discovery will be the "basis of any future metaphysics that can be called science". The assumption of a pure intuition of space and time also denotes the assertion of a causal chain to serve as a glue to the unity of space and time. But for the biologist Lorentz, these a priori concepts as forms of behavior are inherited and innate schemes in animals and it may belong to man[42], but not to a world independent of them.[43] Causality in quantum mechanics, is then determined by Schrödinger's time-equations with temporal succession having no necessary connection or even probably that a specific state will be followed by another. [44]

Moreover, the infamous double-slit experiment of Quantum physicists proposes that the most minute parts of reality cannot be observed to have determinate moving patterns. When atomic particles are shot through two slits, it loses an interference with other particles. From an observer's standpoint, specially when matter is at its most solid phase, a formation of a single and aligned band is detected. Solid matter fits through the slits and shoots itself to where the slits are directly faced. Nonetheless, particles create very random and unpredictable trajectories.[45]

Conclusion

Despite the long gap that incurred between them, the rectification of Hume's causal and spatio-temporal theories became significant in the application of modern physics, specifically in the state-function as it determines the state of any physical system at any specific time. However, it is still of a dismay that modern physics could have been more advanced from the time that it had lost from the digression from David Hume. Nonetheless, in thinking of such possibility, it should be of contentment for the sciences to have even reached such development. After all, what Hume is merely implying from the manner or succession of objects of life as it appears to us and its meaninglessness is our wholeheartedness to accept whatever may come to us.

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[1] Baxter, Donald L. M., *Hume's Difficulty* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 6-7.

[2] Millican, P., In his Introduction to *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., New York, 2008), XIV.

[3] Philosophies directed to by Hume and Kant although both differ from the stances regarding it. [See Allison, Henry E. *Custom and Reason in Hume: A Kantian Reading of the First Book of the Treatise* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., New York, 2008), 54].

[4] Klemme, Heiner F. "Scepticism and common sense." In *The Cambridge Companion to The Scottish Enlightenment* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 117-118

[5] This reading has been influenced by Peter Millican as an objection to Kant's Synthetic A Priori knowledge [See Millican, Peter. *3.2 Responses to Hume's Famous Argument*. Oxford Unit: Faculty of Philosophy. April 10, 2010. https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/32-responses-humes-famous-argument (accessed September 20, 2015)].

[6] Millican, P. Op. Cit., XXIX

[7] Footnote for T 1.1.1.1

[8] As it is first presented in the Treatise

[9] Oxford Dictionary of English (ODE) defines *extrapolation* (verb) as: extend the application of (a method or conclusion) to an unknown situation by assuming that existing trends will continue or similar methods will be applicable [See also Millican P. Op. Cit., XXXVIII].

[10] Distinction with Locke

[11] With necessity

[12] E 7.29

[13] Millican, Op. Cit., XXXVIII

[14] E 1.13 Such as the credibility of associating ideas

[15] T 1.2.4.2

[16] Analysis of a different kind of skeptic stance by Hume. [Baxter, Donald L. M. "Hume's Theory of Space and Time in Its Skeptical Context." In *The Cambridge Companion to Hume*, by David Norton and Jacqueline Taylor (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 146.]

[17] Ibid., 105

[18] Ibid.

[19] T 1.2.1.2

[20] Find Treatise

[21] Hume's thought experiment with regards to this claim is depicted through a grain of sand and with the vivacity of the representation of it. This representation model is at a great degree parallel to picture elements (pixels). [See T 1.2.1.3]

[22] T 1.2.1.3

[23] T 1.2.1.4

[24] This is famously known as the copy principle. [See. T 1.1.1.1 to the establishment of this principle at T 1.1.1.8].

[25] Talk, ed g2s •. "Pixel-example.png." *Wikimedia Commons*. May 27, 2006. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3APixel-example.png (accessed December 9, 2015).

[26] Complex ideas are contrary to simple perceptions or impressions never are exact copies of simple ideas. [See T. 1.1.1.4]

[27] T 1.2.2.1

[28] Sharma, Chandradhar, *Indian Philosophy: A Critical Survey* (U.S.A: Barnes & Nobles, Inc., 1962), 201

[29] See for example T 1.2.2.2

[30] "To them it will doubtless seem strange that I should undertake to treat men's vices and absurdities in the *geometric style*, and that I should wish to demonstrate by certain reasoning thing, which are contrary to reason, and which they proclaim to be empty, absurd, and horrible." [See Spinoza, Baruch, *The Ethics* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press), 135

[31] From inaccurate standards created from mere appearances [See T 1.2.4.31

[32] Pooley, Oliver. "Substantivalist and Relationalist Approaches to Spacetime." In *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Physics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) p. 1 of 48

[33] See T 1.1.7.8 to 10

[34] Baxter, Donald L. M. *Hume's Theory of Space and Time in Its Skeptical Context*, 128

[35] See T 1.2.5.1,22 – 24 for further discussion

[36] T 1.2.5.28

[37] Critique of Pure Reason A 249

[38] Critique of Pure Reason A 250

[39] Critique of Pure Reason B 38, A 24

[40] Critique of Pure Reason A 31

[41] Through the mentioned conditions [See Critique of Pure Reason B44 A 28, A 36]

[42] As Kant also asserts the idealistic, yet transcendent existence of space and time

[43] Heisenberg, Werner. *Physics and Philosophy: The Revolution in Modern Science*. Edited by F.S.C. Northop (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958), 87-91

[44] Northop, Ibid., 13

[45] Milican, Peter. *3.2 Responses to Hume's Famous Argument*. Oxford Unit: Faculty of Philosophy. April 10, 2010. https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/32-responses-humes-famous-argument (accessed June 3, 2016).

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Foucault's Concept of Power in the History of Punishment

Joshua Mariz B. Felicilda

French thinker Michel Foucault sought to improve upon the general conception of power which is a prevalent theme of his philosophy especially one of his main works, *Discipline and Punish*.[1] A fundamental argument by Foucault concerning power is that, firstly, it is aimed at the production of knowledge; and secondly, it is always aimed at a better control over the body, which he calls a *political technology of the body*.[2] In his discussion of power, he elaborated two representations of power: (1) The old representation of power in the form of the power of the king, which had been the more popular conception of power in many social contract philosophies; described as a form of power wielded and owned by a dominant body over a population; and (2) a fundamentally new representation of power which Foucault himself introduces; described as an extremely diffused, dynamic and productive form of power, that is owned by no one but rather is exercised from innumerable points.

Foucault argues that the latter is a more fitting description of power especially since it is a productive force for the development of knowledge; and that such knowledge cannot flourish if it is shackled by the old form of power. He further argues that this new form of power, which is exercised by means of surveillance, is a more efficient way of controlling the body as compared to the old form, which is exercised in public torture.

This paper aims to demonstrate the fundamental characteristics of each form of power in the context of Foucault's history of punishment found in his *Discipline and Punish*. It not only describes the old representation and the new and how they are exercised in the context of punishment; but it also argues how this new form of power has come to be a more effective means of control.

Sovereign Power

Foucault introduces firstly the popular idea of power. This notion of power is something that is wielded and owned by a single domineering body which rules the dominated lower body. This binary conception of power is popular among the social contract philosophies (for instance, Locke, Rousseau and Hobbes) whose political treatises were all aimed at the justification of the legitimate authority of a government. Likewise, the general idea was still there: *power belongs to the king (the government, or any sovereign*). Quite understandably, this notion of power has been the popular one since people are accustomed to viewing power in terms of political notions: the simple idea of authority to lead for instance is something taken, wielded, owned, and voted for. In addition, such power is identified with *law*, a multitude of prohibitions, and even more so, a classification of right and wrong, good and bad, acceptable and unacceptable, licit and illicit. Foucault refers to this representation of power as "juridico-discursive".[3] Foucault adds that the reduction of power to the figure of a master, that is, the single ruling body, is linked with the reduction of power to the law of prohibition.[4] In this case, the law is a manifestation of power. This

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representation of law as power has led to an understanding of power as limited to the law and king. Consequentially, the contemporary analysis of power is articulated by this old juridical conception and has enjoyed a centuries old privilege.[5] This law is identified with a series of prohibitions. The classical notion of power is essentially a negative one which binds its citizens in shackles. Thus, disobedience is identified as the only way to challenge power. We can see from here that power is viewed merely as a binary conflict: behold the ruler versus his subject. Power is only seen as a clash of two bodies; and even that clash is asymmetrical since the conflict portrays not a conflict of equals but rather one that is a top-down encounter.[6]

Torture as a Spectacle

Likewise, this idea of power is well reflected on the medieval form of punishment. Foucault accounts the punishment of Francois Damiens,[7] who charged with *regicide*.[8] The gruesome scene of this old way of punishing features meticulous and sadistic torture viewed on a scaffold by the public. We find the following features that reflect the juridico-discursive form of power, or sovereign power. It expressed superficially the power of the king over his citizens, and particularly, his direct power over the criminal's body. Torture as a spectacle was primarily a "political ritual" which legitimizes the power of the king; not merely a judicial ritual which punishes the crime.[9] The horrific scene is only one of many rituals that sovereignty conducts in order to legitimize its rule, such as the king's coronation, entry to a conquered city and submission of rebellious subjects.[10] All of these rituals celebrate the power of the king. This atrocious ritual is necessary to affirm his power, to legitimize it, and to have all the citizens witness it, so that they would submit to it. The crime was not merely seen as a transgression from established laws but also a direct offense to the authority of the sovereign himself, a direct attack against the king's body.[11] The body of the king is not a political metaphor referring to his right to authority, but is a very real thing whose physical presence is a necessity in the functioning of the monarchy.[12] For this reason, he must be present in all these rituals. The king's body is an embodiment of his power so much so that an attack or transgression against power is already a direct attack on the king's body. Hence, punishment serves a "juridico-political function".[13]

Public Torture in Relation to Sovereign Power

The old form of punishment features the top-down characteristic of sovereign power: the ruling body versus the ruled population. In the monarchical setup of sovereign power, it is the king who is the law, that dictates which is allowed and disallowed; those who do not follow become enemies of the state. The form of punishment itself remarkably emanates this binary conception. We have the king and his double-body, which is the criminal. The spectacle of torture serves not only a *reactivation function* as discussed earlier, but also a corrective and deterrent function addressed to the spectators.

However, Foucault finds this old representation of power quite inadequate. For one, a form of power that cannot do anything else but repress other discourses (that were categorized as illicit) cannot possibly aid in the flourishing of knowledge. And yet the fundamental argument of Foucault is that power is the key reason why knowledge has constantly developed through time at a tremendous pace. If such development of knowledge and the sciences were tremendous, then a juridico-discursive type of power cannot simply be *the* power. This problem reflects the problem with the old way

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of punishment especially during the rise of reformists in the middle of the 18th Century, which inevitably led to a new form of punishment in the form of *disciplinarity* and *surveillance*.[14]

Foucault's new representation of Power

As mentioned, Foucault had his misgivings on the general notion of power (as sovereign power). He boldly declares that we *cut off the head of the king*.[15] What he means is that we must free ourselves from the idea of *sovereignty* when thinking of power.[16] Firstly, He believes that all of reality is constituted by relations of power. He sees power as something that is diffused all throughout the social body. By diffused we mean scattered and tangled with the social network and institutions and other relations of power. It moves away from the popular conception of power since this kind *is not owned, seized or wielded.* On the contrary, *it can be exercised by all individuals who themselves are vehicles of this power.*

Secondly, power is very productive. This is opposed to the general conception that power is merely repressive. *Power constantly produces knowledge.* Power should not be merely seen as something that prevents discourse from flourishing; neither should it be seen as merely a system that sets up the dos and do not's. Rather, it should be seen as behind a complex network which constantly builds and produces new discourses, improving upon present sciences and ultimately producing knowledge and truth. The exercise of power is not definitively limited to domination and repression. In *Discipline and Punish* for instance, forms of observation, studying, as well as regulating behavior, and simply watching the other's behavior is already an exercise of power. It is with this constant observation and studying of the human body, human behavior, with the aim of seizing the mastery of it, that consequently leads to the production of new discourses: introduction of new ways of looking at the criminal through psychology, forensics and even in literature. Lastly, power is inevitably met with various forms of resistance. More specifically, resistance is something immanent in power. Just as power is diffused within an entangled and chaotic network, so is resistance scattered with it even if they are their irreducible opposites; that is, the existence of power-relations heavily "depends on the multiplicity of resistance: these play the role of adversary, target, support, or handle in power-relations."[17]

Foucault's notion of power is radically different from its juridical notion. Unlike its more common notion, this power does not follow the binary, top-down schema but is rather exercised anywhere; neither is it seen merely in the form of law or the king which represses discourse, but is something that comes from anywhere; and is exercised by anyone.

Disciplinarity and Surveillance

The eighteenth century gave rise to what Foucault calls the "synaptic regime of power".[18] He describes it as a power not from above, but a power within the social body. Consequentially, the old power was outgrown, and is viewed as "archaic and monstrous". The body was seen as the very target of power. Power now aimed at not only asserting legitimate authority and vengeance of the king. It was more on domesticating the body; not only to tame it but to make it useful to society; in Foucault's words, to make it *docile.* Hence a new king of penal practice was developed, in the form of discipline.

This form of penalty featured 3 instruments: Hierarchical observation, Normalizing judgment, and Examination. *Hierarchical*

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Observation was the key to coercion.[19] Basically, the gaze of another is already enough to make an individual think about his actions. It would then actually restrict the movements of the individual being observed. In this manner, the gaze of the observer actually exercises power, in which he is able to restrict and regulate the movements of the subject being observed. If one gaze certainly has a significant effect in the individual, imagine a multiplicity of gazes around him; a multiplicity of intersecting observations. In addition to this, observation features an indiscernible observer. It's as if he is able to exert power over the individual without him being identified.

Normalizing Judgment provides a norm to which the subjects were compared to. It is through this that disciplinary institutions served their corrective function.[20] Now it would seem that normalizing judgment repeats the same juridical form of power in its old representation in the sovereign and the law. However the normalizing schema of disciplinary institutions should not be confused with them. For one, the "perpetual penalty" which is exercised at all points supervises, differentiates, hierarchizes homogenizes and excludes individuals in a consistent basis.[21] In this way, the consistency of these actions slowly but surely normalizes them, thus correcting them, and turning them into productive and useful individuals. The norm by far was developed from an accumulation of recorded behaviors (via observation), all of which are compared vis-à-vis, and from which a constant normality was deduced.[22] Unlike the juridical power, it does not refer to a corpus of laws, but through what has been observed. Juridical power would, based on a black-and-white written law, specify acts by categories, jot down what is licit or illicit, and by operating through condemnation. On the other hand, normalizing judgment would base their norms through constant differentiating of individuals, hierarchizing, and homogenizing them into a set of norms based on what has been observed.[23]

Lastly, *Examination* is a combination of the first two mentioned. It is through examination that the "superimposition" of power relations and knowledge relations are assumed.[24] In the slender technique of examination is found the whole domain of knowledge, a whole type of power. Foucault demonstrates the deep-seated importance of *examination* in all of human history, in which power works and new forms of knowledge are generated. Such 'operational schema' has spread throughout the sciences of psychiatry, medicine, and even in manufacturing and even in institutions such as schools, hospitals, and prisons.

Concluding Note

Two representations of power have been reviewed and arguably it is disciplinary form of power, Foucault's representation of power which is characteristic of modern society. Foucault notes the *Panopticon* for example, as his main example of a disciplinary system. [25] This system of surveillance was in fact most definitively portrayed in Bentham's Panopticon, an all-seeing yet indiscernible 'eye' which observes you, is what Foucault states as the general schema for all institutions that we have in modern times.

The panoptic mechanism provides the common thread to what could be called the power exercised on man as a force of work and knowledge of man as an individual. So panopticism could, I think appear and function within our society as a general form.[26]

The Panopticon is not only found in institutions alone in fact, but its schema extends outside of it; in other words, all of society follows this panoptic schema for Foucault.[27]

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Society has evolved to be a living system of surveillance. Everyday living is not without an apparatus that observes and surveys one's actions. Schools conduct several examinations and aptitude tests. Hospitals conduct medical examinations and record every detail about the body. Even outside these institutions, there is still an element of control of behavior. The main theme in society today is organization and discipline.[28] It moves away from the top-down repressive schema. The observation tower does not solely repress despite its control of behavior. It further examines, studies and categorizes commonalities, trends, behaviors, which consequentially generate more knowledge. Power becomes a knowledge-producing force; knowledge that is geared at a more efficient normalization and control of a population.

[1] I make use of three primary sources for this paper: *Discipline and Punish* firstly because it gives a comprehensive account of the history of punishment and how the two forms of power are exercised in the Medieval and Modern form of discipline; *The History of Sexuality Vol. 1,* which provides a discussion on the characteristics of power per se; and *Power/Knowledge,* a collection of interviews and lectures which supplement Foucault's discussion of the matter.

[2] The political technology of the body was coined in Foucault's *Discipline and Punish,* wherein he asserts that the knowledge and science of the body is not primarily and solely aimed at the mastery of its operations and functions but is rather more aimed at mastering the control of it. The political technology of the body is fundamentally aimed at arriving at a more efficient way of controlling the human body (human behavior, posture, action, etc.). The way power/knowledge is utilized in the development of this technology of the body is what is being discussed in the book.

Cf., Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., 1977), p.26. (hereafter as *DP*).

[3] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Vol. 1: An Introduction,* trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books: A Division of Random House Inc., 1990), p. 82. (hereafter as *HS*)

[4] Michel Foucault, "Power and Strategies", *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings (1972-1977)* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p. 139. (hereafter as *P/K*).

[5] "Power and Strategies", *P/K,* p. 141.

[6] Such a view in fact even holds true in Marx's philosophy, wherein he depicts class struggle as a struggle between two classes, the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. In terms of being a binary clash, even Marxist interpretations of the struggle of the proletariat have not escaped this popular idea of power.

[7] Foucault illustrates how in an erected scaffold, where the public become witnesses to such a brutal spectacle, Damiens' flesh was brutally torn from his is limbs with pincers, which were red-hot. Afterwards, from those areas where these chunks of flesh were removed, molten lead was poured along with boiling oil and burning resin which were all melted together. Afterwards he was made to hold the very knife he used for his alleged parricide, burning hot with sulfur, as a brand given to him, that he is guilty of such a crime. Such horror was not the execution proper still, but merely torture, which is an initial part of the ceremony of the harsh penalty, in which they wish to secure a confession from him. With each tearing of flesh with pincers, the clerk of the court, Monsieur Le Breton, would ask him if he had anything to say. Afterwards, he was drawn and quartered by four horses, in which his limbs were severed from his body, leaving him dead. All the remaining pieces of flesh were burned.

Cf., DP, pp. 3-5.

[8] In the context of monarchial power, any form of breaking the law is a form of regicide. The law as we have noted is embodied in the figure of the king himself and that any violation of it is in fact a direct physical attack against the king. Thus lawbreakers are tantamount to regicides.

[9] *DP,* p. 47.

[10] *DP,* p. 48.

[11] Refer to previous footnote, number 9.

[12] "Body/Power", *P/K,* p. 55.

[13] *DP,* p. 48.

[14] The Political Technology of the body, as mentioned, is a very important fundamental theme in the history of punishment. This dilemma features a need for a better control of human bodies. The problem with the old form of punishment was that it was not efficient enough. Not only was it costly, but it in fact generated a significant and steady pace of crimes that it failed to control. Hence there was a need for a better control of

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bodies in the whole population. This is a prelude to the new form of punishment mentioned.

[15] *Cutting the head of the king* has been a theme constantly reiterated by Foucault in his works and interviews: in *The History of Sexuality vol. 1*, p.89, and "Truth and Power", *P/K,* p. 121.

[16] Sovereignty in this sense is used to refer to the popular conception of power as something wielded and owned. It does not refer solely to the king.

[17] *HS,* p. 95.

[18] "Prison Talk", *P/K,* p. 39.

[19] *DP,* p. 170.

[20] *DP,* p. 179.

[21] *DP,* p. 183.

[22] *DP,* p. 178.

[23] *DP,* p. 183.

[24] *DP,* p. 185.

[25] It is described as having a central, *all-seeing* tower with wide windows that open on either side , allowing it to see the periphery, which is an annular building encircling the center. This annular building is divided into individual cells, in which the central tower with all its domineering presence is not only clearly seen, but also felt. These cells have two windows, one on the inside, another on the outside; the former corresponds to the windows of the tower, the latter allows light to cross the cell, thus allowing the individual inside it to be clearly seen rather than be concealed in darkness. Furthermore, the division into cells hindered any form of contact between individual prisoners since there are no windows that would link two cells.

Michel Foucault, *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the Collège de France (1973-1974),* trans. Graham Burchell (New york: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 75. (hereafter as *CdF74*)

[26] *CdF74*, p. 79.

[27] ***But how is the Panopticon any different from the top-down relationship found in the sovereign form of power?*** It would actually seem that the Panopticon, and other forms of surveillance is merely a new form of control exerted from a top-down movement: the Panopticon seemingly becomes the new figure of the king who more effectively exerts power and controls the population. However, this is not quite true. Firstly, the Panopticon represents an all-around surveillance conducted by *anybody*. The reality of it is that, *anyone, or even no one, is actually watching from the central tower.* The effective control of the Panopticon is made possible because it gives the prisoner (or any other object), the impression of being watched by an indiscernible other. It does not necessarily have to be the king. This marks a lasting psychological impression on the body so that even when nobody is actually gazing at him, he is under the impression that he is being watched, even by people equal to him. Hence, it is not a top-down relationship but scattered one, in which anyone can exert power over anyone.

[28] Paul Oliver, *Foucault: The Key Ideas* (London: Hodder Education, 2010), p. 61.

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Spinoza on Conatus and Suicide

Gillian Marian H. Garcia

Abstract: Benedict de Spinoza has fashioned his philosophy in such a way that its foundations are tightly knitted with each other, with definitions, propositions, scholium, and corollary to support each arguments across his *Ethics*. It was found in the third part of his book that the essence of man (and things in general) is *conatus* or the endeavour of such to self-preservation (E3, P6-7). With this in mind, how does it come to be under the notion of suicide? This paper discusses *conatus*, suicide, and the possibility of such self-destruction under the light of Spinoza's doctrine by first defining the concept of each, discussing thoroughly the notion of suicide through both religious and non-religious interpretations, and combining these two concepts to prove that, according to the rational philosopher, suicide is nothing but an external force that overpowers the endeavour of one's will to self-preserve.

Keywords: Conatus, Ethics, Suicide,

I. Introduction

A mathematical and scientific enthusiast, Benedict de Spinoza is one of the philosophers that thrived during modernity. He was inspired by the father of modernity, Rene Descartes, and was, too, concerned with the idea of certainty. Spinoza claimed that the only means to guarantee knowledge is through the pursuit of what is certain. He approached this with certainty as its integral foundation, in contrast to Descartes' method of doubting everything. To this masterpiece, I refer to Spinoza's *Ethics*. It was written with such *geometrical* precision that his propositions stand firm with its axioms and definitions.[1] Within this work of his, he elucidated not only metaphysical concepts but also rational conducts and man's nature of being moral and emotional[2]. With these regards, Spinoza remarks that our happiness is not from our entrapment on our passions nor sentimental things that of value to us; it does not lie under the comfort of superstitions deemed as religion; it lies on man's life of reason. Hence, his book is entitled *Ethics*[3]. Such a book is divided into 5 parts: Part I is of God or Nature, Part II is of the Human Being, Part III is of Knowledge or the Human Mind, Part IV is of Passions and Actions, and Part V is of Virtue and Happiness. In observing the chapters, one can already reason that his whole philosophy is grounded on the notion of God or Nature; and in understanding man, his capacity for knowledge, passions, and actions, one is finally qualified to understand and pursue happiness. Such a beauty it is, then, to understand one's self before one achieves an ethical life.

Of course, the statement above entails that one cannot achieve happiness without first understanding what they are. And to this, Spinoza expressed in the third part of his *Ethics* what things essentially are; it goes as so:

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P6 *Each thing, in so far as it is in itself, endeavours to persist in its own being.*

P7 *The conatus with which each thing endeavours to persist in its own being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing.*[4]

The term *conatus* was used to define the inherent persistence of things for their self-preservation. This was originally used by Aristotle on the matters of biology- with organisms seeming to have more *conatus* than that of an inanimate object and hence identifying the organism as an individual[5]- and was also used by the Stoics and their notion of impulse. Other than Spinoza, Thomas Hobbes also used this term with the same purpose and definition.[6]

With this in mind, a question appears; if all things strive to preserve one's self, what would be the case for those who strives for self-destruction or suicide? Does it somehow emit a sense of self-preservation, or does Spinoza consider no such thing? With Benedict de Spinoza as a reliable rationalist, I will address this matter. I begin by first establishing definitions and concerns regarding the two terms separately. Consequently, I will converge the two concepts, and attempt to answer these questions through the eyes of Spinoza through his propositions. Finally, I will give a verdict and answer as to whether suicide is of no matter with regards to *conatus* or it is an exception to Spinoza's strong-grounded philosophy.

II. Presuppositions

a. Conatus

Descartes used an analogy of wax to explain the essential unity of a thing or that underlying identity to which things are composed of. He asserted that it could be "broken up, melted, transformed in respect of every one of its properties except those which pertained to matter as such." [7] Alas, he came into the conclusion that its individuality does not compare to its being constituted by such parts. Attesting to this, Spinoza claims that there are specific modifications to a substance that does not undergo the changes as that of Descartes' wax. There is an *essential defiance* to such changes. As Roger Scruton puts it, "Things resist damage, fracture and so on, or perhaps, if injured, they restore themselves out of their own inherent principle of existence."[8] This is *conatus.*

As was stated on the introduction, the 6th proposition of Part III introduced the notion of things having an effort or endeavour for self-preservation and self-maintenance. There were distinctions made on the matters of *conatus* (P9, Schol).[9] It is categorized in two: human and non-human conatus.[10] On human *conatus* (also known as *appetitus*), it can either be from the mental (or will) and bodily appetite. It is considered "mental" if it is wilfully endured by the individual; and it is considered "bodily" if it is a body's reaction to endure.[11] Under man's mental striving for preservation, it can be endeavoured with consciousness (or Desire)[12] or without it.

