

Talisik



An Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy

Volume 6 | Number 1 | August 2019



TALISIK

An Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy

Volume 6, Number 1

August 2019

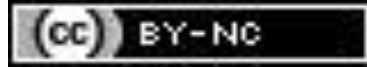
ISSN 2362-9452



Concilium Philosophiae
Faculty of Arts and Letters
University of Santo Tomas



COPYRIGHTS



All the research articles published by TALISIK are licensed under a
Creative Commons Attribution - Commercial 4.0 International License.

TALISIK supports the Open Access Movement. Those who intend to copy and redistribute the articles published by the journal are free upon the condition that they cite the journal article or acknowledge the author.

Articles in the journal are not eligible for commercial purposes.

© Copyright TALISIK | ISSN 2362-9452 | talisik.journal@gmail.com | www.talisik.org

ABOUT THE COVER

TALISIK: An Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy, 6:1 (August 2019)

Layout by John Michael De Guzman

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

In accordance with the mission and vision of the Department of Philosophy of the University of Santo Tomas, i.e. cultivating a research oriented culture, the Concilium Philosophiae, the official organization of the undergraduate students of philosophy of the UST Faculty of Arts and Letters, established **TALISIK: An Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy** in order to foster a research mentality among the undergraduate students of philosophy. As a research platform primarily for undergraduate philosophy students in the Philippines, the journal seeks to publish articles across the whole range of philosophical topics, but with special emphasis on the following subject strands:

- The history of philosophy (East and West)
- The branches of philosophy, such as, logic, metaphysics, cosmology, epistemology, ethics
- Philosophical schools, such as, rationalism, empiricism, phenomenology, existentialism
- Contemporary philosophical issues and trends

TALISIK is a Filipino word. It is a contraction of “Talas” [Keeness] and “Saliksik” [Search]. **TALISIK** then means “Katalasan ng isip na umunawa ng anuman” [Keeness of the mind to understand anything] and “Malaliman at matalinong pagdalumat sa kahulugan ng anuman” [In-depth and intelligent search for the meaning of anything]. Based from the definition of **TALISIK**, the Concilium Philosophiae intends to demonstrate the acumen of undergraduate students of philosophy through their research undertakings. The journal primarily caters to the works of the UST undergraduate students of philosophy, but also welcomes contributions from other fields and institutions.

TALISIK publishes issues annually.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief

Mr. Patrick Andre C. Mencias | University of Santo Tomas

Managing Editor

Mr. John Michael C. De Guzman | University of Santo Tomas

Associate Editors

Ms. Rya Joyce C. Catabas | University of Santo Tomas

Mr. Ralph Janssen Purugganan | University of Santo Tomas

Mr. Christian R. Ramos | University of Santo Tomas

Layout Editors

Mr. John Michael C. De Guzman | University of Santo Tomas

ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. Romualdo Abulad | University of Santo Tomas

Mr. Ranier Abengaña | University of Santo Tomas

Dr. Jove Jim Aguas | University of Santo Tomas

Dr. Fleurdeliz Altez - Albela | University of Santo Tomas

Dr. Paolo Bolaños | University of Santo Tomas

Dr. Jovito Cariño | University of Santo Tomas

Dr. Roland Theuas Pada | University of Santo Tomas

LETTER FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Without a doubt, the criticism of Paolo Bolaños in regard to the lack of “Read-Write-Debate (Sulat-Basa-Debate)”¹ culture of doing Filipino Philosophy would seem to apply even of doing philosophy here in the Philippines. Truly, doing Philosophy should be understood as a dynamic activity that allows a student of philosophy to think, be critical and be able to express his thoughts in such formal fashion, thus the art of writing and submitting to a journal. Students of philosophy would seem to stop in reading and writing process insofar as papers written are only known within the four corners of a classroom, thus having no engagement with in the world of academic philosophy. Therefore, the criticism would seem to be rendered relevant beyond doing Filipino Philosophy, especially in the undergraduate level in the country.

This Volume crafted a rigorous review process that ensures the quality of the article and to showcase of one’s scholarly expertise and discipline in their respective research interest. Thus, the selection was no easy task. The Journal features theses who garnered high remarks during the recent Undergraduate Research Colloquium last May 2019, reduced into journal article format and undergone the review process with comments from their respective reviewers and panelists during the defense. With this being said, the practice of philosophizing continues and flourishes as authors who are eager to contribute to philosophy by putting forward their respective research outputs, and courageously accepts comments and criticisms, thus participating in an atmosphere of discourse in academic philosophy. It also highlights its first book review written on a well known Filipino Thinker, Roque Ferriols.

In presentation of the Sixth Volume of Talisik, we, the Editorial Board 2018-2019 will continue to pursue academic excellence for philosophy in becoming the avenue for philosophical discourse and engagements in the undergraduate level. We extend our sincerest gratitude and congratulations to the contributors for this volume. For it is without their unceasing determination and passion in doing philosophy brings forth a sign of philosophy’s relevance to society. As well as to the reviewers for their patience in taking time reviewing the articles. Their support goes to show that there are scholars who show interest in sharing their scholarly expertise with an undergraduate author. We also would like to thank the advisory board of the Journal, Prof. Paolo Bolaños, Ph.D, and Asst. Prof. Roland Theuas Pada, Ph.D for their unwavering support and guidance in inspiring their students to continue this project that enables critical thinking and promoting the culture of research and writing. And also to Mr. Ranier Abengaña for his comments, and advices necessary for the betterment of the journal and for providing tips in managing a research journal.

¹ Paolo Bolaños, Ang Pamimilosopiyang Filipino Bilang Kulang sa “Sulat-Basa-Debate” in *Ilang Mga Katanungan Ukol sa Pamimilosopiyang Pilipino: Isang Diskusyon Gamit Email*. An Interview published by Emmanuel De Leon, 2015 in <https://gilidsophia.blogspot.com/2015/07/ilang-mga-katanungan-ukol-sa.html>

In line with the vision of the department in promoting the culture of research in academic philosophy, one must be reminded of one's capability not only to simply read and to write, but of one's capacity to be able to join the discourse of philosophy. For it is in the cultivation of this culture that it may show the relevance of philosophy and of the humanities in the midst of progressing times where philosophy would seem to be found nowhere. It is in the hopes that the publication of this Volume that it may be able to ignite discussions in the current discourses in philosophy and continue to be an avenue for such agenda. May this volume instill the courage for the readers to read, write, and to debate in the spirit of academic philosophy upon reading the articles of our fellow Filipino researchers of philosophy.

The Editorial Board

2018-2019

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

MATTHEW DOMINIC D. DIMAPAWI graduated Cum Laude from UST Faculty of Arts and Letters majoring in Philosophy. He is also a style and copy editor of TALA, an online journal of History, and an alumnus literary writer at the Varsitarian, the official student publication of UST. His research interests delve on Phenomenology, Hegelian Studies, Historiography, and Post-Marxism

CHRISTOPHER S. FERNANDEZ is a graduate student with a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from the University of San Carlos. He lives in Cebu City. His research interests include Wittgenstein, Indian Philosophy, Chinese Philosophy, the History of Western Philosophy, and Postmodernism.

JOY THERESE C. GOMEZ is a Bachelor of Arts major in Philosophy graduate from the University of Santo Tomas, Philippines. Currently, she is a copywriter intern for Bean & Barley. She has been a consistent dean's lister in her undergraduate years in philosophy and has been a feature writer for UST AB's The Flame where she has produced several noteworthy feature articles including the article entitled 'A resilient daughter's Silent Battlecry' which is to be awarded a student Quill merit award in late august 2019. Her current research interests are that of aesthetics, ethics, feminism, existentialism and the broad spectrum of self-help.

IVAN EFREAIM A. GOZUM has a degree in Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, since 2019 from the University of Santo Tomas, España, Manila. Currently, he is an instructor at the Angeles University Foundation, Angeles City, Pampanga. His research interests include phenomenology, philosophy of religion, medieval philosophy, Gabriel Marcel and Karol Wojtyła.

KENICHI ANDREAU F. TIGAS is a graduate of the undergraduate degree program in Philosophy offered by the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the Pontifical and Royal University of Santo Tomas. He received his primary and secondary education from St. Paul College San Rafael, San Rafael, Bulacan. His research interests include philosophical anthropology, phenomenology and ethics. He is currently teaching at the Senior High School Department of Adamson University.

TALISIK: An Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy

Volume 6, Number 1 August 2019

Articles

- 11 CHRISTOPHER S. FERNANDEZ
In Defense of Wittgenstein's Therapeutic Philosophy
- 34 JOY THERESE C. GOMEZ
The Beyond And Its Shadow: Emmanuel Levinas On Visual Art
As Transcendence
- 57 IVAN EFRAIM A. GOZUM
Gabriel Marcel's *The Mystery of the Family* in the Filipino
Context
- 80 KENICHI ANDREU F. TIGAS
Work and The Contemporary Human Person In Karol Wojtyła's Theory Of Participation

Book Review

- 96 MATTHEW DOMINIC D. DIMAPAWI
Consciousness in a Time of War: A Review of Roque J. Ferriols' *Sulyáp sa Aking
Pinanggalingan*

In Defense of Wittgenstein's Therapeutic Philosophy

Christopher S. Fernandez

University of San Carlos | kataliyun@gmail.com

Abstract: Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy is accused of being an uncritical philosophy. This allegation is raised by Critical Theory and specifically by Matthew Crippen. Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy purportedly redacts any critique towards oppressive social conditions especially the ones engendered in language itself. It therefore refrains and discourages the questioning of oppressive conditions of pressing concern. However, this accusation against Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy is found wanting. This research shows that Crippen and Critical Theory inadequately assess the character of Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy. This work argues that, on the contrary, Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy facilitates the endeavor of critique. It offers a paradigmatic reminder of how to do critique viz. doing a critique that is sensitive to language.

Keywords: Wittgenstein; Therapeutic Philosophy; Critical Theory

Introduction

In the *Philosophical Investigations*, Ludwig Wittgenstein remarks, “Philosophy is a struggle against the bewitchment of our understanding by the resources of our language.”² Because of this pronouncement, among others, Wittgenstein is interpreted to espouse a philosophy that is therapeutic. This therapeutic character aims at the resolution of philosophical problems brought about by linguistic entanglements.³ This task is exactly, for Wittgenstein, the role of philosophy.

² Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, translated and edited by G.E.M. Anscombe, P.M.S Hacker and Joachim Schulte (Singapore: Blackwell, 2009), 52 §109.

³ To some degree, interpreters of Wittgenstein say that there is a sort of therapeutic end in his philosophy. There is, for instance, Peter Hacker, Gordon Baker, and James Peterman who explicitly state this. But what they mean when they say “therapeutic” is the locus of interpretative dispute. Cf. P.M.S Hacker, “Wittgenstein (London: Phoenix

What is integral in disentangling this linguistic knot is Wittgenstein's notion of language-games. Briefly, Wittgenstein explains that there are many kinds of language; that is, there are many ways in which words are used. Wittgenstein's notion of language-games shows that use determines meaning; and that meaning is intertwined with the activity of life, of everyday living. This specific reading of Wittgenstein's philosophy -the therapeutic dissolution of philosophical problems via the language-games- however, is also subject to various critiques. One such criticism is raised by Matthew Crippen. Having supposed that philosophy should aim at complete clarity, Crippen points out that the task is merely to clarify established language. In this sense, according to Crippen, the "therapeutic philosopher" whom he refers to as the Wittgensteinian philosopher takes language itself for granted. This work evinces that the description of the uses of words and the tabulation of linguistic facts jolts out a disposition of open-mindedness. Rather than limiting discourse, grammatical clarification paves open the possibility of creative expression in language. The description of the uses of words opens up a myriad of alternative grammars -rules for the language-games- and in this way dispels rigid adherence to any single grammar. Briefly, it is therefore far from what Crippen raises as "the unwillingness to interfere with and move outside established forms of language."

Theoretical Background

First, we will need a brief course on Wittgenstein's therapeutic philosophy. Now what exactly do Wittgenstein scholars mean by it? Guy Kahane comments that Wittgenstein's works left "a series of competing and often wildly contradictory Wittgensteins."⁴ That is, numerous details concerning Wittgenstein are subject to various interpretations as such disputes about the exact vision of Wittgenstein are commonplace in Wittgenstein scholarship. For the purpose of differentiating the relevant interpretations from the rest, this research has to first lay down piece meals of the "many portraits" of Wittgenstein, i.e. the corpus of literature on the later Wittgenstein. Understanding the positions concerning the philosophy of Wittgenstein as a kind of therapy in the sections to come is essential in order to locate the points of contention for Crippen later on.

Pertinent here in discussing philosophy as a kind of therapy in Wittgenstein are those who read "two Wittgensteins," - the "early" Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and the "later" Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations*. The focus is on the latter viz. the readings for the later Wittgenstein because it is in the later Wittgenstein that the notion of the language-games is introduced and where Crippen's critique is directed. More definitely, the focus is on the interpretations concerning the later Wittgenstein's occupation with therapy. It should be added further that this work takes the *Philosophical Investigations* as an exemplar of the later Wittgenstein. It is taken as a representative work but not to the exclusion of the other works of Wittgenstein.

Paperback, 1999); Gordon Baker, "Wittgenstein's Method" (London: Blackwell, 2004); James Peterman, "Philosophy as Therapy" (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992.)

⁴ Kahane, Guy and Edward Kanterian and Oskari Kuusela., *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters: Essays in Memory of Gordon Baker* (London: Blackwell, 2007), 2.

Classifying Wittgenstein Interpretations

First and foremost, there are several categorizations for the interpretations of the later Wittgenstein. Hans-Johann Glock, for example, distinguishes the “Rationalist” and “Irrationalists” camps of interpretation in the later Wittgenstein.⁵ Glock sees that Wittgenstein can either be interpreted as a proponent of justification and reason (rationalist) or as a sage and prophet (irrationalist) by virtue of his philosophy. For the irrationalist thematic, Glock enumerates the following interpretations: Existentialist, Therapeutic, Aspect, Nonsense, Pyrrhonian, and Genre interpretations.⁶ Relevant here are the therapeutic interpretations. Glock holds that “grammatical remarks of Wittgenstein’s later work are not conceptual clarifications but only therapeutic attempts to make us abandon philosophical problems for the sake of intellectual tranquility.”⁷ Simply put, he means to say that therapy in Wittgenstein is meant to cure disturbances in the mind which are philosophical in nature.

On another note, Phil Hutchinson considers three classifications for the later Wittgenstein. These are the Doctrinal, Elucidatory, and Therapeutic interpretations. Again, pertinent here are the Therapeutic interpretations. For Hutchinson, therapeutic readings see Wittgenstein as facilitating an “aspect shift for interlocutors.”⁸ What Hutchinson means, briefly, is that Wittgenstein’s philosophy allows one to gain a special insight that there are other ways to see or understand things. This constitutes the character of therapy in Wittgenstein according to Hutchinson.

Meanwhile, Guy Kahane and Edward Kanterian forwards another categorization to interpretations of Wittgenstein. It consists of the following: the Orthodox Interpretations viz. Peter Hacker; the New Wittgensteinian interpretations, viz. James Conant; and the Therapeutic interpretations, viz. John Wisdom.⁹ Generally, the Orthodox interpretations attribute the later Wittgenstein with a therapeutic purpose of removing philosophical confusions. The therapeutic readings, according to Kahane and Kanterian, see the *Philosophical Investigations* as aiming to release us from philosophical problems as well but this however is seen as a primary ethical interest.¹⁰ Proponents include John Wisdom, Friedrich Waismann, James Edwards, Gordon Baker and Stanley Cavell. It is important to note that there are different versions of the therapeutic approach in reading Wittgenstein respective to each proponent.

Let’s follow Guy Kahane and Edward Kanterian’s classification schema of Wittgenstein interpretation as guide. It is this classification that applies more broadly yet comprehensively to the matter at hand. In it, it is possible to define therapy (in Wittgenstein) as the dissolution of philosophical problems in general irrespective of the interpretative school. The endeavor here, chiefly, is specifically to explicate the readings of Wittgenstein as engaging in a therapeutic project. These kinds of readings are plenty. For instance, James Edward’s *Ethics without*

⁵ Hans-Johann Glock, “Perspectives on Wittgenstein: An Intermittently Opinionated Survey,” in Kahane et al. eds., *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters*, 52-60

⁶ Hans-Johann Glock, “Perspectives on Wittgenstein: An Intermittently Opinionated Survey,” 54.

⁷ Hans-Johann Glock, “Perspectives on Wittgenstein: An Intermittently Opinionated Survey,”

⁸ Phil Hutchinson, “What’s the Point of Elucidation,” *Metaphilosophy* 38, no.5 (2007): 702.

⁹ Kahane et al., *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters*, 4-10.

¹⁰ Kahane et al., *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters*, 6-7.

Philosophy and James Peterman's *Philosophy as Therapy* suggest that Wittgenstein throughout his early and later writings maintained a therapeutic aim. Since this work is concerned with Wittgenstein and more specifically his therapeutic philosophy, a distinction of terms is necessary.

Philosophical Therapy or Therapeutic Philosophy

According to Eugen Fischer, philosophy as a kind of therapy can mean two things. First, as "philosophical therapy," philosophy is used to solve emotional and behavioral problems.¹¹ Second, as "therapeutic philosophy," philosophy has the goal of solving emotional and behavioral problems resulting from philosophical reflection.¹² Now Wittgenstein, according to Fischer, belongs to the former (therapeutic philosophy) while Sextus Empiricus is an example belonging to the latter (philosophical therapy).

It is crucial to note that Wittgenstein lacked a systematic account of his own project as therapeutic.¹³ This very fact allows the possibility of multiple interpretations. At best his remarks in the *Philosophical Investigations* or, indeed, in any other text of his only hint towards a deliberate goal for therapy.¹⁴ To clarify this, we have to examine scholars who, in some detail, attempted at identifying the character of the later Wittgenstein to be therapeutic keeping in mind the distinction of terms given previously.

Wittgenstein's Therapeutic Project

The issue of interpretation at stake here is how exactly Wittgenstein's later philosophy is considered to be therapeutic. A representative dispute regarding the therapeutic method of Wittgenstein can be taken with Gordon Baker's interpretation of Wittgenstein and that of Peter Hacker's interpretation of Wittgenstein. These two interpreters shall be representatives of the attempts to characterize therapy in Wittgenstein. Interestingly, Baker's interpretation in *Wittgenstein's Method* (which is his later reading of Wittgenstein)¹⁵ comes at odds with that of Hacker's and where an interpretative dilemma surfaces. The distinction between philosophical therapy and therapeutic philosophy is important here. Baker avers the former for reading

¹¹ Eugen Fischer, "How to Practise Philosophy as Therapy: Philosophical Therapy and Therapeutic Philosophy," *Metaphilosophy* 42 (2011): 50-54.

¹² Eugen Fischer, "How to Practise Philosophy as Therapy: Philosophical Therapy and Therapeutic Philosophy," 57-60.

¹³ James Peterman, *Philosophy as Therapy: An Interpretation and Defense of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophical Project* (New York: State University of New York, 1992), 9.

¹⁴ In the *Philosophical Investigations*, the word "therapy" is mentioned in §133. There is mention of "treatment" in §§254-5, and "disease" in §593. All in all, there is no explicit pronouncement of a "therapeutic project." However, it is notable that Wittgenstein would make several analogies of his "method" to that of psychoanalysis in his manuscripts. (Hacker, "Gordon Baker's Later Interpretation of Wittgenstein," in Kahane et al. eds., *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters*, 98.)

¹⁵ Briefly, Katherine Morris identifies an "Early Baker" who sees Wittgenstein as proposing a new theory of meaning, a "Middle Baker" who sees Wittgenstein as mustering descriptions of grammar, and a "Later Baker" who views Wittgenstein as being associated to psychoanalysis. (Katherine J. Morris, "Wittgenstein's Method: Ridding People of Philosophical Prejudices," in Kahane et al. eds., *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters*, 67-68.)

Wittgenstein but Hacker's reading opts for the latter. A succinct discussion on both interpretations is to follow.

Baker reads Wittgenstein's therapy as similar to psychoanalysis. This is to the extent that philosophy in Wittgenstein, according to him, is tasked with providing therapy from the torments of the unconscious. Hacker, on the other hand, sees Baker's interpretation as "deeply mistaken"¹⁶ since for him it is not sufficiently supported by the texts. Nonetheless he assures that Wittgenstein is undoubtedly therapeutic¹⁷ but in a different sense from Baker's reading. The reading of Hacker involves the elimination of misconceived ideas that hinder a clear view of the interconnections of concepts.¹⁸ Thus, therapy in Wittgenstein, according to Hacker, is such that it remedies confusions that manifests in the surface of our grammar by means of getting a clear overview of it.

Baker argues that therapy is primarily concerned with bringing consciousness to motivations and desires. In Baker's understanding, philosophical utterances are latent unconscious manifestations of cravings, drives, and prejudices.¹⁹ Hence, Baker says, the target of Wittgenstein's therapy is ultimately the acknowledgement of what unconsciously influences an individual²⁰ which is reflected in language. Baker claims that his assertions allow Wittgenstein's therapy to enhance the welfare of a person by making conscious of the unconscious so as to render the grip of the unconscious harmless. In this interpretation, the aim of philosophy is therapy from the torment of unconscious dogmas in one's thinking.²¹

P.M.S. Hacker holds a different position from Baker. For him, Wittgenstein is therapeutic in the sense that he ushered careful description of grammar between forms of expressions. This is in order to locate an interconnection of concepts that serves as the locus of philosophical confusions.²² Here Hacker says that having a pictorial view of our grammar illuminates discourse and thus avoids entanglement. Descriptions of the way words are used, precisely the perspicuous representations (*übersichtliche Darstellung*), sheds light upon philosophical confusions. In a similar vein, Dale Jacquette argues that language and its misunderstandings are not found in the "suffering psyche" but in language itself.²³ If language, says Jacquette, is cured of "meaningless philosophical terminology that is not part of any genuine language-game,"²⁴ there will be no more basis for having philosophical problems in the first place. This is in league with Hacker's thought.

Hacker's interpretation on the nature of Wittgenstein's dissolution of philosophical problems is significant in the orthodox interpretation. His position magnifies the element of language clarification as descriptions of grammar but hardly advances more positive claims about

¹⁶ Hacker, "Baker's Later Interpretation of Wittgenstein," 90.

¹⁷ Hacker, "Baker's Later Interpretation of Wittgenstein," 99.

¹⁸ Hacker, "Baker's Later Interpretation of Wittgenstein," 99-100.

¹⁹ Morris, "Wittgenstein's Method," 69-71.

²⁰ Gordon P. Baker, *Wittgenstein's Method - Neglected Aspects: Essays on Wittgenstein by Gordon Baker*. Edited by Katherine J. Morris (London: Blackwell, 2004), 219.

²¹ Morris, "Wittgenstein's Method," 68.

²² P.M.S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein's Place In Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 107.

²³ Dale Jacquette, "Later Wittgenstein's Anti-Philosophical Therapy," *Philosophy* 89 (2014): 266.

²⁴ Dale Jacquette, "Later Wittgenstein's Anti-Philosophical Therapy," 267.

the aims of philosophy, whilst Baker seems to implicate psychological claims such as making the unconscious surface to thought. Baker's therapy purports to deal with biases that analysis cannot adequately dispel.²⁵ But Hacker's therapy deals with things where only a new kind of analysis of perspicuous representation can deal with.

From these brief explications on Wittgenstein's therapeutic project, it goes to show that there is issue precisely with the meaning of therapy in Wittgenstein. More adequately put, that there is issue in characterizing therapy in Wittgenstein. The purpose of these discussions is to properly situate Hacker's understanding of the nature of therapy in Wittgenstein (which will be important later) as it stands to others, and that there should be due recognition of other interpretations. However, the task here is not to give detail on the entire range of later Wittgenstein therapies. It is now proper to start extrapolating on the criticisms against therapeutic philosophy specifically in Crippen.

Crippen's Critique of Wittgenstein

Matthew Crippen offers a unique critique against Wittgenstein's therapeutic philosophy. Crippen criticizes the later Wittgenstein in respect to its susceptibility to being insufficiently critical towards language in the sense that it inhibits criticism of language. In this section, we focus on Crippen's position which argues against the later Wittgenstein's philosophy under the pretense that such a philosophy contributes to "totalitarian currents."²⁶ In doing so, this section elaborates on the notions concerning the issues with Wittgenstein's philosophy pressed by Crippen. In particular, this section opens the series of indictments by Crippen against the later Wittgenstein's therapeutic philosophy. Crippen forwards his case that there is no "wholesale rejection" of Wittgenstein's thought, to be sure, but rather only a critical commentary or critical analysis of the aspects of Wittgenstein's thought.²⁷

Crippen points out that Wittgenstein's project investigates the functions and structures of language. It is in this sense that it is grammatically oriented. According to Crippen, grammar in Wittgenstein means the possibilities of use for a word referring to the many ways in which words are quite simply put.²⁸ Typical in sentence construction, words establish what is meant. Words are used in various combinations with other words to form various meanings relative to the combination. Insofar as this is the case, grammar is the manner in which things combine.

Fundamentally, however, words do not simply yield meaning from the mere combination of words or their word-order. Crippen adds that words form meaning in relation to particular contexts.²⁹ There are several factors that altogether shape the meaning and the potentialities of use.

²⁵ Morris, "Wittgenstein's Method," 69.

²⁶ Matthew Crippen, "The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory," *Essays in Philosophy* 8 no., 1 (2007): 1.

²⁷ Matthew Crippen, "The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory," 1

²⁸ Ibid., Matthew Crippen, "The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory," 3.

²⁹ Matthew Crippen, "The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory," 3

Crippen enumerates things like environmental setting, gesture, and intonation which affect the relationships of communication between language-users.³⁰ Depending on the context, the same word can serve multiple purposes. Crippen accordingly gives the example of “water.” A toddler pointing at a lake exclaiming “Water!” is one thing and a man stumbling in a desert who exclaims “Water!” is another. The former takes the form of a declarative (the toddler ostensibly points at water) and the latter an imperative (the man begs for water.) This simplistically denotes the difference of their uses albeit being the exact same word.

On the other hand, different words can be put into the same use. Crippen gives this example. “Can” and “understand” may refer to the same token of use in the statements “Can you [speak] Spanish?” and “Understand Spanish?” In this case, both words indicate ability in language or speech and therefore share “conceptual kinship.”³¹ In either case, viz. the difference of words for the same context or the same context with different words, meaning is evidently malleable with respect to its use. Thus, meaning is dependent on use such that a change in the usage of a word in a context entails a shift in meaning completely. These rather simplistic examples nevertheless convey the point. Again, to understand a word is to see how it is being used.

All things considered, Crippen agrees with Wittgenstein’s assertion that “The meaning of a word is in its use in language.”³² Understanding the meaning of “the use of words” is the linchpin of the thought. Crippen continues saying that on this view, questions of philosophy are questions of meaning.³³ For example, “the roar of the processing engine is deafening” makes grammatical sense even before the truth of the matter, that is, prior to having an empirical measurement of the sound (in decibels, for instance). While the nonsensical is the confused misapplications of grammar such as, for example, “The sound of the sun tastes terrible.” Again, this is dependent on a large part on how the use of words is exercised.

A philosophical problem is like a grammatical joke. It involves a strange play of words.³⁴ Crippen states that what is confused in philosophical discourse is the failure to arrive at the meaning of words. He gives an example of the word “nothing.” Now the philosopher who assumes the grammar of nothing along the lines of physical objects may perhaps struggle with the problems concerning the occupancy of space and the nature of a vacuum and so on. These sorts of problems, then, are grammatical fictions arising out of linguistic misinterpretation and therefore are false problems.³⁵ The entirety of the issue, for instance, can be avoided by not assuming that particular sense of “nothing” and recognizing the sleight-of-hand of the grammar that could have been

³⁰ Matthew Crippen, “The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory,” 3

³¹ Ibid. Matthew Crippen, “The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory,” 3

³² Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §43.

³³ Crippen, “Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy,” 3.

³⁴ Ibid., Matthew Crippen, “The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory,” 4.

³⁵ Ibid. Matthew Crippen, “The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory,” 4

otherwise. Take for example Gershwin's *I Got Plenty of Nothing*. Crippen earmarks it for its different use of the word "nothing."³⁶

There are many kinds of languages for there are many uses of words. Thus, there are many grammars (the uses of a word.) The role of the philosopher, according to Wittgenstein, is to look at language and to clarify its meaning -identifying the grammar and its applications- and subsequently the grammatical misinterpretations and misapplications³⁷ This is for the express purpose of alleviating conceptual confusions according to the therapeutic interpretations of Wittgenstein. Since there are many uses of words and relative to them are the varying grammars, i.e., what is permissible or not as per their use, then assuredly there are many methods in clarifying grammar.

Philosophy for Wittgenstein, Crippen writes, aims at perspicuity or clarity in offering elucidations that serve as reminders or points of observations for which a better command and overview of the use of words is possible.³⁸ Wittgenstein, Crippen thinks, is against the use of words alien to the grammar of the discourse. For example, Wittgenstein is vehement against the metaphysical uses of the word "object." More broadly, Crippen thinks Wittgenstein indicts the "unheard-of" use of words which in themselves result in confusion i.e., grammatical misinterpretation.³⁹ Hence, Wittgenstein demands a clear view of grammar in order to remove our tendency to reach conceptual misunderstanding. There are many methods of doing this. For instance, one can give a negative definition of a word to clarify its meaning. "Evil" can be conceptually rendered as "not good" or the privation of it. Even Wittgenstein admits "[t]here is not one philosophical method, though there are indeed many methods, like different therapies."⁴⁰ In any case, the common element of whatever method is the clarification of language.⁴¹ The use of a word is to be elucidated in all possible methods.

