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EDITOR'S NOTES

The May 2011 issue contains five articles—two in aesthetics and one each in African philosophy, philosophy of culture, and philosophy and animal rights—a book review, book note, and some book notices. The contributors come from different places—Italy, South Africa, Malaysia, Nigeria, and the Philippines.

Omotade Adegbinbin identifies in his paper, “*Ifá* and the development crisis in Africa: A hermeneutico-philosophical study,” three oft-repeated versions on African development crisis, namely, (1) European institutional framework, (2) colonialism and slavery, and (3) the African culture itself. He rejects these versions and attributes the development problems more to a leadership crisis and the lack of value commitment of the people. While affirming culture as indispensable to development, he introduces the *Ifá* philosophy that includes the commitment to harmonize the value orientations of both the leaders and the led for a truly meaningful African development.

In the first article on aesthetics, Lok Chong Hoe looks into the question as to whether moral issues must always override aesthetic considerations. His paper on “Environmental aesthetics...” distinguishes between the aesthetic and the practical approaches to environmental protection. The aesthetic approach takes environmental protection as an end-in-itself, that is, beauty for its own sake, or as the common saying goes, “Art for art’s sake.” The practical approach, however, takes environmental protection as a means to an end, that is to say, “the protection of present and future generations...from harm and destruction.” Whether there is a way out of this dilemma is Hoe’s core discussion in the paper.

In the second article on aesthetics, Feorillo Petronilo Demeterio III looks into the controversy about Carlo J. Caparas’s selection as Philippine National Artist. His paper on “Conflict of aesthetic systems...” tries to contextualize Caparas’s works on comics and films within the various aesthetic theories—the traditional, modern, pseudomodern, patronage, and postmodern. Demeterio concludes that the insertion to an existing list of Caparas’s name by the Philippine President was an error and notes the conversion of the aesthetic discourse to a legal one as a case was filed in the Supreme Court questioning the legality of so-called “presidential insertion.”

Mashuq Ally, in “Acknowledging the Other: A multidimensional analysis of race and identity,” argues that the recognition of ethnoracial “difference” lends to a diversity that makes a multidisciplinary approach necessary in understanding racism. While focusing on individual racism in relation to moral issues, the paper explores the various implications of racial identification and makes suggestions on how otherness can be appreciated and acknowledged within the South African setting.

Animals are human or nonhuman. In the paper, "Human and nonhuman animals: Equal rights or duty of respect?" Wilfried Maurice Albert Vanhoutte contends that in the current "rediscovery of Nature," the classical anthropocentric concept of man has been reexamined so as to include other animals. How should animals, especially those affiliated with humans, be treated? Do nonhuman animals have equal rights with humans? Do the former have feelings worthy of human respect? The answers could be varied depending upon one's personal idiosyncrasies.

The book review by Dennis de Vera examines the merits and demerits of *Essentials of logic* (2007 edition) of Irving Copi and Carl Cohen with Daniel Flage. The book is a very good introduction to advanced deductive (both Aristotelian and symbolic) and inductive logic for philosophy and mathematics majors. It has minor errors which can be rectified in the next edition. Logical reasoning involves the development of mental skills at arriving conclusions faster with few or complicated premises. The various exercises provide just that opportunity for a patient would-be logician.

Giacomo Borbone presents in a positive note *The courage of doing philosophy: Essays presented to Leszek Nowak*, edited by Jerzy Brzezinski and others. Among the important ideas in this book is Nowak's critique of metaphysical positivism and its replacement with metaphysical unitarianism that includes attributivism, negativism, and the possible-worlds hypothesis. For Nowak, we are directly in contact with the object's attributes, recognize the reality of the negative, and entertain the possibilities of many worlds.

The May issue of the journal lists the activities of the Philippine National Philosophical Research Society (PNPRS), the Philosophical Association of Philosophy (PAP), and the Philosophical Association of Northern Luzon (PANL). A list of PNPRS officers and members for 2010 is also included.

Rolando M. Gripaldo
Editor

IFÁ AND THE DEVELOPMENT CRISIS IN AFRICA: A HERMENEUTICO- PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY

Omotade Adegbindin
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Today there exists the colonial story that the institutional framework within which the African leaders and other elites in power were attempting to solve the problems of development in Africa was European in origin and, therefore, could not douse the enormity of the crisis of development. As part of the colonial story, some people have also blamed the crisis of development in Africa on slavery and colonialism which, in their view, had serious damaging effects on indigenous structures of economic, social, and political organizations. There is also in contemporary Africa a resurgence of the view that African culture has been a stumbling block to development. Those who subscribe to this view are of the opinion that Africans refuse to adopt a rational approach to economic and socio-political organization which, to say the least, is in consonance with a complete lack of critical stance in respect of local values. This paper jettisons the cultural dimensions of development, stressing the indispensability of a people's culture in any conceivable development process. It looks beyond the colonial story and predicates the crisis of development in Africa on the complicity of African leaders (the State) and lack of consensual value commitment on the part of the citizens. It shows how Ifá as a complete philosophy has the prospect of harmonizing the state and the citizen towards the realization of genuine and meaningful development in Africa.

INTRODUCTION: IFÁ AND “DEVELOPMENT” IN CONTEXT

Ifá can be used to describe a system of divination and also to refer to the Yoruba god of wisdom. As god, *Ifá* requires “a form of worship undertaken by *Ifá* devotees as well as a compendium of performances including praise singing” (Taiwo 2004, 304). But there are a number of people who hold the view that *Ifá* is nothing other than the received instructions from *Òrúnmìlà*, the Yorùbá god of wisdom. In other words, this set of people are of the view that *Ifá* cannot be used in place of *Òrúnmìlà* to refer to the Yoruba god of wisdom. E. M. Lijadu (1923, 10) supports this position when he insists that *Ifá* refers only to “the word issued by *Òrúnmìlà* during divination.” Adebowale Akintola belongs to the same camp as Lijadu. He (1999, 1) explains:

What is universally known as, and called, *Ifà* is, simply put, the philosophy of, or wisdom divinely revealed to, *Òrúnmìlà*. In other words, it is the body of primordial or fundamental knowledge concerning life, and which [is] originally derived from *Òrúnmìlà*.

However, among the practising *babaláwo* (*Ifà* priests) who are the custodians of the received instructions from *Òrúnmìlà*, the general opinion is that *Ifà* and *Òrúnmìlà* can be used interchangeably to refer to the Yorùbá deity of wisdom. This view also gains currency among the native Yorùbá speakers. Besides, there is textual evidence in *Ifà* oral text¹ which brings an end to the perceived controversy over the meaning of *Ifà*. In *Ifà* oral text or literary corpus, there are 16 basic and 256 derivative figures. The 256 derivative figures are divided into two parts, namely, the major categories known as *Ojú Odù* which are 16 in number and the minor categories known as *Omo Odù* or *Àmúlù Odù* which are 240. The 256 figures or *Odù* produce "all the possible combinations of the sixteen principal or senior apostles and the two hundred and forty second-tier apostles (the amulu-odus)" (Akintola 1999, 14).

In this paper, I go beyond mere ethnological discussions and structural analysis of *Ifà*² to deliver *Ifà* as a complete philosophy which has the prospect of providing a firm ground for the resolution of some of the pressing problems confronting contemporary societies. Sophie Oluwole is a representative of most of us in the field of philosophy and, starting off with the critical spirit of philosophy, suggests that the 256 *Odù* can rightly be regarded as certain Yorùbá philosophers and intellectuals who flourished in the past with their respective teachings. In Oluwole's (1996, 5) candid opinion, therefore, "the philosopher's priority is to identify the primary concern of the authors of *Ifà* verses—an attempt to characterize the goal the thinkers wish to attain through thought." She also attempts to show that the works of these ancient philosophers have peculiarities and traits found in the works of certain Western philosophers. According to her (1996, 13):

Some *Ifà* verses are tense and harsh, while others are soft and more humane. Some verse in one *Odù* contradict verses in others. If we were to compare the mathematical rigour of Pythagoras' works with the humanistic concerns of Socrates, we will come up with some distinctions similar to the ones drawn here.

Following Oluwole, therefore, we propose that the *Ifà* corpus is an encyclopedia, "the works of several individual thinkers within the same intellectual tradition." Let us now briefly look at the African own idea of "development."

For many, especially those who subscribe to European patterns and standards, the term "development" "is coterminous with a buoyant economy or technological advancement" (Kudadjie 1992, 207). In this sense, the path to development is seen as "consisting in establishing industries, constructing new buildings and roads, and laying a whole host of infrastructure." For those who believe that development is coterminous with technological advancement, therefore, the indices used to measure a country's development cannot be sought outside the precinct of technological advancement. This implies that

The indices used to measure a country's development are such things as the types of building, highways, forms of transportation and communication, the number of high-technology industries, sources of energy, forms of entertainment, etc. (Kudadjie 1992, 207)

Here, however, we consider the above conception of development as narrow and inadequate for it only emphasizes what Kudadjie (1992, 208) calls the "quantitative" and "external" aspects of development at the expense of the more "qualitative" and "internal" aspects of development. This paper puts a premium on the latter, for it jettisons the self-seeking of the Western way and emphasizes "the humanistic and spiritual components of development such as humaneness, integrity, justice, freedom of the individual, harmony, community, self-fulfilment, contentment, etc."

PERSPECTIVES ON THE DEVELOPMENT CRISIS IN AFRICA

Scholars of different persuasions have over the years identified many factors that militate against development in Africa. Some have attributed the failure of the African state, especially in economic and socio-political development, to economic factors, ideological and political factors, as well as religious and cultural factors. Some have distilled these factors to the cultural dimensions of development, the experience of slavery and colonialism and the leadership problem or, to put the last item in its right perspective, the radical disjuncture in value orientation between the state and the citizens. Thus, it is important that we examine each of these factors and see the one that has the most consequential bearing on the problem of development in contemporary Africa.

On the cultural dimensions of development, there is in contemporary Africa a resurgence of the view that African culture has been a stumbling block to development. Those who hold this view are of the opinion that Africans refuse to adopt a rational approach to economic and socio-political organization which, of course, is in consonance with a complete lack of a critical stance with respect to local values. They argue that the fundamental reason why the continent has deviated from the common development norm is African culture which, following Daniel Etounga-Manguelle (see Odhiambo 2002, 4), has as its core "apathy, a large dose of fatalism, a peculiar relation to the notion of time, the insignificance of the individual in the face of the community, a tendency to 'convivial' excesses, the primacy of conflict avoidance, and the weight of the irrational." Mamadou Lamine Diallo (cited in Odhiambo 2002, 4) shares the same opinion with Etounga-Manguelle when he attributes lack of development in Africa to "the absence of the notion of the individual merit in Africa, social success being generally explained with a collective perspective, involving at times reference to the use of the occult." What can be gleaned from the foregoing is the premium put by Diallo and Etounga-Manguelle on cultural features as determinants of development.

Interestingly, however, Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Deloz do not see "a large dose of fatalism" and "the absence of the notion of individual merit" as having any negative or adverse consequences for development in Africa. According to

them, fatalism in this context is contrary to the meaning given to it by Daniel Etounga-Manguelle, best understood as “a rational response to the huge degree of uncertainty faced by most of the continent’s population” (Chabal and Deloz 1999, 130). They add that the insignificance of the individual in the face of community is “itself the outcome of realistic appraisal of what constitutes the best guarantee of survival in the face of a perennially threatening outside world.” B. A. Ogot is in the same camp with Chabal and Deloz. Stressing the indispensability of a people’s culture in any conceivable development process, Ogot identifies three distinct elements in the culture of a society, namely, ideas, aesthetic forms, and values. According to Ogot (1999a, 320), a people’s habits and beliefs are a product of ideas, while visual arts, music, poetry, and so on, constitute the aesthetic forms. He explains that “the values of a culture are formed by the interaction between ideas and aesthetic norms of conduct, standard of behavior, sources of faith and vision.” He makes his position clearer when he (1999a, 320) posits that

Of these elements of culture, values have the most important role: To develop wisdom and discrimination in a specific culture and provide the dynamism for action and change as well as imparting vitality and quality to the life of the people. Culture thus embraces the humanities and the sciences and relationships between these. Culture is the linchpin of a people’s identity... We therefore need—and need badly—our value carriers who can discover for us common denominator values.

The above excerpt no doubt underscores the synergy that exists between a people’s culture and development; this synergy illuminates the fact that “development is a historical process deeply rooted in the cultural values and psychological systems of individual nations and communities” (Odhiambo 2002, 5). Elsewhere Ogot (1999b, 138) remarks:

People do not live only by economics, public order or science and technology. Before these, they have their concepts and beliefs (religious, ideological or philosophic), they have their value systems which define the priorities and qualities of social relations; they have their attitudes, aspirations, hopes, fears, expressions and manifestations of ethical and traditional code of conduct... Culture in this way becomes a cohesive factor in building human societies.

Thus, it makes sense at this juncture to jettison the assumption that African culture is a stumbling block to development. If, in the words of Ogot (2001, 5), culture “means the ability to structure a social system and to ensure its spread,” then the cultural heritage of a people should rightly be regarded as the point of departure for dynamic development. Given the fact that culture and development are intimately related, we should look beyond the cultural dimensions of development in explaining the problem of development of Africa.

Apart from the cultural dimensions of development, there exists the colonial story that development has eluded Africa because “Western partisan modes of

thought, social organization, and development have been foisted on African peoples" (Vilakazi 1974, 45). This gives rise to the contention in some quarters that development problems in Africa "result from the West's imposition of industrialization within bourgeois social forms." In other words, the failure of the African state concerning development is blamed upon the people's inability to consider socialism "as a possible, workable alternative to the existing capitalist structure of Western societies." This means that the institutional framework within which the African leaders and other elites in power were attempting to solve the problems of development was European in origin and by extension, was capitalist-inspired. According to Absalom Vilakazi (1974, 46):

African economies were distorted and oriented towards serving European needs. Having been conquered by European powers, Africa was not free to develop its natural and human resources the way Europe had. And the capitalist exploitation of Africa from abroad rendered Africa incapable of producing its own capitalist class. Thus Europe continued to develop at a fast pace while Africa was forced into a state of underdevelopment.

Ifá is not opposed to ideological borrowing or a proper cross-fertilization and cultural enrichment of Africa and the world; but *Ifá*, stressing the strength of Vilakazi's (1974, 49) point, would not approve of a situation whereby the West would "press their own ideological and institutional preferences for Africa and the Africans." *Ifá* buttresses this point in *Okanran-sodè*,³ a minor *odù*, when it says that *Eni a bíwon-bí ì wuwon, teni eléni ní yáwon lára* ("People often gullibly adopt other people's ideological preferences without first considering their own"). This expression is perhaps in line with Kwame Gyekye's assertion that the capitalist development is an alien tradition whose imposition will have a damaging effect on the self-perceptions and understandings of the Africans who receive it. Gyekye (1997, 225) also believes that Africans will "find themselves confused in the pursuit of the practices and institutions of the imposed tradition." As a matter of fact, there exists in Africa certain fundamental indices—like the structure of the family, social stratification, and traditional African political structure—which remain a pointer to the fact that capitalist relations have no place to thrive in addressing the problems of development in Africa.

As part of the colonial story, many scholars have also attributed the problems of development in Africa to slavery and colonialism which Africans experienced. Let us recall here that colonization, in combination with the trans-Atlantic trade, was most probably a product of the theory of polygenesis championed by eighteenth-century philosophers like Voltaire, Rousseau, and Hume. The theory of polygenesis gained more currency through Charles Darwin's work *The origin of species* (1859), where Darwin showed how different species evolved in relation to biology and environment. In Darwin's work, we see a hierarchy of human species which places the whites on top, followed by Asians, and then Africans, Native Americans, and Australian Aborigines, who are considered as the inferior races. Through this Darwinian racial thesis the Europeans were able to justify the colonization of Africa

and this also gave rise to their historical claims about the continent in relation to the European concept of progress and civilization.

On his part, Bayo Okunade reminds us of the impact of slavery and colonialism on development in Africa. According to him (1998, 139), the concerted force of slavery and colonialism “undermined and, in most cases, destroyed indigenous structures of social and political organizations thereby truncating the process of development in Africa.” In this century, however, the colonial story seems to be a stale one, especially in the face of the postcolonial enormity of the African predicaments. The point to stress here is that the complicity of African leaders and lack of consensual value commitment on the part of the citizens make worse the already precarious situation and prevent much needed changes in Africa’s economic and socio-political milieu. Thus, Okunade (1998, 139) argues:

It should be noted...that while it is the case that slavery and colonialism had adverse consequences for African development in addition to destroying the self-confidence and self-esteem of Africans, they cannot be regarded as sufficient conditions for the continent’s predicament. There is much in contemporary Africa to show that we need to look beyond slavery and colonialism in explaining Africa’s predicament.

Bayo Okunade’s point does not garble a fact of Africa’s historical process that the colonial legacy to a large extent determined the shape of things to come. The logic in this is that the foundation for postcolonial instability in Africa was laid in the colonialists’ carefully scripted politico-cultural “pre-text.” If we follow Okunade and look beyond the colonial story in explaining Africa’s predicament, then Talcott Parson’s definition of a society is instructive here. For Talcott Parson (1971, 8), a society is “a social system characterized by the highest level of self-sufficiency.” Parson goes further to say that “a society can be self-sufficient only insofar as it is generally able to ‘count on’ its members’ performances to contribute adequately to social functioning.” “Social functioning” here carries the same weight as “development.” When “social functioning” is understood as “development,” it becomes obvious that postcolonial African societies are not self-sufficient, not socially stable, since the state cannot “count on” the members’ contribution to social functioning. One fundamental reason for this postcolonial disorder is the radical disjuncture in the value orientation between the citizens and the leadership as regards the function and development of the African states. Though the cultural dimensions and the colonial story have been used by many scholars to explain the problems of development in Africa, it is our submission here that development has continued to elude Africa because of the radical disjuncture in the value orientation between the citizens and the leadership (the state). In other words, the fact of the mistrust that exists between the people and the leadership explains the problems of development in Africa. More elaborately, the African states have deviated from assuming the classical status of the state which, according to Aristotle in *Politics*, is an association founded with a view to securing the good life for the citizens. Thus, African states have failed in living up to the expectations of the citizens; in fact, “the basic functions of government as defined by the expectations of most members of the society”

(Lipset 1959, 86) have been ignored by the leadership. This attitude of the leadership in most African states has sown a seed of dissension between the leadership and the citizens who often see the state as responsible for the provision of "the essential foundations for the pursuit of public benefits" (Lipset 1991, 92). Rather than restoring this positive view of the state by the citizens, African leaders focus attention on maintaining law-and-order states that will whip the people into mechanical unity and keep the elites' hold on power. On their part, the citizens often express their indignation by not acknowledging "the institutions of the state as the most appropriate and, by implication, worthy of support" (Uroh 1998, 95). Chris Uroh explicates further on what Eghosa E. Osaghae (2004, 13) calls "people-government divergence thesis."⁴ Says Uroh (1998, 96):

It is thought possible for citizens with a negative view of the state to comply with the directives of those in power. But, such compliance would remain essentially prudential. That is, they will obey out of the fear of the consequences of doing otherwise. When a situation like this arises, the state has, almost inevitably, to rely on force to get its directives carried out. This creates a situation in which the citizens would always want, as much as possible, to avoid the state and its agents. In some other extreme circumstances, depending on the resources at their disposal as well as the degree of risk they are ready to take, they plot to subvert the state.

The salient point we are making here is that the state and the citizens are always divided on economic and socio-political agenda which are supposedly meant to engender developmental projects in Africa. To tackle the African development crisis, there is an urgent need to harmonize the state and the citizens whose main aim is to subvert the state while regarding "its development agents as hostile forces to be evaded, cheated, or thwarted as opportunities permit" (Ake 1991, 36). Harmonizing the state and the citizens becomes an imperative, for we believe that the success of the African state in carrying out its economic and socio-political agendas—which are supposedly meant to engender developmental projects—depends largely on the perception of the people about the economic and socio-political sincerity of the leadership. Contemporary scholarship and the numerous published volumes on the crisis of development in Africa have maintained—though looking at the issue from different perspectives—that the radical disjuncture between the state and the citizens is a pointer to the fact that the African state has failed to institutionalize the ideals of democracy. This is probably why Lipset (1994, 3) emphasizes the centrality of political culture, which means that democracy "requires a supportive culture, the acceptance by the citizenry and political elites of principles underlying freedom of speech, media, assembly, religion, of the rights of opposition parties, of the rule of law, and the like." The popular argument is that the failure of the ruling elites to entrench the principles underlying these indices of political culture affects the prospects for the institutionalization of democracy in Africa. Having reduced the problem of development in Africa to the failure of the African state to institutionalize the ideals of democracy, we seem to have a convenient juncture at which to begin the examination of the intervention of *Ifá* on the crisis of development in Africa.

IFÁ ON THE DISJUNCTURE BETWEEN THE CITIZEN AND THE STATE

How does *Ifá* harmonize the leadership and the people in traditional Yorùbá society? Or, put differently, do we have in traditional economic and socio-political system of the Yorùbá what passes for “consensual value commitment” that could forestall the radical disjuncture in value orientation between the state and the people and enhance development in Africa? Do the Yorùbá system of government and its socio-political ideas have any relevance to development in contemporary Africa? Or can viable political structures be forged from our understanding of the traditional Yorùbá system of government?

Let us begin our response to the questions enumerated above by stating that the idea of the state in traditional Yorùbá society, like some other traditional African societies,⁵ presupposes that the Yorùbá lived in highly organized society, though the Yorùbá conception of the state is best understood from the theocratic point of view. Contrary to the scientific opinion of social contract theorists that the state emerged out of a voluntary agreement made amongst individuals (Heywood 1977, 67), the general belief among the Yorùbá is that the state was created by the will or ordinance of *Olódùmarè* (God). This is reflected in the various creation myths, some of which we have analysed in some areas of this study. We would recall the story in *Òfún Méjì* about how *Olódùmarè* sent the divinities (as his “ministers”) to come down and found an ordered world for human beings to live in. Thus, the understanding of government—as that which helps in the making and implementing state policies and perpetuating the state’s existence—is central to the culture and civilization of the Yorùbá. According to J. A. Atanda (1996, 19):

The Yorùbá evolved a monarchical system of government in which an individual with the title *Oba* (king) became the embodiment of the state. Both in the theory and concept of his position, as well as in his appearance, the *Oba* was invested with a lot of authority and surrounded with an aura of dignity. He had supreme authority in the state and his word was taken to be law by the generality of the people. Hence, his attributes as *Oba*, *Aláse*, *Èkejì òrìsà* (king, ruler and second in command to the gods).

The above excerpt can be mistaken to mean that the *Oba* in traditional Yorùbá society “was not accountable to human beings” and that his authority over his people was absolute. But the structure of the Yorùbá traditional system of government is such that the *Oba*, though he is believed to be divinely appointed, cannot exercise absolute authority over his people. We should note here, however, that when we say of an *Oba* as being “divinely appointed,” we simply mean that the selection or appointment of an *Oba* lies not only in the hands of the kingmakers (as is the case in most societies in the world), but also in the final pronouncement of *Ifá* whose significance in governance cannot be overemphasized. *Ifá*, we have repeatedly claimed in this study, is endowed with timeless wisdom and knowledge of human affairs. Thus, its pronouncement, especially in matters affecting the people and

society, is taken as a divine order to be honored and this invariably makes the institution of kingship to be properly acknowledged by the Yorùbá. However, for the legitimization of the kingship and the sustenance of good governance in traditional Yorùbá society, the kingmakers or the council of chiefs also played very important role which further highlights the fact that the *Oba* in traditional Yorùbá society was not an absolute ruler. Atanda (1996, 19-20) sheds more light on this:

In practice...the *Oba* was not an absolute ruler. He administered his state with the advice and active involvement of a council of chiefs known generally as *Ìgbimò* or *ilú*, which may have specific names from kingdom to kingdom.... The chiefs in the *Ìgbimò* were themselves representatives of lineages and other interest groups in the society. They, therefore, stood as the voice of the people. The *Oba* could not make or take major policy-decisions without the advice and consent of his *Ìgbimò*.

Besides the point made above, the *Oba*'s authority was often censored by the council of chiefs and limited by certain constitutional devices and taboos which, according to Atanda, "included devices for impeachment and removal, usually by assassination in any insurrection if the *Oba* violated his oath of office, betrayed his sacred trust or desecrated his highly exalted office in any way" (Atanda 1996, 20). In this way, the Yorùbá system of government evinced effective checks and balances, a clear affirmation of "the question of whether or not the indigenous political system exhibited democratic features" (Gyekye 1992, 242). At this point, it is most desirable that we discuss the conditions for the selection or appointment of an *Oba* in traditional Yorùbá society.

Even though the Yorùbá evolved a monarchical system of government which put a premium on lineage considerations, an aspiring *Oba* was expected to possess some proven qualities of good leadership. Thus, on their part, the kingmakers always ensured that an aspiring *Oba* had no physical deformity or blemish. The logic behind this is that an *Oba* was expected to preside over various matters affecting his people and society, and only a man with good health and vigor could live up to this task. Where two or more candidates were vying to rule, the kingmakers used their initiative and their power as the "voice of the people" to ensure that an aspiring *Oba* had no criminal record within and outside his community, was not high-handed, greedy or sacrilegious. The most historical means of ensuring that the *Oba* would hold power in trust for the people was oath-taking which is a true reflection of a whole series of injunctions that defined the political authority of an Akan ruler (Gyekye 1992, 243). Though all the Yorùbá gods do not approve of such bad characters as high-handedness, greediness, gross irreverence toward something sacred, and so on, it is only in *Ifá* oral text that qualities of good leadership are well-pronounced. This is why a council of chiefs cannot be said to be complete without the membership of an *Ifá* priest whose main "protocol" in the traditional council was to read out to the council (or, at times, the general public) the position of *Ifá* on whatever decision the council or the *Oba* embarked upon. Though the view of every chief (as a lineage head) was respected in the council usually by virtue of his age and genealogical proximity, the council regarded the words or pronouncement of the *Ifá* priest as

final in very crucial matters. Thus, the *Ifá* priest occupied the exalted position of a spiritual leader in the council.

In his attempt to liberate African philosophy from what he refers to as “shackles of absolutism and dogmatism associated with the Western philosophical tradition,” K. A. Owolabi (2001, 154) uses the hermeneutic-narrative approach to show how *Ifá* in traditional Yorùbá society respected the institution of democratic leadership. Owolabi (2001, 160) assumes the position of “a hermeneutic scholar from the Yorùbá socio-cultural background” and, with a sharp hermeneutic insight, identifies in an *Ifá* mythological narrative certain leadership qualities an aspiring *Oba* or leader must possess. Interestingly, Owolabi’s intellectual endeavor is no doubt a distillation of a verse of *Òfún-nagbè* which reads:

Òkánjúwà èéjé won ó mò ó pín
Eni apá tó sí, won a fún won nítan;
Eni àyà tó sí, won a fún won léyìn;
Eni itan tó sí, ibi kòmúòkun eegun dede orí eran ni won fi í fún won;
A díá fèni iwájú tí ó deni ikeyìn;
À fàì mòwà wù won ni
Béni iwájú ijó sí bá deni ikeyìn
À fàì mò 'wà wù won ni.⁶

Greediness drifted them away from fair-sharing (of cow)
 He who deserved the forelimb they gave the thigh;
 He who deserved the brisket got the hump;
 He who deserved the thigh got the bony head;
 Divination was undertaken for the most senior
 who would become the most junior,
 It’s their lack of moral rectitude
 If the most senior became the most junior
 It’s their lack of moral rectitude.

Ofun Méjì was the most senior of the sixteen principal *Odù* in the distant past, while *Ejì Ogbè* was the youngest. According to the above verse, there came a time when their community needed to have a crowned king who would manage the affairs of the community with wisdom, consummate firmness, equity, and fairness. To avoid undue rivalry and a sense of dissension in their ranks, the sixteen *Odù* decided to embark on a journey to visit *Olódùmarè* (the Almighty) who they expected would use his most divine wisdom to select the best candidate from among them. During their long journey, they came upon a big snake, killed it, and distributed it amongst themselves into sixteen places. They gave *Ejì Ogbè* the head of the snake, knowing well that the head is the most bony part of the reptile. But *Ejì Ogbè* took his share without complaining.

At last, the sixteen *Odù* reached *Olódùmarè*’s palace and, in *Olódùmarè*’s court, narrated their ordeal concerning their choice of a capable leader. Having listened to them, *Olódùmarè* promised to meet his divine counsel on the matter the following day and ordered the palace attendants to entertain his guests with a

slaughtered cow which the guests should share among themselves. *Ófún Méjì* and others who were close to him in rank shared the cow into sixteen places. Again, it transpired that they gave *Ejì Ogbè* the head of the cow as his share. He took this unattractive part of the cow without protest and ate it.

In *Olódùmarè*'s court, the following day, this "metaphorical discourse on the qualities of an appropriate leader" (Owolabi 2001, 160) was brought to a logical conclusion. In his court, *Olódùmarè* called on the most senior *Odù* to narrate the event that took place on their long journey and how they had shared the *ehinlá* (cow) which he gave them. Oblivious of what *Olódùmarè* was up to, *Ófún Méjì* related the event that took place on their journey and explained how they had shared the snake they killed and the cow that *Olódùmarè* gave them as gift. After the revelation that *Ejì Ogbè* received the head of the snake and that of the cow, *Olódùmarè* then counselled that *Èjì Ogbe*, the youngest, be made the king of his community. A point of interest here is that the sharing of the cow is central to Owolabi's hermeneutic interpretation of this narrative. According to Owolabi (2001, 160-61):

The unwillingness of the Almighty to impose a leader on the people can be interpreted to mean that the consent of the led is very important in making the leader acceptable and respected by the led. This, in a way, is an implicit endorsement of the democratic mode of choosing a leader. Furthermore, the advice that the youngest and least ambitious deserves to lead the community is, in effect, a recommendation that the leader be humble rather than powerful, and at all times willing to serve the followers. Finally and most importantly, conferring leadership on the one who, without protest, receives the least attractive part of the cow is a clear demonstration that leadership entails service and self-sacrifice, a task that only the patient, the painstaking, and the wise can undertake with success. After all...only the patient, the painstaking, and the wise can engage the head of a cow and benefit maximally from it.

Ifá enlightens further on the selection or appointment of a good leader or *Oba* in traditional society. In the case of two or more people aspiring to occupy the throne, for instance, the kingmakers—having ensured that none of the candidates was high-handed, greedy or sacrilegious—could allow a form of peaceful voting to take place. In this case, what was required of the kingmakers was to find out that the candidate was supported by the majority in the council. Usually, a candidate who was the most affluent, influential, and had the most grasp of the institution of kingship emerged as the choice of the majority. This "elimination method" in the selection of a leader or an *Oba* is supported by *Ifá*.

It is related in *Ogúndá Atóríse*⁷ that, once upon a time, *Olofin* and *Òhúntó* were both vying to become king of their kingdom. When the kingmakers met to deliberate on who was the better candidate of the two nominees, it was agreed that they should vote since the two candidates possessed proven qualities of a good leader. They both were wealthy and influential as well. But, after the peaceful voting amongst all members of the council of kingmakers, *Olófin* emerged as king and it was later revealed that he won the majority to his side because he was much older

than Òhúntó and, so, had the merit of understanding the politics of their time and the nitty-gritty of the institution of kingship than his co-aspirant.

