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Interview on Global Intelligence

Note

Dr. Seyed Javad Miri from Center for Sociological Studies (IPCSS) conducted the following interview with Mihai Spariosu. Dr. Mihai Spariosu is a Distinguished Research Professor at the University of Georgia, Athens, in the United States. He holds an M.A. from Tulane University and a Ph.D. from Stanford University and has taught at many prominent universities around the world. He is the founder and leading theoretician of a new field of study and practice, Intercultural Knowledge Management, which he proposed and developed in two internationally acclaimed books: *Global Intelligence and Human Development: Toward an Ecology of Global Learning* (MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2005) and *Remapping Knowledge: Intercultural Studies for a Global Age* (Berghahn Publishers, New York and Oxford, 2006). His most recent major publication is a historical novel on Plato and his Academy (2010). Dr. Spariosu was President of the International Foundation for Global Studies, the co-founder and former academic director of the Institute of European Studies, founder and director of the East Central European Program, and founder and former director of The Avignon Study Abroad Program at the University of Georgia. He also co-founded and co-directed The International School of Theory in the Humanities at Santiago de Compostela, Spain. He has lectured and consulted widely on the importance of an intercultural approach to scientific research, public policy, and corporate business practices. He has also organized or participated in conferences, workshops, and seminars on global learning and leadership, environmental education, transdisciplinary and intercultural curriculum development, and intercultural knowledge management. He is currently leading the development of centers of global learning in several countries and regions around the world.

Questions on Global Intelligence

In your recently published book *Global Intelligence and Human Development,* you provide a new reference point for understanding global intelligence. How do you think your global intelligence is different from the politically based globalization?

Mihai Spariosu: In that book as well as in other recent writings, I reflect on the phenomenon of globalization primarily in its intercultural, rather than in its political or financial aspects (and I should point out that nowadays the financial and the political are more closely intertwined than ever). I seek to move away from the utilitarian mentality that is all too prevalent in our world today, and not only in the West, as well as from the modernist ideology of progress, understood as unlimited (economic) growth. Unlike neoliberal ideologues and their anti-globalist opponents, therefore, I do not see globalization as a golden opportunity for the financially wealthy to become even wealthier. Rather, I see it as a renewed opportunity for humanity to embark on a global, paradigmatic shift from a mentality of power and so-called 'struggle for life' toward a mentality of peace and mutually beneficial, intercultural cooperation. But, in order to bring about this paradigmatic shift we, the world communities, need to create alternative theoretical concepts and cultural blueprints and then work collectively toward their worldwide implementation.

As one of these alternative concepts, I propose *global intelligence*, which I define as the ability to understand, respond to, and work toward what will benefit all human beings and will support and enrich all life on this planet. Global intelligence is based on the individual and collective awareness of the interdependence of all localities within a global frame of reference and the enhanced individual responsibilities that result from this interdependence. As no national or supranational authority can predefine or predetermine it, global intelligence involves long-term, collective learning processes and can emerge only from continuing intercultural research, dialogue, and cooperation. Global intelligence, therefore, ought to constitute both the premise and the goal of further human development.

The phrase 'what will benefit all human beings' in the preceding paragraph, however, should not be understood in the utilitarian, restricted sense that implies the excessive, materialistic and consumerist mentality currently spreading over many parts of the globe. Nor should 'human development' be understood primarily in terms of neoliberal, economic development, as is all too often the case in public discourse today. In the long run, such utilitarian and reductive modes of thought and behavior, based on the primacy of material self-interest, will hardly benefit humankind, let alone other forms of life on earth. On the contrary, it will impede, if not completely arrest further human development and will severely impoverish the rich diversity of the biosphere. From the standpoint of global intelligence, therefore, 'benefit' implies the harmonious, sustainable development of both the material and the spiritual aspects of humanity, which should, moreover, be regarded not as independent entities, but as complementary sides of human nature.

Other concepts that I believe may help us properly understand the current phenomenon of globalization are those of *globality* and *locality* as well as their derivatives, *globalism* and *localism*. I define *globality* as an infinitely layered network of variously interconnected and interactive actual and possible (or imagined) worlds or localities. At a basic human level, globality involves an aspiration toward (self-) transcendence that expresses itself as ceaseless world making and self-fashioning. *Globalism*, on the other hand, can be regarded as the proper or improper expression of the aspiration toward globality. Historically speaking, there have been many kinds of globalisms, some proper, some improper, some Western, some not. Most of the improper types of globalism that have so far manifested themselves in human history belong to various mentalities of power that aspire, and compete among themselves, to hold sway over the entire planet. I have called such improper types 'globalitarianism', to stress their close affinity with the totalitarian political tendencies that were particularly visible in the past century, but that continue to manifest themselves today. Yet, twenty-first century attempts at globalitarianism do not involve solely repressive political regimes or right-wing and left-wing dictatorships, but also, most alarmingly, the Western democracies. For instance, they include the current economic, political, and military efforts on the part of some Western governments to impose Western-style, neoliberal forms of democracy on the rest of the world.

Localism, in turn, is a mirror image of globalism and can often take improper forms such as ultranationalism, ethnic and religious intolerance, racism, and so forth. Recent examples of improper localism are not limited to the intolerant, closed-minded attitudes of some monocultural or totalitarian nation-states. They also include the paranoid, ultranationalist, and racist attitudes that certain Western political circles have displayed, for example, toward immigrants from Islamic and other so-called Third World countries, as well as toward their own dissenting citizenry, in the wake of September 11 and other terrorist attacks against Western (utilitarian) global interests. By contrast, *locality* is the specific ecocultural space in which individual and collective human activities, contacts, and interactions take place. Locality, just like globality, involves multilayered human perspectives and experiences, ranging from those of the tiniest community to those of planet Earth, or multiplanetary systems.

On the basis of the preceding distinctions, moreover, I have proposed the term *local-global* as an appropriate way of describing not only any theory and practice of globalization, but also any future human community. A local-global theory is a globally oriented local theory. In turn, a local-global community is a globally oriented local community or ecocultural environment. Communities around the world do not engage in interaction with a universal or global community—although they may often

imagine such communities—but with other *local* communities. Some communities may happen, at a particular historical juncture, to become globally dominant or visible as far as their ideas and ways of life are concerned. This fact does not, however, oblige other communities automatically to accept their ideas, values, beliefs, and modes of behavior as if they were embodiments of the Global or the Universal itself. On the contrary, these communities will often perceive such ideas and ways of life as improper forms of globalism (e.g., imperialism), particularly if they are forced upon them. By contrast, a globally oriented local community is constantly aware of its links and interdependence with other, close or distant, communities and is open to free and mutually enriching interaction with all of these communities. In other words, a globally oriented local community is aware that symbiotic intercultural cooperation may be the shortest path to global intelligence.

Finally, I believe that we, the world communities, sorely need collectively to develop and practice an ethics of global intelligence that can best be grounded in a mentality of peace, defined not in opposition to war, but as an alternative mode of being, thinking, and acting in the world. This *irenic* mentality (from the Greek word *eirene*, peace) has its own body of values and beliefs, emerging through intercultural research, dialogue, and cooperation, and generates its own reference frames, organized on principles other than power and domination. It is such an irenic mentality, I suggest, that can best nurture further human (self-) development and that should inform not only the ethical stance, but also all other aspects of the concept and practice of global intelligence.

What are the impediments that may act in the way of promoting 'global intelligence'?

Mihai Spariosu: At first sight, the impediments appear to be insuperable, which may lead some people to conclude that my views are naively and hopelessly utopian. Even the most cursory look at the state of world affairs today reveals that we seem to be going out of our way to promote global stupidity, rather than global intelligence. The causes for this unfortunate course are many, but all of them can be traced back to our will to power and domination, which tends to turn even our most generous and well-intentioned actions into negative energy, with disastrous, often unintended consequences for all of us. We may truly say that the biggest impediment in the way of promoting global intelligence is ourselves. But one should also point out that the worst offenders in this respect are some of our political, economic, financial, and cultural elites, all over the world, who are often choosing to act in the narrow interest of themselves and their small circle of friends and allies, rather than in the interest of their

communities and the humanity as a whole. Add to this the ignorance or the misinformation about other cultures, as well as our own, which is wittingly or unwittingly propagated by our so-called 'mainstream' global media, and you have a pretty accurate picture of why our development as human beings is lagging far behind, despite our giant strides forward in science and technology.

Given this unfortunate situation, we do need a healthy dose of optimism, indeed, utopianism, to regain our faith in the future of humanity. But Oscar Wilde said it best in his essay on 'The Soul of Man under Socialism' (and, incidentally, what he means by 'socialism' has nothing to do with the various historical forms of government which have called themselves that, including 'national socialism'; rather, it is a social organization that enables each of its members to develop his or her creative and spiritual being to the full extent of their God-given gifts and talents and to help their fellow human beings to do the same): 'It will, of course, be said that such a scheme as it is set forth here [in Wilde's essay] is quite impractical and goes against human nature. This is perfectly true. It is unpractical and it goes against human nature. This is why it is worth carrying out, and that is why one proposes it. For what is a practical scheme? A practical scheme is either a scheme that is already in existence, or a scheme that can be carried out under existing conditions. But it is exactly the existing conditions that one objects to; and any scheme that could accept these conditions is wrong and foolish. The conditions will be done away with, and human nature will change. The only thing that one really knows about human nature is that it changes.'

Indeed, if people who dreamed of flying would have been discouraged by the laughter, incredulity, or skepticism of their fellow humans, we would never have airplanes today. But I'll grant you that the task before us seems to be even more difficult than flying: it would take the concerted effort of most, if not all, world communities to turn things around and start moving toward global intelligence. To go back to my earlier quip that each of us as individuals is the biggest impediment to global intelligence, we need not only to understand globalization as global awareness of the reciprocal causality of all human actions and the enhanced sense of individual responsibility resulting from such awareness, but also to start *acting* in accordance with this awareness, chiefly by examining and making the necessary changes in our own thoughts, emotions and behaviors, before we attempt to reform others. Again, Oscar Wilde says it best: 'It is so easy to convert others, but it is so difficult to convert oneself.'

What can facilitate the process of embracing global intelligence in a global manner?

Mihai Spariosu: As I've just pointed out, there are neither ready-made solutions nor quick fixes to world problems, but what we need to work on collectively, throughout the planet, is a change in our ways of relating to each other and to our natural habitat, which are proving to be less and less sustainable in the current global circumstance. But how can we bring about this change? Given the advance state of our technologies, it might be especially tempting to suggest human engineering as the obvious way. But, the catastrophic outcome of the extensive social and human experiments conducted on large populations throughout the world during the past century should give us pause before we embark on such ill-fated adventures in the future. Is the solution to be found in economic development? As I've already noted, our global pundits, whether on the right or the left, seem to connect human progress primarily with material development. Most worldwide statistics and indicators are economic in nature, measuring human happiness by what an individual or a social group has, rather than by what they are. Thus, we have presently divided the world into 'developed,' 'underdeveloped,' and 'developing' societies. Yet, human happiness based on material goods seems to be elusive and does not necessarily increase in relation to the quantity of goods acquired. If we truly wish to change our global paradigms, then we need to change the focus of our worldwide efforts from social and economic development to human self-development. From the standpoint of the latter, there are no developed or underdeveloped societies, but only developing ones. It is this kind of development that in the end will help us solve our practical problems, including world hunger, poverty, and violence, and will turn the earth into a welcoming and nurturing home for all of its inhabitants, human and nonhuman.

It follows, then, that the only lasting way in which human nature can change is through (self-) education, as Plato was fully aware when he founded his Academy and wrote the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Furthermore, if the twenty-first century is to be the century of education, as the proponents of the 'knowledge economy' tell us, then we should take them at their word: as we continue seeking sustainable solutions to world problems, we should concentrate our efforts on educating ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren. If we wish to develop a different kind of global mindset, we need to create learning environments that will help us rise to this seemingly impossible challenge, without repeating the errors of the past, including those of the Platonic Academy. Here are some of the preliminary, concrete steps that I believe we could take, inside and outside the academic world, in order to facilitate the process of embracing global intelligence on a global scale:

1. Work on creating local-global systems of values and cultural blueprints for human development, oriented toward global intelligence;

We need to create the proper intercultural environments within which the various local systems of values and beliefs can come into contact with each other and engage in a genuine dialogue. This intercultural dialogue will not be devoid of conflicts. But it is precisely the willingness to negotiate such conflicts in peaceful, amicable, and mutually advantageous ways that might ultimately lead to the creation of local-global systems of values, grounded in a common human ethos, that all of our world communities can freely agree on. This common human ethos may, for example, include such widely accepted values as care for the human and natural environment, respect for and delight in cultural differences, peaceful and mutually beneficial cooperation, need for spiritual transcendence, generosity, love, compassion, and so forth.

A closely related goal would be to create local cultural blueprints to support and sustain the local-global systems of values. These cultural scripts would obviously not be imposed from the global 'outside,' if indeed such concepts as 'outside' and 'inside' were still operative in our age. Instead, they would spring from and resonate with the most cherished aspirations of a local community. They could start from, but then develop and reform, or even partially replace, the current local, nationalist, ethnic, and racial core of values and beliefs. In this regard, it is instructive to recall the ways in which ethnic and national communities were invented in eighteenth—and nineteenth—century Europe. There were deliberate and sustained attempts by cultural practitioners such as literary and art critics, playwrights, poets, novelists, men and women of letters, composers, painters, actors, journalists, magazine reviewers, translators, grammarians, schoolteachers, and educators at all levels to create national scripts based on a common repository of myths, heroes, events, landscapes, memories, customs, and other popular cultural resources. Such attempts were in turn supported and amplified by the availability of a print culture that could bring people together over time and space. In addition to the development of the book and the newspaper, cultural institutions were created, such as the national theater and opera, literary and artistic circles and associations, and more recently, the film industry, which promoted the national agenda. There is no reason why our contemporary media cannot contribute to a global educational program that will resonate with various local traditions. Indeed, information technology and global communication can play a decisive role in promoting the local-global core of values.

2. Make judicious and responsible use of our information and communication technologies;

We now obviously possess advanced means of communication that continue to develop at breathtaking speeds. But, the important questions remain the old ones: what

is the content of our communications? What uses are we putting our new information and communication technology to? We've had plenty of critics (usually of the post-Marxist type) who rightly deplore the current role of the global media and information technology in promoting Western-style consumerist values all over the world. Indeed, the so-called 'new' media are often responsible of disseminating, under the pretense of 'pop' culture and entertainment, a lot of violent, mind-numbing, self-indulgent and self-demeaning trash that can only enhance our global stupidity and move us farther away from global intelligence. Yet criticism and self-criticism of the new media, although perhaps necessary as a first step, will ultimately remain empty gestures, unless we find ways in which we can put communication and information technology to culturally productive uses. Finally, the point is not 'resisting' the World Wide Web or the latest complex, AI-based, high-speed computation technologies—it would be like resisting the weather—but creating communication networks to educate those involved in the new information technology, beginning with our local and global media elites. One may launch educational initiatives on the Internet that could mediate between the various cultures and mindsets that participate in this vast network, helping its members to become responsible world citizens. Rather than resisting distance learning and other technological aids to instruction because they are supposed to be dehumanizing, let us humanize them by changing the very nature of what we communicate through them. In turn, let us create new, intercultural-friendly types of software that will respect and nourish global cultural diversity and will replace our current standardized types, based on monological and monocultural principles.

3. Make judicious and responsible use of all other technosciences, as well as of Science as a whole, to create sustainable environments for human development;

As ecologists and other scholars, scientists, and practitioners point out, our current mainstream commercial, industrial, and ecological practices remain unsustainable, both in the West and in other parts of the world. A number of concerned Western thinkers and scientists, such as Joanna Macy, Ervin Laszlo, Lynn Margulis, Arne Naess, Frank Capra, Paul Hawken, and Hazel Henderson, among many others, list several actions that our world communities can initiate throughout the planet to alleviate and reverse some of the disastrous ecological practices of the past. The most urgent ones would be to:

    1. Reduce emissions of CO_2 and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere;

    2. Reforest denuded lands and prevent erosion of cultivable lands;

    3. Significantly reduce and clean up pollution;

    4. Develop alternative sources of energy and lightwave technologies;

5. Inhibit conspicuous consumption and introduce worldwide recycling practices;

6. Facilitate and stimulate environment-friendly business ventures, while discouraging wasteful and ecologically destructive business practices;

7. Provide sustainable living, learning, and working conditions for women and children, as well as the underprivileged in general;

8. Encourage a reverse flow of people from the cities back to the countryside;

9. Retrain the unemployed and the underemployed;

10. Do away with weapons of mass destruction and all other dangerous technologies;

11. Reallocate resources in favor of education and healthcare;

12. Encourage and support smaller businesses, smaller educational and other private and public institutions, smaller bureaucracies, etc., according to the principle that 'small is beautiful'.

At present, our mainstream technosciences such as biotechnology are part of the global problem, rather than the solution. We need therefore to develop an ecology of science, as well as an ecology of learning as a whole, grounded in the spirit of global intelligence as urgently as we need to address the problems listed above. Only local-global learning environments supported and amplified by sustainable forms of technoscience can help our world communities become aware of the urgency of such problems, as well as address them in an effective and mutually beneficial manner.

Information technology and other new technologies that are based on the principle of mutual causality or on a nonlinear mode of being and acting in the world will probably fare better in future global circumstances than the ones based on linear models. Ultimately, however, information technology, or any other technology, will be only as 'good' (or as 'bad') as the intentions and objectives of the humans who use it. For that reason, contemporary technoscience, together with all other science and technology, should primarily evaluate itself—and be in turn evaluated and promoted—in terms of its potential contributions to overall human development through global intercultural learning and research, rather than in terms of their short-term contributions to material well-being and/or profit of a relatively small fraction of humanity. In other words, it should evaluate itself, and be evaluated by society at large, according to the emergent ethics of global intelligence.

4. Remap knowledge and reorient our educational systems toward a global reference frame;

Our current educational systems are rooted in the nineteenth-century transition from agricultural- to industrial-based economies and the creation of the modern nation-state. Therefore, they have largely been structured to prepare our youth for

citizenship, employment, and a moral and productive life within the nation-state, focusing mostly on the national economy, security, and welfare. But, our growing awareness of the planet as an interdependent web of life moves us increasingly toward an entirely different world, in which old disciplinary boundaries, whether cognitive or sociopolitical, have largely outlived their purposes and need to be remapped.

It is small wonder, then, that most of our current centers of education and research can hardly keep up with such transdisciplinary and transnational developments. Education and the very purpose and organization of our academic institutions must now be rethought and restructured within a global reference frame. Rethinking education in local-global terms will require remapping the old disciplinary divisions and will generally call for new ways of educating the local-global citizens of tomorrow. Indeed, it will ultimately require that learning become a lifelong process and include all members of our world communities, young or old. Under the impact of lifelong learning, these communities will ideally become genuine laboratories (and playgrounds) of cooperative, intercultural discovery and creativity.

5. Create worldwide intercultural educational and research pilot programs to promote local-global learning environments;

We need to design advanced intercultural and transdisciplinary academic programs that employ educational and training strategies appropriate for a global age. Such programs should start from the recognition that many universities have valuable human resources, academic and nonacademic networks, and in some cases excellent infrastructures, such as modern laboratories, libraries, electronic equipment, distance learning facilities, etc. Many are, moreover, located in cosmopolitan centers of culture, attracting some of the best theoretical and practical minds from around the world.

Because universities could and should play a crucial role in global education, it is not so much a question of creating entirely new institutions than one of redesigning and reorienting the current ones toward global intelligence. For that purpose we need experimental pilot programs that would bring together some of the best human and material resources of universities and other academic and nonacademic organizations from several continents in order to remap traditional knowledge, generate new kinds of knowledge from a global perspective, and design the kinds of flexible cross-cultural and transdisciplinary curricula that are required in today's global environment.

6. Educate local and global elites in the spirit of global intelligence;

As I pointed out at the beginning of this interview, one of the major impediments in the way of global intelligence is the poor quality of local and global leadership. This

is not to say that one cannot also find dedicated and well-meaning leaders from around the world who genuinely attempt to represent, and act according to, the best interests of their communities. Unfortunately, however, they are often at a loss in determining what this best interest might be, confronted as they are with both internal and external political and economic pressures, power struggles, conflicting advice from policy experts, and above all with the perplexities of a complex, interdependent, and largely unpredictable global flow of material goods, information, people, images, and ideas.

Therefore, we need to create pilot global learning programs also because our future leaders urgently need to get an education appropriate for the increasingly complex demands that a globalized world will make on them. In the end, however, we should remember that our leaders, just like our technologies, are only as 'good' or as 'bad' as we are, in other words, that communities and their leaders are also engaged in a relationship of mutual causality, with productive or destructive amplifying feedback loops.

7. Connect our worldwide educational networks with other global and local networks;

These are nongovernmental or civil society organizations, public and private institutions, community service organizations, and so forth. In principle, however, educational networks oriented toward global intelligence should work not only with like-minded academic and nonacademic organizations, but also with those that seem incompatible with them. A meaningful and productive dialogue, based on peaceful understanding, should engage members of all social and cultural groups, irrespective of their ideology or political beliefs. One of the most counterproductive human attitudes is sectarianism of any kind, be it ideological, political, religious, or cultural.

A key to reforming world education is to bridge the current gap between the academic and nonacademic worlds by joining the practical experience and proven success of socially responsible, visionary leaders from the private and the public sectors to the strategic reflection and openness to creative ideas that guide the work of prominent scholars, artists, and thinkers from around the globe. Ideally, the university should become a part of the whole community, and the whole community should become part of the university, so that young and old can learn together and from each other throughout their lives.

Do we have real and lively examples that can delineate the possibility of a global intelligence at the present time?

Mihai Spariosu: We certainly do, and they are in fact too many, all over the world, to mention in a fair and meaningful way here. Most of them are, by and large,

nongovernmental or civil society organizations and citizens' initiatives. For example, Hazel Henderson, in her book on *Beyond Globalization. Shaping a Sustainable Global Economy* (1999), lists a large number of such organizations worldwide that would be compatible with and could help develop the principles and practices of global intelligence. Of course, many more such organizations could be added to the list, including religious and lay charities, community service organizations, youth associations, humanitarian foundations, etc. A difficulty here might be how to distinguish between those who have a genuine concern for their fellow human beings and those who are motivated by material profit. But even the latter kind may do some good (such as corporate charities, for example) and should be taken at their word when they profess the purity of their motives. As Immanuel Kant noted, the appearance of morality may at times have the practical effects of moralityitself!

What does global intelligence offer in terms of understanding 'the other'? What are the ways to really understand the other instead of imposing our own mindsets?

Mihai Spariosu: I'm glad that you placed 'the other' in quotation marks, because it indicates that you believe, as I do, that this concept, just like many other contemporary fashionable cultural constructs, should not go unexamined. One may ask, for example, just how productive or counterproductive this idea of the 'other' might be in the current global circumstance. The term became popular first in modern philosophy through Sartre's concept of the *autrui* (the other), then it was taken up by cultural anthropology and, finally, by cultural studies. In most of these contexts, the 'other' appears as a typical construct of the will to power and its agonistic or conflictive mentality. Sartre himself sets this agonistic tone when he defines the other as 'la mort cachée de mes possibilités' (the hidden death of my possibilities). This concept is developed further in the poststructuralist, power-oriented, theories of identity and difference and is then, unfortunately, translated into a political doctrine in Samuel Huntington's notion of the 'clash of civilizations'. According to this doctrine, Western foreign policies should be based on the 'universal' assumption that people everywhere act as if human relations invariably boil down to 'us' against 'them,' whether 'us' is just a different family, tribe, ethnic group, religion, country, or political camp.

Concomitantly, the idea of the 'other' appears in its reverse, seemingly positive guise, chiefly in early Western cultural anthropology, where the other is often construed as an exotic figure, associated with a Golden Age, e.g., in the topos of the 'noble savage', which, of course, is no less fictional than the topos of the irrational, violent savage or barbarian who needs to be educated and civilized by an enlightened

and progressive West. My much regretted friend and colleague, Edward Said, brilliantly examined some of these Western concepts of the 'other' and their political ramifications in his well-known book on Orientalism. One should add that the reverse is also true and that one could cite many examples of 'Occidentalism', where various Western cultural, economic, and soicopolitical forms are seen either as manifestations of pure Evil, or, conversely, as admirable models, worthy of emulation in an unexamined, wholesale fashion.

How do we move away from these attitudes that have proven unproductive in international relations and how do we begin, instead, to act in a globally intelligent manner? First we adopt alternative concepts of identity and difference, based on a mentality of peace. For example, the concept of responsive understanding, which I discuss at some length in my works, might be of help in this context. The term 'responsive understanding' belongs to the Russian thinker Mikhail Bakhtin, who initially uses it to describe Dostoevsky's approach to his characters and fictional universe. Bakhtin also calls this responsive understanding 'active', 'creative', and 'dialogical'. Responsive understanding means watchful listening and empathetic, interactive participation in an ongoing dialogue, in which each participant carefully and lovingly preserves the integrity of the other. One should add that responsive understanding also conveys the idea of responsibility, understood not as the thou-shalts and shalt-nots of conventional morality, but rather as a free and generous response to the calling of the other, interpreted as a principle of (self-) transcendence, such as God, globality, the human community, another human being, or the physical environment. It is not enough to put oneself in other people's shoes and understand or sympathize with their views, without getting involved in an effective manner. Therefore, responsive understanding can never be separated from willingness and ability to take positive, responsive action, the causally reciprocal effects of which will then propagate by amplifying feedback loops through the entire social system.

On a practical level, it is up to the cultural and political elites in various parts of the world to adopt an alternative, peace-oriented attitude (and policies) toward other cultures. A good start might be organizing intercultural research projects oriented toward global intelligence. Such projects would require that the academic or nonacademic researchers, and then gradually other members of the cultures involved in intercultural learning experiments, view their cultural position and identity through the others' perspectives, as well as their own. One might thus begin by thoroughly exploring, in a collective, dialogical, and peaceful manner, the actual and imagined differences that may exist among the diverse human languages, cultures, value systems, and beliefs, which in turn determine the ways of thinking, feeling, and acting of various

people. It might very well turn out that many of the clichés that various members of one culture circulate, automatically or intentionally, about other cultures and their members are based on incomplete knowledge or received opinion, as is the case of Huntington, among many others, who, under the pretense of informed scholarship, perpetuates antiquated Western prejudices about Islamic and other cultures.

How do you think Islam can contribute to the implementation of global intelligence?

Mihai Spariosu: Islam, whether understood as one of the major religions of the world, or as the enormously diverse groups of people and nations that practice this religion (well over one billion and a half strong) could have a decisive role in turning our planet toward global intelligence. As a religion, Islam disposes of a vast treasure of perennial wisdom in the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and his Household, transmitted to us in the Quran and other sacred texts around it, and beautifully elaborated and practiced in the very rich and inspiring Sufi tradition. This wisdom, which is centuries, if not millennia old, is more than ever relevant today, so that the adjective 'perennial' is fully appropriate in describing it. In view of the current, widely publicized misconceptions about Islam in certain Western political circles, I shall cite just a few examples of what I consider the highest level of global intelligence which emanates from the Islamic religious tradition and which concerns the Islamic attitude toward conflict, violence, and sectarianism.

First of all, the prophet Muhammad himself decries conflict and preaches meekness, just like the other great teachers of humankind, such as Lao-Tzu, Gautama Buddha, Pythagoras, and Jesus of Nazareth. For example, the Prophet says: 'If a man gives up quarreling when he is in the wrong, a house will be built for him in Paradise. But if a man gives up a conflict even when he is in the right, a house will be built for him in the loftiest part of Paradise.' In the Prophet's spirit, al-Gazzali imagines the Day of Judgement, when the Lord will summon, among many other people, those who gave away their lives in the Holy Wars: 'They will be asked, How did you spend your life I gave you?' They will reply, 'We sacrificed it in Your Path'. The Lord and the angels will call them liars and say, 'You gave away your lives that people might call you brave and style you martyrs.' I don't think I need to stress the high relevance of this statement in our contemporary world, even though it does not come, regrettably, from a modern-day imam, but from one of the greatest and most influential Persian Sufi philosophers and mystics of the 11th-12th century.

As to the present and past sectarian conflicts not only inside Islam, but also inside all other major world religions, Mahmud Shabistari, one of the most celebrated Persian

Sufi poets of the 14th century invokes a beautiful metaphor that also conveys, perfectly well, the spirit of global intelligence, as I have defined it here:

> 'I' and 'you' are but lattices,
> In the niches of a lamp
> Through which the One Light shines.
> 'I' and 'you' are the veil
> Between heaven and earth;
> Lift this veil and you will see
> No longer the bonds of sects and creeds.