In considering the meaning of a word, one must always ask "Is the word actually used in this way in the language-game that is its original home?"⁴² The meaning of a word must be brought back to its everyday use, that is, to its proper language-game which is its home. Wittgenstein writes, "[B]ring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use."⁴³ But "everyday" here is quite misleading and there is a risk in mistaking what Wittgenstein might have meant. This does not necessarily mean that words must refer to their popular usage or that words must be tied to the vernacular or the vulgar layman terminology. Instead, it refers to the activity in which a word is being used.⁴⁴ To understand the correct or appropriate use of a word is to have to look into the situation of the activity of its use. This will distinguish the proper from the improper use of a word,

³⁶ Matthew Crippen, "The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory," 4

³⁷ Matthew Crippen, "The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory," 4

³⁸ Matthew Crippen, "The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory," 5.

³⁹ Ibid., Matthew Crippen, "The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory," 4.

⁴⁰ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §133

⁴¹ Crippen, "Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy," 5.

⁴² Crippen, "Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy,"

⁴³ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §116.

⁴⁴ Crippen, "Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy," 5.

where an improper use denotes the fact that a word is weaved away from the activity of its use to which it belongs. An example here is incumbent.

Let us use two “everyday uses” for a word like “function.” A mathematician gets to use terms such as “function” in the practice of their profession. A function in the activity of mathematics is an expression of a variable equation such as in algebraic expressions (e.g. $f(x) = 2x + 22$). Besides from math, “function” serves other uses, e.g. as “assignment,” or “commission” among other things. Take for example politics and governance. The chief “function” of a bicameral legislature, political analysts say, is to have a chamber that checks hasty legislations (which is the case for a Republic). Now these are clearly two different activities of use. It would be inappropriate, then, to ask for the “function” of an algebraic equation along the lines of use in political science and vice versa. This would evidently lead to misunderstanding. Therein the demarcation between proper and improper use is elucidated, e.g. it is proper to use algebraic expressions in the context math and improper to use in a sense that is otherwise.

When Wittgenstein speaks of the “everyday use” of a word he is referring to whatever activities the word happens to be used in.⁴⁵ The range of activities are, of course, innumerable. From a chemist in a lab; to an engineer in a drawing room; to soldiers in the field; to children playing, these may very well be activities of use that ground the context of meaning. A philosopher’s task, therefore, is not to interfere with these actual uses of words.⁴⁶ That is, the philosopher should not disrupt, or in any way compromise, the activity of use subsequently the language-game.

Therapeutic Philosophy insulates the Language-games from external criticism

If Wittgenstein says language is like a game, and to be able to participate in the language-game is to employ words according to the rules of the game, then established languages have sensible rules.⁴⁷ Crippen, however, exerts that this may not necessarily be a good thing. For example, boxing is a perfectly sensible sport with sensible rules but this does not mean that punching other people must always be an appreciable activity.⁴⁸ Looking at an activity from the inside, that is, gauging an activity in its own lens will always result in such activity appearing sensible or reasonable. In this case, by activity we mean the particular employment or use of a word. To remain “insiders” as it were by taking the order of things in their own terms makes even the most outrageous seem sensible.⁴⁹ There is then “an absolution of particular inanities.”⁵⁰ That is, there is remission or an acquittal of activities that are plainly absurd or silly. What this means is that what might have been an inappreciable activity is simply looked past or maintained as perfectly appropriate. Consequently, a language-game becomes incontestable by virtue of being always treated as logically sensible.

Crippen states that it is by moving outside the activity of use that the absurdity of certain grammars is revealed. It is by looking at the language-game in alien terms that the “sensible”

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §124.

⁴⁷ Crippen, “Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy,” 7.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

grammar of that language-game is shown to be in fact irrational or false.⁵¹ Although Wittgenstein ostensibly declares that language is “in good order as it is.”⁵² The exact opposite seems to be the case for Crippen. For Crippen, language can harbor oppressive conditions.

Moving outside established usages of words via re-ordering grammar, according to Crippen, results in a twisting of language insofar as a nonsensical or arcane discourse is generated. In this sense, philosophers are difficult inasmuch as they willfully articulate alien grammars, i.e. non-common or non-established uses of language.⁵³ There is an allusion to poetry which deliberately expresses its meaning metaphorically and allegorically. Crippen suggests that therapeutic philosophy does the opposite of poetry, i.e. it refuses to use words differently. Critical Theorists see this as a problem. Therapeutic philosophy seemingly inhibits new possibilities of meaning and also discourages non-conformity to established meanings. Crippen writes, “Critical Theorists insist the following: to counter Wittgenstein by uttering the unutterable.”⁵⁴ What is ultimately suggested is that the expostulation in unheard-of ways within philosophy is akin to poetry. Philosophy, for Crippen, must be like poetry and Wittgenstein’s therapeutic philosophy is not like poetry. The critical philosopher must bring to life what is inexpressible in established discourse.⁵⁵ The point Crippen surmise is that the later Wittgenstein runs contrary to this. Wittgenstein fails to bring about unheard-of ways of using words. And for Critical Theorists this is a requisite to be able to do social critique.

If the therapeutic task of philosophy were at all to be therapeutic then it needs to be political. That is, clarifying language is not enough to truly emancipate the oppressed individuals because one would have only been illuminating the oppressive conditions reflected in language. This does nothing at all towards having emancipation from them and for Crippen there is a need for emancipation.

Philosophy for Critical Theorists should aim to change the world. To fulfill this role philosophy has to push the boundaries of thought and to develop conceptualizations that allow for new “alien” glimpses of things.⁵⁶ Now therapeutic philosophy supposedly fails to push the boundaries of thought. It dismisses alien ways of using words. To dismiss unorthodox forms of meaning, therefore, would display linguistic analytic philosophy as hiding the conditions of social reality (an “ideology”). Crippen writes that a philosophy that maintains current conditions is one that denies its own ends.⁵⁷ Crippen essentially argues that Wittgenstein’s therapeutic philosophy insulates language-games from external criticism. This is a clear indicator that therapeutic philosophy cannot do social criticism and therefore a philosophy that is uncritical.

Therapeutic Philosophy ignores the History of the use of the word

The next insight Crippen puts forward is that linking use and meaning is a narrow and limited viewpoint because it is negligent of historical context. The typical understanding of a

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §98.

⁵³ Crippen, “Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy,” 8.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 9.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 10.

word's use and the context of its use are too stringently focused on immediate settings that it discounts previous or past contexts.⁵⁸ Crippen expresses the idea that meaning can be adequately understood by looking at its everyday use or viewed only in the context of current discourse. An idea he gathers from Max Horkheimer.⁵⁹ There is much more to be had to meaning other than its surface use. For meaning may be receded behind the past or what once was.

Meaning is acquired in the fullest only in the course of historical process which cannot be penetrated by "linguistic short-cuts."⁶⁰ Each language, he continues, embodies the thoughts and belief patterns rooted in the evolution of the people who speak it; language embodies and carries the changes in time.⁶¹ The effects of being ignorant of history may very well be to jeopardize meaning. Ignoring may not only change meaning but also lead to its false constructions.⁶² The consequences may be more obviously spelled out as the propagation of oppressive and severe forms of language.

Wittgenstein acknowledges that sets of criteria fit some forms of language-games.⁶³ Certain classes of the uses of words calls for its respective rules, or theoretically its operative procedures, otherwise not applicable to another class. Again, there are many language-games. And in their plurality we may draw at least equally the same number of grammars for which sense is determined. But Crippen marks that the general formula nonetheless remains: meaning is use. It is implied that a word is with its everyday use without exempt.⁶⁴ This is withstanding the fact that Wittgenstein by vaguely saying "For a large class of cases...though not for all"⁶⁵ may perhaps admit, though tellingly, of some exceptions. The pronouncement that meaning is the employment of a word largely fails to satisfy Crippen for sure. It allegedly misses to include the sort of historical criteria essential for interpreting concepts and ideas.⁶⁶

Wittgenstein's therapeutic philosophy in neglecting to attend to the history of a word's use foreseeably engenders a problem because the history of the use a word is important for determining the present use of the word. The lack of a historical aspect in the maxim that meaning is use presents breeds a perspective which fails to see how a particular language-game came to be.

Therapeutic Philosophy discourages un-established Language-games

⁵⁸ Ibid., 11.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 13. Horkheimer writes, "It would be a mistake to assume that we can discover the essential meaning of a word by simply asking the people who use it." (Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (London: Continuum, 2004), 112).

⁶⁰ Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, 111. By linguistic short-cuts, perhaps Horkheimer means formalism, logical analysis, or even conceptual elucidation.

⁶¹ Crippen, "Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy", 13.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid., 14.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §43

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Crippen opens the criticism that the Wittgensteinian philosophers' have a limited viewpoint that is narrow.⁶⁷ That is, Wittgenstein's analysis is locked inside the activity of the language-game and, therefore, limits the universes of discourse to some insulated sphere of human activity.⁶⁸

Therapeutic philosophy determines meaning on the basis that a word is used in such-and-such way. This also tacitly gives sufficient grounds to dismiss another use by virtue of being inappropriate for that use. Just because a language-game is not likely to articulate a certain use of a word, it is not a reason to invalidate that use of a word and in effect exclude it from the language-game altogether. But in the operational mindset, this is merely standard operating procedure. The operational mindset refers to the activity of describing meaning solely on its use.

Crippen brings to bear the intrinsic ideological character of linguistic analysis. Again, if a word is not taken in the use which is its home grammatical illusion is sure to follow. Recall that certain uses of words belong to certain contexts and to take this use of a word outside of its context generates nonsensical meaning. This assumption of therapeutic philosophy is precisely the locus of the problem. Use is always isolated in the particular case entailing that the specific use or activity rebukes what it deems "non-use" i.e., alien. The language-game easily raises in objection the alien and subsequently dismisses it. Therefore, therapeutic philosophy latently discourages discourse.

Crippen, moreover, moves to argue that this affords the status quo a sweeping advantage.⁶⁹ To wit, the established universe of discourse deters anything that is otherwise not belonging to it. That language must have strict ordinance of exactitude, perspicuity, and clarity is to sieve off what is contrary to this. Subsequently, the disturbances of the alien grammars are trashed as nonsense in their non-conformity.

What is observed of Linguistic analytic philosophy, Crippen writes, is the indignation of conservatives.⁷⁰ This comes out quite strong. But we are led to believe, following the course of this section, that this is warranted. Several of Wittgenstein's pronouncements are measured by Crippen as severe and authoritarian. If he were referring to the *Tractatus* it might not come as surprising. But alas he means the later Wittgenstein of the *Investigations*.

What have been exhibited so far by therapeutic philosophy are only solutions to "that which is only academically controversial." Therefore, the sophistication of therapeutic philosophy in no way poses a threat to the established order or to influence significantly social reality.

Therapeutic Philosophy operationalizes Meaning into a matter of function

⁶⁷ Crippen refers to Marcuse who says that Analytic philosophers' "[a]nalysis is 'locked'; the range of judgment is confined within a context of facts which excludes judging the context in which the facts are made, man-made, and in which their meaning, function, and development are determined. (Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2007), 119.)

⁶⁸ Crippen, "Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy," 20.

⁶⁹ He invokes Marcuse who writes, "For precisely the setting aside of a special reservation in which thought and language is permitted to be legitimately inexact, vague, and even contradictory is the effective way of protecting the normal universe of discourse from being seriously disturbed by unfitting ideas." (Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man*, 189.)

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 25.

Crippen also finds that there is a positivistic or operational token in Wittgenstein's therapeutic philosophy. Generally speaking, to operationalize concepts is to clarify abstract and vague concepts by translating them into concrete and overtly measurable phenomena.⁷¹ This is characteristic of scientific endeavors in general which had its prototype in experimentation and laboratory techniques. His point of contention is that this instrumentalization or positivistic operational criteria is a trend towards one-dimensionality.⁷²

This form of operationalization, i.e. the reduction to procedure, use, or function, affects the sphere of life. Indeed, "Meaning is supplanted by function...language has been reduced to just another tool in the gigantic apparatus of production."⁷³ There are similarities here to be found in Wittgenstein for which Crippen advances three points. First, both operationalization and therapeutic philosophy aim at clarifying the meaning of words. Second, both emphasize the concrete over the abstract. Third, both take focus on function, use, or the "how" of practice. At this juncture, Crippen interjects Marcuse to ground his claims.

Crippen argues that therapeutic philosophy fixes on one meaning as a matter of procedure or operation. This is precisely a problem because it cements a one-dimensional thinking, i.e. a thinking that sees things in one way only. Appropriated in Crippen's critique, one-dimensionality is mechanically seeing only one possible use for a word.

Critical Theorists value forms of language that move outside the established order of discourse.⁷⁴ Recall that language-games are judged internally, that is, from inside the activity and according to its own rules. This notion is closely associated to therapeutic philosophy. According to Crippen, there is truthfully some merit to this. By positioning language-games separately, the language-game is protected from subjugation by a more dominant one.⁷⁵

To have a language-game gauged by another is akin to having express subordination to a more authoritative language-game. Now there are examples of a language-game domineering over another. Crippen cites the discourse of Science as an example. The scientific discourse enjoys a lofty status contrary to its alternative unscientific discourses.⁷⁶ For example, architecture has taken lengths to exclude geomancy. The former is to be upheld and the latter scoffed in the business of infrastructure planning.

Medicine and philosophy; science and spiritualism, and so on are separate inasmuch as their respective language-games are significantly different. This does not mean, however, they cannot overlap.⁷⁷ The aforementioned merit is nevertheless counterbalanced by its negative consequence. The problem, Crippen sees, is that this differentiation (of a language-game to another) forestalls criticisms and entrenches the status quo of its use.⁷⁸

⁷¹ Ibid., 17.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, 15.

⁷⁴ Crippen, "Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy," 21.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 21-22.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 22.

Further purported results are striking. Setting up different language-games is implicatively recognizing tolerance of all these language-games. This exudes the attitude of being uncritical of any language-game, that is, a refusal to negatively read language-games. The very same shelter that protects a language-game from external interference also shelters it from criticism.⁷⁹

Critical Theory and Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy are alike in the surface of their principal endeavors, viz. there is much clarification to be done by philosophy in language. But there are controversial areas visible in the perspective of Critical Theory not visible in Linguistic Philosophy and vice-versa. Crippen's paper shows that it is premature to disengage what is seemingly disparate. The point ultimately with Crippen is that therapeutic philosophy is latently an uncritical philosophy. This means to say therapeutic philosophy is inadequate in its pursuit or that its pursuit is itself inadequate. In either case, therapeutic philosophy is muddled thinking. Crippen's position which we take as Critical Theory's position as well is wholly contestable. To do this, we first lay bare their portrait of Wittgenstein. Having perspicuity of their views on Wittgenstein allows thereafter demonstrations of their errors. In other words, to show why Critical Theory is mistaken is to show what Wittgenstein correctly meant. To this, P.M.S. Hacker's reading of Wittgenstein shall be very important.

The Nature of Philosophy: Hacker's Reading

Ordinary language is in good order and its goodness lies open to view.⁸⁰ "Good order" let us recall assumes an important import for Crippen. At any rate, according to Hacker, Wittgenstein's established new task is to command the description of the widely ramifying network of concepts associated with linguistic meaning.⁸¹ What we have learned about perspicuous representation (the clear mappings of language-games) is indispensable here. Attaining perspicuity of our language has for its corollary the elimination of misunderstanding and subsequently philosophical perplexity.⁸²

Therapeutic Philosophy is essentially the surveying of language

Achieving clear survey of language is the new task of philosophy. Philosophy is to describe the overlapping rules of language. Philosophy, therefore, consists of the descriptions of the use of words *inter alia* describing the language-games.⁸³ Philosophy is not like science by virtue of its occupation. This is because philosophy is an overview of the very many forms of thought.⁸⁴ In this respect, it may not interfere with the use of language. Philosophy is simply the mappings of our language.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ P.M.S. Hacker, *Insight and Illusion: Themes in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 162.

⁸¹ P.M.S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein's Place In Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 242.

⁸² Hacker, *Insight and Illusion*, 154.

⁸³ P.M.S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein: On Human Nature* (London: Phoenix Paperback, 1997), 9.

⁸⁴ P.M.S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 31.

Philosophy does not accrue anything apart from what already is present. That is, there is no progress in the sense like in the sciences. There is no accumulation or generation of new knowledge because philosophy is only a clarification, a sharpening, a refining of linguistic observation and measurement.⁸⁵ The work of the philosopher consequentially is assembling reminders of how words are used.⁸⁶ The quest for surveyable representation of the grammar of language is coupled on the other hand with a character of curing diseases of the understanding. This refers to the notion of therapy.

Therapeutic Philosophy aims to dissolve Philosophical problems

Philosophy is an activity whose primary occupation is the disappearance of philosophical problems.⁸⁷ Philosophical problems are superficial problems. That is, they are not really “problems.” Instead, philosophical problems are just entanglements in language. Philosophical problems “arise primarily out of misleading features of our language.”⁸⁸ What is gathered, then, is that philosophical problems must not in the first place cause emotional distress or any real sense of human suffering for that matter. This is achieved when we understand philosophical problems are plainly just linguistic puzzlements. This therapeutic result is rendered possible by the token of perspicuous representation. To repeat, perspicuous representation enables the illumination of grammatical forms (rules) we confront that are obfuscated.

Philosophical problems are “dissolved” inasmuch as they are rendered immaterial. This is insofar as the Orthodox reading is concerned. It is good to interject here the friendly reminder that the interpretations of the “therapeutic” character of Wittgenstein’s philosophy are plenty. It is worthwhile to restate this next assertion. “Philosophy is therapeutic insofar as it restores the bewildered to an optimal intellectual state of good sense akin to good health.”⁸⁹ Hacker’s proposition encompasses elegantly the importation for therapy necessary for this work.

Therapeutic Philosophy disavows over-commitment to habits of thought

One main source of philosophical confusion is what Hacker calls a “picture.” A picture is a perverse satisfaction of a philosophical idea.⁹⁰ That is, an overt fixation to a philosophical idea. Some examples include the belief in an eternal Self e.g. *Vedanta*, a perfect unchanging reality e.g. Platonism, and absolute certitude e.g. Cartesianism. To be sure, these are not problems in themselves but they become problems when these suppositional beliefs are forced into engagement without others ideas which are incompatible or contrary to it. For example, Frege thought it was such a scandal that mathematics had not secured a conception of what a number is. His philosophical problem was rooted in his picture that there should be undeviating certitude concerning number for mathematics. Evidently, mathematics would still continue as it did independent of the success of Frege. Another great impediment, which Hacker identifies, is the

⁸⁵ Ibid., 32.

⁸⁶ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §127

⁸⁷ Hacker, *Insight and Illusion*, 161.

⁸⁸ Hacker, *Wittgenstein: On Human Nature*, 8.

⁸⁹ Hacker, “Baker’s Late Interpretation of Wittgenstein,” in *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters* eds. Guy Kahane et al., 100.

⁹⁰ Hacker, *Wittgenstein’s Place In Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy*, 111-112.

expectation of a new deep revelation or the craving for the arcane.⁹¹ In any case, surfacing these philosophical pictures into recognition and acknowledgment is part of restoring an optimal state of intellectual good sense. Perspicuous representation allows the identification and therefore the removal of our own pictures.

Therapeutic Philosophy summarily obtained

The previous explications may give an implication that philosophy is trivialized by Wittgenstein. This is plainly false and misleading. Let us recapitulate Hacker's tropes on the nature of philosophy found in the later Wittgenstein.⁹²

- (i) The descriptive methodology is accompanied by extensive argumentation that painstakingly demonstrates the errors found in our language.
- (ii) The descriptions of the use of words are the primary course of method, and its fruit is a new manner of clarity, and an articulate understanding of conceptual connections.
- (iii) Diseases of the intellect are shown through perspicuous representation. Attaining perspicuous representation are indeed descriptions and arrangements of the rules of our language
- (iv) Philosophical problems are rooted in the forms of language and the most deeply embedded habits of thought.
- (v) Connective analysis or elucidation offered by the descriptions of perspicuous representation answers philosophical questions and suffices the craving philosophers typically crave for.
- (vi) Philosophy has no theories like in science but only explanations. And explanations invite elucidation and clarification towards the bounds of sense. But there are innumerable ways of explanation.

The enumeration above should dispel the idea that philosophy is trivialized by Wittgenstein. We have sketched Wittgenstein twice now, i.e. one according to Crippen and another according to Hacker. Remembering the initial task of this work, it shall be argued that Crippen, in light of Hacker, Wittgensteinian philosophy must be therapeutic contrary to Crippen.

Two Wittgensteins: Crippen's and Hacker's

We are drawn to two Wittgensteins viz. the one Crippen sketches and the one Hacker sketches. We shall find however the case that they are really just one. That is, they have a common understanding of Wittgenstein's therapeutic philosophy.

The reason for which we may say that Crippen's Wittgenstein runs parallel to Hacker's Wittgenstein are as follows. First, both posit the later Wittgenstein as aiming to dissolve philosophical problems by clarifying the structure of grammar. And this is basically the elucidation

⁹¹ Ibid., 112.

⁹² Hacker, *Wittgenstein's Place In Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy*, 112-114.

of how words are used in such-and-such ways which allows for the disentanglement in language. Secondly, both see the later Wittgenstein as proposing the need for a tabulation of linguistic facts. Wittgenstein required a perspicuous survey of the usages of words in order to act on the first point of clarifying grammar. The tabulation of linguistic facts requires a comparative survey of the usages of words that may produce unclarity, hence a logical geography of concepts or perspicuous representation. Finally, both find the later Wittgenstein strictly bounded in the study of words. The only explanations found in philosophy are descriptions of the various uses of words which are done for the purpose of resolving confusions resulting from the misuse of words. Philosophy, according to Wittgenstein, must be the description and clarification of our language. Subsequently, philosophy is tasked in alleviating conceptual confusions that arise for unclear language. Philosophy may have no other purpose. The foregoing discussions illuminate these pointers. We know for a fact that Crippen maintains them and that Hacker does as well. This roughly constitutes a general Hacker's therapeutic Wittgenstein and Crippen promptly assumes all these three key points as the position of Wittgenstein too.

These three key points show the undergirding similarity of Crippen and Hacker's Wittgenstein. Put in a slightly more explicit manner these points indicated above are what Crippen's reading assumes as facts to Wittgenstein and hence it is where he platforms his subsequent critique. It is necessary to recall the two previous chapters to accommodate this understanding.

A Response to Crippen

We begin the prosecution of Crippen and Critical Theory. Our first argument focuses on the issue pertaining to the "is-ought" problem. Deriving an "is" from an "ought" is one such usage of the term naturalistic fallacy. This use is purported first by Hume. This work, however, intends on employing a derivative formulation of the fallacy. To begin, Crippen clearly attempts to derive an "ought" from an "is." That is, Crippen as a matter of fact wishes for Wittgenstein to provide a prescription of action from perspicuous representation. In short, he demands the necessity of a normative project in Wittgenstein. To be sure, perspicuous representation is already a prescription inasmuch as Wittgenstein insisted on its importance as an activity. But it does not carry the weight of a moral or deontic rule. The issue one can foresee with Crippen is that it is not justifiable to impose ethical notions (which in this case is the amelioration of human life from ideological oppression) unto perspicuous representation.

Crippen attempts to argue that the failure to import ethical considerations in perspicuous representation may perpetuate oppressive language-games. This is unfounded. It would be akin to saying that delineating accurately the territory of oppressive countries is also maintaining and perpetuating their oppressive rule. Mapping language-games that may or may not be oppressive is never the same as actually enacting those oppressive language-games.

Wittgenstein's philosophical investigations are grammatical. Now insofar as they are grammatical they are not intended to be reified into reality. What this means is that Wittgenstein operated at the conceptual level and not immediately in social levels. In Wittgenstein, grammatical statements or linguistic facts i.e. rules function as objects of comparison rather than a thesis. What this crudely means is that linguistic rules are models or instruments of employment thus allowing the possibility of a plurality of instantiated uses. Suppose we map out one hypothetically distasteful

language-game, this by no means whatsoever entails an acceptance of that language-game for us to employ. On the contrary, it serves as a negative object of comparison from which one may gauge a more suitable language-game i.e., a good example of what language-game not to play. Thus, we attain an unbiased description of even the most ridiculous language-game yet not for any instance suppose that any such language-game are remotely appropriable. The clear view of that language-game is meant to project rules of language free of prejudices. Hence, in the enterprise of perspicuous representation, the very activity of therapeutic philosophy, we are bracketed from canonical or authoritative linguistic norms. Again, the investigations are conceptual thus they are investigations towards rules and not the applications of those rules.⁹³ This does not mean we are without reign over the applications rather we are disposed to compare freely the applications from there.

The passage “Philosophy must leave everything as it is”⁹⁴ is cited as definitive evidence of Wittgenstein’s conservatism. The kernel of Critical Theory’s grievances, and if Crippen is understood correctly here, is that ultimately the description of grammatical facts leaves alone the social and political problems. More strongly put, that Wittgenstein’s thought is without effect to the pressing issues. This grossly simplifies their points but it is not a hasty generalization of them either. On the contrary, Wittgensteinian philosophy is the prolegomenon to tackling the urgent axiological problems.⁹⁵ Philosophy, in the hands of Wittgenstein, shifted towards the activity of improving one’s thinking process in the most profound manner viz. being sensitive to language and all the queries that issue from it. Philosophy, in Wittgenstein, more concretely practices what social theorists often preach—the relegation of theory in favor of practice. Indeed there is no theory at all in the later Wittgenstein. Now Crippen, again, argues that Wittgenstein’s perspicuous representation, therapeutic as it may seem, does not draw into question the established universe of discourse. The answer to this allegation is the fact that it does. Philosophy, according to Wittgenstein, does not attenuate any universe of discourse in themselves and also philosophy does not prescind the possibility of discussion towards discourses or at any rate the language-games. Besides, how confident is Critical Theory in supposing that its own narrative is more attentive to “reality” than others? In any case, descriptive philosophy i.e., perspicuous representation of the workings of language sufficiently prepares an individual for a more refined social critique. So Wittgenstein’s philosophy does not inhibit social criticism.

The foregoing discussions show the case that Wittgenstein’s therapeutic philosophy is resilient from Crippen’s critique. Crippen’s criticisms of Wittgenstein do not adequately stand with respect to these principal points:

- (i) Wittgenstein’s linguistic analysis and the attainment of an unclouded survey of language and the subsequent alleviation of linguistic entanglements do not and cannot expunge non-conformity to established language-games. On the contrary, it avows rigid adherence to any such established language-game.
- (ii) Wittgenstein’s project of perspicuous representation is instrumental to tackling the socio-politico-ethical issues. It is only a matter of utilizing the clear mappings of our

⁹³ Hacker, *Insight and Illusion*, 196.

⁹⁴ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §124.

⁹⁵ Hacker, *Insight and Illusion*, 196.

language that we may more smoothly, adequately, and even properly take in axiological considerations.

- (iii) Wittgenstein's therapeutic philosophy contains no value judgments not because it does not recognize them but because it is not necessarily the requisite of the investigation. It is a naturalistic fallacy to suppose linguistic descriptions must criticize oppressive conditions when in fact it is not pertinent at all.
- (iv) Wittgenstein's philosophical investigation does not rule out the possibility of critiquing dominant ideology. Instead it facilitates the discussion. The investigations provide the dossier of grammatical facts that may very well serve as the means of realizing and identifying the conditions of life requiring reform or emancipation.
- (v) Wittgenstein's philosophical activity is a paradigmatic reminder of how to carry out critique. It confronts the very way in which we look at things i.e. in language. Thus it teaches reflective sensitivity to how language works.

It would be worthwhile at this point to reiterate the main points of Crippen's argumentation. His argument may roughly summarize into the following four main points:

- a. Therapeutic philosophy insulates the language-games from external criticism.
- b. Therapeutic philosophy discourages un-established language-games.
- c. Therapeutic philosophy ignores the history of the use of the word.
- d. Therapeutic philosophy operationalizes meaning into a matter of function.

Each of these shall be counteracted in light of the characterizations of perspicuous representation handed previously in what follows.

With regards to the first point, therapeutic philosophy does not insulate language-games from external criticism because perspicuous representation presents the language-games as objects of comparison between other language-games. Therefore, a language-game can be evaluated through comparison with other language-games. Therapeutic philosophy opens language-games to criticism effectively by comparing it with other language-games.

Concerning the second point, therapeutic does not discourage un-established language-games because perspicuous representation opens a clear view of other language-games established or otherwise. Perspicuous representation also showcases the possibilities of grammar hence the encouraging possibly new forms of grammar. Perspicuous representation reveals other language-games and therefore facilitates the appreciation and use of un-established language-games.

Concerning the third point, therapeutic philosophy does not ignore the history of the use of the word because the history of the use of the word is an important variable in the task to attain a command a clear view of language i.e., perspicuous representation. Mapping the language-games also entails mapping what were once language-games and what may be the next language-games. Previously and currently existing grammars are included in the tabulation of language-games.