It should be pointed out, however, that—just as we witness in modern political arena—material well-being could be used by a desperate and over-ambitious aspirant to garble the proper appointment or selection of a leader in traditional Yorùbá society. Such an aspirant could use his affluence to attract a greater number of the members of the council to his side and, at the end, make them announce him as their leader, despite a possibility of giving the people a better candidate. In *Ìrosùn Agbè, Ifá* warns that an aspirant's affluence should not be used in such a way that the kingmakers would become amenable and compromise their civic duty of selecting the most worthy candidate as king. Thus, corrupt practices (on the part of the aspirants and the kingmakers) that would see a wicked or an unworthy candidate to the throne were vehemently discouraged in traditional Yorùbá society. In *Ìrosùn Agbè, Ifá* charges both the aspirants and the kingmakers to be truthful and fair during the selection process:

*Tawo-lònà, Tawo-pápá,
A diá fún Gúnnungún tí sàkóbí Olórèé
Tawo-lònà, Tawo-pápá
A diá fún Kólíkólí tí se igbákejì rẹ
A diá fún Èlúúlú tí somo ikeyin won léjenléje
Olórèé kú, wón ní won ó fi Gúnnungún joba ...
Èlúúlú bá kọjálẹ
Ó ní Gúnnungún ò láso méjì,
Kò ye leni tí yòò joba...⁸*

Two priests, Tawo-lònà and Tawo-pápá,
Undertook divination for Gúnnungún,
the heir of Olórèé;
Tawo-lònà and Tawo-pápá
Also undertook divination for Kólíkólí,
the second child;
Also for Èlúúlú, the youngest child.
Olórèé died and Gúnnungún was to become king...
But Èlúúlú protested vehemently
And alleged that Gúnnungún was very poor
And should not be crowned king...

The above verse of *Ìrosùn Agbè* relates that once upon a time, a king called Olórèé had three sons, namely, Gúnnungún, Kólíkólí, and Èlúúlú. Having ruled his kingdom for many years, Olórèé died and, by right and tradition, Gúnnungún as the eldest son should succeed him and become king. As fate would have it, Gúnnungún was in severe poverty at his father's death and could not boast of a good raiment for his coronation if formally announced as king. Because of his penurious state, Gúnnungún showed little zeal towards becoming the king after his father. But Èlúúlú was a man of great wealth and was desperate to rule after his father. Exploiting the

weakness of his eldest brother, he decided to use his wealth to influence the kingmakers to flout tradition and make him king. He went from one kingmaker to another, offering them gifts of woven sheeting and hogshed of palm oil. To be sure of what would be the outcome of his rapacious motive, Èlùlù consulted two different *Ifá* priests who told him in succession that a ruler is not expected to assume the throne through corrupt or illegitimate means. He refused to listen to the priests and continued to pursue his heartfelt desire. The natives overtly expressed their indignation against the choice of Èlùlù as king, but the kingmakers went ahead to announce Èlùlù as the new king.

A day to Èlùlù's coronation, as was the tradition, hunters were ordered to go into the bush and trap a live deer which would be used for coronation rites. Traps were thus set in strategic places inside the bush. Two disgruntled members of the public however, used this occasion to set a trap on a legendary path that Èlùlù would take on the coronation day. Alas, on that day, with only the kingmakers and very few members of the public behind him, Èlùlù took a few steps towards the coronation platform and fell into the trap set by his adversaries. He died before anyone could save him. The kingmakers were put to great shame and later suffered acrimonious reactions from the natives who believed that corruption had drifted them away from installing the "legitimate" king.

On the one hand, the above narrative identifies corruption as a major problem of good governance. In Nigeria, for instance, the success of all the elections held in almost two decades was fraught by corrupt practices mainly on the part of the electoral officers and elites in the corridor of power. It has become the usual practice for the elites, with the electoral officers as their puppets, to impose their own candidate on the masses while overtly demonstrating their serious disdain for oppositional challenge and criticisms from the people. Though corruption has been noted to be mostly pronounced in systems built on poverty (Klitgaard 1991, 86-98), African elites are not doing any better to improve the situations in most developing countries in Africa. Rather, the elites have continued to eulogize the idea that "modern democracy is a product of the capitalist process" (Schumpeter 1950, 297) and, therefore, use their privileged access to state power and resources to enrich themselves without considering the logic of impersonal meritocratic standards in the allocation of state resources. On the other hand, the narrative emphasizes the importance of legitimacy in a democracy. Thus, it reminds us of the Weberian legitimacy theory which advocates three ways by which an authority may gain legitimacy. Max Weber (1946) mentions the "Traditional," the "Rational-legal" and the "Charismatic" ways by which an authority may gain legitimacy. Of the three ways, the significance of both the "Traditional" and the "Rational-legal" ways to good governance is implicitly shown in the narrative. The "Traditional" way, according to Weber, states that a ruler possesses authority or legitimacy by right of succession, especially in monarchical societies. And, though the constitution of the United States serves as a good example of the "Rational-legal" way, Weber (1946, 78) uses the "Rational-legal" way to describe a situation whereby "authority is obeyed because of a popular acceptance of the appropriateness of the system of rules" under which a ruler has won and held office. In this way, legitimacy serves as a matrix for the entrenchment of the ideals of democracy mentioned earlier in this section.

Of course, in the narrative, we can see how the “radius of trust” between the citizens and the leaders and effective collective participation among citizens on matters affecting the state can be jeopardized in a society where there is lack of respect for freedom of speech, rights to oppositional challenge and criticisms, the rule of law (tradition, in the narrative), and so on. The foregoing, following Kwame Gyekye (1992, 251), has shown that

ideas and values of politics such as popular will, free expression of opinion, consensus and reconciliation, consultation and conferring, the trusteeship, and hence limited, nature of political power—all of which are ingredients of the democratic idea—were to be found in the African traditions of politics and that they are, thus, by no means alien to the indigenous political cultures of African peoples.

We have strong inducements to posit here that the relevance of traditional political values and ideas to the African modern political life is enormous. Kwame Gyekye (1992, 252-53) stresses the logic of this assertion when he points out that

It is the profound appreciation of the efficacy and resilience of values, ideas, and institutions of the past that recommends them to the present age, and underpins the significance of such ebullient and euphoric utterances as “our traditions of democracy,” “our traditions of humanism,” “our traditions of hospitality,” and so on.

As a matter of fact, the disregard we have for these political values and ideas is to a large extent responsible for authoritarian politics and illegitimate seizure of political power (Gyekye 1992, 251) that throttle the realization of meaningful developmental projects in Africa. Authoritarian politics and illegitimate seizure of political power in most countries in Africa have continued to intensify the radical disjuncture in value orientation between the leadership and the led. *Ifá* explicates the possible consequences of a neglect of such traditional values and ideas in a “modern” society. According to a verse of *Òsa’gbè*:

Onisinlò, Èhinwá-sinlò
A díá fún won nílúú afeku sinba
Níjò wón gògòdògò tí wón láwon ò se t’Ifá mó
E sin-sin-sin e è féeeku
E forí sìn bí omo eku
E sin-sin-sin e è féeja
E fapá sìn bí omo eja...⁹

Onisinlò and Èhinwá-sinlò,
 Undertook divination for a community
 where rats and fish were used as sacrifice for prosperity.
 At the time when they refused to heed the warnings of Ifá,

And refused to use rats as sacrifice;
 Alas, they later suffered like the rats
 They also refused to use fish as sacrifice,
 And so suffered like fish in the seas...

Once upon a time, *Òsa'gbè* relates, the people of a Yorùbá kingdom had always obeyed the counsel of *Ifá* by governing themselves in the way of their forefathers. In those good days the people only offered rats and fish as sacrifice to *Olódùmarè* and *Olódùmarè*, on his part, had always honored their propitiation by making their kingdom to be exceedingly prosperous. But as "civilization" set in, the people started grumbling among themselves and began to question their old ways of putting everything in the hands of an unseen "ruler." They felt that the theocratic government under *Olódùmarè* was crude, obsolete, and mythologically-inspired and that a "modern" system of government required that they had a crowned king with whom they would be able to relate in person. When the time came for them to offer the usual sacrifice to *Olódùmarè*, the people told *Ifá* that they would prefer to have a crowned king instead. They turned deaf ears to *Ifá's* warnings and implored *Ifá* to approve of their "modern" system of government. After the people had gone to their different homes waiting for the beginning of a new era, *Ifá* presented their case before *Olódùmarè* and the latter—though he sees through time—granted their wish. The people soon had a crowned king chosen from among the different clans in the kingdom. The king quickly learnt that he had almost absolute power over the people and, before he ruled for two seasons, his severity was feared by all. During his reign of utter cruelty and oppression, the people became victims of the injustice and rapacity of their ruler who had almost succeeded in turning them into his slaves. When they finally made a resolve to seek *Ifá's* counsel, *Ifá* told them that the enactment of the ancient rite of "governing" themselves was a compelling necessity if they desired to be delivered from the intolerable yoke. In other words, *Ifá* told the people to go back to the old ways of administering the affairs of their kingdom, the ways they had abandoned for the "modern" system of government.

The message of the above narrative is not coterminous with a suggestion that we should, in our own modern political life, embrace only the traditional political values and ideas at the expense of all modern political ideas. In truth, we are aware that "government in the modern world is complex, more ramifying than of yore" (Gyekye 1992, 253), but what could be gleaned from the narrative, on the one hand, is that the people should be allowed to govern themselves. A brief look at how the *Ifá* carried out his administrative and judicial functions in traditional Yoruba society will highlight the logic of this point.

In traditional Yorùbá society, administrative and judicial functions began with the *baálé* or family head who was the head of an *agbo ilé* (family compound). In an *agbo ilé*, there existed an informal type of court, where the *baálé* settled disputes among the members of his extended family "with a view to ensuring harmony and solidarity in the compound" (Atanda 1980, 22). The formal court of the *ijòyè* or ward chief followed in the administrative and judicial hierarchy. According to Atanda, the ward chief dealt with more complex problems in his ward and this explains why he "had his own *igbimò* of chiefs of appropriate titles and grades assisting him in

the administration of the ward.” Atanda (1980, 22-23) explains further on the ward chief’s court:

The court tried all civil cases involving persons belonging to the different compounds within his ward. As a formal court, it imposed punishments, mostly fines on guilty persons. Besides, the ward chief’s court conducted preliminary investigations into criminal cases, which could only be tried by the highest court in the town, that is, the court of the *Oba*, where all civil and criminal cases were finally settled.

CONCLUSION

Given the above nature of the administrative and judicial systems of government in traditional Yorùbá kingdom, in addition to the fact that the ward chiefs themselves were representatives of their different lineages (the people), it then follows logically that “the people regarded the government as their government. The idea of dichotomy between the government and the people was minimal, if it ever existed” (Atanda 1980, 23).

On the other hand, if we take *Olódùmarè* to be a sovereign ruler as implicitly depicted in the narrative, then we have an unmistakable metaphor which, employing the hermeneutic-narrative approach, translates to an admonition that an “earthly” ruler should see certain status of *Olódùmarè* as an ideal to emulate for good governance. After all, the traditional Yorùbá man believed that the king, like *Olódùmarè*, “must be a symbol of order, of provision for his well-being, and of national cohesion” (Idowu 1962, 49). This is supported by a verse of *Òwónrín Mèjì* where *Olódùmarè* is conceived as the arbiter of “The casket of well-being” (Idowu 1962, 53).

NOTES

1. In virtually all the verses of the 16 major *Odù*, *Ifá* is repeatedly used to refer to *Orunmila* and vice-versa. See, for instance, such verses as *Èjì Ogbè*, *Ìwori Meji*, *Odi Meji*, *Obara Meji* (Abimbola 1968).

2. An exploration of existing studies on *Ifá* shows a dearth of a comprehensive analysis of the philosophical relevance of *Ifá* literary corpus. Previous scholars of *Ifá*, like E. M. Lijadu (1923), J. D. Clarke (1939), William Bascom (1941; 1969), Raymond Prince (1964), and Wande Abimbola (1976), have mostly presented ethnological discussions and structural analysis of *Ifá*. They have conveyed an impression that *Ifá* is a characteristic social institution with only religious, ethnographical, and sociological significance. These studies are, however, silent on the philosophical import of the *Ifá* corpus.

3. I owe this *Ifá* verse to Chief Olanipekun Fakayode, an *Ifá* priest, in Ibadan. *Oral source* will henceforth be used to refer to this reference.

4. Osaghae (2004) points out that the citizens do not have trust in the leadership and therefore look for relevance in their ethnic enclaves whose value orientation has meaning for them.

5. The Akan of Ghana represents a good example. See Gyekye (1992, 241-55).
6. *Oral source.*
7. *Oral source.*
8. *Oral source.* Literally, Gúnungún, Kólikóli and Èlúùlú are names of certain birds, namely, Vulture, Senegalese Coucal, and Grey Plain-tain Eater, respectively. Of the three, Èlúùlú is the most attractive, with bright brown feathers; Gúnungún is the least attractive, bald-headed, and ugly.
9. *Oral source.*

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ENVIRONMENTAL AESTHETICS: MUST MORAL ISSUES ALWAYS OVERRIDE AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS?

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This paper attempts to distinguish the aesthetic approach to environmental protection from the practical approach. The practical approach has a definite goal—the protection of present and future generations of human beings from harm and destruction. Protection of the environment is therefore only a means to an end—this means that if there were alternative and less painful ways to achieve the same goal, then we might opt for those other ways to preserve humankind. The aesthetic approach, on the other hand, treats environmental protection as an end in itself. This is because certain aesthetic moods, feelings, or mental states can only be created by the objects we attend to; these objects (in this case the natural environment) are therefore unique, and their destruction must mean that we can no longer enjoy that peculiar feeling which it (and only it) will evoke.

INTRODUCTION

While practical reasons for environmental protection have a moral dimension, it may seem that aesthetic reasons that are directed to the same end do not. Nearly all practical reasons for environmental protection have, as their ultimate goal, the survival or well being of human beings (e.g., we need to prevent global warming because it can affect food production which will in turn affect human survival), and one could argue that anything that dwells on human survival and well-being must necessarily be morally significant. Aesthetic reasons for environmental protection appear to be devoid of the moral dimension because they are focused principally on pleasure (e.g., we need to preserve the Niagara Falls so that future generations can delight in witnessing its majesty and great beauty). While it is unlikely for practical and aesthetic reasons to conflict (because they are aimed at the same objective, i.e., the preservation of the natural environment), there may be occasions when we need to decide which reasons are more important and should be given priority. One may respond to this by insisting that which reasons are significant will depend on one's objective—if pleasure, then aesthetic reasons can be more important than even practical ones that are aimed ultimately at human survival or well-being. However, if we have to make a choice between human survival and pleasure, then most would

say that the former should be given priority. Besides, ethical judgments imply that we have a moral duty or obligation to do what is right (Johnson 1973), and this means that they have a high degree of seriousness (Scruton 1974)—both of which are absent in aesthetic judgments. This must imply that moral judgments should precede or even override all other considerations, including aesthetic ones. But when applied to environmental preservation, this argument seems to weaken—because, for example, there are habits which can be considered morally incorrect but not treated as serious; neither is there necessarily the feeling of compulsion to immediately correct these habits. In the realm of environmental aesthetics, certain weaknesses found in arguments developed in philosophical aesthetics (which are often glossed over) become glaring. Besides, it is not entirely true that aesthetic reasons for environmental preservation is completely devoid of a moral dimension.

REASONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

I begin by distinguishing between aesthetic and what I call practical reasons for environmental protection. I will clarify practical reasons by citing examples: we need to reduce carbon emissions because they lead to global warming, and global warming can destroy the habitat; or we need to preserve the environment in order to protect the well-being and quality of life of future generations; or we should reduce vehicles that use fossil fuel because they discharge huge quantities of carbon monoxide which will affect our well-being and quality of life; etc. I have classified these as “practical reasons” because they are all directed ultimately at preserving the human race and its well-being. These reasons consider environmental protection as the means to an end, the end being preservation of the human species.

Less well-known but perhaps equally important is the argument for protecting the environment for its aesthetic worth. Some aestheticians and philosophers now argue that the removal of aesthetic considerations must necessarily deplete the strength of our argument for environmental preservation. We frequently approach the surrounding environment in an aesthetic way, and are willing to pay for the pleasure that we derive from contemplating its beauty. A person may buy a house next to the beach in order to experience the sheer pleasure of admiring its scenic beauty, even though he ends up paying much more than for a similar house located elsewhere. We do at times admire the beauty, serenity, harmony, and magical appeal of the landscape, *an attitude to the object which is devoid of any functional or utilitarian concerns*. It is this approach to the environment that philosophers consider as “aesthetic,” and it is this notion of the “aesthetic approach” that we will consider in the next section of this paper. In order to look more closely at the *aesthetic approach*, I must distinguish it from what is commonly regarded as the moral attitude (or the *moral approach*).

TO VALUE THE ENVIRONMENT FOR ITS OWN SAKE

All practical reasons for environmental protection involve human survival and welfare as their ultimate goal. They are *directed at attaining a certain end*, which can be called “the survival and welfare of humankind.” Protection and

preservation of the environment are *only the means* for attaining this very important end. In principle, *means are usually substitutable—they are not valued for their own sake* (we take medicine in order to get well; the medicine is not valued for itself). If we could attain the same end with more efficient means, we might happily switch to those means (although at present, alternative means may be absent when it comes to saving the environment to ensure human welfare and survival).

Aesthetic reasons for environmental protection, unlike practical reasons, do not have this practical goal. Nelson Goodman (1993, 397) made a remark that suggests this claim:

What...distinguishes...aesthetic activity from other intelligent behavior such as perception, ordinary conduct, and scientific inquiry? One instant answer is that *the aesthetic is directed to no practical end*, is unconcerned with self-defense or conquest, with acquisition of necessities or luxuries, with prediction or control of nature ... *the aesthetic attitude disowns [such] practical aims.*

Firstly, the *absence of any practical end* or aim is not a sufficient condition in the aesthetic approach (pure science, unlike applied science or technology, also has no practical end), but it is certainly *a necessary condition*. Secondly, one may argue that even though the aesthetic approach has no practical end (e.g., “self-defense or conquest, the acquisition of necessities or luxuries,” or survival of future generations, etc.), it still has an aim or goal. We often treat a landscape or the natural environment as a means for evoking, experiencing, and enjoying certain emotions or mental states. When we say that the seaside is serene, or the mountain is majestic, we are treating these natural landscapes as the source and means of our emotional response. It is these emotions or mental states that we value, and not the natural environment itself. It is also possible that we treat art objects in this manner. But this view has been refuted by most aestheticians who write on the issue. Scruton (1974, 19) asserts that:

...aesthetic interest cannot be interest in an object as a means to the evocation of emotion, and hence that to treat a play, for example, as though it were a vehicle for arousing pity and terror is to fall into the error of the heteronomy of aesthetic judgment. The play is not a means for arousing dramatic emotions, and hence to the extent that one's enjoyment of a play consists in the experience of these emotions it is not aesthetic—for the play might equally have been replaced by some other object of similar feelings.

It is a serious mistake to take Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* simply as a tool or means for arousing pity and fear, which Aristotle (1941) may have done in his *De poetica*, as this must imply that any other thing that can arouse similar feelings of pity and fear could function as a substitute to *Oedipus Rex*. If *Oedipus Rex* can be substituted in that way, it would not have lasted for centuries as one of the world's greatest tragic dramas. Most great artworks that lasted through centuries are unique

and, therefore, irreplaceable. The same applies to natural landscapes. A well-known beach or mountain range is not simply a means to the emotion or mental state it evokes, or else it would simply be a replaceable means to an end. The natural landscape would not be so highly treasured if it were replaceable.

Now, the view that the object of aesthetic interest (artwork or natural landscape) is unique does not necessarily lead us to a mere disinterested observation of formal properties. Neither should it lead us to the view that the object is only a means for evoking the emotion. Scruton, for instance, argues that the emotion being evoked by the object (artwork or natural landscape) is usually of a peculiar sort, which can only be re-experienced by recalling the landscape (or some feature of the landscape), and this must mean that the object is indispensable to the experience of the emotion. We may also say [and this is Scruton's (1974, 229-37) most significant contribution to the idea of artistic symbolism] that in the aesthetic approach, the relationship between the object and the emotion it evokes is not causal but logical; and in a logical relationship there is no possibility of separating the two items (i.e., object and emotion) into means and end. In order to describe the peculiar emotion evoked by the landscape, I must necessarily refer to the landscape (or features in the landscape); and in order to reexperience the peculiar emotion I need to recall the landscape (or some feature of it) to mind. One places as much value on the object (the natural landscape, or our image of it) as the emotion it evokes. This is because the object and the emotion being evoked are very intimately related and one cannot have one without the other. So the difference between practical and aesthetic reasons consists simply in this: in the former we preserve the environment as a means to save what we truly value, i.e., human beings and their welfare; while in the latter we preserve the environment for its own sake (and in doing so we also preserve its beauty, and all that we value the environment for). Since, as pointed out by Scruton, the object is intimately linked to the emotion, preserving our capacity to reexperience the emotion must also mean preserving the object (or natural landscape).

It is important to note that practical reasons for environmental protection do have *moral overtones* (i.e., they have a moral dimension which aesthetic reasons do not possess). This is due partly to the fact that practical reasons deal with highly important human interests, i.e., the survival of the human race, and the well-being and welfare of future generations, and anything that is directed at these ends must have a moral dimension to it. We could actually rephrase these practical reasons into arguments that clearly reveal their moral dimension. For example, "Anything that harms human life is bad; continuous production of greenhouse gasses by agriculture and industry will lead to global warming, and global warming can in the long run harm human life"; or "Acting in ways that endanger the well-being of future generations is wrong; continuous logging and deforestation can lead to environmental and climatic changes that harm the well-being of future generations of people." It is therefore fruitful to compare moral and aesthetic approaches to environmental protection since the practical reasons for environmental preservation can certainly form part of the moral approach to environmental issues.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AESTHETIC AND MORAL JUDGMENTS AND ITS RELEVANCE TO ENVIRONMENTAL AESTHETICS

One major task of this work is not only to differentiate moral and aesthetic judgments but to also investigate the relation of both kinds of judgment to the issue of environmental preservation. However, I wish to state my intention and purpose more clearly in order to avoid misunderstanding and possible misinterpretation of my argument.

Firstly, I want to stress that I am not investigating the moral aspects of art or art criticism (i.e., I will not deal with ethical issues in the art object, the practice of art, or the realm of art criticism). Neither will I be discussing the aesthetic aspects of moral life and moral evaluation. Such concerns may be highly important but they belong to another article. My chief concern here is simply to look for features or characteristics in the aesthetic attitude which could (hopefully) be employed to differentiate it from the moral attitude and other practical approaches to the issue of environmental protection.

It is important to distinguish the aesthetic and moral approaches simply because many philosophers since Plato have mistakenly assumed that moral and aesthetic judgments are "similar," as both are essentially value disciplines (see Johnson 1973, 178). But aesthetic and moral judgments are significantly different, as my discussion will reveal.

I have argued that the aesthetic approach is important, but is it as important (or even more important) than the practical concerns about the environment? Now, if these *practical concerns involve moral considerations* (e.g., someone might argue that depleting the environment infringes on the interests of future generations and, as such, it is *morally wrong*), then they will *always override aesthetic interests*. One very important feature of a moral judgment (which distinguishes it from aesthetic judgment) is its ability to override concerns that may conflict with it. I will explain this with the help of Oliver Johnson (1973, 178) who argues against the assumption that moral and aesthetic judgments are similar:

For the fact is that ethics contains a crucial dimension that has no counterpart in aesthetics—the dimension to which we apply concepts of right and wrong, duty and obligation. I do not deny that the terms that I have just used can be applied, and properly so, to the realm of aesthetics but I would insist that when they are so applied they stand for concepts substantially different in meaning from those appropriate to ethics.

We are *duty-bound* to act according to certain moral principles. If an action is considered to be just (or in accordance with fairness and justice), then we are *morally obligated* to act accordingly. If a certain action is vicious, then one is morally obligated to refrain from acting in that manner. Inability to do so would be considered as weakness of will or moral deficiency (and one is blamed for such deficiencies and penalized accordingly). I will later argue that this, in fact, is the only significant

difference between aesthetic and moral judgments, and attempts by some philosophers to draw up other differences are not too successful.

I have argued that practical reasons for environmental preservation show that protecting the environment is *morally significant* because it involves the most important human interests (viz., the survival of the human species and the well-being of future generations). If so, then we are all duty-bound to protect the environment; and it is morally wrong to degrade the environment, or to act in ways contrary to environmental preservation. Placing moral duty in the "ought" category also means it *must override* other concerns if its execution should conflict with these concerns (and one could add that it must also be given priority over other interests). From the point of environmental protection, if practical reasons (for environmental preservation) have *moral overtones*, then they can override other concerns that may come into conflict with them. Aesthetic reasons for environmental protection, lacking this capacity to override other concerns they may conflict with, *can never attain the degree of importance* placed on practical reasons. Since aesthetic and practical reasons (for environmental preservation) do not rule out one another, I do not see an occasion for them to come into possible conflict. In fact, aesthetic reasons can reinforce practical ones as they are directed at the same goal of environment protection.

I believe the above condition (of "overridingness") is the strongest, and perhaps the only, significant reason for giving greater importance to moral than aesthetic considerations. But let us discuss other possible differences between the moral and aesthetic approaches. Another reason often cited by philosophers is the universality of moral judgment as opposed to the particularity of aesthetic judgment. I begin by explaining the *universality of moral judgments*. For the sake of brevity, I will confine my discussion to Immanuel Kant. Kant (1928, 82) mentions a necessary condition (I do not think we can defend it as also a sufficient condition) of a moral act when he asserts that we should "act only according to that *maxim* by which [we] can at the same time *will it should become a universal law*." This in fact is an essential part of Kant's definition of what he calls the *categorical imperative*. Now, a maxim can take the form "In order to achieve A (my objective or end), I will have to do B (the action) in circumstance C (the situation)." But in order to determine whether I have acted morally, all I need to do is to assess whether the maxim on which my action is based is *suitable as a universal law*. In other words, I must determine whether anyone who is fully rational and not swayed by self-interest, desires, wants, strong emotions (e.g., fear or love), or other sensuous impulses, and in the same circumstance, would or must act in the same way. What is right for one person must necessarily be right for anyone else in the same position. This also implies that when I make a moral judgment, I would expect agreement from everyone (see Kant 1928, 82). If I say that kidnapping babies to sell to rich families who have no children is morally wrong, I expect everyone to agree with my assertion (even though in actuality, some people may continue to do this sort of thing).

Let us apply this to maxims derived from practical reasons for environmental protection. If they can be accepted as universal laws that should be prescribed for everyone, then (by this criterion) they have the status of moral prescriptions. Consider the following: For the sake of safeguarding the physical interests of future generations

(such as ensuring they have adequate food supply, clean air, good health, normal atmospheric temperatures without global warming, etc.), we must either stop or drastically reduce the present rate of logging. Now, if tests by environmental experts and other scientists confirm that the present rate of logging must adversely affect the physical well-being of future generations, then this maxim can surely be prescribed for everyone (to do something which we already know will degrade the physical well-being of future generations must certainly be an act that is morally wrong). We can construct similar maxims relating to the present rate in which fossil fuels such as coal and oil are used, the discharging of chemical and other wastes into rivers and coastlines, the present rate in which plastic and other nonbiodegradable products are used, etc. These maxims (if supported by scientific evidence) will be moral in nature—i.e., anyone who is fully rational and not swayed by personal interests or sensuous impulses and desires will agree to act according to such maxims. Anyone who is rational and not strongly affected by narrow self-interest or sensuous impulses (like desires, fears, wants, etc.) will agree that doing something that degrades the well-being of future generations is morally wrong, and will therefore refrain from doing it. Maxims derived from practical reasons for environmental preservation, it seems, can be formulated as moral judgments.

But can we similarly derive maxims from aesthetic judgments (either of artworks or the natural environment) that are necessarily universally applicable? Some aestheticians who cling to the idea of uniqueness (not only is the object unique, but the experience derived from it must also be unique) would definitely say, "No." Since the object and the experience of it is unique, we cannot have general rules for aesthetic evaluation. This view is most clearly expressed by Richard W. Miller (1998, 42):

There are *no laws or valid rules* which say which properties of an object (i.e., the properties that an aesthetically sensitive person might recognize) prompt aesthetic appreciation. So if one does not defer to others' aesthetic judgments in making such evaluative claims, one's basis must be one's own *response to the concrete presence of the object*.

According to this view (in aesthetic approach), we can only respond adequately to the art object (or the natural environment) if the object is *presented concretely for direct sense perception* (and this is true even if we are very well-educated in the technicalities of art). Someone may tell us that Mozart's *Clarinet concerto in A major* is very sad and mournful, but that alone will not enable us to know exactly *how* it is sad or mournful (or in what way these emotions are felt and experienced in Mozart's concerto). No matter how much a person may describe Mozart's *Clarinet concerto* we will never know in totality how it feels unless we hear the music being played (or the narrator hums a few rhythms or melodies from Mozart's music for our benefit). Miller (1998, 35) tells us that this is in stark contrast to moral judgments, where "someone who is morally wise can form a moral judgment by relying on trustworthy nonmoralizing reports of others. [And] indeed, our moral judgments of laws and policies are almost entirely formed in this way." If a trusted friend of mine describes the unusual activities of his wife, I would (on the basis of his detailed

description of her affair with her doctor) confidently pronounce my moral judgment of her (e.g., “she is a flirtatious woman,” etc.). But no amount of oral or written description of the artwork (or a natural landscape) will ever be sufficient to convey in full the emotion that is evoked from experiencing the work (or object) first hand. Miller (1998, 35) says that “...aesthetic judgment would not depend, in this way, on concrete presence unless it depended on spontaneous response to the object, the validity of which did not depend in turn, on following a rule describing what properties of the object make for aesthetic value in question.” In moral judgment, however, our assumption that there are universally held moral rules enable us to apply them to cases which are described to us (without our having to directly witness these cases).

The Kantian principle of universality is in direct contrast to how we react to and judge something (an artwork or the natural landscape) aesthetically; where the relationship between value-conferring features and the emotion or mental state being evoked is particular in nature (and one simply cannot extend it universally by saying that any object with similar features must evoke similar mental states). This whole argument on the particularity of aesthetic judgment is based largely on the belief that *each art object is unique, and can never be reproduced*. Now, it is argued that an art object (or something that is viewed aesthetically) *cannot be treated as a means to an end*. This must also imply that the art object (or anything viewed aesthetically) cannot be treated as a means for evoking or arousing some emotion (or mental state). To treat a tragic play like *Oedipus Rex* as a means for arousing pity and fear (which was what Aristotle did in his *De poetica*) is a mistake. If we treat the *Oedipus Rex* as a means to our pity and fear, then this great work of Sophocles *can actually be substituted* and is dispensable—if a drug or a good hypnotist can induce similar feelings of pity and fear, the *Oedipus Rex* and all good tragic dramas can be discarded by human civilization. Since we treasure *Oedipus Rex* for thousands of years (and consider it a great work of tragedy all these years) there must be something in the work that is irreplaceable—the work itself must be unique, and the fear and pity it arouses must be one that is peculiar to the work alone, and not substitutable by any other work or thing or process (for more information on this view, see Scruton 1974, 19-23). And one can say the same for a natural landscape if it is approached from the aesthetic viewpoint.