Finally, since you asked me in a previous question to provide contemporary examples of global intelligence, let me offer one from the Islamic religious world as well—one among countless examples, I should add. In this respect, I would like to mention Murat Yagan, a perhaps lesser known, but equally wonderful, modern-day Sufi practitioner from Abkhasia. In the spirit of Shabistari, he notes that although there have been many different Sufi orders throughout history, '*there is no lack of love or respect between these various orders*. They do not reject each other, or criticize each other. Nor do they claim to be closer to the Truth. Sometimes it is said: ''The fountain from which I drank was here, and there are many other fountains if you are thirsty.'' ' His ancient Sufi tradition, known as Ahmsta Kebzeh, is another living proof of global intelligence, as 'the essence of the Teaching is the response of the aspiration of human beings to better themselves and to better all of life on this globe, bringing it to a state of peace, harmony and oneness, wherein creativity flourishes.'(Excerpted from the Kebzeh Foundation website, www.kebzeh.org).

Now, if by Islam we mean the immensely diverse congregations of peoples and countries, the answer to your question is both very simple and very complicated. Of course, all that the Islamic populations of the world would have to do, in order to move toward global intelligence, is to follow faithfully these wise injunctions and the teachings of the Quran in general, just as their Christian brothers would have to follow faithfully the New Testament, or their Buddhist brothers, the teachings of Gautama Buddha. Unfortunately, this may sound again like a utopian wish. On the more immediate, practical level we, in the global educational field, would need to work with the current and the future elites not only in the Islamic world but all over the globe, in order to get them involved in some of the programs outlined above, as well as in future initiatives that would result from extensive, worldwide, intercultural dialogue and negotiations. We need to persuade especially the younger generation of leaders— through education and personal example—that the present course which many of them seem to be locked in is self-destructive and cannot be sustained much longer. We can already see this, for example, from the current unraveling of the global financial

markets and, with them, of the various local economies, which will in turn bring much more social unrest than we are already witnessing both in the Middle East and in the West. 'Business as usual' is simply unacceptable for larger and larger sections of the world populations and, as the unspeakable carnages of the twentieth century should have taught us, war, violence, repression and oppression are no sustainable solution, because they'll only bring more of the same horrors with them.

A good beginning would be to persuade our elites everywhere, including the Islamic world, that it is in their own best interest, as well as in the best interest of the entire planet, to pool their considerable talents and resources and start addressing, in an intelligent, sustainable way, the local and global issues that I listed in my previous answers to your questions. Indeed, all men and women of good will and generous disposition who are concerned about the future of humanity ought to start organizing themselves through global networks—a task that was much more difficult in the past, but now is greatly facilitated by our advanced information and communication technologies. We ought to embark upon a worldwide intercultural dialogue and not only propose but also work together toward practical, sustainable solutions for our future development as human beings. And then perhaps our leaders will follow as well.

I would like to conclude on an upbeat note. The principles and practices that I've mentioned here as conducive to global intelligence are not new, but are available in most, if not all of our traditions of wisdom. And, as even a very brief look at Sufism has shown, they are abundantly present in the Islamic tradition as well. Yet, they have often been neglected, distorted, or pushed into the background by a mentality of power that has prevailed on our planet for a few thousand years. Although to us, individual human beings, this period seems very long and may lead us to believe that power has always been and will always be the organizing principle of humankind it is nevertheless only a fraction of a second in geological time. From the perspective of life on earth, humanity is only at the very beginning of its development, which should give us cause for hope, rather than despair. In my published work I've made an appeal to the world community of scholars and practitioners to engage in intercultural research, dialogue, and negotiation on these and other local and global issues. I'd like to renew this appeal here to your readers, hoping that it will not go unanswered and that all of us in academia and other fields of human activity will soon begin to move together toward global intelligence. For that arduous task, we need temporarily to suspend our professional skepticism and critical 'second nature,' perhaps even our hardened sense of reality, which all too often is only a hardened sense of defeat. Then we shall be ready not only to dream about, but also to actualize what humanity—and human knowledge—can truly be and accomplish.

Criticism of Heaven or of Earth? On the Dialectical Possibilities of Religion and Historical Materialism

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Thus the Criticism of heaven turns into the criticism of earth.[1]

Abstract

This essay offers a creative encounter between Marxism and religion. It does so by drawing upon a careful and painstaking analysis of the whole tradition of engagements between Marxism and religion—from Marx and Engels through to Antonio Negri—in a five-volume study called the *Criticism of Heaven and Earth* (2007-12, Brill). From that study certain key insights may be drawn out, reworked and rethought, operating on the basis that rather being staunch enemies, Marxism and religion relate dialectically. The outcome in this essay, which explicates the following propositions is:

1. Any treatment of an area where theology has left its spoor—be that politics, philosophy, culture and so on—needs a healthy dose of theological suspicion.

2. Such a theological suspicion should be utterly vigilant on the question of secularized theology, by which I mean the use of reconditioned and adapted theological terms—such as hope, faith and love—for other purposes.

3. That suspicion makes its most telling move against secularized theology by pointing out that the theological use of central categories in political, philosophical and cultural debate are in fact one use of such categories. But they are by no means the primary or original uses.

4. The fashionable concern with ethics and its attendant categories of the subject and the other is highly problematic. Those problems show up in both its theological and materialist uses.

5. The theological category of grace is but a temporary place holder for the idea and practice of revolution.

6. The crucial and neglected element of any political movement is the necessary fable, or, as I prefer, political myth.

7. No matter how counter-intuitive it may seem, both theology and materialism are anti-secular projects.

8) Given the breakdown of the old program of secularism, an exploration of what may be called a new secularism is in order, especially in light of the interaction between historical materialism and theology.

Keywords: Marxism, Religion, Heaven, Earth, Secularism, Historical Materialism, Theology.

Introduction

From the moment Marx and Engels joined the Christian-inspired League of the Just, historical materialism and theology have had a long and often rancorous relationship. Marx and Engels may have managed to change the name of the League of the Just to the Communist League, as well as the slogan from 'the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth, based on the ideals of love of one's neighbor, equality and justice' to 'Working men of all countries, Unite!', but they were not able to get rid of theology that easily. In fact, I would like to move in another direction and suggest that theology and historical materialism are two sides of the same coin, or—to use a different set of terms—they interact in a dialectical fashion. This essay seeks to construct the basic grid-work for such a statement. In order to do so let me begin with a few propositions which I will then seek to unpack.

Propositions

First, any treatment of an area where theology has left its spoor—be that politics, philosophy, culture and so on—needs a healthy dose of theological suspicion.

Further, such a theological suspicion should be utterly vigilant on the question of secularized theology, by which I mean the use of reconditioned and adapted theological terms—such as hope, faith and love—for other purposes.

Third, that suspicion makes its most telling move against secularized theology by pointing out that the theological use of central categories in political, philosophical and cultural debate are in fact one use of such categories. But they are by no means the primary or original uses.

Fourth, the fashionable concern with ethics and its attendant categories of the subject and the other is highly problematic. Those problems show up in both its theological and materialist uses.

Fifth, the theological category of grace is but a temporary place holder for the idea and practice of revolution. (The fourth and fifth propositions are really specific instances of the third).

Sixth, the crucial and neglected element of any political movement is the necessary fable, or, as I prefer, political myth.

Seventh, it seems to me that no matter how counter-intuitive it may seem, both theology and materialism are anti-secular projects.

Finally, given the breakdown of the old program of secularism, an exploration of what may be called a new secularism is in order, especially in light of the interaction between historical materialism and theology.

Now, this is a rather tall order for one essay, for each proposition might well want to relax, wine glass in hand, and discuss matters in a slow fashion while sitting on a balcony overlooking the street. But let us see if each proposition can state succinctly what their core ideas are. Before they do so, a word on why I want to argue that theology and historical materialism are so close. It comes not merely from the fact that they argue an awful lot like an old couple, nor the oft-asserted but seldom explored point that they are both eschatological visions of the future, nor indeed primarily from their meeting in liberation theology, where the liberating drive of certain elements within the theological tradition overlaps with Marxist political concerns[2]. Rather, it comes from a long and continuing engagement with a rather large list of Marxists— philosophers, literary critics, economists, historians and so forth—who have written on theology, the Bible and the church. They are not merely occasional Marxists, an odd priest perhaps who moved from Catholic Action to the communist party. Not at all, for they are some of the major thinkers within the broad and diverse tradition of historical materialism. With a few exceptions, such as Walter Benjamin[3] and now more recently Slavoj Žižek[4], Giorgio Agamben[5] and Alain Badiou[6], most of this work is little known. Critics have conveniently by-passed and focused on other themes. Yet there is a wealth of material, including monographs by the likes of Theodor Adorno, Ernst Bloch, Lucien Goldmann, Terry Eagleton, Karl Kautsky and Rosa Luxemburg[7], and then sections of monographs[8], essays[9], and even the odd novel[10]. The same should be said of Marx and Engels, who for the avalanche of commentary and engagement have not been subjected to an analysis of what they do with the Bible and theology. The references in this previous paragraph give some sense of the sheer weight of these texts, a weight that has increasingly convinced me that historical materialism has an abiding fascination with theology[11].

Theological Suspicion

Rather than concise and dry formulae that seek to encapsulate the key elements of my eight propositions, let us weave them into a philosophical parable (although it really is more of an allegory)[12]. In the spirit of Chaucer, imagine a group walking on a path through a forest. One walks along somewhat distractedly, with her mind on higher

things (although he is none too pious), while another finds his clothes are a little too new and a little too bulky, as are his expensive walking boots. The sweat pours off him as they walk. A third has hardly spoken a word, drawing himself deep into his rather shabby overcoat, baggy cap shadowing his lively eyes and small goatee. And yet he watches the other two very carefully. Each has their own idea of where the path leads. Before long, our watchful third comrade notices that the clothing of the bulky second member of the group clashes horribly. The green shirt and blue pants have not even a belt in between, as the old adage goes. Challenging the sweaty walker, our over-coated comrade discovers a priest's frock beneath. Yet, this is not all, for the badly dressed member of the group peels off yet another layer of sweaty clothing to reveal a final layer, well-worn and stained from too many years of use. As they walk on, they begin to argue vehemently about what to expect at the end of the path. The first of the group looks forward to a glorious city that can exist only through God's intervening grace, a city without crime, poverty, sickness or want. The second, now stripped to his ancient first layer, dismisses such religious dreaming and says he looks forward to a supremely ethical society, one where everyone is a citizen with full rights and where the relations of these subjects with others follow deep ethical principles. And the third, scoffing at the other two, says that he anticipates a society where people give according to their abilities and receive according to their needs, where there is no economic exploitation or classes. And if not, then he will cry revolution at the gates and do his best to overthrow the powers that be. The forest rings with their arguments.

It will come as no surprise that our watchful and over-coated third member of this trio is not only a materialist (and a Marxist one at that). He also maintains a vigilance that I would like to call theological suspicion. He has set himself the task of watching for the presence—covert and (more perniciously) overt—of theology in every possible line of thought and practice. It is not for nothing that he notices and unmasks the pretences of our would-be priest. The term 'theological suspicion' obviously draws from the old Marxist practice of ideological suspicion. However, rather than seeking to uncover the social and economic truths behind the mystifications of ideology, a more carefully constructed theological suspicion takes on board Althusser's insight into the conflictual permanence of ideology, Gramsci's point that hegemony is always unstable and threatened by an alternative, subversive hegemony, and Bloch's argument that we need to exercise some careful discernment of that ideology (his discussion was primarily in the realm of myth). For this reason he is far less interested in seeing through the disguise of the priest, nor even in identifying any secret theological handshakes, than what this priest in badly co-coordinated civilian clothing might do with his underlying theological agenda. The issue here, quite frankly, is discernment.

Does this covert theology hobnob with corrupt regimes of exploitation and oppression? Has it done deals with the devil in order to stay on the side of power? Or is it opposed to the largest warships and the biggest armies, to those who share the occasional coffee with those who abuse power for their own ends? Does it provide neatly secularized theological terms for Right-wing agendas, or is his secular theology the stuff of revolutions with the downtrodden? The whole group knows that theology, especially in light of its less than illustrious history, is all too comfortable with the slick purveyors of influence, avoiding the scruffy opponents and protestors at the gates.

Secular Theology

What is at stake is the much discussed term, secular theology. In his characteristic legalese, Carl Schmitt puts it succinctly in his famous observation: 'All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts not only because of their historical development … but also because of their systematic structure, the recognition of which is necessary for a sociological consideration of these concepts'[13]. It is not merely that key ideas and practices, such as the omnipotence of the absolute monarch or indeed the state, were derived in the past from divine omnipotence, or indeed that the charismatic leader becomes yet another embodiment of Christ. Rather, it is their 'systematic structure' that shows up their theological roots. How do certain categories, such as sovereignty or ethics or the subject or the other, relate to one another? The structure of systematic theology will give us a rather good idea, suggests Schmitt. In contrast to Schmitt, Adorno does not find such secular theology all that desirable[14]. For Adorno, it is the form of the categories themselves that is highly problematic. One cannot merely empty certain terms, such as belief or hope or love or fidelity, of their theological content and refill them with another, more secular, content. The catch is that these forms carry with them the dust of their earlier incarnations. Further, while secularized theological terms may pretend, at least in the hands of their users, to have discarded all their theological baggage, what they actually do is put it under camouflage. This means that the authority structures which were explicit in their overt theological moment now appear in another guise, usually as the authority of this or that leader, or of the philosopher or political scientist or whoever in question.

Relativizing Theology

But in our parable the covert theologian did not stop at his priestly garments; he went one step further and stripped down to those sweat-stained clothes beneath that were much older and gave off a very different impression than his expensive ecclesiastical

garb. Let me exegete this a little: it seems to me that the theological covering or layer of these central secularized theological terms is but one of a number of such layers[15]. We might say that the theological 'filling' of such terms is but one filling they may have, except that I am not overly comfortable with the vessel-content metaphor here (partly because it is used in some types of translation theory, especially dynamic equivalence in biblical translations). So I would rather say that theology is one use for such terms. In other words, they are not intrinsically or primarily theological; their point of origin is not necessarily theological. All we need do is recall that terms such as hope (*elpis*), or love (*philia* or *eros*), or indeed god (*theos*) had a rather wide currency in Greek thought before Christian theology brought about the intersection of certain elements of Greek philosophy and biblical narratives to create theology itself. If this is the case, then their theological moment is but one such moment, however powerful or long-lasting it may have been. The implication is, then, that they may be put to use without either the celebration[16] or the great angst[17] concerning their supposed theological roots. What such a position does is outflank the debate over secularized theology: while we maintain our theological suspicion concerning the theological appropriation and use of such terms, we can also explore and develop their non-theological uses. Such terms are not inescapably and necessarily theological.

It will hardly do, then, to say, by way of either condemnation or celebration, that a particular argument or concept is theological at its heart and leave it at that. One of its uses may be theological, but the label 'theological' is by no means a sufficient assessment of its value or otherwise. As with its materialist—or indeed other—uses, more adequate criteria are called for, such as those I outlined a little earlier in my discussion of discernment. Let me give two examples, one concerning ethics and the other grace.

On Ethics

Despite what is now a rather long debate concerning the theological roots of ethics, whether negative[18] or positive[19], and the search for a distinctly non-theological ethics[20], it seems to me that the way in which the debate over ethics is framed is highly problematic. The theological use of this category, or rather discipline in itself, shows up the problems admirably well, not of course because it is theological but since it brings the workings of ethics to the fore. To put it a little crudely, ethics as normally understood is an effort to provide some framework that enables 'the subject' to deal with 'the other'—whether in terms of citizenship, politics, gender, ethnicity, poverty, nature and so on. I put it this way, since discussions of the subject assume all too often that the writer in question is such a subject, that no matter how constructed the subject

might be it is always a prior question for which the corollary is the other. I have never been particularly enamored with the fascination over the subject and the other, their construction, constitution, and so on. It was not until the link with ethics became clear that I saw the reason for my unease. Rather than ethics being a theory and practice for the interactions between subjects and others, ethics is itself responsible for the creation of those subjects and others.

Why is this problematic? Here some biblical material helps us to see its theological corollary: the category of the subject relies all too heavily on the myth of a chosen people, a group whom God has chosen for no reason other than his own will (or whim) from all the other peoples of the earth. Or we might turn to the development of ethics among the ancient Greeks, where once again we find that it becomes a concern only when you find a small, adult, male class of true 'citizens'. Not only does it become an issue as to how one might relate to the members of this small class, but also with the myriad others who are non-citizens. As for the Bible, the chosen people is marked out by being given an equally mythical law so that they may live an ethical life, subject to subject. However, once you have a chosen people with its law, then you immediately get the category of the 'other', or as the Hebrew puts it, the *ger*, the foreigner or outsider or sojourner to whom these subjects (chosen people) must relate in some fashion. Here the law stipulates that one must welcome the outsider, provide food and lodgings and so forth; in short, the subject must treat the foreigner 'ethically'. Such others are, however, not merely ethnically distinct, for they include women, widows, children, orphans, slaves and so on. In short, the others multiply exponentially. At this point the problems become acute: politics becomes ethics, and then ethics descends into the realm of morality, of how to live one's life. But why do we need some notion of chosen people (whether the sons of Israel or the Church) and outsiders? Who tells me that there are subjects and others? Would the removal, or at least fundamental shifting, of the theory and practice of ethics remove the distinction? I am, then, not particularly taken with ethics in either its theological or non-theological forms for these reasons—its creation of the opposition between subject and object who becomes the other, the dynamic of chosen and outsider, the confusion with politics and the descent into moralizing.

On Grace

However, the dialectic of grace and revolution is far more promising[21]. In our parable, the theologian feels that grace is a crucial feature of his vision of what lies at the end of the path, whereas for the materialist revolution is an option should the society to come be less than desirable. Dialectically, this interaction between grace and revolution really

cuts both ways, especially if we keep in mind my point that theology has no monopoly of origins on such terms. If grace is the theological shape of the category, then revolution is its more political and materialist shape. Such an argument also means that both of the following statements are true: the idea of grace, especially in its Protestant variety as undeserved and unexpected irruption of God into the run of ordinary life such that its course changes forever, is the theological shape of the idea of revolution; revolution, as the unanticipated political intervention that comprehensively undermines and overthrows the status quo, is the materialist manifestation of the idea of grace. In other words, to evoke the old distinction of form and content, the form of the moment of grace/revolution is remarkably consistent—an external and unexpected interruption that rearranges all the coordinates. Where they differ is in the focus of the interruption: for one the name of the external source of that intervention is God and the possibilities of a new society come from the fusion of heaven and earth, if I may put it that way; for the other it is a more human affair in which the interruption seeks to bring about a far better economic and social formation. Except that all of this is far too simplistic and replicates the old distinction between theological and materialist positions — one relies on God, the other on human beings. Each, it seems to me, has a certain transcendence and each has distinct implications for political and economic life.

Political Myth

I am left with three themes of a more general nature: the questions of political myth, anti-secular projects and the new secularism. The first of those is what I would like to call the necessary fable or political myth. As in our parable, each holds a view as to what might be at the end of the forest path. For one it is nothing other than the heavenly city, for the second an ethical society and for the third communism itself. Apart from the point that they are not so far apart, this is where a parable like this begins to break down (or it is perhaps a sign of my lack of parable-telling skills). For it may be read as the weary old point that historical materialism peddles a secular version of the Heavenly Jerusalem, that it is, in other words, an alternative—if somewhat more worldly—religion that demands its own quasi-religious commitment. My argument is somewhat different: each of these characters presents a different fable or political myth. And the reason they argue so much is not so much due to plagiarism as the fact that they struggle over the same piece of ground.

Now, the idea of a necessary fable comes from my engagement with Alain Badiou[22]. What intrigues me about Badiou is that for all his mathematical depth, for all his effort at producing a rigorous philosophical system that turns on the question of revolution (is not the event and its truth precisely such a theory?), he cannot escape the

fable. Indeed, one could argue (as I have) that there runs through his thought a fundamental contradiction between truth and fable. Or rather, this is one shape the contradiction takes—others include the tensions between the ontology of mathematics and the structures of narrative, or between fiction and argument, image and formula, poem and matheme, or even between the intrinsic ontology of the set theory of Zermelo-Fraenkel and the theory of forcing that he calls upon to break out of this closed system[23]. Without repeating that whole argument here, the crunch comes with his discussion of Paul in the New Testament[24]. While Paul provides an exemplary case of the procedures of truth, such as naming, fidelity and so on, the event in question is nothing more than a fable or a mythological core, namely the resurrection of Christ. Or to be more precise, the event itself may be a fiction, but the set of procedures it sets in train have both the features of a truth (in Badiou's definition) and a fable, as he admits only in passing. Now, I want to push this admission further to say that any revolutionary event necessarily deals in the realm of fable as much as it does in truth—the necessary fable of the event, if you will.

If such a fable is necessary, then it points towards the function of political myth[25]. Quite simply, any movement, whether political or religious, operates on the basis of one or other political myth. When I have raised this point in various situations, people often react by questioning such a conclusion. We don't work by means of political myth, they say, for we have programs and organization and so on. So let me clarify what I mean by political myth. To begin with, it picks up Georges Sorel's point that myth is a crucial feature of any movement or political group, for it provides a deep motivational force that survives one disappointment after another. His examples include the general strike, Marx's communist revolution, the French Revolution, Mazzini's efforts at Italian unification, the failed hopes of the first Christians based on the myth of the immanent return of Christ, and the revolution driven by the pessimistic myth of Calvinism, which changed everything from top to bottom[26]. However, I want to go much further than Sorel, for it seems to me that even conventional myths are inescapably political. By 'conventional' I mean the theogonic, cosgmogonic and anthropogonic elements that invariably turn up in most myths with a religious flavor. What is missing from this list of the usual suspects is what may be called the 'politigonic'. Any careful attention to myths such as those found in the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, or indeed myth like the ancient Babylonian *Enuma Elish* will see that they are just as much about the origins and justification of the state and political power as they are about the origins the gods, the universe or human beings. In other words, it is not just political movements that have their political myths, for religious myths have always been deeply political.

How do political myths function? At a basic level a political myth is an important story for a particular group, a story that contains both a narrative about how things came to be as they are and what a better future might hold. Where such myths distinguish themselves from historiography is in the use of language, especially a mythic language saturated in image and metaphor. What we find is what I would call a 'labyrinth of language' that creates worlds that are alternatives from this one. While some myths may lay out a dreary doctrinaire image of such a world, the more interesting ones explore all manner of obstacles, false paths and mistakes on the way to a better world. Such myths also display a heavy dose of cunning, for the way past such obstacles often requires a ruse or three. Further, a political myth dwells not merely on the past with its story about how we got here; rather, it looks forward to what may be called the fiction of a completed truth. That is to say, the world created by the myth provides a scenario in which the political project undertaken now will find its verification. For this reason, such myths are motivational; indeed, they may be said to have a virtual power.

What all of this means for our forest walkers is that their different views concerning what lies at the end of the path really constitute a contest over the turf of political myth. What political myth, or indeed collection of political myths will come out on top? Are they able to share that space, or can one succeed only by chasing the others off the field?

Anti-Secular?

The parable goes on: as the argument continues the materialist turns to the theologian and accuses her of being too other-worldly, of pie-in-the-sky dreams that have no basis in the world. Our theologian responds by pointing out that her hope of what is to come at the end of the path is no more other-worldly than his. He might think it is rooted to the realities of everyday life, but it also looks to a qualitatively different future. It seems to me that there is a point in what the theologian says, for historical materialism also has a distinctly anti-secular program. The starting point for this claim is the basic definition of secularism: it is a way of living, thinking and acting that draws its terms from this age and this world (the sense of the *saecularum*) rather than some world above or some future age. While a number of implications may flow from such a sense of secularism—that secularism is opposed to religion, that it requires the separation of church and state, that scholarship must carry out its task free from theological interference and domination—these are secondary and by no means necessary outcomes of the basic sense of secularism[27].

The implication is, then, that political movements on the Left—greens, anarchists, socialists and so on—also have a distinctly anti-secular element about them. While they may focus their analysis of the problems of capitalism, while they may draw their terms of analysis from this world in order to critique it, the fact that they hold out for an economic and social formation that is not so environmentally destructive, that is not riddled with corrupt and oppressive governments, and that operates according to the principle of 'from each according to ability and to each according to need'—all of this constitutes a focus on an age beyond this one. Indeed, I would go further and point out that many of the terms of criticism are drawn precisely from this anticipated better society.

Yet, we cannot let the theologian off the hook that easily, so we also need to reconsider the theological expectations of another world. Contrary to the caricatures, the various theological myths of a better society do not gaze solely to heaven for inspiration. For much of their attention is devoted precisely to this world, this society and economic system. Apart from the traditional categories of anthropology and harmatology, the various theological traditions have much to say about a just society and an equitable economic system. In doing so, they draw their terms from this world and this age. In other words, theological visions of the future have a decidedly secular feel about them.

Conclusion: A New Secularism

So we arrive at a dialectical confluence: materialist positions have a good deal about them that is anti-secular, while theological programs are not wholly anti-secular, for they too are heavily involved in this world and this age. And that leads me to my final proposition: the awareness that historical materialism and theology are two sides of the same coin implies a thorough rethinking of secularism itself. I would propose that we might think in terms of a 'new secularism'. By that I mean not merely a recognition that the old secularism of materialism and theology are entwined like two strands of a rope, but that it may well be to the benefit of both. This would mean that neither side can accuse the other of being oppressive or totalitarian, in consort with the ruling class or hell-bent on purging religion from the world; in short, neither religion nor historical materialism can blame the other for all of society's ills. Something more rigorous will need to come in its place, and that is none other than the careful vigilance of identifying the use and abuse of materialism or theology to justify exploitation, the grinding of one human being into the dust at the hands of another, or wanton neglect and destruction of the natural world. They will also seek the emancipatory dimensions

in both historical materialism and theology, each of which brings those elements to the fore through their respective political myths.

Lest my last points suggest that theology and historical materialism are really just mirror images of one another, that there really is little that distinguishes them, let me close by reasserting two points I made earlier. The first is that since their relationship is a dialectical one, they do indeed come from different poles. The snare with dialectics is that they need to speak the same language in order to connect at all. Second, I am little interested in any theory of borrowing or plagiarism (usually that historical materialism has plagiarized theology); rather, their interaction is sharpest, and often the most acrimonious, when they contest the same ground. And that ground is none other than the political myths they put forward.

Notes

1. Marx and Engels 1975-2004, Vol. 3: p. 176.

2. See, for example, Löwy 1988, 1996.

3. Benjamin 1998, 1999; 1996: 62-74; 1974-89, Vols. 1, 5, 2: p. 62-74.

4. Žižek 2000, 2001, 2003; Žižek, et al. 2006.

5. Agamben 2005, 2000.

6. Badiou 2003, 1997.

7. Adorno 1989, 1973 [1964]; Adorno and Horkheimer 1999; Adorno 1986, Vols. 2, 3, 6; Bloch 1972, 1995; 1985, Vols. 14 and 5; Goldmann 1964, 1959; Eagleton 1966a, 1970, 2003b, 2003a; Kautsky 2001, 1908, 1976 [1895-7]; Kautsky and Lafargue 1977 [1922]; Kautsky 2002 [1897], 1927, 1947 [1888]; Luxemburg 2004b, 1982 [1905].

8. Gramsci 1995, 1992, 1996; Lukács 1971 [1920], 1994 [1920]; 1988: xxvii; 1968: p. 30; see also Lukács 1983; 1973: p. 308-26; Williams 1978, 1961, 1958; Kristeva 1991: p. 69-76; 1988: p. 102-11; Clément and Kristeva 2001: p. 101-3; 1998: 163-6; Kristeva 1987: p. 83-100; 1983: p. 83-98; 1989b: p. 98-103; 1981: p. 105-11; 1982: p. 90-112; 1980: p. 107-31.

9. Althusser 1997, 1994; Lefebvre 1991: p. 201-27; Jameson 1986, 1996; Luxemburg 2004a [1903], 1903; Eagleton 1966b; Eagleton and Cunningham 1966; Eagleton 1967a, 1967b, 1968a, 1968c, 1968b, 1969.