Concerning the last point, therapeutic philosophy does not operationalize meaning because perspicuous presentation does not prefigure grammar. It does not dictate meaning rather perspicuous representation only pictures it. Therapeutic philosophy does not close off the possibilities of meaning and reduce meaning into one type of function (one-dimensionality). This is because perspicuous representation liberates from fixed grammar by displaying the possibilities

of grammar, that is, the many kinds of grammar and because perspicuous representation does not impose nor regulate grammar as if it were an authority.

Summary and Conclusion

This work ensconces a refutation against Crippen's critique of Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy. In Crippen's analysis, therapeutic philosophy is an uncritical philosophy for principally four reasons. First, Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy's ideation of the language-games are insulated from criticism, that is, it is treated as immune from external strictures or disapproval. Second, Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy discourages un-established or alien forms of discourse (language-games) tying in from the first point above. Third, Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy's occupation of mapping out the meaning of words ignores the history of the use of the words. That is, therapeutic philosophy is not sensitive to how words were previously used only how words are currently used. Fourth, Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy views the meaning of words on instrumentalist lines. Therapeutic philosophy, in accepting that meaning is use, harrowingly suppose that all meaning is a matter of purposefulness thereby operationalizing the meaning of words and therefore forwarding a reductionism of meaning to procedure and function. These four reasons elicit the tendency of therapeutic philosophy to be silent or negligent of the oppressive conditions of social reality according to Crippen. Therapeutic philosophy subsequently perpetuates oppressive conditions by failing to critique the language-games that harbor oppression. This work maneuvers Crippen's critique into contact with the P.M.S. Hacker's reading of Wittgenstein using the Hacker's reading as a platform.

Crippen's accusals are countered with respect to the following reasons. First, therapeutic philosophy eases the possibility of avowing rigid adherence to any established language-game by showing other language-games. Second, therapeutic philosophy may utilize the clear mappings of language to more adequately take in axiological considerations. Third, it is fallacious to suppose that linguistic descriptions must immediately proceed to criticize oppressive conditions when in fact it is not pertinent at all. Fourth, therapeutic philosophy facilitates the discussions on the endeavor of critique instead of stifling it by virtue of the possessing the dossier of linguistic facts. Finally, therapeutic philosophy teaches a paradigm in doing critique viz. a critique sensitive to language and of the manner critique itself is being linguistically articulated.

The work argues crucially that Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy is not unwilling to criticize pressing concerns like oppressive social conditions. The case is that Wittgensteinian therapeutic philosophy is vouched to be contrary to that. Wittgenstein's philosophy is in fact paradigmatically critical.

Bibliography

Books

- Addis, Mark. *Wittgenstein: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: Continuum, 2006.
- Baker, Gordon P. *Wittgenstein's Method - Neglected Aspects: Essays on Wittgenstein by Gordon Baker*. Edited by Katherine J. Morris. London: Blackwell, 2004.
- Glock, Hans-Johann. *A Wittgenstein Dictionary*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 1995
- _____. *What is Analytic Philosophy?* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Glock, Hans-Johann, and John Hyman eds. *Wittgenstein and Analytic Philosophy: Essays for P.M.S. Hacker*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Grayling, A.C. *Wittgenstein: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Hacker, P.M.S., and Gordon P. Baker. *Wittgenstein: Understanding and Meaning Volume I of An Analytic Commentary on the Philosophical Investigations*. London: Blackwell, 2009
- _____. *Wittgenstein: Rules, Grammar, and Necessity Volume II of An Analytic Commentary on the Philosophical Investigations*. London: Blackwell, 2009.
- _____. *Skepticism, Rules and Language*. London: Basil-Blackwell, 1984.
- Hacker, P.M.S. *Insight and Illusion: Themes in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein*. New York: Clarendon Press, 1986.
- _____. *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001.
- _____. *Wittgenstein: Comparisons and Context*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- _____. *Wittgenstein: On Human Nature*. London: Phoenix Paperback, 1999.
- _____. *Wittgenstein's Place in Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy*. Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1996.
- Heaton, John and Judy Groves. *Introducing Wittgenstein*. Edited by Richard Appignanesi. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1994.
- Horkheimer, Max. *Eclipse of Reason*. London: Continuum, 2004.
- Kahane, Guy, Edward Kanterian and Oskari Kuusela, eds. *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters: Essays in Memory of Gordon Baker*. Singapore: Blackwell 2007.
- Kuusela, Oskari. *The Struggle Against Dogmatism: Wittgenstein and the Concept of Philosophy*. London: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- Livingston, Paul M. *Philosophy and the Vision of Language*. New York: Routledge, 2008
- Malcolm, Norman. *Wittgenstein: A Memoir*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Malpas, Simon and Paul Wake, eds. *The Routledge Companion to Critical Theory*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Marcuse, Herbert. *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Societies*. London: Routledge, 1991.
- Martinich, A.P. and David Sosa eds. *A Companion to Analytic Philosophy*. London: Blackwell, 2001.
- Monk, Ray. *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*. London: Random House, 1990.
- Peterman, James. *Philosophy as Therapy: An Interpretation and Defense of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophical Project*. New York: State University of New York, 1992.
- Pichler, Alois. *Wittgenstein: The Philosopher and His Works*. Berlin: Ontos Verlag, 2006.
- Pitcher, George. *The Philosophy of Wittgenstein*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1964.

- Pole, David. *The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- Pleasants, Nigel. *Wittgenstein and the Idea of a Critical Social Theory*. London: Routledge, 1999.
- Geuss, Raymond. *The Idea of a Critical Theory: Habermas and the Frankfurt School*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Stern, David. *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations: An Introduction*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Venturinha, Nuno ed. *Wittgenstein After His Nachlass*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Waismann, Friedrich. *How I See Philosophy*. Edited by Rom Harre. New York: Macmillan, 1968.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Philosophical Investigations*. Translated by G.E.M. Anscombe and Edited by P.M.S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte. London: Blackwell, 2009.
- _____. *The Blue and Brown Books: Preliminary Studies for the Philosophical Investigations*. New York: Harper & Row, 1958.
- _____. *On Certainty*. Translated by Denis Paul and G.E.M. Anscombe. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975.
- _____. *Wittgenstein's Lectures: Cambridge 1932-1935*. Edited by Alice Ambrose and Margaret MacDonald. New York: Prometheus Books, 2001.
- _____. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Translated by D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness. London: Routledge, 1974.
- _____. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Translated by C.K. Ogden. London: Kegan Paul, 2010.

Periodicals

- Crippen, Matthew. "The Totalitarianism of Therapeutic Philosophy: Reading Wittgenstein through Critical Theory." *Essays in Philosophy* 8 (2007).
- De Hass, Leon. "Wittgenstein's Late Philosophy: Its Value for Philosophical Counseling." *Manavayatan The Humanosphere* 3 (2014).
- De Mesel, Benjamin. "On Wittgenstein's Comparison of Philosophical Methods to Therapies." *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 23 (2015): 566-583.
- Dobler, Tamara. "What Is Wrong with Hacker's Wittgenstein? On Grammar, Context, and Sense-determination." *Philosophical Investigations* 36 (2013): 231-250.
- Fischer, Eugen. "How to Practise Philosophy as Therapy: Philosophical Therapy and Therapeutic Philosophy." *Metaphilosophy* 42 (2011): 49-82.
- Hacker, P.M.S. "Forms of Life." *Nordic Wittgenstein Review* Special Issue (2015).
- _____. "Laying the Ghost of the 'Tractatus'" *The Review of Metaphysics* 29 (1975).
- _____. "Wittgenstein on Grammar, Theses and Dogmatism." *Philosophical Investigations* 35 (2012): 1-17.
- _____. "What Is Wrong Indeed?" *Philosophical Investigations* 36 (2013): 251-268.
- Harre, Rom. "Grammatical Therapy and the Third Wittgenstein." *Metaphilosophy* 39 (2008): 484-491.
- Hutchinson, Phil "What's the Point of Elucidation." *Metaphilosophy* 38 (2007): 691-713.
- Jacquette, Dale. "Later Wittgenstein's Anti-Philosophical Therapy." *Philosophy* 89 (2014): 251-272.

- Moyal-Sharrock, Daniele. "Wittgenstein on Forms of Life, Patterns of Life and Ways of Living." *Nordic Wittgenstein Review* (2016).
- Pichler, Alois. "Outline of an Argument for a Therapeutic Reading of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*." *Time and History* Edited by Fredrich Stadler (2005): 235-237.
- Plant, Bob. "The End(s) of Philosophy: Rhetoric, Therapy, and Wittgenstein's Pyrrhonism." *Philosophical Investigations* 27 (2004): 222-257
- Savickey, Beth. "Wittgenstein and Hacker: Übersichtliche Darstellung." *Nordic Wittgenstein Review* 3 (2014): 99-123.
- Von Savigny, Eike. "No Chapter 'On Philosophy' in the *Philosophical Investigations*." *Metaphilosophy* 22 (1991): 307-319

The Beyond and Its Shadow: Emmanuel Levinas On Visual Art as Transdescendence

Joy Therese C. Gomez

University of Santo Tomas | therese Gomez08@gmail.com

Abstract: Emmanuel Levinas' philosophy has consistently put forward that transcendence should not just stop in transcending oneself towards a higher and abstract state of being. Rather, it should ultimately be sought after in one's encounter with the individual beings that present themselves to us, or in his terms, the Other. For Levinas, one's relation to the Other is the epitome of radical alterity as he puts an emphasis in such infinity that is in every person which is simultaneously being represented and masked by the Face. This insurmountable reality is what served as his grounds for a substantial transcendental ethics in which he underlines a desire for the ethical relationship with the Other or in Being- for- the- Other.

Upon reading Levinas' philosophy, it is noticeable that he has constantly made use of aesthetic references, which signify how he has had various literary and aesthetic influences. However, throughout his works, the said references to art and the aesthetic activity apparently exhibit a handful of reservations towards the aesthetic experience. While he acknowledges the entertaining quality of art, he also makes us aware that it nonetheless tends to be disengaging, idolatrous and ultimately encourages a private escape and a descension into oneself. Thereafter, Levinas has always emphasized the necessity of the inseparability of philosophical criticism and the aesthetic experience.

In line with this, there is reason to believe that when situated in Levinas ethics, the aesthetic experience specifically that of the visual arts can be considered a peculiar intervention. Thus, this paper aims to inquire into and clarify Levinas' seemingly unresolved stances on art specifically that of visual art, by way of aligning such with a subliminal kind of transcendence in Levinas' transcendence project— Transdescendence.

Keywords: Levinas, Aesthetics, Transcendence, Ethics, Transdescendence

I. Introduction

It is a subliminal fact that the things we view as beautiful and/or as art affect and influence the way we perceive, think and even act upon reality. In whatever form it may take, though relative to each person's taste, may it be a painting, a poem, a novel, a sculpture or a movie, artworks evidently catch our attention. With such a point, the way we assent to the promptings of art is problematic for Emmanuel Levinas—as he brings into light the tendency of art to intervene with our train of thought, delude us and eventually, its ability to encourage a reverting kind of escape into one's self and ultimately, a movement away from one's ethical responsibility.

An escape from responsibility that something, and most often than not, the escape that art offers is a timely ideology and an evidently occurring phenomena. In quite a usual setting, when we see a certain artwork, for example, a painting or a photograph in a gallery, it requires us to stop dead in our tracks and linger in front of it for us to appreciate it; this is also not to mention that a film also typically requires an hour of undivided attention to follow its plot. What comes with the constant engrossment with a certain form of art is that every now and then when a person asks one for help with something, that person asked tends to delay his response or sometimes even misses and lets the opportunity to help, pass. Such a phenomenon is even more evident today when there is easier access, though secondary, to different kinds of art. In line with this, in *Reality and Its Shadow*, Levinas puts forward that our mode of response to another person is constantly being compromised by the encounter of art. This is due to the fact that the encounter of art has the tendency to absorb us and consequently, allows for a compromise in our ethical responsibility which falls within the scope of descending into one's self with the encounter of art and even in the production of it (in the artist's case). Nevertheless, even with art's peculiar nature, towards the end of the said essay, Levinas noticeably leaves room for art's salvation through philosophical criticism.

Remarkably, Levinas' notion of art does not only manifest in *Reality and Its Shadow* but constantly makes an appearance throughout Levinas' works on ethics as something that tends to intervene with the ethical relation by way of its peculiarity. Despite being so, however, we will see later on that the fundamental insufficiency of art by itself is also utilized by Levinas to fend for a more specific kind of transcendence. This is by means of art and the aesthetic experience signifying a lower and yet crucial kind of transcendence—a transdescendence—that inspires a more radical way of reaching out to the Other.

II. TRANSCENDENCE AND TRANSDSCENDENCE

The notion of transcendence for Levinas evidently serves as a primary foundation of his philosophy to the point where one can really say that he is a philosopher of transcendence. However, the term 'transcendence' in itself can be quite vague; at best, one can say that it usually suggests a 'going beyond', but what exactly is it that one is transcending and surpassing in terms of Levinas philosophy? Evidently, Levinas puts forward his very own notion of transcendence that is imbedded in his framework. As Robert Bernasconi⁹⁶ had stated, Levinas did not intend for his critique of western philosophy to become an ethics at the outset; Levinas did not even want such a heavily prescriptive word to be attributed to what he was doing. However, along the way, he has consistently implied that

⁹⁶ Robert Bernasconi, "No Exit: Levinas Aporetic Account of Transcendence." *Research in Phenomenology* 35, no. 1 (2005):101.

the way beyond being was undeniably to be grounded upon our individual encounters of the Other and this counts for no less than Ethics.

While Martin Heidegger focused on substantiating the authenticity of Being and a transcendence of the supposed human limitations or the way from Dasein to Being⁹⁷, for Levinas, this was arguably to the point of self-absorption and a disregard for the Other. Henceforth, Levinas puts a halt to such an egoistic endeavor and puts an emphasis in constantly going beyond Being onto the Good that is to be found in bearing witness and responding to the Other. Consequently, this implies that transcendence in Levinas' framework is a constant process that comprises of several steps and undercurrents for its substantiation. In line with this, we will see throughout the course of Levinas' philosophical writings, that a going beyond for him can be explicated not only in the course of a thoroughgoing upward movement onto the shore of the Other (transcendence), but also that of a going underneath the depths of the "I" (transcendence).

A. Self-Imprisonment

It has often been said that Levinas takes it a step further by taking several steps back first. In *On Escape*,⁹⁸ Levinas makes us aware that there is indeed no escaping one's pure being as he puts an emphasis on one's constant self-imprisonment and suffering. As Levinas states that "*The experience of pure being is at the same time the experience of its internal antagonism and of the escape that foists itself on us.*"⁹⁹ Self-imprisonment can be realized out of the feeling of restlessness in being that manifests in different kinds of emotions like that of nausea and malaise which eventually signal to a need for escape from being that is of course, impossible. With that point being said, for Levinas, pleasure from things and materiality often presents itself as a means of getting out or a promise of escape, but it is an empty promise for pleasure only seemingly eases one's pain but in the long run, it reveals to be just suppressing it. For Levinas, pleasure encourages complacency and even cowardice to the one experiencing it and, in its wake, lays the feeling of shame upon coming to the realization that an escape from being is not quite possible.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, even as Levinas will elaborate later on in his major works that certain kinds of pleasure can be used for the crystallization of the "I", in *On Escape* is where he initially drew the line by implying the tendency of pleasure to signify passivity for it is an *ecstatic* event or feeling that eventually turns into us dwelling on such a feeling and furthering into ourselves.

B. Rising from Anonymity

In line with this in *Existence and Existents*¹⁰¹, he firstly develops his own formula for a metamorphosis of transcendence¹⁰² by putting an emphasis on the notion of transcendence being a transcendence or a moving upward. Consequently, he starts from the ground up by phenomenologically elucidating the emergence of consciousness and subjectivity-- or in his terms, the hypostasis, in the instances of solitary existence. A vital and novel concept and step to his account on

⁹⁷ Martin Heidegger and Joan Stambaugh, *Being and Time: A Translation of "Sein Und Zeit"* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

⁹⁸ Emmanuel Levinas. *On escape = De lévasion*. Translated by Bettina Bergo, (California: Stanford University Press, 2003).

⁹⁹ Emmanuel Levinas, *On escape = De lévasion*, 61.

¹⁰⁰ Emmanuel Levinas, *On escape = De lévasion*, 61.

¹⁰¹ Emmanuel Levinas, Alphonso Lingis, and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and Existents* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2008).

¹⁰² Emmanuel Levinas, Alphonso Lingis, and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and Existents*, 10.

the hypostasis is his concept of the *Il y a* or the *There is*. The concept of the *There is* can be analogous to several phenomena which Levinas has put forward like that of a child not being able to sleep¹⁰³ thereon being stuck and at a lost for quite some time and not being able to fast forward to the next day. It is the epitome of anonymous existence, of ‘something’ unconsciously getting carried away whilst participating in one’s own chaotic and general existence.¹⁰⁴ Just like its literal translation, the *There is* is like someone being cut-off mid-sentence and thereby trailing off. Thus, for Levinas, “*To be conscious is to be torn away from the There is, since the existence of a consciousness constitutes a subjectivity, a subject of existence, that is, to some extent a master of being, already a name in the anonymity of the night.*”¹⁰⁵

Furthermore, from the title of the book itself, it can best be described as an existence without an existent—yet. Initially, the *There is* plunges us into anonymity and to being complacent by way of it being neither destructive nor productive. Despite being so, the *Il y a* for Levinas is not to be taken purely in the negative sense for it is a natural mode of being and consequently a necessary condition towards transcendence since without the experience of such an existence, one could not learn to rise up from that subliminal intervening moment between consciousness and unconsciousness. The *Il y a* helps one appreciate not being stuck, in finally finding oneself being awake or in dozing off to slumber, either one is better than floating around aimlessly. It is evident that the *Il y a* is a necessary step in the hypostasis or in the quest to finding and regaining the existent in existence or finding one’s footing in being even though it’s way of transcending such a condition is by being taken a step backwards—*descending*.

C. Temporality and the Transcendence of the Face

In *Time and the Other*¹⁰⁶, the notion of Death played a crucial part in further elucidating Levinas’ account of time, transcendence and consequently—alterity; for the death of the Other reminds us that there is an end to one’s subjectivity due to our corporeality and the materiality of things, by reminding one of her limitations and even that of the ethical relation. Moreover, death or the very experience of it is evidently unspeakable to its subject; it subliminally signifies something ungraspable, a fundamental otherness of an event taking place. Despite being so, the notion of it does not incite an efficient escape but is susceptible to furthering into oneself through sympathy and is still not as encompassing as the face-to-face encounter with the Other, the notion of death is yet another descending movement.

Be that as it may, this was also where Levinas introduced the notion of temporality that was first developed towards the end of *Existence and Existents*. It notably breaks away from Husserl’s conception of time being a sort of retention of the past and a *protention* of the future. Rather, Levinas puts forward that each instant is a new beginning that allows for a redemption in that the past and the future is obviously not and never will be the present. In line with this, Levinas states that time is “*a relationship with a future that escapes presence absolutely, the Other’s future.*”¹⁰⁷ With that point being said, time also signifies hope and the infinity that the other signifies in that one can always recommence her existence or take it up in a new way and that there is always more to encounter out there—that there will always

¹⁰³ See Chapter 2 of *Existence without Existence* for more narratives and examples of the *Il y a*

¹⁰⁴ Emmanuel Levinas, Alphonso Lingis, and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and Existents*, 59.

¹⁰⁵ Emmanuel Levinas, Alphonso Lingis, and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and Existents*, 60-61.

¹⁰⁶ Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other: And Other Essays* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1987).

¹⁰⁷ Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other: And Other Essays*, 86.

something most especially, someone other who is bound to change our way of living in one way or another.

In line with this, Levinas' philosophy was widely known for his monumental explication of The Face. For Levinas, the Face of the Other is the embodiment of a reality that overflows and cannot be assimilated by the 'I'. Moreover, it is what "at each moment destroys and overflows the plastic image it leaves me, the idea existing to my own measure and to the measure of its ideatum—the adequate idea. It does not manifest itself by these qualities, but it expresses itself."¹⁰⁸ With this in mind, Levinas has always put forward the commonly overlooked fact that the Other is not an image or an object of our vision; and this, quite frankly says a lot (which will be tackled later on).

The insurmountable reality behind each face and the insufficiency of only living for oneself in the encounter of it is what served as his grounds for a substantial notion of ethical responsibility in which he underlines an immediate desire for the Other and the Other's well-being. As he states that: "The Other faces me and puts me in question and obliges me by his essence qua infinity."¹⁰⁹ Hence, for Levinas, it is not enough to just be, we must escape being and direct such an escape towards a transcendence or towards reaching out to the infinity that is behind the Face of the Other. The Infinite even as it is absolutely Other, leaves its trace on the finite or the Other and that is, in the face of each person we encounter and consequently the way we communicate and respond to the needs of the Other, are capable of revealing the glory of God or as Levinas puts it: *God writes straight with crooked lines.*¹¹⁰ Through this, he was still able to justify and promote that transcendence is to be grounded and sought out in the ethical relation with the Other and that in the end, Levinas puts an emphasis that transcendence is a constant reaching out to the Other but that which acknowledges and retains its core footing in being.

D. Transcendence

It is noticeable that throughout the discussion, there seems to constantly be a shadow or a dark and obscure movement that signifies a crawling back and furthering into oneself. Such a movement that manifests in the definitions of the notion of the 'There Is, pleasure and death, *seemingly* carry one away from an ideal and uplifting transcendence for Levinas that goes outward onto the Other. However, it is often overlooked that such descriptions of furthering into oneself constantly appears in Levinas' discussion due to the fact that it makes way for a clearer and more dynamic movement as it aids the substantializing of the process of transcendence.

In line with this, as we have stated previously, Levinas' transcendence project was in fact indebted and influenced by his contemporary Jean Wahl. Thus, just as we have discussed Levinas' adaptation and emphasis on a transcendence that moves upward and onto the Other—a *transcendence* in the foregoing parts of this paper, a movement of transcendence was also accounted for. Buggraeve in discussing *The Levinasian Movement From The Exteriority To The Interiority Of The Infinite*, states that for Jean Wahl:

¹⁰⁸Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*. (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2013), 51.

¹⁰⁹ Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*, 207.

¹¹⁰Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2009), 147.

The one movement indeed makes the other possible, and vice versa. The movement upwards, which reaches over and beyond existence towards the transcendent, likewise makes possible the movement downwards, which reaches into the depths, or rather to under the depths of existence. Just as the descent into one's own bottomless depth makes possible the transcendence towards the irreducible and transcendent Other. In this regard 'the outbreaks towards on high' and the 'descent into the depths' are mutually involved with each other. The 'au-delà' (beyond) is at the same time an 'en deçà' (hither side), just as transdescendence opens up the perspective of transcendence.¹¹¹

This evidently clarifies that the two kinds of transcendence are neither opposed nor contradictory but are complimentary. Consequently, one cannot subsist without the other. There is reason to believe that Levinas has adapted such a model of transcendence but has taken it up in a different way. Brenda Hofmeyer, in her article regarding radical passivity, explains that although never explicitly stated, Levinas, throughout his works especially in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, affirms the influence of Jean Wahl's *Transdescendence* in his philosophy and explains that:

Apart from a trans-ascendent or upward dynamic, there is also the mention of a 'relapsing immanence'. The latter, instead of going up and away, is suggestive of a downward or backward movement – a trans-descendence. For Levinas, this movement of descent into the underground of the I spells the ethical redefinition of the self. In other words, the ascending intentionality of feeling, the direct and intense contact with the Other, is linked with a descending movement into the subject itself.¹¹²

Quite clearly, from the passage we see that even for Levinas, what comes with the upward movement of a subject's overflowing into the ethical relation with the Other is also a parallel movement of descendence into oneself. This can be in line with the fact that the encounter of the Other is described by Levinas as quite traumatic in the way that one's existence is nonetheless being put into question and shaken to its core initially losing its footing and falling away from itself. With that point in mind, we can see that in Levinas' case the movement of descendence or the movement of *going beneath* that is linked to the intense and anarchic encounter of the Other is nonetheless functional for it is part of the process of transcendence as it allows an awakening and a rehabilitation of the Same and serves as a constant prompt to not settle into the bare minimum of mere being.

Arguably, it can be said that in Levinas' case it fits yet another notion of Levinas which he calls the Other-in-the-Same or the Other awakened. Levinas touched upon this in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* where he noticeably has taken his notion of responsibility for the Other to the a higher level by explicating how it is in line with and even immediately synonymous to one's subjectivity. Hence, subjectivity is precisely the Other-in-the-Same as Levinas writes that:

The subject in which the other is in the same, inasmuch as the same is for the other, bears witness to it. The difference of proximity is absorbed in the measure that proximity becomes closer, and by this very absorption is brought out gloriously, and accuses me always more. The same in its bearing as same is more and more extended to the other, to the point of substitution as a hostage.

¹¹¹Roger Buggraeve, "Affected by The Face of the Other. The Levinasian Movement from the Exteriority to the Inferiority of the Infinity" In *Dialegethai*, 2009.

¹¹²Hofmeyr, Benda. "Radical Passivity: Ethical Problem or Solution?" in *Radical Passivity Library of Ethics and Applied Philosophy*, (2009):26.

Expiation coincides in the last analysis with the extraordinary and diachronic reversal of the same into the other, in inspiration and the psyche.¹¹³

With that point being said, it also compels or rather—inspires the Same to lift oneself up from the darkness. Furthermore, alongside the descendance into the depths of being is a way for it to constantly distinguish and reassess oneself, and what one has to offer or do in order to efficiently respond to the other and care for her well-being. Henceforth, it can be said that for Levinas, it is quite necessary that there be an obscure event in the form of the events that signify transdescendance just as things that are in the presence of light evidently have a shadow trailing behind.

However, to get to the actual light or towards an upper kind of transcendence, which is the ideal one for Levinas he has constantly specified and maintained throughout his works that “*Transcendence in us is desire for something else—for Alterity.*”¹¹⁴ Thereby, throughout the course of his writings, he has consistently found the way out of being or the ‘beyond’ onto the Good which is to be found in the immediate, ambiguous and even senseless acts in the movement of reaching out to the Other which reveals the trace of the Infinite.

III. LEVINAS ON ART

A. Exoticism

Contrary to popular belief, an artwork for Levinas does not just stand as a transparent image or an imitation of an object in this world. This is what Levinas clarifies in a subchapter of his earlier work *Existence and Existents* entitled *Existence Without A World*¹¹⁵ which references art. What ‘art’ connotes here for Levinas, even as they tend to recreate a certain event, is something that stands out from the ordinary things of this world—something exotic. Levinas explains that:

A situation depicted or an event recounted must first of all reproduce the real situation or event; but the fact that we relate to them indirectly through the intermediary picture and the story, modifies them in an essential way. This modification is not due to the lighting or the composition of the picture, to the taste of and arrangements made by the narrator but is first due to the indirect relationship which we have with them—to their exoticism in the etymological sense.¹¹⁶

Levinas thereby goes on to explicate that our treatment of art is that of it being a separated and foreign thing—a detached thing that in turn augments our contemplation of it. This may as well be in line with the Kantian concept of ‘disinterestedness’ in which the encounter of artworks tends to be filtered by using a different parameter and/or faculty other than reason.¹¹⁷ This could be so for artworks mostly

¹¹³ Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being, or, Beyond Essence*. (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2009), 146.

¹¹⁴ Emmanuel Levinas, Alphonso Lingis and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and Existents*, 21.

¹¹⁵ Emmanuel Levinas, Alphonso Lingis and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and Existents*, 52

¹¹⁶ Emmanuel Levinas, Alphonso Lingis and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and Existents*, 52

¹¹⁷ Immanuel Kant and Werner S. Pluhar. *Critique of Judgment*. (Indianapolis, Ind: Hackett, 2010).

appeal to the senses; since artworks elicit pleasure by being expressions of an aspect of the artist's reality in the form of materializations.¹¹⁸

A landscape is, as we say, a state of mind. But apart from this soul of objects, an artwork as a whole expresses what we call the world of the artist. There is a world of Delacroix and a world of Victor Hugo. Artistic reality is a mind's means of expression. Through sympathy for this soul of things or of the artist the exoticism of the work is integrated into our world.¹¹⁹

Bearing this in mind, artworks are commonly regarded as something that could reveal an interiority, that of the artist's perhaps; though, somewhere along the way, the images it presents along with the sensations it brings about, blurs the line between interiority and exteriority thereon acquiring its own meaning that vary from each person's way of relating or rather, sympathizing with them thereby eventually becoming ambiguous.