Given the fact from the proposition 7 that it is essential for man to endeavour for self-preservation, it follows that to destroy itself is to altercate the composition to which one *is.*[13] Martineau adds to this and says that *conatus* is nature's way to avoid those that harm itself and attract those that can aid itself depending on its ability to maintain itself.[14] It is noteworthy, then, to say that *conatus* must remain within itself throughout its being.[15]

b. Suicide

The definition of *suicide* can be seen on dictionaries and encyclopaedias; to which all have a common denominator: one decides to

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end one's self. There is a variety of instances in which one can consider to do so. For one, there is a suicide that is against one's will. If one falls into a situation wherein one is to choose either immense torture or suicide, and one chooses the latter, that is unwilled suicide. Another type of suicide would be one that is done for a greater good. For example, if a soldier would be held captive by the opposing force and force him to expose his representing country's secrets and has committed suicide in protection of his country, the suicide would be done by the greater good. With such a common denominator it begets vagueness and space for error. Other than that, to even define something can corrupt the very nature of the thing and could lead to sophistry. Alas, such is to be defined in an accurate and systematic way, to which Craig Paterson did. He declared criteria through his criticisms of it. First, there are too many acts that encompass "the intentional killing of self" and so, it is deemed to be vague. Second, there must still be an assessment as to whether or not the person intended to self-kill through omission. Finally, one must still consider the morally acceptable definition of it, despite the Roman Catholics' tradition. To these criteria, he has nullified the definitions (of suicide) of Oxford, Émile Durkheim, Richard Brandt, and Tom Beauchamp. Through criticizing them, he then concluded that suicide is *"an act or omission whose proximate effect results in the person's own bodily death, voluntarily and knowingly undertaken, with the intended objective (whether as an end in itself or as a means to some further end) that one's bodily life be so terminated."*[16]

Notwithstanding the idea that there was an exclusion of the Roman Catholic in defining the term suicide, we must, still, expose their perspective of it to attain a fuller understanding of such. The general notion of life, ultimately based from biblical revelation, is that man is not the ultimate guardian of it for he is only the bearer of it.[17] For St Augustine, each suicide is considered as murder. It cannot be viewed under the light of Christian fortitude for it lacks the guiding and strengthening aspect of man amidst adversity. One might say that there are snippets in the Old Testament to which emits suicidal episodes of people.[18] To this, Augustine holds that these were only mentioned in the testament for the purpose of being *judged.*[19] Suicide is to be condemned, and to even attempt this, one will be guilty of the gravest sin. Regardless of the person's reason to kill oneself due to one's suffering, it does not validate that you can. One will only condemn oneself in an eternal suffering. As he concludes, "*...there is no better life waiting for suicides."*[20] For St Thomas Aquinas, following the footsteps of Aristotle, suicide opposes the natural disposition of one to conserve oneself and to endeavour on life. He emphasized that such an act *directly* attacks those who love one and attacks, too, the community. He also states that if one commits this, one will sin against God himself.[21] Like Augustine, Aquinas also rejects sentimental motives in doing so such as (1) life as sorrowful, and (2) guilt suicide. He reasons that bad means do not lead to good ends. In addition to such comparison, Aquinas says that killing one's self would be choosing the worst evil since "death is the last and greatest evil one can suffer." To address the problem of suicide in Catholic tradition, they have established a variety of laws[22] to demonstrate how sinful and wrong suicide is.

In response to these regards on suicide as being immoral and sinful, there are said to have ethical arguments that support suicide. Such is said by Annemarie Pieper. She justifies that indeed one has no right to kill one's self but it is not necessarily right to hinder one from actually doing it, for to do so would trample on one's freedom. It is not obliged but it is *permitted.* She began by stating that in the view of ethics, there

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exists moral codes which oblige and prohibits suicide. To consider the truth of both of this, then is *to restrict human freedom*- one cannot oblige everyone to kill themselves in a specific event nor can it be absolutely prohibited because to do so would signify that one must to keep on living. Pieper then argues that the ultimate human good is not life, but freedom. To this, she says:

> "It is not the fact that man is alive that makes him human, for from a purely natural, biological point of view, plants and animals are also alive; indeed every organic being exists. Life is necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for being human. What is sufficient for man to exist as man i.e., in accord with his human dignity, is freedom. Only as a free living being is man completely human.[23]"

This as an ultimate truth would then insinuate that it cannot be restricted, nor can it be obliged. It is only an option, since, according, too, to Immanuel Kant, there is no law that restricts freedom, and so, it cannot be obliged either. To him, this kind of act[24] is to be termed as *morally indifferent*. To commit such an act is, according to Pieper, not to exceed the boundaries of morality, rather it stops at the final moral frontier[25]. In claiming that suicide is of a permissible act, she says there are two consequences to this: (1) to those who disdain to this act, one must avoid vindicating that such suicides are to be morally condemned. There can be no judge to this since it is only a permissible act, and not a rightl; (2) to those that advocate this act, one must not justify it to regulation and institutionalization. It is only an option, hence it cannot be made a right nor a propaganda of it.

III. *Conatus* and Suicide

The notion of suicide in the realm of Spinoza's *ethical* philosophy has been discussed by the contemporary such as Jonathan Bennett, Allan Donogan, and Wallace Matson, and has been criticized by Steven Barbone and Lee Rice. Their main concern on this notion lies under Spinoza's 4th proposition in the 3rd part of his book. It states:

P4 *No thing can be destroyed except by an external cause.*

Proof *This proposition is self-evident, for the definition of anything affirms, and does not negate, the thing's essence. That is, it posits. And does not annul, the thing's essence. So as long as we are attending only to the thing itself, and not to external causes, we can find nothing in it which can destroy us.* [26]

In utilizing the term *conatus*- that which endeavours a thing to persist in its preservation- and suicide- the act or omission to which the immediate effect is the person's death under given intentions- we see a contradiction. The act of harming one's self to such ends is opposed to one's essence of self-preservation. How can suicide be from an external cause if it is willed by the person himself unto himself? Spinoza argues against this thought by justifying the legitimacy of P4 through his P20Schol. He claims there that no one can reject anything that is helpful for his self-preservation such as food nor can his nature endeavour him to kill himself- it can only come from an external factor. A man can kill himself when another forces the hand to slit himself, or a man can obey to a tyrant's orders in opening one's veins to avoid choosing the greater evil,[27] or a man can imagine something rooted from external factors that conditioned him to do what is in contrary to his essence of self-preservation. The underlying point is a thing *cannot* be the cause of its destruction for to do so would be in contrary to one's essence to self-preserve.[28]

In the eyes of Spinoza's critics, the doctrine *conatus* is still faulty. For one, Jonathan Bennett argues that when Seneca was forced to kill

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himself, the compulsion did not come from the command of the tyrant, but from the choice and desire he himself made. He argues that Nero did not physically coerce with Seneca in placing his armoured hands to his veins, it was Seneca's own doing. Testifying against this, Steven Barbone and Lee Rice implied that indeed Seneca was the one that utilized a weapon to slit himself, but it is because there was not any better choice than doing so. He was forced to kill himself. The inevitability of the happenstance Seneca was situated in pre-established his destruction, built under external conditions he cannot control. What he can control is his choosing of how to die, and he preferred dying in the least pain possible whilst maintaining his honour; in contrary to his other option of becoming a victim and dealing with excruciating pain that will scorch his dignity.[29] Acknowledging the argument Bennett made with regards to accusing Seneca on having this desire to slit himself because he willingly did so, they replied that such a death is merely an accidental and a necessary consequence from his actions. He did not will his own destruction; he is simply the instrument of it. This suicide is of an omission, with the intent to avoid taking the lesser evil. Barbone and Rice also mentions that, on the case of those having disorders such as depression that is deemed from within a person, it is to be regarded as an external factor that *affects* a person.[30] Conceding to Spinoza's *conatus* that is said to be the essence of man, one cannot ultimately endeavour to self-destruct, and to this regard on disorders, is but a *force* to which one succumbs unto. The same also applies to diseases such as cancers, tumours, and whatnot. It is not a part of the person's essence; it is an external factor[31].

Bennett still argues the implication that Spinoza may have overlooked a detail to which man can endeavour to self-destruct. In response to what has been said, he argues that Spinoza's propositions are implying that the person who once was to the person who attempts, if not succeeds, to self-destruct are of different persons because they have now endeavoured to kill themselves. He testifies that Spinoza may be implying that towards the event to which one has chosen to kill one's self, they have changed essences. He goes on as so:

> "Spinoza must be claiming that there is no real suicide here because before killing himself the person became someone else: before his suicide Hemingway became a different individual Hemingway*, and he did the killing! This story collapses when we ask who the victim was. If Hemingway* killed himself, then we are back with a self-killing and no identity changes to help us. And Hemingway* can't have killed Hemingway, since they were never in existence at the same time.[32]"

But to this, the 4th proposition still ensues. Barbone and Rice contend that Bennett has interpreted such a proposition wrong. They argue that there may indeed be tendencies within a person to self-destruct, but it is not essentially in that person; it is from external circumstances that forced the person to the point of taking one's own life. To the Hemingway/Hemingway* problem, they answer that *neither killed either*. It was still the external force that pushed one to kill oneself, regardless of their personality.[33]

Alan Donogan is another that critiqued both Spinoza and Bennett regarding such topics. He approached to this concept of external causes and suicide rather differently than Bennett and focused on the "external circumstances" to which a cause *must* be genuine[34]. He somehow unacknowledged Spinoza's second definition in the third part of *Ethics*, stating that we are only actively participating in an internal or external event when we are the *adequate* cause of it; on the contrary, we are passively participating to those to which we are only of a *partial cause* of

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such event.[35] To this definition, it supplies us with the idea that in the case of suicide, we are only passively participating in the event due to the succumbing force of that to which contradicts one's essence. It is of an *inadequate* causality. Donogan also discussed suicide as a result of a multiple personality disorder, in reply to Bennett. On matters of the Hemingway/Hemingway* dilemma, Hemingway would *not* be present when Hemingway* wills his own destruction. The idea here is that the individual was killed (Hemingway), but not the one that willed such killing (Hemingway*). This argument was grounded on the psychologist B. F. Skinner who mentioned that through operant behaviour, we are educated to destroy people when we destroy things, though we cannot replace the other-destruction to the self-destruction; to do so would be viewing the self as the *other*. This is the integral principle of multiple personality disorder. Henceforth, it was established that what circumstance to which a person is to engage in self-destruction is indeed of an *inadequate* cause- meaning, our participation to such an event is merely passive, contradicting Donogan's argument regarding such- and the destruction willed by a person with multiple personality disorder is resulted by the destruction of that which preceded the "personality" of the one that willed it, not the destruction of the one who wills it. The second dilemma implies that it is still of an external force that drive one to destroy the *other* individual.

In addition to the two thinkers, Wallace Matson utilized the analogy of the sun to criticize Spinoza's notion on external causes for destruction. He proceeds as so:

> "The sun will perish, and it is possible, indeed highly probable, that it will perish by burning itself out, by depleting its nuclear and then its gravitational energy. These processes can in no way be deemed 'external' or 'not pertaining to the sun's essence', unless by sheer stipulation, which would empty the principle of all content. And the sun is surely a thing with an essence and a definition if anything is."[36]

With this statement, it has the power to debunk Spinoza's fourth proposition and can destroy its arguments on *conatus* entirely. In analysis of Matson's argument, Barbone and Rice made evident the main point of such argument; and that is, the equating of *existence* and *essence*. These were already claimed in the very first part of *Ethics* (E1 Def1, P24) that existence is temporal, and essence is eternal.[37] With its essence as *burning,* it follows that there is nothing within its being that counteracts its nature. The existence of the sun is to be deemed only as an accident that is in no way part of its essential nature.[38]

In concluding what has been mentioned, Seneca, Hemingway*, and the sun cannot self-destruct. Each, on their own situation somehow suffers, causing them to change, and resulting to the outside force swallowing them.[39] On Seneca's case, the external instances has driven him to be the instrument of his own annihilation; and on the case of Hemingway/Hemingway*, whichever who suffered the consequences was done so because that individual was overpowered by the preceding force that ensued him. Henceforth, for Spinoza, one cannot commit suicide, nor even attempt it, because it is only due to the external forces that overcame one's endeavour to self-preserve.

With regards to the previous argument of Annemarie Pieper on the matters of suicide as permitted, I would like to justify that, under the philosophy of Spinoza, it is to be regarded as still true. The idea that it is permitted insinuates begets the presupposition that it is under an authority such as morality and law, and Spinoza is silent about this mere technicality. Though it

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is as such, one cannot possibly openly choose the option of committing suicide for, indeed, to will it would make a contradiction with one's essential construct- to one's *conatus*. Furthermore, in defending Pieper's argument, Spinoza's 4th proposition remains intact. If one does rectify its being an option and chose it for one's self, it must be from reasons external to one as was mentioned on the previous paragraphs regarding the possible causes of suicide- that it may be a force within or without one's self that overpowered one's endeavour to self-preserve for it still remains outside one's essence. The reasons one may have to self-destruct is always from the external.

IV. Conclusion

Indeed, Spinoza was a rationalist deemed to have built a philosophy on such strong foundations; to which any one can attempt and later on fail to deny him. His concept of *conatus* has proven to be consistent throughout this paper. For it not only strengthened itself amidst the convincing critiques of various thinkers to him and on the subject matter, but it also ensured that it is consistent enough to disregard the idea of self-destruction.

[1] Considering such a notion that he has built his *ethical* philosophy on firm grounds, it follows that the propositions he testified are rooted on these, insinuating the strength of such, and can be deemed as somewhat technical to even attempt to question; for to ask for clarifications of it is to descend back to where such propositions came from. For example, his first proposition states as follows: *A Substance is prior in nature to its affections* (modifications).

This is grounded on the presupposed definitions he made before making such proposition; and to this, such is established on Definition 3 (*Substance is that which exists in itself and conceived those through itself*) and Definition 5 (*Mode is the modification of a substance* [properties or accidents]). In combining the two definitions, one can beget the first proposition; and so, it cannot be stated as otherwise. This manner to which one arrived to such proposition is imminent throughout his work, and his propositions have been deemed useful by other thinkers all over generations whether it is for critiques or simple justification of arguments.

[2] Roger Scruton, *A Short History of Modern Philosophy: from Descartes to Wittgenstein.* (London: Routledge, 1995). pp. 50-51.

[3] Steven Nadler "Baruch Spinoza" *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. (Fall 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL= < http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/spinoza/>; Internet; accessed 11 December 2015.

[4] Benedictus de Spinoza & Michael Morgan. *The Essential Spinoza: Ethics and Related Writings.* Samuel Shirley (trans.), (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub., 2006). p66.

[5] Scruton, *op cit.*

[6] Spinoza & Morgan, *op cit.*

[7] Scruton, *op cit.* 56.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Spinoza & Morgan, *op cit.* 67.

[10] For, indeed, even plants and animals can strive to persist

[11] An example of this would be the body's natural way of regenerating when it has been scathed or wounded. Another would be such's pull to the surface of the water once one has been diving through it for too long, losing oxygen to breathe.

[12] Appetite was said to have no difference between Desire; only that desire is accompanied with consciousness. R. J. Delahunty. *Spinoza.* (London; New York; Routledge, 1985). pp 221-222.

[13] *Ibid.* 222.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] This is grounded on Proposition 8: *The conatus with which each single thing endeavours to persist in its own being does not involve finite time, but indefinite time.*

Spinoza & Morgan, *op cit.* 67.

[16] Craig Paterson. "On Clarifying Terms in Applied Ethics Discourse: Suicide, Assisted Suicide, and Euthanasia." *International Philosophical Quarterly* 43. No. 3. (2003). 354-355

[17] Niceto Blázquez. "The Church's Traditional Moral Teaching on Suicide." in *Suicide and the Right to Die.* Eds. Jacques Pohier & Dietmar Mieth. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1985). 63.

[18] An example of this is found in Judges 9:53-54 where Abimelech demands his armour-bearer to kill him so no one can take it against him that he was killed by a woman. Another is Saul in 1 Sam. 31:3-5 wherein he dropped himself on his sword so no one can say that he was murdered by the uncircumcised.

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[19] Blázquez, *op cit.* 68.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *Ibid.* 69.

[22] An example of these would be the one implemented by the Council of Braga and Pope Nicholas I. "(The Council of Braga)... those we killed themselves in any way were to be excluded from liturgical intercession and taken to burial without the solemnity of psalm-singing." "(Pope Nicholas I)... suicides must be buried without liturgical ceremonial usual in the offices for the dead. In particular, mass was not to be said, since not only did they sin till their death, but even gave themselves death." *Ibid* 71-72.

[23] Annemarie Pieper. "Ethical Arguments in Favour of Suicide." in *Suicide and the Right to Die.* Eds. Jacques Pohier & Dietmar Mieth. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1985). p45.

[24] A kind of act to which it dangles between the good and evil.

[25] *Ibid.* 47.

[26] Spinoza & Morgan, *op cit.* 66.

[27] The man referred to here is the stoic named Seneca.

[28] Spinoza & Morgan, *op cit.* 113.

[29] Steven Barbone & Lee Rice."Spinoza and the Problem of Suicide." *International Philosophical Quarterly* 34. 1994. pp 222-223.

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] There is another argument regarding Seneca's suicide that Bennett and Rice have discussed. It may be posited that killing himself is an exercise of power and virtue. To this, Seneca might have thought that to defy Nero would pain him, and would give Seneca the pleasure of doing so. This can be grounded on Spinoza's 23rd proposition in the third part: "*He who imagines that what he hates is affected with pain will feel pleasure; if, on the other hand, he thinks of it as affected with pleasure, he will feel pain. Both of these emotions will vary in intensity inversely with the variation of the contrary emotion in that which he hates." Ibid. 233.*

[32] *Ibid.*

[33]*Ibid.* 235.

[34] *Ibid.* 236.

[35] Spinoza & Morgan. 62.

[36] *Ibid.* 239.

[37] *Ibid.* 240.

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] *Ibid.*

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On David Hume's Philosophy of Suicide

Aldrin Matthew L. Go

Abstract: It is evident that suicide cases remain prevalent in society today, due to man's misery and experience of anxiety and frustration. Scottish Enlightenment philosopher David Hume (1711 – 1779) is famously known through his skeptical approach on *epistemology, ethics,* and *religion*. Considerations of other vital aspects of his philosophy are, such as "being a man", are often overlooked, primarily because Hume is viewed primarily within the positivist and utilitarian framework. Hence, the initial endeavor of the paper is to interpret Hume within the existential context of his *philosophy of suicide*. Hume recognizes that *misery* is caused by one's violent passions, and pure solitude, or the absence of companions such as family, friends, or relatives. Hume's moral philosophy endorses the importance of *benevolence* towards our fellow human beings; as conflict, oppression, and violence are often causes of *suicide*. Thus, the primary endeavor of this paper is to examine parts of Hume's life and philosophy in order to derive Hume's response on suicide. It can be observed that in Hume's posthumous essays *Of Suicide* and *On the Immortality of the Soul* denies the *arbitrary* determinations of the Supreme Deity. Following this, Hume presents four essays on happiness – a response against the violent nature of both the world and self. Through this can I construct a preliminary avenue for the possibility of a "*Humean Existentialism*" Thus; the primary endeavor of this paper is to examine Hume's life and philosophy in order to derive Hume's response to suicide; and subsequently, to misery, anxiety, and frustration.

Keywords: *Hume, Philosophy of Suicide, Pride, Benevolence,* and *Happiness*

"Be a philosopher; but amidst all your philosophy, be still a man." - *David Hume*

Introduction

Understanding the prevailing reception of Hume's philosophical schema, it is evident that the lenses of interpretation primarily operate along the lines of positivism and utilitarianism. [1] Emphatically, the prevailing scholarship of Hume is arguably idiosyncratic[2]; in the sense that prevalent interpretations neglect what is perhaps most vital in Hume's philosophy; this is no other than his *philosophy of common life.*[3] Beam sympathizes with this belief, in which Hume's influence has primarily extended and attributed itself within the direction of Anglo-Saxon Analytic Philosophy[4]. But Hume's philosophical enterprise, in reality, expands beyond analyses of how propositions are verified or validated to be certain, as these discourses encompass only Hume's temperament of the *Platonist* form of happiness,

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in which he is observably less sympathetic.[5] There is great merit in expanding the horizons of understanding through the *habit of study*, but often are these inquiries expanded and stretched to its limits, which in turn, compromises its possibility for application in common life and stagnates the social being that is Man.

Hume emphasizes that struggles in *common life* originate from man's *violent passions*[6]; thus, the problems experienced by Man are existential and originate from misery, anxiety, frustration, and absurdities in life. In *The Natural History of Religion*, Hume observes that the emergence of religion (polytheistic and monotheistic) originates from the experience of anxiety and misery—a desire for unity and consolation from the absurdity of the world.[7] It is evident that the inquiries made by Hume's predecessors[8] acknowledges the existence of a Supreme Deity, an ultimate Being or an ultimate Principle which reconciles us with life and subsequently justifies human suffering.

Thus, the endeavor of this paper is to establish a preliminary appropriation of Hume's philosophy within the discourses of existentialism through the problem of suicide; and to examine the repercussions of Hume's response on suicide. Furthermore, the paper endeavors to construct Hume's response on suicide, provided that most of Hume's writings were set during the enlightenment era, in which philosophy was in the state of epistemological turmoil; through the attempt to weave Hume's philosophical schema or *psychologism*, his *four essays on happines*s, and his *posthumous essays*, towards a man of *pride* and *benevolence* with cultivated: *taste*, *perspective*, and *understanding*. Hume acknowledges the merits of being a man of *cultivation*, pride and benevolence, as these virtues enable the possibility of both solitary and solidary happiness.

On Hume's Psychologism

Commit it then to the flames: For it contains nothing but sophistry and Illusion[9] *- David Hume*

The philosophical doctrines of *Rationalism* and *Empiricism* were most prevalent during Hume's time, as both competed for supremacy over the other. The cleavage between these doctrines establishes that knowledge can either be obtained through *reason* or *experience*. Taking the side of empiricism, Hume provides a distinguished twist in his mode of empiricism—placing under trial the principal mode of reasoning into scrutiny; this is no other than *causality*.[10] In understanding the mode of reasoning utilized by Hume's predecessors, even the methodic skepticism exhibited by René Descartes, causality has not been subjected to rigorous examination, as such mode of reasoning is presupposed in every inquiry. It can be observed upon reading Hume—Hume's project was not to ascertain the existence of absolute principles; rather, he sought to explain the psychological operations of reasoning, provided that these have not been subjected to skepticism.[11] Furthermore, what distinguishes Hume from his predecessors would be his anti-metaphysical stance and *irreligion*—understanding that "the errors in religion are dangerous; those in philosophy only ridiculous."[12]

Through his empirical and skeptical approach, Hume cautiously dissects pernicious aspects of metaphysics and religion, such as its dogmatism, abnegation, and nihilism. It can be observed in multiple instances that Hume sought to naturalize man, or return man to his philosophical innocence; that is to say, that Hume demolishes the primacy of *reason* over the *passions*. Hume initiates his critique through the division between *relation of ideas* and *matters of fact*.[13] The former pertains to a priori concepts in

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which the idea's negation is inconceivable, e.g. Triangle has three-sides; while the latter pertains to ideas from experience in which its negation is equally conceivable with its affirmation, e.g. "the sun will rise tomorrow".

Hume explicitly provides this distinction in order to establish the boundary between an idea being determined by other ideas and ideas being determined by experience. Understanding that *relations of ideas* are certain insofar as ideas, such ideas therefore lack resemblance with experience. Hume being an empiricist establishes that discourses concerning natural phenomena or the world necessarily encompass the category of *matters of fact,* precisely because knowledge of phenomena can only be derived from experience. Following these contentions, Hume proceeds with his *problem of induction*.

Induction, as a mode of reasoning, lacks the capacity to ascertain, beyond reasonable doubt, the *necessary connexion* between a phenomena and another. It can be deduced from inductive data, for instance, that "the sun would rise tomorrow", but there is difficulty to conclusively ascertain that in reference to a past experience of the sun rising, that such phenomena were to occur again in the future. Provided that inductive reasoning derives its premises from experience, and as experiences of natural phenomena are experiences of matters of fact, it is evident therefore that arguments of induction remains insufficient in establishing a *necessary connexion* between one phenomena and another. Thus, inductive reasoning cannot ascertain any universal principles of natural phenomena—making such inferences inconclusive, as arguments inferred from causality is rendered unable to reveal transcendental principles of nature.

Following these contentions, Hume utilizes his critique of Causality against prevalent rationalistic and metaphysical arguments on the existence of God. Understanding that God is the prime mover or the uncaused-cause, it necessary to inquire, "*from what impression is that supposed idea derived?*"[14]. Hume is not criticizing God *per se*; rather, he is criticizing man's capacity to induce, deduce, or conceive a Being with determinate and absolute qualities and principles. Inquiries concerning God's existence fundamentally rest on two modes of thinking, deduction (cause to effect) and induction (effect to cause). Evident between these modes of inferences is the relation between cause and effect. Hume contends that causes must bear proportionality with its effects, and effects with its causes; otherwise, the abstract philosopher is *leaping* through the use of analogy; from imperfection to perfection (induction) or entirely of perfection (deduction). By no means could we infer a perfect quality from an imperfect experience, as Omni-qualities[15] are mere fictions made from the whims of *imagination*.[16] Arguments derived from analogy, by no means, allow man real access to the operations of nature and of God. Through Hume's scrutiny over the inconclusive grounds of God's existence, Hume demolishes the primary arguments laid forth by his predecessors, as inferences from causality are insubstantial, so as God's existence.

Therefore, concerning ontology and transcendental principles, Hume attests that such inquiries are frivolous; nefarious once stretched towards matters of ethics. Establishing immutable ontologies and transcendental principles, in turn, provides an avenue for dogmatism, complacency, and nihilism. The following sections of these paper proceeds from these contentions—an application of Hume's philosophical schema on moral philosophy, suicide, and happiness.

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On Hume's Moral Philosophy

Reason is and ought to be a slave to the passions and cannot pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them.[17] *- David Hume*

Moral philosophy, in relation to Hume's predecessors, constructed their ethical systems based on rationally determined principles anchored on abstruse principles, such as moral perfection. But for Hume *reason* is inert, as *per se*, its operations pertain merely on inductive and deductive inferences. Thus, Hume examines the underlying psychologism behind actions; in other words, what are the motivational forces that enable human actions?