This whole argument on the particularity of aesthetic judgment is based largely on the belief that each successful artwork is unique and can never be reproduced—to support this view one can point to the fact that a particular feature that confers value on one artwork (or a particular landscape) will simply not necessarily produce a similar effect in another artwork (or landscape). Powerful strokes of unmixed colors produce dynamism in Van Gogh’s picture, but will not create the same effect (and will in fact degrade) a painting from the Romantic era. The orange sky that comes from a setting sun produces a stunning effect at Niagara Falls, but the same phenomenon may produce dullness at the Mertajam Hill when seen from Penang Island. But this reason cannot imply that general principles of aesthetic evaluation cannot exist, unlike the case of moral judgments where general principles (which can be willed into universal laws) must exist.

Roger Scruton (1974, 25) has an argument against this idea of uniqueness in art and aesthetic appreciation. He says that we must distinguish first from second-

order features in morally-significant actions. First-order features (like bringing satisfaction, pleasure, happiness, etc.) alone will never be sufficient for deciding whether an act deserves a moral worth. Acts that have any one of these first-order features can count one way or the other. But acts with second-order features [which, according to Scruton (1974, 25), can only be detected “by a certain amount of interpretation”] such as courage, cowardice, benevolence, rashness, honesty, liberality, etc., will always count only one way. Scruton asserts that the same happens in aesthetic judgment—there are first-order features like details on a portrait, strokes of unmixed colors on a Vincent van Gogh picture, etc., which can be value-conferring in one work and not so in another—but there are also second-order features in the realm of aesthetic evaluation, as in the case of moral judgment. Second-order features that are named by Scruton (1974, 26) include “tragic, moving, balanced, evocative, sincere, sad, refined, noble, sentimental and so on.” These second-order features which can only be detected after some amount of interpretation in relation to the context in which the work is presented can count only one way—as value-conferring features. A work cannot be bad because it is “refined,” or unsuccessful because it is “evocative.” Hence, argues Scruton (1974, 27), the attempt to distinguish aesthetic and moral judgments based on uniqueness attributed to the former must fail and be abandoned.

It must be pointed out that Scruton’s comparison between second-order features in moral actions and objects that are viewed aesthetically is rather inaccurate. It may be true that the existence of certain second-order features (in actions) like courage, benevolence, etc., will always be value-conferring—in fact these are the moral virtues emphasized by many philosophers in the past. But *when it comes to aesthetic judgment, those second-order features mentioned by Scruton may not always count one way, i.e., as value-conferring features.* In the 1970s, when conceptual art grew popular in certain parts of the world, conceptualists often ridiculed those they called “sensationalists” and “sentimentalists,” i.e., artists who produced works that strongly express certain emotions (such as sadness, the tragic feeling, etc.). Some of them even argued that emphasis on expression of such feelings robbed the artwork of its intellectual dimension, and a good work should express ideas (such as interesting metaphysical ideas) and not mere sentiments. One would also wonder how Dadaists like Marcel Duchamp, who emerged at the turn of the 20th century, would view works that heavily emphasize the expression of emotions. The emergence in the 20th century of artists and movements that directly challenge established aesthetic norms and values has made it difficult for certain second-order features to always count in one way. Second-order features that were previously seen as value-conferring may now be regarded as redundant at best (or even as negative elements of an artwork). If one cares to look beyond the Western tradition, one may come to realize that the value of certain second-order features can become very uncertain. The large number of sandstone statues of Hindu gods staked in neat rows around a Hindu temple would create sheer dynamism and movement on the walls of these temples, so that “dynamism” and “movement” confer great aesthetic value. In Song China (10th century) however, such features would be disturbing, unharmonious, and generally negative—for the emphasis was on quietude and serenity as expressed in simple unadorned celadon stoneware bowls with their thick green glaze mimicking

the feel and consistency of jade, or Chan Buddhist paintings filled with no more than three black-ink painted fruits surrounded by great portions of empty space on the silk canvas. Now, second-order features may count only one way if we take into consideration the entire context (such as the art movement that is involved, the cultural tradition and period from which the work originated, etc.) while assessing the work. But Scruton is still mistaken when he pronounces that second-order features count only one way (the fact that they can be differently assessed in different art movements and cultural traditions mean they do not count only one way). But what has been said so far challenges the claim that each artwork is unique and rules for assessment cannot be crafted to evaluate something aesthetically. Such general rules can be crafted, as long as they are circumscribed by aesthetic values of particular art movements, cultural traditions, and periods. The fact that we refer to an artwork as belonging to a certain movement, period, or cultural tradition already implies there are such "limited universal rules" that allow us to pick out value-conferring or significant features of the movement, period, or tradition. But this would not make them *true general rules* in the sense of moral prescriptions. For these aesthetic rules would apply to some artworks and not to others, while *a moral prescription must apply to all human persons irrespective of cultural tradition or ideological belief*. So the difference between a moral and an aesthetic judgment is unchanged, i.e., the former relies on universal maxims while the latter does not (rules limited to some members of a class are not truly universal). But there is more to it. It seems there are some works (usually those of very high quality that are appreciated through many generations or for many centuries) that are indeed unique and truly irreplaceable—the emotion or mental state they express and evoke are such that they cannot be brought about by another work or anything else. Even such "unique" works must share enough common features with some artworks to allow us to place them in their respective movements or traditions—e.g., we say that the paintings of Seurat (unique and irreplaceable as they are) belong to the Impressionist movement, or the symphonies of Mozart belong to the Romantic tradition, etc. But they must have certain other features that make them truly unique and irreplaceable—and when aestheticians speak of the uniqueness of artworks, it is this special class of highly successful works that they are referring to (although to say that all works have this quality is, I suspect, committing the fallacy of hasty generalization).

We have agreed that moral judgments are based on maxims that have a degree of universality, while aesthetic judgments are not. However, do moral laws have the same degree of universality (or universal acceptance) as scientific laws? In fact moral laws can never hope to attain that sort of universality. Mill (2001, 43) gave two reasons for this. Firstly, there will always be moral nihilist who would reject any maxim employed in moral judgment as invalid. One form of moral nihilism rejects the view that moral statements describe some feature of the world, because no such feature exists. Since there are no moral facts (according to these nihilists), we must conclude that moral statements have no truth value (and are therefore neither true nor false). A moral nihilist may understand all the supporting evidence presented before him, and still deny that a statement which describes the action as morally wrong must be true, neither would he accept a statement that describes the person who performed the act as immoral as true. The existence of such rational

nihilist would imply that maxims used in moral judgment can never attain the kind of universal agreement as in science. Secondly, moral maxims cannot attain the degree of universality achieved in science because of what Mill (2001, 43) calls "blind spots." According to him, "Aristotle's blind spot about hierarchy would keep him from some of our judgments about justice even if he responded rationally to the accumulation of evidence." Mill is probably referring to Aristotle's belief in the inferiority of natural slaves and women (natural slaves may understand reason, but are unable to initiate reasoning necessary for making moral choices). Mill may be right that some people have preferences that make them unable to accept, or completely accept, certain moral maxims (which are intended as universal laws). But to say that these "blind spots" would forever "keep [them] from some of our judgments about justice even if [they] responded rationally to the accumulation of evidence" is not at all convincing. After all, there are people who change their beliefs, or even their values (and this often happens as a result of accumulated evidence).

Since every moral maxim can be rejected by someone (such as the moral nihilist) we can never attain true universality as in science. It is, therefore, more precise to simply say that in moral judgment, one (e.g., the judgment maker) assumes the universality of the maxims employed in the judgment. In making the judgment one feels that everyone (without exception) should act in the same way in the same situation (even if in practice it is highly unlikely that everyone accepts the maxim being employed). Here lies its difference to aesthetic judgment; for in making an aesthetic judgment one does not assume the universality of the criterion that was employed in the judgment (i.e., one cannot say that the criterion applies to all artworks or objects in the same situation).

One could legitimately ask how all this relates to environmental aesthetics, which is still the main focus of this article. After all, judgment in environmental aesthetics can be quite different from judgment in morality and "art aesthetics" in at least one way. One reason for making judgment in morality is to distinguish between good and bad actions (we refer, of course, only to actions that have moral significance); likewise with aesthetic judgment in art that aims (among other things) to differentiate good from bad artworks. In environmental aesthetics, however, judgment may not serve this function—we offer reasons for admiring a beautiful or evocative landscape, but would hardly offer reasons for criticizing a natural landscape as ugly or offensive (except on rare occasions when a developer wishes to replace an unattractive landscape with what he claims to be beautiful dynamic buildings—but such remarks, when they are uttered, are seldom taken seriously). In environmental aesthetics we offer reasons to praise rather than to criticize the natural environment. Now, despite this obvious difference, what has been said about moral and aesthetic judgments is still relevant. Environmental aesthetics is like aesthetic judgments (for artworks) in that there are no true universal rules for appreciating a natural landscape. Since natural landscapes are not man-made and therefore do not belong to specific movements, periods, or cultural traditions (as in the case of art and craft), general rules for appreciation become even more elusive. A feature that enhances the beauty and appeal of one seascape may be entirely neutral in a different seascape. This may be a significant difference between the aesthetic and moral

approaches (to the environment) but *it certainly does not indicate in any way that the moral approach is more important than the aesthetic one*. There is only one good reason for assuming the superiority of the moral over the aesthetic approach (in relation to environmental protection). It is the *capacity of moral reasons to override other reasons* (including, presumably, aesthetic ones) which indicates the superiority of the moral approach—but this has been discussed earlier.

OUR ATTITUDE TO MORAL AND AESTHETIC JUDGMENTS

Scruton believes it is quite fruitless to differentiate the aesthetic from the moral approach by emphasizing the uniqueness of the art object or aesthetic experience derived from the object. It may be true that we can refer to second-order features in actions (e.g., courage, liberality, benevolence, cowardice) without first-hand experience. I do not have to actually witness John handing a portion of his yearly income to starving people in Africa in order to know that his action is generous and benevolent (reports and descriptions of what he did would suffice). Scruton (1974, 26) argues that by the same token second-order features in aesthetic evaluation (e.g., forceful, tragic, evocative, balanced, etc.) can be described and understood by the listener without the latter having to have direct experience of the work. It is true that in describing these second-order features, we need to invoke the whole context in order to show that the work is profound or coherent or evocative—but such descriptions can still be understood without the object being made available to direct perception. Scruton, therefore, believes it is better to look at another direction to distinguish aesthetic from moral judgments. He thinks it would be more fruitful to differentiate the two in terms of our attitude to them—in other words, how we react and respond to them.

Now, before proceeding with my exposition on Scruton, I would like to focus on a couple of potential problems. Firstly, it is simply not true that second-order features in aesthetic evaluation must count only one way, like second-order features in actions of moral significance (a Zen painter will find dynamism and movement in a painting as disturbing and unharmonious—even though these features may be praiseworthy and value-conferring in Western romantic paintings or futuristic sculptures). This point has earlier been elaborated. Another problem for Scruton (1974, 26) is that not every expert in aesthetic criticism will agree that second-order features can be adequately described by offering “a total description of the works of art which possess them.” One wonders if it is possible to give “a total description” of all the features and technical details of the work in order to convey the second-order feature in its totality (without at the same time presenting the work itself to the audience). For instance, in order to describe the total effect of Mozart’s *Clarinet concerto* one may have to resort to humming its rhythm and melody, and so on. Ultimately, the best way to describe Mozart’s *Clarinet concerto* in its totality is to play the music itself (to the listener). No matter how many technical details we use to describe it (without eventually humming its rhythm and melody), it will not produce the same effect as playing the concerto to the listener. In fact Susan Langer (1957, 228; 1959) has pointed out that we turn to artistic symbolism simply because no amount of discursive language can adequately express (or convey) certain

emotions or mental states that we feel. If this is so, then no amount of detailed description can ever convey or evoke the emotion expressed in Mozart's *Clarinet concerto*. This must strengthen the claim for uniqueness—the only way to fully comprehend the emotion that is expressed and evoked is to listen to it.

Does this mean that the art object and our response to it are truly unique (and irreplaceable)? Not necessarily. Those who stress the uniqueness of artworks or our response to them usually cite the most successful or best known artworks to support their case (one can easily refer to cases like Mozart's *The marriage of Figaro*, Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, or Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* to support the claim of uniqueness, for surely such great works continue to be popular through the centuries because they are irreplaceable). But what about paintings and drawings made by high school or college students from general principles taught by their art teachers? For these, too, are surely works of art, even though they do not have the quality and refinement of the works of the great masters. The same can surely be said of sculptures and simple musical compositions made by students from general principles taught by their masters. The case for uniqueness gets even weaker if one looks beyond the Western art tradition at, say, Chinese or Japanese classical paintings. It is known that novices and beginners would faithfully reproduce Fan Kuan's *Travelling along mountains and rivers* (a painting in the Early Song Dynasty) and the works of other great masters as part of their training. It may be argued that one can never completely reproduce another artwork and the reproduction must somehow be different, if not in technical details, then in expressiveness. That may be true if the copy fails to be a successful duplicate. But there are reports of paintings of Fan Kuan's work that appear exactly like the original, right down to the movement and sweep of every small brushstroke. It would be hard to see how these works cannot evoke the same emotions as the original. Furthermore, some of these successful copies were displayed with slightly different titles like *A copy of Fan Kuan's travelling along mountains and rivers*, etc., which makes it quite impossible to say that these different paintings are simply manifestations of the same work of art. And these successful copies are also highly valued, although not as much as the original.

It would appear that we cannot really make a general remark on the uniqueness of all artworks. Some of the great works that last for centuries may be truly unique (also, the emotion evoked is peculiar to the artwork and cannot be evoked by any substitute)—which is one reason they remain highly valued through many centuries. But this may not be true in all cases—to do so would be to engage in very hasty generalization indeed. Artworks of less quality, especially those produced by amateurs and students may be based on very general principles. There are indeed universal principles in art, if they were not, art training would become impossible. However, those who are great or good artists would go beyond these to create works that are truly exceptional and maybe even irreplaceable. I do not reject the uniqueness hypothesis on the same grounds as Scruton. Scruton has sidelined the hypothesis as fruitless on grounds that second-order features in art, like those in morality, can count only one way (e.g., as value-conferring features), and it is possible to fully understand these second-order features by a detailed description of the work (thereby eliminating the need to experience the work at first hand). I have rejected both

claims with counter-examples. However, I accept Scruton's view that the idea of artworks as unique is a highly problematic one, and it may perhaps be more fruitful to look elsewhere for the difference between aesthetic and moral judgments.

We should, therefore, take a close look at Scruton's distinction between the moral and aesthetic approaches, which is based on our attitudes (or reactions to moral and aesthetic judgments). Scruton (1974, 141) argues that moral judgments are always taken to be more serious than aesthetic ones. If someone infringes on a moral principle we blame him, confront him, criticize him in public, withdraw whatever goodwill we have, or even take him to court for the necessary penalty to be imposed on him. If we discover that we have unwisely infringed on (what we consider to be) a moral imperative, we may suffer regret, remorse, guilt, self-hatred, or even willingly submit ourselves to the necessary legal punishment. Infringing on moral laws always involves sanctions. We cannot, however, adopt the same attitude towards infringement on aesthetic values. If someone wears clothes that show very poor taste, or is unable to appreciate the balance and unity in Michelangelo's *David*, or unable to see the harmony and balance of Mount Fuji when viewed from the air, we do not criticize and condemn him in public, withdraw goodwill, or take him to court to be punished in a legal way. If I discovered that I was previously lacking in good aesthetic taste, and had infringed on certain aesthetic norms (e.g., I may have painted my car in horrible rainbow colors), I will probably not feel the kind of guilt, remorse, and self-hatred mentioned above. Aesthetic judgments, therefore, lack the *seriousness* we attach to moral or ethical judgments.

But this does not imply that aesthetic judgments are subjective or even arbitrary, for strong reasons can be (and are often) given in support of certain aesthetic judgments and prescriptions. Art critics have offered strong reasons for appreciating da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*. In the same way, one may also offer strong reasons for calling a landscape as serene, or harmonious, or beautiful. Scruton (1974, 142-43) argues that aesthetic judgments are in this sense "normative"—reasons can be given not only to support aesthetic judgments, but also to transform tastes or train someone in aesthetic sensibility.

Scruton's idea of "seriousness" also means that aesthetic reasons for environmental protection can never be as important as practical reasons directed at environmental preservation, provided that such practical reasons are presented in the form of moral reasons, or involve moral considerations (e.g., "we need to preserve the environment to ensure the well-being of future generations"). If practical reasons are served with moral overtones, then they must override aesthetic reasons because they are more serious from our point of view (i.e., in situations where they conflict, aesthetic considerations must give way to practical ones because the latter is more serious).

However, Scruton's approach is not devoid of problems. There was recently a news report entitled "Are fat people destroying earth?" (*Yahoo! News*, 21 April 2009) in which scientists from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine claimed that obese people are helping in the destruction of the environment because their increased food intake would mean greater production of greenhouse gasses from livestock (especially cattle), agriculture, and transport of greater quantities of food and animal feed. In addition, a lot more fuel is used in transporting overweight people.

We have argued that from the practical viewpoint, there is a moral dimension to environmental protection or destruction, for degradation of the environment must affect the interest and well-being of future generations. Since fat people are responsible for this degradation (and they cannot plead innocence as reports of their responsibility are beginning to surface), they should be made accountable (for what they do). Scruton has emphasized that infringing on moral principles (in this case doing something that can adversely affect the well-being of future generations) must involve sanctions. If so, then we must withdraw goodwill from those who choose to stay fat, confront them, blame them, expose their wrongdoing to others, etc. And if I should continue to stay fat, or do nothing substantial to reverse my obesity, then I should experience extreme remorse and regret, guilt, self-hatred, and willingly subject myself to societal penalties or punishment. Now, it is not surprising that the reader would consider all these pronouncements to be highly ridiculous. One cannot completely dismiss Scruton's claim—we do indeed do these things to people who are morally blameworthy. But we may not do so in all cases; and it may not be practical to always withdraw goodwill from anyone whom we consider to be morally blameworthy (you may not do it if that person happens to be your boss and the only one around willing to employ your services for an acceptable salary, or if he is the head of state which means that to publicly denounce him would ensure you spend your next two years in prison, or a loved one whom you do not wish to displease or offend, etc.). We do make exceptions in life—it is true that the good and wise man will always be ready to condemn anyone who is morally blameworthy, but the vast majority of people have certain “soft spots” for some people, and will not readily ridicule fat people even if they believe in the report from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Scruton is mistaken because we sometimes but not always do what he describes to people who are morally blameworthy. This attempt to look for a common feature in moral judgments, which is also absent in (all) aesthetic judgments, so that we could differentiate the latter from the former seems to run into enormous difficulties. It is perhaps more fruitful for philosophers engaging in this debate to look for another strategy to differentiate moral from aesthetic judgments.

CONCLUSION

Should aesthetic reasons be considered inferior (to practical reasons which have a moral dimension)? It was pointed out earlier that the aesthetic approach (both to artworks and the environment) is directed principally at pleasure, and must therefore lack the moral dimension. But an activity that is focused on enjoyment is not necessarily devoid of a moral dimension. We said earlier that practical reasons for environmental preservation have a moral dimension because they are aimed at (i) human survival, (ii) safeguarding our welfare and quality of life, or (iii) both. While it is true that aesthetic reasons for environmental protection is not directed at safeguarding human survival, it is nonetheless aimed at ensuring a certain quality of life which may even be necessary for our welfare. Imagine the future generation living in purely concrete jungles with little or no greenery, and mountain ranges leveled and seashores polluted beyond recognition. The lack of any opportunity to admire and enjoy majestic waterfalls, sublime mountain ranges, and beautiful shorelines must take something

out of living—it must stifle the development of certain emotions and our capacity to express ourselves. This must affect quality of life and deplete human welfare. It is in this manner that the aesthetic reason for environmental preservation incorporates a moral dimension. One can then argue that depriving future generations of this capacity for enjoying and admiring natural beauty must necessarily degrade their well-being and quality of life, and that is morally wrong. In this way, aesthetic reasons can be equally as important as practical reasons for environmental protection. If it be argued that reasons aimed at survival of the human race are more important than those aimed at human well-being and quality of life (which implies that practical reasons for environmental protection directed at human survival are superior to both practical and aesthetic reasons aimed merely at safeguarding our well-being and quality of life), then one may provide a simple reply: survival without a certain quality of life and overall well-being would make life quite meaningless. One does not want only to survive, but also to live well. A sensible or rational person may say that both are equally important.

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CONFLICT OF AESTHETIC SYSTEMS: CONTROVERSY ABOUT CARLO J. CAPARAS AS NATIONAL ARTIST

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This paper is written to provide an aesthetic parameter to sensibly analyze the controversy that arose after the naming of Carlo J. Caparas as National Artist for Visual Arts and Film. By contextualizing Caparas and his works in five clusters of aesthetic systems, namely, traditional, modern, patronage, pseudo-modern, and postmodern, this paper argues that there can never be a coherent, sustained, and rational justification for the error committed by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in honoring him. The paper concludes with the note that the aesthetic discourse on the controversy was unfortunately converted into a legal discourse as a case was filed by some National Artists, Art Groups, and concerned citizens at the Supreme Court, questioning the legality of the so-called "presidential insertion."

BACKGROUND OF THE CONTROVERSY

The National Artist Award is the highest recognition given by the Philippine government and people to individuals who excel in the expression and development of Philippine art. The award covers the categories of music, architecture and allied arts, dance, theater, film and broadcast arts, visual arts, and literature. Excellence in any of these categories is measured in terms of "vision, unusual insight, creativity and imagination, technical proficiency of the highest order in expressing Filipino culture and traditions, history, way of life, and aspiration." The first National Artist Award for visual arts was posthumously given to Fernando Amorsolo in 1972. At present, the award comes with the following package of privileges: (1) the rank and title of National Artist, as proclaimed by the President of the Philippines; (2) the National Artist medallion and citation; (3) lifetime emolument and material and physical benefits comparable in value to those received by the highest officers of the land such as: (a) cash living allowance of one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00), net of taxes for living awardees; (b) cash award of seventy five thousand pesos (P75,000.00), net of taxes for posthumous awardees, payable to legal heir/s; (c) monthly life pension, medical, and hospitalization benefits; (d) life

insurance coverage for awardees who are still insurable; (e) arrangements and expenses for a state funeral; (4) a place of honor, in line with protocolar precedence, at national state functions, and recognition at cultural events (National Artist Award Secretariat, n.d.).

At first, it was only the first lady, Imelda Marcos, and her cultural advisers who selected the recipients, but in 1973 this delicate responsibility was transferred to the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP). When the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) was created in 1992, the selection process became a joint task of the two cultural offices. In 2003, the President of the Republic issued Executive Order No. 236 “Establishing the Honors Code of the Philippines to create an order of precedence of honors conferred and for other purposes,” which renames the National Artist Award as the “Order of National Artists.” Article IV, Sec. 5 maintains that it is still “the highest national recognition conferred upon Filipinos who have made distinct contributions to arts and letters, upon the recommendation of the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.” However, the same executive order also mentions a Committee on Honors that would “assist the President in evaluating nominations for recipients” of all the awards mentioned in the said document (Art. IV, Sec. 9).

Nevertheless, the CCP and the NCCA persisted in their practice of screening the preliminary nominations and preparing the final shortlist of nominees for submission to the President of the Republic, with the tacit understanding that the President may insert his/her own additional nominee. Hence, just as Ferdinand Marcos had inserted Carlos Romulo for literature in 1982, Fidel Ramos had inserted Carlos Quirino for historical literature in 1997, and Joseph Estrada had inserted Ernani Cuenco for music in 1999, so Gloria Arroyo also inserted Alejandro Roces for literature in 2003 and Abdulmari Imao for visual arts in 2006 (Fonbuena 2009). As long as the insertion was done one at a time and as long as the inserted nominees were more or less acceptable to the artistic community, the practice of “presidential insertion” was tolerated by both the CCP and the NCCA. For the record, only Corazon Aquino totally respected the integrity of the selection process and never inserted any names in the lists of nominees during her presidency.

Some months after President Arroyo proclaimed the 2006 National Artists—Idelfonso Santos for architecture, Ronald Allan Poe for film, Ramon Obusan for dance, Benedicto Cabrera for visual arts, Abdulmari Imao for visual arts, Ramon Valera for fashion design, and Bienvenido Lumbera for literature—the long and rigorous task of selecting the next batch of National Artists was again undertaken jointly by the CCP and the NCCA. On 6 May 2009, after two years of accepting nominations, evaluations, reviews, and reevaluations, the two cultural offices presented their list of nominees to the President. This contained the four names of Manuel Conde for film, Federico Alcuaz for visual arts, Lazaro Francisco for literature, and Ramon Santos for music. Of the four nominees, only Alcuaz and Santos are living artists, as Conde and Lazaro died in the years 1985 and 1980, respectively.

On 29 July 2009, however, the Executive Secretary of the Republic made the announcement that the President named seven new National Artists. This meant that the President had brazenly inserted more than one nominee in the CCP and

NCCA list. Furthermore, the name of Santos was stricken off from the final list, to accommodate four “presidential insertions”—Carlo J. Caparas for visual arts and film, Pitoy Moreno for fashion design, Cecille Guidote-Alvarez for theater, and Francisco Manosa for architecture. This led to an outburst of noisy reactions, starting from the very same group of experts who labored to come up with the CCP and NCCA list of nominees and spreading to the artistic community, the academe, and finally to the general public.

There was no reason given for the elimination of the name of Santos as nominee for National Artist in music. But according to Dr. Antonio Hila (2009), musicologist, history professor at De La Salle University, and one of the most ardent proponents for Santos’s nomination, apparently some people in Malacañang apparently could not appreciate the modernist and postmodernist styles of this composer. Dr. Hila suspected that these artkeepers were limitedly attuned to the traditional and romantic styles of creating music.

Criticisms soon focused on what seemed to be the two most unacceptable insertions, Caparas for his questionable artistry, and Alvarez for her being disqualified from the nomination process in the first place as the executive director of the NCCA. Coincidentally, these two artists were the most vocal ones in defending their compromising situations against the deluge of unsympathetic comments. Moreno and Manosa carefully avoided the media, and consequently did not fan or fuel any further heated discussion. Because the controversy involving Alvarez revolves only around questions of technicalities and decency, this paper will focus on the debates concerning the case of Caparas. Furthermore, among the four presidential insertions, only Caparas caused some concerned citizens to create an online petition against his proclamation as National Artist. This petition (see Alanguilan 2009a) had 4,211 signatories as of 24 October 2009.

Caparas—born in 1948 in the province of Pampanga—started out as a lowly security guard, owing to the fact that he was not able to finish high school. In his spare time, as well as in those dead hours of the night while on duty, he taught himself how to illustrate and make comics strips, giving himself the chance to transplant his career path on the popular cultural industry as an illustrator for comics. After realizing that he could earn more as a scriptwriter, he left behind the tedious task of drawing and coloring figures and focused on writing scripts and novels for the same popular medium. He is known for some of his unforgettable characters such as Panday, Bakekang, Totoy Bato, Joaquin Bordado, Kamagong, Kamandag, Angela Markado, Gagambino, and many more. Caparas improved his fortune and fame by crossing over to film and television as a scriptwriter, director, and producer. He is very prolific in the comics, film, and television industries and is a multi-awarded individual as well. But the local artistic community is simply not convinced that his popular cultural productions could indeed pass as serious and great artworks.

One good thing about the controversy created by the naming of Caparas as National Artist was that it created an occasion for the Filipinos to rethink what art and artist are for them. Their unarticulated aesthetics has been notorious for its brazen tolerance for calendar posters on a living room wall, for oversized wooden utensils beside bastard copies of Leonardo’s *Last supper* near a dining table, and for

dainty needle works and naughty off-colored stickers in jeepney and bus interiors. This could be our moment to finally reflect on what beauty is for us, who its greatest creators are from among our people, and budge our implicit aesthetics towards a more articulated and conscious stage.

If aesthetics is the system of values and criteria that determine what beauty is, then there are a number of aesthetics, each of which are competing for legitimacy, that can be seen through the cloud of dust and debris raised by the government's apparent reckless giving of a too important award to an artist who happened to have a much contested genius. These are the traditional, modernist, patronage, pseudo-modernist, and postmodernist aesthetics. We shall take a closer look at each of these systems and see how they would lend their respective frameworks in appraising the creations of Caparas.

TRADITIONAL AESTHETICS: THE GREAT DIVIDE BETWEEN HIGH ART AND LOW ART

Traditional aesthetics is the system of values and criteria that observes the crisp line dividing high art from low art, and maintains that only high art is real art, because low art is just popular culture, which is nothing but fodder for the undiscerning masses. Traditional aesthetics tends to limit great artistic creations to productions coming from the classic seven categories of art, namely, painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, music, dance, and theatre. Thus, a painting of a great master, or an opera of a great composer, are real art for traditional aesthetics, while a mural painting on a busy alley, or a soap opera, are simply not worthy subjects to be discussed by the educated and the cultured. It sees art as something lofty, almost sacred, uplifting and ennobling to the human spirit. The 18th-century French painter, Jacques-Louis David, forcefully expressed this thought by saying "the arts should contribute to public instruction" (see Witcombe, 1997). Later, during the 19th century, the British cultural critic, Matthew Arnold (1869, viii-ix), expounded the more widespread traditionalist idea that art and high culture should have a humanizing function.

In using the framework of traditional aesthetics, Caparas, the film maker will encounter an immediate obstacle, simply because traditional aesthetics is a little bit myopic when it comes to creations outside the classic seven categories of art. Film as a medium only emerged during the modernist period, when exponents of traditional aesthetics were already waning. This circumstance prevented traditional aesthetics from formulating standards in appreciating and assessing particular films. In fact, when we talk today of art films, these discussions revolve around distinctively modernist aesthetic systems. If at all traditional aesthetics would venture into an appreciation and assessment of particular films, it will be constrained to use standards of film's nearest kin among the classic seven categories of art, namely, theatre and literature. But using theatrical and literary standards to gauge the artistry of Caparas's films would mean giving these creations very slim chances of even being recognized as artistic in the first place.

In using the framework of traditional aesthetics, Caparas the creator of comics will encounter similar difficulties, again because traditional aesthetics simply tends to reject comics as a serious artistic form. Comics proliferated only during the early 20th century, when the modernist period was in full swing. Hence, traditional aesthetics has also no standards in appreciating and assessing particular comics. Unlike film that was able to develop clear and cohesive aesthetic discourses during the modernist period, comics, up to these days, seem to have no such discourses. If at all traditional aesthetics will also venture into an appreciation and assessment of comics, it will be constrained to use standards of the comics' nearest kin among the classic seven categories of art, namely, literature and painting. But using literary and painterly standards to gauge the artistry of Caparas's comics would similarly mean giving these creations very slim chances of being recognized as artistic in the first place.