B. A Break From Representation

The undercurrents of the prior writings of Levinas on art evidently culminated in his 1948 essay dedicated to the discussion of art which is "*Reality and Its Shadow*".¹²⁰ In the first lines where he describes the traditional definition of art, he notes that it is very much upheld and glorified in the society as that which reveals something that is the saving grace of reality or that which tells of the ineffable.¹²¹ This definition of art is exactly what Levinas criticizes in the consequent paragraphs for it runs parallel to the totalizing tactics of western ontology—it promises and even monopolizes meaning which is quite peculiar for the very way artworks function is through their nature of being vague or ambiguous. For this reason, Levinas contends in the consequent passage that:

Art does not know a particular type of reality; it contrasts with knowledge. It is the very event of obscuring, a descent of the night, an invasion of shadow. To put it in theological terms, which will enable us to delimit however roughly our ideas by comparison with contemporary notions: art does not belong to the order of revelation. Nor does it belong to that of creation, which moves in just the opposite direction.¹²²

Noticeably in this passage, Levinas puts forward a crucial and yet commonly overlooked quality of art; that is of it not being able to function as knowledge. Henceforth, it should not be taken as something aiming to reveal things to us in the way that knowledge does. Art is not something of knowledge for in trying to learn something, we try to memorize it or imitate such information in our head, but artworks do not exactly do so. Artworks aren't just made to resemble something from this world for most artworks especially that of modern art do not even seem to belong in this world due to its foreign quality as it was said even in *Existence and Existents*. When we see artworks, we do not conceptualize and immediately figure out what it is trying to say, one actually needs to stop dead in his tracks in

¹¹⁸ Emmanuel Levinas, Alphonso Lingis, and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and Existents*, 55-57 .

¹¹⁹ Emmanuel Levinas, Alphonso Lingis and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and Existents*, 55.

¹²⁰ Emmanuel Levinas and Seán Hand. "Reality and Its Shadow" in *The Levinas reader* (Malden: Blackwell, 2009), 129.

¹²¹ Emmanuel Levinas and Seán Hand. "Reality and Its Shadow" in *The Levinas reader*, 130.

¹²² Emmanuel Levinas and Seán Hand. "Reality and Its Shadow" in *The Levinas reader*, 132.

order to fully appreciate or even try to comprehend such. It does not represent something in a simple way, it is a break from representation. Thus, it is an obscuring rather than an enlightening and Levinas asks the rhetorical question of "how can artworks be viewed as something all-encompassing when its mode of being in the world is through an obscuring?".

C. The Formula For Art

In *Totality and Infinity*, he further puts an emphasis that artworks function by way of it paradoxically clothing the elemental with some presupposed meaning.¹²³ Furthermore, most often than not, what aesthetic things signify is that of its utility through enjoyment; and so, most of his direct and indirect references to art in this book can be found and built upon his discussions regarding representation, sensibility and enjoyment—all of which when fused together may as well be the formula for each work of art for Levinas. As he states that:

The world of things calls for art, in which intellectual accession to being moves into enjoyment, in which the Infinity of the idea is idolized in the finite, but sufficient, image. All art is plastic. Tools and implements, which themselves presuppose enjoyment, offer themselves to enjoyment in their turn. They are playthings [*jouets*]: the fine cigarette lighter, the fine car. They are adorned by the decorative arts; they are immersed in the beautiful, where every going beyond enjoyment reverts to enjoyment¹²⁴

There seems to be a glimmer of hope, however, in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. The second chapter regarding Intentionality and Sensing, containing a subchapter entitled *The Amphibology of Being and Entities* shows that while Levinas retains that art is exotic, he nonetheless uses this to reveal and explain the ambiguity of the verb *to be* just as the title prefigures.¹²⁵ For Levinas in this work, art can be comparable to the function of Language in relation to the essence of things. It encourages a dynamic movement of meaning rather than a static one. This in turn reminds one of the sublime temporality of the modalities in being and that of which recommences being—"that every nameable identity can turn into a verb" and this can explain a lot when it comes to explaining the depth of the radical alterity of the Other and the dynamic movement of language.¹²⁶ However, towards the end, Levinas reveals yet again that such a potential is always to be in line with exegesis when it comes to art.

Through art essence and temporality begin to resound with poetry or song. And the search for new forms, from which all art lives, keeps awake everywhere the verbs that are on the verge of lapsing into substantives. In painting, red reddens and green greens, forms are produced as contours and vacate with their vacuity as forms. In music sounds resound; in poems vocables,

¹²³ Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*, 74.

¹²⁴ Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*, 140.

¹²⁵ Gabriel Riera. "The Possibility of the Poetic Said" in *Otherwise than Being (Allusion, or Blanchot in Lévinas)*. *Diacritics* 34, no. 2 (2004): 14-36.

¹²⁶ Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being, or, Beyond Essence*, 43.

material of the said, no longer yield before what they evoke, but sing with their evocative powers and their diverse ways to evoke, their etymologies.¹²⁷

D. Art In General

Henceforth, it can be resolved that Levinas' notion of art is multi-layered. Art in general is often glorified and is a source of pre-occupation because it is an artist's profound expression of something. However, in addition to such a belief, Levinas often makes us aware of the dangers and red flags of art by implying that it is in fact a non-being and is also most often than not, a non-truth, a work of fiction. An artwork in its countless but synonymous forms, for Levinas, does not simply stand for something that is objectively out there; for the product of an artist, and even if the artist usually works on his art in isolation, is nonetheless derived from a mixture of inexhaustible influences, inspiration and ideologies—something subjective. Thereon, an artwork does not aim to represent a specific thing of our objective reality in a simple way. Furthermore, while Levinas admits and acknowledges that we constantly enjoy, take refuge in and put on a pedestal the images presented in artworks which elicit sensations and rhythm, but in the process of such, it has the capacity to detach us from reality and consequently lead us away from the Other. Thus, artworks in themselves are not and should not be treated as something that could reveal something on its own because of its ambiguous nature and promptings. This has continuously led Levinas to suggest that art should always come with criticism and interpretation.

IV. LEVINAS ON ART AS TRANSCENDENCE

Levinas has been highly criticized for his seemingly ambiguous and rather pessimistic views on art—both in his time and up to today. Thereafter, scholars have taken the task of delving into, interpreting and arguing behind his views on art. Ironically enough, the ambiguity of the meaning of artworks also seems to be one of the reasons for Levinas' supposed unresolved stances regarding it. It is quite surprising to know that someone who has had literary promptings like Levinas would seem to be so adamant about the arts.¹²⁸ Nevertheless, this fact also makes him more credible to criticize it. Moreover, when we carefully situate his criticisms of art in line with the philosophy he has built upon, bearing in mind that it is from a radical and transcendental ethics of generosity, hospitality, and going beyond one's limit by reaching out to the Other, one can hope to be enlightened and find a deeper understanding of both his ethics and aesthetics.

As we have seen in *Reality and Its shadow*, Levinas has implied that art is the shadow of reality, for artworks especially that of the modern visual art usually aim to reflect something from reality by deviating from it. "*Art does not know a particular type of reality; it contrasts with*

¹²⁷Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being, or, Beyond Essence*, 43.

¹²⁸ Colin Davis. "Levinas the Novelist." In *Traces of War* (2017):148-62.

knowledge. It is the very event of obscuring, a descent of the night, an invasion of shadow."¹²⁹ In line with this, Levinas has constantly implied that the aesthetic experience is capable of engulfing one's subjectivity to the point of eventually carrying it to another side or rather; the hither side of reality as Levinas calls it

A. Art and the *There is*

Levinas implies that works of art especially that of modern art do not seem to be from this world since they do not come about naturally. Artworks are made up of things of this world which have a practical and objective use, but in artworks they are used or become as something else and "*it is as if they are cast toward us like chunks that have weight in themselves.*"¹³⁰ In the way that materials are stripped off of their objective and contextual meaning by going through new modifications of such by the artist's use and manipulation—by its exoticism, artworks tend to overwhelm and confuse us as to what they could mean. For this reason, one is caught off guard and knocked off their feet due to the fact that they can denote an event in an image presented that seems to be an undetermined alternate reality—the hither side.

Fortunately, such a description of something can be likened by none other than one of Levinas' notions and that is of the *There is*. Such a claim can be justified due to the fact that Levinas directly dedicates a subchapter of his *Existence and Existents* for the explication of his notion of art and its exoticism to serve as a kind of preparation before he formally introduces the absurd concept of the *There is*. As he states that "*The discovery of the materiality of being is not a discovery of a new quality, but of its formless proliferation. Behind the luminosity of forms, by which already relate to our "inside", matter is the very fact of the 'there is'.*"¹³¹ Thereon in his discussion, Levinas puts forward and describes that the *There is* is not simply a nothingness, but of an event of reverting to nothingness or of a coming back to an anonymous and formless existence. It can be likened to one of those paradoxical moments wherein the silence or the absence of the sound of anything becomes deafening for "*it is full, but full of the nothingness of everything*"¹³² thus, indeterminate.

On the other hand, even though the *There is* is described as an anonymous instant, Levinas implies that it does not exactly feel like it is just an instant for it also runs on the hither side of time. With that point being said, Levinas refers to it as a nocturnal space that drags on and seems to be endless and impossible to move forward from. This fact of the *There is* is synonymous to and manifests what Levinas calls *The Meanwhile* in art which can be described as an artwork literally being timeless. This can be said for an artist succeeds in making a certain instant appear in matter thereon preserving and allowing such a moment to never come to an end. An artwork is a world between times. Therefore, an artwork is also never situated in the present in the sense that for Levinas, the meaning of an artwork can neither be immediately be

¹²⁹ Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. "Reality and Its Shadow" in *The Levinas reader*, 132.

¹³⁰ Emmanuel Levinas, Alphonso Lingis, and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and Existents*, 56.

¹³¹ Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. "Reality and Its Shadow" in *The Levinas reader*, 57.

¹³² Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. "Reality and Its Shadow" in *The Levinas reader*, 58.

figured out nor can it decisively speak on its own and clarify its own existence. Therefore, the encounter with art in itself is a situation wherein the “*present can assume nothing, can take on nothing and thus is an impersonal and anonymous instant.*”¹³³ Thus, art seems to be able to reveal such an instant of the *There Is* by being a materialization of it.

B. The Hypostasis And The Economy Of Being

For one to have clarity and for one’s subjectivity to emerge amidst its crisis and chaos or the *There is*, however, is to identify oneself as an existent from its existence hence, separated from the world it lives in. This separation is in turn, to be done by living from the constituents of its own world. Surprisingly, for Levinas, this comes about through a pre-moral egoism in the form of an uncorrupted enjoyment. One takes enjoyment and is nourished through the elemental of this world not by utilizing such or simply using it as a means towards an end, but by letting such elements infiltrate one through sensibility just for that reason itself—because it is enjoyable. These nourishments can be in the form of the terrestrial, like food, rest, happiness and the like. Such nourishments in the form of enjoyment and sensibility establish interiority and the economy of being from which the “I” crystallizes and establishes its footing.¹³⁴ Furthermore, it is what ultimately effects separation and allows one to distinguish itself and be conscious from the non-I or the things outside itself. This process which carries on to the *hypostasis* is where independence from the dependence in such elements is established and where subjectivity emerges. Thereafter, this is when the subject comes to terms with the fact that while he/she feeds off of the nourishments of the world, he/she is in fact a separated being from the world and especially from the Other who occupies the world as well.

Conversely, while Levinas admits that the encounter of art also elicits enjoyment, it is nonetheless a kind of elemental that is a cause for concern due to the fact that it is quite dense with a diverting kind of sensibility that instead of encouraging independence and separation, tends to encourage complacency and reverting into the sphere of the elemental even after one’s subjectivity has already emerged from it. In this sense, one of Levinas’ definition of enjoyment can be assigned which is that:

In enjoyment I am absolutely for myself. Egoist without reference to the Other, I am alone without solitude, innocently egoist and alone. Not against the Others, not ‘as for me ...’ but entirely deaf to the Other, outside all communication and all refusal to communicate —without ears, like a hungry stomach.¹³⁵

This is so because the naïve and innocent enjoyment we take refuge in the moment we emerge from the *There is*, and that of which nourishes one’s interiority, should make way for

¹³³ Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas Reader*, 138.

¹³⁴ Emmanuel Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An essay on Exteriority*, 144.

¹³⁵ Emmanuel Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An essay on Exteriority*, 144.

the sharing of such a cultivated interiority through the face-to-face encounter. Such an encounter of the Other and her alterity is what will disturb and consequently, put into question one's unassuming gratification or its egoism. However, in contrast with the aesthetic encounter on its own, the latter is most often than not, capable of effecting a setback along the way by deluding one's subjectivity in its puzzling wake and this is mainly due to the fact that artworks elicit and encourage the proliferation of the often stigmatized ideology behind images for Levinas.

C. The Face And The Image Of Art (Levinas And Visual Art)

One of the reasons for the opaque nature of artworks for Levinas is due to the fact that they are loaded with imagery. An image for Levinas be it in the literal or the figurative sense, is evidently a way of doubling reality by means of an adequation or a reduction of it. In a way, an image *frames* and sets apart a scenery. Through such an “*elementary process*” of art: by presenting images, is how it makes things stand out.¹³⁶ However, being such, Levinas stresses that it runs the risk of distorting reality through a newfound freedom of imagination. Thereon, such a distorted depiction of reality is tolerated or even romanticized. He warns us of this as he states that:

by their presence insist on [an object's] absence. They occupy its place mark its removal, as though the represented object died, were degraded, disincarnated in its own reflection. The painting then does not lead us given reality, but somehow to the hither side of it. It is a symbol in reverse¹³⁷.

With that point being said, Levinas constantly describes images to be quite deluding for a subject is constantly led to think that the encounter with art is quite simple. In trying to comprehend a piece of art, the subject tends to think that the comprehension stops on the image of art and that the encounter with such an object is straightforward. On the contrary, artworks for Levinas signify things in themselves; therefore, they should not be taken one-dimensionally including realistic art, for even if artworks resemble certain things of an artist's world, they still have a multiplicity of meaning even to the point of a regress in meaning. Furthermore, for Levinas, even if an artwork can be considered an expression or a work of the Other, an artist is still “*not present, does not attend his own manifestation, but is simply signified in it by a sign in a system of signs.*”¹³⁸ With such an easily overlooked fact of the artist's or the other's distance when it comes to art, that an artwork is not a direct contact with meaning and the Other, most often than not, an ambiguous and a probable misleading image is also constantly being patronized or rather, idolized. Hence, the propagation of this totalizing semiotic is also prone to being applied to one's perception of objects, oneself or worse —the face of the Other. As Aaron Rosen

¹³⁶ Levinas and Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*,132.

¹³⁷Levinas and Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*,136.

¹³⁸ Emmanuel Levinas. *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*, 178.

ironically puts it that, “by being pronounced complete, placed on a pedestal, or hung on a wall, art encourages us to think of ourselves in the same way, as finished products.”¹³⁹

Conversely, the Face of the Other just like any other concept for Levinas should not be taken literally. Despite Levinas having countless passages trying to describe what the face signifies, like that of its condition as a “stranger, destitute, or proletarian”¹⁴⁰, the very act of doing so is admittedly self-defeating for the face cannot be defined, or rather, totalized, but this, however encourages us to attend to them. Levinas’ notion of the Face serves as a constant reminder of another human being’s separation and distinctness from the subject, and vice-versa, simply put, the alterity of the Other. The Face of the Other overflows with signification and the encounter of such alone makes one realize that there will always be something more than meets the eye. Thereby, when it comes to the encounter of the Other for Levinas, the faculty of vision in line with cognition can be constant predators in the name of objectification and assimilation; the source of violence may well be traced back to such a process of trying to absorb and reduce one into things, concepts and even images. Levinas describes that:

To see is to be in a world that is entirely *here* and self-sufficient. Any vision beyond what is given remains within what is given. The Infinity of space, like the infinity of the signified referred to by the sign, is equally absent from the here below. Vision is a relation with a being such that the being attained through it precisely appears as the world.¹⁴¹

In line with such a statement implying Levinas’ adversity to the faculty of vision, his statement that *ethics is an optics*¹⁴² can seem quite blurry at first however, as one reads on, it can become clearer that Levinas constantly subordinates the faculty of vision due to the fact that it is a means of seeing closed wholes in reality. As he goes on to say that “it is a ‘vision without image, bereft of the synoptic and totalizing objectifying virtues of vision, or an intentionality of a wholly different type.’”¹⁴³ Moreover, ethics being an optics for him, is that it is a shame if one simply stops there, with seeing the Other and asserting things about her, reducing her, for the Face *is* by itself and not by reference to a system. Even if vision is where one initially and instantly sees the Other, it does and should not just stop at that; after all, optics is in fact the study of an exhaustive lot of “light and how it affects and is affected by other things.”¹⁴⁴ In line with this, ethics is not being content with what is immediately presented in vision, rather, it should pave the way towards one’s interaction to another who signifies the beyond and what always slips away from common perception. In addition, Levinas has always emphasized that the face is not an image for a human being, not just because it is mobile, but also because a human being is not a thing that we can adequate and manipulate to our own liking. The Face signifies something that one cannot

¹³⁹Aaron Rosen, "Emmanuel Levinas and the Hospitality of Images." *Literature and Theology* 25, no. 4 (2011): 367

¹⁴⁰ Levinas, *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*,75.

¹⁴¹ Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*,147.

¹⁴²Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay On Exteriority*, 23.

¹⁴³Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay On Exteriority*,23.

¹⁴⁴"*Dictionary by Merriam-Webster, s.v. "Optics,"* accessed February 1, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/optics>

conquer or overcome for it signifies the beyond or the infinity in the Other. Thus, the vision of the face alone, the straightforwardness of the ethical encounter may very well be called the starting point of transcendence for it precedes all principles and thereon constantly allows one to go beyond one's perception and capacities.

It is noticeable that there also seems to be another similarity with the pure exteriority that is the image of art and the radical exteriority of the face—that they both disturb and push our being to inquire and preoccupy itself with something. Though, it is also remarkable that Levinas, yet again, brings up art's peculiar nature to further elucidate the effect of the total alterity of The Face— suffice it to say that it is to contrast the two. The difference in Levinas' sentiments about them lies in their effect on us and in what they lead us to question. The image of an artwork, on its own leads one to an infinite regress of its meaning since it is pure exteriority for its *“secret is exposed enclosed in its monumental essence and in its myth, in which it gleams like a splendor but does not deliver itself. It captivates by its grace as by magic but does not reveal itself.”*¹⁴⁵ On the other hand, the Face of the Other paves the way to putting one's own existence into question with one's encounter of a radical exteriority or simply put, alterity. As Levinas states that *“It is the face; its revelation is speech. The relation with the Other alone introduces a dimension of transcendence and leads us to a relation totally different from experience in the sensible sense of the term, relative and egoist.”*¹⁴⁶

D. A Threefold Disengagement

Based on the foregoing parts of this paper, it can be inferred that for Levinas, Artworks present something that has numerous anarchic capabilities at play. With such a point, it can be said that one of Levinas' main adherence from it can be derived from its capability to be used as an evasion of responsibility or to divert subjectivity. An artwork on its own for Levinas, as we have explained, is *essentially disengaged* from reality due to the fact that it stands out in its exoticism.¹⁴⁷ A disengagement is also inherent in the process of making or the production of an artwork in the artist's case and ultimately that of the disengagement of its spectator and/or appreciator which is the subject.

Levinas does not elaborate on and invalidate the hard work and struggles that an artist goes through, Levinas nonetheless views artists as quite privileged people for artists are usually excused from engaging that much in society because they are also idolized or even placed on a pedestal for they are *“free to think that they have gone beyond the real”* and that he always has a masterpiece on its way which is an artwork – all of this he does in isolation.¹⁴⁸ In a way, an artist can be said to be playing god with regards to his art for he is evidently in control of creating another world that is on the hither side. Hence, it is inevitable that the constant process for an artist involves that of a disinterestedness and a disengagement

¹⁴⁵ Emmanuel Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, 192.

¹⁴⁶ Emmanuel Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, 193.

¹⁴⁷ Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 131.

¹⁴⁸ Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 136.

from reality and other people for an artist situates himself “*purely and simply at the heart of his own spectacle*”¹⁴⁹ whereas the “*spectators obsesses*”¹⁵⁰ over delving into the artist’s world.

Thereafter, in a subject’s engagement with an ambiguous product that the isolation of an artist has reproduced and that the artist shares and leaves to the public, the subject is usually immobilized and is consequently not able to fulfill one’s duty of *facing* the Other for it is turned towards an artwork. Artworks are inevitably interesting yet alarmingly engrossing for Levinas. Paintings, sculptures, pictures and films are noticeably and typically sought out when one has some time to spare and for one to unwind since “*To make or to appreciate a novel and a picture is to no longer have to conceive, is to renounce the effort of science, philosophy, and action. Do not speak, do not reflect, admire in silence and in peace.*”¹⁵¹ Most often than not, it is due to the fact that to look and be in the presence of art, since it does not appear to be anything of this world, allows one to momentarily forget one’s immediate reality and to in turn be taken into a new world.

By this means, the novelty of a curated world to be perceived is also quite enticing and pleasurable to the point of one’s established subjectivity collapsing and being carried away from one’s reality. The rhythm of sensations and images is also what makes it capable of carrying us away and making us unconsciously and immediately participate in its event. It is in this context that Levinas states that “*it is a unique situation where we cannot speak of consent, assumption, initiative or freedom.*”¹⁵² It is really quite easy to be entertained by artworks and Levinas does not deny such a fact but thereon strategically deconstructs the enjoyment to warn us of its ability to neutralize one’s actions. Art is quite susceptible to becoming a guilty pleasure in the way that it could easily be used as an escapism or to revert to a sinking further into mere being-in-the-world rather than a being-for-the-Other or towards a consistent and spontaneous transcendence towards responding to the other and even substituting for the Other—something that is at the core emphasis of Levinas’ philosophy.

Hence, it is noticeable that Levinas’ references to art present and reflect a deep observation and a holistic account of the nature of art and that of the aesthetic experience. With that point being said, it is remarkable that for Levinas a great lot of art’s dark and negative aspects stems from almost all of the aesthetic experience’s steps being an immediate disengagement from reality which effects ambiguity that thereon becomes an avenue towards a relapse from clarity and certainty of reality and onto furthering into oneself.

E. LANGUAGE, DISCOURSE AND PHILOSOPHICAL CRITICISM OF ART

So far, it is evident that Levinas’ sentiments are quite gloomy and dismissive when it comes to art. Artworks as Levinas describes are objects that function, thrive and settle in ambiguity or it keeps us in the dark as to what it really means when taken or perceived on its own and in this way is how Levinas makes us aware of its neutralizing effect. Neutrality is often described as an attitude of being lukewarm

¹⁴⁹Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 149.

¹⁵⁰Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 140.

¹⁵¹Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 141.

¹⁵²Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 132.

and undecided about something and this, for Levinas, may well be a source of irresponsibility and even that of violence in the sense that neutrality effects silence in one or silencing of the Other. Silence in turn for Levinas does not necessarily mean that there is peace, sometimes it maybe that there is not an answer because something is being held back, withdrawn and even exiled—the intense and yet indirect encounter of art for Levinas is a constant paradigm of this notion of silence. Levinas profoundly describes it as a “myth taking the place of mystery.”¹⁵³

Quite frankly, a myth is an irrational and yet established belief. In a way, some humans accept myths by tolerating them and by not really taking the initiative to even inquire into their nature or where such a belief is coming from thereby not clarifying if they are even plausible. Furthermore, myths are blind and tactless forces that humans use as explanations or rather as defense mechanisms against the hardships of explaining something. Such an ideology is very much synonymous to the way art presents itself and is being utilized by humans—as a way of settling into one’s preconceived notions and hasty generalizations; ultimately, as an evasion of a better dialogue. As Levinas states that “*The artist stops because the work refuses to accept anything more, appears saturated. The work is completed in spite of the social or material causes that interrupt it. It does not give itself out as the beginning of a dialogue.*”¹⁵⁴

In line with this, Levinas has always put an emphasis that the Other literally and figuratively masks an innumerable lot behind the Face and the expressions she makes. Accordingly, it is of no surprise that language, discourse and communication play a crucial role in reaching out to the Other or the ethical relation and consequently towards transcendence. For Levinas, stating a word breaks the *plastic image of the face* due to the fact that in communicating with the Other is undeniably when the otherness of the Other is realized.¹⁵⁵ However, discourse with the Face of the Other for Levinas is not necessarily disclosure. Its end is not essentially situated in the hopes of attaining knowledge or intentionality. An ethical relation is brought about in the sense that it is not a negation of one’s being, it does not threaten one, rather, it puts the ‘I’ in question. Thereafter, it is one’s obligation to answer to the question/s that the Face of the Other puts forward and effects on us. The response to such a question reflects an innumerable lot about the separated “I” for in answering to the Other’s call, the “I” is also *offering* what it has cultivated from within.

It is to be noted that contrary to the conventional notions of Language, for Levinas, language is not an abstract puzzle; it does not pre-condition intentionality, for language is not something already out there that a subject uses in hopes of finding the other pieces in discourse. Rather, it is the very instrument and/or building blocks of what the “I” has to offer to the Other and into the substantiation of its ethical relationship with the Other. In discourse, the subject does not know what or how the other will respond, for what is the point of discourse if the subject already knows? this will just be another self-gratification or a movement of the Same. Through language, conversation and/or discourse with the Other, the ethical relation is actualized in the sense that it signifies the Other as an overflowing of

¹⁵³Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 142.

¹⁵⁴Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 131.

¹⁵⁵ Emmanuel Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*,155.

thought and which deepens the ethical relationship and is meaning by itself.¹⁵⁶ Ultimately though, this is how the Infinite commands one's Being or in Levinas' term, *the Same* and how the Same in turn attests to such an infinity¹⁵⁷ by further transcending its conditions and by reaching out over to another shore¹⁵⁸ to the Other.

Works of art on the other hand, are elements which are *clothe* with signification¹⁵⁹, but are not self-sufficient because perceived on their own, artworks cannot posit and clarify their own existence. Thereon, in stark contrast to language, art cannot transcend itself on its own for it needs a disclosure to have meaning and eventually to “*find for it a place in the whole by apperceiving its function or its beauty.*”¹⁶⁰ Thus, to combat the nature of art being a constant artificial intervention to one's subjectivity or responsibility to the Other, Levinas has consistently suggested the intervention of philosophical criticism of art. In the subsequent lines to the one stating that art does not begin dialogue on its own in *Reality and Its Shadow*, Levinas finds hope in the previously stigmatized ideology of a myth and consequently that of artworks for it “*is at the same time untruth and the source of philosophical truth.*”¹⁶¹ Hence, Levinas prescribes an antidote to the inhumanity and irresponsibility of art through the philosophical criticism of it. This for Levinas will contemplate and inquire into the techniques used in the artwork and the influences surrounding the artist's work. Criticism will contextualize a work of art in line with figuring out what the artist is trying to convey. Hence, in doing so criticism “*treats the artist as a man at work*”¹⁶² and will link this “*disengaged and proud man to real history*”¹⁶³ thereby also extracting the artwork from the meanwhile, or its literal quality of being timeless, and into situating it in a specific context that can help deepen one's understanding of the work of art. In short, philosophical criticism will humanize the artist and consequently the *inhuman and monstrous nature* of the artwork.¹⁶⁴

Moreover, this study notes that the difference between Levinas' suggestion of philosophical criticism from mere criticism which he mentions at the first part of *Reality And Its Shadow* is that philosophical criticism is a *rehabilitated*¹⁶⁵ kind of criticism against the background of the traditional view of art as revelation. Since Levinas reminds us that an artwork is in fact a non-truth and is not a form of knowledge in the way that it doesn't clarify things on its own, it follows that one's encounter with it should also not be done in isolation for the seemingly self-sufficient nature of art despite it being ambiguous, that the subject perceives, can in turn be internalized by the subject in the use of criticism per se. This can be justified by the fact that criticism by mere contemplation in one's own or the language

¹⁵⁶ Emmanuel Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, 74.

¹⁵⁷ Emmanuel Levinas and Philippe Nemo. *Ethics and Infinity: conversations with Philippe Nemo*. (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2011), 108-110.

¹⁵⁸ Emmanuel Levinas. *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*, 216.

¹⁵⁹ Emmanuel Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, 74

¹⁶⁰ Emmanuel Levinas. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, 74.

¹⁶¹ Emmanuel Levinas and Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 142.

¹⁶² Emmanuel Levinas and Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 141.

¹⁶³ Emmanuel Levinas and Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 141.

¹⁶⁴ Emmanuel Levinas and Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 142.

¹⁶⁵ Emmanuel Levinas and Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 142

of the Same is counterintuitive in the way that it can lead to *a parasitic experience*¹⁶⁶ and yet again, a furthering into oneself. Thus, the philosophical criticism should necessitate an actual conversation with the Other about art. As Levinas makes us aware that:

The use of the word wrenches experience out of its aesthetic self-sufficiency, the here where it has quietly been lying. Invoking experience transforms it into a creature. It is in this sense that I have been able to say elsewhere that criticism, which is the word of a living being speaking to a living being, brings the image in which art revels back to the fully real being.¹⁶⁷

A conversation with the Other about an artwork or a criticism of it art is to be done in the hopes of mobilizing *the Said*¹⁶⁸ that can be represented by the peculiar materialization of an artwork. This is by the very fact that an artwork can manifest the strangest things in the world for it is quite surprising sometimes to see that a simple canvass or photo paper is made dense with an image by an artist. As Levinas puts it that “*The palette of colors, the gamut of sounds, the system of vocables and the meandering of forms are realized as a pure bon; in the touch of color and pencil, the secrecy of words, the sonority of sounds-all these modal- there is resonance of essence.*”¹⁶⁹ All of which however, is to resonate only through an unsaying by way of conversing about what the artist is trying to convey in the artwork. As Levinas does follow to say that “*The exegesis is not something laid on to the resonance of essence in the artwork; the resonance of essence vibrates within the said of the exegesis.*”¹⁷⁰

Through this, the artwork’s ambiguity and insufficiency can be put forward and can be made offerable to the ethical relationship by bearing witness to it and allowing it to have an ethical signification that is, *a Saying*.¹⁷¹ Just as Levinas in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* used the ambiguity of language against the totalizing tendencies of the intentionality of language by speaking in paradoxes and in quite a difficult way of articulation, in the case of artworks, language can also be used to counter the disengaging effect of art in order to divert it towards the more worthy endpoint for Levinas which is ethics. Furthermore, through the necessary inseparability of criticism, conversation and art for Levinas, the aesthetic experience will not just be a way for one to descend into herself or to relapse into anonymity and mere being, but rather, to utilize and apply the

¹⁶⁶ Emmanuel Levinas and Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 131.