Hume makes multiple categories of human passions; concerning motivation and volition, Hume presents his distinction between *direct* and *indirect passions*. The former pertains the motivational forces of action;[18] while the latter pertains to passions over one's self or other people or objects which are related to one's self.[19] It is evident in these distinctions that Hume endeavored to re-invent ethical discourses, placing man as the sole arbiter of ethical decisions. Thus, understanding that Hume's moral thought sought not to anatomically illustrate the fundamental connections between actions and principles of Good and Evil; on the contrary, Hume's project was to derive principles of Good and Evil from man himself and paint to present man, not merely as machines determined by transcendental necessities, but by illustrating the unfolding of man through the experience of passions and the promulgation of natural benevolence and justice over rational and normative ethics.

It is understandable that the *passions* are often characterized as *arbitrary*, in the sense that actions originating from *passions* are crude and unrefined. Hume understands that these contentions are equally plausible and implausible. Actions or volitions motivated by the passions, even those *seemingly* determined by reason. For instance, the experience of touching a candle-flame excites the feeling of physical pain; reason would subsequently dictate that candle-flame should not be touched as it causes pain. Evident from this example would be to mistakenly derive the dictum "the candle-flame should not be touched" from rational analysis of the proposition; rather, the tendency to avoid the candle-flame is derived from the passions of *aversion.* Reason plays a passive role, as the passions are the active forces of human action and volition. Human tendencies towards actions arise from the passions, a reaction or response to experiences; on the other hand, the role of reason in actions and volitions is to temper crude and inexperienced passions through the recollection of past experiences. While it is established that inductive inferences are insufficient grounds for certainty, it is within human nature to establish *custom* or habit in order to exhibit equilibrium between skepticism and dogmatism. Thus, *customs* or *habits* are constantly cultivated and refined for the purpose of appropriation with the current affairs of common life.

In contemplation of man's actions, even the passions are subject to *Causality*, i.e. everything must have a cause, even our passions. Finally, *Passions* should therefore be cultivated to "counter-act" man's *Violent Passions* (Untamed and Vulgar) create *Calm Passions* or the by-product of man's cultivation of his *passion.*

Solitary cultivation and habit enables us to appropriate ourselves within the chaotic world, but Hume understand that solitude cannot be exercised as there are other people whom man co-exists with. Virtue, as Hume says, are actions which excite approbation, while vices excite

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disapprobation. Hume establishing an ethics that is a man of virtue, must act virtuously and possess the motivation towards a virtuous life; Human actions ought to be authentic than imposed, an imposition of doing "virtuous act" does not make one virtuous.

On Deontological Restraints of Suicide:

After the necessary preliminaries on Hume's epistemological and moral thought, I can now proceed with my philosophical examination and appropriation of Hume's response on suicide. Hume understands and contends that free will and determinism are non-contradictory; rather, they are pre-established and are natural. Furthermore, upon reconciling that liberty and necessity are non-contradictory, Hume's moral philosophy maintains that despite our actions being causally determined[20] by the determinations of our will (*liberty*) and other wills (*necessity*), there are no contradictions in man's subjective autonomy as necessity plays a significant role in liberty and vice versa. Thus, actions are still within the province and responsibility of the agent.

In Hume's philosophical terms, I shall now illustrate and integrate Hume's discussion on *passions*, along with its resembling elements on the suicide itself. Actions as explained in the previous section, arise through our Direct Passions or the motivational forces that enables human volition. Angst[21] arises from the condition of man, i.e. the inability to cope up with the absurdity of reality. The underlying Indirect Passion of suicide includes Hatred towards the world; thus suicide is when man is constantly bombarded of his disapprobation towards life;[22] consequently, the tendency towards the *Direct Passions* of *Desire* and *Hope* and the Indirect Passions *Humility* and *Hatred*. Committing suicide requires a motivational force of desire or the will to commit suicide, and with Hope supposing, "through this act of suicide would man be emancipated from his misery". Indirect Passions that are exhibited in the act is Humility towards the self, and Hatred towards the world in relation to the self. Passions interplay with volitions, as they are necessary towards understanding the reason man is condescended to extinguish one's life. Underlying within human volitions are series of passions conjoined forming definitive actions, while at the same time, operates within causal determinations.

On Hume's essay *Of Suicide*, human life either rests in the enduring state of existence or the desire for emancipation from the miseries of existence. Hume's understands that the urge to commit suicide is primarily related to man's miserable existence. Provided that suicide is directly related to a miserable life, there are also deontological arguments that denominate suicide as "transgression of our duty towards God, our neighbor, or ourselves"[23]. Hume sought to pacify the conception suicide through a scrupulous scrutiny of "common arguments against suicide, and by showing that, that action may be free from every imputation of guilt and blame"[24]. Through Hume's Is-Ought contention in the Treatise, Hume primarily criticized theistic arguments that eliminate man's subjective autonomy, i.e. *Divine Providence*. When Hume speaks of transgression, it implies a pre-established moral code that prohibits man to extinguish his existence. But upon stating, "I wish to commit suicide", it does not intrinsically or immediately presuppose that suicide is evil. As explained in the previous section, the origins of human approbation and disapprobation towards actions are directly related on how an action entreats man to exhibit passions of approbation or disapprobation. The immediate misinterpretation of suicide arises from the ideas that man associates with the act, i.e. through Association of Ideas. Hume contends

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the insufficiency of logical articulations to entreat man towards actions; thus the endeavor to tame and constrain the passions through reason alone is futile.

Upon these necessary acknowledgements of certain details in Hume's philosophical design, I can confidently proceed with my critical examination of Hume's philosophy of suicide. Holden understands that "... Of Suicide is a philosophical polemic"[25] directed to criticize the metaphysical grounds of suicide. Philosophical discourses exhibited by Hume's predecessors presented deontological explanations on suicide. Ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle contested that extinguishing one's life is transgressive towards the gods and the state.[26] Medieval philosophers Augustine and Aquinas contend that suicide is a clear transgression towards God—a blasphemous mockery of God's divine commandment "Thou Shalt not Kill" or man's moral obligation to God. Therefore, Hume's argument serves as an anti-thesis against deontological arguments.

In relation to God, suicide could not have been transgressive to God, because upon Hume's examination of *Liberty* and *Necessity*, human actions are causally determined through constant conjunctions of cause to effect. Theists would contend that God is the ultimate determination of all wills, the unmoved force that accounts for all subsequent forces. Establishing that God is the ultimate cause of all things, it follows that God holds responsibility to all subsequent effects, either Good or Evil. Hume argues that:

> All events ... may be pronounced the action of the Almighty; they all proceed from those powers with which he has endowed his creatures... When the passions play, when the judgment dictates, when the limbs obey; this is all the operations of God.[27]

Evidently, because all human actions or volitions fall under the general deterministic laws governing nature, man is rendered unable to circumvent divine order.[28] Man's existence is subjected towards causally determined natural laws designed by the supreme deity; thus diverting the course of nature does not presuppose an intervention of natural laws, precisely because when we speak of "diverting the courses of nature", it is an exhibition of man's natural powers provided by nature itself. Nature has created numerous circumstances that are completely detrimental to the preservation of man's life, as "a hair, a fly, an insect, is able to destroy this mighty being"[29], it is therefore "...equally criminal to act for preservation of life as for its destruction"[30]. Furthermore, Hume contends that nature holds no favoritism; each and every living thing is subjected to the determinations of nature—beyond the possibility of altering these determinations.

> The life of man is of no greater importance to the universe than that of an oyster: and were it ever of so great importance, the order of human nature has actually submitted it to human prudence, and reduced us to a necessity, in every incident, of determining concerning it [31]

In retrospect to the discussion on liberty and necessity, man is necessarily subjected to the determinations of nature; from all our mental to our physical operations. Pondering on the entirety of Hume's philosophy, his philosophical investigation is fundamentally operating within the parameters of Causality. Hence, in the entirety of things, suicide cannot be a transgression of one's duty towards God. Man cannot derive a divine moral ought from scrupulous scrutiny of suicide, because suicide in itself does not contain such moral ought. Furthermore, the grounds maintained by theists, i.e. divine providence (Aquinas, Descartes,

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Spinoza, and Leibniz), are by no means transgressive towards the providence of God as all actions including suicide is grounded by divine providence; thus it is absurd for e theist that man possess such liberty. Frey understands that Hume intends to establish two fundamental points: (1) negatively, man is invariably subjected within the determinism of nature, and (2) positively, there is no transgression towards God on suicide. Therefore, the evils of suicide cannot be derived through theological deontology[32], and that natural religion is rendered impaired in establishing a moral ought beyond the confines and availability of secular reason.

The primary focus of Hume's critique of theological claims on the impermissibility of suicide would be the expendable idea of God within the discourse of suicide and ethics itself; either mentioning or not mentioning God, the fundamental necessities of nature and the subjective autonomy of man is maintained as these are pre-established in nature without any real contradiction. Furthermore, by acknowledging Hume's irreligious disposition, deliberating on the permissibility and impermissibility of suicide within the confines of ultimate principles are ridiculous. Ultimate principles lack substantial grounds as these abstract perfections derived from reasoning bear no real resemblance from our experiences. Man observes no ultimate deontological principles from our actions; rather, Hume contends that actions are deliberated depending on its tendency for approbation and disapprobation—of *virtue* and *vice*.

Upon these criticisms on Hume's argument on suicide, it is equally necessary to scrutinize on the relation between the proportionality of suicide with the theistic doctrine of eternal life. Hume observes that moral philosophies, ranging from Aquinas towards Leibniz are constrained within the idea of eternal reward and punishment. Understanding the initial criticism that suicide, in the logic of theistic reasoning cannot be transgressive towards God. But to temporarily suspend the application of Hume's criticism on suicide, it is necessary to inquire on the theistic repercussions of suicide, i.e. eternal punishment. Discourses on eternal punishment necessarily revolve within the parameters of metaphysics, i.e. the immortality of the soul.

Hume understands that analogy between the present life and eternal life is vastly disproportioned—the fragility of the physical and the indestructibility of the metaphysical.[33] The contention towards an eternal existence presupposes the absurdity of the present existence, precisely because of the supposition that present existence is merely a transitory and preparatory existence towards eternal salvation or damnation; in this case, the promulgation of eternal salvation as the primary doctrine of existence demerits the significance of the present life, i.e. asceticism and religious zealotry as negations of the present for the fulfillment of the eternal. Hume understands that man's natural capacities are appropriated towards pragmatic application in his present condition, drastically contrasting the absurdly venture on absolutely perfect beings, ideas, and principles.[34] If man's natural propensities were directed to the present affairs of life, it would be absurd then to direct our natural capacities to eternal life. Hume further examines the contentions of theistic moral duties that transgressions against God subsequently merit man eternal damnation. The disproportionality between the present and the eternal is also present on the moral aspects of theism; Hume contends, "Punishment, according to our conception, should bear some proportion to the offence. Why then eternal punishment for the temporary offences of so frail a creature as man?"[35] Morality therefore

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should serve human affairs and interests towards the promotion of *benevolence* and *sympathy* towards our fellow men.

Therefore, man should emancipate himself from the restraints of theistic deontology towards a reformation of man's moral standards directed to society and one's self. Deliberations on the subject of suicide should revolve within the affairs of man. Hume proceeds with his criticisms on social constraints of suicide, examining whether it would be detrimental towards society and one's self to extinguish one's life. Hume provides three examples:[36] (1) supposing that man abstains from societal matters, man only ceases to contribute for the welfare of society. Obligations concerning societal matters entail pre-requisites, which is the reciprocal disposition of society. If man withdraws from his social responsibility, can man then be bounded by responsibility towards society and suppose suicide as transgressive? (2) Supposing that society is unable to benefit from man's continued existence, and that man's existence is proven detrimental to the welfares of society, can it not be ascertained that suicide is a laudable act? (3) Supposing that a malefactor foresees his inevitable and shameful death, and by waiting for his execution or voluntarily taking his life are both equally beneficial to society, can it not then be ascertained that suicide is a plausible act for the welfare of society? In these examples, Hume contends that the socio-deontological arguments on suicide because to be logically consistent in deontology, suicide can equally be detrimental or beneficial to society; thus making the advancements of secular reason insufficient accounts on justifying conclusively that suicide is invariably detrimental. Provided that there are no sound deontological restrains that conclusively repudiates the permissibility of suicide, it is now necessary to inquire whether it would be transgressive towards one's self. Hume argues that suicide is neither transgressive nor soundly bounded by deontological reasons, as impositions of duty towards one's self are no longer established when there are no deontological principles imposed by an external authority.

Provided that there are indeed no sound deontological principles that invariably deem suicide as transgressive, it is necessary to proceed on the question "should we commit suicide?" without restraints. In this case, the question shifts from a question of transgression to a question of happiness; hence the following section of the paper deals on the subject of human happiness amidst his anxieties in life.

On Happiness

In retrospect of the previous sections of the paper, it has been established that the urge for suicide is invariably related with human misery or existential anxiety. Understanding that anxiety, frustration and discontent increases man's tendency to commit suicide; hence, suicide in this case is not entirely a question of man's anxiety, frustration, and discontent, but also the question of human happiness, satisfaction, and contentment. The contentions in Hume's essay *Of Suicide* and *On the Immortality of the Soul* should be understood as a critique on the implicit contradictions of the epistemological foundations in the theism's deontological conception of suicide. In Hume's *Treatise*, his philosophical investigation of human nature ventured to criticize and reform the ideas of his predecessors through an empirical and experimental approach. Upon systematizing the psychological operations of man, Hume understands that metaphysical certainties, i.e. God, are fictions of human imagination. Following this would be his historical investigation of the origins of religion,

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later concluding that religious beliefs are created to alleviate humanity of anxiety and fear in life.

In order to proceed with Hume's response on suicide, one must recall Hume's moral philosophy presents that the passions are the motivational forces of action and are the cause human actions. Strictly referring to the assertions exhibited in the treatise, it would be difficult to ascertain a conclusive response on the subject. Hume's philosophical project sought to return man from the metaphysical abyss of contemplations back to the affairs of common life. Hume contends that religion is detrimental to man, as its impositions require the practice of *Monkish Virtues* that are self-negations or anti-nature. Hume writes in his conclusion in *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*:

Celibacy, fasting, penance, mortification, self-denial, humility, silence, solitude, and the whole train of **monkish virtues**; for what reason are they everywhere rejected by men of sense, but because they serve to no manner of purpose; neither advance a man's fortune in the world, nor render him a more valuable member of society; neither qualify him for the entertainment of company, nor increase his power of self-enjoyment? We observe, on the contrary, that they cross all these desirable ends; stupefy the understanding and harden the heart, obscure the fancy and sour the temper. We justly, therefore, transfer them to the opposite column, and place them in the catalogue of vices; nor has any superstition force sufficient among men of the world, to pervert entirely these natural sentiments.[37]

Concerning matters of happiness, Hume composed four essays that examine different styles of human life and happiness, i.e. *The Epicurean*, *The Stoic*, *The Platonist*, and *The Sceptic*. Contrasting the *Treatise's* argumentative writing, the essay exhibits literary style designed to entreat readers to cultivate: *taste*, *perspective*, and *understanding*.[38]

Hume begins with the *Epicurean*, a style of life whose practice is to focus on the natural and simple pleasures of life. *Nature* for this style of life shatters the possibility of obtaining happiness through artificial means. For instance, Hume cured himself from his philosophical melancholy through the practice of the *Epicurean* style of life towards happiness[39]. Although, Hume has some disagreement on this matter, specifically on *Epicureanism*'s ignorance over man's inventive capacities, yet agrees entirely that man should embrace the simple pleasures of the present than to wait for *"eternal salvation"*. Understanding that man also is an "inventive species"[40], Hume now presents his agreements on the *Stoic* form of happiness. According to Hume, *Stoic* style of happiness includes the artificial refinement of one's capabilities, i.e. Inventiveness has a great contribution to happiness. But Hume understands that strictly making artificial refinements man's sole objective towards happiness, man consequently denies himself of the *natural* and making man subjected to pursue human perfection. Compromising one's self within the strict idea of self-refinement makes the products of man's labor empty. Hence, man should balance his natural and artificial pleasures as both are indeed for man. Proceeding on the subject, Hume explains the *Platonist* style of happiness, i.e. a man of contemplation. Philosophical devotion seeks to enhance man's understanding of the world; but if taken strictly, contemplation lacks any real relation with the affairs of common life.[41] Thus, to remedy the extremities of the three styles of life, Hume places the final archetype of happiness, the *Sceptic*. For the *Sceptic*: "Objects have absolutely no worth or value in themselves"[42] and the passions dictate whether objects cause approbation or disapprobation in man. Hume although agrees

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that man should not demerit the fruits of philosophical contemplation, as through as reflection and study can sometimes tranquilize the passions, but they must work with nature, not independent of it.[43] Hume's *mitigated scepticism* makes its pragmatic application present on the subject of happiness. Hume's footnote in the *Sceptic* writes:

> the philosopher is lost in the man, and he seeks in vain for that persuasion which seemed so firm and unshaken… by habit and study acquire that philosophical temper which both gives force to reflection, and rendering a great part of your happiness independent, takes off the edge from all disorderly passions, an tranquilizes the mind.[44]

Hume therefore believes that there should be equal space for man's natural, inventive, and contemplative capacities as the moderation of the *Epicurean, Stoic*, and *Platonist* makes a happy man who is able to perceive pleasure in all his natural capacities. Happiness exists within the temperance over the practice of the styles of happiness, accepting man's limitations with respect to natural, inventive, and contemplative pleasure enables man to counter-act his *Violent Passions*. Suicide, as a cause of unhappiness is remedied through the temperance of one's *violent passions*, the cultivation of man's mind, body, and heart. It is evident that plunging to far, making our *Violent Passions* of anxiety, frustration, and discontent the causes of unhappiness; hence, through cultivation of man, despite the ills of life, one may find happiness through and embrace of the present life. The exhibition of *Pride* here should be taken as *self-esteem,* the preservation of one's self amidst discontent and the confrontation of life's ills without the extreme pretention makes the presentation of pride a moderate and refined one.

Hume on his four essays on happiness presents that from temperance and refinement of man's natural, inventive, and contemplative capacities, man would be able embrace and appreciate the present pleasures of life (*Epicurean*), refinement of man's capacities to a virtuous life (*Stoic*), and enhancing man's contemplative capacities to "counter-act" and temper man's *violent passions* (*Platonist*), i.e. the cultivation of heart, body, and mind. Hume's life is testament to this; throughout his life towards his death, he displayed a cheerful disposition and savored the company of his friends[45], and persisted living without recourse to the comforts of religion, i.e. Hume attesting during his correspondence with James Boswell[46] that the expectation of an eternal life is the "most unreasonable fancy"[47]. Hume's life affirmation is made explicit by his *revolt* against rationalism and religious dogmatism and zealotry through his philosophical polemics (*Treatises* and *Enquiries*) against both rational and irrational religion. In relation to the testaments of his friend Adam Smith, the "magnanimity and frugality"[48] of David Hume presents the actuality of his moral philosophy, in which he places the importance of man's social affairs over philosophical contemplation. It is therefore observable that Hume's philosophical writings are merely springboards that enable man to return back from the abyss of metaphysical contemplation to the affairs of common life. In Hume's magnanimity, he extends benevolent disposition towards his friends—a compassionate disposition towards his neighbors that enables Hume to relish the simple pleasures of life despite being unable to ascertain any ultimate purpose and meaning from even the most scrupulous scrutiny. Through the practice of compassion towards others, man extends the possibility of happiness, i.e. Solidarity through *Benevolence*. Therefore for Hume, to temper our natural propensities through the cultivation of our *mind*, *body*, and *passions*, man can practice a

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life that seeks enjoyment in the present affairs and repudiate seeking the insatiable desires of the mind, body, and passions. Furthermore, through extending man's temperance to others, he practices *benevolence* towards his family, friends, and society.

Hume provides great emphasis on the importance of benevolence, as real happiness is felt from the preservation of one's self, embrace of the present affairs, the cultivation of one's self, the habit of study, and the merry of being with one's friends.[49] Reason cannot construct a method for happiness; for Hume, life and experience is man's greatest teacher. Philosophy perhaps suffices in broadening understanding; but between life and philosophy, Hume would choose to life and man over abstract philosophy. Life therefore must not be one-dimensional—but a flourishing of man capacities and broadening his sphere of understanding that may contribute to the possibility of better life.

[1] Hume, David. "Section I", *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Edited by Millican, Peter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) pp. 6 [Hereafter, this shall be cited as EHU]

[2] It is necessary to examine briefly why the prevailing reception on Hume's philosophy prevalently pertains to his epistemological contentions. Later in this essay, my endeavor is to relate Hume to existential problems, such as suicide, and provide an avenue through which Hume's philosophy is understood as a "guide of life" or response against absurdities of existence.

[3] An enlightenment philosopher born and died in 1711-1779, who is popular through religious stance implicit in his philosophical writings and being part of the triumvirate of British Empiricism along with John Locke and George Berkley. He wrote the books *Treatise of Human Nature, Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding and Principles of Morals,* and *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. His philosophy are primarily influenced by minds such as Isaac Newton, Cicero, Sextus Empiricus, etc. which some remnants of their thoughts are used by David Hume in his works. Most of his philosophical writings pertain to religious superstitions being abhorrent practices for they are merely illusions and sophistry and concerning the dynamics of human consciousness. Hume's philosophy is not limited to his epistemological criticisms, but also his contributions such as: *Theory of Causality, Theory of Passions, Theory of Virtue,* etc.

[4] Beam, Craig "Hume and Nietzsche: Naturalists, Ethicists, Anti-Christians", in *Hume Studies, Vol. XXII, No. 2* (1996) pp. 299

[5] Immerwahr, John. "Hume's Essays on Happiness", in *Hume Studies, Vol. XV, No. 2* (1989) pp. 313

[6] *Violent Passions* are explained in Hume's *Treatise* as crude, inexperienced, or raw passions; these passions arise from the lack of experience, such as the tendency to touch candle-flame out of novelty. This pertains to the absence of *custom* or *habit* that causes *violent* passions over something. These would be explained in the following pages.

[7] Hume, David. "The Natural History of Religion", in *Dialogues and The Natural History and Religion*. Edited by Gaskin, J.C.A. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) pp. 140

[8] Hume's predecessors include, *Rene Descartes*, *Baruch Spinoza*, *Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, *John Locke*, and *George Berkley*.

[9] EHU, pp. 120

[10] See *Section III* of *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, pp. 16 - 17

[11] It is evident that within Hume's *psychologism* that the mind associates ideas with one another, consequently producing various networks which excite passions or broadens understanding. Understanding Hume's critique of metaphysics pertains essentially to the idea of God lacking any *real* relation to external impressions. Analogy produces imaginary networks of understanding, which consequently lead to an evident misappropriation between those compared.

[12] EHU, pp. 18 - 19

[13] Hume, David. "Conclusion of this Book", *Treatise of Human Nature*. Edited by Selby-Bigge, L.A. and Nidditch, P.H. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) pp. 271 - 272 [Hereafter, this shall be cited as T]

[14] EHU, pp. 15 Hume distinguishes impressions from ideas; impressions are the immediate, forceful, and lively perceptions of the mind, while ideas are the mediate, and less lively perceptions of the mind.

[15] "Perfect" qualities ascribed to God: Omni-potent, Omni-present, Omniscient, etc.

[16] For Hume, this pertains to the mind's sovereignty over its ideas—in its abuse, creates radically fictitious things that may no longer bear any proportioned *resemblance* and *continuity* in experience.

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[17] T, pp. 415

[18] Magri, Tito. "Hume on the Direct Passions and Motivation", *A Companion to Hume*. Edited by Radcliffe, Elizabeth (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008) pp. 186 – 194 Magri explicates on the motivational force of direct passions, specifically its capacity to "… impart to the mind a first impulse to internal and external action", and as these enable man towards an action, it also merits itself to be a mental state as it is perfectly understood that Joy and Sorrow, Hope and Fear, and Desire and Aversion are all mental states. *Indirect Passions* are not mental states, but are conjunctions towards an object related to the self or other.

[19] Hume, David. "Section 3", *A Dissertation of the Passions and The Natural History of Religion: Critical Edition.* Edited by Beauchamp, Tom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 18

[20] See Section III of Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*

[21] As I would understand Angst in Hume's sense, I'd infer this to be the mixture of the *Direct Passion* Fear and Sorrow. Angst here is also taken as a direct passion

[22] Hume, David. "Of Suicide", *Selected Essays.* Edited by Copley, Stephen and Edgar, Andrew (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) pp. 315 – 316

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] Holden, Thomas. "Religion and Moral Prohibition in Hume's 'Of Suicide'", in *Hume Studies Vol. 31, No. 2* (2005) pp. 191

[26] Noon, Gorgia. "On Suicide", in *Journal Of The History of Ideas, Vol. 39, No.3*. (1978) pp. 373 – 375

[27] Hume. *Selected Essays.* pp. 317

[28] Holden, Thomas. "Religion and Moral Prohibition in Hume's 'Of Suicide'", pp. 194

[29] Hume, David. "Of Suicide" *Selected Essays.* pp. 319

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] Frey, R. G. "Hume on Suicide", in *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy, Vol. 24, No. 4* (1999) pp. 346

[33] Hume, David. "On the Immortality of the Soul", *Selected Essays.* pp. 329

[34] *Ibid.* pp. 326

[35] *Ibid.* pp. 327

[36] *Ibid.* "Of Suicide", pp. 322 – 323

[37] Hume, David. "Conclusion", *Hume's Moral Philosophy.* Edited by Sayre-McCord, Geoffrey (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2006) pp. 258 [Emphasis is mine]

[38] Hume, David. "Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion", *Selected Essays.* pp. 11 – 12

[39] T, pp. 269 Hume writes in the *Treatise*: "I dine, I play a game of back-gammon, I converse, and am merry with my friends…"

[40] Immerwahr, John. "Hume's Essays on Happiness" pp. 311

[41] *Ibid.* pp. 314

[42] *Ibid.*

[43] *Ibid.* pp. 317

[44] Hume. *Selected Essays,* pp. 356 (This is a footnote of Hume in *The Sceptic*)

[45] *Adam Smith* and *John Home*; see: *The Life of David Hume* by Ernest Campbell Mossner, pp. 589 – 603

[46] James Boswell is a diarist who wrote about the lives of important people; in the case of this paper, David Hume. Mossner writes in his book about the conversation between Boswell insisting Hume to have taken recourse on religion, but Hume abruptly denies to take such recourse and understands it to be the "most unreasonable fancy" (pp. 598) to believe such whimsical illusions. Boswell reconciles himself with a dream about Hume being secretly a religious man, which later made his journals on Hume less "rough".