Granting, for the sake of argument, that traditional aesthetics would give Caparas's works the benefit of the doubt by not outrightly rejecting them as nonart objects, and that it would not use the standards of theatre, literature, and painting in appreciating and assessing them, would this aesthetic system give some favorable evaluations of these same works? Most probably not, for the main reason that traditional aesthetics puts so much emphasis on the uplifting and ennobling functions of art which practically would be a huge stumbling block for Caparas's comics and films, not to mention his more notorious *pito-pito* flicks, or films made within seven days.

Although there are no vocal proponents of traditional aesthetics in this current controversy, there are many conservative Filipinos of the old school who may be silent adherents of this kind of knowing what beauty is. In fact, Dr. Isagani Cruz, during a literary conference at De La Salle University in the middle of this year, mentioned that the reason why the definitely greater masters of Philippine comics, such as Mars Ravelo, Francisco Coching, and Tony Velasquez, were not included during the ill-fated screening and nomination process was that the members of the joint CCP and NCCA selection committee were simply not comfortable yet with the idea of selecting somebody from the comics industry as National Artist. This only revealed a strong traditional aesthetic undercurrent among the country's top art experts. Furthermore, we have already mentioned that the composer Santos was excised from the controversial short list of nominees due to the inability of some artkeepers in Malacanang to transcend their apparent traditional aesthetic framework and appreciate his modernist and postmodernist creations.

To sum this up, traditional aesthetics is a fairly articulated aesthetic system. Although it has no vocal proponents in as far as the controversy over Caparas's presidential insertion is concerned, there are indeed a number of Filipinos, some of them very powerful in the local cultural sphere, who continue to adhere to this aesthetic system. But this is without an irony, for the same artkeepers in Malacañang who turned down Santos based on traditional aesthetics, could be the same artkeepers who facilitated the presidential insertion of Caparas, this time on some aesthetic grounds other than the traditional one.

MODERNIST AESTHETICS: SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF ART

Modernist aesthetics is the system of values and criteria that blurs the once crisp line dividing high art from low art. Unlike traditional aesthetics, modern aesthetics does not confine artistic creations to productions coming from the classic seven categories of art. It therefore gives popular culture the chance of being recognized as real art. Hence, a mural painting on a busy alley could be as real an art object as a painting of a great master; or a soap opera could be as real an art object as a masterpiece of a great playwright. To illustrate this point further, if traditional aesthetics would never consider the possibility of presenting an object found from a junkyard as something artistic, modernist aesthetics has recognized as artistically legitimate Marcel Duchamp's ceramic urinal that was entitled "Fountain."

Modernist aesthetics continues to adhere to the Arnoldian ideal that art has a humanizing function, although it ceases to talk about the concepts of loftiness, sacredness, nobility, and outright didacticism. Instead, modernist aesthetics has some more down-to-earth missions for art, such as making the modern man whole again after being fractured and broken by the cold and cruel aspects of capitalism and modernization; or symbolically bringing him home again after being exiled physically or alienated metaphorically; or renewing his civilization after it had crumbled, imploded, and decayed; or building his fledgling of a nation and reinvigorating his dying nationalism; or soothing his anxieties and restoring his lost humanity (Klages 2003, Schrijver 1992, 439). In this sense, modern art becomes both a manifestation of the Nietzschean search for power that characterizes the modernist spirit and the healing balm for the adverse side effects of this same search for power. For instance, one of the pillars of philosophical modernism, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, theoretically propounded on modernity's creation in the field of cultural politics—the nation—a concept that redrew the map of Europe and assisted the consolidation of the modern states (Schrijver 1992, 439). Nonetheless, the same concept of the nation also heralded the blight of the two World Wars. Modern art was both there to build the nation and to heal the wounds inflicted by nations at odds with one another. Modernist aesthetics may be Arnoldian, like traditional aesthetics. But unlike the latter, it ceases to be metaphysical. By putting its feet solidly on the ground, it becomes existential.

If we may ask at this point what is so Arnoldian with the "rubbish" that Duchamp presented as "Fountain," the answer could be found in its contribution towards the renewal of art after it has crumbled, imploded, and decayed under the pretentious sway of traditional aesthetics. This will become clearer after understanding the succeeding feature of modernist aesthetics, which is its self-conscious drive to react against the ideals and principles earlier established by traditional aesthetics. Hence, if traditional aesthetics had practically enshrined the ideals and principles of realism and verisimilitude to the point of having a gauge as "the more realistic a creation the greater artwork it is," modernist aesthetics is out to discover styles that would undermine realism and verisimilitude. In visual arts, impressionism, surrealism, cubism, and other similar movements can be viewed as attempts to steer art away from the domination of realism and verisimilitude. The

American art critic Clement Greenberg (1960) saw this tendency as the struggle of the visual arts for independence from the narrative and the other arts, such as sculpture. Painting has to come to terms with its own nature, which is a blob of colors on flat surfaces and in exploring such nature, a multiplicity of styles bloomed. Somebody who is exclusively schooled within the parameters of traditional aesthetics would have great difficulties in appreciating, for example, the deconstructed figures of Pablo Picasso, or the nonfigurative swirls and blobs of paint by Jackson Pollock. Likewise, if traditional aesthetics had practically enshrined the ideal and principle of a well-structured narrative, modernist aesthetics is out to look for alternative narrative structures. Again, somebody who is exclusively schooled within the parameters of traditional aesthetics would have great difficulties in appreciating, for example, the stream of consciousness of James Joyce, or the intermingling of fantasy and reality in Franz Kafka. From this perspective, Duchamp's ceramic urinal would appear clearly as Arnoldian still because by its powerful parody of the great and high art, it helped in ushering in new art forms and fresh creativity.

Aside from the goal of constantly renewing art, the modernist self-conscious reaction against the ideals and principles of traditional aesthetics has a more political function. Theodor Adorno, the aesthetic theorist of the Frankfurt School, masterfully argued that the too familiar, too comfortable, and too repetitious canons of traditional aesthetics would only keep man's revolutionary spirit asleep; whereas the unfamiliar, the discomfiting, and totally new canons of modernist aesthetics can jolt this spirit awake.

Many of us would presume that the National Artist Award, as an institution, is founded on traditional aesthetics. But a close reading of its criteria, specifically numbers 2 and 3, would surprisingly reveal that the institution is solidly based on modernist aesthetics: "Artists who through the content and form of their works have contributed in building a Filipino sense of nationhood; Artists who have pioneered in a mode of creative expression or style, thus, earning distinction and making an impact on succeeding generations of artists" (National Artist Award Secretariat, n.d.).

The mandate to use art in building the Philippine nation and the necessity to create new styles and schools of art are, as aesthetic principles, very modernist. Furthermore, many of the past recipients of this same award were adherents of the same modernist styles. For instance, all of the previous recipients of the visual arts category—Napoleon Abueva and Guillermo Estrella Tolentino for sculpture; Arturo R. Luz for painting and sculpture; and Fernando C. Amorsolo, Benedicto Cabrera, Victorio C. Edades, Carlos V. Francisco, Abdulmari Asia Imao, Jose T. Joya, Ang Kiukok, Cesar Legaspi, Vicente S. Manansala, J. Elizalde Navarro, and Hernando R. Ocampo for painting—are modernists. From their ranks, including the National Artists from the other categories, come some of the most vocal critics of Caparas.

If modernist aesthetics has a history of recognizing as artwork even what seemed to be a sheer rubbish, that is Duchamp's "Fountain," would this aesthetic system be more receptive to the alleged greatness and seriousness of Caparas's productions? Based on our discussion on modernist aesthetics, we can have three parameters to test the greatness and seriousness of Caparas's comics and films: first, we can analyze if his works can yield some Arnoldian and existentialist

functions; second, if his works contain self-conscious efforts to react against traditional Philippine comics and cinema and recast them by infusing his own vision of what these comics and cinema should be; and third, if his works make the revolutionary spirit of the Filipino awake.

In analyzing whether or not Caparas's comics and films can yield some Arnoldian and existentialist functions, we may be guided by the following questions: Do Caparas's comics and films make the modern Filipino whole again after being fractured by the cold and cruel aspects of capitalism and modernization, as well as of colonialism and globalization? Do these comics and films symbolically bring the modern Filipino home after being physically exiled and metaphorically alienated? Do they renew the modern Filipino's crumbling, imploding, and decaying civilization? Do they help in building the Filipino nation? Do they soothe the modern Filipino's anxieties and restore his lost humanity?

An analysis of each of these questions would lead us to the realization that although modernist aesthetics is more open to artistic forms other than the classic seven categories of art, its standards are in no way more lenient compared to traditional aesthetics. Caparas, who is too preoccupied entertaining the people and making money by churning out popular cultural productions at a very remarkable speed, would himself simply feel dizzy when confronted with these questions. The box office sales seemed to be his only gauge for the greatness of a particular production and, obviously, he was never motivated by any of these Arnoldian and existentialist stuff.

To drive our point a little deeper, let us take a look at one of Caparas's creations, the 1997 film *Tirad Pass: The story of General Gregorio de Pilar*. The film does not belong to his signature massacre genre or to his *pito-pito* flicks, for in fact it was made with a forty-million-peso budget. Being historical and epic in scope, this film could have been his perfect vehicle for contributing something towards the enrichment of the audience's sense of nationalism. If ever Caparas would eventually grab the honor of being recognized as National Artist, this film could be the piece that Philippine schools may show to their students with an accompanying remark, "This is a work of a National Artist." But, unfortunately, due to blatant historical inaccuracies, sloppy dramatization, poor craftsmanship, careless crowd and combat choreographies, and pathetic special effects, the film could not edify the sense of nationalism of its educated viewers. Instead this would just make them roar with laughter.

In analyzing whether or not Caparas's comics and films carry some self-conscious efforts to react against traditional Philippine comics and cinema and to recast them by infusing his own vision of what these comics and cinema should be, we may be guided by the following questions: Do Caparas's comics and films demolish some clear ideals and principles of Philippine comics and cinema? Do these comics and films introduce new ideals and principles to Philippine comics and cinema that are worth pursuing by the younger generations of Filipino comics and film makers?

Caparas might be very prolific in terms of churning out comics and films, and noted as well for having created some hits, such as *Panday*, *Bakekang*, *Totoy Bato*, *Joaquin Bordado*, *Kamagong*, *Kamandag*, *Angela Markado*, and *Gagambino*, but

he is not known for critiquing traditional aspects of Philippine comics and films, or for introducing some laudable innovations to them. In fact, he is just carrying on whatever tricks and conventions he informally learned along his phenomenal rise from rags to riches. There are rumors that a typical film script written by Caparas would often contain the following bare instructions:

- Frame 1. Same scene of last frame of previous chapter.
- Frame 2. Same scene pa rin, *nag-uusap* (conversing).
- Frame 3. *Bahala ka na* (It is up to you).
- Frame 4. *Bahala ka na* (It is up to you).
- Frame 5. Nagsuntukan (Fist fight).
- Frame 6. Change angle.
- Frame 7. Your angle.
- Frame 8. *Bahala ka na* (It is up to you). (see Arao 2009)

Hence, modern aesthetics would just raise an eyebrow on Caparas's lack of aesthetic self-consciousness, that is to say, his failure to show that he was out to demolish some traditional standards of comics writing and film making followed by a consequent rebuilding of new standards that would be infused with his personal ideals and artistry.

Going back to the film *Tirad Pass*, we are certain that the Philippine cinema had already achieved, even prior to this work, some sort of ideals and standards in handling historical epics of its kind. Instead of transcending these ideals and standards, Caparas seems to slide below the existing benchmark of excellence. No Filipino filmmaker in his right mental frame should ever go back to *Tirad Pass* to scrounge for some ideals and principles that could be used to create the great Filipino film.

In analyzing whether or not Caparas's comics and films can awaken the revolutionary spirit of the Filipino, we can ask the question: are his comics and films capable of igniting in the hearts of their readers/viewers the realization that some things need to be urgently done for Philippine society? Again, Caparas is never noted for inspiring any social action. On the contrary, he has been accused of pandering to the basest emotions and tastes of the uncritical Filipino masses. Beyond the value of fleeting entertainment, his works do not leave seeds for collective action and change.

Even if modernist aesthetics is open to popular culture and even if it had a history of legitimating some truly unconventional art forms, such as Duchamp's "Fountain," its fairly stringent ideals and standards tend to negate Malacanang's aesthetic judgment concerning the greatness and seriousness of Caparas's works. The sheer number of people who consumed and appreciated his popular cultural products could not redeem the fact that his art is devoid of the modernist spirit. Even the guidelines and criteria of the National Artist Award specify that the "broad acceptance" of any nominee does not really refer to his/her being patronized by the greatest number of Filipinos. On the contrary, "broad acceptance" here is understood as previous recognitions, such as a) prestigious national and/or international recognitions, like the Gawad CCP Para sa Sining, CCP Thirteen Artists Award, and

NCCA Alab ng Haraya; b) critical acclaim and/or reviews of their works; and c) respect and esteem from peers (National Artist Award Secretariat, n.d.).

To sum this up, modernist aesthetics is even more articulated as an aesthetic system compared to traditional aesthetics. The National Artist Award as an institution appears to be infused with modernist aesthetic system, and there are a number of National Artists who themselves create modernist art. Nevertheless, it is not certain whether these modernist National Artists indeed adhere to modernist aesthetics, because it is one thing to create modernist pieces of art and entirely another thing to adhere to, and advocate for, the modernist aesthetic system. Any artist can mimic modernist pieces without understanding the whole philosophical foundations of modernism in art. Hence, modernist aesthetics may also have no vocal proponents insofar as the controversy over Caparas's presidential insertion is concerned. Nonetheless, together with traditional aesthetics, it should be the more appropriate framework to be used in assessing and appraising the alleged greatness and seriousness of Caparas's works.

PATRONAGE AESTHETICS: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ART AND POWER

Patronage aesthetics is not even a real system of values and criteria that determines what beauty is. It is simply raw power that tries to dictate what is supposed to be taken as beautiful on one hand and ugly on the other. In itself, patronage aesthetics is an unarticulated and covert system. When the Roman emperors drowned their subjects with circus and bread to prevent them from engaging in anarchy and rebellion, they naturally did not tell the people of their strategic intentions. Otherwise, the whole point of their strategy would explode on their faces.

It was Karl Marx who first exposed the deep connections between power and aesthetics. Power, in its effort to perpetuate itself, often hides behind the veil of beauty to remain unnoticed. The theorists of the Frankfurt School, led by Adorno and Max Horkheimer, showed how some forms of art, including popular culture, could reinforce the existing social order by representing it as the natural order of things and by drugging the people's revolutionary spirit to sleep. The holders of power are beset with both conscious and unconscious impulses to muddle with aesthetic matters.

"Patronage aesthetics" is indeed an appropriate term for that otherwise nameless machination done by the government to confer on Caparas the title of National Artist. Some of the most vocal critics are now saying that the same award to Caparas is no different from the fief dangled by a feudal lord/lady or baron/baroness to a loyal vassal. The son and daughter of the late dictator, who happened to have institutionalized the award back in 1972, aired their suspicion that the award in question is nothing but a payment of a political debt that was incurred by President Arroyo during the 2004 elections, when Caparas allegedly transferred to an undisclosed party the intellectual rights of the film *Panday* to prevent the late presidential candidate, Fernando Poe Jr., who was the leading actor of *Panday*, from using its themes and posters for his campaign materials. Moreover, there were talks that Caparas had already on his drawing board a biofilm project on President

Gloria Macapagal Arroyo with the multiawarded actress, Gina Alajar, taking the lead role. This would complete the scenario in which one Kapampangan is glorifying another Kapampangan and vice versa. Seen from these perspectives, it would really be difficult for a patron not to confer some sprigs of laurels on the head of such a politically useful ally.

Under this line of thinking, Marcos's insertion of Romulo as National Artist for literature, Ramos's insertion of Quirino as National Artist for historical literature, Estrada's insertion of Ernani Cuenco as National Artist for Music, Arroyo's previous insertions of Roces as National Artist for literature and Imao as National Artist for visual arts, were all instances as well of patronage aesthetics at play.

The government's insistence that Caparas is a serious and great artist is also patronage aesthetics at work in yet another level. If Lino Brocka's and Ishmael Bernal's films are too emotionally unsettling to be presented in a period when the government's legitimacy itself is being questioned, Caparas's films are just the sort of materials that can douse any revolutionary flicker in the hearts of the masses, just as the gore from the gladiatorial combats and the feeding of prisoners to wild beasts had pacified Roman subjects centuries ago. We have already stated in the preceding section that Caparas is never noted for inspiring any social action; that he is more known for pandering to the basest emotions and tastes of the uncritical Filipino masses; and that beyond the fleeting entertainment value of his works, no seeds are sown for collective action and change. But in a time of political crisis, from the point of view of holders of power, Caparas could just be the perfect artist to celebrate.

One fundamental problem with patronage aesthetics is that by itself it cannot legitimize its own aesthetic judgment. It can, as it did many times, declare somebody a National Artist, but in front of traditional and modernist artists, art critics, art connoisseurs, and the public in general who may demand some explanations, patronage aesthetics simply cannot give a coherent answer on what aesthetic ground its choice is based. This is because by its very nature, patronage aesthetics is unarticulated and covert.

The previous insertions of Romulo, Quirino, Cuenco, Roces, and Imao by Marcos, Ramos, Estrada and Arroyo, respectively, luckily, were not met with dramatic opposition from the artistic community and the public in general (Fonbuena 2009). But for the 2009 crop of National Artists, a number of circumstances converged and triggered an outrage. First, Malacanang simply crossed the line by inserting four nominees instead of the more conventional and historically tolerated single nominee. Second, Malacanang excised a nominee from the CCP and NCCA list, which was an unprecedented move. Third, Malacañang's manipulation of the CCP and NCCA list resurrected the specter of *dagdag-bawas* (increase party votes here and decrease opposition votes there) that hounded the presidency of Arroyo since the outbreak of the "Hello Garci" scandal (Arroyo allegedly talked over the phone with the chairman of the Commission on Elections to protect party votes) in 2005. Fourth, at about the same time, from 29 June to 6 August 2009, a similar controversy marred the selections and appointments of successors to retired Justices Alicia Austria-Martinez and Dante Tinga, when Malacañang requested the Judicial Bar Council to expand their previously submitted list of

nominees, and when the Judicial Bar Council stood its ground and refused to modify the said list.

But if indeed patronage aesthetics decides to proffer some explanations, it would need the language and concepts of some other more authentic aesthetic systems, such as traditional or modernist aesthetics, to do so.

The writer and critic, Butch Dalisay (2009), noted how abruptly the document "The National Artists of the Philippines guidelines" at the NCCA webpage was updated after the controversy erupted as a belated attempt to legitimize the government's decision to honor Caparas. The controversial Executive Order 236, which is supposed to guarantee that both the CCP and the NCCA can continue with their usual process of coming up with the short list of nominees, is now mentioned in the guidelines to put emphasis on the role of the Committee on Honors to assist the President in evaluating nominations for this and similar awards (Art. IV, Sec. 9; The National Artist Award Secretariat, n.d.). It is unfortunate how the NCCA had tried to shift the controversy from the aesthetic field, where it should belong, to the legal field, where it does not belong, for the simple logic that things about beauty should be discussed and settled among those who know what beauty is.

If we are to take a look at the composition of this Committee on Honors, we will be horrified to know that it is manned by (a) the Executive Secretary of the Republic, (b) the Head of the Presidential Management Staff, (c) the Presidential Assistant for Historical Affairs, (d) the Chief of Presidential Protocol, and (e) the Chief of Protocol and State Visits of the Department of Foreign Affairs (The National Artist Award Secretariat, n.d.). The very offices of these executives could assure us that men appointed to their seats would possess certain degrees of skill in statecraft and bureaucracy, but this obviously does not guarantee that these same men also possess enough knowledge and competence on matters pertaining to art and beauty.

Now that the general public is clamoring for an explanation why Caparas is given a National Artist Award, these unfortunate members of the Committee on Honors would be pressured to spin a coherent aesthetic justification, which, as we have just stated, is simply beyond their knowledge and competence. Gabriel Claudio, acting Executive Secretary at the time of interview, for example, could only say: "If we consider the nominees one by one, I think we can defend the track record and qualifications and reasons they were named as national artists" (see Sabater 2009). Clearly, this general and vague comment would not amount to any aesthetic justification.

If they really have to present some justifications, they will have no choice but to seek expert advice from some artists, art critics, and art connoisseurs, who will be sympathetic to their choice. But knowing that most of the reputable artists, art critics, and art connoisseurs have already aired their negative sentiments against the government's unfortunate decision, the Committee on Honors would have a difficult time looking for experts who are reputable enough and sympathetic to their plight, and at the same time intelligent enough to twist and spin the principles of traditional and modernist aesthetics to be able to come up with an acceptable justification.

To sum this up, patronage aesthetics may not be an articulated system, it may not even be a real aesthetic system, and it may not also have vocal proponents for the reason that it is unarticulated to begin with. However, it certainly has advocates

among the politically powerful artkeepers and holders of power in Malacañang as well as in the key cultural offices of the country. In facing the controversy that it created after imprudently naming Caparas and three other insertions as National Artists, patronage aesthetics has three options to pursue. First is to shift the debate from aesthetic to legal grounds. Since patronage aesthetics is based on the same raw power that permeates through the whole system of government, this option could prove to be a very promising one. Second is to spin aesthetic arguments using the language, categories and theories of traditional and modernist aesthetics. Since we have already demonstrated in the preceding two sections that traditional and modernist aesthetics would tend not to legitimize the artistry of Caparas, this would prove to be a tough option to take. And third is to pursue both the first and the second options simultaneously, with the hope of muddling the whole debate.

A significant question crops up at this point: if Caparas as a National Artist could not be *easily* legitimized by traditional, modernist, and patronage aesthetics, are there any attempts made so far by his supporters and progovernment artists, art critics and art connoisseurs to argue on his behalf? The answer would be a “yes” and a “no.” “Yes” in the sense that there are indeed some scattered remarks and attempts towards legitimation. But “no” in the sense that these remarks and attempts would not amount to any coherent, cohesive, and sustained legitimation. For lack of a proper term, we may group these random utterances under the name “pseudomodernist aesthetics,” as they would initially sound modernist before they would finally unravel when examined more closely.

PSEUDOMODERNIST AESTHETICS: SOME SCATTERED JUSTIFICATIONS

We can start with the pseudomodernist aesthetics of the former Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) and Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) chairman and art connoisseur, Manuel Morato. Among the few people who aesthetically vocalized their support for Caparas as National Artist, it is Morato who most probably possessess the highest knowledge and competence in as far as the arts are concerned.

One of his attempts dwelt on the quality of Caparas’s paintings. Morato was quoted as saying, “Carlo is a damn good painter and artist. I have quite a few of his works. His is an inborn talent, unlike [Cesar Legaspi] who studied it all” (see Esplanada 2009). And he insinuated that Caparas, as a painter, is even better than the previous national artists Cesar Legaspi, Benedicto Cabrera, and Arturo Luz, whose works, he claimed, are not worthy of being placed beside his own collection of European masters, such as Francisco Goya, Vincent Van Gogh, Henri Toulouse-Lautrec, Pablo Picasso, who all happened to be adherents of modernist aesthetics.

Morato seemed to suggest that being unschooled in fine arts, Caparas has the innate tendency to transgress the ideals and principles of traditional aesthetics, which in itself is a tell-tale modernist hallmark. But even if Caparas’s paintings do indeed embody this modernist spirit, it would be unfortunate to know that these paintings are not the subject of his controversial visual arts award, as these few paintings that he managed to create in his spare time would not amount to a substantial corpus. In

fact, the general public never knew before Morato mentioned this that Caparas can paint. He was supposed to be given the visual arts award for his contribution in the field of comics. On 26 August 2009, in the ABS-CBN show "Probe profiles," Caparas desperately showed some of his ink drawings to host Cheche Lazaro, literary writer and critic Dalisay, and the late film critic Alexis Tioseco, to prove that he has some talent insofar as drawing and painting are concerned. He totally missed the whole point, for the issue was not whether or not he can draw and paint, but whether or not his works in the field of comics can boost his claim to greatness in Philippine visual arts. Clearly, Morato's modernist aesthetic legitimization of Caparas's paintings would lead us nowhere.

When he started to present his legitimization of Caparas's contribution to comics, Morato ceased to use any modernist language and concepts. All he said was that Caparas wrote more than 800 novels for comics, that he revived the Philippine comics industry, that he successfully crossed over from comics to television and film, and that he advocated the use of the Filipino language. Unfortunately, all these arguments still failed to legitimize Caparas's supposed greatness insofar as the visual arts aspect of comics writing is concerned. Morato's mention of the more than 800 novels and scripts that Caparas wrote for comics would actually not be very helpful for the embattled artist's cause. Because this would easily lead to the unsettling question: out of these hundreds of works, how many are really worth remembering? Morato's effort to dazzle the general public with such a huge figure would only betray the miserable hit and miss process that Caparas employed to come up with his sheer handful of unforgettable creations.

But the biggest question that Morato needed to hurdle here was how can Caparas be the greatest visual artist in Philippine comics when he was not even the one who illustrated the majority of the scripts that he wrote? For some examples, *Panday* and *Pieta* were illustrated by Steve Gan; *Anak ng Lupa*, by Nestor Malgapo; *Bakekang*, by Mar Santana; *Totoy Bato*, by Tor Infante; and *Kroko*, by Hal Santiago (see Alanguilan 2009b). In the same episode of the "Probe profiles," Caparas reasoned to no avail that indeed he started out as a comics illustrator, but because comics scriptwriting is easier and faster, he abandoned the job of illustrating. His justification that scriptwriting is more lucrative than illustrating only placed him in an even worse light, for an artist is supposed to be faithful to his craft even in the face of financial challenges. Thus, even if Morato can justify that Caparas is the greatest novelist, or script writer, in the Philippine comics industry, the visual arts category would not still be the right award for the latter, because novel and script writing simply belong to the category of literature. We have to remember that for such category, Caparas has to prove his worth against the more respected and serious writer, Lazaro Francisco.

What makes Caparas's National Artist title more difficult to legitimize is that the government had rashly decided to honor him for his supposed excellence in two categories, namely, the visual arts and the film. This means that the Committee on Honors and all those artists, art critics, and art connoisseurs, who are sympathetic to Caparas, owe the general public two explanations: first, on the greatness of Caparas in the field of comics illustration, which we have already shown to be an impossible

task; and second, on his greatness in the field of film, which as we have already shown in the preceding two sections is an extremely difficult task, though not impossible.

If Morato failed to give a coherent and viable justification for the visual arts aspect of Caparas's award, was he able to present a better explanation for the film aspect? Aside from the already mentioned crossover from comics to television and film, all that Morato can do was to blurt out that Bienvenido Lumbera, National Artist for literature, was a pornographer. At surface reading, this is entirely absurd, because granting that what Lumbera supposedly watched at the UP film center were pornographic works, his fault would never bolster the greatness of Caparas. On a deeper reading, the conservative Morato, who is associated with the equally conservative religious group, Opus Dei, is actually implying here that Caparas is a better artist than Lumbera because the Caparas films are not known to transgress the norms of sexual decency. Nevertheless, this argument is still absurd, because the sheer consistency of upholding the norms of sexual decency would never amount to artistic greatness. All children's films and all religious films certainly do not deviate from such norms, but clearly not all of these films would automatically qualify as great works of art. Plainly, the massacre and the *pito-pito* films of Caparas prove to be very difficult to defend as the highest expressions of Philippine cinema even by the very loquacious Morato, who happens to have enough credentials to talk about film, being a former MTRCB chairman.

Dante Jimenez, chair of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC), presented a more elaborate justification of Caparas as National Artist for film. We may examine his argument as our second specimen of a legitimation that veers towards another pseudomodernist aesthetics. Jimenez emphasized the idea that Caparas's massacre films, which he carefully renamed as "justice films," rendered a valuable service to the sector of our society that was victimized by heinous crimes. These films, Jimenez claimed, have raised the level of consciousness of the general public about the plight of this sector that his VACC represents. He cited, as his examples, *The Myrna Diones story*, *Lipa massacre*, and *Vizconde massacre: God help us*, which allegedly oiled the wheels of justice prompting the courts to swiftly punish the criminals involved in the films' respective real life references (see Montano 2009). Jimenez even dramatized his frustrations against the other more reputable artists by asking where they were when the families of the massacre victims needed them most, and whether they have ever lent their art to the service of the sector that each represents.

Jimenez's emphasis on the social and political dimensions of art made his argument sound modernist. But we have to remember that for an artwork to be beautiful and great, from the perspective of modernist aesthetics, it is not enough that it carries some mission for the modern man, for it is also as important that its form and expression should embody the modernist spirit that is characterized by the drive to demolish the traditional standards of beauty followed by a consequent rebuilding using the artist's own personal innovations. As already mentioned in the preceding sections, looking at Caparas's films, it is very difficult to notice such modernist artistry, for we will be confronted instead with tired clichés and worn out conventions that were obviously aimed at just titillating the unschooled taste buds

instead of uplifting humanity. Hence, filmmaker Celso Ad Castillo referred to Caparas's films as equivalent to "tabloids" and actor Leo Martinez, who is the director general of the Film Academy of the Philippines, commented that awarding Caparas with the highest honor for film merely reduced the National Artist Award into a joke (see Samonte 2009).

Granting that Jimenez was right that the massacre films are positively educational, rather than potential propagators of more violence, Caparas could be recognized as a great citizen, but not necessarily as a great filmmaker. If we will follow Jimenez's rather narrow aesthetic logic, then we will be forced to nominate Gus Abelgas, with his *SOCO*, and Ben Tulfo, with his *Bitag*, for the next National Artist Award in film, or the crime scene documentaries of the National Geographic Channel and Discovery Channel for the next Nobel Prize, for the same reason that they have successfully raised the level of awareness of the general public on the plight of the victims of heinous crimes. These people and programs are no doubt rendering valuable service to humanity, but this simply does not mean that they are great filmmakers, who have great art pieces as well.

In an attempt to legitimize his naming as National Artist for visual arts and film, Caparas himself laid out another argument that veers towards another pseudomodernist aesthetic legitimation. By taking shelter on the theme of elite domination of the art, he sounded like a Marxist cultural critic who is trying to defend the popular culture of the masses from the bigotry and intolerance of the schooled, discerning and "English speaking" art critics and art connoisseurs from the upper classes. Caparas asserted, "I am a National Artist who came from the masses. I work and struggle with them" (see Alave and San Diego 2009).

But the true modernist aesthetics, especially if it wanders into the parameters of Marxist cultural criticism, is not just about ceding to popular culture the status of real art. Rather, it is more about challenging the calcified institutions and politics to transform themselves into authentic, humanitarian, and egalitarian features of our society. But Caparas's comics and films seem to do just the opposite. A number of his works do explore social themes, but instead of challenging institutions and politics, they tend to numb the senses of the readers/viewers and send their revolutionary spirits to sleep. Hence, what was initially framed as a modernist aesthetic self-legitimation by Caparas is nothing but a pseudomodernist whining that begged for sympathy from the lower classes and left-leaning individuals. The real art for the lower classes should not only give beauty to their senses, it should more importantly incite them towards a struggle to give birth to a more beautiful and just world.