¹⁶⁷ Emmanuel Levinas and Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 148.

¹⁶⁸ *The said, the word, is not simply a sign of a meaning, nor even only an expression of a meaning (contrary to Husserl’s analysis in the first Logic of Investigation); the word at once proclaims and establishes an identification of this with that in the already said* (OBBE: 36-37). The Said is one of the two aspects of language that Levinas elaborates on in his *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* which can succinctly be described as the actual and literal words *said*. For instance, when a person says ‘I love you’, those three actual words are the Said or the concrete product of articulation.

¹⁶⁹ Emmanuel Levinas. *Otherwise than Being, or Beyond Essence*, 40.

¹⁷⁰ Emmanuel Levinas and Hand. “Reality and Its Shadow” in *The Levinas reader*, 41.

¹⁷¹ The second and last aspect of language that Levinas elaborated on., however, is much more tricky as it is what signifies ethical ambiguity and this is *the Saying* As we have stated earlier that the Said of the statement ‘I love you’ are those exact three words used, the gesture and overall, the way someone says those words to another the Saying and is ultimately more capable of signification and meaning. Thus, if someone says ‘I love you’ while strangling you, would you still believe him? As Levinas continues in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* that: *The saying is both an affirmation and a retraction of the said. The reduction could not be effected simply by parentheses which, on the contrary, are an effect of writing. It is the ethical interruption of essence that energizes the reduction.* (OBBE:44)

ambiguity of art as an inspiration towards the cultivation of the ethical relationship by way of it being a prompt towards the Other—a transcendence.

V. Conclusion

As we can see, Levinas' initially dismissive views on the nature of art did not just come out of nowhere for they stem from a plausible vantage point that prioritizes responsibility, initiative and generosity. For Levinas, the common saying of *art for art's sake* simply does not justify its implications to the human condition especially as it is very much upheld and given such a privileged place in our civilization. The encounter of art is often viewed as an extraordinary experience out of the ordinary that is of our day to day reality; the novelty of a new world that a material such as an artwork allows to appear in contrast from the mundane things we just use to achieve something, is quite enticing and has the ability to draw one in its world. One may think that this is just something we use for our harmless entertainment and enjoyment, but Levinas reminds us that it might be the other way around. An artwork's static ambiguity and a subject's curiosity as to what it truly means is a constant push and pull that can lead to absorption of the subject. As Levinas had stated: that "*evil powers are conjured by filling the world with idols which have mouths but do not speak.*";¹⁷² for Levinas, the way artworks are put on a pedestal, viewed as the saving grace of humanity and as something that is to take refuge in despite having an ambiguous nature and meaning when perceived by itself or as they are presented to us, is a movement that is problematic for it tends to perpetuate an opacity of meaning taking over and blinding us from what should matter and to which we should dedicate our initiative to—our responsibility to the Other. In contrast to the effect of the Other's alterity or her mystery, The Face of the Other thereon signifies light in itself and further has the capacity to justify and bear witness to her existence and even to question ours not just with the use of language. Whereas, art on its own allows us to sink deeper into the darkness and indeterminateness of existence. In this sense, art is insufficient for it is not able to go beyond itself and clarify its own existence much more a subject's due to its peculiarity that come from its imagery and exoticism—it cannot transcend itself nor effect such but is always on the hither side.

Thus, Levinas does not try to change the mode of artistic production nor the constituents of such artworks but has constantly suggested a counter intervention of philosophical criticism to the essential intervention that is art or the aesthetic experience. Such an extension to the exotic aesthetic experience allows for one's experience of it and the questions it has brought about in a subject to be discussed and offered to the Other by means of a conversation—thereafter constantly being situated in the economy of being instead of remaining in the *il y a*. In short, the private escape or descension into oneself that is typically towards mere being and irresponsibility would cease to be so if such an escape would be diverted onto the ethical relation.

Throughout the course of this study, it is remarkable (if one has not already noticed) that Levinas did exactly what he was suggesting: Levinas has constantly brought up his dark notion of art and its descending ideology to argue for a more progressive kind of movement and that is of the transcendental movement that is to be done by reaching out to the Other or his ethics. Through the initial dismissal of art, Levinas constantly makes use of it and its essential egoism to remind us of an impartial transcendence that one could easily settle into instead of pushing forward into a transcendence that pushes towards the Other or the ethical responsibility. Even as Art signifies a certain kind of beauty, it is of no surprise that Levinas was not fazed and is nonetheless consistently concerned with The Good that can come out of it in just the right conditions. Figuratively speaking,

¹⁷² Emmanuel Levinas and Sean Hand, "Reality and Its Shadow" in *The Levinas reader*, 141.

with the right conditions the experience of Visual art being a constant descension from the light or clarity can eventually compel one to push forward to the light that is to be found in the uplifting movement or the transcendence of the ethical responsibility to the Other– it is a shadow that trails behind and allows for contrast indeed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES:

BOOKS:

Heidegger, Martin, and Joan Stambaugh. *Being and Time: A Translation of "Sein Und Zeit"*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996

Kant, Immanuel, and Werner S. Pluhar. *Critique of Judgment*. Indianapolis, Ind: Hackett, 2010.

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Collected philosophical papers*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1998.

_____, and Philippe Nemo. *Ethics and infinity: conversations with Philippe Nemo*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2011

_____, Alphonso Lingis, and Robert Bernasconi. *Existence and existents*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2008.

_____. *On escape = De l'évasion*. Translated by Bettina Bergo. Stanford (California): Stanford University Press, 2003.

_____. *Difficult freedom*. Athlone: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

_____, and Michael B. Smith. *Proper names*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008.

_____. *Otherwise than being, or, Beyond essence*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2009.

_____. *Time and the Other: And Additional Essays*. Pittsburgh, Penn.: Duquesne University Press, 2015.

_____, and Seán Hand. *The Levinas reader*. Malden: Blackwell, 2009.

_____. *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2013.

Wahl, Jean André. *Human Existence and Transcendence*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2016.

SECONDARY SOURCES:

BOOKS:

Critchley, Simon. *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008.

Doukhan, Abigail. *Emmanuel Levinas: a philosophy of exile*. New York : Continuum, 2012.

Hofmeyr, Benda. *Radical Passivity: Rethinking Ethical Agency in Levinas*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2009.

Hutchens, Benjamin C. *Levinas: a guide for the perplexed*. New York: Continuum, 2006.

JOURNALS:

Altez-Albela, Fleurdeliz. "The Body and Transcendence in Emmanuel Levinas' Phenomenological Ethics." *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* 5, no. 1 (2011), 36-50. doi:10.25138/5.1.a.3.

Ben-Pazi, Hanoach. "Emmanuel Levinas: Hermeneutics, Ethics, and Art." *Journal of Literature and Art Studies* 5, no. 8 (2015), 588-600. doi:10.17265/2159-5836/2015.08.003.-

Berenpas, Martine. "The monstrous nature of art: Levinas on art, time and irresponsibility." *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics*, vol.6, (2014), 13-23.

- Bernasconi, Robert. "No Exit: Levinas Aporetic Account of Transcendence." *Research in Phenomenology* 35, no. 1 (2005),101-17. doi:10.1163/1569164054905366.
- Bruns, Gerald L. "The Concepts of Art and Poetry in Emmanuel Levinas's Writings." In *On the Anarchy of Poetry and Philosophy: A Guide for the Unruly*,. New York: Fordham University, 2006, 175-98 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1c84gmm.13>.
- Davis, Colin. "Levinas the Novelist." *Traces of War*, 2017, 148-62. doi:10.2307/j.ctt1ps33bb.12.
- Gabriel Riera. ""The Possibility of the Poetic Said" in Otherwise than Being (Allusion, or Blanchot in Lévinas)." *Diacritics* 34, no. 2 (2004),14-36. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3805815.28>
- Hofmeyr, Benda. "Radical Passivity: Ethical Problem or Solution?" *Radical Passivity Library of Ethics and Applied Philosophy* 20 (2009),15-30. doi:10.1007/978-1-4020-9347-0_2.
- Kronick, Joseph G. "Levinas and the Plot against Literature." *Philosophy and Literature* 40, no. 1 (2016), 265-72. doi:10.1353/phl.2016.0017.
- Mcdonald, Henry. "Aesthetics as First Ethics: Levinas and the Alterity of Literary Discourse." *Diacritics* 38, no. 4 (2010),15-41. Accessed February 20, 2018. doi:10.1353/dia.2010.0003.
- Robbins, Jill. "Aesthetic Totality and Ethical Infinity: Levinas on Art." *LEspritCréateur* 35, no. 3 (1995), 66-79. doi:10.1353/esp.1995.0049.
- Rosen, Aaron. "Emmanuel Levinas and the Hospitality of Images." *Literature and Theology* 25, no. 4 (2011): 364-78. doi:10.1093/litthe/frr050.
- Welten, R. "Image and Oblivion: Emmanuel Levinas Phenomenological Iconoclasm." *Literature and Theology* 19, no. 1 (2005), 60-73. doi:10.1093/litthe/19.1.60.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES:

Burggraeve, Roger. "Affected by the Face of the Other. The Levinasian Movement from the Exteriority to the Interiority of the Infinite." *Dialegesthai*. July 05, 2009. Accessed August 23, 2019. <https://mondodomani.org/dialegesthai/rbu01.htm>.

Dictionary by Merriam-Webster , s.v. "Optics," accessed February 1, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/optics>

Hofmeyr, Benda. ""Isn't Art an Activity that Gives Things a Face?" Levinas on the Power of Art." *Image and Narrative*. September 2007. Accessed February 20,2018.http://www.imageandnarrative.be/inarchive/thinking_pictures/hofmeyr.htm

Gabriel Marcel's *The Mystery of the Family* in the Filipino Context

Ivan Efreaim A. Gozum

Angeles University Foundation | gozum.ivanefreaim@auf.edu.ph

Abstract: As modernization produced a more liberal modern world, the society now needs to reflect on this situation and be awakened of the need to go back and focus on its very foundation: family, the basic unit of the society. However, the way of life of families was also changed by the negative effects of modernization, resulting to the increasing number of cases of broken families, cases of divorce, annulment and the improper formation of children. This paper aims to look at the situation of Filipino families as it delves on how the Filipino families have changed from its traditional roots to the landscape that is the Filipino family is at today. In order for one to have a realization of what an epitome of a Filipino family could be, the research uses Gabriel Marcel's lecture entitled *The Mystery of the Family* to offer a new perspective and proper lenses on how one must look at today's situation of the Filipino family. Issues regarding adultery, divorce, annulment and child formation in particular will be discussed appropriately using Marcel's thoughts on the family. These thoughts are mainly his discussion on the person and the pact between person and life, creative fidelity and hope from the said essay

Keywords: *Mystery, Fidelity, Filipino Family, Modernization*

Introduction

The modern period led to the rise of modern empirical science and one of its greatest contribution – industrialization. Industrialization is a way of life that propagates profound economic, social, political, and cultural changes in the society. It is by undergoing industrialization that societies become modern, thus, undergoing fully to the continuous process of modernization.¹⁷³ It seems to be no-brainer for any one to not acknowledge the positive effects of modernization. Modernization paved way to technological progress which is indubitably very much of help in today's society. Scientific discoveries also occurred during modernization.

Behind all these positive contributions, there are also negative events that happened due to modernization. Many tragedies happened during the modern period because of the invention of different weapons of mass destruction. The technological progress that modernization was able to

¹⁷³ See Krishan Kumar, "Modernization," in *Britannica Encyclopaedia*, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/modernization>, retrieved on September 11, 2018

engender made each person focus more on themselves. This led to humans look at themselves at the “center of the universe.” Behind all the noisiness that the modern period was able to engender, one can realize that there is a longing for a home. One will long for the love and solace that can be found from one’s beginnings. This, the researcher thinks, seems to originate from one’s home – family.

The family is the basic unit of the society. It is the beginning of social relationships. The family plays a vital role in the society and is considered as the most important formation house for a person. Martin Plattel, a British writer, said that the family has frequently been spoken to as the community par excellence.¹⁷⁴ It is expected that all citizens must have a strong foundation of good moral character and prepare them to what the world will bring. It is sad to see that in today’s world, the bonds of the families are gradually weakening. The family is slowly being desecrated. Some people have forgotten the real importance of the family: the divorce rate, child abuses and cases of adultery have been increasing.

Filipino families value their families very highly, an exceptional character which they are known for. Without regards of the liberal influence they have gotten from the western culture, the family remained the basic unit of the Philippine society as they maintain their high respect to elders and close connection with their relatives.

Modernization is catching up with the Filipino family which provided both positive and negative effects to the Filipino family. The once patriarchal trait of the Filipino family is gradually changing. Today, women are allowed to go to work and the father may not be the sole provider for his family. The problem that arouse from this practice is the lack of parental guidance for the children. A result of lack of parental guidance is the tendency of some children to be rebellious; they tend not to maintain close family ties.

In this paper, these situations are to be viewed in the light of Gabriel Marcel’s eye-opening essay, from his book *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, entitled *The Mystery of the Family*. From this essay, he suggests that the family must not be dealt as a problem; rather, as a mystery. Also, he explicates the importance of the sanctity of marriage and the need to have a proper child formation to bring hope in the family.

The Filipino Family: Traditional to Modern

Filipinos are known for their high value of family. The importance of the family to Filipinos shows that “it is as if to be a member of a family is a Filipino’s most striking quality.”¹⁷⁵ This statement shows that Filipinos truly value their family in a deeper sense. They feel special and ‘at home’ when they know that they are a member of a family. Niels Mulder adds:

Before anything else, the family commands the Filipino’s loyalty and is considered to be the wellspring of a meaningful existence, of identity and fulfilment. Sanctified by religious representations and ritual, the household-centered, often multigenerational, nuclear family is inviolable and relatively autonomous.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ See Martin Plattel, *Social Philosophy*, (Pittsburg: Duquesne University Press, 1965), 110.

¹⁷⁵ Niels Mulder, *Inside Philippine Society: Interpretations of Everyday Life*, (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1997), 21.

¹⁷⁶ Niels Mulder, *Inside Philippine Society: Interpretations of Everyday Life*, 37.

The family is not only being given importance by Filipinos because they are simply a member of such. They give importance to the family because it was enriched by tradition and history through the different factors which contributed to how the Filipinos value and perceive what a family is today. The high respect that Filipinos are giving to the family shows that the family for Filipinos is very much relevant due to a reality that everyone is a member of a specific family. Florentino Timbreza even states, “Filipinos are well known for their family-centeredness.”¹⁷⁷

Moreover, the Filipino family has been known throughout the years for the values that characterizes it such as close family ties, deep religiosity, respect to elders, faithfulness in the family and child-centeredness. These values make the Filipino family remarkable. These values solidify one’s perception of the Filipino family for these values have been the basis for any person each time that they talk about Filipino family. However, these values have changed due to the rise of modernization. In the modern setting, these values are not really observed anymore by most modern Filipino families. There has been a change of focus in the family. Modernization made people to be more focused on work in order to cope up with the economic demands that the society has demanded. Medina et al. states:

With modernization, however, many changes are going on in Filipino society which have affected the family. Among these are increased participation of women in the labor force, the growth of mass media, transportation, and communication; the unabated rural to urban migration; and outmigration of Filipinos to other lands.¹⁷⁸

This statement clearly shows how modernization made the Filipino family veer away from its traditional values. The traditional family in which the father is the only one working and the mother is the one taking care of the children has not been applicable because of the situation that the family is in. With modernization, poverty has become a problem and has made the traditional Filipino family values to be somehow ‘unguarded’ due to the lack of focus on parenting because, in most cases, both parents in a family now work in order to survive. Somehow, the Filipino family has lost its brilliance for it has been one exemplar type of family due to its traditional values.

The family, as a social institution, requires members. The family, per se, has its own founding members. These founding members are the husband and wife. The couple who met, fell in love and married each other. These two persons are vital for they are the ones who were united during marriage. These two persons would eventually be the ones to procreate and start the family. Medina states, “Since the family institution is a universally essential aspect of human society, each culture provides some kind of arrangement for the selection of people who will make up the family – who will mate, procreate, and nurture the young.”¹⁷⁹

Traditionally, Filipinos are very critical and sensitive in choosing a partner. The suitor usually undergoes a very hard process of courtship in order to gain the love and trust of both the family of the woman and the woman that he wants to be with. A long-time of proving the worth of the suitor is needed in order to gain the favor of being a couple. However, in the modern setting, some women’s

¹⁷⁷ Florentino Timbreza, *Filipino Values Today*, (Manila: National Bookstore Inc., 2005), 103.

¹⁷⁸ Belen Medina et al., *The Filipino Family: Emerging Structures and Arrangements*, (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1996), 2.

¹⁷⁹ Belen Medina, *The Filipino Family*, (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2001), 78.

affection can easily be gained by suitors by easily sending sweet messages through text, chat and other different means of communication. Today, there are also mobile applications which make the process of courting easier. There are now dating apps that enable any person to have an actual conversation without even knowing each other and without any personal interaction. Sadly, there are people who date even though they do not interact personally often anymore.

After courtship, as long as the couple is ready to be together, they decide to be united through marriage. In the Filipino tradition, marriage is very much highlighted. The Filipino wedding of a couple starts the union of the couple and lets them enter the married life. Traditionally, a Filipino wedding does not only unite the husband and wife but it unites the families of both husband and wife. This tradition shows the high regard for family of the Filipinos and signifies the approval of both sides. Hence, the married couple is challenged to be more committed to their obligations due to the public affirmation between their families.

This is a great event for both families, especially for the couple. This is the fulfillment of their love for each other. Being united by marriage is very essential to Filipinos because they will have an extension of their family. Marriage is being done mainly because the two individuals are ready to commit themselves to each other and have their own family. By being married, they vow for faithfulness and full dedication of themselves to each other and to the family that they will have. With the traditional Filipino setting of being married in the church, the couple is given more responsibility to become faithful for it is what the church is urging.

However, in the modern setting, various changes occurred. There are couples who do not get married and choose to cohabit with each other, in other words; a 'live-in' relationship. Cohabitation is described by Medina as:

The most common type of cohabitation, however, is the joint living of a man and a woman as husband and wife without formal legality of marriage. There is exclusive sexual involvement but there is no assumption of permanency, and commitment is only for as long as the relationship is mutually satisfying.¹⁸⁰

This situation has become common in the country due to the influence that the Western narrative have. Couples do not marry because of the fear of having a lifetime commitment. Moreover, married couples also undergo different situations in today's society. Not all marriages are successful. Due to the marital adjustments that the couple undergo when they live together, marriages have different results. Some result to broken families and unhappy couples. Some situations result to family violence, husband-wife conflict and husband-wife separation.

Violence in the family is very dangerous because it will leave a mark on the relationship. Usually, the family must be the place of safety and refuge for the members. The couple usually are the ones to help each other out through thick and thin. However, some cases indicate that violence against women has been a big issue. Medina explicates:

When women become victims of violence within their own homes and at the hands of their own husbands, it is not only their right to protection that is violated, but all their rights of survival, participation and development are endangered. Yet, many victims helplessly bear

¹⁸⁰ Medina, *The Filipino Family*, 91.

the situation to keep the family intact at all cost even if violence is perpetrated with such debilitating effects as stunted emotional growth, low esteem, and depression.¹⁸¹

This situation is said to have a stigma to the family. The happy life that they are trying to reach during the taking of their marital vows are not met due to the violence that they are experiencing. On the other hand, there are husband-wife conflicts that are due to economic problems. Medina states, “Conflict that is economic in nature, can include issues on savings, investments, purchases, wife’s career aspirations, husband’s working overtime or moonlighting on a second job and other occupational matters.”¹⁸²

For Filipinos, when someone marries, one marries into the better half’s family and takes that thought very seriously. However, today, marriage is being desecrated. This has become a problem because the traditional definition and importance of marriage is slowly degrading and cases of infidelity rise. Gonzales states, “A common concern emerging from family ministry in the Philippine setting is of a marriage affected by infidelity. Infidelity is the breaking of marital vows.”¹⁸³ Minyong Ordoñez supports this claim by saying:

The culture of a people, the Filipino culture in our case, defines our racial identity. Culture manifests goodness and virtues, creativity, and accomplishments in symmetry with the material and spiritual faculties of the people. Culture is the bedrock of a nation’s continuity, unity, subsidiarity, and dignity. And lovability too. We Filipinos are disarmingly called the happiest, most hospitable people on this side of the planet, a national character that originates from our profound celebration of the joy and sanctity of life. No racial pride or culture can evolve based on self-destructive and sinful acts of a people.¹⁸⁴

He points out the importance of the Filipino culture and tradition. However, he also stated that some Filipino values are lost because of the effects brought by the times. Also, it is reported that many Filipinos nowadays support divorce in the country.¹⁸⁵ This is what the traditional Filipinos have been negating, but now, it is starting to rise. This legalization of divorce is being pushed and supported by many Filipinos because of factors such as infidelity and poverty. Gonzales writes:

In Philippine culture, infidelities or extramarital relationships range from casual relationships to the keeping of a querida or paramour (Medina 1991). Alano (1995) lists some Filipino terms referring to infidelity: pakikiapid or pangangalunya (used in legal and scholarly documents), paglalaro sa apoy (playing with fire), pamamangka sa dalawang ilog (rowing up two rivers), pagsusunong ng uling (carrying of burning charcoal), pangangaliwa (turning left or going against the expected direction), pagkulasisi or pangtsitsiks (catching chicks or birds), and pambababae (collecting women). Kabit (clinging attachment) and querida or kirida (Spanish word for beloved, refers to the mistress). The husband’s infidelity is a major concern in Filipino marriages (PCP II, 1992). Carandang (1987) notes that wives rank infidelity as the number one family stressor. Lacar (1993) reports that male infidelity is the

¹⁸¹ Medina, *The Filipino Family*, 192.

¹⁸² Medina, *The Filipino Family*, 193-194.

¹⁸³ Gonzales, *The Filipino Context of Infidelity and Resilience*, n.pag.

¹⁸⁴ Minyong Ordoñez, *Filipino culture, family values*, RH, 2011, <http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=9&title=Filipino-culture,-family-values,-RH&id=31456>, retrieved on September 5, 2018.

¹⁸⁵ “A recent poll by Social Weather Stations (SWS) shows that in the fourth quarter of 2014, more than half of Filipinos (60%) supported the legalization of divorce.” Paulo Taruc, *SWS: Support for divorce growing in Philippines*, n.pag.

most frequent reason for marital separation. Vancio (1980, 1977) cites male infidelity as a major issue for marital break-ups in Metro Manila.¹⁸⁶

Cases of adultery and infidelity in the Philippines are growing.¹⁸⁷ In spite of the statistical figures, records on marital break-ups with finality are not duly listed because of the absence of legal divorce in the Philippines. However, even though divorce is not legalized in the Philippines, infidelity and separation has become an issue. It can be derived that infidelity can also be traced as a gender issue. In addition to, the findings of Gonzales show that marital infidelity is a major concern among Filipino married couples, especially in fast growing cities such as Metro Manila and Iligan City. On the other hand, further observations show that this is largely a male gender phenomenon.¹⁸⁸

With this, it is said that the time that the couple are not together contribute to a conflict which is a bitter pill to swallow. This situation results to infidelity. The absence of both due to the need to satisfy the economic demands does not meet the need of each couple in their relationship. Hence, infidelity came out because of the difficulties that an individual has gone throughout one's life which show the worst side of the individual's personality. The cases of infidelity somehow always point out to the unresolved wants of one, if not both, of the married couples. It can be because of financial difficulties and continuous husband-wife conflicts which contribute to the infidelity of one of the couple.

Thus, the situation that the couple are in today often makes marriage fragile. With the issue of infidelity, the vows of the couple that they made during their marriage are being set aside. As Medina describes, "Judging from the number of court cases filed by spouses against each other, by the number of applications for annulment of marriage, and by the number of couples who are actually separated, marriages today are becoming fragile and full of stresses and tensions... The marriage starts to crumble once they fail to find emotional satisfaction."¹⁸⁹ Infidelity has been really an issue because if the couple does not stay together and be unfaithful with each other, it will affect their family. The marriage and the whole family will surely be affected if the expected heads of the family are not true to their words and do not embody the commitment that they made.

The child is a very important member of the family because the child is the product of the love of both parents. The child has been in the center of the family through time. The parents sacrifice many things for the betterment of their children. Parents invest well for the education of their children. Parents do their best in order to leave a good mark to their children. Also, parents always try their best to provide money and properties that can be beneficial to their children up to the time that they get

¹⁸⁶ Gonzales, *The Filipino Context of Infidelity and Resilience*, n.pag.

¹⁸⁷ "In the McCann Metro Manila Male Study (1995), half of the 485 male respondents reported having had extramarital affairs. As stated, "Relucio reported in her in-depth interview with seven separated women, notes that "infidelity was found to be a common problem." (Dayan, et. al. n.pag) in their study of 60 petitioners for nullity of marriage, report that adultery was one of the major reasons cited." Gonzales, *The Filipino Context of Infidelity and Resilience*, n.pag.

¹⁸⁸ "Thirty-six percent of the males of the 368 respondents admitted to extramarital relations while only 2 percent of the females did so. The male respondents did not find that their extramarital relations were at variance with their marital involvement. About 85% of them said that their marriage was not in any danger of breaking up and actually the marriage had turned out better than they had expected." Gonzales, *The Filipino Context of Infidelity and Resilience*, n.pag.

¹⁸⁹ Medina, *The Filipino Family*, 282.

old. Thus, the Filipino family is a child-centered family. Its structure has always been a family which expresses a sense of importance for the child.

Moreover, Filipinos value their children because they expect their children to be the ones to help them financially, take care of them and assist them in housework when they get old. For this reason, the parents try their best in order to provide good education and formation to their children. Filipinos look at their children as inspirations to become better parents. With this, parents aim to have a good status and successful career in order to provide the best life that they can give to their children. Thus, the child becomes a driving force to parents in order to live a moral life and furnish the craft of their careers. Parents are challenged to be the best that they can be for their children.

This is the way parents think because they are positive with their children and are very hopeful that their children will be the ones to help them progress in life. The child is expected to be the one to help them improve the socio-economic status that their family has. Moreover, Filipino parents look at their children as blessings from God and are hopeful and expected to bring good luck to the family. It has been a tradition for Filipinos to look at their children as a sign of grace and God's gift to them. The children that the parents have symbolize a more blessed marital union and boosts more the morale of the parents. Thus, the children of the couple keep the couple hopeful and joyful in the family.

However, the husband and wife often have different perspective on why they value their children. Usually, a male looks at having a child as an affirmation of his masculinity. The number of children that a man can produce is often looked as the measuring stick for a man's manliness. On the other hand, a woman feels a sense of fulfillment when she is able to bear a child. It is a great amount of joy and satisfaction for a woman to have a child. With this, one can see how important the child really is to the parents. Moreover, Filipinos look at the child as the one that binds the couple more. Medina explicates:

Many wives believe that one way to hold a man is to have children. When they have children, husbands think twice before deserting the family or separating from the wife. Wives also try hard to keep their marriage intact for the sake of the children. When there is a serious quarrel between husband and wife, children often help bring about reconciliation between them. Children, therefore, indirectly cement the union of their parents by helping strengthen the marital bond.¹⁹⁰

Thus, children are very important to parents. On the other hand, parents are also important to children because they will be the first teachers that they will encounter in their life. It is true that the child will eventually be taken into school or other social institutions but it is always in the family that the child will have a more time to be formed. They are the very first persons who gave support, love and care to the child. Thus, it is expected that the parents will have the greatest influence on the child. Hence, the family is the first formation place for the child. The family is the one who will mostly be responsible on the formation of the child because it is the first place for socialization for a child. It is true that the child will meet many people at school, church and social media but it is still in the family that the child will spend more time with. Thus, the family is greatly responsible in inculcating the values that the child needs in his life. The family will always be the first ones to mold the child's character.

¹⁹⁰ Medina, *The Filipino Family*, 217.

Hence, the parents are very much liable in the formation of the child. It is their duty to raise their child well. It is in the hands of the parents on how they will discipline and inculcate good habits and values to the child. There are parents who are overprotective while some parents are lenient to their child. There are parents who impose themselves through punishment in order to discipline their child while there are parents who are soft-spoken in order to always comfort their children.

However, as the child grows, the child will meet more people. The child will be able to socialize more and gain the influence of other people. The peers somehow become more influential than the parents. With this, the child becomes more liberal and somehow veers away from the command of the parents.