[47] *Ibid.* pp. 598

[48] Schliesser, Eric. "The Obituary of a Vain Philosopher: Adam Smith's Reflection of Hume's Life", in *Hume Studies, Vol. XXVIX, No. 2* (2003) pp. 336 – 341

[49] With regards to this, I am not proposing a method for happiness, nor does Hume. These contentions are mere guides, as happiness is lived than analyzed through abstract reasoning.

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On Hume's Idea of Causation

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Abstract: The intention of this paper is to explore and explain David Hume's notion of causation. I will initially discuss Hume's distinction of the two contents of the mind obtained from perception namely, ideas and impression. After which, I will distinguish the three associations of idea. Moreover, I will likewise discuss on how Hume has decisively categorized all inquiries of human reason as logical or empirical in nature. The former is denoted by Hume as Relations of Ideas and the latter as Matters of Fact. Furthermore, I will discuss the two logical courses as to how Hume philosophizes on a given proposition. This would be refer to contemporary thinkers as "The Humean Method." Finally, from Hume's viewpoint, I will discuss how he is able to delve on the concerns of causation without refuting his own and others' empirical standpoints.

Keywords: Causation, Matters of Fact, Relations of Ideas.

I. Introduction

The word empiricism originated from the ancient Greek word *empeiria* meaning, "experience"[1]. It is a philosophical system that claims all ideas are solely dependent from our experiences of the world. Experience is the central figure of the ultimate empiricist postulate that claims "there can be no concept except where there is experience" [2] This notion is indeed acceptable and justifiable to sensible ideas but how about the question regarding causation? What is the particular impression or experience we could infer to in order for us to justify one event as the cause or effect? What are the qualifications and nature of causation? These are the intricate and interesting questions, which in the 'Humean' way, I will philosophically venture to answer.

II. On Ideas and Impressions

The contents of the mind are what Hume explicitly specifies as *perceptions*. Both experience and one's recollection of his memory obtained from these experiences hold an incontestable distinction between the degrees of their *vivacity* and *force*.[3] According to Hume, the liveliness and strength of one's sensory experience of a certain event can never arrive by faithfully emulating all angles of this sensory experience by one's mere operation of the mind, that is, to recall. Such memories, no matter how accurate and truthful they are, may still unintentionally omit a flicker of its liveliness and strength. Supposing I was given the privilege of visiting the Louvre Museum in Paris and examine the exquisiteness exhibited through Leonardo da Vinci's world-famous painting, La Joconde or of listening to a concert of the English classical crossover soprano, Sarah Brightman, Hume reasoned that no matter how much we

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compound our critical examination on the sublimity of the colors, strokes, and shades in the painting or audibly trace back the exquisiteness in posture, vocal mechanism, breathing, focus, and mental concept[4] performed by the singer, we can *never* grasp the exact vivacity and force of our actual experience with the painting and music. Nothing can faithfully emulate the exact liveliness and strength of a certain event including the thoughts and memories of the great minds. The vivacity and force of one's sensory experience are more intense than the vivacity and force of one's memory: "The most lively thought is still inferior to the dullest sensation."[5]

Evidently, David Hume categorized these two contents of the mind in accordance with their degrees of vivacity and force. He termed the more vivacious and forceful content as *Impressions*, whereas the less as *Thoughts* or *Ideas*.[6] Impressions, according to Hume, are our entire lively perceptions. These perceptions do not solely comprise one's external experience but also encompass the internal ones.[7] External experience constitutes one's sensory experience, such as the *burning sensation* felt upon being licked by the flame of a lighted candle, but the feeling of *pain* derived from the burning sensation is what Hume termed as *internal experience* or words, those feelings, emotions, and will.[8]

Thoughts and Ideas, on the other hand, fall back on the mental facsimile of our faint vivacious and forceful impressions. Hume likewise identified ideas as faint mental copies, dull images, or obscure representations of the vivid impressions. However, these denotations are not merely literally expressed as faint images by virtue of obscureness; rather, these ideas are denoted as faint images by virtue of being *causally inferred* from impressions.[9] According to Scruton, ideas also constitute the construction of meanings of the ideas.[10] The causal relationship between impressions and ideas infers the construction of their meanings: "The meaning of everything which can be said consists in its sensory or empirical content."[11] For instance, my visual impression of a particular kind of color *caused* me to arrive at the idea of blue. From my own impression, I could denote the meaning of the idea of blue by defining into words my visual impression of blue, which is "the portion of the color spectrum lying between green and violet"[12] Therefore, the meaning of the idea of color blue is the hue which lies between the colors green and violet. Hence, ideas do not merely demonstrate plainly faint photographs of impressions but also their causally derived meanings from impressions.

Moreover, there are two kinds of ideas: *simple* and *complex*. Simple ideas are merely the basic and individuating copies of our simple impressions received by our passive minds. Complex ideas, conversely, are the association of these simple ideas. The empiricists, namely Locke and Hume, asserted that complex ideas are established upon simple ideas and simple ideas are induced from simple impressions. For instance, if we were to think of a golden apple, we will only be acquainted by this idea by independently knowing what initially the ideas of *gold* and *apple* were. If we were not formerly introduced to the ideas of *gold* and *apple* experientially, then, it is expected of us to fail to comprehend the idea of a golden apple. Similarly, with regard to the idea of heroic cavalry, we understand this idea simply because we are introduced, by means of internal experience (or feelings), to the idea of heroism and *compound* it with the idea of a cavalry. Hence, "no impressions, no ideas" [13]

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Hume states that the human intellect may appear to own an unrestrained freedom of thought, but our thoughts, if they were to be examined critically, are capsulated or enclosed by certain parameters of limitations. The limitations Hume is referring to are the powers of the human intellect to 'compound, transform, augment, or diminish' ideas derived from our impressions.[14] Hence, we could not blame the human intellect to form a series of compounding, transforming, augmenting, and diminishing including that of the most scrutinized idea i.e., the idea of God. The idea of God as the omnipotent, omnibenevolent, and omniscient being would take its root from our external and internal impressions. Hume believed that this idea is derived from the faculty of the intellect to absolutely 'augment' the qualities of potency, benevolence, and wisdom which are derived from his experience. In a similar vein is the idea of God as a Heavenly Father. Hume would propose that the idea of God as a heavenly father can be linked to the experience we had with our earthly father. Hence, "the idea of a father led to the idea of a heavenly father." [15]

Furthermore, Hume takes into consideration the human organ defects that may lead to a 'little susceptibility' with regard to the association of one's ideas. Take, for instance, the nature of a blind man. We can strongly presume the blind man's incompetency in identifying the different colors. We cannot simply force a blind mind to appreciate the beauty of the color of the sunflower by merely describing that the color yellow is "the portion of the spectrum lying between [the colors] green and orange"[16] or by comparison on whose hue resembles that of a ripe pear. The defect of his sense of sight limits the range of his supposedly copious and extensive ideas. Although we can assume the availability of his other sensory organs, such as hearing, smell, taste and touch, we cannot assume the adequacy of his other sense organs in transporting the sufficient external experience for the comprehension of the idea of yellow. One organ is responsible for the construction one specific type of idea. No other sense organ could substitute for the impression of another organ, such that pitch, loudness, tempo and tone can only be comprehended by the sense of hearing similar to that of colors which can only be accessed from the sense of sight. However, man's undesired reality of an organ defect corresponds to a little accountability of his limited idea. Hume takes this into consideration because of the unwanted deficient nature of the blind man; he would account him with 'little susceptibility' of associating ideas from his defected organ which is sight. It is not by one's desire that the blind man was barricaded with deficiency, hence, similarly, it is not by one's desire that his ideas were restrained to some extent: "… by opening a new inlet for his sensations, you also open an inlet for the ideas"[17]; and in an inverse manner, by closing passages for impressions, you are closing passages for new ideas.

All ideas that the intellect possesses, whether simple or complex, only show how potently the mind reflects all information given through one's external and internal experiences. All constituents of the human intellect are simply 'copies' of our impressions, hence, the empiricist maxim: "all ideas must be presented to man in the manner that it is available to his intellect", and this manner is what we call impression, external and internal impressions, to be precise.

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III. On Associations of Ideas

Hume's assertion that once ideas have been admitted in the mind, the mind naturally generates a series of interaction between *ideas* and *impressions*. These chains of interaction or association of ideas utterly speak of certain degrees of regularities. According to Hume, there is no way in which we can genuinely ascribe our ideas other than these three principles of connections namely, *Resemblance*, *Contiguity* in time or place, and *Cause or Effect*.

The first association of ideas, *Resemblance*, simply demonstrates the method on how the intellect naturally connects the present and resembling idea to the original source. These ideas do not merely adhere to the idea that first appeared from impressions but also to the idea which 'represents' that fundamental impression.[18]

For instance, if one is to browse an old photo album and see in the process childhood pictures, Hume implies that the image we perceive naturally resembles and flows back to original idea of our childhood. Hence, resemblance in this aspect, simply demonstrates the natural association of your current idea to the original resemblance[19].

However, in the case of representation, Owen propounded that it will crucially be introduced as an enigma to the empiricist maxim. He stated that the reason behind the 'question-begging' notion of the word *representation* is that this word illustrates not only the ideas which had entered the mind but also the ideas that will eventually enter the mind.[20] Hence, *representations* resemble the idea from the past and also that which Owen found to be contradicting the empiricist maxim, the future impressions.

The crucifix, a foremost Catholic symbol, is an image that was sculpted by persons who were actual witnesses to the crucifixion of Christ, but it also resembles and represents the fact that out of his selfless love, Christ died for us in the past. This representation may have passed the criterion of the empiricists' notion of representation which states that every idea that represents must primarily take its origin from either external or internal impression.

In the case, however, of an architect working on a project, he must initially make a *model* of the future building. Hence, the architect presents an idea that must resemble the future idea. He projects a model that represents something that has not pass through the sense. This is the enigma behind the word 'representation' that Owen talks of.

Contiguity in time or space, on the other hand, is the connection of ideas akin to neighboring qualities of another idea. On that account, when I think of the idea of a house, my mind naturally associates it with pre-existing ideas which is contiguous such as doors, windows, chimney, and the like. Hence, contiguity simply demonstrates the spatial and temporal connection between two ideas.

Moreover*, cause or effects* simply demonstrate how we associate our present ideas either from the past or the future ones. For instance, I have seen exactly with my two eyes the vehement removal of the illegal and untenable settlers in Tondo, Manila, hence it is naturally inclined in my situation to posit that the possible *cause* for such ineludible event is their illegal residency, or on the other hand, to naturally deliberate on the possible *effects* that spring from this event such as the detrimental impact in all aspects of their lives.

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Hume strongly claims that no matter how much we colligate our distinct and innumerable thoughts, these three principles: resemblance, contiguity, and cause or effect, will only be the foundation for such association or chains of thoughts. However, out of the three associations of ideas, Hume found causes and effects to be problematic.

IV. On Relations of Ideas and Matters of Facts

Hume has decisively categorized all inquiries of human reason either as logical or empirical in nature. [21] The former is denoted by Hume as *Relations of Ideas* and the latter as *Matters of Fact*.

The Relations of Ideas are logical propositions which are either "intuitively or demonstratively certain"[22]. These propositions hold certainty without being causally inferred from any external factors simply because their truths are merely established by 'virtue of the meaning of terms'[23]. This kind of proposition asserts its predicate as intrinsically found in the subject, such as the proposition "A triangle is a 3-sided figure". This proposition is linguistically demonstrable and certain, simply because it does not entail any empirical observations for it to conclude a triangle is a 3-sided figure. However, by negating the predicate to the subject consequently follows a self-contradiction. To say, for example, that "a triangle is not a three-sided figure" simply exhibits falsity. Moreover, relations of ideas are determinable merely by one's pure reason. Hume categorizes the demonstrative sciences as mathematics, geometry, algebra, and arithmetic under relations of ideas simply because it is unnecessary for us to examine the physical world in arriving at the proposition that 4 plus 6 is equal to the two-thirds of fifteen or the sum of all angles of a triangle is 180 degrees. No matter what the world turns out to be, 4 plus 6 will permanently be the two-thirds of fifteen and the sum of all angles in a triangle will still remain 180 degrees. These are necessary truths or truths which maintains truthfulness only by virtue of the ideas they express. According to Palmer, relations of ideas are simply *verbal truths* that do not authenticate new knowledge and evidences of the real world but only substantiate truthfulness purely within the parameters of ideas.[24] Hence, relations of ideas are regarded as analytic and *a priori* in nature.[25]

On the other hand, Matters of Fact are propositions which do not essentially demonstrate *a priori* necessary truths, rather they are empirical propositions which establish truths by *experience*. Experience is the sole source of matters of fact.[26] It is only through experience or observation upon which we can establish certain knowledge about the reality. Moreover, matters of facts assert logical incongruity simply because it 'summarizes' everything that is acquired from impressions which happens to be either factual or not.[27] Will it rain tomorrow? Can we guarantee that all of the leaves of the tree will wither at fall? Hume asserts that matters of fact are knowledge on which we can never posit absolute certainty of. They are simply events which are happen at the present time. Their verification necessitates not only one's mere operation of understanding but also authentication through the actual observation or experience of the external world. Negations of matters of facts can never signify any contradiction with each other because whatever is, is, and whatever is not, is not. Yes, it will rain tomorrow. Yes, all of the leaves of the tree will wither during fall. But if both questions entail an answer of no, then it is still a matter of fact because matters of fact can generate contrary effects. Its truthfulness does not lie within the absolute agreement of the

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predicate to the subject but rather on the justification of the proposition with experience. Hume states that matters of facts, which are based from observations, are the only enquiries of the human mind that can certainly pronounce and truthfully assert knowledge of the reality.[28] Hence, all matters of facts are synthetic and *a posteriori* in nature.

V. On Humean Method

Hume's assertion concerning *categories of analysis* basically encompasses two logical courses as to how philosophizing should adhere to any given proposition. This method of reasoning is what contemporary thinkers would call "The Humean Method".[29] This method logically endeavors to answer two questions about the propositional claim. First, *Is it a relation of ideas?* Does the proposition bear any analytic truths, that is, does its denial produce a self-contradiction? According to Palmer, if the answer is YES, then, the proposition entails truthfulness but only in the realm of being 'philosophically trivial'.[30] On the other hand, if the answer is NO, then one must proceed to the second question: *Is it a matter of fact?* Is it a synthetic proposition that encompasses available sense data for its justification? Does its denial absolutely cause a self-contradicting proposition? If the answer is YES, it has passed the empirical standard. However, if the question is answerable by a mere NO, which is to say that, the proposition is neither analytic nor synthetic in nature, to quote Hume, "Commit it then to the flames, for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."[31]

With that, David Hume definitively claimed three main categories of analysis. The propositional claims must be *nothing more* classified as an analytic, synthetic, or nonsense proposition.

To elucidate this further, let us deduce what kind of category of analysis the proposition "Gold is edible", by logically applying the proposed Humean Method, is. First, is it a Relation of Ideas? Is it analytic in nature? Does the predicate, *edible,* naturally inheres to the idea of *Gold*? Do we innately associate that the negation of the idea of 'edible' draws out a self-contradiction to the idea of Gold? No. Hence, we must continue to inquire. Is it a matter of Fact? Is there any available impression as to how we can sensory trace back the idea that gold is indeed edible? Yes, through the sense of taste to be exact. Hence, the proposition 'Gold is edible' is certainly analysed as a synthetic one.

VI. On Causation

During Hume's era, it has been the task of the intellectuals to philosophically endeavor on the metaphysical ideas such as God, world, and the self. Every philosopher can never pass upon the chance of intellectually wagering about these existing ideas. It is either they acknowledged or repudiated the established truth about such. However, David Hume, as an acclaimed empiricist, would empirically venture to look for the certitude of these metaphysical ideas through his own experiences than resort in complying with rationally established presuppositions of the other intellectuals. If Berkeley at that time had sublated the existence of a material substance, Hume, on the other hand, would repudiate not only what was utilized by the philosophers, but also of the scientists and the common people.[32] Conclusively, Hume scientifically endeavored to establish thorough answers brought about by the notion of which Hume is intellectually most renowned of, the notion of causation.

Concerning causal inferences, Hume delved into it by initially applying his "Humean Method" of

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philosophizing. Let us presuppose the equation wherein X causes Y, of which X signifies *smoking* while Y denotes *death*. Hence, the proposition to be examined here is *smoking causes death*. First, does the proposition contain any analytical truths? When one denies the idea of death to the idea of smoking, that is *smoking does not cause death,* will it undoubtedly produce a self-contradictory statement? And that when we thought of the idea of smoking, without any experiential intervention, can we inherently pronounce that it will absolutely lead us to the idea of death? The answer would be a blunt "no." Hence, does it further contain any accessible data whereby we can utterly say that causes are indeed empirically inferred? Indeed not. Then it can be concluded that causation is nothing but nonsense in account.

However, Hume would not immediately succumb to the nonsensical account of causation for he believed that matters of fact are the particular objects of human mind that can generate an authentic description and justification of reality. With that, Hume recognizes cognition concerning matters of facts to be solely founded on the *relation of cause and effects.* [33] To clearly explain this, an inference to what had just been previously discussed must be made. Hume had classified three associations of ideas. These associations speak of *resemblance, contiguity* in time and place, and *cause or effect*. Moreover, it has been the empiricist postulate that ideas are truthful the more related and connected they are to reality. In my understanding, *resemblance* and *contiguity* bear a relative notion of ideas that differs from one person to another. For instance, when I see a friend who according to my judgment bears a resemblance to or appears to be a duplicate of his father, to another person, this friend may instead be seen more of as a resemblance of his mother. Or that upon hearing the idea "being", philosophy majors would contiguously associate it with metaphysical notions such as *esse*, to be, essence, corporeal being at the same spiritual ones, while on the other hand, science majors will merely associate it with corporeal beings such as human beings and organisms. *Resemblance* and *contiguity* may differ in the sentiments of the people, but *causes and effects*, will not depend on the disposition of the perceiver but rather on the available empirical evidences it introduces to man. Another instance would be when an allegedly locked door was seen as open, it can be concluded that someone has broken into the house. Also, when footprints are seen in the desert, one could certainly assume that there had been a man in that place. Hence, to weigh among the three associations of ideas, we can generate the conclusion that causes or effects bear more truthfulness and justification of reality because all reasoning of man is colligated in the same level or nature in the presence of definite and available empirical evidences. However, the question is, *How are we able to justify a certain event as the cause of the succeeding one? What is the absolute nature of causes and effects?* It is indeed a fact that among the three associations of ideas, Hume distinguished causation as the enigmatic one.

Again, Hume believed that it is only through the relation of causes and effects in which we can certainly speak of matters of fact. However, the next intellectual hassle is to arrive at the knowledge of causes and effects. It is without doubt that an individual, including those with great minds, could firmly assert the remedying effect of ginger by simply observing its natural qualities or that an individual knows the precarious effect of chocolates on canines by being purely knowledgeable of its content. According to Hume, there are no entities in which we could rationally conclude matters of fact or real existence by simply perceiving its

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qualities, rationally inferring its causes and effects, nor reasoning independently from experience.[34] Hence, it is not by analytic endeavors that man is able to assert the causal relation of two ideas but rather by the experiences it avails to man. As what Hume enunciated "causes and effects are discoverable, not by reason but by experience" [35] Hence, to arrive at the knowledge of cause and effects is to have a knowledge which is grounded on experience.

Hume, according to Craig, investigated causation as 'the search of a particular impression.' [36] The problem behind such inquiry is to search for the absolute nature of causes. How are we able to aver that X indeed causes Y? It has been an enigma for Hume to postulate the nature of the idea 'causes' simply because of the unavailability of the sense data of causation. Hence, because of this enigma, Hume initially divided his inquisition into three components, namely: constancy, contiguity, and necessary connection.

Constancy simply adheres to the notion that X precedes Y. This precedence must constantly cohere in every event such that we presuppose the occurrence of category-Y event whenever category-X event takes place. Take, for instance, the causal relationship between fire and smoke. Fire causes smoke, and under the component of constancy, we could similarly state that fire precedes smoke; hence, it is expected of us to observe the existence of smoke every time we perceive the existence of fire. On the hand, *contiguity* must also be existent in every causal event. This precisely states the fact that X touches Y, in this case then, we can decisively state that there is indeed an observed trace or an observed contact between fire and smoke.

However, if two events display constancy and contiguousness, would it be sufficient to pronounce those events as causes and effects? Is it probably to guarantee, that even though these events project an image of contiguousness and constancy, these events indeed feature a causal interaction and not just a mere coincidence? According to Hume, it is unsatisfactory to proclaim it as such. There must be an existing bond between X-type events and Y-type events to pronounce that there is indeed a causal interaction between the two. There must an existing inherent idea that every time a category-X-event is observed, the effect could already be assumed as a category-Y-event without referring to any experience. There is thus present a *necessary connexion* or the *necessary bond* on which we could affirm with certainty the existence of causation between the two constant and contiguous events.

Craig states that when inquiring about the impression of the necessary connexion, we must ask: What is perceived when we observe some causal interaction? [37] What do we perceive in the process of ingesting ginger tea and the treatment of cough or sore throat? What do we perceive as a precarious effect of chocolates to canine and not to human beings? Hume claims that "there is no other impressions we can see rather than that what appeals to our outward sense". [38] The objects for observations are merely the entities which can be drawn out from our sensory organs such as color, movement, taste, sound, and any physical changes and such objects of impression are not simply the impression of a necessary connexion.

Indeed, Hume is an empiricist who resorts to justifying real existence based on what is perceivable. However, Hume does not merely subject himself to literal truths. What have been

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accounted through impressions, either as contiguous or contingent event, cannot be immediately concluded as a cause, rather he claimed that these might be reckoned as impressions of 'further events, further objects, further members of the causal chain and not the impression of the linking power or necessary connexion.' [39]

Hume stated two reasons for the absence of a necessary connexion. First, causal interaction only occurs in two distinct events.[40] X causes Y entails event-X as distinct from event-Y basically because if one sublated the difference between the two, that is to say event X is similar to event Y, only corresponds to conjoining the two events into one either in the form of X causes X or Y causes Y. Moreover, if one has obliterated their distinction then it may toilsome for one to investigate which is the cause or effect within the two similar events because of the analytic or *a priori* nature it possesses. Also, when a proposition essentially becomes analytic and *a priori* in nature then it only corresponds to limiting it to the category of *relations of ideas* which Hume found out to be inconsistent in elucidating the knowledge of the relations of cause and effects.

Second, causal events are categorized as *matters of fact* and such matters of facts propositions must permanently be contingent, hence they cannot possess something which is *necessary* including that of the necessary connexion. It is only in *relations of ideas* or propositions which are analytic and *a priori* in nature in which we could discover the existence of a necessary connexion. As an example, there is a necessary connection between 3+5 and 8 because we could already presuppose that when one has engaged in the idea 3+5 it can be concluded with certainty that it will correspond to 8 without initially resorting to experience. In a similar vein, if one negated 3+5 to 8 that is pronouncing 3+ 5≠8; hence we will be engaged in a self-contradiction. But if those propositions in which the predicate is intrinsically found in the subject are the ones possessing the necessary bond, hence, the absence of distinction between the two events is observed. And if such distinction is extinguished, cyclically and problematically, resort to the first reason for the absence of a necessary connexion is made, which states that causal events must necessary possess two distinct events.

The notion which we had if necessary connexion is indeed perceivable is to look at the first appearance of the cause with a pre-determined and certain knowledge of the effect without depending on the assistance of experience. However, there is no such instance whereby man is able to rationally anticipate and convict the future effects with certainty. There is no available impression in which we could utterly and certainly pronounce that there is indeed a necessary cause-effect link between two distinct, constant, and contiguous events. There are no impressions of a necessary connexion, hence "rules out the possibility of a necessary connexion"[41].

According to Craig, "the subject begins with a search for the impression for which the idea of power is derived, and ends by defining a cause"[42], hence to posit that there is no impression of a necessary connexion only follows that by no means could an absolute definition of a cause generated. However, Hume does not totally repudiate the notion of causes and effects in this world, but he held firmly the position that "there can be no intuitive or demonstrative knowledge that every event has a cause."[43] Hume believed that it is merely an arbitrary notion of man to coin an

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event as cause or effects simply because there is a constant conjunction existing between X and Y events. The fact that man unconsciously associates that X-event precedes Y-events, and Y-events succeeds X-events, is deeply- rooted on the principle of custom.[44] To be more precise, "They are the distinguishing marks of beliefs."[45] Man believed that if it rained then the entire ground will be wet, and conversely, if the entire ground is wet then man can definitely assert that it had rained. Because of the recurrence of X follows Y, it is out of custom that whenever one experiences X, he constantly assumes that it will be anticipated by a Y event. Custom habituates man to constantly assume that the future will perpetually resemble the past. Hume, pronounced that these train of events is merely an individuating impression that we recognized as casual impression. They are certainly not causal events because of the empirical absence of the impressions of a necessary connexion. Everything that man causally infers is attributed to not as causal impression but what Hume would distinguish as merely a feeling, belief, habit or custom, which impulsively emanated within man's convenience.

The assertion that there are no available impressions from which we can account the existence of a necessary connexion to, and such custom or belief of man that uses to form arbitrary notion of causal inferences between two events, it could only be concluded that there is indeed no empirically and demonstratively justified truth to which we can absolutely ascribe causation. The secret powers are unknown and as Hume would love to state: "nature has kept us a great distance from all her secret, and afforded us only the knowledge of a few superficial qualities of objects."[46] Nature has concealed itself from the parameters on which human curiosity could never unlock her secrets. Rather, nature has only provided us a glimpse of her secret, which in turn, ignited our desires to verge into a philosophical inquisition, but in end such fruitful knowledge is still, ironically, fruitless and insufficient for drawing out the absolute truth about causation.