10. Williams 1960.

11. I have no wish to assess that work here, manly because I have already undertaken that task Boer 2007, 2009, 2010.

12. This is a practice beloved by British philosophers of religion. What they tend to call a parable, however, is really an allegory, since one by one the various points in the story make a point pertinent to the argument. Of all the arguments in that curious collection, *The*

Philosophy of Religion, edited by Basil Mitchell, the moments I remember still after twenty years are the various parables or allegories. See Mitchell 1971.

13. Schmitt 2005: p. 36.

14. Adorno 1973 [1964]; 1986: Vol. 6.

15. The germ of this argument comes from a passing observation by Michel de Certeau: 'In a certain way we might consider the time of their religious "filling" as a moment in the history of these cultural forms' Certeau 1988: p. 175-6.

16. See, for example, Milbank 1990.

17. See, for example, Moreiras 2004-5.

18. For example, Jameson 2005: p. 58.

19. For example, Eagleton 2003a: p. 140-73.

20. For example, Butler 2005.

21. These terse comments on grace and revolution began with reflection on Badiou's argument for a 'wholly laicised [*laïcisée*] conception of grace' Badiou 2003: 66; 1997: 70, Žižek's belated discovery of a very similar point Žižek 2003, Goldmann's analysis of the dialectic of grace—between the Elect and the Reprobate in Pascal's Jansenism Goldmann 1964, 1959. My argument moves a step or two beyond them as well.

22. Boer Forthcoming.

23. Desanti 2004.

24. Badiou 2003, 1997.

25. Boer 2008.

26. Sorel 1961: p. 42, 125-6.

27. For a fuller version of this argument, see Boer 2007b: p. 6-16.

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Bildervelbot and Utopia: On the Imageless God and Unarticulated Society

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Abstract

The intent of this article is to explore the sometimes cryptic theological undercurrents that are at the core of the Critical Theory as developed by the Frankfurt School for Social Research, and the ramifications they have on the political-utopian thought of its first generation of scholars, especially that of Theodor Adorno. I claim that the the Jewish image ban (*bilderverbot*) serves as the theoretical basis for much of the Critical Theory's non-identity philosophy, especially in Adorno's *Negative Dialectics.* The ban on identity-thought that Adorno advocates in his seminal work, as a response to the *new* 'categorical imperative' that nothing like Auschwitz should ever occur again, presupposes a radicalization of the Jewish ban on images of the divine. Furthermore, just as the *bilderverbot* preserves the possibility of the 'totally other,' Adorno's radicalization of this theological concept into a social-political one functions as the basis for which the Critical Theorist contemplate the 'totally other society.' In essence, my claim is that the utopian politics of the Frankfurt School are rooted which their adherence and radicalization of the Jewish ban on images of the divine.

Keywords: Image-ban, Utopia, Auschwitz, Theology, Identity-Thought

Introduction

For many philosophers, Adorno's invoking of theological categories in his Negative Dialectics and others works, posses a bit of a mystery. They ask, why would an atheist philosopher, rooted in Freud, Marx, and Nietzsche, continually deploy theological language such as messianic, redemption, and *bilderverbot,* to such a degree that some would accuse him of being a crypto-theologian? Has not religion and theology already been abandoned due to its inability to defend its claims against the Enlightenment? Has not the metaphysics of religion been already so discredited that to reintroduce

them back into philosophy is to commit a crime against reason? For Adorno, the semantic and semiotic qualities of theological language and thought must be rescued from religion itself, and further transformed, reoriented, and reintroduced within philosophy. Only philosophy, and more specifically non-identity forming dialectical philosophy, has the capacity to wield such language without the threat of artificially creating a new totalizing system of thought that furthers the suffering of the subject. In doing so, Adorno creates an added philosophical dimension to old theological concepts, imbuing them with a new critical-dialectical spirit.

In this essay, I will examine what I see to be the core theological concept that gives substantive meaning to Adorno's Negative Dialectics and his philosophy of suffering; that is the notion of *bilderverbot,* the theological ban of images. I claim that the essence of critical theory and as well the core of Adorno's philosophy is the sensitivity toward the suffering of the finite individual in the unjust and violent world. Yet equally important to Adorno's concern for suffering, is the imperative that he identifies has having been 'imposed by Hitler,' to direct our 'thoughts and actions so that Auschwitz will not repeat itself, so that nothing similar will happen.'[1] Bilderverbot takes on a much deeper and more radicalized meaning within Adorno's thought than what it generally is understood to be within the Jewish tradition.[2] This radicalized conception of the image ban aids Adorno's understanding of the events of the Shoah, as well as lends its philosophical weight against the re-occurrence of Auschwitz in any form. I will attempt to elevate and highlight the notion of bilderverbot to the position that I believe it deserves; that as a key concept in understanding the theological element in Adorno's dialectical and utopian thought.

The secondary aim of this essay is to explore the political, economic, and social ramifications of the philosophical deployment and radicalization of the notion of bilderverbot in the Frankfurt School's conception of utopia. By determinately negating the originally Jewish conception of bilderverbot and therefore preserved and extending the concept beyond its original and sole theological meaning, Adorno and the Frankfurt School elucidate the inherent double negativity of bilderverbot as well as the concept of utopia. It is with its connection to utopia, as the 'totally other society,' as the bilderverbot expresses the 'totally otherness' of the divine, that connects utopia to the ban on any positive articulation of the divine. By translating the theological category of bilderverbot into the social category of utopia, they aid in making clear the nature of 'that which doesn't exist,' i.e. utopian absence of positivity, and by inference, 'that which ought to exist' without any positive articulation of such. It is my goal to concretely connect Adorno's theological—bilderverbot language/ concept, to his utopian thought about the possibilities of world transformation.

The Ugly Dwarf Rears its Head

Walter Benjamin, Adorno's friend and teacher, and in many ways the one that most influenced Adorno's theological thinking, wrote in his *Theses of the Philosophy of History*, that theology is so ugly within secular society, that it has wizened up and now must 'keep out of sight.'[3] However, Benjamin claims that it is this same ugly theology that animates historical materialism (it is the Hunchback that controls the Puppet), and that only when historical materialism 'enlists the services of theology' will it 'win all the time.' It was Benjamin that impressed upon Adorno the residual power and importance of theological concepts, and that for Benjamin, what religion and theology warranted was a *determinate* negation, not an *absolute* negation. He did not advocate any form of an a-historical return to religion as a way of addressing contemporary antagonistic society; the retreat into a traditional religious life was simply not possible post-Enlightenment or post-Auschwitz. Religion itself, as understood by the Critical Theory, too often contributed to the very suffering that their philosophy and sociology was attempting to diminish. However, there was something remaining within theology that elicited their attention as worth rescuing.

Why Still Theology?

In the face of a world that is increasingly moving towards total administration, increased violence, oppressive corrosion into a totalizing schema, domination of instrumental rationality, the depletion of meaning, and the instrumentalization of the arts as manipulative propaganda, Adorno was convinced that the theological impulse kept open the possibility for a different and more reconciled form of existence; one that does not abandon all of human life to the dominance of the status quo of modernity—a state of perpetual suffering due to perpetual antagonisms unleashed by the dialectic of enlightenment, i.e. the man's domination of nature and other men, and the triumph of the suffering it produces. Although Adorno insists, in agreement with Kant, that the thing-in-itself (in this case the divine) cannot be penetrated by pure reason and therefore we must remain *favete linguis* (keeping silent, e.g. the impossibility of a positive articulation of the divine) about the *ultimate* nature of divinity—a restriction doesn't allow any positive articulation of the divine, nor does it allow us to positively construct a vision of a totally-other society. Yet, despite the limits of reason, modern philosophers and theologians are impelled to continue to probe theorize the possibility that another society is possible. The distance of the divine, and the impossibility of understanding it fully should not arrest critical thought from turning a skeptical eye towards human history in an attempt to alleviate future suffering by way of a future reconciled society.

For the Critical Theorist, to abandon such an endeavor in the face of despair is to condemn all of human history, present, and future to the suffering that they wished to alleviate. Therefore, silence on the divine can not and should not translate into silence on society or human history, but just as theology is rescued by its inversion in critical philosophy, so too should our discourse about society deploy the inverse negativity of 'utopia' in its longing for a fully reconciled society. For Adorno, the possibility of an inverse theology should be coupled with the real-world possibility of a 'totally other society'; to separate the two would be to diminish the possibility of either and fall back into a wait-and-see eschatology—an option that neither rescues the living hopeless nor redeems the suffering of the dead. Furthermore, according to Christopher Craig Brittain, it is the very negativity of Adorno's 'inverse theology' that resists the dominant schema and coordinates of the status quo from 'silencing those who cry out against oppression and who work for a more human and rational society.'[4] For Adorno, it is the rescue of the semantic and semiotic material from theology that allows 'perennial suffering' to actualize its 'right to expression,' i.e. inverse theology allows the suffering to be expressed without being absorbed into the coordinates of the existing society and thus resisting it's distortion, absorption, and commodification within the already existing society[5]. For Adorno, echoing Marx's definition of religion, theology is the expression of historical wounds and suffering, and without it the cry for emancipation, reconciliation, and redemption is rendered mute. Because of this, Adorno says, 'the need to lend a voice to suffering is a condition of all truth. For suffering is objectively that weighs upon the subject; its most subjective experience, its expression, is objectively conveyed.'[6]

Bilderverbot and Adorno's Radicalization

In a letter to Otto O. Herz following Adorno's death, Max Horkheimer explained critical theory's connection to Judaism and to the 2nd commandment of the Jewish Decalogue concerning the construction of images. Horkheimer says,

> I tell you this in order to make Adorno's complicated relationship to religion, his religious allegiance, comprehensible. On the other hand, may I say that the critical theory that we both had in developing has its roots in Judaism. It arises from the idea: Thou shalt not make any graven images of God. [7]

From this quote, it is clear that Horkheimer identified the *roots* of critical theory as being within the Jewish bilderverbot (ban on images). However, although rooted in Jewish theology, Adorno's appropriation of the 2nd commandment of the Decalogue does not limit itself to the ban on any positive articulation of the divine, either by

image or by word, but instead goes radically further.[8] In his article *Reason and Revelation,* Adorno addresses many issues concerning the importance and danger of 'positive religion.' Adorno sees the modern return to religion to be rooted in human *longing* and *need*, which is abundant due to the alienated and reified condition of mankind in contemporary society, and not rooted in the validity of religious truth-claims. For Adorno, this return to *homo religiosus* sacrifices reason on the alter of what religion provides for humanity (even if it is delusional). Following Freud, Adorno sees positive religion as both providing a false sense of security and assurance, that existence is inherently meaningful and that some a-historical metaphysical being is ultimately in control. Religion, in this non-prophetic sense, is also inherently positive; i.e. that it affirms the status quo as opposed to lending its support towards the protest against the status quo.[9] Furthermore, Adorno remains skeptical about the reintroduction of religious metaphysics within a secular age; he fears that such a move could only lend itself to the reproduction of suffering due to the instrumentalization of religious metaphysics by capitalism and the ruling elite, and that the hope for a reconciled society directs itself towards a placating eschatology brought about by divine intervention, as opposed to a concrete historic possibility brought about by human activity. Positive religion can only placate the masses by falsely delivering to them that which they psychically need (the opiate), while leaving the society unmolested and intact For Adorno, the only thing that can be rescued from religion and theology is its negativity. Consequently, Adorno sees 'no other possibility than an extreme ascesis toward any type of revealed faith, an extreme loyalty to the prohibition of images, far beyond what this once originally meant.'[10] Thus, in his book *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno returns to the concept of bilderverbot and deploys it in a radicalized direction that he initiated in

Reason and Revelation

We should not mistake Adorno's intentions when invoking the notion of bilderverbot; he does not advocate a positive role for Judaism and or Christianity as systematic worldviews (theologies, rituals, sacred spaces and individuals, etc.) in his critical philosophy or 'inverse theology'—that would be a half-hearted return to mythology as an escape from the already existing society and an attempt to take refuge in irrational religiosity; a religiosity that has no substantive potential for the alleviation of human suffering but can only placate or mask it. However, the negativity of theology, embodied in the notion of the bilderverbot, which says nothing positive about the object of cognition (the 'totally other'), maintains a space for thought to transcend immanence. Negative Theology is not burdened or limited by that which is the case, but continues to

ponder the possibility of that which *ought be the case* without ever constructing a positive plan, blueprint, or theory, that would serve as another totalizing system (something that Adorno wants to avoid). By thinking through 'the given,' and at the same time resisting the temptation to construct a totalizing system of thought that could transcend the given, Adorno contends that out of necessity negative theology articulates itself through what he calls 'constellations'—a way of thinking which provides an understanding, comprehension, and vision without building a new iron cage schema which forces all into a totalizing conceptualization. Thus, the nature of theology, and by definition negative theology, is that it always pushes beyond the existing coordinates of what immediately appears to us as reality. In doing so, theology can rescues the protesting voices of the victims of history—those left in the ditch of human existence, and does not render their voices unmusical and unheard by diminishing them to simple material existence (as the positive sciences do) or to abandon their suffering to fate (as in some forms of religion and mythology), for it gives voice to their suffering and protests against that which causes them to suffer in a hope for an existence not defined by what is the case. Their voices embody the longing for happiness and fulfillment, the opposite of suffering; and within those voices, the potential for the reconciled society is preserved and advanced, as their expressed suffering forever testifies for the indictment against inherent violence of nature and the ever-increasing Golgatha history, while at the same time poetically calling for a ultimate state of reconciliation—that the murderer shall no longer triumph over the innocent victim and that society should be rooted in non-possessive love and agope/ solidarity. The negativity of theology, its resistance to what is the case, it's insubordination to the unjust material world, it's ability to envision another society, and its concern for the suffering, serves as the vehicle for the hopes and longing of the innocent victims of history and nature.

The Hebraic ban on images says,

> You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God.[11]

Horkheimer and Adorno invoke the Jewish iconoclasm in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* but at this point do not philosophically extend the ramification of the bilderverbot beyond that which it is understood to mean within Judaism itself. They write,

> The Jewish religion brooks no word which might bring solace to the despair of all morality. It places all hope in the prohibition on invoking falsity as God, the finite as the infinite, the lie as truth. The pledge of salvation lies in the rejection of any faith which claims to depict it, knowledge in the denunciation of illusion.[12]

Christopher Craig Brittain points out that this passage can be seen as a form of ideology-critique, but from a close reading of this section, it is clear that the authors here do not explicitly have a conception of bilderverbot that is *radically* beyond that which can be found within the Jewish tradition itself, and therefore it is not quite yet an articulation of what Adorno means by when he says in *Reason and Revelation* that we must have a 'extreme loyalty to the prohibition of images, *far beyond what this once originally meant.*'[13] Furthermore, the religious image ban has to migrate from the depth of the mythos into secular reason and discourse, and it must extend beyond the non-identification, articulation, and image of a divine being in order for it to be the loci of Adorno's critical philosophy of history, society, and human suffering. If Adorno's bilderverbot is radical beyond original intent, then it has to go well beyond Jewish theology without ever losing the theological claim that grounds it.

Although the seeds of the radicalization of the bilderverbot are expressed in the Dialectic of Enlightenment, it is in Adorno's Negative Dialectics that the concept reaches its full radicality. For Adorno, that which is theological, must become applicable to the material world in which human history dwells. Although philosophical abstraction is not alien to Adorno, the theological abstract concept of bilderverbot, if it is to be rescued from theology, must become radicalized and adorn the attire of the Turkish puppet (Benjamin's historical materialism) without folding into a petrified dogmatism or 'weltanschauung' characterized by 'vulgar Marxism', e.g. Sovietism or Brecht.[14]

Bilderverbot Secularized: Contra Identity Philosophy

Adorno's Negative Dialectics not only secularizes the Jewish concept of bilderverbot, i.e. the non-identification of the divine, into a critical philosophy of society, but he extends the meaning of that 'which cannot be articulated' from strictly speaking and imaging the divine to a possibility of conceptualizing anything in its full givenness. Not only does the notion of God (the divine thing-in-itself) resist penetration by way of reason and its conceptual schema, but the universal 'object' also resists such a conceptualization. Bilderverbot has become radicalized to the point where all is thoroughly inconceivable to the other in its full givenness or from within itself. Adorno contends that reason violently imposes certain structures, definitions, qualities, etc. upon the objects. These false imports that are projected onto the object by reason's impulsion to categorize deny the subject the ability to grasp the object itself, as the qualities of the object that remain recalcitrant to the conceptualization are ignored and or severed. The violence of the imposition of the concept renders the object something other than what it is-for what it is must include that which is non-conceptualizable—

that which was severed when conceptualized. The mode of reasoning that remains oblivious to it's own dominating force is what Adorno calls 'identity thinking.' According to Adorno's student Gerhard Schweppenhäuser, 'confusion of rational categories with nonobjective reality amounts to an identity compulsion: the human mind cannot avoid classifying objects according to normalizing and deviant characteristics, according to the criteria of identity and nonidentity.'[15] Identity thought, which serves as a 'single cognitive schema' has a twofold function. First, it serves as the object's pervasive structure of knowing, and secondly, it dismantles the singularity of the object so that it fits easily within the schema of the our conceptions and perceptions.[16] In doing so, the conceptualization violently transubstantiates the object into something that it is not. The conceptualization of the object can never fully grasp the object itself, and therefore there always remains a remainder, i.e. the non-conceptual. Despite this, according to Adorno, the philosopher has no choice but to work through concepts, for it is 'inherent in thought itself … to think is to identify.'[17] Yet the dialectian must remain perpetually cognizant of the tendency of the concept to distort and dominate the object, for 'dialectics is the consistent sense of nonidentity.'[18] For Adorno, this awareness of the violent and deformative nature of the conceptual is missing in Idealisms' tendency to conflate thought with the object—rendering it impossible to grasp the very thing that idealism set out to understand.[19]

As stated before, Adorno transfers reason's inability to grasp the 'totally other' without turning it into a stagnant idol (which limit's the totally other to a certain time, space, and being, which is the most extreme form of identity thinking) down to the level of the subject's inability to grasp the object through conceptualization. However, because man cannot live within a conceptless world, and has but no choice but to construct concepts, the ability to say that the object that appears in front of him is a 'totally other' is not acceptable. The 'totally other' can only apply to that understanding of what the divine is. A complete transference of the theological bilderverbot to a social, material, and historical bilderverbot is not possible, as it would render human life unintelligible as human thought would be impossible. Adorno is forced to make a compromise with the radical nature of the theological bilderverbot, i.e. the subject must attempt to grasp the object, with full understanding that his conceptualizations cannot fully comprehend, grasp, or possess a full penetration of the thing-in-itself. What's equally important, it must constantly be engaged in a rethinking of the object itself as not to petrify and thus stagnate the concept. The dialectical philosopher (the subject) must always be mindful of that which resists conceptualization, i.e. the singularity and uniqueness of the object. These binding yet elastic statements concerning the object comprise a 'constellation' of thought—characterized by its fluidity, and thus escaping

the production of a system of thought that renders all of reality intelligible. Knowledge of reality in its totality is false (in its claim to completeness) as it becomes akin to the idol when it claims to be divine. In essence, Adorno's insistence on the non-identical in thought is a philosophical bilderverbot that is less radical than the theological in the sense that it cannot make reality into the 'totally other,' as the discourse about the divine does, but more radical in that it forces the subject to see the non-conceptual as being beyond the discourse about the divine and is extented into the discussion about the physical world and society in which we live. For Adorno, the theological ban on images must migrate into the secular discussion about society if it is to be relevant in the modern-secular world.

Bilderverbot and the Suffering of Auschwitz

The notion of bilderverbot finds its ultimate importance in Adorno's concern for suffering of the finite individual. Rejecting the traditional answers to the theodicy question, as well as a descriptive analysis of Auschwitz, and wanting to rescue the autonomy or irreducibility of the suffering of the innocent victim, Adorno writes, after Auschwitz, our feelings resist any claim of the positivity of existence as sanctimonious, as wronging the victims; they balk at squeezing any kind of sense,

> however bleached, out of the victims' fate. And these feelings do have an objective side after events that make a mockery of the construction of immanence as endowed with a meaning radiated by an affirmatively posited transcendence.[20]

Adorno rejects any conceptualization of the suffering of Auschwitz, as any attempt to construct a positive interpretation of the event would render it *meaningful*; a prospect he finds revolting. For Adorno, Auschwitz remains and must remain *without any meaning*; as all attempts to imbue the mechanized extermination of a people with some form of altruistic purposivity, whether that be philosophical, theological, or ideological, would be a mockery of the meaninglessness of their suffering, as it would imply that Auschwitz was an inevitable part of some divine or cosmic plan—that it's occurance was simply a moment in a meaningful blueprint of human history, as opposed to to understanding it as a product of perverse social organization that was completely unnecessary and should have never happened. Furthermore, Adorno understood that any attempt to impose a conception upon the victim's fate would inevitably fail to comprehend or account for the every micrological moment of suffering, pain, humiliation, and agony. Suffering of the innocent victim is, for Adorno, that which cannot be conceptualized. As such, there is no possibility for any concept to grasp Auschwitz without denying the suffering of the victim; a remainder that at all times

resists the deformative violence of the concept. For Adorno, any form of positive meaning for Auschwitz would originate from the analyzing subject, never from the object, i.e. those suffering. The agony of transcendence without countermovement via prayer in the concentration camp, which didn't bring the intervention of the totally other, but only the brutality of the SS and their dogs; the inconceivability of the bourgeois 'coldness' that was required to exterminate children by the thousands; the humiliation of seeing your parents stipped naked in front of an audience and beaten; the extreme instrumentalization of humans, all defy meaning as they are moments of sustained somatic terror and suffering which escapes any positive articulation. Language, is provoked by suffering, but is utterly incapable of formulating a single sentence that can convey or transfer the experience of suffering from one individual to another. The somatic nature of suffering can only be experienced, not expressed. Therefore for Adorno, every theological, philosophical, and historical attempt to provide such conceivability, and thus render it meaningful (such as the theodicy answers), only leads to the further victimization of the victims-to render their suffering conceptually less than suffering, to render their agony understandable, and to render their brutal deaths meaningful. This impulse to conceptualize must not be allowed to revictimize the victims. Faced with the destructive nature of conceptuality, Adorno states 'Auschwitz confirmed the philosopheme of pure identity is death.'[21] For the Jews, the conept of *Der Juden*, and all its negative connotations, diminished the uniqueness of every Jew, and rendered every Jewish individual into a conceptual framework that portrayed each and every Jew as a threat to the *Deutsches Volk* which allowed for them to be conceived of as the perpetual enemy. As a concept, every Jew was stripped of his or her individuality and was rendered 'life unworthy of life.' On the other side of the conceptualization, i.e. what is German, the Nazis understood the 'remainder' which resisted conceptualization within the *Deutsches volk* as the Jew, and as such had to be eliminated, as it served as the persistent reminder that Europe is not how it is conceived to be by their racial ideology. To conceive of Europe as Jew-free, led to the attempt to physically make Europe Jew-free. In the Nazi consciousness, the Jew was both the non-conceptual component in Europe, as he resisted a full integration into the concept of Europe and the cult of Aryanism, and therefore was the perpetual and unwanted 'other.' Furthermore, the Jewish remainder, the non-conceptualizable recalcitrant, was not simply a beneign phenomenon, but was conceived of as a disease, a plague, and an existential threat. For the fascist, the non-conceptual/ concept had to be eliminated. In Adorno's estimation, the identity thought of the Nazi's led directly to the gas chambers because the Jews were first that which remained outside the conceptualization of Christian Europe, and second, a conceptualization of the

degenerate and dangerous other. In essence, the Jews were both non-concept and concept, and as such posed a double threat that had to be terminated.

In explaining his position that poetry after Auschwitz was inconceivable, Adorno said,

> … just as I said that after Auschwitz one *could not* write poems … it could equally well be said, on the other hand, that one *must* write poems … that as long as there … is an awareness of suffering among human beings there must also be art as the objective form of that awareness.[22]

In giving expression to the suffering of the finite individual through art and poetry, one does not violently impose some form of meaning through conceptualization upon the suffering object, but invokes a constellational moment of insight that allows the subject an insight into the suffering—a moment of somatic-empathy/ experience that does not propose to render a judgment, an understanding, and or a conceptualized meaning. Poetry, the specter behind the thought, the 'thereness' and equally 'not-thereness', opens the space for the voice of the suffering, so that remembrance of the innocent victims is sustained and their history of suffering is never forgotten, but does not fall into the conceptualizing temptation of prose.

Bilderverbot and the Negative Utopia: Non-Defining of that which doesn't Exist

The Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School has been highly influential on the theory and praxis of sociology, psychology, history, philosophy, and religion. The first generation of Critical theorists, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, and Leo Lowenthal, etc., came from some kind of Jewish backgrounds. Although many of these thinkers moved from a religious context, into a secular theory-praxis orientation, as we have seen, they nonetheless retained certain religious and prophetic impulses within their theory that where deeply rooted in their messianic and prophetic Judaism. In the second part of this essay, I want to discuss various details concerning the Frankfurt School's notion of *utopia,* especially how it relates to religion and most specifically Horkheimer and Adorno's notion of the 'totally other,' as a gesture toward defining (by way of not defining) God, i.e. the concept of bilderverbot, and the 'longing for the totally other' as a definition of religion. I will attempt to make explicit, if it is theoretically possible, what the critical theory of religion, in its prophetic form, only leaves implicit within their discussion of utopia. Furthermore, the ultimate goal of this section is to elucidate the connection between the 'negative utopia' of the Frankfurt School, and the 'negative theology' that is rooted in Adorno's radicalization of the Jewish bilderverbot.

The American Context

Most of the first generation of critical theorists that escaped Hitler's fascist Germany came to America in search of sanctuary.[23] They did not come looking for a new permanent home, as they had always intended to return to Germany after the defeat of fascism, nor did they accept Zionism as a valid response to fascism and emigrate to Palestine.[24] The Frankfurt School theorists believed the Jews of Europe had an immense role to play in the redemption of the continent, not only through a reconciliation between the Jews and Gentiles, but for a critical reconciliation and redemption of the European Enlightenment project itself. However, while they found refuge within the U.S. and were greeted warmly by the New York academic community at Columbia University, and eventually in California as well, they nevertheless remained reserved on many political and social issues, due to the pervasive suspicion of foreigners, especially those who where German, of the political left, Marxist, and or represented a critical view of American democracy and or capitalism. When they did speak, they spoke in an idiom that was not accessible to the average American, and hardly accessible by those in their philosophical and sociological fields (at least in the American academic academy). However, their relative silence should not tempt one to think that they retreated from their critical philosophy and conformed even slightly to American consumerism or the ideology of liberal democracy and capitalism; they remained the *genius loci* (guardian spirit of a place or issue) of critical leftist thought within academic circles. In the global context of Auschwitz, world war, genocidal aggression, nuclear bombs, and increased oppression and suppression of substantive freedom, what Schopenhauer identified as 'Golgatha history,' or what Hegel called 'the slaughter-bench of history,' the critical theorists conceived their philosophy within the inevitable sadness of the age, but imbued it with ageless hope.[25] It is part of my argument, that this irrepressible hope for a future reconciled society, while actively engaging in a dynamic and dialectical analysis of the world torn apart by reason made myth, fear made praxis, and love made murder, has its roots in the *longing* for a messianic age (without *expecting* it)—or a development of a society rooted in the transvaluation of all capitalist values, i.e. the utopian society of reconciliation and peace.