Moreover, today, due to different influences from modernization, some parents do not live together often because of the fact that one needs to work abroad in order to satisfy the economic demands. Some of those who are not living together result to unsuccessful marriage because not all can withstand the situation of not being together. For this reason, there are cases of solo-parenting. In addition to, solo-parenting does not only come from situations of people who separated due to the situation of not being together due to the necessity of working abroad. Some parents do not live together anymore due to their situation of being single or unwed, abandoned families, divorced and legally separated couples and also those who are widowed. Thus, this situation asks more from the parent who is with the child for that parent needs to do more than the usual parental role needed. Hence, it can be seen in this situation that the child will really look for a role model and other people to look up to.

All of these situations are something to be pondered on with regards to child formation. It is because some children are not formed well because of the peer influences and bad parenting. Different ideas and people influence the child as soon as the child goes out of the home and interacts with others. Apart from this, the issue of child formation, there are also two issues in which children are dealing with today – child abuse and child labor. Medina states:

One problem with regards children is child abuse which includes physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and neglect. It is sad to say that most abhorrent type of child abuse, which is incest, is usually perpetrated by the father, but the victim is afraid to report the crime because of threats by the abuser. Another form of exploitation is child labor. Many children are in hazardous jobs like quarrying, mining, deep-sea fishing, construction, etc. which is against the law, while others are in domestic work. Also, many urban poor children are on the streets trying to earn a living as hawkers, newsboys, watch-your-car boys and shoe-shine boys. This is attributed not only to poverty but also to the state of the family relationships such as parental separation and remarriage of widowed parents.¹⁹¹

These two issues are very relevant today because of the on-going reports of cases of both. With this, one looks on how the child is in today's world. Child abuse has been an issue in the country. There are many cases of child abuse in the Philippines. Some of the child abuse cases are because of sexual abuse and some are because of violence.¹⁹² There are children who underwent different types of child

¹⁹¹ Medina, *The Filipino Family*, 286.

¹⁹² “As many as 2,147 cases of child abuse were reported to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in the first quarter of 2016, more than one-fourth of which was of a sexual nature. The figure was nearly half of the total 4,374 child abuse cases reported in the entire year of 2015, according to the Policy Development and Planning Bureau of the DSWD. Social Welfare Secretary Judy Taguiwalo called for greater vigilance among the

abuses – physical, neglect, emotional and sexual. There are already many children who are victims of abuse. Whatever type of abuse it is, it is still not right to abuse the children. Some parents inflict physical injury, deprive basic needs, assault their children verbally and make their children as objects of sexual gratification. Thus, children are very much vulnerable in the society because they are often the ones looked down and abused by those who are older and in authority. The children are very much vulnerable to different acts of discrimination, abuse, exploitation and many more oppressive actions.

On the other hand, another way of child exploitation is through child labor. Medina says, “Child labor is practiced in economically depressed cities and towns where most parents have either little education or training for any job; therefore they often ask their children to work.”¹⁹³ It is quite clear that parents result to child labor because of the economic demands due to the high cost of living in today’s society. Instead of sending their children to school, they send them to work places such as factories and streets where they earn money in order to help the family. Therefore, the child will exert effort and time working and away from their parents. Medina explicates:

They don’t question why they should be helping in breadwinning or even acting as main breadwinners of the family instead of going to school because they accept this as part of their duty as children. Living and working in the streets, however, force them to relate to city thugs, criminal elements, and other strangers, thus exposing them to risks of physical harm, crime, and other anti-social activities (Porio, 1994). The increase in the number of street children and the kind of life they experience in the streets are attributed not only to poverty but also, to a certain extent, to the state of family relationships such as parental separation or marital discord, remarriage of widowed parents, and relationship with step-father or step-mother (Lamberte, 1994). Most of these street children are abandoned or neglected by their parents (*Situation Analysis, Children and Women in the Philippines*, 1992).¹⁹⁴

The cases of child labor did not only result from poverty but also from unsuccessful marriages. It is still dependent on the parents on how they will be able to survive and form their children well. These cases of child labor show the different effects of how the family landscape has changed throughout the years.

Marcel’s *The Mystery of The Family*

Gabriel Marcel talked about *The Mystery of the Family* during one of his sessions in the Gifford Lectures. He provided points that can help one to look at family in a different light. He suggests that the family must not be dealt as a problem; rather, a mystery. He says:

The family does not suggest just one problem, but an infinity of problems of every description which could not be considered as a whole; you have already heard several of them discussed with a competence which I lack. But it is above all because the family seems to me to belong to an order of realities, or I should rather say of presences, which can only create problems in so far as we are mistaken, not so much with regard to their special character, as to the way in which we human beings are involved in them.¹⁹⁵

public to protect the children in the face of the growing number of child abuse cases in the country.” Yap, *Child abuse on rise, DSWD report shows*, n.pag.

¹⁹³ Medina, *The Filipino Family*, 234.

¹⁹⁴ Medina, *The Filipino Family*, 234.

¹⁹⁵ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962),

In here, one can see that Marcel looks at the family as a mystery because of his notion of mystery. Problems are facts exterior to one's existence, whereas the family is a mystery because its reality is bound up with one's existence. Realities which unquestionably influence one's existence. That is why Marcel compared the mystery of the family to the mystery of the body and soul which he considers as the root of presences. He said that the family is a mystery because one is talking about presence not outside of the family but the family in itself.

In Marcel's comparison of the body and soul to the family as a mystery, one can see the reason for such comparison. Marcel pointed out a deep similarity between the union of the body and soul and the mystery of the family. He explains that union of the body and soul is not something he cannot place in front of him or consider as an object because there is a certain fundamental unity between the two.¹⁹⁶ Sweetman explains, "As with the union of body and soul, I cannot make of family relationships a pure idea to be placed in front of me to be considered as an object without misunderstanding their essential nature."¹⁹⁷ Marcel says:

This unity is less a *given* principle than a *giving* one, because it is the root from which springs the fact of my presence to myself and the presence of all else to me. Thus it encroaches upon its own data and, invading them, passes beyond the range of a simple problem. It is in this very definitive sense that the family is a mystery, and it is for this reason that we cannot properly and without confusion treat it simply as a question to be solved.¹⁹⁸

With this perspective, one can look also at the family as something that is bound within one's existence. Marcel suggests that one should look at the family as something not outside of oneself. The family is a mystery which is something that encroaches the person. It is not exterior to the person. Sweetman explicates, "It is more accurate to say that I am involved in the "mystery" of the family."¹⁹⁹ For Marcel, the family is something wherein one has a vital involvement and deep connection. The mystery of the family is likened to the mystery of the body and soul because this comparison suggests that it is the root of all presences. The presence which Marcel would categorize is the presence that is present to oneself and others or to one's presence. This fact shows that "...the family is also the root of presences too close and too far away to be found in the objective knowledge zone, in the realm of facts."²⁰⁰ Marcel adds:

I can discern enough, however, to enable me to follow this umbilical cord of my temporal antecedents, and to see it taking shape before me yet stretching back beyond my life in an indefinite network which, if traced to its limits would probably be co-extensive with the human race itself. My family, or rather my lineage, is the succession of historical processes by which the human species has become individualised into the single creature that I am. All that is possible for me to recognise in the growing and impressive indetermination is that all these unknown beings, who stretch between me and my unimaginable origins whatever they may be, are not simply the causes of which I am the effect or the product: there is no doubt that the terms cause and effect have no meaning here. Between my ancestors and

¹⁹⁶ See Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 69.

¹⁹⁷ Brendan Sweetman, "Book Review on HOMO VIATOR: INTRODUCTION TO THE METAPHYSIC OF HOPE," in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, (Virginia: Philosophy Documentation Center, 2012), 713.

¹⁹⁸ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 69.

¹⁹⁹ Sweetman, "Book Review on HOMO VIATOR: INTRODUCTION TO THE METAPHYSIC OF HOPE," 713.

²⁰⁰ Dy, "Marcel's Mystery of the Family and the Problems of Modernization in the Asian Context," in *Karunungan: A Journal of Philosophy Volume 20*, ed. Alfredo Co, (Manila: UST Publishing House, 2003),71.

myself a far more obscure and intimate relationship exists. I share with them as they do with me – invisibly; they are consubstantial with me and I with them.²⁰¹

Marcel discussed that the relationship between the child and the ancestors, who have a very far relationship with the child, pertains that there is vagueness in their relationship because of the lack of closeness. Their relationship is very far because one will look at them historically far from the child's nearest family lineage which are the parents. However, even though these ancestors are very distant origins, there is an intimate relationship that exists precisely because of the fact that they came from the same lineage. The same family roots that they have is the main connection between the child and the distant ancestors. That even though they are already distant, there is something that still binds their relationship. Marcel also wants everyone to realize that the family is not only a value but also a living presence. He says:

If the family is a reality it cannot be simply expressed or objectively established like a simple succession. Let us even insist that it is infinitely more than what appears from pure and simple entries in civil registers. It exists only on condition that it is apprehended not only as a value but as a living presence.²⁰²

Because of this, Marcel regards the family as both a value and a presence. First one, the family is a value. One can trace the way the family is a value through one's sentiment during childhood. This is the pride of belonging to a certain community or group. He says:

A value first of all. I think that here we must make an attempt to relive but in such a way that we think it out and elucidate it an experience which was shared by most of us when we were children, an experience which it is actually very difficult not to distort when we try to express it, because it includes a certain pride. This pride if we are not careful might seem to be confused with vanity, but this is a degradation of it. We are proud to belong to a certain community because we feel that something of its lustre falls upon us.²⁰³

This pride is a certain response made from depths of one's being to an investiture of which it behooves one to prove oneself worthy.²⁰⁴ This concept of pride depicts that pride must be constructive and not aim to impress another. Thus, pride must help one to have a foundation in order to establish one's conduct. On the other hand, Marcel pointed out that pride is not like vanity, wherein one turns outwards, in order to preserve unity. Dy supports this claim by saying, "Pride is constructive, helping me with a foundation for my conduct, and therefore should not be mistaken for vanity, which is sterile because it turns toward the rest of the world to impress it."²⁰⁵ With this discussion of pride, Marcel suggests:

But it is through this sentiment of pride that we can trace in what way the family is a value. It is a recognised hierarchy, and I do not merely have to integrate myself into it by recognising the authority vested in its leader; I have actually been caught up in it from the

²⁰¹ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 71.

²⁰² Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 76.

²⁰³ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 76.

²⁰⁴ See Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 76.

²⁰⁵ Dy, "Marcel's Mystery of the Family and the Problems of Modernization in the Asian Context," 72.

origin. I am involved in it, my very being is rooted in it. This hierarchy cannot fail, this authority cannot be abolished without the family bringing about its own destruction as a value.²⁰⁶

Through pride, one can trace family as a value. Family is a recognized hierarchy and authority in which one does not have to integrate oneself into it because one has been caught up in it from the very beginning. The family is already with a person. One can say that the family is something to be proud of because one has roots in which one belongs. Dy explains this thought by Marcel by saying, “Failure to recognize this hierarchy of authority in the family is tantamount to losing its value.”²⁰⁷ On the other hand, Marcel suggests that the family is also a living presence. As presence, the family is a “protective skin” against the foreign, threatening, hostile world. He states:

Each of us, with the exception of a few rare and unhappy individuals, has, at least on certain occasions, been able to prove by experience the existence of the family as a protective skin placed between himself and a world which is foreign, threatening, hostile to him. And there is no doubt that nothing is more painful in the destiny of an individual than the tearing away of this tissue, either by a sudden or a slow and continuous process, carried out by the pitiless hands of life or death, or rather of that nameless power of which life and death are but alternating aspects.²⁰⁸

When one is taken away from one’s family, it is the most painful experience because one is being separated from the “protective skin” one has. This “protective skin” is very evident in family life. The awareness of this primitive privileged “us” in the family which is inseparable from a home of one’s own.

The family as mystery of the incarnation of the pact between the person and life points out that the pact, or nuptial bond, between person and life is within the person’s power to untie but when the person does so, the person loses the notion of existence.²⁰⁹ Marcel says:

It seems as though it were necessary to postulate the existence of a pact, I should almost say a nuptial bond, between man and life; it is in man's power to untie this bond, but in so far as he denies the pact he tends to lose the notion of his existence. What is exactly to be understood by this bond? I may be accused of being led away by a metaphor, of unduly exaggerating abstractions. But however we interpret this fact philosophically, we must recognise that man is a being and the only one we know capable of adopting an attitude towards his life, not only his own life, but life in itself. He is then not a mere living being, he is, or rather he has become, something more, and we might say that it is through this faculty for adopting an attitude that he is a spirit.²¹⁰

²⁰⁶ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 76.

²⁰⁷ Dy, “Marcel’s Mystery of the Family and the Problems of Modernization in the Asian Context,” 72.

²⁰⁸ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 77.

²⁰⁹ See Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 84.

²¹⁰ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 84.

From this point of view, one can see the person as the only being capable of adopting an attitude towards life itself. This viewpoint is another expression of transcendence over life and death. The pact of the person and life shows promises of life and the person's response to life. With this, one can realize that it is precisely in the family that this pact is worked out. Dy explains this by saying, "The pact between the human being and life is the confidence that the person promises life – which makes it possible for one to give oneself to life – and the response of life to this confidence."²¹¹ Marcel used marriage to explain further this pact between person and life. He says:

The essential act which constitutes marriage is obviously not the pure and simple mating which is only a human act, common alike to men and animals; it is not just a momentary union, but one which is to last; it is something which is established. A family is founded, it is erected like a monument whose hewn stone is neither the satisfaction of an instinct, nor the yielding to an impulse, nor the indulgence of a caprice.²¹²

This example of marriage emphasizes that it is marriage that start a family whose ties will last. Marcel also mentioned that there are many false marriages.²¹³ He explicated that in false marriages, there is a legal union but no sacramental character of union between the couple. Thus, divorce can readily and easily be admitted by the couple in false marriages. However, Marcel says, "It is more than probable that in a society where divorce is not only accepted, but regarded in many circles as a more or less normal contingency, a time must inevitably come when the irresponsibility with which so many unbelievers lightly and heedlessly get married, is communicated from one to another until it infects even those who by tradition, human respect or some remnant of faith are still impelled to take a vow of fidelity in the presence of God, only to find out too late that by this contradiction they are themselves caught in a trap from which it is not possible to escape except at the price of a scandalous renunciation or dishonourable subterfuge."²¹⁴

Divorce makes an individual disregard the importance and sanctity of marriage. That is why Marcel does not want one to look at marriage as a simple contract because it would be like a temporary promise who can expire at a given point in time.²¹⁵ Marcel stated that the only condemnation of divorce that can be justified is the condemnation which they must recognize as being pronounced in the name of their own will, a will so deep that they could not disown it without denying their own natures.²¹⁶

Moreover, one can be able to realize that the mystery of the family can be said to be the mystery of fidelity and hope. Sweetman states, "Marcel offers similar analyses in essays devoted to the subject of fidelity in human relationships, and on immortality, in which he tries to show by probing each subject that there is an inexpressible but rational aspect to unconditional commitments that points toward the transcendent."²¹⁷ With this, one can realize that the values of fidelity and hope is important in Marcel's philosophy. To understand it in the family context, Marcel says:

Perhaps we shall now be able to discuss why the mystery of the family can truly be said to be a mystery of fidelity and hope. Analysis shows that the crisis in our family institutions

²¹¹ Dy, "Marcel's Mystery of the Family and the Problems of Modernization in the Asian Context," 74.

²¹² Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 85.

²¹³ See Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 85.

²¹⁴ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 85.

²¹⁵ See Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 86.

²¹⁶ See Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 86.

²¹⁷ Sweetman, "Book Review on HOMO VIATOR: INTRODUCTION TO THE METAPHYSIC OF HOPE," 714.

can be traced to a deeper and deeper misunderstanding of the virtues through which the unification of our destiny both terrestrial and super-terrestrial is consummated.²¹⁸

Marcel invites everyone to have a deeper understanding of the family. This disaffection in the family that Marcel was saying is said to be due to a deeper misunderstanding of the virtues of fidelity and hope. With this, Marcel discusses the mystery of fidelity and hope to understand further the family's mystery. The crisis in family institutions can be traced to deeper misunderstanding of the virtues of the family through which the union of one's destiny is concluded. With this, Marcel explicates this situation through discussing the mystery of fidelity and hope. It is quite clear that many will regard that fidelity is often likened to faithfulness. This faithfulness is what one often asks to a family member in each family. One is often asked to become faithful with one's family. Marcel says:

First of all a fundamental error or illusion must be disposed of concerning fidelity. We are too much inclined to consider it as a mere safeguard, an inward resolution which purposes simply to preserve the existing order. But in reality the truest fidelity is creative. To be sure of it, the best way is to strive to grasp the very complex bond which unites a child to its parents. There we have a relationship which is always exposed to a double risk of deterioration.²¹⁹

Fidelity is not a mere safeguard to preserve an existing order but, for Marcel, true fidelity is something which is creative. As Dy explains, "Fidelity is not to be misconstrued as an inward resolution to preserve an existing order."²²⁰ Genuine fidelity is creative and this can be envisaged in the complex bond of a child to its parents. The bond between parents and their child is unprotected to the risks of deterioration. Marcel explicates the relationship between the parents and their child through narrow traditionalism. He explained that narrow traditionalism is wherein a child is entirely in debt of those who gave life. Moreover, they treat the child as creditor because they look at life as a burden. Marcel applied this to birth control practitioners, who out of pity for possible descendants, rejects the chance to live by the child.²²¹ The pity is given on those who are not yet born, and the value of life is measured in terms of pleasures and comforts of the individual. Thus, life is a possibility for good or evil. Marcel discusses further creative fidelity by saying:

So then in the end everything comes back to the spirit which at the same time is to be incarnated or established, and maintained, the spirit spreading beyond the self; and it is precisely this spirit which is expressed by the words "creative fidelity". The more our hearts as well as our intellects keep before them the idea of our lineage, of the forbears to whom we are answerable because in the last analysis it is from them that we receive the deposit which must be transmitted the more this spirit will succeed in freeing itself from the shroud of selfishness and cowardice in which a humanity, more and more cut off from its ontological roots, is in danger of becoming gradually enveloped.²²²

With this perspective, one can understand creative fidelity more. Creative fidelity is keeping one's heart and intellect before the lineage to whom one is answerable, because it is from them that one receives the deposit to be transmitted.

²¹⁸ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 90.

²¹⁹ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 90.

²²⁰ Dy, "Marcel's Mystery of the Family and the Problems of Modernization in the Asian Context," 75.

²²¹ See Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 90.

²²² Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 92.

Apart from Marcel's discussion on creative fidelity, he also accentuated the importance of child formation. He says, "But this possibility is only achieved in so far as the being to whom it is granted appears from the moment of his birth as a subject, that is to say as able to enjoy and above all to suffer, and capable of one day attaining to the consciousness of what he has at first only felt."²²³ Procreation transmits life that can actualize the possibilities that it produces. It can produce good and bad. Dy supports this by saying, "The truth is that life itself is neither a blessing nor a curse but a possibility, a chance for good and evil."²²⁴

The child must be formed well so that when the child grows up and develops the child's own attitude towards life, the child can appreciate this challenge to form the offspring that is to come and acknowledge the effort of the parents. As explicated by Dy, "The child must be formed with this opportunity so that when he grows up and develops his own attitude towards life, he can appreciate this challenge and acknowledge his debt."²²⁵ The parents must teach the child well. Hence, this is an explication of the debt and credit between parents and children. With this, Marcel looks at this idea and says:

It is, then, the sacred duty of parents to behave in such a way towards their child, that one day it will have good reason to acknowledge that it is in their debt. But if ever they are to be justified in considering that they have a credit here it will be exclusively in so far as they have succeeded in discharging a debt themselves, which to tell the truth cannot be likened to a payment of account but rather to the production of a work of art where their only share is the laying of the foundations.²²⁶

The debt and the credit on the parents and the child's side urges the duty to have proper formation. This can urge both to have a relationship wherein the child is being formed and the parents will have the sense of responsibility toward the child. As Dy states, "The debt and credit are as much on the parents as on the child's side."²²⁷ In addition to, it seems that there is a deafness to call of creative fidelity which Marcel traced from a human being's loss of sense of hope. Marcel says:

I said that hope cannot be separated either from a sense of communion or from a more or less conscious and explicit dependence on a power which guarantees this communion itself. "I hope in Thee, for us", such is the authentic formula of hope. But the more this "for us" tends to confine itself to what concerns the self instead of opening onto the infinite, the more hope shrivels and deteriorates, and, in the domain of the family, the more it tends to degenerate into a short-sighted ambition and to fix its attention on ways of safeguarding and increasing a certain Having which actually need not take a grossly material form. But I added that it is only by breaking through Having that hope can effect an entrance into our soul.²²⁸

From this, one can draw out that hope is linked to a sense of communion: "I hope in Thee for us."²²⁹ The more this "for us" can be seen in the family. As Dy explains, "Authentic hope is linked to a sense of communion, an openness to an infinite power which grounds our communion, our us."²³⁰

²²³ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 91.

²²⁴ Dy, "Marcel's Mystery of the Family and the Problems of Modernization in the Asian Context," 76.

²²⁵ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 76.

²²⁶ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 91.

²²⁷ Dy, "Marcel's Mystery of the Family and the Problems of Modernization in the Asian Context," 76.

²²⁸ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 92-93.

²²⁹ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 60.

²³⁰ Dy, "Marcel's Mystery of the Family and the Problems of Modernization in the Asian Context," 77.

Hope is linked to communion which is an openness to an infinite power that constitutes togetherness and belongingness. Hope fades when it is limited only to the self. In the family, hope must break through the state of having in order for hope to be of help to the person and enter the very soul of the individual. Marcel defines having by saying, “By the term Having I did not mean exclusively the visible possessions of which each of us can make an inventory, but rather the armour of good or bad habits, opinions and prejudices which makes us impervious to the breath of the spirit, everything in us which paralyzes what the Apostle calls the liberty of the children of God.”²³¹

It is hope that veers away from the anxiety of modern living. Of the things that are happening in the society, one is led to a realization that life is the incarnation and the family is the meeting point of the vital and spiritual aspects of life. That is why one must have an acknowledgement of Divine Fatherhood. Marcel says:

It is natural that under such conditions the family should be choked between the claims of two systems apparently opposed, but actually converging and reinforcing each other. In fact, it only assumes its true value and dignity through the functioning of a central relationship which cannot be affected by any objective causality and which is the strictly religious relationship whose mysterious and unique expression is found in the words *divine fatherhood*.²³²

From this discussion, one can know that hope is something that looks at the journey of a person and have the family as the meeting point of the vital and the spiritual. This is the reason why Marcel is against naturalism and materialism because of the very fact that naturalism and materialism is a form of an arrogance of an acknowledgement of a higher being and also the development of pride which denies obedience. Dy fortifies this claim by saying, “Against naturalism and materialism, hope accepts the creature condition of the human being and acknowledges the Divine Fatherhood.”²³³

Marcel’s *The Mystery of the Family* in the Filipino Context

As a being-in-situation, Gabriel Marcel suggests that one must not look at a situation as a problem. One must look at it as a mystery. One must not detach from the situation in order to have a better grasp of the situation. Thus, one must not look at the family as a problem, rather, it must be dealt as a mystery.²³⁴ To further have a full perspective on the family, one must not be like a legislator or judge for these persons look at a situation from above and detached from their selves. One must realize that the family is not something that is outside the self. In a family, a member must not try to veer away from the existing reality of the family precisely because of the very truth that one belongs to such. It seems impossible to detach the very self of any individual in the family because it is very evident that there is an inclination to the family. Hence, the family is a mystery and any one must always be reminded that the family is something which is attached to any person.

Due to modernization, the Filipino family has been slowly disintegrating. This is what Marcel stated when he said that technological progress has affected to the loss of human substance. It is seen very clearly in the craftsmanship in human relationships, standardization of individuals, little respect for individuals and local customs and peculiarities in the society. This change of pace of the rhythm

²³¹ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 94.

²³² Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 95.

²³³ Dy, “Marcel’s Mystery of the Family and the Problems of Modernization in the Asian Context,” 77.

²³⁴ See Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 68.

of life made the way of living faster. It somehow changed the focus which they have. Marcel calls this situation as an extraordinary acceleration of the rhythm of life.²³⁵ For this reason, one must always be reminded to treat at any situation and the family as a mystery in order for them to not be detached. The family must stay intact and be true to the traditions and culture of the family. One must not veer away from the family's closeness and one must not be affected by any disturbance in order to preserve the sanctity of the family.

With this perspective, one can relive the traditional Filipino values of the family. By treating the family as a mystery, one can see clearly that the family is still a living reality and it can still persevere towards the preservation of the sacredness of the Filipino family. This outlook will make a Filipino realize that the family is something that they are already caught up. It is a reality that one is tied into one's own family. Hence, for Marcel, the sentiment of pride that one belongs to a family makes the family as a value.²³⁶ The family is a value to them because they have pride on their own family for they belong to such. There is no denial that any person belongs to a family. It is quite clear that a person is rooted in any family tree and a person has a connection to the bloodline that the person belongs to. This relation makes one realize more that it is very important to recognize the belongingness to a certain family. Thus, the family is a value because of this certain pride, which is constructive, that will remind the Filipino that they are a part of a family.

Furthermore, Marcel suggests that the family is a presence. He states, "Each of us, with the exception of a few rare and unhappy individuals, has, at least on certain occasions, been able to prove by experience the existence of the family as a protective skin placed between himself and a world which is foreign, threatening, hostile to him."²³⁷ This feeling is innate for every individual and it is very important for Filipinos to be reminded that they always have a protective skin which the family has always been to them. The family is presence for it has always been their comfort place. The family has been a home which comforts and lets the person feel safe for there is the sense of trust and solidarity alive inherently in the family. The family must always make the individual feel 'at home' because the family resembles a comforting image to any member. It must really be a protective skin of the person so one will always have the feeling of belongingness and always have a welcoming atmosphere at home. The family must do its best in order to let the individual experience a sense of love and solace in the family. Thus, the Filipino family must look at the family as a mystery, value and presence in order to further cultivate the values and relive the values in which the Filipino family has been trying to uphold.

Marcel was aware that the family will undergo such situations due to the changes that modernization will have. He explained that one must look at marriage as a pact between humanity and life. This statement means that a human being responds to life and one form of responding to this pact between humanity and life is through marriage. Marcel states, "The essential act which constitutes marriage is obviously not the pure and simple mating which is only a human act, common alike to men and animals; it is not just a momentary union, but one which is to last; it is something which is established."²³⁸ Thus, Marcel wants every citizen to envision a marriage which ties will last.

²³⁵ See Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 79.

²³⁶ See Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 76.

²³⁷ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 77.

²³⁸ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 85.

This statement of Marcel propagates a viewpoint to every individual. He suggests that marriage, as a sacramental bond, should be preserved. For this reason, Marcel does not want anyone to tolerate divorce because it removes the sanctity of the sacramental union that couples had during marriage. The vows that were made in front of God during marriage were being disregarded when couples result to divorce. With this, one must look at the sacredness of marriage and one must not treat marriage as a simple contract for it has a sacramental bond. The conjugal union during marriage elevates it from other forms of relationships. It must not be treated like an ordinary contract in work in which one can resign any time that one wants. One must always realize the importance of marriage and always be reminded of the vows that one made during marriage.

For Marcel, marital ties can last if the couples have a form of fundamental generosity and availability to each other. This mindset of couples will result into the unity of the family. Fundamental generosity and availability, or *disponibilité* as Marcel calls it, will both make the couple be open and committed to each other. Both of these make one to be more connected to other human being. The two ideas can further urge the couple to be engaged in their relationship. Thus, a sense of *disponibilité* is very much needed to have a claim or establish a deeper connection between couples.

Moreover, for marriage to last, both couples must have the virtue of fidelity and hope. Fidelity is very much needed for couples to last. For the fidelity to be truly genuine, the fidelity of the couple must be creative. Creative fidelity makes the individual be faithful and committed not by any factor but by own will. The fidelity of the couple is not something imposed but is something that comes out naturally because it is genuine. Thus, even though committed, in order to last, the faithfulness of the relationship of the couple requires both constancy and presence of each other. There must be a middle ground which brings the couple together and love each other. Also, there must be physical and spiritual presence between the couple. There must be an intersubjective relationship between the two in order to really have the feeling of being one. Thus, the sincerity of being together and openness to each other must be maintained.

Moreover, this genuine fidelity of the couple that Marcel suggests boils down to a sense of spontaneity. This sense of spontaneity is very important for it will make the fidelity natural and not hypocritical. As Marcel states, "For fidelity as such can only be appreciated by the person whom it is pledged if it offers an essential element of spontaneity, itself radically independent of the will."²³⁹ Thus, this element of spontaneity is important for fidelity to be genuine. There must not be any other factor but in order to have genuine fidelity. There must not be any hindrance or any reason to be faithful. Fidelity must always be spontaneous and come out naturally. Hence, it is the own will of the couple which makes them faithful to each other.

Also, Marcel states the need for a creative fidelity for couples. Creative fidelity must have a self-knowledge which Marcel gives importance. One must already have a deeper knowledge or understanding of one's own self before committing to the other. However, Marcel states, "In principle, to commit myself I must first know myself; the fact is, however, that I really know myself only when I have committed myself."²⁴⁰ With this, one goes back to Marcel's notion of mystery and reminds couples who make vows and commitments of marriage to always involve the self in order to further reflect and have a stronghold of the commitment made. The commitment made by the person entails also a deeper understanding and knowledge of the self. The members of the couple complement each

²³⁹ Marcel, *Creative Fidelity*, 155.