VII. Conclusion

David Hume claimed that it is the idea of a necessary connexion which certainly determines two events as causal events. However, as an empiricist, who resorted to the validity of ideas from experience, he saw nothing which is akin to his senses that which can attribute as the impression of the necessary connexion. Hence, with that given assertion, Hume pronounced that there is no impression of necessary connexion; there is no idea of a necessary connexion. Therefore, there is no causal interaction between two contiguous and constant events; they are just merely nothing but individuating future objects, events, or impressions which man has arbitrarily distinguished, out of custom, as causes and effects.

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[21] Scruton, Roger, op. cit., p. 124.
[22] Hume, David, op. cit., p. 108.
[23] Scruton, Roger, op. cit., p. 125.
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[25] Immanuel Kant was the one who coined Hume's Relations of ideas as analytic and *a priori* in nature and Matters of Fact as synthetic and a *posteriori*. However, I prefer using the terms –analytic and synthetic–throughout the discussion for purposes of linguistic convenience.
[26] Scruton, Roger, op. cit., p. 125.
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] Palmer, Donald, op. cit., p. 211.
[29] *Ibid.,* p. 213.
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] Hume, David, op. cit., p. 211.
[32] Palmer, Donald, op. cit., p. 214.
[33] Hume, David, op. cit., p 109.
[34] *Ibid.*, p 110.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] Craig, Edward, "The Idea of Necessary Connexion" on *Reading Hume on Human Understanding: Essays on the First Enquiry,* (ed.) Millican, Peter, (USA, Oxford University Press: 2000), p. 215.
[37] *Ibid.*
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] *Ibid.*
[40] Hume, David, op. cit., p. 111.
[41] Scruton, Roger, op. cit., p. 127.
[42] Craig, Edward, op. cit., p. 215.
[43] Noonan, Harold, op. cit., p. 110.
[44]Hume, David, op. cit. p., 121.
[45]Scruton, Roger, op. cit., p. 127.
[46]Hume, David, op. cit., p. 113.

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John Locke on the Goal of Education

Sherlyn A. Layesa

Abstract: In this paper, the goal of education will be identified and discussed in the light of John Locke's philosophy. Regarding this, I will attempt to answer the following questions through Locke's perspective and eventually, relate them to the context of education at present time: (a) What is education? (b) How does an individual acquire knowledge? (c) What are the importance and uses of education? (d) What can an educated person contribute to the society? Moreover, in order to understand Locke's viewpoint, it is necessary to know where his ideas are coming from, hence his life and educational background will also be presented. At the end of this paper, John Locke's thoughts and methods concerning education will be applied as possible solutions to the societal problems that we are facing nowadays.

Keywords: Education, Current Societal Problems, Locke

"I have always thought the actions of men the best interpreters of their thoughts."

Looking into the history of mankind, it can be established that education plays a significant role in the life of the rational beings. It gives us necessary knowledge, which is needed in our daily living.[1] Technological developments, innovative medicinal treatments and other helpful discoveries would not be possible without edification. Furthermore, education is also used as a tool in reducing societal problems, like poverty. Hence, its importance is emphasized by the society. It can be observed that the governments in each country aim to improve the quality of education their citizens have. Substantially, they intend to build more schools and improve the facilities of the established institutions. Moreover, new methodologies in teaching were being upheld to capture the students' attentions and divert it into the desire of learning. Such examples could be the following: flipped classroom model, design thinking or case method, gamification and the use of social media. Traditionally, the teachers explain lessons first, before the assignment of tasks. But in the flipped classroom model, students were encouraged to prepare for the discussions beforehand. In the design thinking or case method, students are exposed on resolving real life cases through group analysis, brainstorming, innovation and creative ideas (McIntosh, 2014). On the other hand, gamification imparts learning through the use of games. Lastly, through the use of the social media, students' motivation in studying is augmented. For example, the Brazilian Academy of Languages encourages their students to review the tweets of their favorite artists, and correct their grammatical errors in an effort to improve their English language skills (Santos, 2013). In the context of our country, despite the previous development plans and projects formulated by the government and different sectors, the quality of Philippine education still leaves much room for improvement. In fact, as part of the

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efforts of the present administration to respond to the perceived needs of the education sector, the "Enhanced K to 12 Basic Education Program" was pursued and eventually was implemented.[2] This step and the abovementioned matters are mostly directed towards economic development. Typically, the mindset of people nowadays, is to earn a certain degree, in order to find a job that suites his standard of living. Academic achievement is often related to one's mental capacity and the worth of his salary. However, does the purpose of education primarily centers on the acquisition of knowledge and material progression?

In this paper, I will discuss a different notion regarding the goal of education: *virtue*, which is derived from John Locke's work entitled *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*. This work is mainly concerned in childhood education only, which is why for further considerations; I will also present his other work *Of the Conduct of Understanding*, who's concerned with cultivating the minds of adults. Both the *Thoughts* and the *Conduct* aim at the habituation of the mind to reasonableness. The former focuses on education for morals, while the latter is more on politics. At the same time, for additional information, his theory of knowledge will also be discussed in the light of the book *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. In order to further understand his viewpoints and methodologies that will be presented in the succeeding chapters, it is necessary to look into his life and educational background, because these factors greatly influenced his way of thinking.

John Locke is an English philosopher, physician and educator. He was born in Wrington, Somerset, England, on August 29, 1632. He wrote works on politics, religion, human understanding and *education*. His primary writings are *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and *Two Treatises of Government*. Locke's parents were both Puritans. His mother died during his infancy, which is why he and his brother were raised by their father, who was a lawyer and Parliamentarian. At his early life, John Locke was taught at home by their father, which explains why he favored the tutorial form of education.[3] From there, he attended Westminster School and in 1652, he went up to Christ Church, Oxford, where he studied a variety of subjects, such as Greek, grammar, Hebrew, history, logic, moral philosophy and rhetoric. Eventually, he became a college tutor and Lecturer in Greek in this institution, whereby he tutored 13-18 years old students. During Locke's years in Oxford, he became more interested in the field of science, particularly chemistry and medicine, even though he is not formally qualifying as a practitioner that time (not until 1674); he went in 1667 to London to serve as a physician to Lord Ashley, later Earl of Shaftsbury. Whence, Lord Ashley is the one who influenced him to be more interested in politics. Moreover, Locke was also assigned to take care of Lord Ashley's 15 year old son.[4] Based from the above mentioned background of Locke's life, the severe importance and the kind of approach he attributed into educating children can be traced. For example, in reference to his profession as a personal tutor to a future Earl, the kind of character the child should possessed is in its utmost relevance. Hence, when it comes education, Locke views virtuosity as its primary objective.

"Know Thyself". Like Socrates, John Locke believes in the importance of knowing oneself first before positing inquiries in nature, however in a different context. For Socrates, it is necessary that one should know thyself, because he believes in the theory of reminisce or in Plato's words, *anamnesis*. By introspection, we will be able to remember the knowledge that is

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inherent in us. On the contrary, Locke believes otherwise. For him, there are no innate ideas in the mind, everything we know came from our experiences. Knowing thyself for Locke is the examination of our own abilities, especially the *capacity of the mind*[5]. By determining the power of our individual minds, Locke said that we will be able to do everything, at the same time be happy. In his *Epistle to the Reader* that can be found in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* he narrates the story behind this essay, wherein the concept of knowing thyself will be underscored:

> I should tell thee that five or six friends meeting at my chamber, and discoursing on a subject very remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand, by the difficulties coming any nearer a resolution of those which perplexed us, it came into my thoughts, that we took a wrong course; and that before ourselves upon the inquiries of nature, it was necessary to examine our own abilities and see what objects of understandings were, or were not fitted to deal with. This I propose to the company, who all readily assented and thereupon it was agreed, that this should be our first inquiry.[6]

As an empiricist, Locke claims that the sole source of knowledge is experience, if this is so, the cultivation of the minds of the children must be monitored, because the knowledge that they will acquire in their childhood will be the foundation of their principles and attitudes. The mind as a *tabula rasa* as defined by Locke, denotes the significant role of the parents as the first educator of their children, because during childhood, their experiences are formative. Education then is a tool that can be used in shaping their future dispositions. This topic is thoroughly discussed in Locke's work entitled *Some Thoughts Concerning Education.* Wherein he states that, "Great care is to be had of the forming children's minds, and giving them that seasoning early, which shall influence their lives always after (Section 32)." This book was written during his stay in Holland and it was dedicated to his friend, Sir Edward Clark, of Chipley, Esq., advising him how to best raise his son. Unlike the standard goal of education we have nowadays, he claims that the true objective of education is not to create scholars, but virtuous men, hence the principle of virtue was formed, which is defined as the ability to subvert one's immediate appetites and desires to the dictates of reason. Locke's experience in tutoring children when he was still at Oxford, might be one of the reasons why he focused on educating the young aged. On the other side of the coin, his other work entitled *Of the Conduct of the Understanding,* is also directed towards the cultivation of the mind, not of the children, but of the adults. Nonetheless, both the aim of the *Thoughts* and the *Conduct* is reasonableness.

According to Baldwin Bird, in his article entitled *John Locke's Contribution to Education*, John Locke in his writings embodies the characteristics of a practical Englishman, dealing vigorously, directly and carefully with whatever object he wishes to analyze, but still has positive rather than negative conclusions. English philosophers concentrate to the study of human mind and society from an empirical viewpoint. In the succeeding chapters of my paper, it can be observed that Locke was a typical English philosopher. He treated every problem he wants to solve in a common-sense manner; he analyzed rather that synthesized and described rather that explained.[7]

On the Acquisition of Knowledge

At the early beginnings of the Renaissance period, the "Methodic Doubt", a new method of thinking was introduced by Rene Descartes, which supports the notion of innate ideas of Socrates and Plato. Descartes was not able to clearly define what innate ideas are, but Locke regarded these as object of consciousness.

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Unlike the Cartesian view of knowledge, for him knowledge is entirely a product of experience, and these determines the kind of person we will become. This is supported by his claim that there are no principles which are universally agreed upon by mankind.[8] He then established that the human mind, at birth, is a *tabula rasa* or a blank slate and that everything we know came from experience. Aside from attributing the term *tabula rasa*, which can also be related to Aristotle, he also compared the mind into an "empty cabinet" and "white paper", which can only be furnished with the use of our senses such as the sense of sight, smell, touch, taste and sense of hearing. For Locke, these sense faculties enable us to acquire knowledge, as if they were originally imprinted on the mind. . For him, the mind is not only a passive receiver, because through reflection we can think, believe or even doubt.[9] Furthermore, Locke also supposes that we have other faculties that enable us to receive process and even manipulate information, and these are the existence of our memory and our ability to use language. In his *Essay*, he also established that the ideas in our minds determine our behavior, hence in his work concerning education he proposes that as earliest as possible, a child's mind must be filled with good principles, so that when he grow up he will live a virtuous life.

According to Locke, through experiences *simple ideas* were created, and as these ideas combine, they became *complex*, and form knowledge.[10] For example, our concept of a salad is derived from our individual notions of vegetables such as lettuce, cucumber, carrots etc. Likewise, the concept of a garden will not be possible without first knowing varieties of plants and flowers. As John Locke writes,

> Knowledge then seems to me to be nothing but the *perception of the connexion and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our ideas*." In connection with this, he presented four sort of agreement or disagreement, and these are as follows: **(1)** identity or diversity, **(2)** relation, **(3)** co-existence or necessary connection and **(4)** real existence.[11]

Firstly, the knowledge of identity and diversity is an act of the mind that recognizes the differences of ideas from each other. This enables the mind to perceive each idea clearly and infallibly. This can be linked to the objective of the Principle of Non-Contradiction, wherein without the knowledge of the distinction between things, man will always be undergoing a dilemma brought by inconsistencies. Second is the knowledge of relation. With regards to the first sort of agreement or disagreement, positive knowledge would not be possible. Since, distinction among ideas constantly denied each other, the perception of the relation between ideas is necessary. Thirdly, the knowledge of co-existence perceives the conterminous appearance of a collection of qualities. Fourthly, and the last sort of agreement or disagreement is that of actual real existence agreeing to any idea. Among the said kinds, Locke considered this sort as the agreement or disagreement that contained all the knowledge we have or even those which we have the ability to know.

Upon describing how we acquire our ideas, the question whether we can rely on what our senses tell us can be raised. How can we be sure whether the world really is the way we perceive it? John Locke responds on this concern by first distinguishing *primary* and *secondary qualities*. *Primary qualities* for him these are the extension, weight, motion, number or anything that can be perceived by the senses objectively, in other words these are quantitative qualities. On the other hand, *secondary qualities* are sensations like color, smell, taste and sound, which reproduce on the effect of the outer reality of our senses, which are qualitative. Everyone can agree on the primary qualities, because they inhere within the

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objects themselves. However, when it comes to secondary qualities, disagreement arises, because these depend on the individual sensations of each person.[12] For example, the smell of *durian* is adequate for Juan, but unpleasant for Maria. Neither of them can be considered as right or wrong, because they are just describing how *durian* affects their senses. From this, John Locke introduced these three degrees of certitude: **(1)** *intuitive*, the most immediate and certain form of knowledge, which comes from self-reflection; **(2)** *sensation*, it established the existence of the things of the world and **(3)** *demonstration*, which are rationalistic arguments.

On Education

In *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, John Locke describes and discussed the ideal education of a gentleman, yet since women when it comes to virtue and obedience do not differ from men, his educational manual for a gentleman do not differ either.

John Locke's fondness in the field of science has greatly influenced his methodologies and viewpoints when it comes to educating children. He established the importance of how we should take care of our physical bodies, because for Locke, what we must aim for is not only a sound mind, but also a sound body. By keeping the body in strength and vigor, the *young master* as used by Locke to termed children, will have the ability to obey and execute the orders of the mind. Underpinning, vis-à-vis health and education, is the significant role of parents to their children.

John Locke's pedagogy addressed three key themes, which are as follows: (1) the development of self-discipline, (2) the significance of developing a good character and (3) the importance of developing reason in a child.[13] In Section 33, Locke writes:

> As the strength of the body lies in being able to endure hardships, so also does that of the mind. And the *great principle*[14] and foundation of all virtue and worth is plac'd in this: that a man is able to deny himself his own desires, cross his own inclinations, and purely follow what reason directs is best, though the appetite lean the other way.[15]

In the section above, the "great principle" that was mentioned is referring to self-discipline. For Locke, by being a disciplined individual, one will be able to set aside external factors like desires and bodily inclinations that will lead him to exclusively follow what the reason dictates, and eventually use them as guidelines on how to properly act in any given situation. However, he observed that when it comes to disciplining the children, parents often err by being too lenient or too strict. According to Locke, the secret of education lies on the reconciliation of these said contradiction. The educator must have the ability to keep up the child's spirit easy active and free, yet at the same time to restrain him from many things he has a mind to, and to draw him to things that are uneasy to him (Section 46). When it comes to Locke's idea and methodologies about self-discipline, the teachings of Buddhism can be associated. Like in Buddhism, parents must avoid the two extremes; instead they must focus on the *middle path*.

From his *Essay*, Locke denies the existence of innate ideas, nonetheless in his *Thoughts*, he take into consideration the fact that there are "natural tendencies implanted on the minds of men"[16]. He states that, "God has stamped certain characters upon men's minds, which like their shapes, may perhaps be a little mended, but can hardly be totally altered and transformed into the contrary."[17] It seems like he's implying that when it comes to educating children, we cannot totally alter their aptitudes. On the contrary, all we can aim for is to make

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the best out of what nature has given them, and to prevent the corruptions and faults to which such a constitution is most inclined (Section 66). In developing the child's character, Locke strongly disagree in the concept of schooling, instead he favored tutoring. This kind of mentality can be questioned at present times. Usually, the reason why parents send their children to school is to enable them to learn how to interact with peers, at the same time to show them the larger picture of the world apart from their home. Nevertheless, according to Locke, these kinds of understandings can also be experienced at home, hence there is no need for schooling. At the same time, he points out that children require individual attention, in order to determine and eventually correct the natural weaknesses and faults they possess. This kind of attention cannot be given in school, because in there, the teacher's attention is divided among the students who are present in the class. At one hand, parents, whose role is to act as the bridge to the development of their children's good character, must not impose numerous rules, because their child will not be able to understand them all at once, and at the end of day, those percepts will only be forgotten, therefore they are useless. Instead, Locke suggests only two guidelines, and these are as follows: (1) Firstly, parents should guarantee that their children understands, at the same time are capable of performing the tasks that will be given to them. **(2)** Secondly, is about the repetition of tasks that were set, until they became habitual to the children. Locke claims that through habituation, certain acts and mentality that were based on memory or reflection will turn out as natural. The latter guideline that was given by Locke is a crucial step for the development of the character of a child, because as said in the earlier chapters of this paper, it is at this stage, in which one can easily implant anything into their minds. As Locke writes, " Having this way cured in your child any fault, it is cured forever; and thus one by one you may weed them out all, and plant what habits you please (Section 64). For example, if a person, as part of his daily routine, is used to take a shower before eating, throughout his lifetime this practice can be observed. At one hand, habituation can also be related to tradition or culture, because both share a common characteristic: repetition. The Filipino culture of saying "po" and "opo" and the gesture of "pagmamano" as signs of respect are evident examples that could support Locke's concept of habituation. In a traditional Filipino family, these forms of politeness are practiced every day. It can be realized that, even as the young members of such families grow up, the said culture will still be visible and it will continually be passed throughout generations. Based from the examples enumerated, it can be said that acts which were acquired from habituation are difficult to change and can last for a lifetime. Hence, good values must be repeatedly taught during one's childhood.

As said in his *Essay*, the most certain form of knowledge comes from intuition, hence in regards to the second key point that was given by John Locke, one of the most important habit that a parent must develop in his child is the *habit of reasoning*[18]. Being curious is a trait that comes along with having a young mind, looking into this, Locke recommends the educator to end this natural curiosity by channeling it into knowledge. This can be possible by answering their inquiries clearly, truthfully, and in accordance to their level. In the end, the three main themes of Locke's pedagogy are related to each other. In summary, a child that is governed by reason, which can be acquired through habituation, is an adult marked by self-discipline.

From the education of the children, let us now move on to the cultivation of the minds of the

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adults. The highlight of his work, *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, is intellectual independence. If in the *Thought*, the role of an educator is necessary; in the *Conduct* this character is shunned. For Locke, adults must "see with their own eyes" (paragraph 24), because at this stage, an individual already has the capacity to discover the truth, at the same time guide others who are also in their search for it. The state of one's understanding is now wider, in connection with this, Locke describes the proper conduct that must be attributed to it and it is: the ability to resist external factors in the indifferent examination of one's own beliefs, which is similar to what is discussed in the former paragraphs. This kind of conduct is what an adult should use in the field of politics.

The education of the children and adults that were defined by John Locke are interrelated and somewhat dependent on each other, dependent in a sense that, there is a cycle of responsibilities and obligations. Education then is a continual endeavor.

Importance and Uses of Education

As presented above, the importance of education from the viewpoint of John Locke lies on its ability to shape a person's character from childhood, even up to adulthood; and to tame desire with reason. From his *Essay,* it can be established that whatever is in the mind, it governs the behavior and the kind of principle a person upholds, and it supported in the *Thoughts* and in the *Conduct*. This practical kind of viewpoint explains the reason behind the inevitableness of simple misunderstandings and even greater disputes. People act in this world according to what they believe, hence it seems like both morality and politics, which are the two main concern of society, are founded on the accumulated individual opinions. If this is the case, the kind of education we practice greatly influence the kind of nation we will have. Ergo, if we want to live in a peaceful world, the teaching virtue must be imposed to mankind.

Conclusion

As a notable empiricist, John Locke's works are noticeably related to his experiences. His inclination towards medicine, philosophy and politics are evident in his writings. Despite the discrepancy in the situation that was experienced by Locke, and what we lived by today, the applicability of his proposed philosophies can still be observed. In the context of our society nowadays, the mentality of people regarding education is far different from Locke's. If for John Locke, the main goal of education is virtue, today it is not the case. As materialism continuously consume the minds of people, the quest for self-reflection and self-actualization decreases. Education simply became a means to the kind of life status an individual want to have, which often became the reason why we forget to cultivate the most important aspect of our being: *goodness.*

Lockean education can be used as a tool in the necessary shift of the standard goal of learning to a more practical implication. The significance of this kind of edification lies on its distinct approach that diverts from the abovementioned context. Instead of encouraging and persuading young individuals to take a 'marketable degree', they must be first taught on how to act and carry themselves virtuously. By doing so, the former will eventually follow. The value of cultivating a child's attitude must be the first priority of a parent over the acquisition of knowledge (and/or the yearning towards a profitable future, which is one of the criterions at present time). However, this does not mean that the latter are not necessary. The above mentioned is both significant in the formulation

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of one's character, in fact they are related. The former cannot be possible without the latter. Nonetheless Locke is reminding us, that before we pursue our desires and aim for understanding, we must first look into ourselves internally. By doing so, we will realize that, at the end of the day, all of the things we do are subjected to the law of morality. This can be related to Paul Ricouer's notion about being as oneself with the other. On the contrary, for Locke, in order for an individual to be with the other, he must first dwell into cultivation of his personality.

[1] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, edited and with an Introduction by Roger Woolhouse (England: Penguin Group, 2004).

[2] Kristine Carla Oteyza, "Enhanced K to 12 Basic Education Program: Opportunities and Challenges", *Economic Issue of the Day*, 7:2 (2012) URL= http://dirp3.pids.gov.ph/ris/eid/pidseid1202.pdf.

[3] This will be further discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

[4] Roger Woolhouse, "Introduction" in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.

[5] Italics mine.

[6]John Locke, "The Epistle to the Reader", in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 8.

[7] Baldwin Bird, "John Locke's Contribution to Education", *The Sewanee Review*, 18:2 (April 1, 1913), 177-187.

[8] Ideas are considered as innate, if they have *universal consent*. There are two kinds of principles which can be considered as innate and these are the *speculative principle* (Principle of Identity or Principle of Non-Contradiction) and the *practical principle (e.g. Synderisis)*. However, for John Locke, these principles do not prove the existence of innate ideas, because they are not universally known by mankind. Locke used the illustration of the propositions *'What is, is'* and *'Tis impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be.'* These propositions are more likely to be considered as innate, however they are far from having a universal consent, because not everyone knows these principles. To support this claim, Locke presented the thoughts of the *children* and *idiots* as examples. Certainly, the aforementioned propositions are not present in their mind. Hence, innate ideas do not exist. Ibid., 59-74.

[9] Jostein Gaarder, *Sophie's World* (New York: Orion Publishing Group, 1996), 218-221.

[10] *Simple ideas* are based on the senses, reflection and sensation; while *complex ideas* are formed through combination, comparison and abstraction. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, p. 8.

[11] John Locke, "Book IV, Chapter I: Of Knowledge in General", in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* 467.

[12] Gaarder, *Sophie's World*, 219.

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[14] Italics mine.

[15] Locke, John, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education,* ed. John William Adamson (USA: Dover Publications Inc., 2007), 17.

[16] Baldwin, "John Locke's Contribution to Education", *The Sewanee Review*, 18:2 (April 1, 1913), pp. 180.

[17] *Ibid.*,29.

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Before Nietzsche: Spinoza's Concept of the Theistic Übermensch

Myreen C. Raginio

Abstract: This paper will have three main points. The first is the theism of Spinoza's God; the second is the interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy as a humanist account rather than an atheist one; and the last will speak of the parallelisms in the philosophies of Spinoza and Nietzsche that will lead one to conclude that Spinoza's philosophy has elements similar to Nietzsche's Übermensch. It will aim to provide a thorough examination of Spinoza's God and its impersonal implications which will be later on used to defend the aforementioned proposition. This paper however, will focus on Spinoza's philosophy on bondage and freedom to prove the connection with Nietzsche's Übermensch.

Keywords: Spinoza, Nietzsche, Übermensch, theism

"When a man is prey to his emotions, he is not his own master."

Man is finite and oftentimes this finitude leads to the conception that the existence of an infinite being is a necessity. This instance can be clearly seen in *Deus ex machina* philosophies like that of Descartes'[1] wherein the existence of an infinite and omnipotent being is necessitated as a presupposition to the first certainty of the cogito. In this philosophy, the existence of the infinite is justified in the fact that man which thinks is finite and therefore this man cannot be the cause of himself. There ought to be an infinite uncreated cause to cause the existence of the finite – thus it is clearly seen in this philosophy that the existence of the infinite is necessitated as a scapegoat for without the infinite, the finite cannot be.

Another instance wherein man's finitude leads to the necessary existence of the infinite can be seen in the philosophy of Berkeley,[2] where he had discussed valid knowledge as well as the existence of external realities in *Of the Principles of Human Knowledge* and *The Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous,* respectively. In his famous words "*esse est percipi*" or "to be is to be perceived", Berkeley naturally equates the perceiving mind to be that of an infinite mind that is capable of being present in all places at all times. If the finite mind were to be the only existing mind, this philosophy will fall under much greater criticisms – larger in number and graver than its present criticisms – for a mind that is not infinite to cause the existence of external realities through perception will certainly be absurd for reality would then be entirely relative. Thus, then in this philosophy, the infinite mind is once more made out to be a necessity.

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These qualities of infinity, supremacy and omnibenevolence[3] are what are commonly attributed to God. God is infinite, God is supreme, and God has the omni-qualities. Common notions of God are anthropomorphic, one may then say. God for many is like man only with better, more perfect qualities.

The leading concept of a God is that of the Judeo-Christian orientation: an all good and all powerful God who also loves mankind. Thus, then when a God, not containing these attributes is introduced, the label of "atheism" is given. And one of the deemed "atheistic" Gods is Spinoza's God.