The entertainment journalist Ricky Lo (2009) also argued for Caparas. His aesthetic justifications are rather hazy, but they possess some streaks of pseudomodernist aesthetics. Lo's first proof of Caparas's greatness is the fact that the latter had achieved something in the comics, film, and television industry despite the disadvantage of not being able to finish high school. Secondly, Lo mentioned Caparas's previous recognitions, such as having a street named after him, and being multi-awarded, including a citation for having helped in the propagation of the national language. Thirdly, Lo again brought up Caparas's legendary crossing over from comics to film and television that was already elaborated by Morato. Fourthly,

he reminded us of the great bulk of Caparas's publications. Then Lo summed up his argument by saying, "In short, Carlo has championed popular literature."

Unfortunately, Lo's aesthetic legitimation failed to establish that Caparas is the greatest among the living and the recently dead artists in the comics, film, and television industry. Lo did not even bother to prove that Caparas is the greatest in the sphere of popular culture, by carefully showing evidence of the artist's separate statures in the comics, film and television industries.

To sum this up, there are a number of attempts made by supporters and sympathizers of Caparas which at first glance would appear to be instances of modern aesthetic legitimation. But because of their fragmentary nature, their lack of thoroughness and focus, and their deficient foundation insofar as real knowledge of modernist aesthetics is concerned, they fall short of their intended goals. For lack of a proper term, we label these attempts as instances of "pseudo-modernist aesthetics."

A similar significant question crops up again at this point: If traditional, modernist, patronage, and even pseudomodernist aesthetic systems could not satisfactorily defend the seriousness and greatness of Caparas as an artist, is there still another aesthetic system that can be invoked in this controversy? The fact is there is, which unfortunately did not emerge during the controversy and which may not be reflective of the sentiments of the majority of Filipinos who followed the dispute, and this is postmodernist aesthetics (see Jameson 1991). Before finally wrapping up this paper, we may take a look at this last aesthetic system and discern if it can offer a helping hand to the beleaguered government and the equally beleaguered National Artist.

POSTMODERNIST AESTHETICS: ART WITHOUT COMMITMENTS

As its name suggests, postmodernist aesthetics is related to the modernist one. In fact, it is both an offshoot and a reaction to this earlier aesthetic system. Hence, just like modernist aesthetics, the postmodernist kind is also open to artistic creations other than those coming from the classic seven categories of art, and tends to blur the distinction between high and low art. Postmodern aesthetics, therefore, gives popular culture another chance to be recognized as a legitimate artistic expression. Yet postmodern aesthetics is not burdened with the modernist aesthetic conviction that art has some missions to accomplish for the modern man, such as making him whole again after being fractured and broken by the cold and cruel aspects of capitalism and modernization; or symbolically bringing him home again after being exiled physically or alienated metaphorically; or renewing his civilization after it had crumbled, imploded, and decayed; or building his fledgling nation and reinvigorating his dying nationalism; or soothing his anxieties and restoring his lost humanity (Klages 2003; Schrijver 1992, 440). Beyond the aesthetic pleasures that art offers, postmodern aesthetics does not promise any additional moral, social, political, spiritual, or existential values. Thus, Quentin Tarentino's *Pulp fiction*, for example, which is utterly flat insofar as these values are concerned, would be considered a great postmodernist film.

Moreover, postmodernist aesthetics does not share the modernist obsession with reacting against the ideals and principles of traditional aesthetics, and is therefore happy with the pastiche of traditional and modernist styles (Klages 2003). Thus, for example, Roy Lichensteins's paintings, which are nothing but seemingly effortless magnification of a frame from a comic strip into a huge canvas, would be considered a great postmodern painting. As another example, the fusion of classical Greek columns and modern facades would be considered a fine postmodern architecture.

Being tolerant of popular culture, having no demands for commitment towards uplifting humanity and social struggle, and having no requirement for strict adherence to any style, postmodern aesthetics looks promising for Caparas's bid to be recognized as a serious and great artist. But would postmodernist aesthetics indeed legitimize Caparas's popular cultural productions? The answer, however, would not be a simple yes or no.

Postmodern aesthetics would indeed be tolerant of Caparas's art and would not raise its eyebrows on the kind of people who truly appreciate his creations. If some people indeed enjoy Caparas's works, then postmodernist aesthetics would easily affirm his greatness. But there are technical aspects of postmodern aesthetics that would make the whole system rather uncongenial to the project of justifying his worth as a National Artist.

First, postmodern aesthetics has a natural abhorrence to hierarchies and canons. This makes questions such as, "Is Caparas greater than Mars Ravelo?" or "Is Caparas greater than Celso Ad Castillo?" or "Is Caparas greater than Dolphy?" hardly sensible. Postmodern aesthetics revels in diversity, pluralism, tolerance, and openness. If people enjoy and appreciate certain artistic creations, let them enjoy and appreciate them. But asking for some recognition that some artistic creations are greater than other creations would already curtail the diverse, plural, tolerant, and open celebration of beauty. In other words, postmodern aesthetics contradict the very logic of the National Artists Award, an institution which is mandated to search for hierarchies of greatness among Filipino artists. This makes postmodern aesthetics a fairly useless framework for Caparas and his supporters and sympathizers.

Second, postmodern aesthetics is highly suspicious of political intrusions on the sphere of art. Such suspicion is again based on the premise of the postmodern diverse, plural, tolerant, and open celebration of beauty, as well as on the postmodern mood of incredulity towards grand discourses of power. Hence, it would create a big issue out of the presidential insertion and patronage aesthetics that allegedly benefited Caparas and three other National Artists. This makes postmodern aesthetics, for a second count, a fairly useless framework for Caparas and his supporters and sympathizers.

Third, even though postmodern aesthetics is not stringent on adherence to a particular style, it still requires a good grasp of aesthetic principles and theories and puts an emphasis on craftsmanship. Tarantino's *Pulp fiction*, for example, is not just about some sloppy and random "quotations" from popular culture and past films, but is founded on the filmmaker's almost encyclopedic knowledge of film history and his hands-on approach to almost all aspects of production. From this point of view, Caparas's sloppiness would still appear sloppy, just as his random

style would still appear random. This makes postmodern aesthetics a little bit unfriendly to his creations.

Fourth, postmodern aesthetics is still an alien system to Filipinos in general. In fact, many Filipinos remain uncomfortable even with modernist aesthetics. For example, it is not uncommon to see a Filipino lumping together all nonfigurative and semifigurative modernist styles under a single category, "abstract art." Furthermore, we have already mentioned that the composer Santos was supposedly excised from the CCP and NCCA list of nominees due to the failure of Malacañang's artkeepers to grasp the ideals and standards of modernist and postmodernist music. This makes postmodern aesthetics, for a second count, a little bit unfriendly to Caparas's creations.

To sum this up, postmodern aesthetics is an articulated aesthetic system, and although it has no vocal proponents in as far as the controversy is concerned, it is potentially tolerant of the kind of art that Caparas produced. But because this aesthetic system abhors hierarchies and political intrusions, requires some good grasp of aesthetic theories and principles as well as high levels of craftsmanship, and is yet unfamiliar to many Filipinos, it may not be a very useful framework to be used in legitimating Malacañang's decision of making Caparas a National Artist.

CONCLUSION

So far, this paper examined the creations of Caparas from the perspectives of traditional, modernist, patronage, pseudomodernist, and even postmodernist aesthetics. It was revealed by the series of individual studies that in view of some specific reasons, none of these aesthetic systems could present an adequate, coherent, and watertight aesthetic legitimation of the seriousness and greatness of Caparas's works.

On 19 August 2009, a group of National Artists composed of Virgilio Almario, Benedicto Cabrera, Napoleon Abueva, and Arturo Luz, together with some academicians and members of the Concerned Artists of the Philippines, filed a petition at the Supreme Court to restrain the actual conferment of the award and review the legality of the government's insertion. The respondents of this said petition were the Executive Secretary of the Republic, the Department of Budget and Management, the CCP, the NCCA, Cecille Guidote-Alvarez, Caparas, Jose Moreno, and Francisco Manosa. On 25 August 2009, the Supreme Court promptly issued a temporary restraining order and instructed the respondents of the said petition to present their response within ten days.

The controversy had finally shifted from the aesthetic field into the legal one. The question that the Supreme Court has to settle is no longer whether or not Caparas is the most serious and the greatest among the present and the recently-dead Filipino visual artist and film makers, but has changed into whether or not the President of the Republic was acting legally when she inserted the names of Caparas and the three others, into the recommendations made by the legitimate selection committee. Clearly, an aesthetic matter is something that cannot be settled in a nonaesthetic field. Thus, whatever the decision of the Supreme Court would be, the aesthetic

question of the greatness of Caparas's comics and films would continue to hound the Filipinos.

On 15 September 2009, Agnes Devanadera, Solicitor General of the Republic and acting Justice Secretary, submitted the government's reply in a form of a comment to dismiss the case on the ground that it is supposed to be moot. She argued that although the Supreme Court restrained the government from ceremonially conferring the medals and other privileges to the seven new National Artists, the Presidential Proclamations that were already issued conferred upon them the honor of being recognized as National Artists. With or without the actual ceremony, Devanadera stressed, the seven are already proclaimed National Artists. She even mentioned the case of Fernando Poe Jr., who despite his heirs' refusal to accept the medal and other benefits, is still reckoned today as one of our National Artists.

The controversy had already unmasked the conclave-like secrecy that shrouded the selection of the National Artists, had exposed the phenomenon of "presidential insertion," and had revealed that previous National Artists Romulo, Quirino, Cuenco, Roces, and Imao are just as dubious as the latest National Artists Alvarez, Caparas, Moreno, and Manosa. We can only hope that "presidential insertions" would eventually become things of the past and the succeeding National Artists would really be individuals whose works can be legitimized as great creations in any of the legitimate aesthetic systems.

It is important that independent of the Supreme Court's rulings, we as a people should be able to address and resolve the aesthetic question surrounding Caparas's works. In this way, as a people we will be able to grasp what beauty is for us, who its greatest creators are from among us, and finally budge forward our implicit aesthetics towards a more articulated and conscious stage.

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ACKNOWLEDGING THE OTHER: A MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS OF RACE AND IDENTITY

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I attempt to conceptualize racism through an acknowledgement and evaluation of ethnoracial "difference." The multidimensionalities of ethnoracial definition and experience as well as of racist expression have prompted the multidisciplinary nature of the analytic work necessary to understand them. Although I focus upon the core issue of individual racism with special reference to moral issues, I also explore ethical and socio-political implications of racial identification, and make some suggestions concerning future developments with regard to appreciation and acknowledgement of otherness within South African society.

INTRODUCTION

In order to understand racism, one needs to understand why it takes various forms. Consider antiblack racism that has cast such long historical shadows over the United States and South Africa. How can it be explained why one would disregard blacks as *blacks*—unless perhaps one had some color phobia? Is it sufficient to identify the presence of racialized contempt or the perception of another group as humanly inferior?

A discussion of the immorality of racism must take into account its causes, what a person is responsible for; a person's character; the extent to which she can control aspects of her desires and other fundamental issues in moral philosophy. Moreover, it must do so in relation to a specific theory of racism—of what it is.

According to Levine (2004, 87-88):

There is a tendency for moral philosophers to give psychologically superficial causal accounts of racism and to claim, in varying degrees, that such causal accounts are either otiose or relatively neutral with regard to either an explanation of the immorality of racism, or to grasping the nature of racism. This pitfall needs to be avoided. In-depth causal accounts of racism are essential for both tasks. It is also necessary—and this seems obvious—for any strategy to curtail racism. It is perhaps less clear, but nonetheless the case, that any historical causal account of racism that

gestures towards completeness must likewise include a complex psychological account as the key ingredient.

Taking a preliminary look at racial prejudice and sexual discrimination, both would seem to entail the presence of contempt or a contempt-like reaction. However, it may turn out one is not really despising others because of their skin color, sexual preference, etc., but rather because of how those others are being psychically portrayed (Levine 2004, 93-94). All of the causal factors of prejudice may be exacerbated or quelled to a degree by the particularities of one's own personal, social, political, cultural, and historical circumstances. Thus, James Baldwin (1967, 19; cited in Levine 2004, 94) hits the nail on the head when he writes:

White people in this country [the U.S.] will have quite enough to do in learning how to accept and love themselves and each other, and when they have achieved this...the Negro problem will no longer exist, for it will no longer be needed.

Racism, like other prejudices, may be grounded in character defects and a variety of psychological disorders and problems. Thus, an explanation of the immorality of racism would at least include reference to the moral reprehensibility of having such a character—and one's responsibility for that character along with associated traits. This is undoubtedly true of other forms of immorality as well. It would also speak of the extent to which such features are under one's control and how the issue of control is related to moral responsibility. Even if it is hard to change, this does not necessarily give the racist an excuse. However, it does help us grasp the range of racist phenomena, morally and otherwise, better.

These considerations considerably complicate the role or significance of a person's motivation when assessing moral culpability because motivation itself becomes a complex and problematic category. One is motivated on various levels, conscious and unconscious, and in many, often-conflicting ways. These are complex issues, yet given an adequate explanation of racism, they are also the ones that must be addressed. I try to do this in this paper by circumscribing the salient phenomena of my investigation. Then I amplify my understanding of racism and the broader context within which the concept functions. Thereafter, I focus upon the core issue of individual racism with special reference to various interpersonal moral issues. Next, I examine the moral and socio-political implications of racial identification. Finally, I survey certain troublesome racial-transformational issues within South African society, and make some suggestions concerning future developments.

ON RACE AND RACISM(S)

Before considering what a philosophical account of racial identity should look like, I need to clarify certain key terms. I shall speak of racisms rather than racism. Racisms are forms of ideology and practice that serve to inferiorize and exclude (or include in subordinate positions) all groups whose boundaries are defined in terms of an ethnic or collective origin. The boundaries do not have to be racialized for

racist exclusions to operate. A restrictive use of racism is unhelpful. The use of racial distinctions is essentially related to forms of social relations at historically specific times and to the ways in which these relations maintain fundamental inequalities in power. Racisms and associated practices of discrimination are integral to the capitalist system, but rest on ideological arguments and theory (Blaut 1992).

According to Anthias (1996, 30-31), racisms can be regarded as

...the extreme form of the exclusionary face of ethnic phenomena... Other forms of exclusionary face of ethnic phenomena are to be found in ethnocentrism (the belief in the naturalness or taken-for-granted superiority of the ways of being of the ethnic group) and xenophobia or the dislike of outsiders that becomes racist when the group has power to exclude in a diverse number of ways... There are more or less benevolent forms of the articulation of ethnic processes. Ethnicity is dedicated to the boundary formation and assertion in the face of difference and threat to the group; whether the group is more or less powerful will determine the form it takes. Racisms are dedicated to maintaining existing borders and resisting usurpation by subordinate groups or attempting to dominate over these groups. It is both defensive and expansionist—defensive of the border but expansionist in terms of areas of domination over other groups and resources. Ethnicity is a resource that can be marshaled in the exercise of both usurpation and exclusion and can be used by both racists and anti-racists in order to provide effective political mobilization through the assertion of common interests that override those of class and gender.

Therefore, racisms are not static phenomena, but are renewed and transformed:

They are malleable and changeable, adapting to new conditions and targeted at different race groups at different times. Racisms do not stay still; they change shape, size, contours, purpose and function—with changes in the economy, the social structure, the system and, above all, the challenges, the resistances to that system. (Sivananadan 1983, 2)

So racisms do not rely only on race categorization, but use the ethnic category more generally as their essential building block. The historical manifestations of racisms, however, are linked to a diversity of economic and political projects and do not, therefore, emanate exclusively from ethnic processes. Nevertheless, racisms need not rely on a process of racialization in the sense of constructing their objects in “race” terms. As Balibar (1991, 21) has suggested, it is possible to think of “racism without race.” Racisms can also use the notion of the undesirability of groups that need not be conceptualized in explicit racial terms but as others more generally. This may lead to attempts to assimilate, exterminate, or exclude groups. Such attempts may be justified by the negative attribution given to culture, ethnic identity, and personality as well as racial stock. For example, anti-Muslim racism in the West relies on notions of the “non-civilized” and supposedly inferior and

undesirable character of Islamic religion and way of life, rather than an explicit notion of biological inferiority. However, what permits us to refer to all these discourses and practices as racist is to be found in the attribution of collective features to a given population. This population is endowed with fixed, unchanging, and negative characteristics, and subjected to relations of inferiorization and exclusion.

Indeed, the question of power and differential damaging effects are central to racisms. For example, subordinated and powerless groups may hold beliefs that other groups are inferior. Such beliefs and attitudes may be characterized as racist, but they are not coterminous with the racisms propagated by dominant powerful groups. This is because the beliefs of powerless groups cannot produce social effects of subordination and inferiorization. Thus, racisms are not just about beliefs or statements (discourse in this narrow sense). They involve the ability to impose those worldviews as hegemonic, and as a basis for a denial of rights or equality. Racisms are thus embedded in power relations of different types. From this point of view, although blacks may be racist in terms of believing that some groups are endemically inferior, they do not usually possess the power to harm them in a severe and systematic manner.

UNDERSTANDING RACISMS AND THEIR SOCIOCULTURAL NEXUS

Theories and typologies of racism are legion, but in the light of my earlier critical remarks, I need to make some suggestions in order to shore up my analysis of racial identity. The conceptualization of the relationship between race and racism has led to some confusion. As mentioned above, some critical researchers eschew the term race and prefer the notion of *racism without races*. The goal of my conceptualization of racisms is not to specify the essential nature of racisms (i.e., to propose an ontology or social theory of racisms), or to argue that racism is a set of beliefs in contrast to a set of practices, or vice versa. I shall employ a definition that seems both accurate and serviceable insofar as it can be used to explore racisms in their connections to society, culture, institutions, history, and life-world. However, I shall be concerned mainly with individual racism, bearing in mind that this cannot be understood without acknowledging its embeddedness within larger contexts and structures. Racisms must be analyzed, for example, in connection with the implementation of laws, in daily communications and practices, in popular culture, and in systems of power. Nevertheless, the goal of the construction below is not to attempt to give a comprehensive analysis of racisms, but rather to provide a conceptualization that may permit the kind of evaluation required to acknowledge ethno-racial "difference."

In his neat encapsulation of racism, Jones (1997, 280) alludes to three dimensions:

Racism results from the transformation of race prejudice and/or ethnocentrism through the exercise of power against a racial group defined as inferior, by individuals and institutions with the intentional or unintentional support of the entire culture.

Hereby are a number of aspects emphasized and identified: *ideology* (ethnocentrism) and attitudes of racial superiority (*individual racism*); institutional power as a means of implementing ideological biases (*institutional racism*); and the broad-based cultural support of an ethno- and culture-centric ideology (*cultural racism*).

An immediate insight from these definitions is that racism at an individual level may represent mostly the post hoc rationalization of racist actions that are impelled primarily by sociocultural imperatives "helpfully" institutionalized as ideology. Now, if it were somehow possible to separate interest-group-manipulated institutions from their cultural hearts, racisms would lose their ideological veils, appear exactly what they are, and thereby lose legitimacy. However, even if we were able to wipe out expressions of the personal bases of racisms, institutional racism would not thereby be diminished.

I want now to introduce the form of racism that I will mostly be concerned with in this paper, namely neoracism. Neoracists construct an ensemble of differences or meanings of uniformly constructed groups. Such groups may no longer be labeled as races but as cultures, ethnicities, peoples, nations, foreigners, immigrants, and so on. Neoracists evaluate this ensemble of differences or meanings while attributing superiority to themselves or their group, and inferiority to others. In neoracism, the naturalization of the ensemble of differences or meanings takes on a different look. Typically, they argue that these differences or meanings can be found not in the biology of "these people," but in their culture. In neglecting the historical dimension of culture, however, they naturalize the concept of culture. Thus, neoracists employ the concept of culture in the same manner as the concept of race has been employed. They do not refer to racial purity, but to the dangers of a multicultural society. Often, they refer not to a particular racial group but to the unemployed immigrant as a parasite. These neoracist ideological-discursive constructions are used to legitimize, recommend, and enforce actions over other ethnic groups. The power might be expressed in the denial of political rights for immigrants, for example, that are routinely enjoyed by members of the dominant culture. Once more, though, I want to point out that individual racism can only be comprehended within the context of societal, cultural, and institutional racism. Although I shall mainly be concerned with the former, especially antiblack racism, the latter varieties are not traits or diseases solely of individuals—they are dimensions of Euro-American colonialism and culture. I shall presently consider the functionality of racist thinking for different individuals and explore the narcissistic dimension when the other is devalued and left outside.

There are various dimensions to this neoracist phenomenon, one of which can be termed racial consciousness. This refers to a set of beliefs about perceived differences between human groupings based on color, physical type, and culture. Such beliefs may be widely held, but they tend to be loosely articulated, expressed in popular attitudes and behavior patterns, but not systematized in a body of theory or scientific discourse. Racial consciousness usually postulates a hierarchical ordering through emphasis upon correlation

between racial and cultural differences. In this respect Theodore Allen (1993, 22) writes:

When an emigrant population from 'multicultural' Europe goes to North America or South Africa and there, by constitutional fiat, incorporates itself as the 'white race', that is no part of genetic evolution. It is rather a political act: the invention of 'the white race'.

For most of the time white people speak about nothing but white people, it is just that they couch it in terms of "people" in general. According to Allen (1993, 3), research shows that in Western representation whites are overwhelmingly and disproportionately predominant, have the central and elaborated roles, and above all are placed as the norm—the ordinary—the standard. An important stream of studies, therefore, has exposed the extent to which the racial order imperceptibly functions around the comfort, convenience, affirmation, solidarity, psychological well-being, advantage, and advancement of whites. Despite the way in which white people experience their social space as culturally neutral and individually determined, whiteness has a definite cultural content, characterized by assumptions, belief systems, value structures, and institutional and discursive options that frame white people's self-understanding (Frankenberg 1993, 191-235). Over the past decade or more, a body of scholarship systematically has exposed the constructedness of the "white race" itself—how racializing processes have limited membership and shifted boundaries according to perceived group interests in different historical contexts.¹ These operate through strategies of inclusion and exclusion, while at all times they police the privileged access to resources for those who count as members (Lipsitz 1998, 19-25; Roediger 1991, 43-64; 1994, 181-98).

Cultural racism, as a theory, needs to prove the superiority of Europeans, and needs to do so without recourse to the older arguments from religion and from biology. The claim is that nearly all of the important cultural innovations that historically generate cultural progress occurred first in Europe, then, later, diffused to the non-European peoples (Blaut 1992, 294). Therefore, at each moment in history, Europeans are more advanced than non-Europeans in overall cultural development (though not necessarily in each particular culture trait), and they are more progressive than non-Europeans. This is asserted as a great bundle of apparently empirical facts about invention and innovation, not only of material and technological traits, but also of political and social traits like the state, the market, the family. The tellers of this tale saturate history with European inventions, European progressiveness, and European progress.

Hitherto, I have been examining the following aspects of the definition of racisms that I am employing in this paper: *the transformation of race prejudice through the exercise of power against a racial group defined as inferior by institutions with the intentional or unintentional support of the entire culture.* My purpose has been to try to understand the nature and causes of racisms, along with their social and political implications. What I have omitted until now is the moral or personal and individual dimension.

MORAL IMPLICATIONS

In her account of racism, Adrian Piper (1990, 285-310) characterizes individual racism as a defective theory of personhood sustained by a need to maintain the conceptually unified integrity of the self. What seems to be involved in such a defective or inauthentic personhood would be a false understanding of both oneself and the world. If I am untrue to myself, I say one thing and do another. Not only do I cease to be trusted by others, but eventually, if not immediately, I cease to know myself as well. I become unrooted, subject to external pressures, and unsure of my directions and ability to act on my deepest insights about life and myself. Piper thinks the racist is such a person. However, David Kim argues that Piper's account is overly rationalized. For him, what is central to racism is the presence of racial contempt. He (1999, 111, 113) defines contempt as "...a finely blended compound of disgust and pride [which]...involves a sense of offense due to the perceived baseness of its object or target."

Kim (1999, 116) correctly recognizes that contempt is central to some of the dominant forms of individual racism and that "many racist trait ascriptions are best understood in terms of contemptuous regard." He (1999, 109) applies this analysis to three types "to highlight unity among and differences between the psychic alloys of white supremacists, ordinary visceral racists, and paternalistic racists," seeking to show how contempt provides a vision of the normative structure of the worlds of these three types of racists. Referring to the second type (the ordinary visceral racist), Kim mentions the Piper (1992, 19) "litmus test" for racism, requiring one to stare "intently at someone's face, point out and compliment 'black' facial features and ask if he or she has any blacks in her bloodline." The deep disgust or contempt elicited upon being forced suddenly to identify with black bodies would be profoundly revelatory of the person's racism.

These accounts all have something valuable to add to any attempt to unravel what is morally salient about racisms and I shall return to additional aspects of them later. Two issues follow from the foregoing considerations. The first is one already touched upon: Given this way of understanding racisms, is a different kind of explanation of the immorality of racisms appropriate? It seems that a different kind of explanation is required from that offered by, say, Piper, Kim, or Garcia (as we shall see). It is necessary that it be rooted specifically in the nature of racisms rather than with what racisms or racist behavior has in common with other immoral behavior. As argued by Piper, racism, like other prejudices, is grounded in character defects and a variety of psychological disorders and problems.

Such considerations considerably complicate the role or significance of a person's motivation when assessing moral responsibility. Extensive self-deception involves considerable effort on the part of the one being self-deceived, and such deception is always motivated and intentional. It is also far more prevalent than many people realize.

Garcia (1996, 33) says, "Output-driven concepts [such as being dangerous or harmful] cannot suffice to ground assigning any moral status, because vice and virtue are by nature tied to the action's motivation." However, morally assessing an

action in relation to an agent's vice and virtue involves more than merely tying it to its motivation; and tying it to its motivation is a complex matter. There are often deep-underlying psychological and conflicting motives and issues of character to consider when one is assessing moral responsibility and a person's vice and virtue. Output-driven concepts are, as Garcia (1996, 33) maintains, often useful for moral judgment because they "can help us to decide whether the action is negligent or malicious or otherwise vicious." Racisms and prejudices are apparent insofar as we are psychologically constituted as we are beings who routinely and unavoidably make use of various defense mechanisms, who repress, project, maintain conflicting attitudes and beliefs, and so on. This becomes especially evident in what has been termed "symbolic" or "aversive" racism.

Within the South African context, forms of "aversive" racism have become particularly salient during the past decade. This term was coined by Kovel (1970, 54) and elaborated by Gaertner and Dovidio (1986, 66) who expand it to refer to various strategic practices among those who

...consciously endorse egalitarian values and who would not discriminate openly or directly, or in any way that could be attributed to 'racism'. However, because of their negative feelings they would discriminate, often unintentionally, when their behavior could be justified on the basis of some factor other than race, or when the situation was ambiguous in nature.

A growing body of research (Fazio et. al., 1995; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998) demonstrates that whites immediately categorize blacks racially, and negative stereotypes and attitudes are automatically activated. Consequently, bias can continue to occur at the personal level or in terms of practices that subtly disadvantage blacks or fail to provide blacks the support that whites receive. According to Gaertner and Dovidio, while shame and the threat of being ostracized by society for holding overtly racist views have served the purpose of decreasing acts of overt racism, they have been much less successful at eliminating them. The shame of the past and the subsequent need for whites in particular to protect themselves from self-contempt, may be responsible for this shift towards a more subtle—yet more dangerous—form of racism.

Consider the responses in the press to Hashim Amla's refusal to wear, for religious reasons, the South African Breweries ("Castle lager") logo on his cricket shirt. *Sports Illustrated* editor Simon Borchardt (2008) was perhaps the most prominent among the many voices raised in condemnation of Amla's stance on the grounds that "Castle effectively pays a portion of the players' salaries, yet Amla has not turned down that alcohol-tinged cash."

Undoubtedly, Borchardt, along with many other South Africans, professes strong egalitarian values and believes that he is not prejudiced. However, they also possess negative feelings and beliefs that they are unaware of, or that they try to dissociate from their images of themselves as nonprejudiced. These negative feelings may be rooted in common cognitive, motivational, and sociocultural forces. Consequently, convictions of fairness, justice, and equality, along with the most

unavoidable development of racial biases, form the basis of the ambivalence that they experience. The ambivalence produces more subtle and indirect manifestations of discrimination than more traditional, overt forms of prejudice. Whether aversive racists actively discriminate against blacks depends largely on the situation. Because they consciously endorse egalitarian values, they do not discriminate against blacks in situations in which discrimination would be obvious to others and themselves. They will only do so when they can justify their behavior on the basis of factors other than race. In this way, they can maintain their nonprejudiced self-images and continue to believe that they treat members of all races fairly. Nevertheless, even though they are unaware of it, the behavior of aversive racists can have potentially harmful and debilitating effects on their victims.

The subtlety and apparent unintentional character of such contemporary forms of racism can contribute to racial distrust and tension. Because aversive racists are unaware of their own prejudice and discriminate only when a negative response towards the other can be justified based on some factor other than race, they tend to underestimate the impact of race. They certainly dismiss racism as a motive for *their* behavior. From the perspective of the discriminated persons, the inconsistent behavior of whites and their denial of personal bias can lead to questions about the sincerity of these responses. Whereas whites may be insensitive to seeing racism anywhere, their victims may be sensitive to seeing it virtually anywhere.

This leads me to my final question. What are the prospects for white people sorting themselves out in the (unelaborated upon) way James Baldwin suggests is necessary to overcome antiblack racism in the United States and, of course, in South Africa? Can whites rid themselves of those defensive, repressive, projective, narcissistic features that are the sources of racial contempt and hatred? Alternatively, to generalize, what are the prospects of nonblacks altering those features of our psychological selves that are the sources of the plethora of potent prejudices and racisms that continue to have such devastating consequences?

Levine (2004, 95) provides the right balance of realism. His suggestion is that

...It would seem to require that we change fundamental psychological features of ourselves that seem damned near impossible to alter, like envy or jealousy. Indeed, in some cases eliminating racism requires eliminating envy and jealousy. Nevertheless, for one who has achieved a certain level of consciousness and self-awareness, such change appears possible—*just* possible. Of all the difficulties one may have with oneself—with one's character, personality, sexuality and psychological makeup—it seems that being a racist need not necessarily be one of them.

Given the social and cultural barriers to interracial relationships, entering into and maintaining such a relationship requires from both parties enormous reserves of commitment, empathy, assertiveness, honesty, and willingness both to give and to receive from another. However, the rewards for both giver and receiver may be immeasurable.