²⁴⁰ Marcel, *Creative Fidelity*, 163.

other and help each other have a grasp of their own selves. Thus, one must always have a response to the commitment made. As Marcel says, “All commitment is a response.”²⁴¹

If all stated are found in the relationship, disposition and fidelity of married couples, their marriage will have ties that last. Creative fidelity will only work for the couple if there is genuine love, constancy, sincerity and trust. No one is sure of this when they made the commitment but all are hopeful to maintain their relationship because of an assurance of the involvement of the self. Marcel states:

In swearing fidelity to a person, I do not know what future awaits us or even, in a sense, what person he will be tomorrow; the very fact of my not knowing is what gives worth and weight to my promise. There is no question of response to something which is, absolutely speaking, *given*; and the essential of a being is just that – not being ‘given’ either to another or himself.²⁴²

Thus, fidelity is creative for it will enable the person to be creative together with the partner. With this, Marcel wants the couple to answer the call of creative fidelity. To hope that by being faithful to a higher Being will urge the couple to be faithful also to each other. It will be a sense of absolute fidelity, a hope, that will enable fidelity to be possible. The inspiration of absolute fidelity will make one be creatively faithful.

Hence, Filipino couples can look at their relationship and marriage using Marcel’s ideas. Filipino couples must always have the sense of involvement, responsibility, generosity and availability in order to have a deeper relationship. They must always be reminded of the sacredness of the sacrament that they received during marriage. Moreover, couples must have constancy or a middle ground in order for their relationship to last. They must have a stronghold to the commitments that they had during marriage. Also, they must always be faithful to each other as likened to their faithfulness to God.

Marcel accentuated that the very response of married couples to the pact between humanity and life is to procreate. The conjugal union of the couple will eventually result into procreation. The procreation of the couple will result to a child. This event in life between couples will be the one that fortifies the bond of the couple and also the pact between humanity and life. It is an event which concludes the couple’s commitment to respond to life and commitment to produce life. This is the pinnacle of being a creative being as couples.

Marcel states, “It seems as though the marriage must in some way regulate itself in relation to the offspring, for whose coming preparation has to be made; but it is not less certain, and this observation is of the greatest importance here, that a marriage concluded simply with a view to procreation is not only in danger of degeneration because it does not rest on a firm spiritual basis, but, still more, it is an attack upon what is most worthy of reverence in the specifically human order.”²⁴³ This explicates the creative testimony of the couple to produce a child. The creative testimony of the couple to procreate culminates the response of the couple to the pact between humanity and life.

²⁴¹ Marcel, *Being and Having*, 46.

²⁴² Marcel, *Being and Having*, 47.

²⁴³ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 87.

Moreover, the child is the binding element of the couple and the couple's family. The child belongs to an indefinite network. Marcel claims:

I can discern enough, however, to enable me to follow this umbilical cord of my temporal antecedents, and to see it taking shape before me yet stretching back beyond my life in an indefinite network which, if traced to its limits would probably be co-extensive with the human race itself. My family, or rather my lineage, is the succession of historical processes by which the human species has become individualised into the single creature that I am.²⁴⁴

The ancestors of the couple are all related and linked to the existence of the child. Thus, the child is the center of the family. The child must be aware of the lineage for the child belongs to the very long family tree that the child has. It is this awareness of the child that helps the parents to also have a deeper connection with each other. The child makes the parents a better couple because of the positive effect that the child brings in the family. The child is the concrete by product of the couple and reminds that the two families of the husband and wife are now really linked with each other. The child represents both the families of the parents.

With this, to further dwell on the child, Marcel envisages a family and home which will form the child into a good human being. The child as a hope for the next generation is Marcel's ideal environment in the family. For this reason, it depends on the hand of the parents in order for the child to be formed well. Marcel states, "It is, then, the sacred duty of parents to behave in such a way towards their child, that one day it will have good reason to acknowledge that it is in their debt."²⁴⁵ It is a debt and credit for the parents to form their child very well. It is their task to lay down the foundations.

Thus, parents must be responsible enough in order to form the child well. They must have a realization that since the child is born out of mutual love, they must have a sense of responsibility towards the child. The child must be cared and formed well in order for them to be responsible beings. The child must not be put into danger and exposed to the bad influences which can negate the proper formation of the child. It is the duty of the parents to be the first educators of the child for they will be the first persons that will affect in the process of socialization of the child.

Hence, Filipino parents must be the one responsible to the formation of their children. They must give importance to the child for the child is the most basic common ground for the married couple. The child is the one that is linked between both the families of the married couple. Thus, the child must be given importance. Moreover, parents must not treat their children as objects. Parents must give the love and comfort that the child needs. Also, the child must be formed properly in order to be a hope for the next generation. Thus, the child will be the springboard for the next generation of families. In addition to, parents must be reminded that their marriage is not limited to the commitment of husband to his wife, wife to her husband, but the commitment of the couple to the family which they will raise, in turn, their commitment in the society in which they belong to, as active agents of bringing about good citizens from their family, and living as morally upright citizens themselves.

Conclusion

²⁴⁴ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 71.

²⁴⁵ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 91.

The prevailing traditional values of close family ties, religiosity, respect accorded to elders and affection for the aged are challenged by the influence of the West and modernization. The sacredness of marriage is also affected by modernization. The growing number of infidelity and divorce rate shows how Filipinos are losing their grasp in their relationships. The loyalty they have is lessened. Some relationships also do not result to marriage but just result to cohabitation or 'live-in'. Because of the problems they face, parents now also do not have time to form their children properly. Child abuse and child labor are also increasing. The importance of the child in the family is having a change of outlook. Solo-parenthood and cases of infidelity greatly contributed to the shift of landscape in the formation of the child and in the structure of the family.

For this reason, one must always be reminded not to detach their selves from their own families even though some live distant from each other. They must always be reminded that they are still involved in their own families. As Marcel states:

As for me, who devote myself to this operation, I am outside (above or below, if you like) the facts with which it deals. But when it involves realities closely bound up with my existence, realities which unquestionably influence my existence as such, I cannot conscientiously proceed in this way.²⁴⁶

This perspective of Marcel suggests one to always look at their families as something that involves them. The very "I" of the individual is never detached from the family. The person is always connected and involved in the family that the person belongs.

Moreover, Filipinos must always value their families. They must always have a sense of pride. They must be proud that they belong to a family for their own families are already part of their historicity. Filipinos also must love each member of the family and be present and available to any family member in order to further deepen the bond. In addition to, one must maintain its closeness to their own families because they will always be the 'protective skin' amidst all social institutions. The family will always be the one to bring comfort and love to the individual. The family is always full of love and care. The family will always be home. Also, Filipinos must be reminded to keep marriage sacred. The sacramental union that marriage provides must be maintained and the vows committed must be kept. The oaths and promises of the couple to each other must be upheld. The sacramental bond that marriage constituted must be maintained.

The Filipino couples must also be faithful to each other. They must have generosity and availability to each other. They must have constancy in order to have a common ground. Their fidelity to each other must be genuine and come out of spontaneity. It must not be forced but genuinely or naturally comes out of the individual. Their fidelity must be creative.

As the cases of child labor and child abuse go up, Filipinos must be reminded to look at the importance of the child. The child is the one which strengthens the union of the couple and the families of the couple. The child must be seen as a blessing for it is the child who gives hope for the next generation and accesses what is to come. Parents must be responsible enough to form their child into a good and responsible beings. Love and respect must also be given to the child.

Due to modernization and influences that the times have brought, the Filipino family has lost some of its important values. The heaviness and noisiness of modernization changed the landscape of the Filipino family. It changed the perspective of many individuals. Even though some of the traditional values of the Filipino family are deteriorating, there is still a glimpse of hope for these values to be revived. Thus, Gabriel Marcel's *The Mystery of the Family* can be of help and be used as lenses in

²⁴⁶ Marcel, *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, 68.

order to see the situation of the family more clearly. For traditional Filipino family values to be relived, one must always be reminded that the family is a mystery. Filipinos must always be proud of their own families, love their own families and respect their own families. Also, parents must remain faithful to each other and form their children well. Hence, one can always hope in Thee for the Filipino family to regain its remarkable character.

Bibliography

- Dy, Jr. Manuel B. 2003. "Marcel's Mystery of the Family and the Problems of Modernization in Asian Context." *Karunungan: A Journal of Philosophy: Volume 20* 68-80.
- Marcel, Gabriel. 1949. *Being and Having*. Glasgow: The University Press.
- . 1970. *Creative Fidelity*. New York : Noonday Press.
- . 1962. *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*. New York: Harper Torchbooks.
- . 1978. *The Mystery of Being: Reflection and Mystery Volume 1*. New York: University Press of America, Inc.
- Medina, Belen T.G. 2001. *The Filipino Family*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.
- Mulder, Niels. 1997. *Inside Philippine Society: Interpretations of Everyday Life*. Quezon City: New Day Publishers.
- Ordoñez, Minyong. 2011. "Filipino culture, family values, RH." *BusinessWorld Online*. May 18. Accessed March 24, 2017. <http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=Opinion&title=filipino-culture-family-values-rh&id=31456>.
- Sweetman, Brendan. 2012. "Book Review on HOMO VIATOR: INTRODUCTION TO THE METAPHYSIC OF HOPE. ." *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 711-715.
- Taruc, Paulo. 2015. "SWS: Support for divorce growing in Philippines." *CNN Philippines*. March 24. Accessed February 18, 2018. <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2015/03/24/survey-pinoys-favor-divorce.html>,
- Timbreza, Florentino. 2005. *Filipino Values Today*. Manila: National Bookstore Inc.
- Yap, DJ. 2016. "Child abuse on rise, DSWD report shows." *Inquirer.Net*. July 25. Accessed February 18, 2018. <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/798772/child-abuse-on-rise-dswd-report-shows>.

Work and The Contemporary Human Person In Karol Wojtyła's Theory Of Participation

Kenichi Andreau F. Tigas

Adamson University Senior High School | Kenichi.tigas@yahoo.com

Abstract: The history of human civilization manifests an account of man's striving towards progress in all aspects of human existence. A wide array of disciplines was developed, primarily to satisfy the needs of man for survival, and to pursue his desire to enhance his living with himself and with other men. In describing man's situation in the world, it is necessary for him to be defined as a being in relation to other beings. Such social relations encompass all aspects of human activity, e.g. labor or work, yet also presuppose a more profound reality underlying such interactions; hence an expression of the tendency of man to manifest his social nature through social interactions and activities. However, in his pursuit to develop a progressive global community characterized by the tenets of materialism and worldliness, the human person suffers under reductive forces found in the structures of society, especially in the field of work. Man's living with other workers within labor communities has become the conduit to a world that reduces him to a mere means to an end. Karol Wojtyła, a staunch critic of superstructures that promote the devaluation of the human person, has comprehensively established his philosophy under the influences of his personal experiences, the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, and the rigorous intellectual development he received from academic institutions. He did not merely emphasize the irreducible value of the human person in his philosophical expositions. Rather, he also recognized the human person who fulfills himself in acting together with others. Labor, as an activity performed with others, is an avenue for realizing the personhood of the human person – thus his theory of participation. In this light, this research envisions to appropriate the theory of participation of Karol Wojtyła in locating the position of the human worker in the contemporary society. As man reached the zenith of human progress with his standards of modernization, he is challenged by the concrete structures of reality, and is urged to engage in the preservation of his personhood as a human person who works and participates in the contemporary society.

Keywords: Wojtyła, human person, participation, work

Introduction

The philosophical legacy of Karol Wojtyła reverberates through the different intellectual paradigms and had established a fruitful discourse, especially on the concept of man. From the various tragedies which influenced the drama of life of the philosopher Pope, the acumen that he manifested became a fortress of the doctrines of the Catholic Church and importantly, shaped a philosophy that caters to the needs of the morally and intellectually regressive modern world.

The global crisis in the mid-twentieth century brought about by a series of wars and a prevalence of cultural discrimination, primarily in his homeland, led the Polish philosopher to reinstate the position of man in the pedestal of anthropological and ethical discourses. From the variegated economic and political structures to the anthropological defilement of the human person in the history of humanity, Wojtyła attempts to rescue the dignity of the human person from the state of being ‘objectified’ and ‘reified’. Wojtyła’s personalistic movement, as his commentators would label his philosophy of man, rectified the contemporary understanding of the person and developed a renewed emphasis on his dignity.

Moreover, his intellectual effort in improving the identity of man encompassed the different historical periods; he tried to combat a number of philosophical trends and positions which are insufficient in understanding the human person. His predilection to provide a dignified definition of man— not as an animal nor a mere substance who affirms his own existence—became the core of his philosophy which is also intensively generated by the assistance of the Scholasticism of Saint Thomas Aquinas and the phenomenology of Max Scheler. In his ardent pursuit to elevate the human person from the objectifying threats of the world, he initiated the primal step for its realization through the application of his philosophical anthropology to sexual morality, i.e. human persons in the context of the conjugal relationship. The development of his intellectual viewpoint in the morality of sex in relation to the human person intensified his zeal in delving into the most profound interpretations of the human person in his subjectivity and irreducibility.

As he is known as a vanguard of the dignity of the human person, it cannot also be denied that the span of his philosophical literatures underlies a single concept of his intellectual ruminations and comprises the totality of his philosophy – the human person and his dignity.²⁴⁷

Truthfully, the contemporary human person also faces a radical predicament that concerns his social and ontological position as an individual who possesses an irreducible dignity. Man encounters a grave dehumanization in labor or work as one of the primary aspects of his existence and activity. Thus, delving into the world of Wojtyła’s philosophical contemplation and research, this study shall administer the appropriation of the philosophy of Wojtyła in identifying and establishing a philosophical description of the human worker in the contemporary society. With the same kind of social atmosphere to the time of Karol Wojtyła’s life, the present world encounters a kind of ethical and moral regress which involves a multitude of social factors – political, economic, religious and

²⁴⁷ Simpson begins his explication of Wojtyła’s philosophy by emphasizing the central theme of the latter, wherein, as the Polish philosopher’s literature suggests, the human person lie in the fore of his discussions. See also Peter Simpson, *On Karol Wojtyła* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, Inc., 2001), 7.

others – wherein the dignity of the human person is not only set aside but is also threatened to face a conscienceless debasement and adulteration.²⁴⁸

This contemplation on the thoughts of Karol Wojtyła is not merely a repetition of his ponderings nor a narrative of his beliefs and doctrines; this is a reaffirmation of his desire for a universal perspective on the human person as his dignity is not only realized within the domain of sexual ethics, but is and must also be applied to societal affairs, especially in this contemporary age where work and economy underlies every form of human activity.²⁴⁹ In this framework of the human person’s irreducibility—that man as a rational and experiencing being who cannot and must not be reduced to a mere object—which this study tries to interpolate its relevance in this period of time, or even of any epoch. This reaffirms the position of the human person as a ‘somebody’, not merely in the domain of marital copulation and family life, but also in the authentic and concrete activities of man such as labor. From an intellectual synthesis of the philosophy of the Angelic Doctor and Schelerian phenomenology²⁵⁰, the philosophy of Karol Wojtyła shall serve as an indispensable bastion of this age that would not only provide an avenue for philosophical discourses on the human person, but shall find itself significant in the realm of concrete reality and in the underlying structure and value of human work.

Wojtyła’s Philosophy of Person: On Intersubjectivity

An analysis of Wojtyła’s concept of man’s subjectivity leads to its full realization in existing and acting ‘together with others’. This is brought about by the existential fact that man, yet a subject, also exists and acts together with other subjects. Thus, Wojtyła is led to generate the latter part of his magnum opus, *The Acting Person*, dedicated to his concept of intersubjectivity, especially his theory of participation.

Nevertheless, the concept of intersubjectivity is not merely a problem that pops out of the mind of the philosopher-Pope. It extends to a more profound predicament that concerns the *I-other* relationship. It roots from the notion that the concrete person and his fact of existence and activity, is designated by the pronoun *I* while simultaneously existing and acting common with other human persons.²⁵¹ The other is denoted as he who lives alongside with the *I*; he is both *another* and *one of the others*.²⁵² These conceptions form part of the fundamental idea of Wojtyła’s notion of

²⁴⁸ Mejos asserts that the contemporary society is characterized by the setting aside of man’s dignity and the priority of trivial matters over those which are truly significant. See Dean Edward Mejos, *The Personalism of Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II: Redeeming the Person through Love* (PhL Thesis, University of Santo Tomas, 2009), 56.

²⁴⁹ Wiegel reiterates Wojtyła’s “Law of the Gift” inclined to his ‘self-giving’ which leads to human fulfillment. This concept is laid not merely for the Christians to take as an example, but manifests the catholicity of Wojtyła’s philosophy which establishes a firm ‘universal moral demand’. See also George Wiegel, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2005), 136.

²⁵⁰ Correa brands Wojtyła as a “synthesizer” for being able to bridge the notions of Thomism and phenomenology in relation to the human person. Peter M. Correa, “The Philosophical Position of Karol Wojtyła,” *Philippiniana Sacra* 25, no. 74 (1990): 237.

²⁵¹ See also Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II)*, 159.

²⁵² Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II)*, 159.

intersubjectivity; the *I-other* relationship is firmly based on his concept of subjectivity and grounded on man's concrete and lived experience.

The person's concrete and lived experiences are the fundamentals of the *I-other* relationship. Wojtyla clarifies that such relationship does not arise from a universal understanding of the human person.²⁵³ However, this universal understanding opens the possibility for such relationship. The notion of intersubjectivity is heavily determined by man's lived, interpersonal, unique and unrepeatable experience with the other.

Wojtyla's philosophy of the human person clearly laid out his concept of action as that which serves as the avenue for a proper understanding of the human person.²⁵⁴ However, this understanding of the dynamization of the person and action, likewise leads to an aspect of reality that such actions could also be performed 'together with others'. The basis of intersubjectivity begins from the understanding of the human person as an *I*. The subject fulfills himself in action. On the other hand, he also experiences the *other*. The human person's experience with the *other* is explained by Aguas:

The other lies beyond the *I*'s experience of self-consciousness, self-determination and self-possession, because these experiences are limited to the self. However, the other as another *I* also experiences these essential elements. Hence the other is not just in relation to the *I*; he is also another *I*, related experientially with his own *I*.²⁵⁵

One must embark on the study of the human person's participation with others through the consideration of the *I-other* relationship, primarily of his own experience with the *other*. Through such awareness, one would be able to see, not merely his commonality with the *other*, but also discovers that the *other* is also another *I* who experiences the *other's* own subjectivity.

Participation, in its ordinary sense and definition, means 'having a share or part in something'.²⁵⁶ Such definition may refer to a kind of interaction such as a meeting or discussion. However, such a definition is insufficient in portraying the more profound experience of the human person in acting together with others. Philosophically, the term is associated to nature and refers to the transcendence and integration of the person in action.²⁵⁷

²⁵³ Wojtyla's concept of the human person who exists and acts 'together with others' is not understood through a universal concept which underlies every individual, i.e. through the ontological idea of essence. Instead, he contends that the intersubjective reality in which the person fulfills himself in action is understood through the concrete and lived experience which is unique and unrepeatable. *Ibid.*, 160-161.

²⁵⁴ The previous sections on the discussion on the philosophy of the acting person serves as the foundation of Wojtyla's aspect of intersubjectivity. Prior to the conception of man who exists and acts 'together with others', his subjectivity is first emphasized through the performance of action and the fulfillment of himself in such action. *Ibid.*, 161.

²⁵⁵ Wojtyla stresses the fact that man is a conscious subject, he who determines himself and holds the capacity to possess and govern himself. However, he is also posed with the fact that he exists and acts 'together with others'. In this reality, he also encounters the other as a conscious subject, he who also determines himself, and capable of possessing and governing himself. *Ibid.*, 159-160.

²⁵⁶ See also Michael B. Montalbo, Jr., *The Church on Labor and Workers* (Manila: Angelo J. and Aloma M. delos Reyes, 1988), 75. See also Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)*, 163.

²⁵⁷ See also Karol Wojtyla, *The Acting Person* (Dordrecht; Boston; London: D. Reichel Publishing Co., 1979), 269.

Wojtyla's idea of participation is not merely portrayed as the very act of interaction, nor does it merely suggest an ontic property of the human person. Participation requires the consciousness of becoming close to another, and such process roots from the lived experiences of one's own *I*.²⁵⁸ Moreover, the structure of the human person, as indicated by the previous discussions, is not merely revealed through his action or in his interaction with other persons. He is more revealed in participation with others.²⁵⁹

Participating with others indicates the transcendence and integration of man in the action.²⁶⁰ This notion renders the human person as he who maintains his uniqueness and individuality, and at the same time, he engages into the action without being immersed in the social interplay.²⁶¹ Such transcendence and integration is also reaffirmed in participation as he shows in the communal acting and simultaneously brings about the personalistic value of his action.²⁶²

Furthermore, Wojtyla considers participation as a trait of the person acting 'together with others'. He contends that the notion of participation signifies a feature of the person himself "that innermost and homogenous feature which determines that the person is existing and acting together with others does so as a person."²⁶³ The affirmation of Wojtyla upholds the view that in participation, the person exists and acts together with others as a conscious, efficacious and self-determining subject. Also, participation allows the person to realize the authentic personalistic value, i.e. the performance of the action and the fulfillment of himself in the action.²⁶⁴

The notion of participation, as a property of the person that enables him to fulfill his action and importantly himself, is then contrasted with *alienation* as the antithesis. Alienation, as the popular philosophical lexicon of Marx, refers to the estrangement of man from the economic and political systems, property, and work.²⁶⁵ However, as Marx advocated social change, Wojtyla insisted to go to what is essential more than the structures of social and economic existence. Alienation, Wojtyla conjectures, means the negation of participation and effects a twofold negative implications – it renders the impossibility of the *I* to see the *other* as another *I*, and it "inhibits the possibility of

²⁵⁸ Participation in the humanity of others, according to Wojtyla, does not arise from the universal understanding of the human being, but from one's "consciously becoming close to another" which originates from the lived experience of one's own *I*. See also Karol Wojtyla, "Participation or Alienation?," in *Person and Community: Selected Essays* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 197-207.

²⁵⁹ Aguas explicates the understanding of revealing one's subjectivity in participation. The transcendence and integration of the person is revealed in participation, while at the same time his fulfillment in the action is achieved through participation. See also Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)*, 164.

²⁶⁰ Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)*, 164.

²⁶¹ Participation reveals the transcendence and integration of the human person. He transcends the action as he is not absorbed by the social interplay; he integrates himself in the action as a complementary of the former. See also Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 269.

²⁶² The fact of man as existing and acting 'together with others' is not opposed to his being a conscious subject. He maintains the *personalistic value* of his action while simultaneously acting in a community. This precludes to the idea of Wojtyla that "even when acting 'together with others' man can remain outside the community that is constituted by participation." Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 269, 279-280.

²⁶³ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 269.

²⁶⁴ Wojtyla considers the notion of participation as both an ability and a realization. This notion as the "ability of acting 'together with others' which allows the realization of all that results from communal acting and simultaneously enables the one who is acting to realize thereby the personalistic value of his action." *Ibid.*, 271.

²⁶⁵ See also Wojtyla, "Participation or Alienation?," 205.

friendship and the spontaneous powers of community (*communio personarum*).²⁶⁶ This explication on participation and alienation is then culminated by Wojtyla posing the question on the ultimate predicament of mankind, especially of the contemporary age: *participation or alienation?*

Wojtyla's Social Teaching On Human Work

John Paul II begins his encyclical *Laborem Exercens* on the understanding of work as that which is naturally reserved for man, the only creature capable of the former.²⁶⁷ He succinctly provides:

Work means any activity by man, whether manual or intellectual, whatever its nature or circumstances, it means any human activity that can and must be recognized as work, in the midst of all the many activities of which man is capable and to which he is predisposed by his very nature, by virtue of humanity itself... Only man is capable of work, and only man works, at the same time by work occupying his existence on earth.²⁶⁸

Work does not merely presuppose the reality of the human person as that which characterizes him as a social animal. Such aspect is not merely a kind of social existence which requires the human person to engage himself into. Moreover, despite the significance of work in the formation of man, it is and must always provide a niche for the emphasis on the human person as the purpose, primary basis, and subject of work.²⁶⁹ Hence, in social systems which take the form of political, economic and cultural engagements, the human person remains the priority.

Wojtyla emphasizes that the subjectivity of the human person is not merely anchored on the metaphysical foundation of man as a *suppositum*, but his subjectivity may be clearly justified in his capacity to know that he is the efficient cause of his action.²⁷⁰ In the same light, as the human person gains his personhood not merely from his universal essence shared with other persons but also from his unique and unrepeatable experience so as the same principle must be manifested in human work.

As his magnum opus *The Acting Person* precludes, a human act is the dynamism that would lead to the real source of knowledge of the human person.²⁷¹ So work, as one of the aspects on which man is required to manifest his actions, may serve as an avenue, not only to acquire knowledge of the essence of man, but importantly, to emphasize that in such aspect, man is of primacy and has an irreducible value.

Moreover, the important aspect on which such knowledge of the structure of the human person is acquired is through the moment of efficacy. This philosophical concept discloses the fact that man does not only exist and act but he is also the cause of his own action. Thus, the knowledge on the personhood of the worker, as a human person and subject of work, could be acquired from

²⁶⁶ As the previous discussion reveals, participation is seeing the *very humanity of the other*, the consideration of the *other* as another *I*. On the other hand, *communio personarum* refers to a more authentic human community which imbibes the notion of participation in its social and interpersonal dimensions. *Ibid.*, 206.

²⁶⁷ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens* (Pasay: Paulines Publishing House, 1997), 3-4.

²⁶⁸ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 3-4.

²⁶⁹ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 18, 20, 22-23.

²⁷⁰ On the question of who is the human person as a subject, Wojtyla identifies him as man having the experience of himself while at the same time, having the experience of himself as the "actor". See also Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 71.

²⁷¹ See also Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 27. See also Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II)*, 69-70.

the fact that he is the author and cause of his own actions. On one hand, Montalbo affirms work as an *actus personae* and states that, "...the one who carries it [work] out is a person, a conscious and free subject, that is a subject that decides about himself."²⁷²

John Paul II, on the other hand, declares in his encyclical that "as a person, he works, he performs various actions belonging to the whole process; independently of their objective content, these actions must all serve to realize his humanity, to fulfill the calling to be a person that is his by reason of his very humanity."²⁷³

The principle of efficacy finds its significance as the worker, as a human person, not merely knows that he does the action proper to work, i.e. he works. More importantly, he is the cause of his own work, and not that work is the cause of his dignity as a person.²⁷⁴ This is reaffirmed in *Laborem Exercens*, as John Paul II firmly declares that despite man's vocation for work, the worker must remember that "work is 'for man' and not man 'for work'."²⁷⁵

In *Laborem Exercens*, John Paul II classifies two dimensions of work – objective and subjective. The former refers to the material aspect of work such as technology, whereas the latter corresponds to the person as having the capacity to act in a "planned and rational way."²⁷⁶ These distinctions affirm that in the realm of work, the human person stands more significant being the subject of work above its objective dimensions.²⁷⁷

The centrality of the person stated by the Pope in the encyclical is upheld by Montalbo. The latter regards the human person as the "primary reference point of the production process."²⁷⁸ Man's position in the economic scenario not only accounts for just compensation through wages, but by being able to be fully recognized as a subject of work – all processes are made for him and are aimed for his full human development and not as a mere form of subsistence, working like a cog in a huge machine.²⁷⁹ The beauty of man's subjectivity is also expressed in the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* as

²⁷² The thoughts of Montalbo in this paragraph reveal implicitly that the capacity of the worker to decide about himself implies self-possession and self-governance which are pertinent and significant in shaping the philosophy of Karol Wojtyła. Montalbo, *The Church on Labor and Workers*, 98. Moreover, Wojtyła, in explaining efficacy and self-determination, prioritized the use of *actus personae* instead of *actus humanus*, as the former is truly appropriate in referring to the capacity of the human person for the element of efficacy. See also Karol Wojtyła, "The Person: Subject and Community," in *Person and Community: Selected Essays* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 228.

²⁷³ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 20.

²⁷⁴ The element of efficacy stresses the concept that an external object depends on its cause, an outside effect depending on its authoring subject. Moreover, John Paul II highlighted the concept of human activities as "transitive" in character, which he also mentioned in *Laborem Exercens* that work is of "transitive character" wherein work is directed towards an external object, thus affirming a form of "dominion" over the earth. See also Wojtyła, "The Person: Subject and Community," 229.

²⁷⁵ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 22, 25.

²⁷⁶ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 16-23.

²⁷⁷ The disparity between the objective and subjective dimensions of work preclude the position of Wojtyła in emphasizing the value of the human person as unquantifiable and not defined in terms of materialism and economics. John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 22.

²⁷⁸ The succeeding discussions are inspired by the same personalistic tenet, that in every process of production and aspect of labor, the human person is situated in the core of experiences, making him the priority and end of all activities. Montalbo, *The Church on Labor and Workers*, 102.