"Deus sive natura" – God or nature; this pronouncement of Benedict de Spinoza had elicited various reactions. It was a concept of much peculiarity that, Spinoza and all who adhere to his philosophy have been branded as heretics. The dogmatists viewed this statement as meaning to interchange God and nature loosely. This was addressed by Spinoza to be a misconception however. In his letter to Henry Oldenburg[4], Spinoza clarified that he did not identify God with nature. He meant to say that the universe is a mode under two attributes of thought and extension – but these are not God's only attributes – there is an infinity of them that is not present in our world. This does not go against the universal understanding of God, then: that He is a being of infinite qualities – or in this case, attributes. God has not been reduced to mere corporeal matter when *deus sive natura* is pronounced for this means that God is *natura naturans* – nature in the process of creating, becoming – it is being in progress: nature naturing. It is not static and does not merely speak of the created (and therefore eliminates the creating nature of God); it is nature as a free cause – nature viewed as active. "By nature viewed as active we should understand that which is in itself and is conceived through itself, or those attributes of substance, which express eternal and infinite essence, in other words God, in so far as he is considered as a free cause.[5]" The dogmatists' adamant protest with *Deus sive natura* arises from the misconception of what was meant by nature. They deem nature to mean as *natura naturata* – nature viewed as passive. Contrary to *natura naturans*, *natura naturata* is nature as created. It is "all that which follows from the necessity of the nature of God, or of any of the attributes of God, that is, all the modes of the attributes of God, in so far as they are considered as things which are in God, and which without God cannot exist or be conceived.[6]" Here, Spinoza speaks of nature as the corporeal matter – that which the God in *Deus sive natura* as *natura naturans* has created. There is yet no sign of atheism, despite the peculiarity of the conception of Spinoza's God once the meaning of nature that is identified with God is clarified. What then causes this label to be placed? Apart from objections with *Deus sive natura*, objections on Spinoza's pantheism (which is really more panentheism) result to an accusation of atheism.

Spinozism is not Atheism

There have been numerous criticisms of Spinoza as well as plentiful interpretations. A common label of Spinoza's philosophy is pantheism – a doctrine defined by Merriam-Webster as equating God with the forces and laws of the universe. This is understandable for on the surface, one may interpret Spinoza's God as an equation with the forces and the laws of the universe inasmuch as God is *Deus sive natura* where *natura* is *natura naturans*. But a more accurate label had emerged: panentheism. Panentheism, unlike

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pantheism, maintains a distinction between the divine and non-divine and the significance of both.[7] In pantheism, there is no distinction between the divine and the universe – they are equal – while in panentheism, the divine and the universe are ontologically different. A more simplistic explanation of panentheism is "all-*in*-God". Panentheism then is a more accurate label of Spinoza's philosophy inasmuch as the world, according to Spinoza, is only a mode of the substance (God) under the two attributes of thought and extension. This is similar to saying that the world is indeed within God and yet God is still greater than the world for the world is only a mode under two attributes – not the substance itself.

Amidst these two predominant labels, however comes another more controversial label argued by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi. Jacobi equated Spinozism with pantheism, fatalism, and atheism.[8] Here one might bring to light a contradiction: why is pantheism in the same group as atheism? Jacobi had argued that Spinoza's doctrine was pure materialism inasmuch as all nature and God are said to be nothing but extended substance.[9] According to him, this line of thought will eventually lead to atheism in that the holiness of God will be absent due to His reduction to mere matter. This was of course opposed. According to Mendelssohn, whom he had a correspondence with regarding Spinoza in particular and philosophy in general in *Concerning the Doctrine of Spinoza in Letters to Herr Moses Mendelssohn,*[10] there is no actual difference between pantheism and theism – saying further that the difference is only nominal. To this I will elaborate further and endeavour to provide not only a sufficient but also a convincing demonstration.

Picture parallel lines wherein one line represents a realm where there is no infinite, necessary, and Supreme Being and the other line represents the presence of one. These lines are the same inasmuch as they are both lines or as defined in analytic geometry, a set of points whose coordinates satisfy a given linear equation. But these lines are said to be parallel and therefore can never intersect, nor meet at any point. This parallel aspect then gives the distinction as well as the separation of these two lines. Just like theism (the line wherein there is an infinite, necessary, and supreme being otherwise known as God) and atheism (the line wherein there is no such being), the two concepts cannot and will never meet albeit being the same (i.e. being about God). This is a known fact for theism and atheism are contradictories. One speaks of God, the other non-God. How will this analogy support Mendelssohn's claim that there is no actual difference between pantheism and theism, one might ask? To this I answer, these separate lines, as defined in analytic geometry, are a set of points. Taken analogously, these sets of points may be thought of as the sub-categories of theism and atheism respectively which make up theism and atheism per se. Like the correspondence of Jacobi and Mendelssohn wherein there is a general topic and a particular argument, theism and atheism are the general topics while the particulars are the sub-categories. Naturally, the sub-categories must be in line with the framework of the general topic. The framework of both categories has been stated previously.

In general, theism is a belief that there is a God (but for the sake of this argument, what God means will not be subjected to one meaning alone) while atheism is a belief that

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there is none. The sub-categories for these then will be as follows.

For theism, there are numerous sub-categories: polytheism, pantheism, monotheism, and finite godism.[11] There are possibly more than these, but these are the most dominant. In all these beliefs, there is the existence of a God. It may refer to the existence of only one God (like that of monotheism and pantheism) or many (like that of polytheism and finite godism) – it still remains that there is a common denominator in these beliefs and this is the existence of God.

For atheism, there are still sub-categories but these sub-categories may be better referred to as classifications or degrees. In a lecture delivered by Alfredo P. Co before the Graduate School of the Divine Word Seminary, three classifications of atheism were given: philosophical, moral, and philosophical-moral.

> Philosophical Atheism advances an argument proving the non-existence of God or disproving the existence of an Absolute Being. This form of Atheism is of two kinds. A philosophical atheist may prove lengthily that there is no God or disproves the existence of God and yet may privately live a religious life. Or one who proves that there is God or refutes the proof of the non-existence of God and yet privately lives a Godless-life.[12]

In the above excerpt, one may understand a philosophical atheist as a partial atheist wherein the lifestyle and the philosophical orientation are not in harmony. The atheism is only one side of the coin, and not the whole coin itself.

The second form of atheism is more complex and "unique", as stated by Co.

> Moral atheism on the other hand, is a unique form of atheism. A moral atheist does not advance an argument yet one easily feels that his atheism prevails. This type is also of two kinds. The first does not prove the non-existence of God and the whole life of this moral atheist is lived without God. His philosophical writing is silent and does not point to any form of absolute being. The second is the actual experience of meaninglessness, the experience of abandonment and the feeling of detachment from God. This we may call an existential form of atheism.[13]

In the moral form of atheism, the moral/personal life of the person is in focus. It no longer concerns itself with the rational implications of the existence or non-existence of God but with the experience itself. Here, one may say that the moral atheism is more absolute for it does not even bring into question the atheistic belief. However, it is also less credible for it is a blind belief on the non-existence of God.

The philosophical-moral kind of atheism, then can be assumed to be a combination of the first two, and this is rightly so. The third kind of atheism, according to Co, is the genuine kind for it not only blindly believes and lives atheism, but also rightly seeks *why* there is no God. Philosophical-moral atheism is genuine inasmuch as it is atheism in all aspects – the whole coin and not just one side of it.

Apart from these classifications, atheism is also commonly associated with materialism and naturalism.[14] Materialism in general is the view that the only thing that exists is matter, [15] while naturalism is the system of thought holding that all phenomena can be explained in terms of natural causes and laws.[16] In these two, the existence of God is given no place since the concept of God is not material in

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typical theism and the natural causes and laws become the replacement of the function of God in the world.

In the demarcation between theism and atheism, two terms earlier introduced resurfaced: pantheism and materialism. In a way then, both Jacobi and Mendelssohn were right when they claimed that pure materialism would lead to atheism, and that pantheism and theism have no actual difference, respectively. However, if one were to trace down Jacobi's words, he also stated that Spinozism is equated with "pantheism, fatalism, and atheism". There is a contradiction now therefore. One may then be moved to ask if pantheism is synonymous with materialism. If the pantheistic nature of Spinozism were once more procured as *Deus sive natura* where *natura* is *natura naturata*, then yes, one may say that the pantheism of Spinoza is leaning close to materialism for the nature identified with God is the material kind, but it has already been stated that nature in *Deus sive natura* is the active kind. Therefore, Jacobi's assertion in the first place, is wrong. Even Mendelssohn is not that accurate for Spinozism is properly panentheism and panentheism, rightly belongs to theism as well; more so even since panentheism actually recognizes the distinction of the divine from the non-divine, unlike pantheism which qualifies everything as divine. Thus, Spinozism is not atheism for it is panentheistic and panentheism is theism. Any further objections to the theism of Spinoza's philosophy may be coming from its stark difference from the Judeo-Christian tradition. Spinoza was branded as a heretic after all and this was due to his deemed "atheism". But as what was already said before, there is nothing atheistic in Spinoza's God, inasmuch as God or nature is still an infinite, necessary, and creating being.

Nietzsche as a Humanist

When Nietzsche is mentioned one automatically associates the word atheism with him. This is so because of his famous pronouncement found in his work entitled *The Gay Science*: "God is dead."

> Nietzsche's atheism is most usually construed in his attacks on the Christian conception of God as well as other-worldly, moralistic, and super-sensory images of God. Nietzsche interprets belief in such conceptions as a scapegoat for man, his denial of life's realities. Man needs something to lean on, something which provides apparently plausible explanation for his suffering.[17]

Although it is not wrong to ascribe atheism to Nietzsche's philosophy insofar as he had viewed God as a mere mental construct, a different view will be endeavoured to be undertaken in this paper. Instead of looking at Nietzsche's philosophy as a form of atheism, this paper will aim to show a more optimistic side of the philosophy of Nietzsche by hermeneutically reading his philosophy with the lens of humanism.

One might disagree with the choice of interpretation for truly Nietzsche had criticized humanism himself, saying "Humanism is nothing more than an empty figure of speech.[18]" Yet one should also keep in mind that nihilism, which is another philosophical position commonly associated with the philosopher, was not advocated by him. In fact, Nietzsche had also criticized nihilism, stating that "it can become a false belief, and lead individuals to discard any hope of meaning in the world and thus to invent some compensatory alternative measure of significance." He had only studied it extensively yet he himself has been commonly dubbed as a nihilist.

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This inconsistency of words and usage can be made understandable, however for even in the introduction written by R.J. Hollingdale in The Penguin Classics' edition of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, this peculiar characteristic of Nietzsche as a writer and philosopher was noted. "At first glance, Nietzsche's work as a whole presents a bewildering spectacle, involving a host of loose ends, themes suddenly taken up and just as suddenly dropped, and apparently glaring contradictions. [19]" This observation can aid in justifying an interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy as an account of humanism inasmuch as Nietzsche contradicting himself in writing is not alien or unusual, for in fact, his writings itself have "glaring contradictions" in them. "When he changed his mind he allowed the contradiction to stand, since out of it truth might arise.[20]" The earlier proposition then is now not as far-fetched.

He who reads Nietzsche, disregarding the atheism in it, will think that Nietzsche is advocating a kind of humanism. But first off, what is humanism as will be used in this paper? The British Humanist Association listed down the beliefs of humanists as: "(1) that one can live a good life without religious or superstitious beliefs; (2) that there is only one life and one should make the best of it, creating meaning and purpose for one's self and making sense of the world using reason, experience and shared human values; (3) that one should try to live a happy and fulfilled life and help others to do so and; (4) that the way to achieve all these is to live responsibly, thinking rationally about right and wrong, considering the consequences of one's actions and trying to do the right thing.[21]" Humanism then puts emphasis on man as a human – a finite being – and his abilities to live his life as he sees fit via his own capabilities.

The first belief of a humanist is no doubt a perfect fit for Nietzsche's philosophy. His philosophy which advocates the death of God – which is not meant literally or as meaning that before, there was an actual God, but now he is no more – is the foundation for this perfect fit. The death of God does not only equate to the absence of an infinite, necessary, and Supreme Being but also the absence of the moral implications that comes with the existence of a God. In a way, it also makes this philosophy in line with the second belief of the humanists as stated by the British Humanist Association.

The Christian God which is most commonly the reference for the talks on theism is a God that is equated to the final arbiter – or justice itself. In this worldview, morality is dependent on the existence of God. Virtue, and the living of a good life, is also pegged on the existence of God. With this in mind, Nietzsche's question then is, without this God, will all these talks on morality, justice, and virtue cease to be significant? Will the world really be set to flames in the absence of a final arbiter? This is where Nietzsche's humanism comes in. There is not a need for a God or any religious or superstitious belief to live a good life. In fact, man has killed God, inasmuch as the morality clause attached to the belief of the existence of the Divine is no longer applicable to the modern world. According to Nietzsche, in the absence of these virtues essentially tied to religion and God, there is still a human value that goes beyond – deeper – than the ones founded on Christian values. This human value he speaks of is the will to power.

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The will to power for Nietzsche is the main driving force in humans. By driving force, it is understood as that which instigates motion in human activity. This will to power is commonly associated with ambition, and achievement geared towards reaching the highest possible position in life. This driving force also implies egocentricity inasmuch as the concern of every individual is said to be his own elevation to the highest position possible. It is a honing of one's own mind and skills to its optimum level – in a way it is selfishness and is hard-pressed to be put in line with humanism so far as the third belief is concerned. In view of the first and second belief, however Nietzsche's philosophy is, without a doubt, humanist for his philosophy also entails a reliance on one's own rationality and one's own experience in giving meaning to the world instead of relying on the existence of a Divinity to determine life's meaning and one's purpose. The shared human value that is being spoken of in this instance is the will to power which may be viewed pessimistically, or like the view of Nietzsche's philosophy as humanism instead of atheism, optimistically.

Nietzsche has made a distinction between force (*kraft*) and power (*macht*). "*Kraft* is primordial strength that may be exercised by anything possessing it, while *macht* is closely tied to sublimation and "self-overcoming", the conscious channeling of *kraft* for creative purposes.[22]" Here one sees that will to power does not reduce itself to ambition and achievement alone, for the power that is willed is deep-rooted. Rather than an ambition to achieve the highest position possible in an economic or social sense, the highest position is equivalent to an overcoming of one's own flaws, and shortcomings – it is a "self-overcoming".

This self-overcoming can be easily connected to another famous aspect of Nietzsche's philosophy: the Übermensch (or the Overman, the Superman, in English). All these are connected to the very core of Nietzsche's philosophy: the absence of God. The will to power is closely related to the Übermensch which is basically "the elevation of man to a position from which he can permanently assume the place in the world formerly occupied by God.[23]" The Übermensch is Over-man, or Super-man – meaning surpassing man. Man is he who is dependent on a Higher Being; the Übermensch is he who relies on his own capabilities. Again, this is a clear affirmation of the first two beliefs of humanists, but this concept of the Übermensch is also akin to the third belief of the humanists inasmuch as one lives a happy and fulfilled life by escaping from the deemed need to depend on a Higher Being. The question of whether or not Nietzsche's philosophy can also be interpreted as allowing one to help another, on the other hand, can be answered by referring to a portion of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*'s prologue wherein the Saint and Zarathustra conversed about going back to mankind to share his enlightenment.[24] Here, Nietzsche writes about Zarathustra, who loves mankind as to allow them to partake in enlightenment as well, and a Saint who used to love mankind, but now hates them and only loves God for he has lost hope in all of mankind. This excerpt may be interpreted as an implication for reaching out a helping hand to others, inasmuch as Zarathustra whom could have lived in his own enlightenment alone, "descended" to let others know that life ought not be lived behind the shadow of a Higher Being. This reaching out to inform others is a form of help: through knowledge. Zarathustra had lived a happy and fulfilled life in solitude for

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ten years, which he made use of to help others live the same. But the usage of this may be, as Kant would say about the mind, a mere machination or manipulation into fitting an idea to one's own belief or opinion.

The fourth belief which speaks about deeds of right and wrong and their consequences, in other words, morality, is much more difficult to justify. In the *On the Genealogy of Morals'* first essay *Good and Evil*, Nietzsche describes two kinds of morality: the "knightly-aristocratic" or "master" morality and the "priestly" or "slave" morality.[25] The former is morality based on consequences while the latter is morality based on intentions. The latter is reminiscent of Christian ethics wherein the end does not justify the means while the former can be associated with the Machiavellian tradition wherein the end justifies the means. In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche criticized both forms of morality yet stated a preference for the master morality stating that although slave morality is what is rampant in the society, master morality ought to have a resurgence. In a way then, the fourth belief is partially fulfilled inasmuch as the consequences of one's actions are taken into consideration. The life of "responsibility" and consideration of what is "right" and "wrong" however are subjected to further study which will not be discussed any more than what has already been said in this paper for it is not relevant to the core of the paper.

Suffice it to say that enumerating some of the characteristics of Nietzsche's philosophy has led to an otherwise clearer view of why Nietzsche' philosophy apart from being an atheistic account is humanist. This positive view of Nietzsche's philosophy will have its place in the synthesis of the ideas of Spinoza and Nietzsche later on. For now, one can then infer that Spinoza's philosophy, which is theistic, is not really that far off from Nietzsche's philosophy if viewed as humanistic rather than atheistic.

Determinism in Spinoza's Philosophy

Spinozism, as was stated before, is panentheistic – "all is in God", there is unity while the distinction between the divine and the non-divine remains. In this unity then lies an implication of determinism. The unity of God and Nature is deterministic such that all things of existence are modifications of God or nature and therefore are made out to be the aspects of one and the same thing. The mind and body for example, are modes of God viewed as the attribute of thought (mind) and extension (body). They are different in a way, yet they are only aspects of one and the same thing. "The mind is the idea of the body, and the body is constituted of various ideas of the mind."[26] This is similar to saying that one side of the hammer is for hitting nails, the other for removing them. Both have different functions yet constitute the whole of the hammer. There is a hammer in the side that hits the nail; there is a hammer in the side that removes it. But of course, this demonstration is utterly simplistic and does not even address how this unity becomes deterministic. I will then go along with the explanation from the very beginning.

According to Spinoza, there is only one substance and this substance is God. (Prop. VI & Prop. IX) A substance is "that which is in itself, and conceived through itself: in other words that of which a conception can be formed independently of any other conception.[27]" Substance then can be said to be free for "that thing is called free, which exists solely by the necessity of its own

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nature, and of which the action is determined by itself alone.[28]" God being the only substance and substance being the only thing that is free (as is made apparent by the above definitions) will lead one to ask, "What of the modes and attributes of the substance (God)? Are they not free?" To this I will answer by reiterating Definition VII of Part I of Ethics, only this time, focus will be given on the second statement: "On the other hand, that thing is necessary, or rather constrained, which is determined by something external to itself to a fixed and definite method of existence or action.[29]" Since all else are modes and attributes aside from substance and the modes and attributes are dependent on other things apart from itself for its existence, then all else are "constrained" – not free. Determinism is in the definition of being constrained itself – "determined by something external to itself to a fixed and definite method of existence or action." What is it this "something external" that is referred to in this text? It is none other than the laws of nature.

If one were to only take these in at face value – or rather without much contemplation and reflection, one might argue and insist upon freedom of the modes and attributes as well sans their definitions. This may be argued by using the history of philosophy itself. One may insist that if everything were determined to a fixed method of existence or action, history would not have the dialectical quality it has as per Hegel. For the mind would then be subjected to a uniformity of thought, considering that it too is merely a mode viewed as an attribute of thought. Yet one should understand what is truly meant by Spinoza's determinism. Determinism does not equate to predestination in Spinoza's philosophy, rather it simply means that everything that happens, happens through necessity. This is different from predestination for predestination speaks of fate and a fixed outcome of life. Spinoza's determinism merely speaks of a fixed *method* of existence and action: the laws of nature. Examples wherein this determinism is manifested can be seen, through the food web. Predator and prey have a natural relationship of eat and be eaten, they cannot escape from this. An easier to comprehend example would be the demarcation between the male and the female. It is in the nature of the male to be the provider and the female to be the nurturer. This is patterned from the male and the female's biological make up. The male provides the sperm for the creation of the offspring while the woman not only provides the egg for successful reproduction, but houses the offspring itself. The male is given the duty to provide whatever the female and the offspring need while the female is tasked to take care of the offspring. It is an inescapable relationship for it is in the law of nature itself (i.e. the biological make up). Even those who try to escape it still result to succumbing to nature. Wives who work for the family find themselves longing to be with their children, feeling guilty over not being the one to take care of them; husbands who become the caretaker of the house and the family feels a sense of worthlessness in that he is unable to do his duty of providing for the family. One might argue that these are mere social constructs – an effect of one's consciousness to the opinions of society – but it is not. These feelings of displeasure arise from the inside. This is internally caused. This then is the work of the God of which all of existence is in. This is the law of nature, for as was clearly demonstrated in the novel by Jostein Gaarder, Sophie's World, God for Spinoza is "not an outer cause, since God speaks through the laws of nature and only through

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them."[30] And yet it has been said that being "constrained" is being determined by something external to itself, will this not be true now then since God's interference is internally caused? If one were to only consider this aspect of Spinoza's philosophy and conveniently disregard the fact that for Spinoza, there is only one substance and therefore only one thing that exists through itself and in itself – a contradiction really will be apparent. Yet it is in the fact that there is only one substance that makes the inner cause being external to the constrained thing comprehensible. All else are dependent on the substance which is external to them and this substance *speaks* through laws of nature, thus making itself an inner cause, but because it only speaks through laws while still remaining self-sufficient (i.e. a substance) it remains to be external to the thing itself. The contradiction, then is eradicated.

An incessant question now has surfaced in regard to this paper. If Spinoza's philosophy is deterministic, how can it be related to Nietzsche's Übermensch? This I will answer in the next section.

The Theistic Übermensch from an Impersonal God, and the Control of Passions

Theism, as was discussed in the earlier sections of this paper, is a belief that there is a God; the Übermensch is a concept in Nietzsche's philosophy which is commonly interpreted as man being beyond "human, all too human", or as being a man who does not peg his values on religion and the existence of a God. In this paper the Übermensch is the manifestation of a successful enactment of the will to power – a "self-overcoming". Combine the two then and one has a theistic Übermensch in which one overcomes the self in spite of the existence of a God. This theistic Übermensch is what is manifested in Spinoza's philosophy. How this is so will be explained shortly.

With Spinoza's God and theism being thoroughly discussed, one will be certain of one thing: that the God of Spinoza is an impersonal God – different from the God of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The impersonality of the God of Spinoza lies in the fact that God is not a separate entity from the world that governs it as an outer cause and therefore is not the type that one prays to for aid and guidance. No, the God of Spinoza is not anthropomorphic and does not radiate mercy and justice (as opposed to the Christian God). This impersonality of God in Spinoza's philosophy is what makes it plausible to be related to the Übermensch of Nietzche. The Übermensch is man that is free from the influence of God; and by God, Nietzsche refers to the Christian God mostly. Spinoza and Nietzsche are similar in this sense then for their non-adherence to the common conception of a God (or rather the lack thereof of its acknowledgement). But the commonality between Nietzsche and Spinoza does not end there. Aurelia Armstrong in her paper entitled *The Passions, Power, and Practical Philosophy: Spinoza and Nietzsche Contra the Stoics* took note of the general agreement of Spinoza and Nietzsche in regards to their ethical projects. Both are described as "adhering to the idea that the quest for human perfectibility is only possible within the horizons of immanence. [31]" Immanence here does not refer to divine immanence, but rather to the immanence of the main driving force of man which in Nietzsche is the will to power and in Spinoza the *conatus* which is in general, a striving to persist in its existence. This *conatus* emerged in Spinoza's philosophy firstly in Proposition

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VI of the Part 3 of *The Ethics*: "Everything, in so far as it is in itself, endeavours to persist in its own being." This rings loudly of the same connotation of the will to power of Nietzsche and thus as cited by Armstrong with the use of Yirmiyahu Yovel, Spinoza and Nietzsche have a common ethics of "self-overcoming".

It is now easy to connect Spinoza's philosophy with Nietzsche's Übermensch. The Übermensch being the manifestation of the successful fulfilment of the "self-overcoming" and Spinoza having a philosophy on "self-overcoming" as well will lead to the conclusion that both philosophers have "practices of self-formation or self-transformation that aims at the attainment of an enhanced form of human life characterized by an affirmative attitude toward existence.[32]" This rings loudly of Nietzsche, yes, but of Spinoza? The following paragraph will demonstrate the consistency of this statement to Spinoza.

Spinoza distinguishes between emotion as an activity and emotion as passion. Emotion is an activity when one is the adequate cause of the modification i.e. "a cause through which its effect can be clearly and distinctly perceived" and a passion when one is not.[33] These two definitions are necessary in justifying the practice of self-formation and self-transformation in the philosophy of Spinoza, inasmuch as being controlled by the passions means passivity and controlling them equates to "self-overcoming". If the emotion is that of which we are not the adequate cause (passion), it is equivalent to living life through another's way, but if the emotion is that of which we are the adequate cause, one takes control of one's life and overcomes one's own limits – the tendency towards passions. This overcoming – this control of the passions – can be equated to the Übermensch inasmuch as there is a reliance on one's own capabilities, without the reliance on another (a Supreme Being). It is a show of the will to power. But this control of the passions is still theistic inasmuch as "those ideas which are adequate in the mind are adequate also in God, inasmuch as he constitutes the essence of the mind"[34]. These adequate ideas are the emotions. One might be confused as to how Spinoza's philosophy is applicable to the Übermensch when God is interwoven into the mind itself, to this I answer with Proposition III of the Part V of *The Ethics*. "An emotion, which is a passion, ceases to be a passion, as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea thereof." In this proposition, there is an implication of a choice – a will. It is said that Spinoza's philosophy does not give space to free will inasmuch as everything happens through necessity, but in the case of controlling the passions – controlling the emotions per se – we are the first mover inasmuch as we are the ones who form the clear and distinct idea of the passion. "An emotion thereof becomes more under our control and the mind is less passive in respect to it, in proportion as it is more known to us.[35]" Here, it is knowledge that empowers the "self-overcoming". Does not Nietzsche's Übermensch use knowledge in the same way?

Conclusion

The theism of Spinoza does not hinder in its similarity to the philosophy of Nietzsche (his atheism and humanism included). Spinoza, even before the time of Nietzsche had already concocted an Übermensch – a theistic one at that. The theistic Übermensch of Spinoza lies in the fact that one who has control of his emotions takes control of his

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own life (for he is the adequate cause of such modification). Yet, the similarity is not absolute inasmuch as the determinism of Spinoza's philosophy does not allow the full practice of the free will, which is central to Nietzsche's philosophy. The *conatus* of Spinoza, however makes up for this, inasmuch as the *conatus,* like the will to power, makes one strive in his own being. This striving is also an overcoming of the self, inasmuch as one does not allow passivity to overcome him. In a world where God and nature are one, there is still a place for an Übermensch.