Utopian Reaction

According to Horkheimer, modern utopian thought and theory are reactions to the rise of bourgeois society and its 'legitimating philosophy' that reifies an antagonistic system of political economy, rooted in man's exploitation and domination over

mankind, into the realm of nature; thus causing it to appear as inevitable and natural. The 'Aristocratic law of nature'—the guiding principle of fascism, which augments the inherent 'mechanistic killing cycle' of nature to the level of normative human interaction—is indicative of modern capitalist society, and as such, it is the 'dispossessed classes of people [peasants, farmers, proletariat] who have to bear the cost and suffering' of such a system.[26] Within the pain and suffering of such a society, the utopian impulse is born.[27] As such, utopia expresses the sum of desires to negate what is the case in nature and history, to relieve the suffering of man and nature in a society that would be, if it could be, endorsed by the divine, especially that of the Abrahamic God. Utopia, as an all-encompassing social concept of negativity, i.e. criticism of all that exists coupled by the desire to replace it with that which doesn't exist but is nevertheless longed for, reflects the notion of the 'kingdom of God,' i.e. the eudaemonic society of man rooted in absolute justice, perfection, and closeness with the divine. Utopia *is not* that which *is*, and thus the meaning of the word: 'that which has no place. Yet since it is *not that which is*, it also contains within it the dialectical-critical function of the prophetic—it remains outside of the 'metaphysics of what is the case,' as Adorno identified scientism— positivism and vulgar materialism, and stands as both the accuser and inquisitor of *existing society* (that which *is* the case)'.[28] The utopian impulse of critical theory is constitutional; having been rooted in and appropriated from utopian impulses in Marx, Freud, Hegel, the prophets, and eschatology. Furthermore, for the Frankfurt School, it was their background in the messianic Jewish upbringing and education (*bildung*), with its notion of bilderverbot, that, as explained by Leo Lowenthal, was co-determinate with secular socialism in their desire for a more reconciled society.[29]

Another very important absence that gives rise to the desire for utopia is the *parousia-delay*-the non-appearance of the promised messiah (Jewish and Christian), and the absolute longing for reconciliation and the cancellation of suffering and despair that would accompany the advent of the messianic.[30] However, the promised 'kingdom of god,' which was to be the fully reconciled and godly society, seems to have been abandoned, not by the masses and their move toward scientific, materialistic, mechanistic, and naturalistic causal explanations of existence, but for many by God itself. The Enlightenment was an attempt to liberate man from his superstitions, and therefore cultivate a sense of agency in man-that he is the master of his own history-and thus recognize the fact that the divine has abandoned human history through his non-intervention and or that God, as Ludwig Feuerbach insisted, simply didn't exist outside of humanity's projections. Indeed, Nietzsche's 'God is

Dead' didn't propose the death of God, but the inability of modern many to believe that a thing such as God could ever exist.[31] Furthermore, many of the assimilated modern Jews could no longer believe that a God so-conceived could exist, especially after what would appear to be his flagrant violation of his covenant with the 'Chosen of Israel.' One can see this very dynamic in the trial of God in Auschwitz, where through the deployment of reasoned arguments, the Jews puts God on trial and found him guilty for his violation of the covenant through his involvement in Jewish suffering (non-involvement in ceasing Jewish suffering, or active involvement in imposing Jewish suffering). Although reason and law, both understood to be creations of the divine in Judaism, were used to condemned God, some inmates in the extermination camp, awaiting their last minute of life, returned to their unreasonable prayers after they found God guilty of violating his covenant. Yet even prior to Auschwitz, many enlightenment and utopian thinkers expressed through deistic language their impatience for the messianic age. As all of history disclosed itself to them as a piling up of one catastrophe after the next, and Walter Benjamin's 'Angel of History' saw it, they became pessimistic about the possibility of a divine intervention and or rescue.[32] Many disillussioned believers concluded that 'if the God of justice and mercy is unwilling to intervene in human history on the side of the victims, the oppressed, the murdered, and the raped, then humanity is unwilling to wait for him.' Why should humanity wait for the promised messiah if in its worst suffering that messiah seems not to take interest nor does he appear—despite his promises and ability? Can humanity not do for itself what was once promised by the divine, especially since humanity has advanced it capacity to determine its own future and environment since the days of the Prophets? Consequently, for those who still maintained a belief in a divine being that is active in human history, the *theodicy* problem, or questions of God's justice in the face of the absence of justice in his world, had driven many to seek a utopian solution without the blessing of the divine, regardless if they still believed in the divine. Marx's secular communism is an attempt to do just that; that in the face of the totally other's non-appearance, non-intervention, and unconcern, that man should make the 'kingdom of heaven' on earth without the divine's blessing or imput-that it is a historical necessity that cannot wait for the uncaring and or powerless God. However, this utopian impulse, which can be found in Marx, Freud, Bloch, and other critical voices, preserves the utopian impulse of the theological inspired kingdom of god, while negating the religious imperative of God's intervention into history to bring about such a utopia. The promise of and longing for reconciliation, justice, and peace remains powerful within human relations, while the notion of a divinity becomes ever more distant.[33] The responsibility for the construction of an optimal society is increasingly viewed

as a human obligation and not that of an eschatological event or the interjection of the divine into history.

Religion, Utopia, and Suffering

Unlike other modern theories that claim to be secular in nature, the Critical Theory of Religion does not *unreflexively* reject religion and religious claims as mere ideology (like certain forms of Marxism do), as residues of mental material that truly belongs to historical infancy of humanity (the 'universal mass neurosis' of Freud), or as humans projecting themselves and their wishes and desires into a metaphysical realm (Feuerbach), or as slave morality, moralizing all that is weak over all that is strong (and therefore good) as Nietzsche tells us.[34] On the contrary, the Critical Theory of Religion takes seriously the emancipatory and prophetic claims and desires of religion, while it attempts to rescue certain semantic and semiotic materials from the depths of their *mythos* (sacred story) and reformulate them into revolutionary theory and praxis. While such material is preserved within the critical theory, the mythology, untrue ideology, pathology, and criminality of positive religion is negated, often with the insights furnished by the critical theories of religion according to Feuerbach, Marx, Freud, Bloch, Benjamin, Adorno, Horkheimer, etc.[35] Determinate negation (*bestimmte negation*), as taught to the Frankfurt School by Marx, and Marx by his dialectical teacher Hegel, is applied to religion, to liberate its emancipatory potential from its violent criminality and distorted pathological history and orientation. The truth and power of the story, its prophetic core, often located within the micrological details of every particular event of human suffering, have been embraced, amplified, and therefore preserved.[36] As we've discussed before, this rescue of the negativity of theology from religion is what Walter Benjamin pressed upon the younger theorist Adorno. Furthermore, an integral component of critical micrological analysis of society and individuals is the rescue of the desire for a 'utopian other' than what is the case, the remembrance of past suffering, and the practical intent to diminish future suffering, that is often expressed in small details of the pain and existential anguish in the lives of those who find themselves in the ditch of history.[37] Through the micrological focus on the suffering, pain, and misery of human existence, what Adorno identifies as the non-identical or non-conceptualizable, which remains secure in its' particularity, the experience of the individual does not get absorbed and lost in the totalizing whole. As stated before, for Adorno, by thinking about human suffering and the singularity of the individual through constellations (as opposed through systems), the utopian alternative becomes recognizable, if only in its negative form, i.e. that which utopia cannot be.[38] Furthermore, the utopian image through constellation thinking escapes the destructive

tendency to become an encompassing and dogmatic whole—a closed system that warrants orthodoxy, developmental stagnation, and an authority to enforce its coordinates. The non-conceptualizable constellation—which is only accessible in insightful flashes—that vague but powerful notion of the messianic—utopia, yet unknowable force, allows the deployment of its prophetic course without retreating into a oppressive cannon of being—the idol. The remembrance of the pain and suffering of the victims of history garnishes a response from the spirit of utopia, but does not press the suffering into a conception that does violence to its singularity.

Capitalism and the Abandonment of Utopia

Despite the Critical Theory's rootedness in a utopian negation of the aggressiveness and destructiveness of nature and society, recent history and recent trends toward alternative future number one, the totally administered society, and number two, the totally militarized society, have led some to abandon the utopian ideal, alternative future number three, the totally reconciled society; some have done this out of despair, i.e. Leo Lowenthal, and others out of pragmatics, i.e. Jürgen Habermas. In a lament of current society and history, Lowenthal, the critical theorist of society and literature, said,

> What has not been lost is, of course, the critical approach: the process ofanalysis, retaining the good and rejecting the bad, the need to accuse, theindictment of all that exists ..., but without explicit hopes. What has occured is not a retreat into skepticism or cynicism, but sadness. The utopianmotif has been suspended.[39]

It can been read from this text the horror of Critical Theory; despite the desperate need for the destruction of 'socially necessary illusions,' (those untruths that sustain, perpetuate, and legitimate already existing society) it is those illusions that posses the minds of much of mankind, and as such the social, political, cultural, and economic power of capitalism, with its tendency to reify, objectify, commodify, commercialize, and oppress, turning all living organisms into a meaningless part of the 'exchange society' (*tauschgesellschaft*). For the Frankfurt School, who saw WWI and WWII, Hiroshima & Nagasaki, the Shoah and Vietnam, etc. as consequences of such a society, it was incredibly disappointing to see an entrenchment of such a society as it becomes more barbaric; Golgatha history perpetuates, while the slaughter-bench expands to make room for even more victims. Through a analysis of social, economic, and political trends in the 1960's and 1970's, the Frankfurt scholars foresaw the capitalistic turn towards its own death through the increasingly more radicalized free-market. However, despite capitalism's suicidal tendencies, attempts to resurrect capitalism were viewed as superfluous, because it would not die! They foresaw that through state interventions

into the economy (back to basics ideology), those most geared towards social justice could nurse the capitalistic system back to health, via modifying and taming it; capitalism with a smiling face (welfare state). This trend opposed a radical departure from the already existing society towards alternative future number 3 —the fully—reconciled society, i.e. the creation of a utopian-like existence through socialism; a society that could be later endorsed by the Messiah.[40] Now in the 21st century, we must say that Lowenthal and the Critical Theorists have a *justified right* to be sorrowful with these turn of events, but do not have an *absolute obligation* to be so. If to accept the notion that the utopian motif has been suspended, then should it not, in the name of those who suffer while refusing to abandon hope for a reconciled society, be vigorously resuscitate as the philosopher Slavoj Žižek has recently challenged the political left to do? [41] In light of the centrality of the utopian motif in the first generation of the Frankfurt School, it appears that the utopian impulse cannot be abandon into sadness for it remains constitutive of the Critical Theory itself. Implicit in Lowenthal's 'sadness' is the reality of capitalism's barbaric victory and the retirement of a radical vision for a just and reconciled society. However, the elimination of the negativity of the utopian motif would collapse the entire project of the Critical Theory into banal skepticism, meaningless nihilism, or uncritical description, and thus perpetuating the sum of all antagonisms already entrenched within the status quo. In fact, coupled with the concern for the suffering of the finite individual, it is this very longing for the totally other than what is the case that is at the heart of the Critical Theory. Without it, Critical Theory retires itself into pure academics.

Utopia and the Theological

As stated above, most of the first generation of Critical Theorists took refuge in the U.S. during the Fascist period in Germany. Knowing that they were not in a Left-friendly country, as the primary ideological enemy of the U.S. prior to World War II was Bolshevism, and that the alliance between Roosevelt and Stalin was only pragmatic and not a reconciliation between the Bourgeois and Marxist Enlightenment, Horkheimer and Adorno, et al. were careful not to blatantly demonstrate their leftist and socialist political philosophy for fear of retaliation and or deportation (but neither did they abandon it). Conservative America was not a friend of their political and philosophical orientation and consequently they understood that their position within the U.S. was precarious at best.[42] We have since learned that those scholars associated with the Frankfurt School in American exile were under surveillance by the U.S. government, and thus confirming that the Institute was correct in being careful about publicly articulating their positions in the 1930's, 1940's, and after.[43]

However, despite the obvious historical reasons for Critical Theory not to articulate a positive utopia (as the indictment of all that exists), there is a much more important reason. The Frankfurt School thinkers understood themselves to be *utopian iconoclasts,* having philosophically appropriated the Hebraic ban on images (bilderverbot). As such, Adorno defines Utopia in his lectures on negative dialectics as,

> Consciousness of possibility adheres to the concrete, the unspoilt. Its path is blocked by possibility, never by immediate reality; this explains why it always seems abstract when surrounded by the world as it is. Its inextinguishable colour comes from non-being. Thought is its servant, a piece of existence that extends, however, negatively, into that which does not exist.[44]

In much the same way that they adopted a radicalization of the second and third commandments of the Decalogue, the ban on making images or names for the imageless and nameless 'totally other,' so too have they adopted this position in terms of utopia. Utopia, by its very definitional nature, treads very close to the definition of the divine, as *the totally other then what is the case.* Utopia, is the 'totally other society' than *what is the case* in really existing society, articulated via the *servant of thought*. The Jewish ban on idolatry, which includes any positive statements about the divine, is taken seriously by the Critical Theory of Religion, not because they were Jewish, or even religiously committed to Judaic law, but that it is within this hope for the totally other—in the possibility of the nameless and imageless other's redemptive existence—that there is any hope for the rescue of absolute meaning, perfect justice, human compassion, and unconditional love, etc. ... . The sorrowful longing for the messianic return, the *parousia* event, or the coming of absolute justice, so that the unrepentant murderer shall ultimately not triumph over the innocent victim—that the injustice of history and nature is not the final word of all—expresses the need for such a hope.[45] For the Critical Theorists, the complete and total abandonment of the longing for the totally other is a complete and total abandonment of humanity, left simply to the devises of nature and history. The grave risk associated with such an abandonment is to increase the suffering, despair, and violent annihilation of man at the hands of man, and his continued enslavement to his passions, irrationality, instrumental reason, aggression, narcissism, sado-masochism, and self-destructiveness. The Critical Theory of Religion understands religion to be the echo of the cry of the innocent masses, and their longing for absolute justice—of which the Critical Theory has sympathy and fully identifies with, because at its core is the sensitivity for the finite human creature and their suffering.[46] The first generation of Critical Theorists understand that to make an image of or name for the totally other is to drag the infinite into finite language (species language) within a finite world, and thus cancel any hope

in the totally other, as it has become less than the *totally* other.[47] Likewise, the utopian desire must remain the unknowable society if it is to remain the relentless inquisitor of all that exists within nature and history. Any positive articulation of the utopian ideal is to make it a idol, a false ideology, and thus a tool for manipulation in the hands of those who would manipulate for the benefit of one over 'the other,' and as such reinstate an antagonist society. As Adorno expressed, it is utopia's *non-being* (that it does not participate in the reality of what is the case) that gives it other-worldly emancipatory power, or what Adorno calls its 'colour.' Furthermore, positive religion (which is a full participant in what is the case), as a set formula of dogmatic statements, takes on administrative quality, an enforceable orthodoxy, which calls for an enforcer—the priest—who then, because of his power position, has the power to enforce uniformity that orthodoxy demands, and thus stifle the free and creative articulation of human thought and action—the emancipated being.[48] Positive religion, especially rooted in authoritarian hierarchy, abandons its prophetic *geist* (if it's a prophet inspired/ revealed religion) when it becomes a petrified system—a system that stands in direct competition with the totally other society of utopia. However, with inverse theology, or cipher theology as Adorno identified it, religion has to be forcibly rescued from the hands of those who functionalize it as a 'contingency management experience subsystem.' For the Critical Theorists of Religion, the only way to do that is to *rescue God from religion, and justice from the world*—as all attempts to posit God in the positive lead to idolatry, and all historically mediated human attempt to bring universal justice are ultimately failures, for the dead cannot be resurrected, the raped cannot be made pure, and the maimed cannot be made whole again by man's hands alone.[49] Consequently, the utopian impulse must also remain only in the negative—or expressed only in such a way that it articulates that which it is not. The double-negativity of utopia, first by definition as 'that which has no place,' and secondly by only being able to be expressed in the negative, that which *utopia is not*, is the only way to effectively understand the phenomenon without loosing its quality as a sum of all negations, and thus its prophetic *geist*.

With this political-theological maneuver, the Frankfurt School takes a tacit position on utopia—like the Jewish second commandment, banning all positive images of the divine, so the Frankfurt School, still rooted in a secularized Jewish prophetic and messianic hope, refused to positively identify any notion or system of utopian society.[50] Utopia is inexpressible. This is what Lowenthal meant when he said that utopia is the 'indictment of all that exists ... without explicit hopes.' In agreement with Ernst Bloch's notion that the only true believer is the atheist, so to the only true believer in Utopia is the *atopists*—those who believe but leave any notion of a positive

utopia unarticulated. The only way to rescue the utopian motif from total abandonment is to preserve it in silence via its double negativity.

Incompatibility of Utopia and Positive Religion

Horkheimer and Adorno identified religion as the *longing for the totally other than the terror and horror in nature and history*, and as such utopia, which is the negation of such conditions, cannot be compatible with any positive religion.[51] For the Critical Theory, 'the longing' expresses the indictment against history and nature; it expresses the prophetic critique against unjust society; it expresses the Socratic questioning of all presumptions and assumption, all common sense, and all ideological truth claims. Therefore the notion of utopia is inherently *contra mundum* (against the world as it exists) without being 'anti-world,' as *another world* (way of being-in-the-world) was certainly imaginable by the Frankfurt School.[52] They saw, with the Bourgeois Enlightenment, that religion became more positivistic, privatized, and atomized; it was pushed further into a dark closet of personal experiences, kept out of the public sphere, and depleted of it's dialecticity. It was thoroughly castrated of all its potential for substantive social critique. The predominant use that the ruling classes had for religion was as a 'contingency management experience system,' a system to restores equilibrium to political economy through the calming and soothing 'opiate' religion, for the benefit of stabilizing civil society and or nation-state within any given historical catastrophe.[53] Religion's positive injunctions concerning life in this finite world—such as Apostle Paul's encouragement to obey all legitimate authority[54], suffer peacefully while waiting for the coming of the Messiah, and the ascetic abandonment of the prophetic for a mystical retreat into oneself, were functionalized by the Bourgeois for their own benefit, separating religious critique from the state and economy. However, the hypocrisy of the situation was apparent, as the Bourgeoisie expressed no sincere belief in such unscientific and obscure metaphysics, but nevertheless found it a useful tool for the control and exploitation of the manipulated masses.[55] The religious worldview and life-world were soon replaced by a new social ethos in which the market and exchange society became the dominate mode of public existence, while religion, and its prophetic indictment of society, stayed a private affair between the divine and the individual.[56] As the market-oriented way-of-being-in-the-world became socially dominate and civil society became the most powerful force within and on the life-world, its influence penetrating into the family and state, religiously mandated or inspired social tendencies toward rituals, theologies, morals, ethics, and institutions had to be made docile and complacent, and thus non-prophetic and uncritical of civil society. The Bourgeois ruling class, although personally in contempt of religion,

especially its leftist prophetic core and its rightwing obscurantism, allowed for its continual existence in society albeit in the form of 'positive religion.' This was especially true in the United States where the separation of church and state allowed for an abundance of religious life; religion became democratized and marketized, which also fractured and privatized it, robbing it of its collective social power. However, what remained was religiosity in its most status-quo affirming positive form, which reifies and affirms the existing class structure, unjust economic conditions, inhuman imbalance of wealth and power, environment catastrophes, and the systematic subjugation and destruction of part of humanity for the benefit of another part of humanity. As such, Jesus and the Prophets were reconciled with the American ideology. The social nature of religion, that which would posit what the world *ought* to be based on the teachings of Jesus, Moses, Muhammad, etc., was de-emphasized for the quest for *personal redemption* and *social-political-economic legitimation*, as opposed to *social renewal and transformatio—*the *kingdom of God* was sacrifices for the *Empire of America*. The social gospel was all but canceled as a civilizational imperative and was at best given occasional lip-service and followed exclusively on an individual basis if at all. The Nietzschean 'master morality' of competition, greed, and aggression became the new moral code, as capitalism's core values extended into the state and family. This 'domestication' of the prophetic religion is precisely what Marx was critical of in his last of three definitions of religion, the 'opiate of the masses,' i.e. a religion that normativizes unjust social relations and reconciles humanity to such injustice. For Marx, people should not be harmonized with social antagonisms, and it was ideological to claim that they already were under the present capitalist society. Horkheimer and Adorno likewise identified that in the post-Bourgeois, Freudian, and Marxist enlightenment, positive religion was and is the dominate mode of religiosity in the West.[57] Nevertheless, the critical-prophetic aspects where taken over, rescued, and often fulfilled by secular Marxist revolutionaries, who were generally honest about their opposition to positive religion, while appreciating the revolutionary aspects of religious thought and history (ex. Friedrich Engel's and Ernst Bloch's work on Thomas Münzer, the theological and political leader of the Peasant's Revolt in 1524). These Marxists, including Marx himself, and subsequently the Frankfurt School, already engaged in an inversion of religious motifs, semantic and semiotic potentials, into secularized principles, values, etc.[58] For these revolutionaries, it was painful to see that those who would proclaim to follow the 'religion of love' could not see that the gospels' ideals had been dialectically rescued and transformed into secular 'solidarity.' It only confirms their suspicion that Christianity had exiled itself far away from its historical critical-prophetic core, and had become fossilized in a positive form, especially post-Constantine and his Romanization of Christianity.[59] Marxism was not only the self-

critique of bourgeois liberalism, but for the Frankfurt School it was also the self-critique of Judaism and Christianity.

Because positive religion affirms the status quo and therefore its unjust conditions, utopia, as the sum of all negations of injustice and imperfections in society, stands in complete contrast. There is no place for a positive religion in utopia, for if utopia where to be actualized, there would be a lack of injustice for positive religion to affirm. As such, positive religion is the ideology that stands in perpetual opposition to negative utopian thought, and as such, will continue to be the enemy of the conventional religious believer as nearly all attempt to build a secular-utopian society have viewed.

No Theocracy? But who's behind the Puppet?

In Walter Benjamin's brief essay *Theologico-Political Fragment*, he addresses the temptation for humanity to confer upon themselves the power of the Messiah when he states,

> Only the Messiah himself consummates all history, in the sense that he aloneredeems, completes, creates its relation to the Messianic. For this reasonnothing historical can relate itself on its own account to anything Messianic.Therefore the Kingdom of God is not the *telos* of the historical dynamic; itcannot be set as a goal. From the standpoint of history it is not the goal, butthe end. Therefore the order of the profane cannot be built up on the idea ofthe Divine Kingdom, and therefore theocracy has no political, but only a religious meaning ... . The order of the profane should be erected on the ideaof happiness.[60]

For Benjamin, the Messiah represents the total end of history, the messianic *jetztzeit* (now-time) that stops the clock of time, the total consummation of all that has gone before and the redemption of the suffering and those who have suffered.[61] It is the messianic breakthrough into history that ushers in a society that is at the present time, and with the present language, unable to be articulated. For Benjamin, it is not a possibility for humanity to construct a society that *fully* embodies that which the messianic intervention would establish. However, Benjamin, like Adorno, although leaving a positive vision of a utopian existence unannounced, does leave us with a small criteria, one that can be used to guide the building of the best society that man can build, i.e. that it should rest of the foundation of mankind's happiness. Without getting into the particulars of what each individuals' happiness is, because some surely garnish pleasure from cruelty, exploitation, and oppression, and that is not what Benjamin is proposing, we should understand Benjamin to be saying that such a society should direct itself towards justice, compassion, equality, solidarity, and peace; i.e. the succession of man's domination over man. If such a society could be created, it would

produce the conditions for which every individual could fulfill themselves and their talents which the bounds of justice, yet it would not seek legitimacy from any notion of the divine. Needless to say, if such a society was brought about by human activity, as flawed as it would be, Benjamin and the rest of Frankfurt School would understand this to be the end of bourgeois society and capitalism, as the values of such are anathema to the values of a society rooted in happiness via the incarceration and eventual abolishment of injustice, violence, and needless suffering. For Benjamin, the point is not to reject the prophetic values, principles, and goals of a messianic theocracy, but to secularize those prophetic tendencies into a secular society that can be endorsed by the Messiah if and when he ever enters into history. If there is a vague image of the utopian potential within the corpus of the Frankfurt School, it is the secularized prophetic theocratic society; the society that is *explicitly* governed by the values of historical materialism (the puppet), but are *tacitly* rooted within the ugly little dwarf (prophetic theology). Furthermore, if Ernst Bloch is correct in his understanding that the only true believer is the atheist, because unlike the theist, his absence of faith leaves the divine unarticulated and therefore secure in its complete otherness, then we can say, in light of Benjamin's ban on theocracy, that a just society, absent the intervention of the Messiah, could only be brought about by an *a-theocratic* state and society, as it would be the society that does not make a mockery out of the divine by rooting its existence in it, which would inevitably bend and distort the divine towards its own earthly ends, or by claiming that it is doing the work of the Messiah, which, according to Benjamin, is the *end* of history, not a movement *within* it. For the Frankfurt School, without the Messiah, only the secular state and society can adequately address the needs of humanity, by allowing the those prophetic values and principles from prophetic religion to migrate into legislation and culture; any legitimation appeal to the divine would render the divine less-than-divine, and utopia as less-than-utopian.

Notes

1. Adorno, Theodor W. Negative Dialectics. (New York: Continuum, 1999) p. 365.

2. This is also true for the Islamic tradition.

3. Benjamin, Walter. Theses of the Philosophy of History in *Illuminations.* ed. Hannah Arendt. (New York: Schocken Books, 2007) p. 253. Many have argued since Benjamin articulated this thesis that the opposite is in fact true for the contemporary: that historical materialism is so ugly that it must desguise itself within theology, or that philosophy itself, which has become exhausted in the face of global capitalism, has not choice but to be rescued by theology. See Davis, Milbank, and Žižek. Paul's New Moment: Continental Philosophy and the Future of Christian Theology Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2010.

4. Brittain, Christopher Craig. Adorno and Theology. (New York: T & T International, 2010) 14.

5. Adorno, Negative Dialectics. p. 362.

6. Ibid. 18.

7. Horkheimer, Max. in Theodor W. Adorno: One Last Genius. Clausen, Detlev. Trans. Rodney Livingstone. (Cambridge, Mass.; The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008) p. 365.

8. In traditional Jewish understanding, the bilderverbot of the Decalogue bans not only the construction of images, but also the linguistic articulation of any mental and or conceptual image of the divine. All forms of anthropomorphism of the divine, or any positive utterance about the nature and or attributes of the divine, are seen as an attempt to drag the infinite into finite language and capture it. To do so is an attempt to control the divine itself. This will have an interesting influence on Adorno's notion of non-identity thinking.

9. There will be a further discussion of 'positive religion' later in the article.

10. Adorno, Theodor. W. Reason and Revelation in Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) p. 142.

11. Exodus 20:4, Holy Bible Revised Standard Version. (New York: Thomas Nelson Inc., 1972) p. 65.

12. Adorno & Horkheimer. Dialectic of Enlightenment. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002) p. 17.

13. Brittain, Adorno & Theology pg. 89, Adorno Reason and Revelation p. 142.

14. See Negative Dialectics. p. 200, 204.

15. Schweppenhäuser, Gerhard. Theodor W. Adorno: An Introduction. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009) p. 41.

16. Ibid. p. 41.

17. Adorno, Negative Dialectics. p. 5

18. Ibid. pg. 5

19. Schweppenhäuser. Adorno p. 41.

20. Adorno, Negative Dialectics p. 361

21. Adorno, Negative Dialectics. P. 362

22. Adorno, Theodor W. Metaphysics: Concept and Problems. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001) p. 110.

23. Walter Benjamin was the one exception. He was unable to escape Europe and eventually committed suicide in Portbou, a small town on the Spanish-French border in the Pyrenees.

24. Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm decided to stay in America, yet Fromm would eventually return to Europe via Switzerland.

25. I define 'hope' to be the desire to negate what is the case; the horror and terror of history and nature. Horkheimer seemed to be less hopeful from the rest concerning the prospects of

a second Enlightenment or a self-correcting enlightenment. See Klapwijk, Jacob. Dialectic of Enlightenment: Critical Theory and the Messianic Light. (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock: 2010) p. 94., Adorno. Negative Dialectics. (New York: Continuum, 1999) p. 378.

26. Ott, Michael R. Max Horkheimer's Critical Theory of Religion: The Meaning of Religion in the Struggle for Human Emancipation. (New York: University Press of America, 2001.) p. 47.

27. Ibid., pg. 47. Also See Adorno's discussion of suffering in 'Meditations of Metaphysic'. Negative Dialectics. p. 361-408.

28. See Brittain, Christopher Craig. Adorno and Theology. New York: T & T Clark International, 2010.

29. For the first generation of Frankfurt scholars, messianic Judaism's task was not only eschatological and theological, but was a political task assigned to present a model of what life on earth should be if all things were perfect. See Lowenthal, Leo. An Unmastered Past. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987, Rabinbach, Anson. 'Benjamin, Bloch, and Modern German Jewish Messianism' in *Telos,* Winter 1985, No. 34, p. 78-124.

30. Although the Critical Theorists did not include this, it is clear that the Islamic longing for the messianic would also be included in this image.

31. It's interesting to note that Nietzsche's Zarathustra announces the death of God to the marketplace, and indicts those who are going about their 'business' there as the murderers of God. The bourgeoisie, Nietzsche tacitly announces, are the executioners of the divine. Why do they laugh at him? Because they already know they've killed God.