RACISMS AND IDENTITY

Racial prejudice, contempt, and hatred have many sources: personal pathologies, socialization, economic competition, cultural values and attitudes prevalent in the dominant society. Many theorists date anti-black racism to the preceding five hundred years—to the colonization of the New World. Others—seeking to include anti-Semitism—point to the period of the Crusades when European identity was first contrasted with the “brown” people of the Middle East. Whatever its date of origin may be, racism as an apparently culturally-learned response certainly appears to be eradicable. Consider what an incident of racism might be like when isolated conceptually from a social pattern of racism. In such a case, a perpetrator would express or enact contempt or hatred toward a targeted person in virtue of her race, but there would be no history or prevalent pattern of racism that pertained to the targeted person’s racial identity. There would be no commonly known stereotypes of the members of the target’s racial group. There would be no commonly known slang words available for insulting such persons. There would simply be no race-based context of contempt or hatred for making sense of such an act. A conceptually isolated act of racism becomes little more than an act of scorn or animosity. Such acts are not logically impossible, nor are they empirically nonexistent. However, they carry nothing of the “bite” of racism, as we know it.

From this example, one may infer that the real sting of racisms lies in the racial context within which their targets are located. Racist acts, especially those involving exclusions and deprivations of social benefits, contribute to such maintenance when their targets are members of disadvantaged groups. Lawrence Blum (2002, 51) points out:

Though a white individual is not more racist or more morally evil in harboring racial prejudice than is a black individual, the moral asymmetry makes the *consequences* of her prejudices, and the acts expressing them, worse than those of a black individual.

Blum’s remarks address the situation in the United States where — notwithstanding the election of a black President—large-scale discrimination from a white majority remains salient. However, we in South Africa need to recognize certain developments in that country.² Blum adverts to the changing racial demographic in that country leading to the replacement of the “white-black” paradigm for understanding racism. According to Harlon Dalton (1996, 206-10), some blacks resent ceding “victim-of-racism” status to other nonwhite groups, and even *African* immigrants! Hence, Blum (2002, 51) speculates:

Hostilities among different groups, stemming from various forms of competition, reflections of age-old white American prejudices, prejudices indigenous to the immigrant groups, inevitable scapegoating, and other factors, will continue to generate antipathies among persons of color.

These observations have become very salient since the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994. With the influx of immigrants especially from Africa and Asia (which had been strictly controlled until then), the potential for more outbreaks of the xenophobic violence which began anew in May 2008 has increased significantly.

Race is a fertile domain for civic virtue of many different kinds, and it is easier to see this when we recognize that some civic virtues can be identity-sensitive. For example, there are virtues that conduce to harmonious relations between races. Such harmony does not have the normative standing that a core goal such as racial equality has; nevertheless, it is not an insignificant good in a racially divided society, and qualities that help to foster that goal should be seen as virtues. Sometimes the same behavior that aims to promote racial justice also promotes racial harmony. Once the domain of race is opened up as a site of civic virtue, one can see other goals and other virtues as well. For example, there are goals related to “recognition,” understood in something like the way Charles Taylor (1994) discusses—ways that people wish their distinctive social identities to be recognized by others in various social venues. One might suggest that showing recognition of the value of each of those groups and its members to the shared enterprise would be a civic-like virtue for all South Africans, since we cannot define our identities in isolation from each other.

At the heart of contemporary discourses about migrants, minorities, and citizenship are to be found anxieties about what it means to “belong” or to be excluded from national collectives. I can exemplify such differentiation by considering two races or ethnicities in South Africa. An essential component of apartheid as a modern system rested on the institutionalization of a racial classificatory system, particularly one based on ethnicity. Rigid constructs of the population structure into four racial groups—namely white, Indian, colored, and African—effectively undermined the fluid categorization process of identity formation that existed and still exists. As James and Lever (2000, 44) point out, the idea of colored and Indian peoples each as distinct racial groups is somewhat arbitrary for within these categories reside people of varied descent. For instance, being colored today merely refers to an ability to trace

...some ancestry from Africa, Asia, or both and [speak] either English or Afrikaans as a home language, indeed, that the very notion that a ‘Coloured’ people exists is due to the complex sociology of three centuries of European domination and more recently the classificatory mania of the apartheid regime. (Lever 2000, 44)

In the same vein, the Indian population is mistakenly assumed to represent some kind of homogeneous group when history reminds us that an ancestry can be traced back to a diverse populace of Hindus and Muslims from India and the East.

Now a guiding theme in recent scholarship concerns the claim that, like race, ethnicity, too, is not a natural category (Smaje 2000, 7). As can be seen from the example above, the boundaries of race and ethnicity are not fixed, nor are their membership uncontested. Race and ethnicity, like nations, are widely considered to be “imagined communities” (Anderson 1983, *passim*), socially conceived and

considered, manufactured and inflected group formations (Peterson 1995, 16). They are discursively fashioned or ideologically produced, made and changed in relation to, and molded by social conditions, relations, clashes, and struggles. They signal a language in and through which differences are accorded social significance and may be named and explained (Goldberg 1997, 160-61). However, what is of importance to researchers studying race and ethnicity is that such ideas also carry with them material consequences for those who are included within their parameters or excluded in terms of their extension. Hence, categories such as race and ethnicity are best conceived of as political resources. Both dominant and subordinate groups, for the purpose of legitimizing and furthering their own social identities, interests, claims, and powers employ them. In this context it is important to remember that identities based on race and ethnicity are not only imposed—even though they often are—but they can also be formulated and fashioned through resistance. Such terms as “racialized” or “racialization” are accordingly ambiguous. They fail in their often-facile usage to distinguish descriptive context from normative critique, analysis from dismissal, processes of race making from critical rejection of racist implications.

The rise of extreme right wing and neofascist movements and parties since the collapse of the Soviet Union in both Western and Eastern Europe has resulted in the emergence of new forms of racist politics, a surge in popular racisms, and violence against migrant communities. This has contributed to creating an environment in which the future of settled migrant communities as well as of new groups of migrants and refugees is very much at the heart of public debate not only in Europe but also in our own country. Social identities become hotly questioned when something previously considered fixed, coherent, and stable is placed in question, and subjected to doubt and uncertainty.

The growth of identity politics is seen by some as challenging cultural homogeneity and as providing spaces for marginal groups to assert the legacy and importance of their respective voices and experiences. At the same time, however, identity politics has often failed to move beyond a notion of difference structured in polarizing binaries and an uncritical appeal to the discourse of authenticity. It has sought to construct primordial notions of ethnic exclusivity that celebrate certain identities in the face of criticism from multiculturalists and antiracists. Because they have been provided with opportunities to reassert and reclaim suppressed identities and experiences, such groups have often substituted one master narrative or theory for another.

In countering such reactionary positions one may consider the views of Edward Said (1993, 261-62) who notes that

...the history of all cultures is the history of cultural borrowings. Cultures are not impermeable...Culture is never just a matter of ownership, of borrowing and lending with absolute debtors and creditors, but rather of appropriations, common experience, and interdependencies of all kinds among different cultures. This is a universal norm.

The reality of globalization exposed classical notions of “culture” and showed that “culture” is bound up with broader historical processes which make cultural

practices quite fluid and permeable.³ In the final analysis, South African national culture is a creative synthesis of both global and local processes.

A similar premise applies evenly to the interrogation of identity: To return to a lengthier quotation from Said (1993, 407) on identity:

No one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are no more than starting-points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. However, its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly exclusively, white, or black, or Western, or Oriental.

Yet just as human beings make their own history, they also make their cultures and ethnic identities. No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudices to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness, as if that was all human life was about.

It is accepted in modern-day scholarship that people express multifold identities. Reactionary ideologies, such as ethnocentrism, seek to restrict any person within the confines of one category. The real situation is that every single person could draw on a multifold individuality and could break away from the obsession with a so-called ethnic identity. An affirmation of the fact of a multiple selfhood is vital to our own nation-building project.

Many decades of discrimination have contaminated all of us with tremendous prejudice that will not be wiped out in a mere few years. South Africa possibly requires at least a few generations of intense antibias consciousness-raising. An urgent and immediate obligation exists for a national antibias campaign that will target issues such as ethnocentrism, racisms, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, and so forth, which continue to plague the nation.

In his account of the vice of racism, Garcia (1996, 10; and elsewhere) often refers to it as involving inadequate concern or respect, or as an offence against either benevolence or justice. On rare occasions, he (1997, 21) mentions other race-related vices, such as engaging in racial stereotyping, seeing persons primarily as members of a racial group rather than as individual. He seems to imply that the reason race-based ill will is bad is simply that it instantiates the vice of malevolence. For instance, if I hate Moreno and wish him ill out of jealousy, this is as bad as if I hate him because he is black. However, we do not generally look at malevolence in this way. We tend to think that race-based ill will is a worse form of ill will than many other forms. The concept of a "hate crime" is a legal analogue to this moral intuition. The idea behind a hate crime is that a crime, such as assault, committed out of hatred of someone grounded in certain group-based characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and so forth, is deserving of more severe punishment, than the same crime committed for a different reason.⁴

Thus race-based ill will seems to be bad not only because it involves ill will, but because the ill will is based on race. It would seem, then, that ill will comes in morally distinct subvarieties; perhaps, the same could be said for disrespect, disdain, disregard, etc. One might even say that race-based malevolence is different from jealousy-based malevolence in having a distinct moral valence and perhaps a somewhat distinct psychic structure.

In contrast, a certain kind of racial awareness may be a necessary condition for the moral value of inter-racial relationships. There is a kind of epistemic value involved in understanding the racial dynamics of one's society insofar as race-related knowledge is involved in affirming and valuing the particular racial identity of racial others. A nonblack person in a pluralistic society can expect that her activities that are shared with blacks will be enriched by their presence in a manner that is in some way related to the historical experience, cultural forms, and distinctive identities of black people. Racial identity enters the picture indirectly: when a nonblack is interacting with a black person in a way that expresses an appropriate sense of recognition and appreciation, she acknowledges the black person's individual way of understanding her black identity. She need not have much detailed knowledge about black cultures—what is needed is to have sufficient knowledge to have a positive view of blackness and sufficient cultural sensitivity to acknowledge blacks without self-consciousness or anxiety about their identities. However, one cannot merely *choose* to value blacks as peers if one's attitudes and sentiments are not currently aligned with that value.

Of course, people do not want to be stereotyped, or even mostly identified with the racial group to which they belong. Although there may be many particular contexts in which one is perfectly happy to be regarded simply as a member of one's racial group, overall, most people wish others with whom they come into contact to treat them as individuals and not simply as a member of racial groups. However, many countervailing considerations hinder such understanding. Given one's historically traumatic racial past, it is no easy matter not to make unwarranted assumptions about others based on their group membership. Seeing others through the prism of group identity inclines us to see them as fundamentally the same. Such homogenization of other racial groups (never the group to which the homogenizer herself belongs!) is arguably one of the greatest obstacles to inter-racial understanding. But if one wishes to accord a person of a different racial group the necessary respect, one needs to go beyond acknowledging, say, blacks as blacks.⁵ It is not the case that the particularistic dimension of acknowledging blacks already encompasses seeing blacks as individuals. While it is true that one needs to be aware of individual particularity in order to see how appropriately to give recognition to a particular black person, how the black person relates to her black identity, and how she would be likely to experience various expressions of recognition is only a part of her individuality. What is missing is the capacity to see others as individuals *in light of* their racial identity, while appreciating the reality of all of our multifold identities.

AN ETHICAL IMPERATIVE

Turning specifically to South African life, the meaning of race and the nature of racial identity are far more complex and ambiguous now than they have ever been before. The discourses through which South Africans represent race relations are changing. Racism itself no longer seems to reside exclusively in the economic and social settings of yesteryear; instead it seems to be migrating into the realm of privately held beliefs. But the defeat of legalized white supremacy has not ended the struggle for racial equality. Pervasive material inequality between whites and blacks coexists with formal legal equality. To be sure, in major corporations, substantial sales of shares have been sold to blacks who, in virtually all cases, did not have the requisite capital to acquire the stakes being sold. A drive to ensure representation at board and management levels has long been under way. Preferential procurement of goods and services from black- and female-owned enterprises is now the rule. But far from leading to a wider distribution of wealth most of these efforts—including employment equity measures and skills development—seem to foster a culture of cronyism and corruption. Racial and gender imbalances in the distribution of wealth, income, and opportunity are still the rule (Department of Labor 2007). Too many poor blacks are still not in a position to create something meaningful with their lives.

The moment when South Africa will be able to recognize itself and be recognized as a truly *nonracial community* is still far away. Aversive and blatant racism keep recurring often in the guise of debates about things that seemingly have nothing to do with race as such—poverty, crime, corruption, HIV-AIDS, rape, sports, questions of linguistic and cultural pluralism, or, more recently, the change of names of public places, cities, and airports, or the erection of monuments commemorating past struggles or celebrating newfound freedoms. Because “transformation” or “empowerment” (the set of policies designed by the government and the private sector to redress past racial discriminations and to redistribute wealth and income to previously disadvantaged groups) involves both moral questions of justice and equality as well as pragmatic and instrumental questions of power and social engineering, it epitomizes more than any other postapartheid project the difficulty of acknowledging otherness. It is, therefore, not surprising that the debate on “transformation” has become more and more contentious, even at times acrimonious. It is as if South Africa is unable to face up to race at the very moment when the walls of racism, while still in place, are nevertheless tumbling (Nuttall 2004, 453).

Current South African disputes about “transformation” are, therefore, expressive of the extent to which, one-half decade into democracy, the country finds it difficult to clearly articulate the ethics of care and responsibility, duties and obligations, that freedom demands. Very often, those whites who are the most committed to achieving genuine racial equality are not recognized and are hardly heard. Many—including former antiapartheid activists—have been sidelined. Keen to protect their newly gained positions against challenges, the new ruling black elites have failed to tap into reservoirs of goodwill and talent among white professionals, some of whom do not support the governing party (the African National

Congress) but are eager to fully exercise their citizenship and contribute to the building of a nonracial society.

It is nevertheless true that, according to many former beneficiaries of past racial atrocities, reconciliation means that blacks should forget about South Africa's fractured past and move on. It is argued that white youth in particular cannot be blamed for acts of racial discrimination committed long before they were born. Many whites have retreated to a comfortable position of personal nonculpability and are unwilling to tell the truth about past misdeeds. Born to positions of enormous social and economic advantage, they are reluctant to wash their hands of the privileges they accumulated over three and a half centuries. Instead, they have wholeheartedly espoused the promises of individualistic liberty, which they now oppose to the requisites of racial justice. Even more than South African black citizens, they now believe in the liberal ideology of the self-reliant and self-made subject and pretend that one-half decade after liberation, white racism can no longer be considered the most important cause of black poverty. Nor can it be held responsible any longer, they argue, for the troubling gaps in life chances between black South Africans and their white compatriots (Uys 2007). Instead they maintain that once blacks have been granted equality before the law, no further action is needed. They also believe that racial disparities in South Africa today are either the result of the misguided policies of a corrupt and incompetent black government or simply a manifestation of the moral failure of individual blacks—those who do not work hard enough, do not go to school, do not live an ethical life, and do not know how to steer clear of crime, corruption, and illness. To advocate the redress of past injustices and the undoing of a racist legacy that cumulatively resulted in a profound imbalance in the fundamental structures of opportunity (housing, education, income, transportation, employment, etc.) is proclaimed unfair by white-led political parties such as the Democratic Alliance and white-led trade unions such as Solidarity.

Many doubt whether "transformation" has accomplished anything of value. "Transformation" is said to interfere with market rationality, discourage foreign direct investment, and act as a form of reverse racism and discrimination against whites, who, disenfranchised, now have no choice but to leave the country. Those who cannot leave have but a fleeting attachment to the new democratic order. Unable to give up their former investment in the psychic and material benefits of whiteness, they vacillate. As their former identity unravels and its old symbols crumble, they retire into racially secluded enclaves. Instead of practicing freedom, they opt for a politics of recrimination, heckling, and rancor.

A kind of casuistry is now peddled in some white South African academic circles, business and political organizations, trade unions, and think tanks. The claim is that the more fortunate black South Africans receive a disproportionate share of the benefits of "transformation"; "transformation" has done relatively little, on balance, to help blacks in general or poor blacks in particular; "transformation" generates major social costs that fall disproportionately on whites; redistribution is a process in which what is lost by one group exceeds what is gained by another, making the society as a whole worse off (Benatar 2007).

A radical revision of South Africa's white supremacist ideology is, therefore, taking place. White supremacy no longer involves asserting the "natural inferiority"

of blacks and rejecting the idea of a common humanity, a world of individuals endowed with common rights. Instead, the defense of racial inequality and stratification is articulated in two ways. First, the moral legitimacy and appropriateness of policies of redress are challenged. This argument rests on the belief that law should neither mandate social equality nor attempt to eradicate conditions of racial inequality and the legacy of past victimization.

Second, the apologetics for racial inequality is gradually couched in the rhetoric of rights, fairness, and equality. Such rhetoric is mobilized in an effort to institutionalize a racial privilege that is trying to mask its racial nature. In essence, those who deny that past racial injustices can be rectified by legally enforced and race-conscious remedies in the present hope that real differences among racial groups will thereby be protected and preserved and the imperative of justice and redress indefinitely postponed. In principle, there is nothing fundamentally illegitimate in providing relief to those who, in the past, have been injured by race-based state action. This is not the same as systematically denying to innocent white citizens equal rights and opportunities. Yet it is true that policies of racial rectification might constrain their opportunities in certain areas of public and economic life. The deprivation they might endure in the process should, in any case, be temporary. It can in no way be equated with the race discrimination and dehumanization blacks suffered under colonialism and apartheid.

On the other hand, as Achille Mbembe (2008, 15) argues, the project of “transformation” cannot be confined to a largely managerial, bureaucratic, or quantitative exercise with the primary concern of ensuring that adequate numbers of blacks find places in government, higher education, commerce, and industry in general. South Africa cannot afford to simply replicate the old Afrikaner model of filling state corporations, civil service, and the universities with incompetent citizens while using state patronage to promote dubious business ventures.

Devoid of any ethical consideration, the project of “transformation” can be catastrophic in terms of its costs and its consequences. Opponents of “transformation” are right when they point to loss of efficiency, especially when unqualified black persons are chosen over more qualified whites. The morality of the project of “transformation” should be judged by the extent to which it fosters equality and restores capabilities to those who have been deprived of these by unjust laws and racist policies.

Such a racially inspired critique of “transformation” is different from the class-based critique emanating from certain quarters of native opinion—for example, from predominantly black trade unions, such as COSATU, and political parties allied with the ruling party, such as the South African Communist Party. Thus, for Moeletsi Mbeki, South Africa’s ruling class is composed of two groups. The first, the white economic oligarchy, owns and controls the minerals-energy complex that constitutes the dominant core of South Africa’s productive economy. The second, the politically dominant black upper middle class, oversees the redistribution of wealth toward consumption. For Mbeki (2007, 218), “transformation” is the name of the historical compromise achieved by these two groups during the negotiations that led to the 1994 political settlement. “Transformation” entails wealth distribution from white capital and large corporations to the black upper middle class, and the

creation of a class of blacks with capital. Less than a policy, it is a method perfected by the oligarchy to placate the political elites and to buy protection. Among the many effects of this wealth redistribution program is not only political stability and economic prosperity, but also the emergence of an unproductive, comprador class of rich black politicians and ex-politicians who depend on white capital and pursue a parasitic relationship with the government.

For more radical black critics, this accumulation path is not simply a betrayal of the poor. It also increases inequality among black people and reproduces a situation not too dissimilar to the racial, class, and gender regime under apartheid. It exacerbates racialized poverty and, more ominously, fosters the creation of a vast urban black underclass—a quietly ticking bomb. It is one of the many ironies of the 1994 “negotiated settlement” that a large number of white South Africans can simultaneously stigmatize the project of “transformation” and continue to feel entitled to their privileged position in society. They are willing to fight for their constitutional rights, but they are not ready to contemplate, and deal with, the accumulated atrocities on which these privileges rest.

For centuries, whites in South Africa enjoyed unfair advantages in the labor market. They were able to rig the rules of the game and control access to jobs and promotions while closing off blacks’ access to training or education. The disempowerment and dispossession of black people go far back. The introduction of the pass system, the institutionalization of the cheap labor system, the exclusion from property ownership—as tactics—were instrumental to the accumulation of wealth, land, and power among whites, on the one hand, and the development of patterns of dispossession among blacks, on the other (Bundy 1979).

To protect white privilege, those in power created boundaries in the forms of laws, customs, and traditions. A deeply-embedded racist ethos helped to justify whites’ loss of feeling for human fellowship with blacks. This is how white privilege came to be seen as an entitlement that was hardly ever contested. Over many centuries, whites developed an ability to pass on to succeeding generations the spoils of racial violence and atrocities. These took the form of monetary or property value, banking practices, housing and land assets, educational resources, cultural capital, insider networks, good jobs, and a sense of self-esteem, dignity, and superiority.

Today, large sections of the South African white population can no longer see the advantages they gained from these arrangements. Indeed, in order to oppose “transformation,” they have to mentally erase the past and forget the elements of cruelty and brutality it took to maintain white privilege. Whites have to be discouraged from understanding the benefits that still accompany their own skin color, even in the new democratic dispensation. Instead, in a typical move, they are encouraged to absolve themselves from the sins of the past and to perceive themselves as the new victims of a corrupt and incompetent black government that, in addition, is “soft on crime.” It is small wonder that they cling tightly to the symbolic vestiges of a racist past as a way of softening their newfound material precariousness. Consumed by nostalgia and melancholia, they cannot imagine what it means to be white in Africa without the paraphernalia of apartheid (the church, the national-Christian ideology, the army, black servants, and so on). But there are indications that some members of the new white underclass—those who navigate cross-racial

inner-city life as beggars and destitute—are forced to undo the racism of earlier generations.

The end of apartheid, however, has not affected the structural positions the white propertied classes enjoyed during the period of white supremacy. If anything, these whites are doing better today, economically speaking, than ever before. To be sure, they lost political power. But they did not die as a class. In most instances, they can still use their economic muscle and social capital to co-opt an increasingly predatory black elite, therefore gaining the upper hand, to the point of turning the “transformation project” to their own advantage.

CONCLUSION

As we reach the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, issues of race remain salient in the world—this despite the election of the first black American president and the South African’s own on-going attempts at social and racial transformation. In this paper, bearing developments in both theory and practice in mind, I have sought to unpack three forms of racism reflected in Jones’s well-known general definition. I focused upon the core issue of individual racism with special reference to various interpersonal moral issues by examining the moral and socio-political implications of racial identification. Through appreciation of the complex facets of negotiating and recognizing aspects of social and racial identities, hope for a better future for all members of multicultural societies is imaginable. As an ethical imperative, various issues bedeviling acknowledgement of the other within an evolving South African polity have been examined.

NOTES

1. Theorists contend that white people consider themselves to have no race—they are just “human.” Racial others are expected to speak and have knowledge only of their own race; white people, on the contrary, have assumed the privilege of speaking for the human race. This unraced quality of whiteness enables and perpetuates white privilege. Because they are ostensibly without race, not simply one race among many, whites have come to represent the standard against which all else is defined.

2. Today, the dominant claim in America is that racism is dead. America has solved its race problem and can now be “color-blind.” As a result, race-specific policies such as affirmative action can no longer be justified (Brown et. al. 2003). Similar developments can be observed in South Africa. To be sure, not all white South Africans think alike or share the same political and economic interests.

3. See my chapter, “Why Jaspers gives us hope: Deconstructing the myth of cultural impermeability” (forthcoming).

4. According to the American Psychological Association (1998, 1), “Hate crimes are violent acts perpetrated against people, property, or organizations because of the group to which they belong to or identify with” (see Uys 2007).

5. Charles Taylor's (1994) argument can be read as suggesting that both *regarding as equals* and *appreciating others' individuality* are forms of common respect.

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HUMAN AND NONHUMAN ANIMALS: EQUAL RIGHTS OR DUTY OF RESPECT?

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Contemporary philosophy is said to focus on particular issues, rather than on comprehensive syntheses. The following contribution intends to join this trend by offering some reflections on the “animal rights” debate, which is to be situated within the wider context of environmental philosophy. While classical Western concepts of man were anthropocentric, recent cultural developments have triggered a rediscovery of Nature, especially of nonhuman animals, while focusing on their affiliations with us, humans. Appropriate relations with those animals require a respectful attitude on the human side, as if those animals had full moral and legal rights. But is this not an illusion? Can we talk about real “rights” for animals, or should we just remain aware of them having their own feelings and take care not to hurt them, unless for a “serious” cause? While taking note of the wide variety of animal species and habitats (a dog is not a fish, while pets are different from farm animals or animals in the wild), the answer to this question may have its bearings on one’s personal choices regarding food, clothing, entertainment, etc.

INTRODUCTION

It is sometimes said that philosophers are people who tend to make problems where there are none. Even as I think that this statement is open for discussion, I believe that I will develop myself as a real or “typical” philosopher in the next pages. In fact, the following thoughts are intended to focus on one of today’s most prominent ethical issues, which is the relation between human and nonhuman living beings. Given that their bodies look and function somewhat similarly, both groups may be called “animals.” However, according to established conventions, I will reserve that term for “nonhuman” animals in certain places, as long as the context makes clear that it does not refer to the human species.

I will work out my overview in the following steps. In the first place, I will question why or how this apparently weird topic has made it into the conversations of leading contemporary philosophers of ethics. Some historical background will be offered, both from Biblical and profane sources. After this, I will try to find out in what consists the difference between human beings and other animals. This will be immediately followed by the question whether animals are to be

considered as moral or nonmoral beings. A review of the dominating theories will be included, without the expression of any specific preference. In the next step, I will try to find why we seem to have different degrees of sympathy for animals: what animals deserve our attention and what animals do not? Why is this so? Are some animals more “developed” in a human sense or are we just giving in to subjectivism or sentimental feelings? I will further look into terminological issues, like the relation between “rights” and “welfare” or “liberation.” Before reaching my conclusions, I will shortly mention (and criticize) possible alternatives for the current situation, like vegetarianism and organic farming, and point at the delicate issue of animals used for the testing of certain products.

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

For the religious, as well as for the other believers, it cannot be denied that we, humans, are not alone in the world. We share our tiny space on this planet—that is getting more and more crowded—with plenty of other living beings.

Human cultures have felt the need to distinguish between humans and nonhumans. A reference to the biblical story of creation may be sufficient to illustrate this: humans and nonhumans were both made by God on the same day, but humans came last and were said to be made by God in His own image (Gen. 1, 26). God’s restrictions regarding the eating of fruits in the garden of Eden also seem to have been addressed only to the human being (Gen. 2, 16). Except for this interdiction, humans may use creation for their own goals and purposes, precisely because of their privileged position. This view of the natural environment is anthropocentric. The nonhuman part of creation does not form a sufficient basis for value judgments or moral decision making.

Considerations about animal welfare or rights also seem not to have played a significant role in the dietary options of early Christian monks and monastic communities. Even rational health considerations were hardly important to them, as the body was, in general, deemed inferior to the mind and, therefore, not of primary interest. Instead, the field of interest was dominated by moral and spiritual considerations. Virtue, contemplation, and rejection of a specific social order—the one associated with the “world”—were the core values that motivated and steered their asceticism (Horrell 2008, 51).

The Greek philosopher Aristotle denied any moral status to animals as they are believed not to have a “rational soul.” Critics in the feminist movement and elsewhere have accused him of “masculinism” and “somatophobia” for being overconcerned with reason. The Christian Middle Ages and Scholasticism largely echo the tone of Biblical and other ancient sources. Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (1987, 227-31) formulated the classical viewpoint as follows: Animals are created to serve Man’s bodily and temporal needs. This service is a part of their very nature. In order to carry out their task, animals need bodies, or better, they *are* bodies. If the body of an animal dies, so does its spirit, unlike in humans. Animals also do not achieve any knowledge, due to their assumed “innate stupidity.” Nevertheless, they share in doing good, for their Creator’s sake.

Another frequent culprit of proanimal rights groups is the philosophical rationalism of René Descartes. Cartesian philosophy is strictly dualistic, as it applies methodic and universal doubt as a means to achieve metaphysical certainty. The first certainty discovered by Descartes was that of the mind's existence (as bearer and performer of cognitive operations). Assertion of the presence of a material world—to which also the bodies of humans and animals belong—would only come later. Meanwhile, however, the human being (as mind alone) was given the privilege and vocation to become "master and possessor" of nature, forfeiting any idea of harmony or equality between different species.

Descartes is often presented as the first philosopher of the modern era. Feminists as well as animal rights activists are, therefore, often negative about the effects of modernity on culture, as far as this was characterized by mechanistic science and anthropocentrism. The whole of it allegedly breathes an atmosphere of patriarchal "masculinism," as is further expressed in cultural and economic imperialism and colonialism (Cudworth 2008, 170ff.).

The idyllic presentation of an initially harmonious coexistence of human and nonhuman animals, as in the Biblical story of creation, is far away. During the modern period, scientific discovery and technological evolution have created a widening gap between humans and nonhuman living beings.

PANGS OF A DEVELOPING PARADIGM SHIFT?

In recent times, modern development has even accelerated. The past decades have been showing a global trend towards more efficiency, productivity, and personal comfort. It was in this period that the issue of the treatment of nonhuman animals by humans has become an object of discussion, both among specialists in moral philosophy and a wider public.

Some people have been wondering about the possible cause of the current interest for the topic. One could point at the fact that nonhuman animals have probably never before suffered so much—this is so intensely, so systematically and on such a wide scale—as today. Among the most pungent issues are the use of animals in races, fights, or other so-called "sports events." Other forms of "animal (ab)use" include the testing of products intended for human consumption and the so-called "factory farming." These practices are perceived as causing unnecessary harm to animals, as in electrocuting or throat slitting of slaughterhouse pigs and cows, "de-beaking" of hens living in cramped wire cages, etc. It is believed that highly rationalized methods of breeding animals are not only bad for the well-being of the animals themselves; farm staff and even consumers may be adversely affected too, as by low salaries, and by the risks of accidents or skin diseases and respiratory ailments. There is also the fear of water and soil contamination, of food poisoning and deforestation (to increase grass land surface), etc. In a time of global warming or climate change, other rational considerations like "economizing efforts and resources" in food production play an important role in the wider discussion about how to deal with animals. Regarding the case for or against vegetarianism—that has implications for animal treatment—efficiency has sometimes been a criterion

to justify one's position. If, for instance, two pounds of meat require ten pounds of grain (as animal food), then this shows that meat is a relatively resource-ineffective food product and, therefore, also unfriendly to the environment.

Still, there is something paradoxical in the present context. Today's debate seems to be sparked by a large-scale abuse of animals in the sophisticated machinery of economic production, but it turns a blind eye on certain practices that confer to pets a status similar to that of a human person: we just have to think of dog hotels (with expensive, daily rates), dog clinics, dog beauty parlors, dog cemeteries, etc. Or are animals in contemporary Western society often supposed to fill the gaps left behind by lacking or unsatisfactory human relations? Are animals the remedy against the looming loneliness of many individualist workaholics or screen-addicts?

Children seem to have a particular interest in animals. The attraction is often mutual. Developmental psychologists are pointing at the important role played by animals in the identification processes that lead towards a mature personality. They are usually the protagonists in drawings, cartoons, children's stories, fairy tales, and motion pictures, from *Tom and Jerry* to *Donald Duck* and from *Beauty and the Beast* to the *Lion King*. Perhaps, psychological support and hugging comfort are coming nowadays more from dolls and teddy bears than from real animals. This is because children are no exception to the rule that fewer people are being physically exposed to animals. Urbanization and industrialization also have their repercussions on children's lives. Reports about a possible world pandemic of animal-born diseases—like SARS, AIDS, and even new flu viruses or strains—only tend to further alienate humans from their animal counterparts, and spoil the joy of their natural companionship.