[1] Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. by Elizabeth S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross, ed. by Mortimer J. Adler (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 1991).

[2] George Berkeley, *The Works of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne,* vol. 2, ed. by A.A. Luce and T.E. Jessop (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons,1949): 163-263 (Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous).

[3] In as much as this infinite being, in its goodness created man and the world.

[4] *Correspondence of Benedict de Spinoza* (Wilder Publications, 2009), letter 73.

[5] Baruch Spinoza,*The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza,* vol. 2, trans. by Robert Harvey Monro Elwes (London: George Bell and Sons, 1891), p. 68.

[6] Ibid., p. 69.

[7] John Sculp, "Panentheism", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring, 2013) accessed December 1, 2015.

[8] George Di Giovanni, "Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi", in <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/friedrich-jacobi/>, accessed December 1, 2015.

[9] In reference to Spinoza stating that the world is a mode under two attributes of thought and extension.

[10] Published by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi without permission from Medelssohn in 1785.

[11] Refer to the gods of Greek mythology.

[12] Alfredo P. Co, "An Inquiry into Oriental Atheism", in *Across the Philosophical Silk Road: A Festschrift in Honor of Alfredo P. Co* (Manila: UST Publishing House, 2009), p. 38.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Eric Chabot, "Who is God? Comparing Atheism, Theism, Deism, Pantheism, and Polytheism: A Closer Look", in < https://chab123.wordpress.com/2011/02/16/a-comparison-between-theism-deism-pantheism-and-polytheism-which-god-or-gods-shall-we-pick/>, accessed December 1, 2015.

[15] Merriam-Webster.

[16] Eric Chabot, "Who is God? Comparing Atheism, Theism, Deism, Pantheism, and Polytheism: A Closer Look".

[17] Irfan Iqbal, "Nietzsche Versus God: The Death of God and Atheism in Nietzsche's Philosophy", in *Al-Hikmat* 18 (Pakistan: University of the Punjab Press, 1998) p. 59.

[18] Tony Davis, *Humanism.* (1997) p. 37.

[19] Friendrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* trans. by R.J. Hollingdale (Great Britain: C. Nicholls & Company Ltd., 1961), p. 2.

[20] Ibid.

[21]"What is Humanism?", in <http://www.humanismforschools.org.uk/pdfs/what%20is%20humanism_.pdf>, accessed December 4, 2015.

[22] Jacob Golomb, *Nietzsche, Godfather of Fascism? On the Uses and Abuses of a Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

[23] Nietzsche, Friendrich, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* trans. by R.J. Hollingdale, (Great Britain: C. Nicholls & Company Ltd., 1961) p. 2

[24] Ibid., p. 39-53.

[25] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kauffman & R.J. Hollingdale (New York: A Division of Random House, Inc., 1969).

[26] Karen Watson, "Baruch Spinoza, 'Human Beings are Determined", in Philosophy Lander, accessed December 5, 2015.

[27] Baruch Spinoza, *The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza,* vol. 2, trans. by Robert Harvey Monro Elwes (London: George Bell and Sons, 1891), p. 45.

[28] Ibid., p. 46.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Jostein Gaarder, *Sophie's World*, trans. by Paulette Moller (New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, Inc., 1994) p. 233.

[31] Aurelia Armstrong, "The Passions, Power, and Practical Philosophy: Spinoza and Nietzsche Contra the Stoics", in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 44, no1 (United States: Pennsylvania State University Press): p. 6.

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[32] Ibid., p. 7.
[33] *Ethics*. Part III, Definition I.
[34] Ibid., proof to Proposition I, Part III
[35] Ibid.

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Nietzschean Aesthetic Themes in the Selected Poetry of Ophelia Dimalanta and Tita Lacambra-Ayala

Ivan Tan

Abstract: Friedrich Nietzsche's aesthetic thought when compared to the more traditional views of Kant appears to be working on a wholly different plane. If in Kant, for example, one assumes a disinterested standpoint, Nietzsche assumes a point of view that is more direct: that life and the individual become the very objects of art through active participation. This view severs Nietzsche from the older theorists and presents a new way of understanding art, not for its own sake, but in relation to man. The task undertaken in this paper is to outline a few key Nietzschean aesthetic themes that are portrayed in some poems written by Philippine poets Ophelia Dimalanta and Tita Lacambra-Ayala. These are intoxication, elevation, tragic fate, affirmation and creation. The discussion of the poems written by Dimalanta and Lacambra-Ayala must then circle around these themes and their relation to Nietzsche's conception of art. These themes, furthermore, will be divided into two groups: intoxication and elevation will be discussed under Nietzsche's general description of the elements of art in relation to some poems by Dimalanta; while tragic fate, affirmation and creation will be discussed under Nietzsche's figure of the tragic artist in relation to some poems of Lacambra-Ayala. The poems selected will be presented in full after the conclusion.

Keywords: Dimalanta, Lacambra-Ayala, Nietzsche

Preliminaries: Nietzsche's change in perspective

It is to be noted at the onset that Nietzsche's aesthetics underwent some changes from the 1870's to the late 1880's. The aesthetic view of Nietzsche in his earlier writings was characterized by his text *The Birth of Tragedy* published during the year 1872. While a marked change could be observed in a passage in book two of *The Gay Science* (1882) producing a different trajectory in relation to art in his works. This change may also be seen as formative in the different ideal type of person Nietzsche wanted to actualize which also changed from his earlier writings to his later writings. These differences and shifts in perspective characterized Nietzsche's works in so far as he did not formulate an explicit system of philosophy. Though no definite system is seen, (as for example, the works of Kant where there are classifications and sub-headings, etc.) this does not mean that Nietzsche's thought is disjointed in the sense of overturning itself in complete contradiction for there are always connecting threads in the development of his

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thought which may link his earlier views to his later ones that still renders them intelligible.

A few things on the changing perspective of Nietzsche should be pointed out to prevent confusion in the analysis of poems later on. In Nietzsche's aesthetic thought, Apollo and Dionysus are used as symbols to portray the form in which art appears to man; these symbols are still held by Nietzsche throughout his writings, most especially the Dionysian with a few alterations in use[1]. However, Nietzsche's view shifts from *The Birth of Tragedy* to *The Gay Science* in so far as the significance of art is concerned. Walter Kaufmann observes that in Nietzsche's earlier view, art, in so far as it allows man an image or projection of himself as a work of art, finds his dignity in this for the reason that "it is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified"[2]. While one observes in *The Gay Science* that Nietzsche writes "As an aesthetic phenomenon existence is still bearable for us."[3] The marked difference between "justified" and "bearable" must be noted in so far as the former suggests an eternal reason and seal while the latter brings out a more open-ended view which does not take away any difficulty and suffering that must be lived. Other than this, it must be said briefly that an implication of this change in view reflects also the different figure which Nietzsche presents in his later writings: the Overman replaces the tragic artist[4], the latter being the ideal of the earlier works of Nietzsche. The interpretation held in this paper leans more towards Nietzsche's departure from the world being justified by art and is more inclined to his later views on art as that which makes life bearable. Still, some views, which can be assimilated from *The Birth of Tragedy,* are kept.

Elements of Art

Intoxication

Nietzsche echoes in his *Nachlass* what he wrote in *The Birth of Tragedy* that intoxication is characteristic of the Dionysian as opposed to the Apollonian dream-state. Intoxication is understood in Dimalanta's poem *We Are Electric*[5] with the portrayal of the electric quality of every star and stone; the overflowing electricity everywhere and within the person. Dimalanta writes:

> …this force that moves the
> sun and ticking hearts,
> crisscrossing through
> every energized roadway
> …towards this flowing
> current, ripe for recharging,
>
> seeking consonances with
> these kinetic elements,
> running out of the spirit
> into an overabounding field
> of force that sends us
> mighty private signals
> where there mutably we leave
> surcharged, peaking…[6]

The image of force and abundance which Dimalanta portrays in the poem reflects Nietzsche's conception of the intoxication in the Dionysian state as it breaks the bliss of the Apollonian principle of individuation; in the realm of Dionysian intoxication every conventional barrier is broken down, the veil of Maya has been torn apart revealing a mysterious primordial unity in force[7]. Without this aspect of nature even the Apollonian vanishes, for form and measure cannot be imposed without a conflicting resistance in tension with it. This state of intoxication of the Dionysian realm is also immediate in experience. It does not need

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any special intuition by reason or logic: one is already immersed within it and is enclosed by it. To this theme, Dimalanta writes in the poem *Usually, Disaster Begins Rather Quietly*:

and with not much bang and fanfare,
hissing insidiously from all corners
of one's sensing, starting the day's
havoc: a first splurge of water,
this whirlpooling into a deepsea swell.
it is not then this nothing, nor the none,
nor no one, but this fullness, this
crazy shouting heave, orgying outwise,
with the world and every one and all
around O so wanting, quietly quietly
he is there, need and all…[8]

The Dionysian conflict "orgying outwise" cannot be avoided—it is life itself. Furthermore, the intoxication of this state is full and bursting; even if one may find oneself in a state of reserve and restraint, the conflicting and organic aspect of life is in constant tension with this and seeks to dissolve it. The irrational and instinctive have always been there in all its noise and "shouting", in the height of passion but also in its silence when one is least conscious of it. Intoxication might also be understood in the form of a derangement of sensuous impressions overwhelming the subject externally then seeking to extend itself internally. Dimalanta illustrates this in her poem *One Final Burning*:

it is the wind's demolishing hand
come to soon fell this imperious
frame into its final death-swoon,
its seared selves dispersed
piece by piece; faint flappings
in the air, hurt birdwings
bleeding in post-mortem spasms,

… firewalls isolate it,
so it sizzles on in private,
contained in all its seethings,
its intimate designs
within itself intensified
into poetry's richly ringing
intertexted lines limned
in cycles of firelit pain
and joy, sovereign and sole
within its fragilely flammable
formidable walls, my personal
incandescent world that had
then burnt on and on, not out
nor down, but forever quietly on.
and because forever,
some ghosts of it are fielded
all over the site of its ruins.

… this flesh by flesh gobbling
up is initially one painless
smouldering, flames gutting
everything standing in their sweep
within the ring
of their annealing.
and then, the smell!
like something acrid, acid,
carbonaceous, quite nothing else.
and slowly, this strange oozing

smell swells, redounds into
spitting, splitting noises,
pain cracking up
in many pieces
in different places
all at once!

… its life cinders on
until this ultimate imploding,
one deafening blast to the climax rite
as loved ones writhe, ashen
in their own consumed shells,
or perhaps, relieved at last
over this burning's end.[9]

In the series of stanzas quoted above, one becomes aware of certain sensations of pain that a person experiences which are not limited

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to the plane of sensory experience, but beyond it in a person's inner economy. The Dionysian foundation of art for Nietzsche buries itself deep in the person, extends and blankets the person's internal pathways of the mental. The persona's world has been burned on and on for eternity. This ends in an implosion—the climax of the Dionysian that extends within the person may lead to death leaving behind only "consumed shells". One observes in this poem that the graphic portrayal of conflicting forces overpowers any sort of form. The "burning" which occurs is appropriate to the intoxication of the Dionysian as it consumes a person "in cycles of firelit pain and joy"[10].

Dream

In Nietzsche's aesthetic theory, measure and reason is understood through the figure of Apollo, which is in constant conflict with the figure of Dionysus. The Apollonian may be understood in the context of the poems cited to be the very intelligibility of words used to portray the conflicting characteristic of experience and nature. For Nietzsche, poetry itself, in its use of rhythm and meters, of conjuring a vision through association of words is already a manifestation of the Apollonian characteristic of order[11]. Hence the Apollonian aspect is understood in the way the poem presents itself to the reader.

Elevation

But art does not stop in the recognition of the Apollonian and Dionysian aspects nature. For Nietzsche, the significance of art lies in its ability to make life bearable. In section 107, book two of *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche explains that art serves as a stimulus for life in the midst of the terrifying realization that error is a condition for man's subsistence. In this vein, Nietzsche writes that avoiding the consequences of such absurd realizations makes "art as the good will to appearance"[12]. Art becomes a bridge to man seeing himself from a distance; from a distance which retains his "freedom above things" that he is likely to lose without these instances which art offers—instances wherein man is able to see through what he does in matters he takes more seriously, such as morality for example, enabling himself to rise above them. This means that the Apollonian and Dionysian as recognized by their own characteristics do not mean much if as a whole art does not stimulate man. The *Nachlass* offers some insights as to how art is a stimulus to life. The intoxication mentioned above is a feeling of increased power and vitality[13]. For Nietzsche, the increased feeling of power characterized by intoxication also entails a greater mastery of the will over drives and impulses. Furthermore, this power does not create "pessimistic art". But rather, the effect of works of art arouses the very condition for its creation—intoxication itself[14]. This means that intoxication constantly elevates man to greater and greater extents to the point wherein one is able to love the things of the world and one's senses[15]. This is of course not to be confused with a blind striving for pleasure nor a will to disorganization. Nietzsche, in so far as art is concerned, emphasizes the mastery, which comes with an increased vitality: a logical and geometrical simplification is a sign of an increase in strength, a symptom of what Nietzsche calls "the grand style". Ophelia Dimalanta's poem *Lines to a Life Poet* illustrates this clearly:

Here if you must burn at all
For the country's lapse of green,
You must search in the rustic confines
Of your mind, where each lease of summer
Is not only sudden whorls of colors
But rain, crystalline and pure,
A spate of promise
Tensing your frame.

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And here, if birds materialize at all,
They do so offhand, in frozen cliques
…Wrapping about them the city's
Chilling anonymity...
…Portents
Of lyric dearth and dying.

You pause to wonder, minting yea-lines
Meanwhile catching fire every minute,
While the rest of the world is shrouded gray…[16]

Dimalanta's first stanza in particular presents the Nietzschean position in art. That if one must burn and become intoxicated, one is not consumed entirely. Though there is the aspect of burning, there in the very state of elevation too must emerge the promise sought through the derangement of the Dionysian—that one cannot passively let the irrational and chaotic consume oneself and remain "sudden whorls of colors". The last stanza focuses on the affirming aspect of elevation which accepts one's burning as essential in contrast to a pale world. If the first part of this paper dealt with intoxication and elevation as elements formative for the foundation and significance of art for Nietzsche, the latter part will deal with man's attitude towards nature and his possible participation within it in relation to art. The latter part will also elucidate some points mentioned above.

The Tragic Artist

Tragic Fate

In the light of what has been said earlier on the inescapable Dionysian characteristic of the world and the realization of error as a condition for man's life, Nietzsche makes his point in the *Nachlass* against Aristotle who explains that the tragic suggests a "downward movement": that tragic art has the potential to harm health, leading to a disorganization and disintegration of life. This sort of nihilism is easily observed by Nietzsche who suggests on the contrary, that tragedy can be tested, and in testing it will reveal its tonic characteristic as a stimuli rather than a depressant[17]. Art, then, is a stimulant, intoxication with, and a will to life[18]. Tita Lacambra-Ayala presents the tragic core of life in the poem *Creations, Precisely*:

Even when the world is turning round
like the map and the science of it, even when
the tip is but a few degrees and east
to west it turns upon an orbit: there is
the space around its presence, the unsure
genesis of its past, and feared collisions
are in the future sure events. The laughter
and living on the gay surfaces come
from the still and sorrowful core
lost from all movement and the touch of ether
…there in the core, the pure sorrow from
which
even the laughter grew, from which all grow…[19]

The world which surrounds the persona has a core of pure sorrow as a precondition from which all grew. This portrays the necessity of the tragic where man may be located. Amidst reason and the order and classification imposed on the world there is a "space around its presence" and the conflicting "collisions" of the future. Hence life is always open-ended for there are no eternally justified reasons on which man may sleep on comfortably. Man's fate is tragic in so far as he is faced with this predicament which calls for affirmation if he is to triumph and not despair—he is called to be attentive. This sorrowful core, furthermore, is likewise characterized by the way the world appears to be "questionable and terrifying" in man's relation to it[20]. It is to be noted in Lacambra-Ayala's poem that a contrast is placed between rationality and science on the one hand, and the irrational core lost in all motion.

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This is man's condition amidst the many things: he is situated directly within the immediate flux of becoming, suffering within it to the point that he has no time to be able to formulate an absolute standpoint and justification in relation to it. Provisional measures are called for—nature encloses man indifferently when religion, truth, science and other means of solace are unable to speak. Nietzsche claims in a fragment relating to *The Birth of Tragedy* that can be found in his *Nachlass* that the only world is this world that is "false, cruel, contradictory, seductive, without meaning"[21].

Affirmation and Creation

The world as it appears to man as such is in need of affirmation if man is not to perish in despair. Nietzsche explains that the tragic artist affirms the questionability and terror of existence through his far-sightedness in the overall economy of things. According to Nietzsche, the tragic artist makes a heroic "Yes" as they are "hard enough to experience suffering as a pleasure"[22]. This affirmation is a testament of the artist's vitality and strength as a consequence of a "habitual intoxication" which makes them "fuller, simpler and stronger" thus yielding a greater fruitfulness due to their potency.[23] In the same breath, creation must be consequent to affirmation. The plunging of an artist forward in creativity becomes the means to bear existence. The poem *Gilding* by Lacambra-Ayala describes this:

…Each day a day of birth
unravelled from old dreams
lusting for hunger, for thirst
and other wild lions.

This is the time for skinning
the dirty neck of doubt.
For burning unused ropes
rotting from the tree.[24]

The persona speaks of being reborn and lusting for hunger, thirst and wild lions. This shows the fullness of the artist bursting out in expression. Moreover, the persona speaks of "burning unused ropes rotting from the tree" suggesting a will to externalize whatever lies dormant inside the person. It is a will to express and create with all inner resource that one has grown and nurtured in oneself so as not to waste their vitality (this may be taken as a metaphor for death, or in a more literal sense, decay). The tragic artist, then, in affirming nature and existence, participates in its creation. This creation, however, is not blind and careless, it does not seek to express in a way that has no form. Nietzsche emphasizes what he calls "the grand style"[25] being mastery over the chaotic influx of impressions and impulses within the self to render them form. Moreover, it is a remodeling of life in the manner of simplifying what is complex by one's self mastery. Creation is not making something out of nothing, but a reshaping of what is—furthermore, a revaluation that extends not only to art, but to all other aspects of life. This can be seen in Lacambra-Ayala's poem *The Impeccable Sin is to Despise Feeling* as she writes:

such as the narrow bitterness so narrow
that it cannot be pathed to trace the expanded
causes…
And then let it be said…
that the impeccable
salvation is love's old willingness to win
a path through the narrow tapered trunk
from the wind's gay song and follow it through
until the tiny, plenteous roots are found
and there unknotted, understood, loosened,
and mingled with not sadly in the deep soil
but gladly as wind and rain and sun
and rock and silt and loam in the deep soil.[26]

The first few lines suggest that the impeccable sin in despising feeling can be understood in the

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example of a narrowness that cannot be mapped out and is closed off. The succeeding lines portray the contrary: that the salvation is a "willingness to win a path" which can be connected to Nietzsche's artistic creativity. The reshaping and participation in nature which Nietzsche calls for is clearly seen in this poem as the former is portrayed in the formation of a way through, while the latter is the joyful participation with the elements of nature representing the Dionysian. So it has been said that the tragic artist creates on the ground which sprang from his life affirmation. While this creation and creativity blesses existence as it becomes bearable—for the tragic artist elevates life and others in so far as he himself and what is externalized by him streams from a potent intoxication. One last poem of Lacambra-Ayala illustrates in sum the artist's fullness in creation and affirmation; the tragic artist's capacity and strength is clearly understood, she writes in *The Trick is to Find*:

The Trick is to find
the path
to unbearable beauty
and unbearable joy
or unbearable
hurt

and bear all of it
like an egyptian
mummy wrapped
in all these
unbearable things

Then show up at a
party
smoking a cigarette
held by a friend
with a fondness for
olives, peanuts and
whisky

Then life will be
a scream
And almost bearable[27]

The trick is that one must search for a tonic, an initial stepping stone from which one emerges in fullness. For Nietzsche the obvious answer is art. The sum of the efforts of the tragic artist is the creation and remodeling of a life though not in accordance to how things are in themselves enables existence to exhibit its lightness in joy. The lightness characterized that is consequent to the increase in power and vitality of the artist is seen in the third stanza where the persona casually portrays a scene of a party as though the weight and terrors of existence are out of sight. But these are never out of sight. Nietzsche writes in the concluding portions of *Twilight of the Idols*:

The psychology of the orgiastic as an overflowing feeling of life and strength, where even pain still has the effect of a stimulus, gave me the key to the concept of tragic feeling…Saying Yes to life even in its strangest and hardest problems, the will to life rejoicing over its own inexhaustibility even in the very sacrifice of its highest types—that is what I called Dionysian, that is what I guessed to be the bridge to the psychology of the tragic poet. Not in order to be liberated from terror and pity, not in order to purge oneself of a dangerous affect by its vehement discharge—Aristotle understood it that way—but in order to be oneself the eternal joy of becoming…[28]

The significance of art and the tragic artist is not to negate the suffering, terror and contradictions of existence, but rather to be able to enhance a person to be able to affirm existence through them in the way it presents itself and creatively participate in the Apollonian and Dionysian aspects of life. This is a form of fearless overcoming and triumph that is

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necessary if one is not to perish from an existential passivity. Furthermore, this is a path of revaluation which is always connected with Nietzsche's struggle against nihilism and what he observed to be the devaluation of the highest values thus far, such as God, slave morality, and truth.

Conclusion

It is understood through the course of the paper that Nietzsche's aesthetic theory is not an abstract and disinterested theory but rather one that is engaged and immersed in life itself. It is clear that art for Nietzsche cannot be limited to objects of molding that is viewed and appreciated for their own sake. For Nietzsche art must be understood as a self-creating in the sense of giving form to oneself in the midst of dominating chaos. These qualities, chaos and irrationality, are understood through the Dionysian impulse that is in constant conflict with the Apollonian impulse. Man as part of nature must then confront these aspects as he is immersed and enveloped in it: this is the challenge to man that invites him to become an artist through affirmation and creativity thus transfiguring his disposition towards life and existence. The tragic artist must be one that joyfully lives with all the terrifying aspects of becoming in a state of intoxication and elevation of life. These aspects and themes which revolve in Nietzsche's aesthetics are to a certain extent clearly portrayed in certain poems of Ophelia Dimalanta and Tita Lacambra-Ayala.

[1] The symbol of Apollo though, later on, is not used as much as Dionysus as primacy is given to Dionysus. Kaufmann notes that if the earlier distinction is Apollo and Dionysus, the later would probably be the Christian and Dionysus.

[2] Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Birth of Tragedy," in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, translated and edited by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Modern Library, 1992), 52.

[3] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 163.

[4] The figure of the tragic artist though was not erased or marked out by Nietzsche.

[5] Ophelia A. Dimalanta, *Flowing On* (Manila: Santo Tomas University Press, 1988), 23-24..

[6] Ibid.

[7] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 36-37.

[8] O. Alcantara Dimalanta, *Montage* (Manila: UST Publications, 1974), 57.

[9] Ophelia Alcantara Dimalanta, *Lady Polyester: Poems Past & Present* (Manila: Santo Tomas University Press, 1993), 222-225.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale, edited by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), 420.

[12] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 163.

[13] Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 420.

[14] Ibid. 434.

[15] Ibid. 433.

[16] Dimalanta, *Montage*, 70.

[17] Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 449.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Tita Lacambra-Ayala, *Tala Mundi: The Collected Poems of Tita Agcaoili Lacambra-Ayala*, edited by Ricardo de Ungria (Manila: UST Publishing House, 2011), 33.

[20] Nietzsche, *The Will to Power,* 450.

[21] Ibid. 451.

[22] Ibid. 450.

[23] Ibid. 421.

[24] Lacambra-Ayala, *Tala Mundi*, 43.

[25] Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 444.

[26] Lacambya-Ayala, *Tala Mundi*, 29.

[27] Ibid. 281.

[28] Friedrich Nietzsche, "Twilight of the Idols," in *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited and translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), 562.

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Selected Poems of Ophelia A. Dimalanta

We Are Electric

(Lake Tahoe, October '87)

we are electric…
and so is every star,
and every stone; this is it
within and everywhere,
this force that moves the
sun and ticking hearts,
crisscrossing through
every energized roadway
for migrant birds and
monarch butterflies in
heat and chartless drifters
like us…god, it is this
that dries up all open wounds,
bound as soon we are
towards this flowing
current, ripe for recharging,
seeking consonances with
these kinetic elements,
running out of the spirit
into an overabounding field
of force that sends us
mighty private signals
where there mutably we leave
surcharged, peaking, for the
time being recouped, revved
and patched up (coming full circle
from this pointless drive around
the lake's sensorrounding cast
till back of the beyond),
every single quaver and crack.

Usually, Disaster Begins Rather Quietly

and with not much bang and fanfare.
hissing insidiously from all corners
of one's sensing, starting the day's
havoc: a first splurge of water,

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this whirlpooling into a deepsea swell.
it is not then this nothing, nor the none,
nor no one, but this fullness, this
crazy shouting heave, orgying outwise,
with the world and every one and all
around O so wanting. quietly quietly
he is there, need and all.
he will not stray this way.
and the stars say, so…
every oncoming day they say
will tune different. a voice.
a stranger, a call, or even a familiar.
love in a different dress.
disasters take all colors.
worst is this which begins subtly,
covering, hovering; an offhand pin-bruise
hacked into a mortal sore,
one does not know when-why.
till one is near loss, and just why why
one does not even halfway know.

Lines to a Life Poet

Here if you must burn at all
For the country's lapse of green,
You must search in the rustic confines
Of your mind, where each lease of summer
Is not only sudden whorls of colors
But rain, crystalline and pure,
A spate of promise
Tensing your frame.

And here, if birds materialize at all,
They do so offhand, in frozen cliques,
Any time of day, sphinxlike upon some eaves,
Wrapping about them the city's
Chilling anonymity, never ever ready
With their usual pastorals, their tiny voices
Uncarrying, stilled inside their throats,
Brown specks of silence. Portents
Of lyric dearth and dying.
Dots upon murk and heaving smoke

And always, here mornings are astute.

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And instantaneous suns whir an early
Rasping tune, as impresses of sleep persist,
And briskly, evening stumps in even before noon,
Businesslike, as if it had some nasty task
To see efficiently through and right on.
The air around you has a cunning way
Of sucking in every living din
While louder and above all
Clutters the sovereign peal of death.