32. Benjamin, Walter. Illuminations. ed. Arendt, Hannah. (New York: Schocken Books, 2007) p. 257.

33. Despite what the 'sociology of religion,' currently championed by Thomas Luckmann, tells us about secularization and religion, all points of reference within the family, civil society and the state are geared towards the ever increasing nature of secularization— which sparks the 'religious' reactions of many individuals and groups. Unfortunately, they take this reactionary stance by the few as being proof of a societal-global return to religion. It is precisely because of the fact that society, polity, economy, etc., is becoming more secular, that some choose to be religiously reactionary. The Luckmann thesis unfortunately puts the cart before the horse.

34. See The Frankfurt School on Religion: Key Writings by the Major Thinkers. Ed. Eduardo Mendieta. New York: Routledge, 2005.

35. I use the term 'positive religion' here to mean a religious orientation that confirms the status quo of nature and history, or one that does not engage in an active attempt to move history toward the prophetic. I will discuss in detail later.

36. See Siebert, Rudolf J. Toward a Dialectical Sociology of Religion: A Critique of Positivism and Clerico-Fascsim. In the book *Marx, Critical Theory, and Religion.* Ed. Warren S. Goldstein. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2006.

37. A good example of a micrological hope for a reconciled society is Herbert Marcuse's 1967 identification of 'benches' in Hanoi that only seat two people, 'so that another person would not even have the technical possibility of disturbing.' In this small detail lies the hope for a future society rooted in inter-subjectivity and unconditional love. Also see Adorno, Theodor. 'Education after Auschwitz' in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) p. 191-204.

38. Adorno. Negative Dialectics. p. 361-408.

39. Lowenthal, Leo. Unmastered Past. p. 237.

40. See Žižek, Slavoj. First as Tragedy, Then as Farce. New York: Verso, 2009. p. 9-85.

41. See the film Žižek, dir. Astra Taylor, with Slavoj Žižek, Zeitgeist Films, 2005. Also see Marcuse's 1967 article, 'The End of Utopia,' where he expressly points out the need to abandon, not the substantive idea of utopia, but the pejorative nature of the word 'utopia.' It we forgo the use of the word (while preserving the concept), so that the word no longer stands in the way of its actualization, then we can begin to make the necessary changes to produce the real possibilities of utopian change, without the undermining effect of the accusations that such a project is *merely utopian*. Marcuse's point is well take, and it may be the case. But another possibility is the aggressive defense of lost causes, or causes to be, even if they are utopian.

42. Even though it generally remained on a friendly basis, the Frankfurt School often had serious and open disagreements with American Leftist intellectuals. For a good review of their critical discourse with Pragmatists scholars, see Wheatland, Thomas. The Frankfurt School in Exile Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

43. See Jenemann, David. Adorno in America. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007). p. 180-183.

44. Adorno, Theodor W. Lectures on Negative Dialectics. (Malden MA: Polity Press, 2008) p. 210.

45. See Ott, Michael R. Max Horkheimer's Negative Theology of the Totally Other. In the book *The Future of Religion*. ed. Michael R. Ott, (Chicago: Haymarket Press, 2009) p. 167-186.

46. The Critical Theory has taken seriously the *entire* quote of Marx from his 'Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right': 'Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.' See McKinnon, Andrew. Opium as Dialectics of Religion: Metaphor, Expression and Protest in *Marx, Critical Theory, & Religion*. Warren S. Goldstein, ed., Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books: 2009.

47. See Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment. (New York: Continuum, 1986) p. 23-24.

48. Fromm, Erich. On Disobedience and Other Essays (New York: The Seabury Press, 1981), p. 41-57.

49. See Siebert, Rudolf J. From Critical Theory to Critical Political Theology. New York: Peter Lang, 1994. It is interesting to note that the English word 'cipher' derives from the Arabic 'sifer,' which means 0 (Zero). Zero, according to Mathematics, serves as a 'placeholder' for the negative space. With this in mind, Adorno's negative or 'cipher' theology is a placeholder theology, devoid of positive content.

50. This is one of the reasons that the Frankfurt School could not endorse the Soviet Union and other 'Communist' countries, despite their initial excitement about their creation. Marcuse most likely remained the most optimistic about Soviet and other Communist societies. However, he struggled with the fact that many ended up being not too far removed from already-existing liberal-capitalist societies.

51. Adorno, Theodor. W. 'Observations on the Liberalization of Religion' in *The Frankfurt School on Religion.* ed. Eduardo Mendieta. (New York: Routledge, 2005) 255. Also see Adorno, Theodor. 'Reason and Revelation' in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) p. 135-142.

52. Despite their lack of optimism, the Frankfurt School scholars remained imprisoned in hope about future human relations. They did not retreat into Schopenhauerian pessimism, although they learned a lot from his philosophy.

53. See Siebert, Rudolf J. The Critical Theory of Religion: The Frankfurt School. New York: Mouton Publishers, 1985.

54. 'Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.' (Rom. 13:1-2). Bible, Revised Standard Version.

55. In the 20th century, the functionalization of religion was coupled by the functionalization of psychology. Positive religion legitimated the political-economy, and positive psychology, through the use of marketing and public relations, helped maintain the conspicuous consumption that perpetuated it. Both religion and psychology, which at their core is the liberational intention, were both used to enslave in capitalist political-economy. The first critical study of the functionalization of psychology for the benefit of capitalist political-economy was done by Vance Packard, in his book The Hidden Persuaders. New York: Van Rees Press, 1957. Although some of the material is certainly dated, it is well worth the read as it sheds light on the genesis of consumer market manipulation that is still in use today. Also See Adorno, Theodor. The Culture Industry. New York: Routledge, 1991.

56. Of course Western prophetic religion resurrected itself mainly among minorities and the dispossessed at various times during the 19th and 20th centuries, Ex, Dr. Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Liberation Theologians in Central and South America, etc. Although these movements were generally successful in reforming the societies they were located in, they nevertheless did not radically transform them.

57. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment. New York: Continuum, 1986.

58. Horkheimer, Max. *Theism and Atheism* in Critique of Instrumental Rationality (New York: The Seabury Press, 1974) p. 49-50.

59. See Reimer, James A., Constantine: From Religious Pluralism to Christian Hegemony   in *The Future of Religion: Toward a Reconciled Society* Michael R. Ott, ed., Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2007.

60. Benjamin, Walter. *Theologico-Political Fragment* in Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographal Writings. ed. Demetz, Peter. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1978) p. 312.

61. Byrd, Dustin. *Walter Benjamin's Theory of Divine Violence and Political Messianism* in Social Theory, Religion, and Critical Discources: Critical Theory in the Postmodern Globe. ed. Seyed Javad Miri. (Saarbrücken, Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011) p. 185-224.

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A Psychological Ontology of Consciousness and Expressiveness for Critical Pedagogy

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Abstract

This paper will discuss how the pervasive models of pedagogy are oblivious of an ontological oversight of consciousness and its underlying components. With a focus on the impact of meta-ethics on pedagogy, the paper argues how the ontological components of pedagogy are marginalized at the expense of a reductionist epistemological perspective. The presentation will illustrate examples and cases from real class rooms and curriculum studies to explicate the above mentioned points. The paper offers insights to cast light on the vital role of ontological consciousness and its role in constructing, changing and transforming the process of education.

Keywords: Psychological Ontology, Consciousness, Critical Pedagogy, Reductionism, Expressiveness, Epistemology

Introduction

Consciousness unfolds itself in the heart of expressiveness and expressiveness, in its broadest manifestation including non-verbal behavior, proxemics and sundry epitome of beings, ontologically reflects a source or sources from which the modes of expressiveness are shaped and created. One may suggest that consciousness and expressiveness are ineluctably tied together and they both open up the possibility of exploring the realms through which both consciousness and expressiveness indicate the levels of being and belonging. Consciousness and expressiveness may demonstrate the etiological project in which the goals and potentials of awareness, language, being and becoming are presented in macro and micro cosmological layers.

Although Sir William Hamilton (1870) attributes the use of consciousness to Descartes and claims that before Descartes, consciousness has been used merely in an

ethical sense, the word consciousness has been profusely used in its entirely philosophical senses by a large group of Islamic Philosophers such as Ibn Sina, Suhrawardi, Mulla Sadra, etc. (Ha'iri 1992).

Ironically enough, the issue of consciousness has been presented in certain circumscribed ways and has not received enough attention in the Western way of thinking: 'Modern Western philosophy has, since its inception, been compelled to exclude certain claims of awareness from the domain of human knowledge, and to brand them as mere expressions of fervor or as leaps of imagination' (Ha'iri, p. 5, 1992).

In defense of certain claims of awareness, Ha'iri (1992) argues: 'Yet, the exclusion by philosophical thought of these matters does not, ipso facto, prove the falsehood of these types of knowledge'. Ha'iri (1992) brings philosophical arguments to substantiate a wide array of awareness including mystical experiences and particularly knowledge by presence by making a rigorous distinction between a knowledge based on the concept in the mind of something that is itself absent from the mind and a knowledge based on something which is itself present in the mind and whose very existence is inseparable from the knowledge of it.

In discussing this consciousness, Ha'iri (1992),

> In the language of illuminative philosophy, this consciousness is referred to as 'knowledge by presence'. The prime example of this knowledge is that which is apparent to the knower performatively and directly without the intercession of any mental representation or the linguistic symbolism. This knowledge manifests itself through all human expressions in general and self-judgments in particular. Hence such assertions as 'I think' or 'I speak' become in particular the vehicles for the manifestation of this knowledge. The active subject of these judgments is the performative 'I' as distinct from the metaphysical 'I' or the self which has been the fundamental issue in any philosophical inquiry.

In the realm of western psychology, consciousness has often been used to refer to one's knowledge about his/her experience, and the construction of reality. In line with this approach, John Locke defined consciousness as 'the perception of what passes in a man's own mind' or, according to Ornstein (1972) consciousness consists in 'subjective life.' In the meantime, Freudian psychoanalysis revealed specific domains where awareness is replaced by unawareness or unconsciousness or non-consciousness. Interestingly enough, one of the goals of psychoanalysis and Rogerian therapies is to 'expand consciousness of our inner life' (Feshbach, et al., 1996).

One needs to have an awareness of what he/she wants to say whether he/she is aware of this awareness or not. Even in stages of unconscious competence which may happen for a language user, he/she needs to have an awareness of one sort or the other otherwise one cannot say or express what he/she wants to say. Arguably, he may be

aware of one layer and not the other ones or some and not all or may be aware of some in the conscious level and unaware of some others in an unconscious level. In spite of a large bulk of unconsciousness that may protuberate, there remains a part, albeit miniscule, which inescapably stands out in the conscious level.

Some Aristotelian philosophers made a distinction between what they called potentia pura or the fundamental activity to acquire an aptitude, actus primus or the acquisition of this aptitude and actus secendus or the utilization of this aptitude. This was promoted in linguistics by Chomsky with his introduction of competence and performance. Others such as Falvell and Wohlwill (1969) made an attempt to do the same in discussions of cognitive development. This distinction did generate various sorts of controversies both in theoretical and empirical spheres even by people who tried to use the distinction (see for instance Falvell & Wohlwill, 1969, Sternberg; 1985; Chomsky, 1965; Premack, 1979). Accroding to Chomsky (1979), 'linguistic competence (the knowledge of the language) constitutes only one of the factors in performance' (Chomsky, 1979, p. 84). He points out that 'there is, first of all, the question of how one is to obtain information about the speaker-hearer's competence, about his knowledge of language' (Chomsky, 1979 p. 18). In empirical aspects, the major question was: how do we know about competence if and only if the way to understand competence is nothing other than performance? As long as someone has not talked or written anything, how can we ever have any access to the repertoire of his/her consciousness of language? In other words competence evaluation mainly relied on performance itself. As a reaction to these controversial discussions, some such as Goodnow (1985) viewed the distinction on the same continuum or put aside the distinction and spoke of moderators of competence.

Whether we agree or disagree with the distinction or other distinctions such as availability, i.e. what one can do and accessibility, i.e. what one does do, at least of some aspects of what the language user says is at the mercy of his/her consciousness. In other words, the language user may come to recognize his/her consciousness of the language he/she uses. At this stage, it may be worth recalling Vygotsky (1962) and his discussion on the direct relationship between consciousness of one's cognitive processes and one's ability to control them. In line with this postulation, he focused on the conditions under which children ultimately gain consciousness and mastery of their own thoughts. So this may suggest that attainment or increase of consciousness can make a contribution to the mastery of thoughts and thinking.

If one's consciousness is frequently and extensively exposed to mediated messages, how does the consciousness unfold itself in the process of expressiveness?

The denial of television as the constituent of the culture would be in the words of David Mark (1987) 'poor research' or its ignorance would be 'suicidal politics'. In line with this claim, Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi (1990) and Numbers (1997) report that every week, residents of the United States spend 15 out of their average 39 hours of free time watching television, making it by far the most popular leisure activity. Only work and seeping take most of the time. In a worldwide level, people spend over 3.5 billion hours watching television (see Haris, 1999).

The relationship between consciousness and expressiveness can reveal a more ontological layer in that the manifestation of consciousness can be examined in respect to modes of expressiveness.

How does the level of consciousness may have an impact on the modes of expressiveness? This can be of significant implication especially if we discuss expressiveness not merely as the presentation of some appearance of diction but as the crystallization of one's being and one's mode of living. It was in line with this understanding of expressiveness that German Expressivism considered any act of realization or any mode of unfolding a form of expression (Markova, 1982). Romanticism encouraged consciousness of one's expression, one's action, one's past, one's history and one's childhood as may see this in poetry such as Piano by D.H. Lawrence.

Kant emphasized the power of reason in the modes of expressiveness as the irrational motives and desires were introduced as the impediments of rational free action. Kant proposed that human rationality should determine the human freedom to act so consciousness of this rationality was prompted as the component of the mode of expressiveness: 'So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine, own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as a means only' (Kant, Critique of Practical Reason, p. 47).

For Heidegger, consciousness and expressiveness can be examined in two levels: the level of knowing and the level of understanding. Understanding occurs when the person finds himself/herself in a state of practical belonging or connectedness with the object of understanding so he/she goes beyond knowing about the object and understands it in the sense that understanding turns out to be a mode of being. One may feel that he/she knows how to express and he/she rarely thinks about what he/she says as it often happens when people do shopping and ask for the price of what they intend to purchase. Nonetheless, they maybe entangled, entrapped or stuck in a situation, condition, mood, or circumstances where they consciously seek to use the words and mindfully strive to employ sentences to articulate what it is that they want to say. According to Ussher (1955, p. 80) 'The world as world is only revealed to me

when things go wrong'. It is exactly in such cases when the person becomes conscious of the language he/she uses or the significance of the type of expressiveness that he/she needs to hire to unearth his/her feelings, affects, ideas, opinions, beliefs, etc. For example, if some one plans to write a letter on an important or crucial issue of his/her life, or if one faces up with a situation where he/she engages in a defense, support and championship of what he/she assumes is brutally ignored by others, he/she may find himself/herself in a very sharp state of consciousness in respect to the choice of the words, the arrangement of the phrases, etc. This consciousness does not necessarily warrant the production of a finely woven locution which is amazingly riveting in terms of style and opulently rich in view of content. The consciousness, however, becomes the main factor for the person in experience to experience and understand the signification, the impressiveness, and the implication of expressiveness. In other words, when caught in situations where acknowledgement of the significance of modes of expressiveness becomes one becomes more conscious of his/her relationship with the mode of expressiveness that he/she chooses to use or is subscribed to use.

Challenging the reductionism of the pervasive scientific discourse and its promotion of univoicty, Ricoeur (1991) discusses how a low level of expressiveness can induce low level of consciousness. Ricoeur (1991) maintains that 'in scientific language there is an attempt to reduce as much as possible this polysemy, this plurivocity to univocity: one word-one sense' (p. 449). Reductionism can then be discussed in terms of the low inducing modes of expressiveness which are embedded in low levels of consciousness (Fatemi, 2009). Opening up the implications of our modes of expressiveness and its discursive consciousness, Ricoeur (1991) indicates how discourse can bring meaning and consciousness as it opens up the possibility of establishing diverse forms of relationship between the experience of consciousness and the modes of expressiveness. He indicates 'discourse is this power of indefinitely extending the battlefront of the expressed at the expense of the unexpressed' (Ricoeur, 1991, p. 69).

Ricoeur (1982), Heidegger (1971), Gadamer (1988), Habermas (1979) and Wittgenstein (1974) consider the centrality of language and its relation with our consciousness and being as Heidegger describes language 'as the house of Being' from which he presents the mutual relationship between the individual and Being.

In another ontological level of understanding the significance of expressiveness and its implications for consciousness, Langer (1978, 1984 and 2009) through numerous empirical investigations demonstrates how entrapment within a mindlessly accepted zeitgeist of language would initiate and engender levels of consciousness that impose recursive forms of expressiveness and foster 'premature cognitive commitment.'

Our understanding of consciousness can have a striking bearing on our modes of expressiveness. The pervasive western understanding of consciousness is embedded within a materialist mode of expressiveness; consciousness is formed and constituted in the world of matter and it is operated in the realm of the material and the perceptible. Nasr (2007) challenges the fundamental layers of consciousness in the western ontology and claims that consciousness is exposed to the sovereignty of the material and its forces and accordingly our modes of expressiveness fail to go beyond the subjugation of the discourse of the expressed within the material world. He argues that our utilitarian stricken consciousness may contribute to the production of merely material stricken modes of expressiveness. Elaborating the containment of consciousness within the Western material discourse of consciousness, Nasr (2007) indicates that:

> Modern materialistic reductionism has not only resulted in chemically infested food and polluted air, nut also the loss of meaning in its ultimate sense. There can in fact be no ultimate meaning without the acceptance of the Ultimate in the metaphysical sense. It is indeed a great paradox that human consciousness in modern times has produced a view of the cosmos which has no room for consciousness. And when human beings do seek to find consciousness in the objective world, or experience what they consider to be encounter with conscious beings outside of the human realm, they are marginalized and condemned to the category of the hallucinating men and women in need of psychiatric care. When our ancestors could encounter angels and even lesser beings in nature, and when such encounters were acceptable within the Weltanschauung in which they lived, they did not encounter 'aliens' in the modern sense, nor in the societies in which they lived. And the conscious beings they did encounter were not alien to them (p. 227).

Nasr (2007) examines the relationship between modes of expressiveness and consciousness and argues that a transformation in the level of consciousness and understanding the primacy of consciousness to the material world would transform modes of expressiveness and modes of being and becoming in the world. In understanding the impact, he propounds that

> If human beings were not to live below the human level, but realized the full possibility of being human, they would grasp intuitively the truth of the assertion of the primacy of consciousness. Their own consciousness would be raised to a level where they would know through direct intellection that the alpha and omega of cosmic reality cannot but be the Supreme Consciousness which is also Pure Being and that all beings in the universe posses a degree of consciousness in accord with their existential state(Nasr, p. 229).

A new understanding of consciousness beyond the utilitarian and material layers may help us understand how consciousness and expressiveness can give rise to the implementation of a project on what Spariosu (2004) calls 'irenic mind.' The discourse

of brutality, ferocity, violence and tension can be replaced with a new discourse where the signifiers of consciousness and expressiveness are not sought in the stabilizing discourse of power at the service of hegemony of materialism. The new discourse namely the discourse of an 'irenic mind' can facilitate the process of delving into a comprehensive sense of togetherness where the modes of expressiveness are not in pursuit of proving the self through denial of others. This may also foster an understanding of consciousness which is not confined to the centers of pre-determined reference points within the hegemony of the expressed and thus it may as well call for exploring the new reference points which have been concealed to oblivion through the domineering modes of expressiveness.

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Erich Fromm and Religion

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Abstract

We may think that the process of defining is a simple act of semantic significance but the truth of the matter indicates otherwise. In other words, to define a concept is as important a scientific act as any other aspects of epistemological endeavors due to the fact that if one is able to define an object correctly it surely indicates that he has been able to conceive the 'studied object' in a rounded fashion. To put it otherwise; it indicates that one has been able to delimit the boundaries of the object in a conceptual fashion within the mental parameters by turning the unknown dimensions into known aspects.

Having said this, we need to turn to the question of religion and social theory as it has been conceptualized within a Frommian point of departure. While being conscious about the indefinablity nature of religion, Fromm has attempted to define the social character of religiosity both historically and contemporaneously. In this chapter, we shall look at Fromm's view on religion and the modalities it may have taken in the course of history and in the bosom of modern society.

Keywords: Social Theory, Sociology of Religion, Erich Fromm, Society, Frankfurt School, Critical Theory

The Role of Religion

Since the dawn of Enlightenment, the majority of thinkers argued that the Age of Reason had begun and the sign of reasonability had been defined in contrasting terms vis-à-vis religion. In other words, the antonym of reasonability in the context of modernity has become religiosity as the opposite of religion within the context of Enlightenment paradigm has come to be that of reason. This binary opposition has not been confined solely to the lexical domain or conceptual realm of debates. On the contrary, here we are faced with an ontological issue that has far-reaching existential consequences for the constitution of self and society.

This mode of approaching the question of religion is not present in the Frommian

sociology of religion as he views the question of religiosity (as well as art-awareness) in a totally different fashion by arguing that religion is part of a greater elementary forms of awakening human self into the deep-rooted modalities of human existence. In other words, Fromm discerns in the communal as well as individual life of human beings a strong tendency towards two conflicting modalities of routinization and vitalization. The former forces us into a conformable standardization while the other compels us to break the chains of conventionality by being more spontaneous. Fromm, unlike mainstream disciplinary thinkers, considers religion to be a very fundamental function which is of vital significance for the sustenance of life as a human life in the world. What is that elemental function of religion?

Fromm believes that human life is constituted of certain essential realities that without which life cannot be qualified as a human leben in the welt. The role of religion is to awake us to the existence of these fundamental realities by breaking the patterns of routinization which would gradually reduce humanity into an automaton. However Fromm is not wholeheartedly giving to the idea that religion could sustain this positive function of awakening of the soul to the fundamental realities of existence as religion itself could become a new form of routine and the history of religions is a great witness to this tragic fact (Fromm, 1955: 144).

The indefinable definition of Religion

A cursory look at the contemporary debates on sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy and history of religion and social theory would readily reveal the impossibility of defining religion in a disciplinary fashion which could be agreed upon by all concerned parties. In other words, to define religion one needs to realize an indefinable paradox that exists within the core of defining religion and that is the elusive feature of religiosity that is hard to catch and freeze in a conceptual fashion.

To put it differently; the reified unit which is conceptually frozen and defined is not what religion is in an existential sense but it is a reduced aspect of religiosity which could have discursive significance and demonstrable as an illustrative example of social contract but devoid of the spirit of religiosity. In other words, the covenantal dimension of religion is not accessible to be reified but it is present to be realized and lived in the soul of man as this is the sole abode of religiosity.

The question of religion has been seriously discussed by Fromm in almost all of his published works but there has been scant attention by sociologists, in general, and sociologists of religion, in particular, to the particular approach of Fromm's complex sociology of religion that takes the very *lebenwelt* of human self as the context of

debate. For example, the recent work by Richard K. Fenn (2009) on the *Key Thinkers in the Sociology of Religion* is a prominent case in this regard. The work is remarkable and Fenn does a great job by looking at Durkheim, Freud, Weber, Parsons, David Martin, Bryan Wilson, Peter Berger, Luhmann, Geertz, Bloch and Catherine Bell as the key sociologists of religion, but Fromm along with Marx and Jung are eschewed very disbelievingly.

However this should not be counted as Fenn's chariness vis-à-vis Fromm and his importance as a sociologist of religion. On the contrary, this seems to be the state of affairs within sociology where even the sociological status of Fromm is not established, let alone his importance for the sub-discipline of sociology of religion.

In other words, the position of Fromm in terms of sociology of religion is less debated and undertheorized indeed. These are the tasks which students of sociology and social theory should work on in the near future as his position is not only of disciplinary importance but of great practical relevance for what could be termed as problems of *philosophy of life*. Fromm's view on religion is expressed in terms of the dialectics between *techne* and *episteme*, which has profound theoretical and practical consequences for anyone interested in living a human life. Yet, one may wonder how does Fromm define religion?

He refers to religion in its widest sense, i.e.

> … as a system of orientation [that assumes] an object of devotion … (Fromm, 1955: 175).

However, to understand Fromm's notion of religion one must take into consideration the dialectical character of his thinking which is present in all his works. Although he argues that religion consists of a system of orientation that assumes an object of devotion, each religion or any kind of religiosity is not thereby beneficial for the formation of human character. On the contrary, there are various kinds of religiosities which are harmful as they thwart the free development of personality.

History of Religion: Separateness versus Union

Fromm's humanistic reading of the history of religion and the history of *Dasein* in general and of individuals in particular moved him to a 'normative historiography' which has not been debated within sociological context of debates. He believes that Man has an essence and the essential configuration of human being has a double-edged basic makeup which could be defined as 'separateness' and 'union'. These two vectors could be employed in the existential historiography of human life both in the individual sense and collective fashion as well as historical context. Fromm (1994: 75) argues that,

> … there are two ways of overcoming separateness and of achieving union. The [primary one we could] … find in all primitive religions, and it is a way to return to nature, to make man again into a pre-human animal, as it were, and to eliminate that in man which is specifically human [i.e.] his reason [and] his awareness. This elimination is done in all sorts of ways … [namely] … by drugs, by orgies, or simply by identification with animals, by putting oneself in the state of an animal-especially in the state of … a bear, a lion or a wolf.

In other words, Fromm (1994: 75) seems to suggest that in the history of religion which is the history of spiritual evolution of mankind, this is,

> … the attempt to overcome the sense of separateness by ceasing to be human and by regressing to the natural state in which man is a part of nature and in which he might become an animal.

The second solution to overcoming separateness and gaining union seems to be possible through,

> … developing [of] specifically human powers of reason and of love to such an extent that the world [becomes] his home … (Fromm, 1994: 76).

Fromm (1994: 76) argues that the paragon of this second approach appeared in the horizons,

> … in the period between 1500 B.C. and 500 B.C. in China, India, Egypt, Palestine, [Iran] and Greece … . [In other words, man] found oneness not by regressing but by developing [which enabled him] by becoming fully human he lived in a new harmony with himself, with his fellow men and even with nature.

Fromm (1994: 76) discerns an undeletable stream in the history of humanity which one could see,

> … [in the message] of prophetic messianism … [in the system of] late-medieval religious thought … [as well as in the thought of proponents] of eighteenth-century humanism … [an essential message which] is still the essence of religious and spiritual thought … [and that could be formulated as man's] … task is to develop his humanity, and in the development of this humanity he will find a new harmony and hence the only way in which he can solve the problem of being born.

Religion and the Character Formation

Religion is of great value in the formation of character but the significant question is what kind of religion could play such a formative function?

Fromm believes that we have two broad kinds of religiosities, i.e. the authoritarian and humanistic religion. He believes that the authoritarian religion has a harmful

effect, since it thwarts the free development of personality while humanistic religion will help a person to develop his human capacities to the fullest. The key words for Fromm are 'reason', 'love', and 'productive work' as they are the basic ingredients for a fulfilling human life.

In other words, the character of a human person is shaped in an authentic sense when man realizes that there is,

> … only one solution to [the human condition]: for one to face the truth, to acknowledge his fundamental aloneness and solitude in a universe indifferent to his fate, to recognize that there is no power transcending him which can solve his problem for him. Man must accept the responsibility for himself and the fact that only by using his powers can he give meaning to his life. If he faces the truth without panic he will recognize that: there is no meaning to life except the meaning man gives his life by the unfolding of his powers, by living productively; and that only constant vigilance, activity, and effort can keep us from failing in the one task that matters-the full development of our powers within the limitations set by the laws of our existence. Only if he recognizes the human situation, the dichotomies inherent in his existence and his capacity to unfold his powers, will he be able to succeed in his task: to be himself and for himself and to achieve happiness by the full realization of those faculties which are peculiarly his-of reason, love, and productive work. (Fromm, 1947: Ch. 3)

Modern Religiosity and Ancient Modality

By contrasting authoritarian religiosity and humanistic religiosity Fromm seems to suggest that we can further divide the authoritarian makeup into again two broad camps of 'Humanistic Religions' and 'Idolatrous Religions'. By *idolatry* he means,

> … that form of man's search for unity in which he returns to nature, to his own 'animalness' … . He submits himself to nature, to the work of his own hands (in the form of idols made of gold and silver or of wood) or he submits himself to other people (Fromm, 1994: 17).