LANGUAGE FACTORS

The excellent lexical study of Joan Dunayer (2001, 107, 112, 139) has demonstrated how multifaceted repression of nonhuman animals became culturally "acceptable," thanks to a wide spectrum of euphemisms that have grown spontaneously or were created deliberately for such a purpose. For instance, the "killing" of animals by researchers during vivisection is called "sacrificing," which presents more noble connotations. Likewise, the animal's "suffering" became the animal's "distress." As laboratory technicians are directly exposed to cruel practices like vivisection, they may develop vague feelings of sympathy with the animals, that evoke "guilt." Such explicit term could not figure in any report, however, especially if made upon the order of a commercial company. It was, therefore, embellished into "stress," and consecutively into "uneasiness" and the even more neutral "feeling." In the restaurant business, a separate terminology is created for cooked meat, as to dissociate it from the live animals from which it is undeniably derived. The talk is about "beef," "pork," or "mutton," rather than about "cow," "pig," or "sheep," that refer more directly to the animal and not to its "cooked" derivative. The same can be said about "spareribs," "T-bone steaks," and "drumsticks" that work as a camouflage of the live animal from which those food items were derived.

SOCIOPHILOSOPHICAL REMARKS

Regardless of how interesting all these considerations may be, a clear explanation of the evolution still remains necessary.

Roger Scruton (2000, 3) points towards a “metaphysical” cause for the surge in interest for nonhuman animals’ fate. Concepts like “soul,” “free will,” “eternal judgment,” etc., are no longer understood or even used. According to his hypothesis, the decline in familiarity with the Christian religion and worldview would explain the interest in an allegedly “corrected” or “more balanced” view upon the animal species, at least in part. Christian religion—in its historical ambition to distinguish itself from paganism—has emphasized the difference between humans and nonhumans in an attempt to identify the human being with its spiritual and rational functions. Unlike many forms of paganism, the Christian view rejects the idea that nature has sacred or divine features, as Richard Posner (2004, 53) points out.

In the post-Christian Western culture, the interest in a comprehensive, metaphysical worldview has somehow remained, but it veered away from proposing a unique model of understanding. In this search for a new world order, the relation between humans and other living beings and the environment as such are calling for a new vision. The widespread distrust in classical metaphysics since the Enlightenment has prepared the foundation for a “theoretical transgression” of the traditional borderline between humans and nonhuman animals and between moral and nonmoral beings. This has led philosophers like Jeremy Bentham to compare the neglect of animal rights to racial discrimination, while his utilitarian ally, John Stuart Mill, even made a link with slavery. Domesticated animals like pets, sometimes remind us of conditions in which slaves had to live and to work, as with dogs tied by a too short chain, pigs soaking in mud mixed with their own excrements, sheep being transported in overcrowded trucks, etc.

Ulrich Melle (2000, 495), makes a link with the evolution from a more rural to a predominantly urban and industrialized society. The times in which most humans were naturally exposed to a variety of animals are gone. Cows, pigs, horses, even chickens, ducks, and rabbits do no longer belong to the settings of the average Westerner’s day-to-day life. The most frequently experienced animals today are the so-called pets. As cats, dogs, and the like are often sharing our premises, rooms, and furnitures, we tend to implicitly consider them as our equals. Treating them badly, then, appears as a lack of courtesy, a form of injustice, or worse. “Cruelty” “barbarism,” and the neologism “*speciesism*” (see Dunayer 2001) are often heard in this context. However, others are objecting to the application of classical moral terms and discourse to the relations between humans and animals. The fact that some living creatures belong to a particular species—the human one—entitles them, they believe, to moral rights that other living beings do not enjoy; in other words, talking about moral rights makes no sense outside human life and human society.

FULLY (SELF)-CONSCIOUS BEINGS?

The discussion about “animal rights” turns around the requirements for “moral status” in both human and nonhuman animals. If there is no doubt about the

applicability of moral rules, rights, and duties to human animals, why is this so? What is, then, exactly the essence of human nature: to be “rational”? Not according to utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham, who found that a fully grown dog is perhaps more “rational” than a newly born human baby. The discussion about similarities and dissimilarities between humans and nonhumans should, therefore, be focused less on whether animals can reason than on whether they can suffer. However, a fundamental requirement for both “thought” and “emotion” remains to be “consciousness,” and this is exactly what philosophers like René Descartes have denied to animals.

In his discussion of the issue, Melle (2000, 499) admits that the relevance of the ethical debate about animal rights and dignity depends on the presence of consciousness in animals. However, with this position, the discussion about human and nonhuman animals is likely going to end up more complicated than that it will be solved. Problems arise if a “strong” version of consciousness is being used, this is one in which consciousness reflects on itself, turning itself into its object. Such a narrow interpretation—which makes one think of the so-called HOT or “higher order thought” concepts of consciousness—would hardly allow us to speak of consciousness in animals.

Anne Ruth Mackor (2000, 540) distinguishes between “transitive” and “intransitive” consciousness. “Transitive” consciousness is related to an object, while “intransitive” consciousness just expresses a state of “being awake” in a subject. The strict interpretation of “consciousness” would require a transitive awareness of each intransitive state of consciousness. Of course, denying this strict form of consciousness to animals does not yet mean that they can be treated as lifeless objects. Their sense experiences, however, would not be called “conscious.” Therefore, a distinction is needed between the state of “having pain”—which is merely a biologically motivated state of the mind—and “feeling pain” which refers to consciousness. According to this hypothesis, animals may “have” pain, but they do not “feel” pain. This position has far reaching consequences for the assessment of an animal’s capability to function as a moral subject. If animals were not able to “feel” pain, they might also not be said to be able to suffer. This would undermine Bentham’s alternative for “reasoning” as a fundamental requirement for moral status.

Melle shares the criticism towards the strict concept of consciousness, which is more than just (preconscious) experience. In the second place, consciousness should also not be reduced to “linguistic competency.” The absence of language activity might be an indicator of the absence of complex mental processes, like reasoning; it does not yet mean, however, that there could not be any form of consciousness in animals. Any deliberately strict interpretation of “consciousness”—as analogous to conventional human consciousness—seems, therefore, anthropocentrically biased.

FULLY “MORAL” BEINGS?

It was to address such kind of striking situations that Australian philosopher Peter Singer (1975) wrote his eye-opening book, *Animal liberation*. Assuming that both human and nonhuman animals do experience pain, pleasure, or satisfaction in

the same way and to a more or less similar extent, they are likely to prefer pleasure or happiness to pain or discomfort. If ethics can be defined—if seen from a teleological perspective—as the “science of promoting happiness,” it should be consistently or uniformly applied to all conscious beings, whether these are nonhuman animals or humans, and whether these humans are fully conscious or just on a reduced extent, due to age, illness, birth defect, etc. In other words, in all places and at all times, our behavior should be concerned with “morality,” or with maximizing happy feelings in all animal species.

However, not all animal rights activists share this “happiness-oriented,” utilitarian stand. The American Tom Regan (1983)—through his book, *The case for animal rights*—criticized Singer’s utilitarianism, which allegedly denies the so-called “intrinsic value” of every carrier of experience. Regan states that a genuine respect for a fully grown “subject” means treating it as more than a sum of pleasant or painful experiences. It means respecting its autonomy or its capacity of self-determination. These are genuine and explicit “rights.” Such rights should be equally assigned to all subjects, whether human or not. For this reason, Regan’s “rights-based” approach is sometimes called “egalitarianism.” It also finds support in the so-called “argument from marginal cases,” where a parallelism is drafted between the more intelligent categories of animals and the mentally “defective” or under-developed humans (including newly born infants, extremely senile and mentally disabled people). While both groups are displaying a comparable state of intelligence or subjective complexity, inflicting pain on the human group would definitely face explicit disapproval, while doing the same on the nonhuman group would be much better tolerated. Regan and his allies are questioning the twisted logic behind this inconsistency. Equality should be applied to all living beings, regardless of their degree of intelligence. However, critics tend to comment that this argument rather degrades some classes of humans to the animal level, than that it uplifts some animal species to the human level. Therefore, DeGrazia (2002, 35-36) makes a distinction between the assumedly extravagant plea for “equal consideration” and the “sliding scale model.” The latter attributes rights more vaguely to animals, according to a hierarchical understanding in which the degree of “rights” depends on the degree of complexity in the animal’s cognitive, emotional, and social skills. An appropriate balance of interests is needed to justify the intensity by which certain “rights” like that of “freedom from suffering,” will be affirmed on behalf of the animal.

Other opponents of animal rights—especially those belonging to the group tagged as “contractarians”—argue that the term “rights” is abusively or at least improperly applied to animals. Any legal system presupposes a kind of contract between different participants through which their respective freedom is somewhat reduced in order to protect the vital interests (including individual freedom) of each. Such viewpoint implies that intense reasoning and negotiating takes place before the contract comes in effect. How could animals ever participate in such a debate, given their limited consciousness? “Contractarians,” therefore, observe that not only animals, but even humans who do not avail of full cognitive and rational functions (like babies, mentally disabled, and Alzheimer patients) only can have “rights” if others take their defense. An animal’s self-awareness or self-consciousness is not

sufficient to sue those who violate its presumed "rights." To what extent may human lawyers defend nonhuman clients? And who will pay for the services of these lawyers? It should also be reminded that everyone who is entitled to claim certain rights has also parallel duties. Obligations and privileges are closely intertwined and belong to some sort of a web that holds the members of the "ethical community" together. How can nonhuman animals or severely demented humans be aware of their duties or how can they be reminded of them? Still, to slaughter a disabled human person would meet disgust and rejection. Why, then, is it prohibited to do so? It is not allowed simply because conscious and capable fellow humans and relatives do not like to see any such thing happen. The same may be said about animals: if it is not tolerable to torture animals, this is not because of a violation of the animals' "rights," but because of the disapproval by human society that does not accept this practice, as it perceives it as a first step towards torturing humans. The "contractarian" point of view identifies established social practices and the awareness about them as hermeneutic key to specific sensitivities.

Nussbaum (2004, 299) and Mackor (2000, 527ff.) both refer to the late Harvard professor John Rawls (1971), who denied to animals two key features of a "moral subject." First of all, nonhuman animals do not have the capability to rationally plan their lives. In the second place, they do not possess a "sense of justice," lifting all obligations from them in moral terms. There can in fact be no question of any form of reciprocity among them, or between them—as a class—and that of humans. In spite of this limitation, there are some similarities in the "way of life" of humans and other animals and in the capacities of both to feel pain. Therefore, humans are held to behave in a human and compassionate way towards other animals. They are not allowed to treat animals arbitrarily and inflict them pain indifferently.

From a comparable point of view, human obligations to animals could be tagged as "indirect," rather than "direct," according to P. Carruthers (1992), as referred to by Mackor (2000, 528ff.). Accordingly, the same may be said about the rights of animals. If animals deserve our respect, it is not because they are "moral subjects" in a direct sense, but because of the potentially problematic consequences of hurting them. They are only "indirectly" moral subjects.

DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN HUMANS AND NONHUMANS: A SLIPPERY SLOPE?

The differences of viewpoint and the resulting contradictions within the concept of "moral subject" require further elaboration. If nonrational human persons—like babies and little children or dementia-struck aged people—do not only deserve our respect, but even enjoy the status of "moral subjects," why is this not so with more complex classes of animals? Among the species that resemble most the human one, the apes occupy an important place. Chimpanzees—even as their cortex is less than one fourth the size of a human one—seem to have so many neurons in their brains that we could not exclude some form of consciousness in them. At least, their cognitive capabilities may be compared to those of little infants or mentally retarded people. Therefore, if babies and Alzheimer patients are treated with a typical "human" respect, then chimpanzees are entitled to a similar honor, according to the stand of

Steven Wise (Posner 2004, 54ff.). What is, then, the criterion for “moral status”? Could it, once more, be “cognition”?

Using “cognition” as a criterion for human dignity might cause serious problems: a computer may “know” a lot, but if it will ever develop self-consciousness, it should truly be treated as a human person. Steven Wise, however, denies this possibility and therefore does not attempt to put computers and apes on the same level. In fact, he implicitly admits the limitations of “cognition” as a basis for attributing personal rights. A human fetus hardly has cognitive capacities but, according to many, it should not be killed. However, a dog that kills other animals or sucks their eggs may be killed under particular conditions, while a murderer of fellow humans should not be given the death penalty, according to some opinions.

There seem to be lots of inconsistencies in our dealing with nonhuman animals and in the status that we are according them. Still, it is not always possible to say why we are inconsistent, even if we are inclined to find some of these inconsistencies not totally baseless. The clue seems to lie in the possibility of a comparison with human beings. Even as nonhuman animals undeniably do not avail of full rational powers, many of us have the impression that at least some of these animals can develop consciousness. This consciousness extends to the surrounding world, but also to the self. For this reason, too, the “higher” animals will be given names. Some animals that were given names will even react if hearing their names. This points at the value of that particular animal as an individual. An animal without a specific name has no status as an individual. For this reason, its death means less of a loss. It cannot be considered as a proper individual being, but just as a set of experiences (including pleasure or suffering) that fade away at the death of its carrier (an insect, a bird, etc.)

Creatures without a name are also deemed to be perfectly exchangeable. If one’s pet goldfish dies, any other can take its place. Fishes are also lacking another, related feature of so-called “conscious” animals: reciprocity of communication. If a particular sign or expression of affection is met with an echo from the beloved creature, this one profiles itself as an individual, rather than as a species. In general, pets and other domesticated animals will be much better qualified for perception as “individuals” than their counterparts in the wild.

Martha Nussbaum (2004, 299-320), recognizing both the merits and limitations of the utilitarian approach, defends the “capabilities approach” as an alternative. An animal would be eligible for rights, in as much as it has talents or capabilities to develop, just as its human counterparts. These potential skills and elements of knowledge are usually never realized because of a factual discrimination, which is somehow comparable to the discrimination of human minorities. This injustice leaves the animal without a so-called “flourishing life” and causes instead frustration. The role of ethics would, then, be to promote feelings of wonder before the capabilities and consequent dignity of animals and to restore the conditions that are needed for their recognition and realization. Such a strategy requires both direct, positive human actions and indirect ones, such as refraining from behavior that is harmful to animals, their “habitats,” and natural ways of living. However, some capabilities do not need to be promoted—they might even need to be inhibited—if they cause needless harm to the animal’s peers, to humans, or to other types of animals.

The “capabilities approach” avoids the sum-ranking, quantitative approach of utilitarianism that led, for instance, to the absurd consequence that an enhanced production of animals by the food industry could be ethically good—provided that those animals do not suffer much—as it leads to a numerical increase in happy creatures. Unlike utilitarianism, the “capabilities approach” attaches some importance to the species to which an animal belongs, as this will interfere with the judgment about whether flourishing opportunities are in place or not, or insufficiently.

THE ECOFEMINIST APPROACH

Some animal rights activists draw a parallel between animal liberation and women’s emancipation. They consider both classes as victims of the oppressive structures of so-called “patriarchal” culture. Western thought is said always to have displayed a low esteem of the body, of “female” emotiveness, and of non-Western cultures, that are deemed not to be sufficiently “rational.” This low esteem obviously also affects the relation with “irrational” animals. The male-dominated cultural machinery aims at the establishment or consolidation of male dominion in society; it uses reason as its main tool and develops its methods around binary structures of thought, using opposite concepts. Among these opposites, one is always presented as “good,” while the other is “less good” or even “bad,” as in “mind versus body,” “male versus female,” “culture versus nature,” “reason versus emotion,” “human versus animal,” etc.

Therefore, the solution for the oppression of nonhuman animals and women and minorities lies in a coordinated protest against their common “enemy.” All should fight a patriarchal culture, including its rational methods and conceptual frameworks. Not reason, but emotions and empathy should form the basis for moral judgment, according to the feminist perspective. The suspicion of several feminist philosophers or activists is that reason easily comes to the defense of a social “status quo,” which implies a continuation of the current culture of discrimination. Utilitarianism, egalitarianism, and other reason-based approaches to the animal rights issue are, therefore, rather inefficient or even suspect in the eyes of many feminists. Not conceptual “clarity,” but “empathy” with animals as concrete, embodied beings, constitutes the beginning of change. Nonhuman animals are more likely to benefit from a prediscursive and directly physical interaction with humans than of the “distancing lens of a narrowly conceived reason,” regardless of the intentions that lead to its deployment (Bailey 2007, 355-56). Some feminists, however, dare to defend “theorists” like Regan and Singer. They claim that true “empathy” cannot just be based upon “emotion,” but also requires rational “reflection.” Without a “distinct self-concept” that “reflectively engages with the situation of another,” empathy risks to deteriorate into “sympathy,” which is more condescending and superficial than “empathy.” It would result in a generalization of different forms of suffering, from social discrimination to rape (Gruen 2007, 337-38).

Not all feminists are also in favor of the protection of animals in the name of the protection of women. Patriarchal rationalism may not only be responsible for the systematic abuse of animals for meat consumption, but also for the prohibition of the eating of certain meats at certain occasions. Religious rules—like those

contained in the law of Moses (as in Leviticus 11)—are the product of a priestly, male-dominated culture directed towards an excessive restriction of enjoyment for the sake of sustained control. In this case, reason is not used as a tool to achieve male domination; it is on the contrary banned from interfering in the discussion. What matters is not to ask the question why some meats are prohibited and others are not! Eating in general, including eating so-called “forbidden” meats in particular, is a source of joy or pleasure and, for that reason, related to sexual enjoyment. By dogmatically declaring certain meats “unclean” or—better—“immund” (Cixous 2004, 171), the religious lawmaker stigmatizes and excludes from mainstream society any individual who takes part in their consumption, as the “impurity” of the consumed meat is deemed also to contaminate its consumer. Feminists propose to replace “spiritualistic” arguments for religious asceticism [mainly because of concerns of self-control, as indicated by Northcott (2008, 188ff.)] with “emotional” ones.

In other situations, it is esthetic and economic reasons that are invoked to justify the interdiction of meat-eating. The desire of conformity with male-imposed health and beauty norms, especially those displayed in commercial advertising and broadcasting, brings some women to reject meat. Other feminists are criticizing contemporary cookery books and magazines for their lavish display of suggestive pictures of cooked meat dishes in an almost pornographic fashion. Such pictures are criticized for evoking a link between the sexualized animal flesh and the eroticized female body. Changing eating culture will, therefore, also imply a change in images and narratives surrounding it (Gruen 2007, 255 ff. ; Cudworth 2008, 173). At any rate, the culture of “violence”—that makes discrimination of women and animals possible—should be replaced by one of “gentleness” and “care,” even as this may form an alternative basis to justify vegetarian choices.

WHAT KIND OF NONHUMAN ANIMALS?

Are rights for all animals? Or are these reserved for the more intelligent animals? Is there some sort of a hierarchy in which those animals that are closest to man have higher rights than those with less intelligence? This may be an appealing idea, but it does not offer concrete clues about how to distinguish between different species. Is it scientific testing that should determine an animal’s intelligence, or rather “experience” or “tradition”?

Are we not giving in to a tremendous level of subjectivism if we rank animals according to the “rights” they deserve? Or what could be the (objective) reason why animal rights activists have been concentrating mostly on mammals? Is this the class of animals that look, live, and procreate in a way that is most similar to that of humans? Or is it perhaps a coincidence that precisely mammals are bred more than other categories, whether for their meat, for clothing, or for scientific experimenting?

If one tries to approach animals—especially mammals—from an objective perspective and seeks to establish comparisons with humans, the endeavors look set for a successful outcome: animals do learn as an effect of the assessment of a current situation and its confrontation with a previous assessment of a similar situation. Changes in this assessment modify animals’ beliefs and induce them to change their behavior.

Although such cognitive development is more than mere conditioning, it remains below the complexity of reasoning. Animals do not extend their expectations to a remote future and the remote past will only be relevant as far as it is directly connected with an ongoing experience in the present. The same may be said for moral and esthetic behavior. Birds do not really sing; dogs do not really court each other as humans do; sexual impulses are still different from romantic love, in spite of certain ceremony-like forms of expression.

In an attempt to identify animals that have rights from those who have none, Peter Singer tries to use the criterion of "individuality." Animals that do exist as individuals are to be distinguished from those that do not. However, where should one put the borderline? Why do an individual horse and an individual dog have rights which an individual rat and an individual ant do not? Or why do we find scientific experiments acceptable with mice, but not with cats? Or why can we imagine raising pigs for the sake of butchering and eating their meat, but find the same rather repelling with dogs, horses, or rats?

Apparently, no strict borderline can be drawn between animals, according to their degree of "rights." Even as "intelligent behavior" forms an important factor, its concrete application depends partly on subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, such subjectivism should remain self-critical and be prepared to achieve objectivity wherever possible. Such would not be possible if it remained at the level of sentimentality. Emotions can be very superficial or selfish; they have their roots in the subject itself, not in the object of its compassion, and as they are guiding one's actions, they remain subject-centered, rather than object-oriented. They risk, therefore, to create a distorted impression about a relation that sooner or later may be pierced and deflate. In the case of a relation between a human being and an animal, the risk with sentimental feelings is that they tend to be protracted as the animal does not adequately react to the subject's sentimental attitude which they do not understand. For this reason, the illusory power of sentimentality is greater while dealing with animals than with humans as there is little that may challenge it. One tends to remain stuck in his illusions for a longer time.

RIGHTS OR JUST "SYMPATHY"?

What is in fact the meaning or definition of "rights" in the case of nonhuman animals? Would it be—in its most basic form—something like "protection from suffering"? This would mean that under no circumstances should animals be deliberately tortured and harmed indirectly or, to a minimal extent, even for well-established and widely-accepted purposes like the testing of new and experimental drugs or the breeding of genetically modified species for transplantation organs. It would also mean that animals are given a certain freedom of movement, as much as possible in a natural environment, as this is deemed to boost their enjoyment instead of their suffering in confined places.

Even if this definition is given the strictest interpretation, it falls short of the scope and depth, which certain animal rights campaigners would like to give to the rights issue. It is sufficient to remind here of the debate between utilitarians and "egalitarians." The former are being accused of not properly addressing the "rights"

issue. If “maximizing happiness” and “minimizing pain” are the basis for morally-correct actions, then the raising of cattle for consumption might well be morally recommended. If the animals are given a sufficient degree of freedom and comfort, if they are killed by a painless method, and if market demands for a steady and abundant supply lead to increased numbers of them, utilitarian principles are perfectly respected.

A distinction is made between “animal rights” and “animal welfare,” the latter being just a milder version of the former. The “utilitarian” term “animal liberation” is equally less strong than “animal rights.” These distinctions may be important. Roger Scruton (2000, 123ff.), for instance, sees little sense in including animals into the moral community up to the point of giving them “rights.” Of course, we humans have the duty of caring for animals, of protecting them from any unnecessary harm. Under no circumstance should we take pleasure in any form of suffering by animals. However, this does not yet entitle animals to our protection as a “right.” “Welfare” or “well-being” in animals ought to be promoted, but this obligation on the human side cannot be translated in terms of “rights” on the nonhuman side.

Provegetarian Cora Diamond (2004, 100 ff.) also states that a discussion in terms of “rights” is beside the question. Or should we, for instance, say that a mentally-disturbed human being has the “right” not to be eaten? If there is a moral indicator that is unfavorable to eating the meat of animals, it is simply the perception that “it is wrong doing so.” In other words, the repulsion is based upon a perception of animals as sufficiently similar or related to us as to extend the application of “human” moral criteria to them, too. Eating (any form of) meat is, therefore, equal to cannibalism. Likewise, defending the abolition of slavery or fighting for women’s rights, cannot forego defending also the dignity of animals. Rational definitions will not lead to a satisfactory argument for a fair and “human” treatment of animals. There is rather some sort of intuition needed (even as this term is somewhat ambiguous and could be confounded with “contemplation”). One needs to develop a certain form of sensitivity and vulnerability to be approachable for proanimal arguments. This sensitivity is further expressed in the extension to animals of feelings, thoughts, and attitudes that we normally reserve for our relations with fellow-humans, like charity, respect, and pity.

Peter Atterton (2004, 51 ff.) correctly remarks that the contemporary philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas (2004, 50)—famous for his ethics based upon the infinite revelation in the face of the other—has spent little or no words to the relation between human and nonhuman animals. In the few cases when he did so, he clearly seemed uncomfortable about the topic. Lévinas clearly stated that “without considering animals as human beings, the ethical extends to all living beings. We do not want to make an animal suffer needlessly and so on. But the prototype of this is human ethics.”

Our interaction with nonhuman animals should be patterned according to the values that define our interaction with humans. This presupposes an explicit awareness that nonhumans are somewhat different from humans. Otherwise, we might be tempted to “read” typically human features “into” animals. This tendency is supported by behaviorist theories about similarities in patterns of conduct that are assumed to express similarities in mental state. Vegetarians often assume that animals

that are bred and eventually slaughtered for human consumption suffer “as if” they were human beings. Although such spontaneous analogies are common, they contain some danger. This danger may be called the “anthropomorphic fallacy,” which is somewhat related to “sentimentality.” In spite of its noble and sympathetic undertone, this intuition could run out of control and inspire in some persons an illusory feeling of “moral indebtedness.”

Nevertheless, domesticated animals are entitled to human “care” for their comfort and fulfillment. When it comes to animals in the wild, the object of human responsibility shifts to the general balance of Nature. This means respecting animals in their *habitat*, which is not usually adversely affected by traditional human activities like small-scale hunting and angling. “Darwinists” and naturalists will point out that surplus individual animals are meant to die for the better state of the species and the environment.

A CASE FOR VEGETARIANISM?

Eating meat is an old human custom, the origin of which is probably impossible to locate, both in historical and geographic terms. Even as some cultures are predominantly vegetarian, they were often once carnivorous and were consecutively transformed under the influence of certain religious rules or prescriptions.

What exactly keeps people to eat meat? Muers (2008, 186) refers to Carol Adams (1993), who was exploring the relation between feminism and vegetarianism and had asked whether it made sense to serve only vegetarian food during feminist conferences. The problem is that a lot of people simply find it “natural” for humans to eat meat of various origins. As no human law can ever overthrow a “natural” law—this is a law which reflects the very order of being—the eating of meat will continue forever and ever, according to this reasoning. To counter this, Adams proposed to “de-naturalize” the eating of meat and a series of other actions that are connected to it, as hunting. If human minds may be convinced that not the violent hunting of creatures, but the nurturing of compassionate feelings for their sufferings is more natural and typically human, then a new intellectual and moral climate may emerge. In that case, not the “natural” argument as such, but the way it is filled in will need to be modified.

Adamson (2004) mentions that many cultures have developed food hierarchies based upon preferences by people and that in the majority of cases, meat was (and is) ranked at the top while plant food at the bottom. This trend seems to be confirmed in the case of medieval Europe as the cookbooks of the time reveal an endless stream of meat dishes, while hardly leaving space for a vegetable dish. On the other hand, there is almost simultaneously a trend to abstain from meat, usually with some form of religious motivation. While cannibalism almost universally meets negative emotional responses, some religions—like Judaism and Islam—forbid certain types of meat, especially pork. In the Christian tradition, meat was forbidden at certain days or times of the year or for particular groups, like monks. Consistency in following the dietary prescriptions of one’s own religion is important in the process of personal identification with the group. It also helps to ensure one’s acceptance as a member and grants to the group a certain degree of cohesion. For this reason,

Adamson states that—while banquets and other festive meals were used to define a community and give it stability—communal fasting too, as the flip side of communal eating, had the effect of binding people together, as is still the case nowadays among Muslims during the holy month of Ramadan.

However, the strongest reason for abstinence seems to have been in the desire to “clean” or purify the body and mind. If Saint Benedict prohibits the consumption of animal flesh to his monks, except for the sick and the weaker ones, it is because he expects this to boost their concentration on essential aspects of the monastic vocation, like prayer and study. Early Christian monks used to fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, eventually also on Saturdays in some areas, leading to abstinence from meat, but sometimes even from fish, eggs, milk, and other dairy products. Under the influence of some extremist groups, a strong association was made between meat consumption and meat “production” through sexual intercourse. Therefore, some desert fathers seem to have restricted their diet very firmly, not out of compassion with other creatures, but out of a burning desire to control their own bodies, their desires, and their temptations. For desert fathers as Evagrius and Cassian, “gluttony”—the sin of eating too soon, too expensively, or too much—is the first among evils. However, others were opposed to vegetarianism, precisely because of its association to heresy and radicalism. Dietary choices and the discussions surrounding them, always took place within the larger framework of orthodoxy and/or heresy. Therefore, if some authors (like Irenaeus and Hippolytus) took a position against vegetarianism, this was not necessarily an expression of indifference for the treatment of animals. They were rather opposing the metaphysical dualism of the Gnostics, together with its spiritualistic and antiphysical implications. What and how you ate revealed whether you were an orthodox or a heretic, a conformist or a defiant (Shaw 2008, 75 ff.), even as some were preaching “dietary indifference” as the most authentically Christian attitude. In short, in spite of widespread practices of fasting, Adamson (2004, 187) can state that “a diet that included meat was still central to the Christian faith, and so was procreation.”

The waning influence of the Church in the private matters of its members, combined with a worldwide growing moral liberalism and individualism, has evidently not led to a more restrictive atmosphere in terms of food consumption nowadays. We just have to mention the endless varieties of dishes that are offered in the many restaurants and food stalls in shopping lanes and malls to illustrate this. However, vegetarianism—and its most radical form “veganism”—has gained some fans because of the alleged health benefits in a climate of cardio-vascular diseases and cancer. The number of vegetarians has also risen in the wake of a number of food scandals in Western countries—like that of the BSE crisis, or around the foot-and-mouth disease or dioxin poisoning—that were directly or indirectly the effect of intensive farming and mass food production. Further, the campaign around global warming has also endorsed calls for a more eco-friendly diet, even as habits are hard to change, especially if related to eating. Becoming a vegetarian is, from that perspective, not a matter of individual choice, but a response to the perceived moral obligation to act and live in conformity with human nature. As an assumed “remedy” to distorted socioeconomic and cultural developments, vegetarianism can be either seen as a critical trait of mainstream culture or as a form of counterculture. In

contemporary “Western” culture, vegetarianism appears to have become a part of mainstream culture, albeit still a somewhat marginal one. Even as meat remains the main substance of a meal for most people, its prestige has a bit diminished because of the rise of vegetarianism as a culturally acceptable alternative.

OR FOR TRADITIONAL FARMING?

Modern breeding methods and techniques were conceived and developed to maximize output and refine cost-effectiveness in agriculture and the food producing industry. This has undeniably led to a permanent, wide offer of different kinds of meat and other foods in the market, at more or less affordable prices. Economic development and ecologic balance do not always match very well, however. Just as in agriculture, strategies to increase industrial productivity may have adverse effects in a long term on food quality and safety, and on Nature as a whole. If the global supply of meats and other animal products has to keep its current proportional relation to world population, the number of animals on the planet will also have to rise, creating an additional burden to the planet’s ecosystems. The promotion of a vegetarian or “low meat” diet, combined with a sustainable and environment-friendly way of farming, shows the way out of the current spiral.