You pause to wonder, minting yea-lines,
Meanwhile catching fire every minute,
While the rest of the world is shrouded gray:
Which of you is the gruesome misfit,
Which is the sinister lie, the great monstrosity,
Poet-pariah, the lone uprooted tree.

One Final Burning

i.

it is the wind's demolishing hand
come to soon fell this imperious
frame into its final death-swoon,
its seared selves dispersed
piece by piece; faint flappings
in the air, hurt birdwings
bleeding in post-mortem spasms,
strange noises in the dark
flung far off into the nightmare
of one's waking moments. and it is
these later residual resonances
that could stalk one's nights
since the exact contour and voice
of its going must only be imagined,
must be suffered by the scavenging,
senses, salvaging possible hanging-on
shards of her here and there,
even as the had been instantly
wrenched, erased as it were,
as if it never had been,
in this post-prandial passing.
one can only then recast, re-image
over and over, more pained each time,

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mount on the soul's scorched lapidaries,
her lamellar incinerating,
the slant of her first crumbling,
the rumble and shade of her deepest
moan, and this one nightfall fitful
stirrings in the flaying wind.

ii.

i know this one
could not possibly go
the way of all other
dying old houses.
firewalls isolate it,
so it sizzles on in private,
contained in all its seethings,
its intimate designs
within itself intensified

into poetry's richly ringing
intertexted lines limned
in cycles of firelit pain
and joy, sovereign and sole
within its fragilely flammable
formidable walls, my personal
incandescent world that had
then burnt on and on, not out
nor down, but forever quietly on.
and because forever,
some ghosts of it are fielded
all over the site of its ruins.
imagine fluffs of light,
ghoulish emanations of its
immortal remainders, picking up
their paths slowly, dawdling
over previous treasures, worldly
and invisible, and now, so soon
assuming their eerie sheen,
an afterglow of cinders burning
flameless in the tomb of night.

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iii.

no, it does not begin
with any crackling sound
like scarred scripts burning.
this flesh by flesh gobbling
up is initially one painless
smouldering, flames gutting
everything standing in their sweep
within the ring
of their annealing.
and then, the smell!
like something acrid, acid,
carbonaceous, quite nothing else.
and slowly, this strange oozing
smell swells, redounds into
spitting, splitting noises,
pain cracking up
in many pieces
in different places
all at once! still

its life cinders on
until this ultimate imploding,
one deafening blast to the climax rite
as loved ones writhe, ashen
in their own consumed shells,
or perhaps, relieved at last
over this burning's end.
the skull tautens, breaks,
bursts forth into nothing, nil,
its ghosts given up...pure annihilation!
the cold remains of its spirit
ash-kohl in its final irrevocable
bleak dissembling, now, here in
this one kind of final burning.

Selected Poems of Tita Lacambra-Ayala

The Impeccable Sin is to Despise Feeling

such as the narrow bitterness so narrow
that it cannot be pathed to trace the expanded
causes. The roots be plenteous and tinily

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outspread to grow, put finally into the taper
of trunk bearing the shriveling nuts,
the yellow anemic fronds waving brittle
and sad, attempting the wind's protuberant
gay song. And then let it be said (nor thought
alone so terribly, closely in the heart's
subsoil roadways) that the impeccable
salvation is love's old willingness to win
a path through the narrow tapered trunk
from the wind's gay song and follow it through
until the tiny, plenteous roots are found
and there unknotted, understood, loosened,
and mingled with not sadly in the deep soil
but gladly as wind and rain and sun
and rock and silt and loam in the deep soil.

Creations, Precisely

Even when the world is turning round
like the map and the science of it, even when
the tip is but a few degrees and east
to west it turns upon an orbit: there is
the space around its presence, the unsure
genesis of its past, and feared collisions
are in the future sure events. The laughter
and living on the gay surfaces come
from the still and sorrowful core
lost from all movement and the touch of ether
Outside gaieties have strained their elements
through depths of sand to her core, and there,
there in the core, the pure sorrow from which
even the laughter grew, from which all grow.
Even the sweetness has a bitter truth in it.
Ah this perfect globe, the world's shaky thing

Gilding

The extravagant vision
colors dawns, goldening shadows
into sight stteadfasting me.
The bright condition:
the short quick verse of laughter
the heavy sea walking on tiptoe
the wind playing along blindfolded

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or outburst of a tree yawning

Each day a day of birth
unnavelled from old dreams
lusting for hunger, for thirst
and other wild lions.

This is the time for skinning
the dirty neck of doubt.
For burning unused ropes
rotting from the tree.

The Trick is to Find

the path
to unbearable beauty
and unbearable joy
or unbearable
hurt

and bear all of it
like an egyptian
mummy wrapped
in all these
unbearable things
Then show up at a
party
smoking a cigarette
held by a friend
with a fondness for
olives, peanuts and
whisky
Then life will be
a scream
And almost bearable

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Fresh Hope for a Broken World: Gabriel Marcel's Phenomenology of Liberation

Franz Joseph C. Yoshiy II

Abstract: By the advent of the 21st century, the world is slowly succumbing (if not succumbed) to a certain 'broken-ness'. Man's identity and dignity is continually undermined as societies wage war against each other. This is all because we have failed to reflect on the presence of the other. These are the very same reflections made by French Existentialist, Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973) during his 1949 Gifford Lectures. Hence the question remains: how do we hope in the midst of our broken world? This paper shall attempt to answer this question by going back once again to Marcel's reflections on the human experience of hope and how this aids us in liberating our world from its broken-ness. It focuses on an aspect of his phenomenology and metaphysic of hope wherein he implicitly relates hope to liberty. Here he explains that in hoping, a person sets his mind to the thought that everything is not lost even though there is no more way out. This attitude enables the person to be in the state of relaxation, or what Marcel would call, liberty. In the event of a hope-towards-liberation, man seeks the assurance of the Absolute Thou (God) for an authentic liberation. Which is why for Marcel, faith is never to be separated from hope. Since, it is through faith that a person quietly affirms his belief in the Absolute Thou. This hope, likewise, provides man with an avenue for a communion with God. It must not only be contained within oneself, rather, it must be extended from one's self to the other. This bond between the self and the other through the Absolute, is what Marcel calls, love. True liberation, in the end, is rooted in these three virtues of hope, faith, love and their end, God or the Absolute Thou.

Keywords: Broken World, God, Hope, Liberation, Phenomenology

"If there is a concept in my work dominating all others, it is without doubt that of **hope**, understood as a *mysterium*, a concept, as I have previously stated, that is enlivened as though from within through ardent anticipation."

Introduction: Reflections from a Broken World[1]

By the advent of the 21st century, the world has entered the age of fast-paced technological progress. Man's capacity to reflect on things worth reflecting has been replaced by gadgets that seem to alienate him from his very being. Moreover, this lack of reflection in everyday life is also what caused the rise of terrorist violence all over the world. Many states, particularly in

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the Middle East, are collapsing into disorder. There is an impending possibility of an ecological catastrophe all because of man divorcing reflection from his everyday actions. Indeed, our world is broken. These are the very same reflections made by Christian existentialist philosopher, Gabriel Marcel (1889–1973).[2] When he delivered his lecture "A Broken World" during the first series of his Gifford Lectures in 1949[3], he pointed out that "we live today in a world at war with itself, and this state of world-war is being pushed so far that it runs the risk of ending in something that could properly be described as world-suicide."[4] It is important to note here what he said about our world turning against itself. Our world is slowly succumbing (if not succumbed) to a passionless age – a completely "mechanistic age." In the words of Marcel, a 'heartless' world. In his lecture he pointed out three factors that contributed to the world's losing of its real unity and peace: (1) *Increased socialization of life* where man's true identity is reduced to mere 'identification cards/documents'; (2) *Extension of the powers of the State* where the government acts like an omniscient god; and the (3) *Loss of real unity due to lack of brotherhood, privacy, creativity and reflection*. These signs, according to Marcel, are certain evils which present a reality that needs to be transcended. These are sins which, at their very roots, are due to one's failure to reflect on the presence of the 'other' by "taking one's own self as the center"[5]. *How then do we hope in the midst of our world's broken-ness - a broken-ness which holds us captives in our own world?* This paper will attempt to answer this question by going back to Marcel's reflections on the human experience of hope and how it may aids us in liberating ourselves from this situation.

Gabriel Marcel's Philosophy of Hope

A. Phenomenology of Hope

Although Gabriel Marcel wrote more than one treatise concerning hope, his essay "Sketch for a Phenomenology and Metaphysic of Hope"[6] provides a detailed and concrete account on hope. First and foremost, we have to understand that the first part of his essay uses Phenomenology as the primary method of locating hope in the realm of everyday human experience. However, this kind of Phenomenology does not use any kind of *epoche, eidetic-transcendental reduction*[7] rather, he utilizes a "reflection that is rooted in experience."[8] Basically, "Marcel strives here both to bring out the meaning and intention of the concrete act of hope, and also to meet the question of its validity, its truth value, its bearing on reality."[9]

Readers would probably find his essay unusual, since he does not begin with any technical definition of hope. Rather, he talks about how the experience of hope i.e. "*I hope*" like the rudimentary experience of faith i.e. "*I believe*" must be purified from any reason that is outside and that does not come from the innermost core of *my being*.[10] In other words, it is not a **problem** but rather a **mystery**.[11] In the case of a trial (e.g. illness, exile or slavery etc.), *I hope* is intended towards a salvation or deliverance. It is important to note that Marcel sees trial as a "darkness"[12] and a "captivity."[13] Furthermore, being a captive involves oneself in being "alienated" e.g. sterile artist/writer, the invalid/sick. Nevertheless, Marcel admits that it is not limited to tragic situations such as these. It could be that of a mother that is waiting for the birth of her child or an adolescent waiting for his/her love. Hence, it is with no doubt that captivity is a general part of human existence. That is why "the less that life is experienced as a captivity, the less the soul will be capable of

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seeing that veiled mysterious light"[14] – the light at the very core of hope.

But then, Marcel poses a problem regarding hope – what is the object of our hope? He reminds us that through a *nisus* or effort, hope manages to go beyond the certain objects attached to it. That is why, it is important to emphasize the difference between "I hope" and "I hope that."[15] Hope, in a sense, does not claim to know anything hence, it is timid, humble and chaste. As mentioned earlier, hope is a mystery. Thus, it is very hard to describe it or define it rationally. But some realists would argue that hope would eventually be reduced to the "organic refusal to accept intolerable situation as final"[16] e.g. hope of a sick man or hope of a prisoner. This point of view looks at hope as something measurable in the sense that the amount of an individual's refusal is tantamount to the strength of his/her hope. But Marcel explains that hope's strength is different from the body's vitality. Even though the body is on the brink of collapsing, hope is able to live on. He adds that it is meaningless to establish any psychological or physical theory of hope since it is impossible for one to tell what the trial shall do to him/her.

Hope comes from our temptation to despair. Despair, as defined in the essay, means "capitulation before a certain *fatum* laid down by our judgment."[17] In other words, we give up to an inevitable situation up to the point of imagining or even anticipating our own destruction/death (e.g. a person suffering from an incurable sickness). It is as if telling ourselves, "there is no more way out for me but death." Marcel took notice of two attitudes running in this kind of scenario: *to capitulate* and *to accept*. The distinction is simple: *to capitulate* means ceasing to be myself or "breaking down" before an inevitable situation whereas, *to accept* means keeping myself firm and intact; counters any idea of destroying the self. Nevertheless, he warns us not to imitate the stoics[18], otherwise we would end up strengthening ourselves without taking notice of the *thou*. Thus, hope cannot be resolved as a mere acceptance rather, it is "non-acceptance". This may sound a little bit uncanny, but Marcel furthers his point by saying that hope is a "positive non-acceptance" since it is more relaxed or graceful than the stiff and powerless attitude of revolt. To clarify this point further, he declares that "if we introduce the element of patience into non-acceptance we at once come very much nearer to hope."[19] Patience, in essence, means realizing that we have our own individual rhythm or pace i.e. "to take one's time." To force ourselves from this natural rhythm would only lead us to despair. Likewise, if we try to impose our own rhythm on others, we would be despairing for them. In short, patience is "letting things be."

B. Metaphysics of Hope

But then another question is raised, if we are to take hope as a certain wish for something and believe that it will come: is hope then a mere illusion? It was mentioned a while ago that there is a difference between "I hope" and "I hope that". Hope must overcome this imagination by disallowing oneself to "imagine what I hope for." Only then can it subdue the objection presented. It was also said earlier that, when I undergo a trial, my wishes are intended for liberation or salvation, no matter how I represent it. This problem is directly related to the previous argument. Is hope then a mere evasion? We have to bear in mind that in situations such as trials, we are confronted with two means: the *temptation to despair* and *liberation*.

At this point, Marcel discloses the affinity between **hope** and **liberation**. Going back to our example of the man with an incurable sickness, temptation to despair exists when his expectation that he will recover from a given

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time will not be met. But, if he is able to overcome this kind of attitude, that everything will not be lost even if his expected time was not met, then he acknowledges hope. He is far more "relaxed" from the constraints of time and his expectation. Thus, he is liberated. Furthermore, setting conditions/limits to hope would eventually lead to despair. A person who hopes is similar to a "believer" who does not limit but transcends every obstacle and secures its very "being". Marcel would strictly affirm that absolute hope is inseparable from absolute faith.[20] Which is why, despair is a betrayal to the Absolute Thou.[21]

Does this mean that finite (worldly) hope must be renounced for a more stable absolute hope? Marcel offers us the example of a patriot who hopes for the liberation of his country. If the patriot resorts to despair, this would make him give his enemies a greater advantage. This is because of the very fact that the moment he despaired, he already renounced any idea of liberation or freedom of his country. On the other hand, if he hopes for the liberation of his country, and even though he would not be able to see this liberation, the fact that he hoped for it, he actually helped to prepare it. A "religious bond" on this matter is presented, "when I hope, I strengthen, when I despair, I weaken or let go of the certain bond which unites me to the matter in question."[22] This bond, even on a personal level, exists in myself as a "spiritual interconnection" – when love is being reciprocated i.e. communion. As fidelity is *creative*, so is hope. Hope does not conform to previous and established experience, rather it is an "experience-in-the-making." With this in mind, we realize a certain relationship between hope and time. Hope penetrates through the obstacles of time since its creative power allows it to explore new "truths" other than the ones coming from established experience.[23]

Touching once again the problem of hope as an illusion, Marcel provides us with the two meanings of human condition: "vital and spiritual order" and "nature." These two need to work together since the latter falls short of the former. It is also important to note that human condition is full of risks. These risks must be acknowledged as a part of our human condition and the moment we avoid these risks[24] we are refusing hope. Hope is not a contract, that if we give off something we "expect" something in return. It makes no claim but humbly awaits on grace. The thought of a contractual "claim" would reduce "*hope in*" to a mere "expect from".

Another attitude against hope criticized by Marcel, is that of Spinoza. This attitude looks at hope as a "subjective" inclination in achieving self-fulfillment, devoid of any metaphysical grounds. Looking at the subjective and the objective as two dichotomies, would take away the essential relation between hope and **love** or **communion**.[25]

Finally, Marcel offers us with several conclusions. When facing a certain trial, "the temptation to shut in the self and time (repetition)"[26] exists. Nonetheless, it may be overcome through communion and hope. My "trial" becomes your trial and eventually mankind's trial. This leads us into Marcel's perfect formulation of hope: "**I *hope* in thee for us**". The very essence of this declaration lies within the intersubjectivity of hope and its religious implication. The true act of hope is reflected by our relation with the *thou* which eventually becomes an *us*. Moreover, it is through the Absolute Thou or God that this "thou" and "us" is bonded or "cemented". In other words, the Absolute Thou is at the very heart of this relationship. Even so, only those who are free from the bondage of Having can "*live in hope*" and true hope. Is hope then an

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innate virtue or a "gift" from the graces of the Absolute? Does it depend on us or not? Marcel answers both affirmatively and negatively. It is a "gift" in the sense that it is "a 'call' to which I must respond"[27]. It is offered, but then we could always deny it. Another question is raised: Can one hope with insufficient reason/grounds? This, he points out, is a mere question of probability – another quantification/calculation of hope. In a sense, he is trying to say that "reasons for hoping" is meaningless. What if we are already facing the matters of fact that provides us with reasons to stop hoping? In the case of the mother who still hopes for the return of his son, although he was confirmed dead, is brought about by "her loving thought which repudiates or transcends the facts". And that her hoping is a "love, against all hope."[28] Hope must transcend the egotistical desire. Like love, the lesser that it is egotistical, the more likely that presence will manifest.[29] It was clearly stated above that, hope turns away from established experience. But as Marcel suggests, Hope is a "return" and at the same time "something new". As the paradox states, "*as before, but differently and better than before*."[30] In short, a "renewal" or "transfiguration." He ends the essay with a provisional definition of hope:

Hope is essentially the availability of a soul which has entered intimately enough into the experience of communion to accomplish in the teeth of will and knowledge the transcendent act the act establishing the vital regeneration of which this experience affords both the pledge and the first-fruits.[31]

Towards a Phenomenology of Liberation

In the previous section, we have seen how Marcel provided us with penetrating reflections on the human experience of hope. Returning to our insights about our broken world, we have posed the question: *How then do we hope in the midst of our world's broken-ness - a broken-ness which holds us captives in our own world?*

First, it must be realized that our situation as a 'broken world' is a form of captivity – where we, as human beings, are alienated or deprived of a certain kind of liberty. We are captives in a sense that we are trapped inside a system of a mechanized world – "a bureaucracy of life" as Marcel puts it. This is clearly manifested, as we have mentioned at the introduction, in man's true identity being reduced to mere "documents". Likewise, the State acts like an all-seeing eye – an "omniscient god" where the State looks at his fellow men as a potential threat to its power. Clearly, at the very root of these problems, is man's failure to reflect that beyond these documents lies a valuable truth – the truth of man's being. And, it is precisely this indifference towards the value of this truth that fragments our world.

This, however, may be counter-balanced by a sincere act of hope. A hope that rejects the despair laid down by our submission to these "document identities" and "god-acting State". As stated in the preceding part of this paper, hope is always directed towards a certain kind of liberation or salvation. Liberation, in this sense, is the feeling of relaxation and creativity amidst the grappling thoughts of giving up on our current situation. Hence, one's battle-cry would be: "we can do something." And by pronouncing these words, one does not simply hope anymore, but also "believes in" the transcendence of any possible calculation of victory or loss. This person-in-hope likewise quietly and humbly believes in the power of the Absolute Thou – the one capable of granting true liberation. This affirmation of belief in the Absolute Thou, according to Marcel, is faith.[32]

Hope, then again, is not an egotistical enterprise. It is always tied to intersubjectivity,

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as Marcel puts it. "[T]his means that hope is always centered on a *we*, on a living relationship…One of the most meaningful examples that can be given in this context is that of hope in the Liberation such as we have lived it in the dark times."[33] This only goes to show that as hope is intersubjective, so is liberation. Hope in liberation, therefore, calls for an active participation in a concrete community. As Vincent Miceli remarks, "Hope, then, cannot be self-centered…I hope for the return of someone long absent, for the defeat of the enemy, for peace for all, for the guarantee to all peoples of their liberties."[34] In short, hoping in liberation is nothing without the essential virtue of love. This love, calls us to be **available** (*disponibilité*) to others' needs, especially in their times of trials and darkness. This bond created by loving and remaining with the other likewise creates a communion with the Absolute Thou.

Some Final Remarks

To sum up everything, it was shown at the beginning of this essay that our world today is a 'broken world' due to certain elements pointed out by Gabriel Marcel during his Gifford lecture, leaving us with the question: *How then do we hope in the midst of our world's broken-ness - a broken-ness which holds us captives in our own world?* By going back to Marcel's "Sketch for a Phenomenology and Metaphysic of Hope", we were able to trace three important virtues highlighted by Marcel himself which is quintessential in liberating ourselves from our broken world – hope, faith and love. Hope is what enables us to reflect that everything is not lost in the face of our current situation. This hope must, likewise, be coupled with faith that we can do something through the Absolute Thou, who is at the same time the final guarantor of our liberation. Finally, these two are summed up by love. Love enables us to enter into a genuine communion with the Absolute Thou by making ourselves available to others' hope for liberation. Hence, "hope is emptied of its meaning and its virtue if it is not the affirmation of a we, of an all-of-us-together – but this oneness of spirit can of course be founded only upon an appeal to the One."[35] True liberation, therefore, is rooted in these three virtues of hope, faith, love and their end, God or the Absolute Thou.

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[1] This paper was presented in one of the parallel sessions during the joint conference of the Philosophical Association of the Philippines, Inc. and *Pagaruhangan* held at the Lyceum of Aparri, Cagayan, last February 25-27, 2016. The theme of the conference was "Questions on God".

[2] Gabriel Marcel, *Philosophical Fragments 1909-1914 and The Philosopher and Peace*, trans. by. Viola Herms Drath, (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1965) p. 19. [emphasis mine]

[3] These lectures were compiled and published as *The Mystery of Being: Reflection and Mystery* (First Series-1949) and *The Mystery of Being: Faith and Reality* (Second Series-1950).

[4] Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being: Reflection and Mystery*, trans. by. G.S. Fraser (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery Company, 1960) p. 28.

[5] Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being: Faith and Reality*, trans. by. Rene Hague (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery Company, 1951) p. 181.

[6] Gabriel Marcel, *Homo Viator: Introduction to a Metaphysic of Hope*, trans. by Emma Craufurd (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1951), 29-67.

[7] Edmund Husserl, the founder of Phenomenology, used these three methods (epoché, eidetic and transcendental reduction) in his phenomenological method.

[8] This reflection is further subdivided into two levels: **Primary** and **Secondary**. The former "tends to dissolve the unity of experience…" while, the latter "is recuperative; it reconquers that unity." Marcel, *The Mystery of Being: Reflection and Mystery*, p. 102-103.

[9] Seymour Cain, *Seymour Cain, Gabriel Marcel's Theory of Religious Experience, (New York: Peter Lang, 1995)*, 112.

[10] In his book *Être et Avóir*, Marcel dichotomizes *being* (être) from *having* (avóir). In simple terms, the latter means "to have for one's self, to keep for one's self, to hide…[it] seems to have a tendency to destroy and lose itself in the very thing it began by possessing." The former, on the other hand, refers to something that comes from the very **depths of myself** i.e. something

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that which I do not merely possess but is **integral to me**. Cf. Gabriel Marcel, *Being and Having*, trans. Katharine Farrer (London: Dacre Press, 1949), 160 [emphasis mine].

[11] Here we have to take note of Marcel's distinction of *problem* and *mystery*. "A *problem* is something which I meet, which I find complete before me, but which I can therefore lay siege and reduce. But a *mystery* is something in which I am myself involved…A genuine *problem* is subject to an appropriate technique...whereas a *mystery*…transcends every conceivable technique." *Ibid*, 117; emphasis mine. In his phenomenological method, a problem is located within the Primary Reflection whereas the mystery is in the Secondary Reflection.

[12] "It is, indeed, true that throughout a trial of the kind I have in mind, I find I am deprived for an indefinite period of a certain light for which I long." Marcel, *Homo Viator*, 30.

[13] Captivity, as Marcel defines it, is "a compulsory mode of existence involving restrictions of every kind touching my personal actions." *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid.*, 32.

[15] The distinction between the two shall be tackled under the section of this paper "Metaphysics of Hope."

[16] Marcel, *Homo Viator*, 35.

[17] *Ibid.,* 37.

[18] "Stoicism counsels an acceptance of the inevitable that entails the determination to remain myself and thus transcend the decree of fate. This, says Marcel, is a self-enclosed, unradiating virtue, which strengthens the inner self, without regard for the neighbor, perhaps the highest form of egotism." Cain, *Gabriel Marcel's Theory of Religious Experience*, 112.

[19] Marcel, *Homo Viator*, 39.

[20] Marcel emphasizes that the source of this "absolute hope" is from the Absolute Thou or God. "It appears as a response of the creature to the infinite Being to whom it is conscious of owing everything that is has and upon whom it cannot impose any condition whatsoever." *Ibid.*, 47.

[21] "What is the meaning of despair if not a declaration that God has withdrawn himself from me?" *Ibid.*

[22] *Ibid.*, 48.

[23] Established experience, according to Marcel, looks at time as if it does not bring anything new. E.g. elders telling the younger generation "indisputable truths". Marcel contends that the elder's experience before is different from the youth's experience in the present moment. The elders imposing their "truths" to the younger ones would create a "generation gap". In addition, this established experience is much more prone to despair since it looks at time as a closed system.

[24] Avoiding risks is similar to avoiding disappointment.

[25] "In creation, love is embodied in the created thing…hope is a vital aspect of the creative process…This is not a matter of self-amusement but of communion with others; and we see that whereas despair and solitude go together, hope is always bound up with communion, with love." Cain, *Gabriel Marcel's Theory of Religious Experience*, 116.

[26] *Ibid.*, 117.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] Marcel, *Homo Viator*, 65.

[29] "This *presence* is incarnated in the 'us' for whom 'I hope in Thee', that is to say in a communion of which I proclaim the indestructability." *Ibid.*, 66; emphasis mine.

[30] *Ibid.*, 67.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] Absolute fidelity is based "on a certain appeal delivered from the depths of my own insufficiency *ad summam altitudinem*." To be able to fill in this insufficiency, Marcel proposes a commitment to this being whom he calls the "absolute recourse." This commitment presupposes a "radical humility", meaning we have to admit that we cannot always rely on ourselves – that we have to seek another "recourse". In this case, he identifies this "absolute recourse" with God. This **absolute fidelity** in the "absolute recourse" or God is what Marcel calls, **faith**. Cf. Gabriel Marcel, *Creative Fidelity*, trans. by Robert Rosthal (New York: First Noonday Printing Press, 1964), 167-168.

[33] Gabriel Marcel, "Structure of Hope," in *Communio* 23, trans. by David-Louis Schindler, Jr. (Fall 1996), 607-608.

[34] Vincent P. Miceli, S.J., *Ascent to Being: Gabriel Marcel's Philosophy of Communion* (Belgium, Desclee Company, 1965), 128-129.

[35] Marcel, "Structure of Hope," 611.

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