As aforementioned Fromm (1994: 97) believes that idolatry,

> … is not the worship of certain gods instead of others, or of one god instead of many. It is a human attitude, that of the reification of all that is alive. It is a man's submission to things, his self-negation as a living, open, ego-transcending being. Idols are gods that do not liberate; in worshipping idols, man makes himself a prisoner and renounces liberation. Idols are gods that do not live; in worshipping idols, man himself is deadened.

On the other hand, we have the sociological concept of alienation which in the Frommesque style is transformed into an aesthetic concept which,

> … expresses the same idea as the traditional concept of idolatry. [in what sense does this modern concept express the same idea as the traditional concept of idolatry?] … [it could be argued that the] … alienated man bows down to the work of his own hands and to the circumstances of his own doing. Things and circumstances become his masters, they stand above and against him while he loses the experience of himself as the creative bearer of life. He becomes alienated from himself, from his work, and from his fellow man (Fromm, 1994: 97).

One may argue that in the idea of idolatry we had the worship of certain gods to whom people sacrificed their children but today these kinds of practice are considered to be repugnant manifestations of an idolatric past. In other words, modern man would refuse to worship,

> … Moloch, or Mars, or Venus … (Fromm, 1994: 97).

Yet, based on the principle of similarity which Fromm (1994: 98) established in terms of alienation and idolatry (i.e. reification of *life* and *lebenization* of *Res*) he believes that the modern man does not,

> … notice that he worships the same idols … only under different names. Today's idols are the objects of a systematically cultivated greed: for money, power, lust, glory, food and drink. Man worships the means and ends of this greed: production, consumption, military might, business, the state. The stronger he makes his idols, the poorer he becomes, the emptier he feels. Instead of joy, he seeks thrill; instead of life, he loves a mechanized world of gadgets; instead of growth, he seeks wealth; instead of being, he is interested in having and using.

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A Scientific Analysis of the Origin and Evolutionary Nature of Reality

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Abstract

The origin and nature of being has long perplexed researchers, but a recent book authored by Leuten (2011) and backed by over a thousand references provides documented insights on this issue. While many have even concluded that 'we know little about why we have the beliefs we do' about reality (Lanman, 2011), Leuten (2011) derives scientific conclusions on how everything evolved from nothing that are consistent with all known facts, including the well-established power of conscious belief and the nature of religions that exist today. This article evaluates the evolutionary theory of reality in light of other information, including new findings that have only recently become available and that supply further evidence of its validity. Additional insights are thereby contributed on some of the main questions that religions purport to answer, including on the reason for and nature of existence, as well as on the origin of everything in this universe and the reason for existence.

Keywords: Nature of Being, Evolution, Scientific Analysis, Evolutionary Theory of Reality, Leuten

The Origin of Everything

Since particles pop out of a vacuum of nothing all the time (*NewScientist*, 2008), since the simplest particles naturally develop into more complex chemicals by the process of evolution, and since artificial cells and life itself can be created from inorganic compounds (Sanderson, 2011a), it isn't necessary to postulate an external power for the creation of human beings and everything else. In particular, Leuten's (2011) conclusion that human beings evolved from nothing dividing through by itself follows logically from the scientific facts. With the existence of people that create religions explained, it is possible to have deeper understanding of the evolution and nature of their religious beliefs.

Whereas other scientific theories like those discussed by scientist Peter Aitkins in his book *On Being* provide 'no upbeat message about the meaning of life' (Brooks, 2011a), Leuten (2011) proves that there is a purpose for everything that is jointly determined by all human beings, whose evolved nature requires a priority to be the long-term preservation of the species. Other scientific studies of being imply that, 'deep down, we like everything are driven by purposeless decay' (Brooks, 2011a), but Leuten's (2011) logical deduction that particles, life, human beings, and everything else evolved from divisions of nothing that sum to zero in the aggregate supplies a well-documented reason for all existence. Moreover, in contrast to most contemporary scientific theories that are unable to even clarify what gives things their attributes like mass (Gefter, 2011b),[1] Leuten's (2011) hypothesis provides a non-mystical explanation for the characteristics of everything, including mass and gravity.

It has been documented that pairs of particles and antiparticles appear spontaneously in any vacuum of empty space all the time, and a large portion merge back into nothingness before they can move separately (*NewScientist,* 2008). The unmerged pairs of fermions popping up out of nothing represent divided pieces of nothing that form matter and antimatter and that are driven spatially to unite with their opposites to form the energy of reunited whole nothingness (Leuten, 2011). Matter, which consists of an electron in its most basic form of divided nothingness, moves forward in time, whereas antimatter, which includes the basic anti-electron or positron that is the opposite side of divided nothingness to an electron, acts like matter travelling backwards in time. Combinations of matter and antimatter, which are mere electromagnetic force fields that attract their opposites, can exert a gravitational pull on other objects through their spinning in space-time that is maximized in quarks and their nucleon products to create concentrated mass.

Quarks are triplets of electrons and positrons trapped spatially in triangular formations, which gravitationally slow the movement of time because the composite fermions can't travel in their innately opposite temporal directions, i.e., backwards and forwards, respectively, and so they are frozen in time by their positions of equidistant electrical attractions to each other (Leuten, 2011). The effect of their slowing the passage of time in the area they occupy is to warp other space around them, thereby attracting objects toward them in what is called the strong force. It is recognized that the strong force, which holds quarks and nucleons together to form atoms, could explain the characteristic of mass, but the mathematical complexities involved in that relationship make it difficult to prove this phenomenon (Griggs, 2011). More information on the structure of quarks, nucleons, and other fermion groupings is provided in the appendix.

The slowing of time by the mutual attraction of fermions trapped in triangular formations contrasts with the timeless energy that results from an actual reuniting of opposite halves of nothing. When particles and antiparticles collide, they transform back into unified nothingness undivided by time. This nothingness is observed to move at the speed of light by still divided halves of nothing. In particular, not being divided temporally into halves, the energy of the union of a particle and an antiparticle appears as two entangled photons existing in 2 separate points in space-time in matter or antimatter universes where time is divided into individual increments.

Each divided piece of nothing, whether reunited into the energy of nothingness or not, consists of a mere wave of possibilities. New divisions of nothing appear briefly as individual points on the wave before disappearing as an averaged nothing in an instant. On the other hand, the averaged state for any fragment of nothing that is weighted by the probability of occurrence doesn't sum to zero if its probability wave function in this universe has been collapsed on a particular point by contact with a 'real' divided or reunited piece of nothing.

'Real' pieces of nothing have had their own probability wave functions of potential collapsed into a point of existence by other nothingness with a permanent existence in the points of space-time. An existing divided piece of nothing can either be a still separate half of nothing or a reunited pair in the form of actual photons. Real photons represent the energy of united nothingness, which has once been truly divided on some actual point of a probability wave function and thus can't disappear back into the pure nothingness of mere potential divisions of a vacuum.

It has recently been recognized by scientists that the universe could have come into being spontaneously when its energy state momentarily flickered away from zero (Brooks, 2011b). In particular, the waves of such virtual energy are collapsed on particular points of possibility by contact with other particles already in existence. However, the origin of such real existence in space-time isn't explained by such scientific theories. In contrast, Leuten (2011) has clarified that any past particle may have its own probability wave function collapsed by future conscious observation, which itself can arise from divisions of nothing and must therefore occur to develop the human consciousness that thereby creates itself out of nothing. The uncertainty principle involved in the reality of quantum physics that is inconsistent with existing common-sense understandings of cause and effect (Brooks, 2011b) makes possible such a past collapse of probability wave functions by conscious human focus in the present or future (Leuten, 2011).

While modern scientists don't understand how a superposition state of all feasible points on a wave function can collapse into a single point, they do recognize some

interaction with the universe can cause such a collapsing of possibilities into a single reality (Mullins, 2011). The infinite set of feasible multiverses that can evolve from nothing includes at least one with beings characterized by self-aware thought that creates itself and everything else out of the mere possibility that divisions of nothing can lead to consciousness (Leuten, 2011). The existence of humans in this moment implies that they are connected temporally to such a past.

Philosophers and scientists alike have previously hypothesized that consciousness is a separate field that interacts with and controls the brain (Ananthaswamy, 2011f), but they haven't shown how this electromagnetic field evolved from nothing to be able to create itself and all else that it also influences. This research explains the intuition behind the scientific reality of the universe in which human beings and their conscious thought evolved.

The Scientific Basis of Reality

The multiverses in which humans live are characterized by an expanding space over time in a manner that seems to require mysterious forces like dark energy and dark matter that seem to defy observation or explanation except in the context of everything arising out of nothing (Leuten, 2011). In particular, such forces likely derive from the virtual matter and antimatter appearing in the vacuum of space. For instance, the reunited pieces of nothing arising out of merged halves of nothing in the vacuum of space probably cause the large amount of unexplainable dark energy in the universe that apparently keeps the cosmos expanding despite the gravity of matter and dark matter (Leuten, 2011). The fact that dark energy has been determined to be continuing to increase as the universe expands, thereby driving the continued inflation of space over time and all the matter and energy within it (Chown, 2011a), is consistent with a hypothesis of more empty space (i.e., more spatial divisions of nothing) enabling more divisions of nothing into electromagnetic fields attracted to their opposite halves.

Both virtual particle/antiparticle pairs and their reunited forms as virtual photons can become real, non-disappearing ones through contact with already existing particles like the photons of starlight. Such energy from nothing could explain the dark energy phenomenon.

On the other hand, those fermions that don't reunite could exert a gravitational pull which warps space-time to draw objects toward each other and which might alone account for the signs of a large amount of undetectable dark matter in the universe (Leuten, 2011). The dark matter, which is hypothesized to keep the universe from expanding and spreading out more, could include both the virtual particles and those whose wave functions have been collapsed into points of reality through contact with

other real particles like star-emitted photons. There are various theories on the nature of this unseen attractive force.

Some have hypothesized dark matter to be composed of a neutron-like particle (Gefter, 2011b) or neutralinos (Clark, 2011). It's also possible that the effects of the unobservable dark matter are at least partially caused by neutrinos and antineutrinos that derived originally from divisions of nothing (Leuten, 2011). Some of the observed effects of 'dark matter' could also arise from relatively small black holes that formed under the high pressure of the early universe (Chown, 2011b). The fact that very small black holes have even been recreated in laboratories by shining light into a piece of glass (Brooks, 2011b) provides some support for this latter hypothesis.

It's also conceivable that both dark matter and dark energy derive at least in part from the pairs of quarks and antiquarks, which can appear out of the vacuum of space through divisions of nothing that form into triangular shapes, and which may create a sort of small black hole by singularly freezing time in space when they split apart (Leuten, 2011). A quark black hole might conceivably absorb a positron from another fermion pair newly popping up out of nothing while the electron is pushed outwards by the quark.[2] The wave functions of all the involved fermions are thereby collapsed on particular points that enable the creation of both matter and energy that are 'real'. In particular, the resulting actual fermions can't return to averaged nothingness because the positrons absorbed by a black hole may be transported by it into an antimatter universe where they can't have a common wave function with a particle in the matter universe. Actual matter is thereby collapsed on points of existence in this universe that can then collapse the ave functions of virtual particles into real ones. Thus may something come from nothing through the quantum singularity of a triplet of fermions trapped in a triangular black hole that freezes time and enables separate matter and antimatter universes. In any event, the quark/antiquark pairs that arise out of nothing all the time (Ananthaswamy, 2011e) may certainly represent one component of the creation of something out of nothing, since the mere freezing of fermions in triplet formation may create joint wave functions which can't average back out to nothing and which create magnetic fields that can collapse yet other virtual fermions into existence, including photons.

These various phenomena could also interact together to enable the transformation of the virtual particles arising out of a vacuum into dark matter and dark energy. For instance, divisions of nothing in the space near a cosmic black hole could result in an antiparticle being attracted toward the black hole while the particle half of the pair is flung away, thereby making it impossible for them to disappear, as their averaged wave functions no longer cancel out to nothing. The newly existing particle would

then interact with other virtual particles it encounters in space and thereby bring them also into existence. In addition, a spin for the black holes at the center of galaxies that is opposite that of the revolving stars (Chown, 2010) could result in friction in spins between the newly created particles spun away from the black holes and other particles in the galaxies (such as the photons of starlight) that might resonate more after a combined collision with virtual particles (and thus lead to a conservation of energy even after the virtual particles become real). The quark/ antiquark pairs forming out of virtual particle triplets spontaneously arising in a vacuum could also create magnetic fields to spur the process. The elliptical shape of galaxies and their distribution of movement/ attraction (*NewScientist,* 2010) might be explained by this process that involves the quantum interactions of the mathematical infinities of black holes with the zero of nothing.

All interactions and relationships in this universe are governed by the laws of quantum physics which has an inherent uncertainty principle that enables the appearance of virtual particles in a vacuum as long as they negate each other over individual Planck units of time (Ananthaswamy, 2011c). The probability wave functions for the existence of divided pieces of nothing thus average out to nothing unless they interact with actual particles/ antiparticles in existence to collapse their wave functions into points of definite being that align existing particle/ antiparticle characteristics like direction of spin sufficiently to offset the energy required for their own transformation into reality. Such points of existence across all interacting fermions must merely add to nothing such that any creation of actual energy or particles correspondingly reduces the energy of existing fermions (McKee, 2011). The divided nothingness of everything can therefore be created from nothing, which is at the core of all perceived reality that itself merely consists of divided and reunited pieces of nothing in space-time (Leuten, 2011).

The complex combinations of divided pieces of nothing that form consciousness is the 'first cause' which can collapse wave functions on particular points of existence both forwards and backwards in time. In particular, the reality of quantum physics enables causality to work in both temporal directions, and so a collapsing of a single wave function through conscious observation automatically collapses all necessary past wave functions on points that permit this observation. To enable such creation from nothing, consciousness must create a present alignment of spin states sufficiently coherent to offset the energy required for the creation of real particles/ antiparticles out of nothing in the past.

Quantum reality not only allows human observation to collapse wave functions but also indicates the existence of an uncertain amount of energy in a vacuum that can be

infinite at any moment but must sum to zero across all probabilities of existence. These two facets of nothing and its divisions make it possible for the wave functions of this virtual energy to be collapsed into points that evolve into human beings, who thereby create themselves through the interactions of the pieces of nothing that comprises consciousness. In particular, the energy of consciousness at any moment can make the virtual particles in the past form into combinations of existence that later develop into the people with a conscious focus which directs the subconscious to carry out the collapses of the probability wave functions of the possible divisions of nothing that are needed to form human beings.

As previously indicated, the pairs of virtual particles and antiparticles can become real when they come into contact with actual matter and antimatter that isn't merely virtual (McKee, 2011) because the latter have had their wave function of potential already collapsed on distinct points of existence. However, since even existing electrons, which are point particles (McAlpine, 2011b) that are spherical (*NewScientist*, 2011g), have no radius and no innards (McAlpine, 2011b), everything, including human beings and their consciousness, remains nothing at the core. The various probability waves of these portions of nothing interact with each other in different ways through their electromagnetic force fields of potential attraction in a complex fashion that creates the perceived reality of the present without any absolute existence.

When the spatial and temporal movement of any opposite halves of nothing causes them to meet in the same point in past, present, or future space-time, they naturally reunite back into nothingness. Light photons created by the merging of divided pieces of nothing exist with a particular probability as alternatively moving in opposite directions in time as positive or negative energy. Positive energy represents a photon's movement forward in time across all temporal points simultaneously, while negative energy is essentially the same except for a different temporal direction that is reflected in a differential spin (Leuten, 2011). Although negative energy, which also exists in gravity (Gefter, 2011c), reverses the direction of space-time and movement therein, the instantaneous flow of photons across all moments in time regardless of the temporal direction makes photon energy have very similar effects regardless of temporal direction (Leuten, 2011).

If the wave functions of photons haven't been collapsed by contact with real particles or antiparticles, their probability wave functions cancel each other out via the equal possibility of them having opposite spins, i.e., offsetting temporal directions for their positive or negative energy. Their uncollapsed probabilities of positive or negative energy therefore only appear briefly as virtual particles before they disappear

inside of a Planck moment of time because their waves average to nothing. Since the photon energy arising out of a vacuum sums to zero net (Penrose, 2004), it must disappear over a single Planck unit of time unless the photon wave functions are collapsed by contact with existing particles.

It is important to explain how virtual photons, which are mere waves of reunited pieces of nothing that have equal possibilities of moving forwards or backwards in time, can be transformed into actual being in this temporally divided universe by contact with actual particles/ antiparticles whose existence is a certainty as opposed to merely a possibility with some probability of occurrence. In particular, unified nothingness has a wave function of two possible temporal directions for their instantaneous movement across all points in time that is collapsed on a distinct point of these two possibilities by the contact with real particles or antiparticles. Similarly, pairs of electrons and positrons arising spontaneously out of a vacuum can themselves have their wave functions collapsed by contact with other particles or antiparticles so that they too become real as long as the total energy and matter/antimatter sum to nothing.

If any of the opposite halves of nothing that merge to form united nothingness have already had their wave functions collapsed on points of existence, the reunited nothing can't disappear back into the vacuum of space. Instead, it takes the form of permanent light photons in the universe divided into increments of time. Such real energy is perceived in this universe as two separate photons existing in different points in space, but they remain unified through their entangled spins that prevent them from cancelling each other out, thereby preventing them from disappearing as virtual particles.

Photons, which travel timelessly across all points in space, appear to move at a finite speed from the relative perspective of divided pieces of nothing that still exist apart from each other in different points of space-time. Such unified electromagnetic force fields, which aren't separated temporally and thus don't experience the passage of time, can then collapse other virtual particles and antiparticles into existence by interacting with them as they move through space-time.

In some cases of real energy creation, a wave function collapse of virtual particles results in two virtual photon particles both moving forward temporally, but in other multiverses the photons are both moving backwards in time. Even when collapsed on a particular point, their spin wave functions sum to zero across all multiverses, as they move in opposite temporal directions in another unconnected multiverse that is also divided into units of time. Their wave functions also add up to nothing across all temporal units in any particular set of connected multiverses through their alternating spins, even while they remain united instantaneously through their entanglement.

In particular, despite alternating between forward and positive energy with tugs in opposite temporal directions in each unit of time that the photons experience instantaneously all at once, the photon pairs created out of nothing have their spins entangled in each Planck moment of time to be the same after their wave functions are collapsed into existence. Photons have to change to the same spin upon contact with another because they essentially annihilate each other when they collide and thereby turn into two photons whose waves are unified and entangled by their past interaction. Although they are united nothing, they appear in the universe divided into units of time to have a separate past and future in space that they actually experience mutually and instantaneously in totality. If their spins weren't entangled to be the same by contact with actually existing particles/ antiparticles, they would disappear as virtual particles with equal and offsetting probabilities of positive or negative energy.

Thus, the virtual energy that appears spontaneously in a vacuum only disappears from observed existence if it doesn't interact in some way with anything whose wave function has been collapsed into actual being. On the other hand, in cases where photons encounter existing particles/ antiparticles, their wave functions collapse on a point that eliminates any future chance of them averaging to the zero energy of virtual photon waves. In the future multiverses connected to the point in space-time where they come into contact with something real, the photons exist as a joint wave function which causes each photon to always affect the other with some probability, thereby making it impossible for that joint wave function to average out to nothing and disappear.

New experiments have shown how virtual particles can be transformed into actual matter as well as energy (McKee, 2011).[3] As indicated by Leuten (2011), such collapses of virtual wave functions to create non-disappearing particles can occur via phenomena like the Casimir effect as well as in any reaction of virtual particles with existing matter, such as occurs in the strong force (Leuten, 2011). It can never be certain that a vacuum is completely empty because photons are constantly popping in and out of existence, and these virtual photons slow down the spin of actual particles, as has been shown by head-on collisions having a larger effect than rear-end ones that result in the lost rotational energy being emitted as real detectable photons (Harris, 2011). The latter events represent examples of the collapsing of the wave function of virtual united energy into real existence on points of a probability wave function without creating anything from nothing.

When a fermion absorbs a photon or photons, it has to move in space because a fermion can only travel in individual units of time, unlike photons which traverse all time instantaneously.[4] Particles only move forward temporally and antiparticles just

advance into the past in increments without spatial movement, unless they are united with photons that are unified across all temporal units. The extra temporal energy in fermions from absorbed photons spills over into travel in individual points in space in each moment in time.[5]

The dimensions of space are just further divisions of nothing, as they divide each unit or moment of time into separate spatial units or fragments, thereby allowing a fermion to traverse a combination of spatial and temporal points which add and correspond to the instantaneous movement of an absorbed photon across all units of time. In particular, the absorption of a photon by a fermion must result in the absorbing half of nothing, which is still divided by time from its own opposite, having the excess temporal energy of the photon directed into other dimensions called space. Even the photons, which are united pieces of nothing moving instantaneously through all points in time, appear to be spatially separated at particular points in time, despite them actually remaining united by being undivided by time, as is indicated by their quantum entanglement.

The Origin of Space and Time

When a photon is absorbed by a fermion to cause it to move spatially, it has to divide nothing into additional units of space if an adjacent spatial unit doesn't exist in that moment of time. In addition, if there is a division of nothing without space, then a point in space must be produced to enable the existence of the fermions. Any such creation of more space may allow the spatial universe to expand even faster than the speed of light over time.

The time dimension itself originates from divisions of nothing moving in opposite temporal directions, as it essentially divides the resulting particles and antiparticles, which, unlike united pieces of nothing, don't experience all units of time instantaneously (Leuten, 2011). In particular, each division of nothing at any temporal moment results in a particle and an antiparticle moving in opposite temporal directions in Planck units of time, each with a probability wave function of potential interactions with other particles and antiparticles that is governed by the laws of quantum physics in each increment of time. Each potential point on those wave functions is nothing but an electromagnetic force field that spatially attracts its opposite but generally repels its opposite half. For instance, the negative charge of the electrons of an object exerts a repulsive force on the electrons on the outside of another object (Highfield, 2011).

The spatially repelling nature of same-charged fermions arises because each divided half of nothing must be drawn to a different opposite half in order for each to be able to reunify back into nothing. They therefore naturally adopt spins opposite to

each other that reflect their different pointing in either the temporal or spatial dimensions, thereby enabling them to avoid attracting the same opposite half nearest in either time or space to the other. Their opposite spins draw space-time around them in different directions, thereby pushing themselves away from each other. The possible colliding of more than one identical half of nothing popping up out of nothing in the same point of space therefore requires at least the possibility of one additional point in space for them to occupy, and this spatial dimension must exist in some multiverse(s) because of the non-zero probability of occurrence of colliding identical halves of nothing. In addition, since divided pieces of nothing couldn't exist in separated form in unified spatial nothingness, unified pieces of nothing travelling instantaneously through all points in time resulted in pushing other like halves of nothing into additional points in space.

The spatial pull of opposite-charged fermions moving in opposite directions temporally toward each other in both time and space then bends the one dimension of space to create a second spatial dimension. In particular, the opposite divided pieces of nothing tug on each other not only in space but also in time in a direction opposite to their temporal movement, so that the past and future meet at the end of both. Everything adds up to nothing, since the sum of positive and negative temporal units sums to zero as the time dimension circles around to merge the past and future after an equal amount of each moment of positive and negative temporal units (Leuten, 2011). The reunion of the time dimension into a merged nothingness is thus actually caused by the temporal tug of the particles and antiparticles that are divided by their opposite movements in time but also attract each other through their pull into the infinite future and past, respectively, for an eventual mathematically necessary reunification into nothingness.

The existence of two spatial dimensions permits the formation of fermion triplet trappings that further bend space-time through the freezing of their movement in time. In particular, the equidistant electrical attraction in space of such temporally trapped trios creates a gravitational tug that curves space further to form a third spatial dimension. As previously indicated, the time dimension in which the spatial dimensions exist was created jointly with the division of nothing that created particle/ antiparticle pairs which moved in opposite temporal directions to enable their separation.

Since the temporal dimension has to add up to nothing to ensure that nothing can be created from nothing, and since opposite halves of nothing had to tug on each other temporally despite opposite movement in time, time must circle around to make the past and future meet after an equal amount of time in both directions. This bending of space-time automatically curves everything back on a reunion into nothingness, and

the second and third spatial dimensions arose as a result. In particular, a linear spatial dimension is naturally curved by time collapsing back on itself. The resulting circle becomes a three dimensional sphere as the warping of space-time by the pull of matter and antimatter on each other in the same direction in space but in opposite directions in time further bends space-time. Gravity can sometimes lead to such a strong warping of space-time that it creates a black hole, which can represent a wormhole to another universe that has time flow in a reverse direction. The first matter in the earth's universe may have been created from a black hole in an antimatter universe that led to the Big Bang which initiated the earth's cosmological existence, just as all universes had to have a previous one which is only possible through a circular nature of time that collapses back on itself into black holes (Leuten, 2011). The earth's universe, which was characterized by a detachment of light from matter 100,000 years after the Big Bang that originated it (Brooks, 2011b), may very well also collapse from the gravitational tug of matter into a giant black hole. That end itself may lead to a Big Bang of an antimatter universe that moves in the opposite direction temporally to this one by beginning with a black hole and ending with a Big Bang in a matter universe. There is therefore actually no beginning or end, since all points in space-time connect via the circular merging of them.

The Spin of Reality

As previously mentioned, only nothing (including both reunited and never divided nothingness), or an individual half of it, can exist in the nothingness of a unit of space-time that divides them. As a result, only opposite halves of divided nothing have the electric forces which attract each other in space back into reunification as a whole nothingness that cause alternating movement in space and time that is reflected in various spins.

Particle and antiparticle spins, which are actually pseudo-spins of objects without a radius that are integrated with the fabric of space-time (McAlpine, 2011b), reflect the objects' alternating movements in time or space toward an opposite divided piece of nothing. The movement in time pulls them temporally toward unification at the end of an eternal future and past while the travel in space may be in any spatial direction toward its opposite. An up spin may represent a pointing to the future, while a down spin would be directed back toward the past that would be reflected for matter as travel in space toward its antimatter opposite travelling backwards in time (whereas the up spin for antiparticles would represent pointing toward its particle opposite travelling forward in time through space). The spatial direction of the spin thus enables divided halves of nothing to attract their opposites in different areas of space.

For pieces of nothing that have already unified but are observed as entangled photons, only different directional movements in time are possible because they travel through all points in space-time simultaneously. Photon spins can therefore be observed to vary in any moment in time solely due to their varying direction in time. Their spins are observed to only occur in a direction perpendicular to their spatial movement because their internally unified charges can't attract, or be attracted to, an opposite half in some other spatial direction and so it can't be electrically pulled relatively more toward moving in space over time than to traveling through the temporal dimension. Nonetheless, a photon can point in two directions in time because it consists of a unification of both an electron and a positron whose temporal movement is opposite that of the other, and this alternating temporal direction is reflected in a spin perpendicular to perceived spatial motion. Other spin possibilities can't exist for photons because their instantaneous passage through all points in time prevents them from having their total energy allocated differentially between passage in the temporal dimension and movement through space.[6]

Unlike photons, other particles can polarize in any direction, as they can be pulled by their opposites in a different proportional tug through space than through the temporal dimension.[7] A spin always completely parallel to spatial movement may exist for anything for which there is no passage of time, as with black holes. Any spin between perpendicular and parallel would thus represent a combination of temporal and spatial travel in space-time.

The position of a particle's two magnetic poles that determines the direction of its spin creates a magnetic field. That field reflects the circulation of charges in a particle, with such charges consisting of both a positron and an electron in the magnetic field of a light photon. The directional spin is generally random, except in the case of a collapsing of the probability wave function of spin potential via an interaction with other particles or antiparticles, such as via observation, or such as in the case of isotopes, which are polarized to point in one particular direction (Leuten, 2011).

Particle spins are well known to have magnetic effects when there is an alignment between their poles, although the existence of poles in pairs isn't fully understood by contemporary scientists (Webb, 2011). Spins and the different poles that actually reflect varying pulls of the particles toward their opposites in either the temporal or spatial dimensions (Leuten, 2011) may be collapsed into polarity through interactions with other particles that cause the wave function of spin potential to exist at a particular point instead of an average of all feasible points. A change in the direction of spin that can be caused by any interaction between fermions and that, in the absence of any other influences, results in opposite spins for two colliding halves of

nothing with the same electric charge uses up energy which is released or transferred via light photons.

The direction of spin affects particles' interactions with light photons. For instance, left-handed molecules reflect light to the left, whereas right-handed ones reflect light to the right (Calleman, 2009). Left-handed molecules can be distinguished from right-handed ones because they circularly polarize light, whose electric field corkscrews through space in a left-or right-handed direction (*NewScientist,* 2011f).