AND WHAT WITH TESTING?

Besides their “use” for food, fur, or entertainment, animals also form an important source of information to various types of researchers. A distinction should be made between various types and purposes of projects in which animals are used. If the research does not cause any pain or harm to the animal, there is, of course, no moral problem. However, if suffering does occur, the animal’s well-being is compromised and, therefore, the utilitarian principle of “ethicality” is violated. The moral evaluation of the procedure will, then, depend on whether the research is intended to cater to some vital and essential human needs (for instance, to test a new medicine or to determine whether a fox that bit a human has rabies) or simply to serve private economic interests (like the launching of a new cosmetic or household product), as commented by James Garbarino (2007, 255).

Yarri (2005, 94, 101) states that Tom Regan (1983) rejects the use of animals in research even if the expected human suffering by not testing outweighs the suffering of the test animal. The basis for this rejection is the violation of the animal’s interests. Regan does not believe in “benign animal experimentation” that carefully respects animal rights. However, this kind of “justice based” criticism is deemed too “essentialist” and too “rational” by some commentators, as it overemphasizes the “essential nature” of animals, at the expense of their singular and relational qualities. The most appropriate basis for moral judgment and actions should be a combination of direct experience and abstract principles, a fusion of feelings and thoughts as in the concept of “unified sensibility,” according to Deborah Slicer (2007, 105-20). Embracing feminist concepts as “care” and “loving attention” will prevent legalism while respecting both the relatedness and the differences between humans and animals. Even the utilitarian Peter Singer is said to have deviated from

his "rational" principle by defining the "morality" of animal testing through the "desirability to exchange" the animal with, for instance, a mentally-retarded human. This feeling-based argument is clearly aiming at the quantitative reduction of animal research cases and the avoidance of the more "mentally complex" or "psycho-socially needy" animals in product-related experiments.

CONCLUSION

The often heard "common-sense" solution to the problem of animal rights flows from the position that animals are not able to completely fulfill the role of humans in society and that, therefore, they cannot avail of rights in the proper sense, or these rights are different from human rights. Animals do not actively participate in the highly complex world of human abstract thought, industrial production, social services, or in artistic and symbolic expression. In each of these fields, participants are considered as subjects and are therefore held accountable for their deeds. Therefore, and also because of the worldwide problematic state of respect for human rights, the issue of animal rights seems not to be an absolute priority for most social and moral philosophers today. When the discussion cannot be avoided, many philosophers remain skeptic about the possibility to theoretically support and practically implement such rights.

I believe the discussion about our attitudes towards animals should be seen as a part of a wider, environmental ethical discourse. No matter how different animals are from mollusks, plants, flowers, or vegetables, they are just another element of Mother Nature's mosaic. Perhaps, we should stick to the idea of showing rightful respect to animals according to their degree of intelligence and complexity of interactive patterns. This presupposes the earlier mentioned "hierarchy" of sensitivities towards classes of human and nonhuman animals. Obviously, humans would top such moral hierarchy, which remains affected by apparent arbitrariness. According to the Later Wittgenstein, our opinions are not primarily based upon rational ideas, but they reflect a preconceptual attitude. Moral intuitions are not the fruit of a careful and systematic reflection. Instead, they are given to us through culture, through education. For that reason, they can never be totally neutral, whether we intend to abide by them or to reject them.

The same seems to be true about our attitude towards animals. That they should not be tortured, especially if only for human pleasure, seems to be evident to us, even if we cannot explain why. That humans have a relative moral priority over other animals seems to be clear from our strong repulsion of cannibalism, while the eating of animal meat is—for most of us—acceptable or even delightful. At least, this is what it seems for beef or chicken; some religious beliefs forbid the eating of other meats, like pork, as I earlier said. In contemporary Western culture, most people might find the thought of eating the meat of their neighbor's dog not very appetizing. For Filipinos, horse meat is to be kept off any menu, even as in the West it is acceptable because of some assumed health benefits in spite of a papal directive by Gregory II in 732, addressed to Christian converts in Germany, to abstain from horseflesh.

These examples have reference to some sort of a “cultural relativism” in the field of meat-eating and other dietary practices. More than the practices themselves, however, it is the underlying motives and the perception of values that matter, and these are not always rationally justifiable.

A last question pertains to the situation in the Philippines. Most Filipinos—including students and teachers of philosophy—look surprised upon learning about the existence of something like an ethical debate on “animal rights.” Maybe, one of the reasons is that many Filipinos have been naturally exposed to a variety of animals in a variety of situations since their childhood, especially in the countryside. They do not have, in other words, the narrow and distorted concept of animals as mere pets that perfectly fit in the sterile urban environment in which most Westerners are living today.

Another reason for the low interest in animal rights is probably the priority of “human rights,” which in the Philippines is still a hot issue, not the least during a run-up in local and national elections. And there is also the need for more infrastructures, more industries and communication facilities for economic development. These are typical features of a modern, rational culture of planning that requires an appropriate state of mind. The recent (quasi)-failure of the Copenhagen talks on climate change has illustrated that such state of mind is typical for developing countries which are not primarily concerned with environmental issues. In spite of all this, critical reflection—especially in the academic departments of philosophy across this archipelago—cannot avoid the “stumbling block” of the attitudes of mankind to its long-term companion: the nonhuman animal. Perhaps, some indigenous practices or traditions that involve the killing of animals may need to be questioned—like the *cañao* or the *pinicpican* in the Cordillera mountains—leading to another round of discussion about whether a national or regional identity may depend on a few “untouchable” cultural practices? At any rate, the book *Genesis* has taught that life on earth went on for Noah and his companions after the floodwaters had disappeared (Gen. 8ff.), and it even became more bountiful than before.

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BOOK REVIEW

Irving M. Copi and Carl Cohen
with Daniel E. Flage:
Essentials of logic

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Pearson Education, Inc., 2007, 452 pp.**

A great deal of intelligence and sincere judgment is needed to review reputable and recognized authorities of logic. Mere descriptions of what their work talks about and how such discussions are communicated are inadequate to warrant the purposes for which the book itself is prepared and conceptualized. To my mind, the review should be as rigorous as the authors intended the book to be as a concise textbook in Logic. No other logic book, it appears, has as much rigor and scholarship as the *Essentials of logic*.

The *Essentials of logic* is a response to numerous requests for a concise introductory logic text ("Preface," ix). It exceeds what is generally expected to be taught in basic Logic courses. It has, so to speak, envisioned the fundamental concepts as comprehensively as possible. The elucidations provided for, from basic logical concepts to a preliminary explication of the principle of induction, are more than basic or introductory. The discussions, however, are without prejudice or bigotry, brilliant.

What is even more brilliant and perhaps the most looked-for in any Copi and Cohen's text, is the range of exercises that it provides. They are more than adequate as preparatory components to develop both the logical and critical thinking of the individual. The teacher is therefore equipped with an array of adequate choices. The challenge to the teacher is how such exercises can be utilized to pass on what is otherwise intended as primordial in the study of logic. Although answers to odd-numbered exercises are provided, a creative and incisive insight and patience on the part of the teacher and the students are necessary, if not inevitable, to answer or solve the exercises. The exercises require a lot of impetus and enthusiasm to cover the dynamism inherent in them. In the absence of a creative and meaningful dissemination of learning, coupled with the lack of impetus and enthusiasm, the exercises contained in the *Essentials of logic* may be too overwhelming for beginners and a frightening simulacrum of notations and schemata for nonphilosophy majors. When this happens, what is intended as a concise and introductory logic text that envisions the fundamentals may become alienating or else intimidating. Be that as it

may, whether or not it becomes other than what it is intended for, the countenance it carries as *Essentials of logic* remains.

REMARKS ON THE CHAPTERS

The book is divided into nine chapters. Each chapter contains more or less a number of subtopics, which if carefully assessed and evaluated, are crucial to the succeeding discussions. Chapter 1, for example, has ten subtopics. Each subtopic is preparatory for the others. It begins with a straightforward definition of what logic is. This is followed by an elaborate discussion on propositions, arguments, premises, and conclusions. Arguments and explanations are distinguished (7-9) after a thorough discussion of earlier subtopics. Whether the distinction is carefully established or not remains an interesting concern. Although a distinction is provided, I do not think such a distinction is sufficient. It may have been easily understood if additional space is given for both. It is not enough, I suppose, to simply say that explanations answer the questions why or how something is the case while insisting that in an argument, the premises are known to be true at the beginning (8). Even teachers of logic may find such a distinction inadequate unless the purpose is simply to introduce them. What follows after is devoted to techniques for recognizing arguments. I think this part is sufficiently discussed considering that a number of premise and conclusion indicators are given (12). They allow the readers to recognize arguments and even arguments that need contextual evaluation. This is a good preparation for paraphrasing, analyzing, and diagramming simple arguments or arguments that contain complex passages.

The inclusion of essential hints for readers, not to mention the summary provided after the chapter, and a number of carefully selected exercises after each subtopic make Chapter 1 really attractive. This, to my mind, is one of the book's strengths. The exercises are so fruitful that they outweigh whatever inadequacy one may find in it. They pose a challenge to be creative to both the reader and the teacher. Copi, Cohen, and Flage perhaps assume that such an inclusion is better than a number of explanations. I think so, too. Explanations without exercises are meaningless or useless. So a little explanation with a number of carefully selected exercises is outstanding. After all, the study of logic is about developing skills in reasoning through practice. The exercises are meant for such a purpose.

Chapter 2 provides a thorough discussion of the various fallacies committed in reasoning. It groups fallacies into relevance, presumption, and ambiguity. Each classification is extensively explained, including the variants that each fallacy has. The fallacies are carefully presented with clarity and rigor. Another category, fallacies of defective induction, is added in the latest edition of Copi and Cohen's *Introduction to logic*. The appeals to ignorance and illegitimate authority, classified as fallacies of relevance in the *Essentials* (2007), are now classified under the fallacies of defective induction in the 13th edition (2009) of the *Introduction*. It is apparent that the *Introduction* is meant for the general public, that is, for all students in college, while the *Essentials* is meant for philosophy and mathematics majors.

Chapters 3 to 5 are devoted to traditional Aristotelian logic. Chapter 3, for example, begins with a comprehensive account of categorical propositions and their classifications. This is followed by a discussion on Venn Diagrams, that is, on the inclusion or exclusion of one class from another. The distribution of terms is likewise thoroughly introduced along with the concept of the existential import, which claims that a class has a member. The Aristotelian square of opposition is presented with much comprehensiveness as preparatory to logical equivalences and immediate inferences.

Chapter 4, which deals with categorical syllogism, is built upon the rigor of the previous chapter. Chapter 4 is logically ordered and equipped with essential hints and conceptual summaries for enhanced familiarity. The nature of syllogistic arguments is discussed after a thorough discussion of the standard form categorical syllogism. The topics are very well ordered and are somehow connected by logical priority, i.e., one topic is built upon another. More than that, the inclusion of the flowchart adapted from Daniel Flage (158-59) for applying syllogistic rules is, I think, another highlight of the chapter, not to mention the number of included exercises, which has become one of the trademarks for any Copi and Cohen logic text.

While Chapters 3 to 5 are carefully explained, the attempt to present the fundamentals of Aristotle's logic in the most comprehensive way possible yielded some misprints or typographical errors (see Andrew Aberdein at <http://my.fit.edu/~aberdein/Copi2Errata.pdf>). These errors are, of course, expected to be corrected in the next edition of the *Essentials*.

Chapters 6 to 7 are devoted at great length to propositional logic. It explains at the outset the language of modern symbolic logic and for what purposes such symbols are alluded to. It begins with the distinctions among the basic concepts of conjunction, disjunction, implication, and biconditional statements with much rigor and clarity. The inclusion of the chart for the language of propositional logic (200-201) manifests this rigor. While other logic textbooks have similar charts, the range of what is provided here far outweighs the others. The chart, for instance, provides a number of possibilities on how a given statement is formulated and represented. The variations alluded to here appears to me as vivid examples of profound scholarship and knowledge on the subject at hand.

Similarly, the section on truth table and reverse truth table are lucidly discussed (208ff.), making the analysis of compound propositions even more interesting. The authors are patient enough to include the process of constructing truth tables from the guide column down to the columns for compound statements themselves. They have cautiously introduced the method of truth table constructions with ease and succeeded in making them "understandable" for both the reader and the teacher. In teaching propositional logic, this section seems to be the most tedious part since a great deal of tolerance is required to pass on the wisdom behind the construction of truth tables and truth possibilities. As experience shows, as the number of variables increase, so the number of truth possibilities also increase at great length. In the absence of a creative technique and tolerance, this part of propositional logic is intolerable to students.

The method of deduction or the section that deals with natural deduction is discussed considerably in Chapter 7. The principles, I think, are circumspectly presented making the process itself friendly to both the teacher and the reader. It has a way of passing on the essentials of deduction without making it appear fearsome or even alienating. The conceptual boxes that summarize the essential points of deduction are significantly helpful in the process of acquiring the techniques themselves. The frequency of examples and the repetitive remarks on how the demonstrations or formal proof must proceed are also contributory to learning the process, notwithstanding the emphasis directed to the conclusion when evaluating the argument prior to the construction of the proof. Equally important is the number of steps or techniques given to make the deduction process familiar to both the teacher and reader (271). As in previous chapters, there are misprints and errors committed in this chapter.

For example, exercise No. 19 seems to have erred in line 8. Line 8 should have been $[A \supset (D \equiv E)]$ following the combinations of lines 2 $\{(C \vee B) \supset [A \supset (D \equiv E)]\}$ and 7 $(C \vee B)$ through modus ponens. Similarly, the English sentence *Alejandro won the election or both Dmitri and Lucia lost*, translated as *Alejandro won the election and Dmitri lost, or Alejandro won the election and Lucia lost* for distribution is incorrectly formulated. The sentence should have been "Alejandro won the election or Dmitri lost and Alejandro won the election or Lucia lost" to correspond to the logically equivalent statements $[P \vee (Q \cdot R)] \equiv [(P \vee Q) \cdot (P \vee R)]$ following the distribution rule. In the same way, line 11 from line 10 $[\sim(\sim p \vee r) \vee r]$ should have been $[(\sim\sim p \cdot \sim r) \vee r]$ instead of $[(\sim\sim p \cdot r) \vee r]$ following De Morgan's principle. The proof should have been two steps shorter. Consider:

11. $[(\sim\sim p \cdot \sim r) \vee r]$	10 DeM
12. $(p \cdot \sim r) \vee r$	11 DN
13. $(p \vee r) \cdot (\sim r \vee r)$	12 Dist.
14. $p \vee r$	13 Simp
15. $q \vee s$	2,14 CD
16. $\sim\sim q \vee s$	15 DN
17. $\sim q \supset s$	16 Impl.

The theory of quantification and the rules that govern it are covered in Chapter 8. Although the discussion is not as comprehensive as in the other chapters, it has presented the fundamentals of quantification theory. In fact, the manner in which the discussion proceeded is quite simple yet it carries the primary principles necessary to learn the theory itself. The presentation on singular propositions, for instance, is a case in point (297). Such a technique for translation is intuitively simpler yet recognizable. The same is true with the presentations of both the universal and particular statements (298ff.).

Interestingly, the inclusion of the chart containing the language of quantification is an added advantage of the book (302-304). While other logic texts have similar inclusions, these are so far more in number and are more

complicated than the others. Familiarity with them is crucial to learning the fundamentals of quantification theory.

The principles of induction as presented in Chapter 9 are clear and rigorous. Although the topics are limited to arguments by analogy and appraisals on them, explanations and hypotheses, and arguments to the best explanations, it appears that these topics are sufficient for an advanced study on induction.

ADDITIONAL REMARK AND RECOMMENDATION

While it is always fruitful to consider how each chapter is presented and the purposes to which they are directed, it is also equally important to consider the range of exercises provided to enhance whatever principles are discussed in each chapter. In so far as the *Essentials of logic* is concerned, such need is well provided. In fact, the number of exercises it contains is more than what is necessary to learn the basic principles of logical reasoning, if patiently responded to by both the reader and the teacher. The exercises are its backbone. They make the discipline alive.

However, just as the exercises make the discipline alive, I think, familiarity with its history as a discipline is also necessary, considering that the Logic course is regarded as a general education subject in several countries other than the United States. An inclusion of a brief history of logic and how logic has influenced the direction of human thought and inquiry through the years will certainly make the study of logic even more interesting, especially if the inclusion is presented by a recognized authority in the discipline.

Nonetheless, *Essentials of logic* is an added treasure to the already developed yet flourishing immense literature of the discipline and in that respect, I highly recommend it as a textbook.

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BOOK NOTE

Jerzy Brzeziński et al.,* eds. *The courage of doing philosophy. Essays presented to Leszek Nowak*

Rodopi, Amsterdam & New York, 2007, 471 pp.

The courage of doing philosophy is a very important volume dedicated to one of the most original contemporary philosophers of science, the Polish Leszek Nowak. Main founder of the so-called Poznań School of Methodology and “editor-in-chief” since 1975 of its official review, the *Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities*, Nowak distinguished himself in the international epistemological landscape—thanks to the systematic development of the *idealizational conception of science*.

This scientific approach starts from a methodological study of Karl Marx’s and Galileo Galilei’s works. Leszek Nowak re-elaborates it in a creative way, establishing a close comparison with the most significant conceptions of contemporary epistemology. It got its conceptual nucleus in the need to separate “essence” from “appearance” as developed by Marx, who had taken it from Hegel, in order to catch what is more essential in phenomena, which, according to Nowak, is the fundamental aim of science.

But this need can only be completely developed if we look at what constitutes Nowak’s theoretical starting point, both simple and innovative, that is, the thesis about the difference between abstraction and idealization. In fact, upheld differently from those by inductive philosophies or even by the positivist and postpositivist ones, idealization—not abstraction—should be considered as the core of the scientific method, says Nowak. There is a substantial difference between abstraction as it appears from a methodological reconstruction of Marx’s *Capital* and idealization. Even though Marx used the term “abstraction,” he intended it in a radically different way from the empiricist conception. To understand better this difference, we can take the example of Galileo’s law of free falling object:

$$s=gt^2/2$$

*The complete names of the editors are: Jerzy Brzeziński, Andrzej Klawiter, Theo A. F. Kuipers, Krzysztof Łastowski, Katarzyna Paprzycka, and Piotr Przybysz.

Galileo disregards in this law some factors that we know act on bodies, operating in that way some “counter-factual assumptions.” In its complete form, the formula reads:

$$\text{if } R(x) = 0 \text{ and } g = \text{constant, then } s(x) = gt^2/2$$

In this transcription, we notice how air resistance (R) on the body x , is equated to zero and the gravitational force is fixed as constant, when in reality we know that things are different. But that is the way scientists work; they formulate—sometimes tacitly—some “idealizing assumptions.”

The thesis of Nowak and his School consists, therefore, in maintaining that mature science proceeds by systematic idealizations. Science works by: (1) introducing idealizing assumptions, (2) formulating idealizing laws, and (3) gradually concretizing and “approximatizing” these laws.

The difference between the abstractive and the idealizing procedures consists in the fact that in the former case, the human intellect obtains universal concepts by abstracting them from knowledge of particular objects (through generalization of empirical facts). In the latter case, the human intellect proceeds by “enclosing between parentheses” some aspects of phenomenal reality that we consider peripheral in order to focus on the essential factors of the phenomena under investigation. Classic abstraction finds its roots in Aristotle’s works. Aristotle used abstraction as the building block of the theoretical sciences like mathematics, and physics, among others. However, Aristotelian abstraction refers to the immediate empirical reality—what appears—and thus fails to capture the deeper essence of the phenomena. This aspect of Nowak’s epistemological reflection has been taken into account in recent years by important epistemologists like Nancy Cartwright and others.

The volume, *The courage of doing philosophy*, presents important contributions not only of this epistemological aspects of Nowak’s thought, but also of the other two aspects of his thought, that were subsequently developed—non-Marxian historical materialism and Unitarian Metaphysics.

Non-Marxian historical materialism, says Krzysztof Brzechczyn, “is, on the one hand, a modification of Karl Marx’s historical materialism and, on the other hand, its extension” (235). In fact, in formulating non-Marxian historical materialism, Nowak uses both Marxian methodology (the “idealizational” side) and Marxian dialectics, but he radicalizes the original Marxian version by extending the materialistic critique to the political and cultural aspects (which Marx considered as simple superstructural manifestations).

The main thesis of non-Marxian historical materialism states that 1) Class divisions do not exist only in the economy, but they emerge even in other spheres of human activity, like politics and culture; 2) In political relations, the means of coercion determine the division of a society; the ruling elite controls the means of coercion while the ordinary citizens are deprived of this means; 3) In the economy, the material level is characterized by the means of production that constitutes a division between the class of owners and the class of direct producers

(workers); 4) In culture, the material level is characterized by the spiritual means of production that determine a division between the class of “priests” and the class of “believers.”

Nowak spent his last energies on the topic Unitarian Metaphysics. The starting point of Nowak’s reflections is a critique of the *metaphysical positivism* that Piotr Przybysz says “is not used by a specific school in philosophy; nor does it denote the metaphysics inspired by the views of A. Comte or R. Carnap” (315).

According to Nowak, metaphysical positivism represents “the most widespread thinking pattern in today’s metaphysical discussion” (316) and it is based on some dogmas such as the dogma of a single world, the dogma of substantialism, the dogma of “positivity” of existence, and so on.

Nowak (317) instead proposes three basic ideas in his Unitarian Metaphysics: attributivism, negativism, and the possible worlds hypothesis. To the question “What is the fundamental ontological category?” metaphysical positivism answers, “the category of an object”—a point of view that can be found in Aristotle’s *Categories*. Nowak states that there is no direct access to the object itself, so “the basic ontological category is that of an *attribute*.”

Another fundamental question relates to the positive character of existence postulated by metaphysical positivism, according to which, everything that exists is positive. Nowak (317) takes a different view because for him “negativity is [a] part of being... The dichotomy of positive and negative is inherent to being itself, and is prior to language or thinking.”

The other aspect of metaphysical positivism that Nowak criticizes pertains to the dogma of a single world (we have only one world, the world we live in). Instead, Unitarian Metaphysics “advocates the pluralism of worlds... Each of them contains objects of various categories, i.e., physical objects, material points, etc.” (318).

The volume does not only contain the contributions of the main pupils of Nowak (now all professors in different Polish universities) but even those presented by philosophers of science of international fame. The volume starts with an introduction and a selected bibliography of Nowak’s papers. The rest of the volume is categorized into three sections: 1) “Science and idealization,” 2) “Science and ontology,” and, 3) “Science, philosophy and values.”

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BOOK NOTICES

Clare Carlisle & Jonardon Ganeri, eds. 2010. Philosophy as therapeia (Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement: 66). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 245pp. ISBN 9780521165150. £21.99. US\$37

“[T]here is no use in philosophy if it does not expel the suffering of the soul.” With these words of Epicurus, the editors of the present volume are offering eleven contributions by mainly Europe-based scholars on the “therapeutic” function and mission of philosophy. As the contributions cover both Western and Oriental philosophical traditions, from both ancient and recent times, the editors intend to show how the topic has a universal philosophical relevance. But if philosophy is to be understood as a therapy, what illness is it supposed to cure? And is the one who’s ill not, perhaps, the subject of philosophy, being simultaneously doctor and patient? These and other relevant questions are being addressed in this highly accessible work, that also offers seven pages of bibliography. Philosophers of all ages and traditions have considered their human lives as works of art—for instance sculptures or decorated cloth—for which philosophy could offer adequate methods of fashioning. This metaphor emphasizes the practical purpose of philosophy and the belief in the ultimate capability of the human subject to achieve its own happiness that transpire from this book.

Michael Funk Deckard & Péter Losonczi, eds. 2010. Philosophy begins in wonder: An introduction to early modern philosophy, theology and science. Eugene (Oregon): Pickwick Publications/Wipf and Stock Publishers. ISBN 9781556357824. US\$43.

The title of this work might appear as a surprise: after referring to philosophy’s beginnings, the subtitle clarifies that the topic is, in fact, on early modern philosophy! However, the young editors have managed to offer an interesting collection of fifteen chapters—equally written by mostly young academics—that illustrate how “wonder” is at the basis of philosophy throughout its history, not just at its (Greek) beginnings. The concept is illustrated by a personal experience of intellectual doubt, leading to wonder—the confrontation with Hume’s skeptic approach to causation. Wonder is also at the basis of modern philosophy, that cannot be totally separated from theology and science. Contributions are grouped in three parts, with the historical, scientific, and religious contexts coming first. The next parts are on wonder in respectively seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe. In the modern era, philosophy

remains marked by its past, but it assumes a clearly scientific touch, like in Descartes. His amazement was less directed to the new discoveries in themselves, than to the scientific method that had brought them about. In modern times, wonder is therefore being said to have turned into "curiosity." The editors have (successfully) tried to present a wide range of authors, not just the traditional antagonism between Continental rationalists and British empiricists. The authors intended to demonstrate how philosophy shows a relatively strong continuity, from the ancient over the medieval into the modern era. In this sense, the book also tries to do away with a number of long-time misconceptions, as that about the often underestimated theological dimension in early modern philosophy. The book—some chapters of which can, according to the editors, also be used as an undergraduate textbook—is a welcome source of support for all, including the advanced reader, who want to deepen their knowledge of philosophy in the modern era.

D. M. Armstrong. 2010. Sketch for a systematic metaphysics. Oxford: Clarendon Press. ISBN 9780199590612.

This short but lucid presentation of a contemporary metaphysics has grown out of a course taught at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York in 2008. It reflects a profound change in the perception of metaphysics as a philosophical discipline in contemporary circles of analytical philosophy. Metaphysics has become respectable again, even though the subject is rarely approached in a systematic way. The current book, therefore, is addressed to a wider public, including both professionals and general educated people with a pronounced interest in philosophy. Being inspired by lectures given by John Anderson in 1949 and 1950, it also intends to remain modest in its ambition, given the nonrigorous nature of philosophical argumentation. Taking "space-time ontology" as its directing principle, the overview is spread over sixteen chapters, carrying titles as "properties," "relations," "states of affairs," "particulars," "truthmakers," "possibility, actuality, necessity," "numbers," "classes," and "mind." The author justifies this relatively high number by saying that "philosophy is often best digested if you take small bites." And this is probably particularly true for metaphysics, being considered as—perhaps—the most "heavy" and abstract of philosophical disciplines. Those terms may be called "topical neutral notions," and constitute the backbone of metaphysical terminology, while they're often raising questions and controversies, what is being illustrated at the beginning by the concept of "causality" and its many interpretations. A short, synthetic conclusion would have been useful after the last chapter, but its absence evokes the author's desire for modesty, as he refuses to come up with a categorical and "finished" theory. As a solid introduction to both metaphysics and contemporary analytic philosophy, this book will also be appreciated by the advanced learner, who can make use of the bibliographic references at the end.

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**PHILIPPINE NATIONAL
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- 3) 8 July 2009, Thursday, 1700-1900 HRS. Dr. William Sweet (St. Francis Xavier University, Canada). "Ethics of multiculturalism and hospitality"

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- 5) 11 December 2010, Saturday, 1700-2000 HRS. Dr. Rolando M. Gripaldo (PNPRS, Quezon City). "Ethics in technology"

PNPRS FOURTH NATIONAL CONVENTION
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DATE: 14 March 2010

1. Dr. Atty. Noel Ramiscal (1350-1435 HRS) [University of the Philippines at Los Baños]. "Philosophical foundations of the legal aspect of academic freedom"
2. Dr. Jove Jim Aguas (1405-1450 HRS) [University of Santo Tomas], President, Philosophical Association of the Philippines. "Wojtyla on person, love, and sex"
3. Dr. Rolando M. Gripaldo (1530-1615 HRS). Executive Governor, PNPRES. "Constative logic"

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THEME: *Ethics of Remembering History and Solidarity*
VENUE: University of La Salette, Santiago City, Isabela
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2. Prof. Raymundo Pavo (University of the Philippines-Mindanao, Davao City). "Collingwood's notion of history: A possible basis for an ethics of solidarity"
3. Prof. Mark Lawrence Pascual (University of La Salette, Santiago City). "The ethics of remembering"
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*In view of Typhoon Ondoy (Ketsana), the PANL 2009 Convention was cancelled.

**PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION
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PAP ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 2010

THEME: *The Philosophy of the Human Person*

VENUE: Don Bosco Technical Institute, Makati City

DATE: 7-9 April 2010

DAY ONE: 7 April 2010

First Plenary Session: Dr. Lino Gregorio V. Redoblado, OFM (Our Lady of Angels Seminary): "Freedom unmasked: Towards a Levinasian anthropological disinterressement"

First Panel Session: (1) Dennis M. Edralin (University of Santo Tomas): "Person in Scheler's phenomenology of hierarchy of values" and (2) Alvin Sario (Aquinas University, Legaspi): "A Philosophy of the human person towards an ethics of health care"

Second Panel Session: (1) Guillermo Dionisio (University of Asia and the Pacific): "The human person from a Hindu vantage point" and (2) Jonathan Ray Villacorta (University of Santo Tomas): "Man's religious demand in Kitaro Nishida's inquiry into the good"

DAY TWO: 8 April 2010

Third Panel Session: Juanito V. Bernardo Jr. (Manila Tytana Colleges): (1) "Ayn Rand's objectivist idea of man" and (2) Agnes G. Ponsaran (University of Santo Tomas): "Man and meaning: Frankl's logotherapy"

Fourth Panel Session: (1) Dr. Mark Joseph T. Calano (Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City): "Charles Taylor on self-interpretation: Understanding interpreter and interpreted" and (2) Dr. Paolo Bolaños (University of Santo Tomas, Manila): "The ethics of recognition and the normativity of social relations: Some notes on Axel Honneth's materialist philosophical anthropology"

Fifth Panel Session: (1) Peter Mara (University of Santo Tomas): "Karol Wojtyla's theory of consciousness" and (2) Marella Ada Mancenido (University

of Santo Tomas): "In-itself and for-itself, the problem of Being's search for authentic existence: A reading of Sartre's Nausea"

DAY THREE: 9 April 2010

Sixth Panel Session: (1) Prof. Virgilio Rivas (Polytechnic University of the Philippines): "Being is not the anonymity of freedom," (2) Tracy Llanera (University of Santo Tomas): "Breaking the mirrored man: Rorty and pragmatism," and (3) Darlene Demandante (University of Santo Tomas): "Jacques Lacan's notion of a human person"

Second Plenary Session: (1) Dr. Leovino Ma. Garcia (Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City): "Capable human being: Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics of identity"

PAP MIDYEAR CONFERENCE, 2010

THEME: *Asian Intimations on Western Thoughts*

VENUE: University of Santo Tomas, Manila

DATE: 23 October 2010

First Discussion: Andrew Soh (Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City): "Wuzi: The human being as a selfless self."

Plenary Lecture: Dr. Florentino Timbreza (De la Salle University, Manila): "Filipino thoughts in parables"

Second Discussion: Michael Roland F. Hernandez (Ateneo de Naga University, Naga City): "Wu-wei and differance: Thinking difference and deferral towards a Taoist social philosophy of action"

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