²⁷⁹ Although the provision of remuneration belongs to one of the concrete manifestations of the society's respect for the personhood of man, the concept of just wage as the criterion for human development also poses the

Pope John Paul II declares that, yet man obtained some rights from his work, he also owns some rights which already preexist because of his “essential dignity as a person.”²⁸⁰

In the same context of man’s dignity as worker, independent of economic influence, John Paul II argues that what lies prior to the science of exchange and trade of goods is a “something” which lies in man “because he is a man.”²⁸¹

Wojtyla realized that the problematic of intersubjectivity lies inherently in the fact that the *I* and the *other* are not merely personal subjectivities who exists and acts, but they are also subjected to an analysis as they are also capable of sharing their lived experiences – they are not merely existing and acting subjects, they also exist and act with each other.²⁸²

The human person as a worker is also faced with this reality. In the social realm in which he belongs, he is also a personal subject who exists and acts –conscious of himself, capable for self-determination, and fulfills the self in the action. On the other hand, he is also existing and acting inevitably together with others; hence, working with others and not merely with and for himself. This is succinctly realized in *Centesimus Annus* as John Paul II states that “more than ever, work is *work with others* and *work for others*, it is a matter of doing for someone else.”²⁸³

However, the fact of existence and action with others challenges the notion of subjectivity. Thus, the question arises on how the latter would be preserved while maintaining the former. Likewise, the worker is posed with the same question on how he would maintain his subjectivity as a human person while inevitably encountering the other. The bias in each side of this ontological reality, either on the individual or on the collective, may lead to a form of dehumanization or instances of alienation.²⁸⁴

Thus, Wojtyla suggested that in order for the human person to exercise both dimensions which constitute his personhood, he must exist and act with others while affirming his personal

tendency of tacit dehumanization as such presupposes the equivalent of an action produced by the human person is quantifiable. Hence, yet wages are necessary for human living, the former is insufficient to understand the development of the human person and explain the reality of human condition. John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 56.

²⁸⁰ This proposes the understanding of the primacy of man’s personhood over his social nature. In some instances where he faces the danger of dehumanization, one must first understand that such form of danger not only poses against his social position, e.g. as a worker, but cuts into the more profound aspect of his existence, i.e. his dignity as a human person. John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus* (Pasay: Daughters of Saint Paul, 1996), 24.

²⁸¹ John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 67. Furthermore, as mentioned, work supposes a “transitive character” because of its being oriented to an external object from its authoring subject. However, human activities such as work are also in possession of a “non-transitive character” which Wojtyla termed as “inwardness” or “in-selfness”. Yet human actions take the form of this inwardness, Wojtyla emphasizes that their non-transitivity and “virtualness” must be unraveled. Henceforth, the human being is considered in the lens of his lived experience. See also Wojtyla, “The Person: Subject and Community,” 227. On the other hand, the “something” being referred to in this context is not the non-transitivity of human action, but the human person’s subjectivity, i.e. his capacity for reflexive self-consciousness, self-determination and self-fulfillment.

²⁸² See also Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)*, 159.

²⁸³ John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 61.

²⁸⁴ This reality, however, is being experienced today in the forms of totalism and individualism. The former refers to the primacy of the common good and the society without taking into consideration the good of the human subject. The latter, on the other hand, pertains to the superiority of the individual good over the common good. This shall be dealt with in the next paragraphs.

subjectivity.²⁸⁵ This is his theory of participation. The worker, therefore, could maintain his subjectivity as a human person without failing to recognize and share in the subjectivity of his co-worker. Work, then, is not merely a work with and for others, but becomes an important social aspect to share in the humanity of others while affirming the self at the same time. John Paul II adds, “work becomes ever more fruitful and productive to the extent that people become more knowledgeable of the productive potentialities of the earth and more profoundly cognizant of the needs of those for whom their work is done.”²⁸⁶

Indeed their symbiosis presents the firm relationship of the society and the human person – first, the progress of the society which helps the transformation and fulfilment of the worker, and the contribution of the worker for the progress of the society on the one hand. The theory of participation elevates the worker from the lure of traditional conception of personhood. Participation enables the workers, not only to share in the fruits of their labor, but in their very humanity.²⁸⁷ This intersubjective theory paves the way for the worker to realize and fulfill himself even working together with others.²⁸⁸

Participation, according to Wojtyla, is also a property both of the person and action.²⁸⁹ The former corresponds to the tendency of the human person to remain himself in a social community.²⁹⁰ On the other hand, the latter refers to the positive relation of sharing in the very humanity of others, thus forming the sense of a community.²⁹¹ Applied in the context of human work, John Paul II states in *Laborem Exercens*:

When man works, using all the means of production, he also wishes the fruit of this work to be used by himself and others, and he wishes to be able to take part in the very work process as a sharer in responsibility and creativity at the workbench to which he applies himself.²⁹²

The concepts of creativity and responsibility brings about the idea of participation as a property both of the person and action. The worker, through participation and sharing in the humanity of others, fulfills himself, thus he is a human person capable of creativity. On the other hand, as the human person works, he does not merely do such for himself but he is also responsible for working “for” and “with” others.²⁹³

As participation stands at the core of Wojtyla’s concept of intersubjectivity, this theory is instrumental in establishing a community that develops the human person and provides him access towards self-fulfillment. This, then, leads to the value of participation as a form of experience geared

²⁸⁵ Wojtyla declares that in order for participation to thrive, man must have the capability of retaining the personalistic value of his action while at the same time, sharing in the “realization and results of communal acting.” See also Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 269.

²⁸⁶ John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 61.

²⁸⁷ See also Montalbo, *The Church on Labor and Workers*, 124.

²⁸⁸ Montalbo, *The Church on Labor and Workers*, 124.

²⁸⁹ See Wojtyla, “The Person: Subject and Community,” 237.

²⁹⁰ Wojtyla, “The Person: Subject and Community,” 255.

²⁹¹ See also Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)*, 167-169.

²⁹² John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 56.

²⁹³ The philosopher-Pope also considers the right of work as a form of vocation to service and cooperation with others, and as a duty for the growth of the society. See also John Paul II, “Labor Has Primacy Over Capital (Catechesis of Pope John Paul II on the Dignity of Human Work),” *The Pope Speaks* 42, No. 5 (1997): 290. See also John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 59, on the idea of work as a moral obligation.

towards the creation of *communio personarum*, a community of human persons who recognize the dignity of other human persons. Such community necessitates that the human person belonging to such community must not only espouse their own individual goods, but aim for the realization of the common good, adopting the latter as constitutive of the individual good. Wojtyla emphasizes the correlation of the common good and man's subjectivity in *The Acting Person* as he states, "it is impossible to define the common good without simultaneously taking into account the subjective moment, that is, the moment of acting in relation to the acting persons."²⁹⁴

The correlation of participation and the common good in the subjective sense fortifies the community as a true "dynamic unity" despite the plurality of subjects. The philosopher-Pope marks in his encyclical on human work:

All of this brings it about that man combines his deepest human identity with membership of a nation, and intends his work also to increase the common good developed together with his compatriots, thus realizing that in this way work serves to add to the heritage of the whole human family, of all the people living in the world.²⁹⁵

The people's realization of work serves as an aspect in which the community upholds the attainment of the common good. As the subjective sense of the common good proves to be the "principle of correct participation,"²⁹⁶ the human person who attempts to attain his individual good in accordance with the common good is ensured that in his actions, he fulfills and realizes himself.²⁹⁷

The significance of the common good in a community of persons could manifest participation in the encounter of different personal subjectivities. Further, the concept of community is not merely explicated in terms of the common good but also in its ontological structure, the relation of the *I* and the *other*. Wojtyla postulated two dimensions of community – the interpersonal (interhuman) and the social.

The interpersonal dimension, characterized by the *I-thou* relationship, presupposes a dialogue between two persons yet directed towards all other human beings.²⁹⁸ This dimension of community also entails a reflexivity that the *I* must consider the *other* as another *I*. Hence, the fullness of participation is disclosed in the reciprocity of the relationship as in such relationships, the *I* experiences himself, the other and the relation between him and the *other*.²⁹⁹

On the other hand, the social dimension of the community, represented by the *we*, refers to the multiplicity of persons and termed by Wojtyla as "communitas."³⁰⁰ The persons within the

²⁹⁴ Moreover, the subjective dimension of the common good allows the person to perform authentic actions and to fulfill himself in these actions. Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 281-283.

²⁹⁵ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 35-36.

²⁹⁶ See also Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)*, 170.

²⁹⁷ The relation of the common good in participation reveals that through the former, the human *I* gains the possibility of fulfilling himself while belonging in a human *we*. See also Wojtyla, "The Person: Subject and Community," 250.

²⁹⁸ Wojtyla, "The Person: Subject and Community," 174.

²⁹⁹ Wojtyla, "The Person: Subject and Community," 173-178.

³⁰⁰ Wojtyla, "The Person: Subject and Community," 179.

community, from the lenses of the social dimension, are related not by the uniformity of their actions, but because of their being driven towards a single value – the common good.³⁰¹

These two dimensions of human community constitute Wojtyla’s notion of intersubjectivity which affirms the personal subjectivity of the human person and its compatibility with the community. The field of work must also possess the same attitudes in order to further the relationship between the human person and the community.

The interpersonal dimension of the community suggests that the worker must consider the other worker as having the same personal subjectivity that he has; the worker must be able to comprehend the other as a concrete human person, a unique and unrepeatable subject who is rational and free.³⁰² Moreover, the social dimension views the worker who is situated in a community with other workers and they strive towards the common good characterized by truth.³⁰³

These communities are reflections of the relationship between the human persons belonging to such communities. Participation in these communities are not only conditioned by the relationship of the persons, but is also determined by the attitudes to which the people adhere to. The authentic attitudes are solidarity and opposition, whereas the inauthentic attitudes are conformism and non-involvement.

As work environments are also composed by communities of work, participation is also determined by the kind of attitude the workers adhere to. The encyclicals provide concrete circumstances which are constitutive of the attitudes of participation. The authentic attitude of solidarity is manifested in the workers’ *right of association*³⁰⁴ or the establishment of “labor or trade unions”, as such are advocates of the fulfillment of the self while complementing others.³⁰⁵ He does not merely consider his personal share to the community but also accepts the share of others. Nevertheless, the same workers’ right to association³⁰⁶ may be understood as a form of the authentic attitude of opposition which, according to Wojtyla, the former serves as a “mouthpiece for the struggle for social justice” yet not a “struggle against others.”³⁰⁷ As opposition confirms the common good³⁰⁸, labor unions are instrumental in upholding the “just rights” of the workers, forming a community of

³⁰¹ Wojtyla, “The Person: Subject and Community,” 179-180.

³⁰² The interpersonal dimension consists of the fact that the *other* is another *I* different from my one’s *I*, a relation which proceeds from the *I*, but also returns to the *I*. Ibid., 173. See also Wojtyla, “The Person: Subject and Community,” 241.

³⁰³ Wojtyla, “The Person: Subject and Community,” 181.

³⁰⁴ See also John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 72.

³⁰⁵ See also Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)*, 187.

³⁰⁶ Aside from the idea of an association, Wojtyla terms this union as the “workers’ movement.” This movement, as a concrete appropriation of the authentic attitude of opposition serves as a “moral conscience to unjust and harmful situations”; hence, defending the rights of the workers as persons in possession of human dignity. See also John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 33.

³⁰⁷ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 73. Also, the metaphor “mouthpiece” was also used by Wojtyla in *The Acting Person*, referring to the authentic attitude of opposition as being the voiced out and not signifying withdrawal from the community. See also Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 286.

³⁰⁸ See also Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)*, 187.

solidarity and preserving participation in relationships through the opposition and struggle against social injustice.

John Paul II upholds that “each person collaborates in the work of others and for their good... he collaborates in the work of his fellow employees, as well as in the work of suppliers and in the customer’s use of goods, in a progressively expanding chain of solidarity.”³⁰⁹

The inauthentic attitudes also reflect the contemporary condition of work communities. Workers who feel that he is just a cog in a machine or a mere production instrument³¹⁰ are persons who experience conformism and are hampered in realizing participation. Nevertheless, a concrete circumstance of the non-authentic attitude of non-involvement may be the real predicament of *unemployment*. This social reality remains very evident and prevents the realization of participation as the person makes himself absent from the community of work in which he must belong to, as man who has the natural leaning for work.³¹¹ The unemployment of the worker implies his withdrawal from the community of work. Hence such characterizes the nonauthentic attitude of non-involvement.

These attitudes determine the presence of participation in a community. But in some instances where the human person conforms his ideals to the society and ceases to be a personal subject, he falls into the dilemma of alienation. This problem was also provided a substantial amount of consideration for discussion in John Paul II’s encyclical *Centesimus Annus* and affirms its presence, even in the work community. He explains:

Alienation is found also in work, when it is organized so as to ensure maximum returns and profits with no concern whether the worker, through his own labor, grows or diminishes as a person, either through increased isolation in a maze of relationships marked by destructive competitiveness and estrangement in which he is considered only a means and not an end.³¹²

On the one hand, the concept of alienation was heavily problematized by Karl Marx who devoted a section of one of his early writings to alienated labor. On the other hand, Wojtyła is more concerned with the profound truth of the human person in his personal subjectivity, the predicament of alienation exists as a problem that demands not merely within the bounds of economic principles, but importantly, anthropologically and consequently, ethically.

Wojtyła considers alienation as the opposite of participation. As it was defined as the phase of isolation, its contrary must be a form of coexistence with the other yet it goes beyond such coexistence. Thus the human laborer is not merely a subject who works in isolation nor merely exists for himself

³⁰⁹ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 84. Moreover, the collaboration and solidarity of the workers in a particular labor community, according to Montalbo, implies not merely their sharing in the “ownership, profit and management of the business enterprise” but entails the experience of personal subjectivity in the concrete intersubjective community, i.e. the “mega-process of production.” See also Montalbo, *The Church on Labor and Workers*, 130-131.

³¹⁰ See also John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 56.

³¹¹ This idea of *unemployment* as an inauthentic attitude of non-involvement and hinders the occurrence of participation does not imply that the human person has no longer opportunities for participation in other areas of existence. However, as a human being, he is naturally predisposed for work, even attested that at least a huge portion of his life is devoted entirely to work. Hence, as work is definitive of a great portion of his experience, work also poses the greatest, if not the supreme influence on his transformation as a human person.

³¹² John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 79.

despite acting together with others. The worker, as far as he lives in participation with others, tends to work in being with others.

Montalbo affirms the philosophical analysis of the theory of participation of John Paul II in understanding the latter's papal encyclicals and adds that "...it is participation that allows each personal 'I' to experience his subjectivity and fulfill himself and through his action – precisely in his acting together with others."³¹³

The significance of participation is manifested in the appropriation of this theory to concrete realities such as human labor. The primacy of the human person over labor ensures the position of the former, that in relationships concerning the human person as a worker, no other economic process or system could cause the human person to be dehumanized or devalued.

The two impersonalistic systems of totalism and individualism are also contrary to participation, thus limiting the human person to realize himself in acting and existing together with others, or sharing in the very humanity of others.³¹⁴ The former may find its concrete application in the collective context of socialism which Wojtyla thinks is not in accord with the affirmation of the human person as a subject.³¹⁵ Individualism, however, is characterized by the human person's tendency of rejecting the common good and merely patronizing his individual good. This is perhaps reflective of the contemporary situation and predilection of capitalism as that which merely concerns the favor on one individual, compromising the subjectivity and the good of the society.

Conclusion

The advent of contemporary work-related adversaries paved way for the discourse on human person. Work not only serves as a means for man's sustenance. It also shapes the community, and influences the family and other social institutions, up to the nation.³¹⁶ Despite the predilection of Wojtyla's philosophy to the Catholic tradition, he was able to establish a philosophy which reaches a universal audience. Such philosophy affirms the dignity of the human person universally as it appeals to all races, cultures and countries. Indeed, his is a "voice in the world that is threatened by depersonalization."³¹⁷ The appropriation of Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology to the reality of work reveals the capacity of philosophy as an avenue for critique which explicates all other realities, especially those which pose the danger of depersonalization to the human person. Thus, on the question of how shall the contemporary human worker realize his personhood in the society, Wojtyla provided the answer – the theory of participation.

Wojtyla's theory of participation opens the possibility of living in the world without falling in the predicament of dehumanization and while remaining to be a personal subject – a conscious, free and self-determining human person. This concept of intersubjectivity allows the human person to maintain his personhood while being in a contemporary society, especially in the realm of work. It engages the

³¹³ Montalbo, *The Church on Labor and Workers*, 131.

³¹⁴ These systems or trends serve as limitations to participation which either isolate the person from others (individualism) or be coerced to realize the common good (totalism). These systems are considered "impersonalistic" or "antipersonalistic". See also Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 271-276.

³¹⁵ See also John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 54.

³¹⁶ Jozef Glemp, "Human Work in the Teaching of John Paul II," in *Unitas* 62, nos. 1-2 (1989): 57.

³¹⁷ Rolyn B. Francisco, *Karol Wojtyla's (Pope John Paul II) Theory of Participation Based on his Christian Personalism* (Makati: St. Pauls, 1995), 112.

human person to share in the very humanity of others – that human persons existing and acting together within a particular social group do not merely create a society, but a *communio personarum*, an authentic community which celebrates the joy of being with each other and respecting the dignity of each human person.

The quandaries related to and brought about by social, political and economic forces relegate the position of the contemporary human person to the manipulation of these structures. Nevertheless, Karol Wojtyła's theory of participation links the chasm between these aspects of human existence. The theory of participation guarantees the preservation of personhood in the community and in the experience of the *other*.

Labor, as a significant human activity, enables the possibility for an encounter of the *other* who also envisions to perfect himself at work. Also, this activity engages man to realize his personhood in the consideration of the “end for the sake of which the work is done,”³¹⁸ i.e. the human subject, and not only through the production of goods.

The rise of various work-related predicaments not only convey a superficial disorder in the realm of economic and social affairs. These dilemmas stand on profound realities, especially on the way the contemporary society looks at the human worker. Hence, this contemporary condition and perspective on labor must be augmented. Instead, it must be regarded as an activity that espouses the fulfillment of man.

Work must be celebrated as an encounter of the human person with himself and other persons; it must be both a gift to be grateful for and a responsibility to be fulfilled. As such, labor becomes a gift to humanity as an essential locus for the satisfaction of man's needs, an opportunity for man to improve his physical life, and as a common vocation that unifies all men. Also as a responsibility, labor is presented as a vital activity for the preservation of the community and the state. The significance of work is not merely understood within the context of employment percentages or in the amount of output produced by the labor force. More importantly, the principle which binds labor as a vital existential aspect and activity of humankind is its emphasis of the human person as the center of its purpose.

Moreover, it must open more opportunities for man to develop his personality and improve social connection which leads to greater fulfillment of humanity. In considering this significance, work then must be designated with a special position in the heart of the society as the manifestation of the people's striving towards the enhancement of their way of life and as the only social activity by which they would be able to express the unity of a single human family.

As an activity that is only administrable by the human person and no other creature, work is an inevitable reality that man must not fear or consider as a burden or suffering. It must be a personalistic act that is enjoyed, valued and done for its own sake and for a more noble purpose – the fulfillment of man – as man becomes more of a human being through work. The nobility of labor is brought by the fact that it is an activity by the human person. Indeed, work is a sublime act that is

³¹⁸ Indeed the ultimate vocation of man must not only concern the development of his skills, but of his whole humanity. De Torre uses the work of the carpenter: man must not only be a better carpenter; more necessarily, the carpenter must be a better man. Joseph M. de Torre, *Christian Philosophy* (Manila: Sinag-tala Publishers, 1980), 199.

integrated within and performed by the concrete human person yet it also transcends the physical movement of hands and the processes of the human mind. It is a supreme aspect of human reality that must be cherished by the person but is also shared by persons – a gift that is both given and received by the human person to himself and to other people as one human community.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Books

Wojtyła, Karol. 1979. *The Acting Person*. Dordrecht; Boston; London: D. Reidel Publishing Co.

Encyclicals

John Paul II. 1996. *Centesimus Annus*. Pasay: Daughters of Saint Paul.

—. 1997. *Laborem Exercens*. Pasay: Paulines Publishing House.

Articles

Wojtyła, Karol. 1993. "Participation or Alienation?" In *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, by Andrew N. Woznicki, 197-207. New York: Peter Lang.

—. 1993. "The Person: Subject and Community." In *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, by Andrew N. Woznicki, 219-261. New York: Peter Lang.

Secondary Sources

Books

Aguas, Jove Jim S. 2014. *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II)*. Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House.

de Torre, Joseph M. 1980. *Christian Philosophy*. Manila: Sinag-tala Publishers.

Francisco, Rolyn B. 1995. *Karol Wojtyła's (Pope John Paul II) Theory of Participation Based on his Christian Personalism*. Makati: St Pauls.

Montalbo, Jr., Melchor B. 1988. *The Church on Labor and Workers*. Manila: Angelo J. and Aloma M. delos Reyes.

Simpson, Peter. 2001. *On Karol Wojtyła*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, Inc.

Wiegel, George. 2005. *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.

Journal Articles

Correa, Peter M. 1990. "The Philosophical Position of Karol Wojtyła." *Philippiniana Sacra Vol. 25, No. 74* 233-239.

Glemp, Jozef. 1989. "Human Work in the Teaching of John Paul II." *Unitas Vol. 62, Nos. 1-2* 47-65.

Thesis

Mejos, Dean Edward. 2009. *The Personalism of Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II: Redeeming the Person through Love*. PhL Thesis: University of Santo Tomas.

Consciousness in a Time of War: A Review of Roque J. Ferriols' *Sulyáp sa Aking Pinanggalingan*

Matthew Dominic D. Dimapawi

University of Santo Tomas | dominicdimapawi21@gmail.com

Roque Ferriols' *Sulyáp sa Aking Pinanggalingan* is an autobiography dedicated to articulating the experiences and reflections of the author during the perilous time of World War II in the Philippines. It could be said that the text, in reference to its title and perspective, was written for two possible reasons: (1) as a personal form of meditation and the revisiting of the author's experiences, (2) and as a way of acquainting the readers to the mode of consciousness during such a desolate time. The latter reason shall be given more emphasis than the former in this review as to further investigate how man thrives through the dangers of war viz. how they consciously respond to the daunting exposure to dread, death, and the search for hope.

As one reads the book, one is immediately introduced to the mood of Ferriols' autobiographical writing—one that espouses existential and phenomenological themes. This can be seen in the page before the table of contents, having for itself an introductory statement that proclaims: “Ang hindi marunong lumingón sa kanyang pináanggalíngan ay hindi makararating sa kanyang parorónan” (He who does not know how to reflect upon his past shall fail to reach his destination).³¹⁹ This quotation straightforwardly stresses the essentiality of retrospective meditation in accomplishing future aspirations heavily founded on the present and progressive deeds and habits. On the one hand, it echoes a phenomenological tone in man's act of reflecting upon her historical development, the internalization of what *was* transitioning and influencing what *is*. The existential tone, on the other hand, resonates in man's capacity to creatively and authentically shape himself into a self-determined individual; one who is not held captive against himself by material or spiritual forces. Thus, implying that man is more able to determine the direction of where he wishes to go, actively navigating through the troughs and crests of his wavelength-like life, if he understands—even if partially—how he traversed through time. History, therefore, serves as a benchmark and compass for human unfolding, an event one can only interpret in retrospect—always different at one point in life and in another—an unchanging reality that may aid him in actualizing his aspirations through the reevaluation of his disposition.³²⁰

³¹⁹ Roque J. Ferriols, *Sulyáp sa Aking Pinanggalingan* ed. Leovino Garcia (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2016).

³²⁰ Moreover, one should also consider the reality that some may reach such ends but find little fulfillment; a lifetime felt as inauthentic.

This intertwining of themes remains constant throughout Ferriols' narration and is evident in his writing style. Two significant—and, in my opinion, the most striking—chapters of the book are greatly bathed in such themes, having been portrayed in a metaphorical style of writing. These chapters are *Paghabandog*³²¹ and *Exaltatio Crusis*. The former chapter is where Ferriols starts the book with an account of the passing of Gusting³²² and his reflection on human consciousness as compared to that of animals—expressing his initial disdain for a higher degree of awareness, but then reconsidering it as that which is the noblest of human existence; to know and be one with everything that is. Here, one is exposed to this phenomenological identification with another object, in this case, the consciousness of a chicken in contrast to that of a man's consciousness. It was through his meditation of an outside existence did his consciousness move out from himself back to himself, granting him the realization that the beauty of his higher degree of consciousness is that he can endeavor to be one with the universe and, in turn, have the universe exist within him as he apprehends who he is. This idea is later fitted to a bigger and broader view in *Exaltatio Crusis*.³²³ In this chapter, the young Ferriols, and 'Br. Pat Ceballos journey across a silent Manila to meet Dr. Gonzales.' Such silence is later broken by *pung pung pung*'s, *PUNG*'s, and *tak tak tak*'s. These sounds represent Ferriols' creativity in his craft; invoking the readers to think of an innocent mental image that represents a heavy and morbid reality. The first sound signifies the exchange of airborne warfare, specifically machine gun fire. The second is the earth-shaking power of anti-air emplacements. And the third sound is the haste of people running away from danger as they seek safety.

Taken for their possible metaphorical significance, these sounds underline the experience of their time; attuning the reader to the thought that, even in times of peril and dissonance, man seeks—through the power of their creativity and humor—various ways to mollify this unsettling grief. They set themselves within such grounds and consciously merge themselves with this environment. Man intentionally does so in order for him to further understand war as it is, then view it differently as to not fall into the crippling effects of disarray and death, that in times of war one can see death as the beginning of one's spiritual prayer in the afterlife, and that the sounds of war are transformed into human sounds to render such harsh reality as tolerable and not beyond human understanding.

Moreover, it is also through this reformation of views does man positions himself in a world of otherness, that he is not isolated from these realities and takes part—when in the presence of others—in the realization of its greater idea.³²⁴ This gives a person a sense of hope, to pursue, despite

³²¹ Ferriols, *Sulyáp sa Aking Pinanggalíngan*, 2-3.

³²² Ferriols, *Sulyáp sa Aking Pinanggalíngan*, 2. Ferriols expresses his reflection of Gusting's death in a striking manner: "Sabado noong inilibing namin si Gusting. Namatay siya noong Miyerkules. Noong Martes isang araw lamang ang nalalabi sa kanyang buhay... Balang araw parami nang parami ang nalalabi sa kanyang buhay. Ang mahirap sa tao ay kailangan niyang mamatay." This alludes to man's existential fear of death and that he, with such fear, is always plagued and conscious of its presence. This acquaintance with death foreshadows the next chapters and the carried grief in its knowledge and experience.

³²³ Ferriols, *Sulyáp sa Aking Pinanggalíngan*, 110-112.

³²⁴ Ferriols, *Sulyáp sa Aking Pinanggalíngan*, 111. In this chapter, Ferriols talks to a person inside the Post Office building as they were seeking refuge from the battle taking place: "Tinanong niya, "Father, saan ang parokya ninyo?" Sabi ko, "Hindi pa ako pari, nag-aaral ako maging paring heswita. Ang parokya ko, bago pumasok ng seminaryo, ay Espirito Santo na nasa kanto ng Tayuman at Avenida Rizal." Parang lumiwanag ang kanyang mukhâ.

perilous odds, the dreams he has whether it is for peace, survival, or love. Such hopefulness is given greater depth when one reflects on what he has traversed and garnered, like the memory and thought of someone waiting for you at home or the fortitude to keep one's word or mission when recalling the need for God's presence to be felt in a time of death and hell incarnated. These sentiments inspire a person to continuously unfold for oneself and, most importantly, for others.

Concerning the overall reach of the book, it is a text for readers to reflect upon, to establish an understanding of history and the contemporary age. Indeed, there is a stark contrast between the past and today, but it is precisely by this historical distance can a sense of responsibility for self and society be fostered, and that knowledge of the past allows us to construct a more intricate and relational present. Learning is a humbling process if one permits himself to reflect upon everyday experiences regularly. It is to look once and look over again to see truths that were not seen at first glance. It is the act of acknowledging one's indebtedness to history in the development of oneself that the ideas and beliefs that we hold now are not presuppositionless. Thus, we are bound to be struck by the thought that our past, as it haunts, plagues, and vexes our minds, are not as crude and cruel as we have once perceived them.

As a conclusion, it would have to be demanded from the reader to read and feel the text deeply as to realize more significant and more personal reflections on what is said in the text; a gaze at moths and flies.³²⁵

“Aba, iyon rin ang parokya ko.” This further posits the idea that it is in establishing a relationship with the world do we find ourselves building connections with other people. It is in being conscious of others, whether of a moment, community, or place, do we find a sense of belongingness with all those connected to them. Hence, a return to the idea proposed in chapter one where man's consciousness allows him to embrace the world and be one with it.

³²⁵ Ferriols, *Sulyáp sa Aking Pinanggalangan*, 18-21, 111. Ferriols learns lessons from the moths that bother them as they work and pray. This connotes the idea, in relation to my review and use of the metaphor, that our origins and past journeys can be a bothersome memory, hence, the need to keep an understanding eye and tolerate attitude towards future challenges. "Brother, parang mga langaw" is a sentence stated by Bro. Pat Ceballos as he saw the war rage on above them. This figuratively portrays how our understanding of things can be as humorous and straightforward as flies but are nonetheless significant sources or ways of appreciating or unearthing the significance of event or reflection.