Most protein molecules of life on earth tend to be characterized by left-handedness, probably because light radiation circularly polarized in the earth's atmosphere tends to destroy the right-handed molecules (Leuten, 2011). The earth's atmosphere, which polarizes light in a circular pattern which creates a series of concentric rings centered on the sun, and which causes light waves to vibrate in only one plane (Coghlan, 2011a), may contribute to such effects on molecular stability. Excessive instability in compound composition would be inconsistent with the nature of the relative permanence of the matter comprising organisms living on earth, and so the direction of light polarization in the earth's atmosphere may be one reason for most life compounds of life being left-handed.

In contrast, DNA, which reflects light to the right, would easily be destroyed by light radiation if it weren't protected inside cellular membranes (*NewScientist*, 2009). Genetic material may be relatively permanent as a result, despite light photons polarized in the earth's atmosphere normally disrupting the DNA because sunlight on earth may systematically change the spin direction of such right-handed molecules (which may be pointing more toward the past and thus naturally be more permanent if undisturbed by contact with pure energy). It is very conceivable that the molecules of DNA, whose double strands must be unraveled via enzymes in order for segments of it to prompt the production of proteins (*NewScientist*, 2011p), initially formed inside some protected area like a membrane that consisted of left-handed compounds, which themselves might naturally interact with right-handed ones less, thus protecting the genetic material from both and themselves and united halves of nothing. However, it's also possible that DNA originated outside the earth's atmosphere and travelled to the planet via interplanetary objects like asteroids or developed as the earth's atmosphere was still forming billions of years after the Big Bang that initiated the universe in which the planet currently exists. Regardless of exact origin, DNA developed into living cells, humans, and consciousness, which itself caused this evolution of everything from nothing.

The various possible states of divisions of nothing in the circular but temporally divided nothingness appear as nothing summed except when they are collapsed by phenomena such as conscious observation, which can eliminate some possibilities on

wave functions somewhere in time that in turn restrict other potential points on wave functions in both the past and future (Leuten, 2011). Causality thereby occurs in both temporal directions. This quantum fact enables human consciousness to collapse probability wave functions on particular points today through focused observation that thereby collapses past wave functions on distinct possibilities which allow the very consciousness in the present to evolve into existence. The mere feasibility of a single conscious observation developing from nothing in non-unidirectional time ensured its occurrence, and the result is the reality of this universe.

Such a phenomenon is possible because of the quantum physics' uncertainty principle that derives from the mere potential division of nothing by itself that requires absolutely nothing to have a possibility of happening. In particular, each quantum object like an electron doesn't have a defined value but many possible values with a probability attached to it (Brooks, 2011b). This inherent characteristic of nothing and its divisions enables the evolution of human consciousness and everything. In particular, the reality of quantum physics, which mathematically describes the mathematical characteristics of nothing, its divisions, and the interactions between those divided pieces of nothing, allows for an infinite number of possibilities to exist that include the creation of humanity by itself (Leuten, 2011).

However, the human beings that create themselves via the characteristics of nothing can only control isolated aspects of their existence and universe because of the uncertainty principle of quantum physics that makes it impossible to know both the spin state and another characteristic of anything such as speed and location. For instance, scientific findings have shown that, if a photon is bounced off of a particle in order to establish its position, the impact will change the particle's momentum so that it isn't possible to completely define more than one characteristic of a particle (Brooks, 2011b). The electrons, quarks, nucleons, atoms, and molecules of this universe that arise out of the division of nothing will always have parameters which are unobserved, unknown, and uncertain, thereby making the very human consciousness that created them be less than omnipotent.

Thus, the molecules which formed the organic matter that developed into life-forms on earth evolved into human beings with consciousness through their collapsing some, but not all, of the probability waves of nothing and everything in the past in order to produce themselves from nothing. Although these complex combinations of divided halves of nothing that make up human beings and consciousness essentially produced themselves, they have powers that are restricted by the reality of quantum uncertainty in the universe they manufactured in the process of forming a self-aware self-awareness that doesn't return instantaneously back into nothing.

Consciousness

The very collapsing of wave functions to produce a self-aware self-awareness that created all is made possible mechanically by coherent neural firings of brain cells or neurons. Consciousness itself, a full understanding of which some have concluded to be beyond the limits of science (Brooks, 2011b), has been hypothesized to be composed of a series of millisecond long cycles of electromagnetic brain states, each one split into unconscious and conscious stages (Biever, 2011). This self-aware self-awareness enables humans, through their forecasting which includes self-prediction and self-control of their future actions, to collapse the probability wave functions of other combinations of fermions and bosons on points that enable their existence in particular feasible sets of multiverses with a nonzero chance of being connected by adjacent units of time (Leuten, 2011).

In the first stage of each conscious thought, environmental stimuli are detected and reported to the portion of the brain responsible for sensory memory, and then this information is scanned to pick out patterns to draw a conclusion on the stimuli that is consciously perceived (Biever, 2011). This process, which involves synchronized electrical/chemical reactions between various brain cells or neurons, evolved from the natural Bayesian process of neurons learning to fire electrically together when doing so improves the probability of being reinforced chemically based on both past information and the newest interactions between the brain cells (Leuten, 2011) that evolved to be useful for the species.

Synapse connections between neurons, including those in skin, display behavior that depends on past electrical activity, act like memristors (McAlpine, 2011a), and serve a very important communication function to enable the coherent neural firings that lead to useful mental activity and conscious thoughts. The brain cells utilize such electromagnetic processes to enable themselves to learn like Bayesian minicomputers acting in coordination with each other (Leuten, 2011). In particular, healthy neurons normally maintain a small negative voltage across their membranes by pumping positive ions out of their membranes, but they reverse their charge when they fire, thereby causing their interior to take on a positive charge along their entire cell that allows them to carry signals to other neurons (Marshall, 2011a). It has actually been found that neurons under positive electrodes can be artificially trained to fire more frequently in response to incoming signals (and may thereby boost mathematical skills as well as enable more precise movements) because such positive electrical signals (as well as some sound waves) open neurons' ion channels (Wilson, 2011).

The process of reinforcing coordinated firings that help enable a species to survive and procreate in diverse ways depends on the production of chemicals like dopamine

that is controlled by one particular brain sector (Leuten, 2011). Differences in people's genes, such as those that increase the length of dopamine receptors in some people and thereby make it harder to attain their attention while increasing the degree of attentiveness when focus does occur (*NewScientist*, 2011i), result in dissimilar behavior being rewarded in different people. For instance, the longer dopamine receptors in some apparently result in more dopamine being required to reinforce sets of electromagnetic firings but may make the activity last over more time without reinforcement once they are prompted to do so. Such varying neural reinforcement across individuals increases diversity, including with respect to hyperactive and autistic tendencies that may be useful for a small portion of the human group.

The dopamine-producing brain area itself seems to be spurred into electromagnetic activity to supply the reward to human consciousness when the waves of conscious neural firings indicate self-satisfaction with decisions. However, brain waves indicating a failure to act in the best interests of humanity may restrict the supply sufficiently to create adverse feelings of emptiness and worthlessness, thereby discouraging thoughts and actions that are counterproductive to the species.

Since negative electrodes seems to inhibit neural firings just as positive electricity inhibits them (Wilson, 2011), both electromagnetic reinforcement and penalties may be used to create the coherent neural firings of consciousness, which can actually control its own coordinated activities to some degree through the collapsing of photon and fermion probability wave functions with its own thoughts (Leuten, 2011). Conscious thoughts can actually reinforce self-selected mental activities and decisions with massive dopamine rewards that are reflected in happy feelings of self-satisfaction from having made a correct decision. However, such rewards seem to depend on a self-perception of having made a positive contribution to humanity and future human beings into the far future, or negative electromagnetic penalties may be innately set off that result in feelings of emptiness.

Because long-term contributions to humanity are difficult to assess or predict in the present, the conscious has a great deal of latitude in its self-rewarding process, especially short-term. Nevertheless, the human brain seems to be aware that reinforcement of forecasts of future worthiness of actions to all result innately in neurons receiving chemical penalties that include limited dopamine rewards. Such electromagnetic activity can aggregate into more than offsetting feelings of disappointment and uselessness. Extremes of self-deception and pure selfishness are thereby inhibited in the built-in system of brain cell interactions.

These electromagnetic/ chemical reactions that are involved in forming conscious thoughts in human brains thus promote attempts to preserve the species. Conscious

thoughts can indeed control themselves to a large degree, as the processes of self-aware self-awareness can be affected by the very electromagnetic waves that are created by this very consciousness, but there apparently has evolved innate signals that are sent subconsciously to motivate service to humanity long-term.

Human brains have developed a structure whereby the various pieces of data incorporated in the system of subconscious neural firings are strung together and compared with those involved in long-term memory to determine which phenomena are relevant enough to be allowed into the neural firings involved in the working memory of consciousness from which all other areas of the brain can learn (Biever, 2011). The combinations of various different neural firings create all conscious thoughts that are chemically rewarded internally to create feelings of happiness and self-fulfillment when they are self-perceived to be beneficial long-term for humanity in the aggregate, but they terminate at the death of the individual (Leuten, 2011).

Near death, a loss of blood supply causes the ion pumps in brain cells to stop creating the negative voltage in the non-firing state because the positive ions remain in the cell, and the neurons depolarize in a wave of final activity lasting about 3 minutes (and up to 4 minutes) without irreversible brain damage (Marshall, 2011a). The starvation of brain cells causes a perception of white light that reflects the excessive noise in the firings (Leuten, 2011). However, memory in near-death experiences may be inhibited by the lack of coordination in neural activity, just as they are in some other extreme situations like during epileptic seizures (Marshall, 2011a). Uncontrolled neural firings are also associated with Parkinson's disease that has been linked to a lack of dopamine, without which the transmission of signals between brain cells is dampened, but the resulting uncoordinated neural firings lead to excessive physical shaking in this latter diseased state (Buchanan, 2011a). Parkinson's disease and the more intense but less protracted physical shaking involved in epilepsy can cause body movements because the other body cells then aren't starving and can therefore carry out the actions directed by the uncoordinated brain firings of such diseases. In any event, all the thoughts and self-aware self-awareness of an individual consciousness cease at death.

While a conscious brain is still alive and functioning properly, there is a delay of 1/10 of second between an observation and consciously thinking about it (Highfield, 2011), thereby implying that the subconscious not only has access to more information that it can process quicker, but it also receivers it earlier. However, the neural firings of consciousness also affect the brain cell activity of the subconscious electromagnetic activity, and so the electromagnetic waves of consciousness are far from controlled by subconscious electric activity. In particular, while much of the brain's activities occurs

subconsciously, the conscious is in charge of setting the rules for the subconscious at all times, including with respect to determining what information is allowed into conscious thought and what actions or reactions should be undertaken automatically (Leuten, 2011).

Much of consciousness involves an internal narrative, in which individuals try to understand themselves, their feelings, and their actions, including subconscious signals and intuition, in a process that is concentrated in the left hemisphere (Marshall, 2011b).[8] This dialogue, which often consists of weighing the pros and cons via arguing opposite sides of a choice, helps an individual make more optimal decisions using logical reasoning and language symbolism. In addition, the narrative helps an individual to categorize internal emotions and external stimuli via words that permits a generalized analysis of optimal behavior (Leuten, 2011). Internal stories also allow people to try out ideas and imagine what might happen if they made different choices, including more risky ones without danger (Marshall, 2011b).

The inner dialogue of consciousness creates a different pattern in brain activity from actual speech, as conscious thoughts involve more activity in the Wernicke's area, which processes pure meaning or semantics as opposed to the linguistics or phonetics and word construction that is processed in Broca's area (Graham-Rowe, 2011). Consciousness involves electromagnetic waves created by coherent neural firings throughout the brain (Leuten, 2011), and the electromagnetic waves of thoughts using the symbols of language in a dialogue represent part of the way people process the world (Graham-Rowe, 2011) as those waves utilize the categorized information to summarize the electromagnetic state of the world and evaluate alternative courses of action that don't need to be communicated to others.

Philosophers have so far been unable to prove whether the individual is the only self-aware one in a world of zombies (Biever, 2011), and this human situation is actually consistent with Leuten's (2011) conclusions that each human being can collapse the wave functions of their conscious thoughts to create their own reality that is separate from what others consciously choose. In particular, the coherent neural firings of consciousness that are developed from chemical reinforcement of the individual firing neurons collapse the electrical activity of their own brain cells on points of their own choice to create thoughts, which in turn permit them to collapse the wave function of feasible multiverses on points of an individual's own conscious selection. The selected points only have to be consistent with at least some joint points on all other probability wave functions, as different points consciously selected by other human beings will be experienced by them in other multiverses that are permanently separated from ones chosen by yet other people. Thus, only the 'zombie'

wave function of others is normally observed that can be collapsed on feasible points by a person, who need not worry about what unconnected multiverses the other people actually choose for themselves.

Each person can therefore experience one set of multiverses that is permanently divided from other feasible sets that others choose to live. However, the wave functions of all continue to exist in each set of multiverses that is separated from the others by the selection of each individual who doesn't experience those multiverses unconnected to that person's own chosen ones.

There may very well be an infinite number of each person doing something similar in each instant in a different multiverse (Gefter, 2011a). This hypothesis is consistent with the conclusion that each human being can select the particular set of feasible universes the individual wishes while others choose alternative sets. The possibility of divisions of nothing evolving into conscious human beings with such a capacity has been proven by Leuten (2011), and so such 'psychic powers' represent a logical scientific deduction as opposed to a mystical belief or supernatural occurrence. The empirical finding that only those who believe in psychic forces will have them, or even witness their display, is consistent with the reality of their existence, as skeptics tend to collapse wave functions of possibility onto points where psychic abilities fail.

Aspects of the brain's structure appear to be designed to collapse wave functions both internally and externally to the individual (Radin, 2006), thereby enabling psychic powers that can influence the self, others, and everything. In particular, consciousness permits the collapsing of wave functions via microtubule openings in neurons that can affect both the past and future, thus enabling the evolution of the possibility of divisions of nothing to develop into human beings, each of whom can utilize the power of positive thinking to collapse wave functions on particular feasible points through thoughts that resonate with those of others (Leuten, 2011).

Some of the points chosen can include merging the probability wave functions of the individual with another (or others) to create the joint consciousness of mutual hypnosis that provides more resonating power and happiness. Such a selection of a communal determination of the points at which the wave functions are collapsed enables a person to escape the world of zombies, although such a human ecstasy is only possible in cases where a mutual surrender of wills is feasible for the chosen one(s).

Although software has been developed that mimics the process of self-awareness and subjectivity in robots (Biever, 2011), it is unlikely for such inanimate objects to be able to collapse multiverses on points of their own choosing that are independent of their human creators (Leuten, 2011). Even though computers are already being designed that have components which act like groups of firing neurons (Marks, 2011),

it seems unlikely that the infinitely complex process of human thought can be manufactured artificially. Human beings seem to have a truly special place in the reality of nothing.

Since anything that can happen must actually occur in some multiverse(s), the mere existence of human beings in this universe represents a partial proof that they evolved in some set of past multiverses that are temporally connected to the ones in which humanity currently exists. The only feasible set of multiverses in the past and future connected with the observation of humans existing today is the result of humanity in the aggregate collapsing wave functions to cause the possibility of divisions of nothing that evolve into human beings to become reality. Those beings actually willed themselves and their own particular 4-dimensional universe into existence according to the laws of quantum physics that govern the interrelationships between divisions of nothing.

In particular, the mere possibility of a combination of various divisions of nothing with an ability to have a self-aware self-awareness that can collapse wave functions through its own conscious choice ensured the collapse of the probability wave functions of all that led to their existence. This reality brought into being by human will power had a non-zero chance of occurrence that had to happen in some multiverse which would include the human beings who created it. Such willful conscious thoughts or self-aware self-awareness thereby increase the probability of their evolution from near zero to a total certainty.

Because human consciousness had to at least partially be a unified one that enabled them to overcome the harsh environment in which they evolved from nothing, humans' collapsings of wave functions remain dependent in part on being in harmony with the wave functions of other human beings (Leuten, 2011). A joint probability wave function of all human beings therefore developed that may be the only feasible way for consciousness to exist in a form that doesn't instantaneously collapse itself back into a unity of nothingness. In particular, due to the nature of the universe and the halves of nothing of which it is composed, the irresistible urge of divided pieces of nothing and the fractal macrocosmic forms of their combinations to unify with their opposites back into nothingness made it impossible for the universe to be created by a single being.

It is actually possible that there have been, are, or will be conscious beings other humans in the universe. They too would share the power as deities and would have to be cooperative as well. If there were ever any contact with such 'aliens', cooperation or peaceful co-existence would seem to be the only feasible relationship with them given the necessarily cooperative natures for all conscious beings. Even though each conscious individual has the power to select a set of feasible multiverses to experience

that is separate from those chosen by others, the set of feasible multiverses is severely restricted by actions incoherent with the entire wave functions of others human beings, especially those of future humans who will have far greater will power.

Human Beings as Deities

With human beings having been shown to have created themselves and their universe, they can be construed as deities, albeit communal ones given their nature. With conscious beings having arisen endogenously within the system that arose from nothing, and with no evidence whatsoever of the influence of an exogenous force or being, it can be concluded that there is no external or internal deity other than the collective group of all conscious individuals, who are irrevocably motivated to be drawn to live harmoniously with one another.

It is of course possible for people to fight their innate nature, especially in the case of sexual repression and societal pressure to be individualistically selfish, but the result is extreme perversions and reduced potency in will power. Barring such perverted impotence, all are naturally driven to mutual human love, of which romantic love is the most potent.

Each mix of divided pieces of nothing that makes up an individual human being is naturally attracted irresistibly to a system of divided halves of nothing that comprises its sexual opposite. The result is the nirvanic feeling of romantic love which can result in the release of an incredible amount of energy, of which the procreation and raising of other human beings with their own individualized but coherent self-aware self-awareness is only one possible outcome. The blissful emotion of love may have thus been a crucial aspect of the processes which enabled humanity's own evolutionary creation from nothing. In particular, humanity in the aggregate consciously collapses humans' joint probability wave functions of potential on the partial but powerfully coherent unification in the form of mutual human affection that causes individuals to jointly select points on the universe's wave function of possibilities in a process of hypnotic group consciousness. It may therefore be the love between separate human beings that gives them both the motivation and power to will themselves out of nothing.[9]

Understanding the exact scientific process by which humanity created itself isn't necessary for people to have will power. However, cognition of the basic facts can help maintain the belief in the real potency of compassionate positive thinking, thereby enhancing confidence in humanity's ability to control the electromagnetic, chemical universe in which they evolved themselves.

Chemicals themselves are just various combinations of divided pieces of nothing. The mixtures of those divided pieces of nothing that resonate sufficiently with all others to survive and reproduce most are destined to dominate the universe, subject to the environment created from divisions of nothing that were willed into existence by human consciousness through its mere feasibility. Nucleons, or triplet groups of fermions, are the combinations of divided halves of nothing that last longer, and they form into various compounds like hydrogen that then develop cosmically further into heavier elements which permit the evolution of conscious human beings (Leuten, 2011).

Although 96% of the universe in which humanity exists is composed of dark matter and dark energy (Chown, 2011c), the rest has been estimated to currently consist of 89% hydrogen, 10% helium, and 1% everything else (Clark, 2011). Since hydrogen isn't extraordinarily stable,[10] more complex elements or combinations in the form of molecules can eventually dominate the universe, including via life and human beings. However, such coherently cooperating life doesn't seek to engulf all but instead must avoid the uniformity of pure reunited pieces of nothing, as well as prevent a situation of purely random divided pieces of nothing that would also exterminate all living beings. Complete absorption or unity with all would eliminate the orderly chaos in the universe that enables the very existence of life, just as would total anarchy without any structure to it. Thus, life's drive to avoid uniformity as well as complete randomness is merely a reflection of human beings willing themselves into existence through divisions of nothing that can neither totally reunite into nothing nor become totally independent of each other without destroying humanity.

Future human beings willed past people into being, as well as the future ones beyond them, ad infinitum, but all future human beings are created and helped to be willed into existence by present and past humans (Leuten, 2011). Thus, there is a communal will of humanity that creates reality, with each individual able to choose from the infinite number of different feasible multiverses of this reality by merely collapsing the wave functions on the desired possible points through will power. The infinite number of multiverses of possibilities that exist because the expanding space of this universe causes more areas of the universe in which humans live to be unobservable by them (Gefter, 2011d) implies that the unselected possible points will occur not only in multiverses totally separated from the chosen one but also within the existing universe, as well as in subsequent repeats of this universe as it collapses and reappears from another black hole in an antimatter universe.

Regardless of what happens in the unexperienced multiverses and where, the potency of an individual's will power to experience something remains a function of the degree of resonance with the wills of others. In particular, frictions between the

probability wave functions of all the electromagnetic fields involved increase the amount of energy required for attaining any goal and make some unattainable given the finite supply of will power that each person can internally harness. The probabilities of all human wave functions in the aggregate at any moment in the space-time of the multiverses in which a person exists therefore determine not only what is feasible but also the degree of energy needed to experience a particular point on the wave function of multiverses via a conscious choice to do so. As a result, even though each person has freedom of choice to select any feasible universe, there are many phenomena that are totally impossible at any moment or extremely difficult to positively believe into existence.

Thus, each person's power of positive thinking is constrained by the feasible set of wave functions of all, including of other human beings, even though the individual human being can select the points on the set of feasible multiverses that the person wishes to experience. All other possibilities will not be experienced by a particular person, although each individual will also exist in the other multiverses as another being who has chosen a different point or set of points on the person's probability wave functions. Thus, there are an infinite number of versions of people making decisions in at least slightly different circumstances about which the individual is totally unaware because the person or someone else chose a different path that is permanently disconnected from the sets of multiverses in which other versions of the individual exist.

The mere evolution of human beings from nothing provides an indication of the incredible things that are possible, at least over time. Human beings don't need to be continuously aware of these facts to have these powers, as positive thinking delegates carrying out most willed tasks to the subconscious, which can do wonders for individuals with thoughts that are harmonious with the human natures of other people. In particular, even though these complicated interactions are created and maintained by humans through their collapsing of wave functions via their collective will, there may be no conscious knowledge of any of the extraordinarily complex interactions involved. However, because most will power is implemented subconsciously, and because human subconscious activities evolved for cooperative strength, the subconscious processes necessary for carrying out willed intent need to be harmonious with those of other humans in order to be effective (Leuten, 2011).

Cooperation has long been an important characteristic for life. For example, living beings with multiple cells originally developed as individual single-celled organisms clumped together and evolved traits which helped the entire group of cells in a process that enabled task specialization and restricted the reproduction of individual cells for the

benefit of perpetuating the whole (Holmes, 2011b). When single-celled organisms replicated into multicellular animals, they had to further control the unrestrained growth typical of single-celled life because of the especially suicidal effect of unlimited individualized cellular expansion within an organism (Barras, 2011). Life therefore evolved to enable a cooperatively controlled growth (Leuten, 2011) that contrasts with cancer. Cancer, which represents a form of life with few internal restrictions on expansion, may have been more typical 600 million years ago before more genetic constraints were placed on reproduction (Barras, 2011a) that enabled the development of so many species not characterized by the suicide of undetected cellular growth.

Uncontrolled reproduction can continue to exist today from a selfish outlook that eventually provides corresponding signals to the cells, which multiply without regard to the system of the other cooperating cells. This process of cancerous growth can be promoted by carcinogens like tobacco, but it can be halted by a belief in cooperation that restrains the growth for the benefit of the whole.

Given that even unisexual, self-procreating, multicellular species eventually always die out due to runaway mutations (*NewScientist*, 2011o), it seems clear that cooperative activity must cross over not only between cells but also from one organism to another to ensure survival of such a species. The genetic weakening effect of incest and inbreeding is an example of runaway selfish genes that are totally inconsistent with the basic attraction of opposites that may have reached a fractal pinnacle in human love and lust.

While Leuten (2011) has provided an enormous body of evidence on how life and human beings evolved from nothing, new scientific findings are filling in some more details, such as with respect to how compounds on earth developed into the first living beings. For instance, a synthetic cell has been created using artificial versions of phospholipids as the walls or membranes, with varying pH triggering self-catalyzing metabolic reactions that turn one small organic molecule (formaldehyde) into simple sugars, releasing energy on the way (Sanderson, 2011a). Evidence of how life could have evolved on earth from various chemicals in existence there, including first into RNA which could have formed naturally in volcanic clay and developed into life-forms that formed the framework for the organisms based on DNA (Marshall, 2011e), has previously been provided (Leuten, 2011), but many of the necessary compounds might have alternatively originated on asteroids that impacted the earth (Marshall, 2011c). In any event, since the laws of evolution apply to chemical compounds also, with those molecules most suitable for their environment surviving and reproducing in a struggle of life against thermodynamic uniformity (Sanderson, 2011a), life was virtually certain to evolve in this universe.

Once life developed into simple organisms like bacteria a few billion years ago on earth (Leuten, 2011), photosynthetic bacteria were enslaved by a more complex cell, resulting in a loss of their independence as these possessed micro-organisms turned into the chloroplasts that are in the cells of all plants and algae (Holmes, 2011a). A similar capture of bacteria by another cell led to the development of the mitochondria in the cells of all animals, which evolved after plants filled the atmosphere with oxygen (Leuten, 2011). Plants need carbon dioxide to mix with other chemicals so they can manufacture sugars, proteins, and fats in the photosynthetic process (Holmes, 2011a), and they emit oxygen as a byproduct of their electromagnetic chemistry that animals like humans need to sustain their own living processes.

Once the initial complex biological/ chemical forms of life were developed in the past by human conscious thoughts, complex interactions maintain the processes needed by living beings that will continue as long as there is will power to perpetuate them. For instance, a few keystone molecules, such as dimethyl sulfide (DMS) which is released by algae when they are chewed by predators and which then oxidizes into a suite of compounds that act as condensation nuclei to help form clouds that in turn reflect sunlight and cool the earth, are instrumental in keeping an ecosystem of life going (Gupta, 2011).

All such biochemical activity is in fact the product of many different combinations of attractions between divided pieces of nothing and their resulting unification that all represent mere electromagnetic force fields which have nothing at the core. Those pieces of nothing existing in and divided by four dimensions have evolved to form into complex systems of attraction with characteristics like brains, self-awareness, consciousness, and the will power to create them. Will power has been documented by Leuten (2011) to have an extreme potency across time and space that is related to the power of positive thinking and belief, as is evidenced by the placebo effect and the 'psychic waves' of electromagnetism that are subconsciously formed by everyone but can be consciously directed by those using their brains to serve humanity.[11]

The Evolution of Brains

All organisms' brains, including those of human beings with consciousness emanating from them, evolved from natural tendencies that developed to be evolutionarily more adaptive than simple computer programs (Leuten, 2011). For instance, the same gene involved in controlling for decisions on whether to leave an environment with limited food also determines the fight or flight decision by coding for a particular neurotransmitter receptor (*NewScientist,* 2011c). One particular human gene that arose

40,000-50,000 years ago has been linked to impulsive and exploratory behavior, risk-taking, and the ability to shrug off new situations, and another similar one originated 10,000 years ago (Pearson, 2011). Those latter genes may have actually enabled people to deal with extremely dangerous environments that required risk-taking activities, and the catastrophic events associated with the ending of the ice age 10,000 years ago could have been one of the environmental prompts for their further development. Such genetic developments may very well have been crucial in enabling human beings to be able to undertake the paths that led to discovering the meaning of life, the universe, and everything, thereby creating all with that knowledge.

The brain, which creates algorithms that develop from a starting innate tendency, adjusts for changes in probabilities based on experience and learning, and it is employable for general applications, unlike computers which normally have to be reprogrammed to deal with each new situation (Ananthaswamy, 2011a). The brain operates most creatively by analogy, which is where sleep often becomes especially effective by running simulations of similar but seemingly unrelated situations and information. The effectiveness of using such analogous logic may derive from everything being based on the same basic divisions of nothing characterized by the same properties of time travel and attraction. Those facets of nothing translate in fractal form into the macrosphere of human existence, observation, forecasting, and will power. The coherent electromagnetic brain activity of consciousness apparently even learns to be especially strong just prior to a shutting down of consciousness (*NewScientist*, 2011m), as likely occurs to enable humans to self-determine when they feel it is optimal to sleep or enter into a subconscious state for resting that also provides multidimensional, and metaphoric thoughts via dreams that are actually more creative.

Dreaming, which is only possible for those with a thalamus and cortex, is a prediction of a wake experience, often in a rationally incoherent form however (Hobson and O'Callaghan, 2011). Remembered dreams during the period of deep sleep labeled the REM state can create the same pattern of EEG oscillations called theta waves in frontal and prefrontal cortex areas, as also occurs for those recalling memories while awake (Coghlan, 2011b). Since the theta waves are those that are typical in the deepest form of hypnosis and that are normal for children 2-6 years old (Leuten, 2011), and since the frontal and prefrontal cortex are involved in conscious thought, the brain may be training itself in REM sleep to carry out actions without question upon general analogous cues.

Through the simulated experiences of dreams, the individual is allowed to determine reactions to different situations that can facilitate rapid self-chosen actions to future similar or analogous circumstances in a form of self-hypnosis. For example,

in remembered dreams during non-REM states, alpha wave activity in the right temporal lobe, which is involved in recognizing an emotional event, has been observed that resembled the activity for recall when awake (Coghlan, 2011b). Alpha wave activity, which represents a less deep hypnotic state than theta waves and is typical for children 6-12 years old (Leuten, 2011), enables some conscious interference in the subconscious process of decision-making, thereby effectively resulting in a self-hypnotic training of the brain during this type of sleep.

Since it has been documented that hypnosis is enhanced by oxytocin that promotes trust in the hypnotist (*NewScientist*, 2011l), it may be concluded that the maximum effectiveness in self-hypnosis during sleep or otherwise requires a trust or belief in oneself. The metaphoric nature of dreams allows those simulated decisions made during sleep to be applicable to a wide variety of situations. In any event, since the same parts of the brain during sleep are on the alert for things to remember that tend to be emotionally charged and that are deemed to be important during wake time (Coghlan, 2011b), sleep and dreaming can be understood to help individuals to adapt optimally to their environment in a process of continuously learning from the past.

Past real experiences also provide a means to learn to optimize future actions (Weir, 2011). However, the typical theta wave state for children under six puts the brain in a hypnotically receptive condition that is characterized by little or no conscious questioning (Leuten, 2011). As a result, people don't consciously remember much of their earliest years, as their experiences then have no connection to the more rapid electromagnetic frequencies of conscious thoughts. Thus, learning in infancy is possible only subconsciously, including via dreams and more primitive innate responses to environmental stimuli.

Memories tend to be consciously recallable at an earlier age for children if they are incorporated into stories that include feelings (Weir, 2011). Emotional tales prompt conscious reflection and hence the beta brain waves, which are more readily connected to other neural firing patterns of consciousness. Those connections facilitate recall of the information upon the excitation of any of the interconnected neurons. A relationship to other phenomena that are frequently called up enables easier conscious recall through the connected neural firings, but it is also possible to learn new behavior subconsciously from the past without ever consciously recognizing the learned knowledge or the event(s) that led to it (Leuten, 2011).

A person's capacity to consciously plumb the depths of the past appears to be intimately linked to an ability to imagine the future (Weir, 2011). Looking both backwards and forwards in time does seem to enhance decision-making. Since humans may be the only organisms that attempt to predict the future (and not just react to

present conditions and stimuli using a subconscious Bayesian learning process or an innate tendency), they may be the only ones with a consciousness that actually developed out of that forecasting and self-predicting (Leuten, 2011). Predictions optimally utilize information on past similar situations and relationships to help in making decisions, whose success is at least partially a function of environmental reactions to one's own future actions and therefore requires self-forecasting for the most effective analysis of action choices.

The existence of a self-aware self-awareness not only aids in such useful self-forecasting, but it also serves other purposes. For instance, the 'self provides a structure around which to organize memories, and language then supplies a further kind of memory scaffold, anchoring the details in a format we call up years later' (Weir, 2011). Conscious thought can thus be used to logically deduce more optimal courses of action in the future that are facilitated by the nature of language, which organizes concepts into categories and thus helps in drawing conclusions based on generalizing logic.

While language serves as a categorization tool that enables generalization, speech itself grew out of the need to communicate the complex predictive thoughts of human beings, who needed to evolve as a cooperative species in order to survive (Leuten, 2011). The communication advantages of language require a categorized scheme of symbols that are generalizable enough for others to understand, and these general concepts enhance a person's own logical thought processes. In contrast, without words to categorize events and without a sense of self to enable an organism to recognize a separate experience, it becomes difficult to differentiate various events from each other in a recognizable fashion or pattern.

A memory uncategorized by the symbols of language might only be called up with smells, sounds, feelings, etc. that trigger the connected neural firings. The latter type of recall has been hypothesized to be possible at an early age despite the fact that the dentate gyrus, which is one small area of the hippocampus where the details of memory are stored, doesn't fully mature until age 4 or 5 (Weir, 2011). However, a memory without words might only be understood in a holistic uncategorized whole that may supply learning and even feelings of deja vu but no recognizable memory for those organisms that don't forecast. Memories not naturally evaluated by conscious logic based on the generalizing symbolism of language can lead to counterproductively impulsive actions based on simple stimulus-response reactions that are easily subject to manipulation by those with a thinking capacity (Leuten, 2011).

For humans, it is optimal to connect the items needed for memory into symbolic stories (Robson, 2011). Tales tie pieces of information together, allowing easier recall

due to more neural firings connected to each informational bit than isolated statements or events unconnected to other memories. In particular, the information networked by a story apparently enables more neurons trained via dopamine rewards to fire in conjunction with each other to activate the neural firings associated with the memories desired for recall (Leuten, 2011). Tales also permit generalizations of situations for rapid response when needed, as the story-related neural firings are excited by a stimulus that is similar to one in a story and therefore prompts other brain activity which can readily elicit the story-related responses, unless consciously inhibited for reasons that seem to make the gut reaction inappropriate.

No predisposition is required for the most incredible memory, as has been shown by older people dedicated to remembering particular items, and various scientific means can be utilized by anyone to enhance remembering things, such as by refreshing the information in consciousness in intervals between 10 and 20 percent of the time to the moment when recall is desired (Robson, 2011). Since the hippocampus is one of two brain regions known to grow neurons throughout life, and since hippocampal neuron growth can be promoted by antidepressants like seraline that block receptors for glucocoritidcold stress hormones (Hamzelou, 2011b), human beings appear to be genetically inclined to increase their memory as they happily age, possibly to be able to provide others with the knowledge and insights that comes from their experiences as part of their evolved cooperative natures.

The Facts behind Humans' Cooperative Tendencies

As previously mentioned, besides the capacity to predict and thus have a self-aware memory, human brains evolved to work in conjunction with each other in a form of group consciousness (Leuten, 2011). For instance, people in close proximity naturally mimic each other in many non-verbal ways or signals, with their brain activity often synchronizing, thereby allowing them to function together in a process that can actually parcel out portions of a task to the different individuals simultaneously (Jabr, 2011a).

A communality that incorporated an egalitarian individualism has been explained to have innately evolved in people as humans were forced into the open savannahs of Africa by more arid weather around 2.5 million years ago that reduced the size of the jungle protection and made them easy individual prey for predators like lions unless they cooperated (Leuten, 2011). There were 13 carnivores in Africa 2.5 million years ago (including lions, leopards, cheetahs, hyenas, a canid, and sabertooth cats), with all outweighing humans' ancestors, although there were only 11 of those left 1.7 million years ago, and only 4 then outweighed the humans existing at that time (Shipman,

2011). In Europe, there were cave bears, mammoths, and other huge animals that dominated the landscape until the end of the last ice age about 24,000 years ago (Marshall, 2011d), while giant boars and very strong, fast bears threatened human existence in North America until a few thousand years ago (Leuten, 2011). The dangerous environment for people on earth thus appeared to persist virtually everywhere until recently.

Although human development of tools, weapons, and fire along with evolutionary growth in size enabled the species to eventually dominate their former predators, the evolved innate need to cooperate was widespread and long lasting in human prehistory even though making human cooperation may have appeared to become less vital for the survival of humanity in the last few thousand years. The early dire environments for humans in prehistory made food sharing more necessary for survival (Macleod, 2011i), as humans needed all others in a common fight to survive the predators and the reduced food supply that existed on the savannah. As indicated by the befriending domestication of the canid species called wolves (Shipman, 2011), this process included even cooperation with some predators, with the initial domesticated animals probably being very young ones who might have been attracted by the warmth and protection of humans' fires and then raised empathetically by the fire-keepers to eventually provide some additional protection to those caretakers (especially from undomesticated predators).

A natural human empathy evolved as a result of this past desperate environment in which humans lived that motivated them to greater cooperation than other primates.[12] However, people evolved to be able to do so in an individualistic way where each person has the freedom to determine how best to empathetically serve the common goal of survival and mutual happiness of the species (Leuten, 2011). The oxytocin that is naturally produced internally in human brains is the key chemical which causes people to empathize with others, and since people generally feel good about such experiences (Marshall, 2011b), the empathetic feelings that so optimally motivate instinctive mutual assistance both reflect innate tendencies and are normally reinforced into continuing. The electromagnetic activity that sparks the internal production of chemicals to create this pleasure developed over time to motivate cooperative behavior without individuals having to weigh the personal material benefits of acting in harmony with others.

Since oxytocin has been found to be important for having suggestions followed more hypnotically (*NewScientist*, 2011l), it serves another important role in inducing human cooperation by promoting sufficient trust to act cooperatively. While people can always choose to collapse their wave functions of possibility on different points

than those suggested by others, and while individuals can even spitefully react by choosing any point except one recommended for perceived exploitative purposes, there is an innate inclination to want to trust people enough to follow their suggestions (Leuten, 2011). This suggestibility trait of humans evolved to promote cooperation with less hesitation and evaluation for the common good in a sort of group consciousness.

The hypnotic effect of mere statements by others is so strong that it tends to cause people's true subjective opinions to be strongly influenced by the views of other people. For instance, when made aware of a group opinion that the beauty of a woman is greater than thought before learning that view, men not only change their stated opinion on the matter but also experience more activity in value areas of the brain like the orbitolfrontal cortex and the nucleus accumbens, indicating that they truly value a female's beauty more highly after hearing those other views (*NewScientist*, 2011a). Empathy may be an important component of this tendency, as people feel what others feel, and people's natural conformity to the group's opinion contributes to their cooperation for a common goal.

People are so naturally attuned to empathy that they even feel as if they are the individuals in fictional stories they hear or observe, as the same brain regions lights up as if the tales were the real-life experiences for the listeners or observers (Marshall, 2011b). Such stories have long helped people cooperate better in social situations where they can act more quickly and instinctively to diverse environments for which the tales provide generalizable situations.

While anyone perceived to exploit this cooperative human tendency for purely selfish benefits is subject to spiteful treatment that can be extremely vicious, the innate tendency of human beings is to help each other and share equally in a manner that has nothing to do with a trading of material benefits (Leuten, 2011). For instance, in tests where a person can give received money to an anonymous stranger without any hope of reciprocity, most people share 25-50% of the amount they get, whereas chimpanzees in contrast don't offer anything to others in similar tests even when their fellow chimps show a desire for something and even when it costs the giving chimpanzee nothing to provide the desired object (Macleod, 2011).

This difference between selfish chimps and cooperative humans who lived millions of years without reimbursement may shed some light on the reasons for some recent findings related to the effectiveness of reward systems. Human beings evolved to be motivated by feelings of self-satisfaction and the non-tangible love of their fellow people in pursuit of a common goal (Leuten, 2011), and specific incentives interfere with these natural instincts by redirecting people's focus away from the goal of a

particular task. As a result, a motivational system based on tangible rewards can transform enjoyable work into drudgery, reduce creativity, cause less risk-taking, result in less collaboration, and make people feel less valued (Fleming, 2011).

Moreover, incentive or bonus systems encourage stealing colleagues' credit, blowing one's own trumpet, false flattery for bosses, criminal behavior like insider trading, spreading false rumors, and short-term reckless gambling (Fleming, 2011). Humans' natural inclination to cooperate for the good of humanity in their own creative way (Leuten, 2011) is thereby destroyed and replaced with counterproductive behavior. Even incentive schemes like employee stock options designed to align the interests of workers with those of capitalist firms often cause people to seek the shortest route to the rewarded outcome without regard for the organization's actual goals, and executives in many cases merely lie and cheat to achieve a paid targeted outcome like a higher stock price (Fleming, 2011). Documented facts demonstrate the relative ineffectiveness of capitalist incentive systems compared to communist ones in aggregated economies of different countries (Murphy, 2000).

It has actually been found that people working puzzles voluntarily are less likely to continue when they were previously rewarded by money (or by ribbons in the case of children) than others who hadn't earlier been rewarded (Fleming, 2011).[13] With monetary pay having actually been found to undermine the motivation of people who enjoy their work, the problems of pay-incentive plans run far deeper than merely the difficulties of measuring performance and the ill will such schemes generate (*NewScientist*, 2011e). Specific material reinforcement can stop people from working for the sheer joy of it, and even grades or other bribes may lead to inferior work (Fleming, 2011).

Pay for a task causes workers to expect a reward for each job performed and to be displeased if the money isn't provided. In particular, a feeling of injustice results when a person doesn't receive a predicted reinforcement, thereby tending to cause a spiteful refusal to do the work without the just payment. A significant contributor to such a spiteful response is a perception of exploitation, insofar as the past payment indicates value provided to someone or to some organization, so that the worker perceives being ripped off if the value in the effort is supplied without the reward received in the past. Humans' inclination to work productively together persists as a naturally enjoyable endeavor only as long as there is no perception of exploitation (Leuten, 2011).

In addition, greater surveillance, evaluation, and competition associated with material reward systems not only undermine intrinsic motivation but also cause people to take less responsibility (Fleming, 2011). Such controlling oversight induces people to be distracted into consciously worrying too much about the adverse consequences

of failure, thereby reducing the power of positive thinking and belief and their joy at working cooperatively with others.

The One True Deity is Humanity

The evidence of all the factors that cause humans to cooperate with each other, including sometimes in a form of group consciousness which resembles a unified hypnotic state that allows for diverse, individualistic actions in pursuit of a common goal, is overwhelming (Leuten, 2011). As previously indicated, it was evolutionarily useful for humans to believe in this religion of humanism. A belief in all humanity as a deity also reflects reality, insofar as everything evolved from nothing through the common will power of all human beings collapsing their possible existence into points of actuality.

Given that everything is created endogenously by this deity, any separate or superior deity would have to be exogenous to the system of multiverses and thus irrelevant. With no evidence of such an external deity that would have no useful purpose or affect anything anyway, it's rather absurd to believe in one. While some in the distant future might conceive of how to create one that actually does exert control over human beings, there would never be any motivation to do so, especially since human nature would cause a spiteful revolt that would eventually lead to a destruction of either the manufactured deity or humanity.

The widespread contemporary religious views such as those of Christianity, which postulates the existence of a deity superior to human beings, have been documented by Leuten (2011) to be fabricated by some past people(s) strictly for exploitative purposes. Many believe that these religions aren't just factually wrong, they are morally wrong (Lanman, 2011), as would seem to logically follow given the manipulative reason for their origin. Christianity and similar systems of lies were designed to deceive people into passively accepting slavery to an artificial 'elite' of unnaturally selfish individuals and are based on lies that are void of any meaningful validity. Besides being riddled with distortions of the truth and mandating inhumane behavior like worship and servitude to superior beings, contemporary religious myths like christianity are completely inconsistent with quantum reality, human nature, and the real reason human beings innately have a tendency to have religious beliefs in deities.

The first human deities were sexual partners. Mates' romantic love for each other is very similar to the psychological state and brain wave patterns involved in worship of a deity (Leuten, 2011). Mates in love seek only to serve one another, and in return they are granted the heavenly bliss of an ecstatic feeling of oneness with the other.

Their physical union, which creates further pleasure for both partners, can result in the miraculous procreation of life, thus enabling them to be characterized as creators. On the other hand, a lack of faithfulness in a mate can raise the spiteful ire of the partner that can create a hell for both. The fear of a spiteful reaction, which at the very least may result in the loss of the heavenly love of the partner, can motivate each person to have no deity other than the individual's mate. The virtually religious nature of this experience that is often called romantic love creates a group consciousness which makes the happiness of each dependent on the happiness of the other.

The orgasmic pleasure involved in sexual intercourse that tends to create a feeling of 'letting go', 'loss of control', and an altered state of consciousness by deactivating the left orbitofrontal cortex (Sukel, 2011) may be an important component of the natural religious experience which promotes the perpetuation of the human species. In particular, romantic love may partially represent anticipation of the many future mutual orgasms to be shared mutually in the ecstatic relationship of joint surrender to a group consciousness. This blissfully binding feeling thereby helps motivate mates to surrender to each other long-term, thereby enabling their harmonious cohabitation in the process of reproduction and raising the resulting offspring who need years of care. The product of the parents' love then provides humans with a commonness of purpose in the form of caring for the resulting children, as well as for the mother during her long period of dependency while pregnant.

These affectionate traits had to evolve as human brains grew because their cranial sizes required an extended period of pregnancy and offspring dependency. The ecstasy of romantic love that strongly resembles worship must have thus originated several million years ago to bond mates together to provide such care.

Subsequently, weather conditions and overcrowding by stronger chimpanzees forced human ancestors to come down from the trees, as previously indicated. There in the open they had to evolve to cooperate with each other or be killed by stronger, faster predators, and so a more general group consciousness with all humans developed that provided innate chemical rewards in people's brains for mutually loving service to other in the human group, albeit in a less blissful form than for the romantic love that has an additional mating component incorporated into it (Leuten, 2011). At times, a very powerful group hypnosis among many could be invoked to enable incredible feats that included killing otherwise overwhelming predators.

The slower neural firings involved in theta and alpha brain waves that minimize feelings of pain (Thomson, 2011) and fear as part of the natural effects of hypnosis would have promoted a soothing and blissful cooperation that can explode into rapid herculean acts upon cue as part of the electromagnetic activity across human brains

united in a group consciousness for a common purpose (Leuten, 2011). Since sensory distractions and confusion can also serve a similar purpose of reducing the intensity of pain, at least temporarily (*NewScientist*, 2011h), a portion of the soothing effects derived from working together may be supplied by the distraction that a focus on cooperation supplies. However, the ecstasy of serving a higher common good individualistically and voluntarily as part of a communal effort to perpetuate humanity in harmonious happiness is unique in providing a continuously pleasurable experience that can provide lasting relief from all pain, fear, frustration, and seeming hopelessness.

As a result of these phenomena, people began to believe in a higher purpose and the superiority of the human group as a whole. Humanity thus became a sort of powerful deity, of which each individual was a part. Each person, however, had the freedom to serve the others in the individual's own way, thereby maximizing creative individualism for the common good.

The human group deity expanded as offspring at puberty migrated to other clans, which welcomed their youthful energy and beauty. The human groups were thereby united by blood and sexual ties that made humanity as a whole the deity. People lived in ecstatic harmony with each other then, as a group consciousness was mediated by a naturally developed empathy that made all want the happiness of all other human beings.

Despite the empathetic group consciousness that drove humans to serve the species through most of prehistory, there was no doubt individualistic competition for more attractive mates throughout that time. However, the struggle back then was fought on the playing field of each trying to contribute more to the happiness and well-being of the human group, thereby motivating very cooperative but creatively individualized efforts toward advancing human technology and civilization (Leuten, 2011). This sort of competition promoted a universal happiness and strength, as did an evolved culture of swapping children at the age of puberty between clans that facilitated the opposite-sex, opposite-age, and opposite-clan matings.[14] Such a societal environment may actually be necessary to maximize human happiness.

Maximization of human happiness is widely considered to be a very complex task toward which all people strive (Klein, 2003). Human happiness is very difficult to define, but it exists in moments of enchantment when a person leaves the individual's concerns behind and feels in a different state of mind (Bruckner, 2011). Such a state of consciousness tends to exist in people feeling self-satisfaction with their past decisions and a self-contentment with their choice for their future direction in life. As human consciousness developed in the process of learning to forecast the future and thereby

make better decisions to help in the long-term perpetuation of humanity as a whole, happiness evolved to reward personal success in carrying out this purpose, and some positive feelings coming from just trying to do so (Leuten, 2011).

In particular, as human predictive capacities grew, self-forecasting was increasingly required because humans' very soothsaying enabled them to have a rising power over the environment in which they were driven to survive and thrive, and a self-aware self-awareness was optimal for that process. This consciousness evolved ever more to improve its own predictive ability in a circularly self-reinforcing process of increasing forecasting abilities, greater control over the environment, and expanded consciousness. The brain is constantly trying to predict the future by building mental models of the world, and it is very important for the brain to discover when the models are correct or incorrect (Wiseman, 2011) in order to make better decisions in pursuit of its overriding purpose. This decision-making power was so effective that consciousness evolved to be given command control over the entire brain, but the feeling of happiness had to develop to motivate actions consistent with the goal of serving humanity as a whole in order to motivate the necessary cooperative actions to enable the human species to survive and prosper (Leuten, 2011).

Decisions that turn out to be suboptimal for the purpose of serving humanity don't necessarily create unhappiness. In particular, people can learn from mistakes, so that their errors actually have a positive effect on humanity long-term as a result. The brain rewards itself with a humorous experience when it comes across an incorrect explanation or outcome, and people have become addicted to this feeling or 'mind candy' (Wiseman, 2011) that helps improve decisions in the future. Thus, learning from mistakes can also bring happiness, especially if one's priority is always to serve humanity.

With consciousness having been given discretion over the choice of priorities in life, it is indeed very possible for humans to totally disregard the innately rewarded tendencies. Nonetheless, there can be a very heavy cost in terms of adverse feelings of unhappy emptiness that derive from the structure of the human brain, which evolved to only be able to reward efforts based on a decision to utilize the power of consciousness to advance humanity as a whole long-term (Leuten, 2011). In particular, unless a person instinctively carries out the function of having all thoughts and actions designed to benefit humanity as a whole long-term, unhappy thoughts and doubts naturally arise about the optimality of alternative choices. Both the overriding reason for life that is selected and the actual decisions that are made in pursuit of this purpose are subject continuously to at least subconscious questioning and regret if any alternative meaning for life different from the innately evolved one is chosen.

While people might normally learn to follow their innately evolved purpose, many contemporary societies encourage pure selfishness through tangible rewards of material benefits, as well as through the widespread teaching servitude to a fictitious deity to attain a fabricated reward of heaven after death. Many people are thereby pressured into an unnatural, empty, and unhappy directions for their lives today.

While some have hypothesized that people are heavily motivated by a desire for wealth, others suggest that humans are largely driven by selfish genes to procreate. However, the evidence that that people are no happier now than 60 years ago when average wealth was much lower (Layard, 2011) and that children have a reliably negative impact on happiness for mates with them (Griggs and Gilbert, 2011) implies that human beings have evolved to be motivated by other things.

Leuten (2011) has explained that feelings of happiness evolved to reward people's own conscious decisions which they perceive as optimal in light of environmental stimuli that include empathetic feelings for all humanity. Recent evidence that people are happier with irreversible rather than reversible decisions because they rationalize the former (Griggs and Gilbert, 2011) and that people who care more about others tend to be happier than more selfish people (Layard, 2011) is consistent with this conclusion. Through this reinforcement system, people are driven to serve humanity as a whole, not the individual, and a feeling of self-fulfillment along with personal happiness is the reward for deciding to pursue this higher goal (Leuten, 2011).

In contrast, having happiness as the only goal makes people crazy (Bruckner, 2011), as doing so is inherently frustrating because such purely selfish considerations diverts the individual from the very purpose for which the feeling of happiness exists. Seeking solely to satisfy personal happiness or hedonistic pleasures is pathological in people, as such can never provide the self-fulfillment of trying to carry out human beings' innate purpose of serving all humanity. A feeling of emptiness, worthlessness, and inadequate self-satisfaction will eventually drive the selfish individual toward a suicidally intense hedonism unless it is stopped by a recognition of a higher purpose than the individual self (Leuten, 2011). Positive feelings of pleasure, happiness, and self-fulfillment evolved for the benefit of the species to perpetuate the individual's life and genes, to try to assist others in doing so as well, and to do one's best to serve humanity as a whole, respectively.

Happiness seems to depend not only on avoiding purely selfish behavior for oneself but also regarding others whose lives are devoted strictly to themselves as inhumane. In particular, self-motivated and self-reinforcing service to present and future human beings, and thus long-term happiness itself, requires eliminating all feelings of empathy or concern for anyone and anything that doesn't contribute to that

goal. Empathy for selfish people and related subhumans who have self-renounced their humaneness through their lack of concern for humanity distracts a person from the higher goal of serving all humans. Such pathological empathy can also lead to unpleasant exploitation by inhumane creatures seeking only personal benefits for themselves to the detriment of all human beings.

Perversion of the Human Belief System into Fictitious Religions

The harmonious relationship between human beings persisted for millions of years until about 35,000 years ago when the first hierarchical religion was adopted. At some point in prehistory, however, a belief in the superiority of women developed that was formally based on their special procreative and nurturing traits (Murphy, 2008). This faith was likely initiated through some women's access to special technology or 'magic' that appeared to give them superhuman powers.[15] Exploitative one-way hypnosis was likely employed, and the natural, mutually hypnotic love between human beings was replaced with a fetish worship of objects and deities that emphasized a bizarre belief in the superiority of females. This matriarchal culture continued for about 30,000 years when global warming due to the ending of the most recent ice age caused natural catastrophes that weakened the matriarchal civilizations sufficiently to allow previously exiled patriarchal barbarians to conquer them (Leuten, 2011).

Once the matriarchal cultures had been vanquished, the male conquerors imposed their own cruel religions on the vanquished (Baring and Cashford, 1993). Fetishes and deities were transformed to emphasize male superiority, as men were actually proclaimed to be superior to females. Women were even perceived often enough as 'evil', and females were widely treated as slaves or property by patriarchal males.

Judaism was one example of a patriarchal religion designed by barbarian conquerors. It emphasized the superiority of one group of such patriarchs who emigrated from the deserts of Saudi Arabia a few thousand years ago to conquer matriarchal Canaan (Leuten, 2011). During that particular conquest, the Hebrews/Israelis religiously slaughtered around a million Canaanites, as documented in their own holy books (Walker, 2000). The Israelis were later removed from their conquered holy land of Palestine about two thousand years ago by another patriarchal tribe, the Romans.

A few hundred years after their dispersal, some Israelis/Jews had developed a new religion, Gnostic Christianity, which they spread to Gentiles across the Roman Empire. This new patriarchal religion tied the Israeli holy books, which were called the Old Testament by the Christians, to some new ones labeled the New Testament. It

thereby became possible for Gentiles to serve the Israeli deity on a more equal basis with the Jewish 'chosen people' (Leuten, 2011). Besides being less racist than Judaism, Christianity was also less harsh toward women and encouraged more innate human characteristics like cooperation, albeit still with subservience of the masses to a higher power. Eventually, as even more benign pagan religions spread throughout the Roman Empire (Baring and Cashford, 1993), Rome saw fit to adopt a harsher Catholic form of Christianity as its own official religion (Shlain, 1998). Cooperative work was thereby preached to the masses as part of their servitude and obedience to a holy elite and the ruling powers.

After the conquest of Rome by other patriarchal barbarians, the new rulers of Europe became convinced of the usefulness of employing Christianity as a religion to maintain domination of the masses, and the promise of a heavenly reward in a fictional afterlife for obedience to the holy elite and their deity was especially useful in motivating people into passive acceptance of exploitation (Leuten, 2011). The eternal punishment of hell was pledged for disbelievers in this set of manipulative lies, thereby providing the ultimate discouragement from rebellion against the religiously cruel servitude. This system of psychological terrorism continues today in many parts of the world, thereby diverting people from a revolution against their inhumane masters.

The pressure applied to mold obedient slaves to the elite is even greater in modern times because of the great control that corporations, their media, and controlled politicians have over people's lives and minds. The psychiatrics industry that pushes people to get closer and closer to the boundary of an averaged 'norm' to avoid being labeled mentally ill (Ronson, 2011) is another aspect of the brainwashing system designed to extract unquestioning conformance in servitude to exploitative rulers (Leuten, 2011). As a result, a large degree of uniformity of opinion and behavior exists among the masses despite the very propaganda of individualistic choice that is designed to inhibit cooperative efforts towards overthrowing the inhumane society. The key ingredient in molding obedient slavery to the elite is the requirement to submit to a higher power in order to avoid the punishment of both penalties on earth and in the fictitious afterlife fabricated by christianity.

Christianity and related systems of lies or incentives for inhumanely conforming obedience have thus been spread across the world, and many people are brainwashed into believing such religions from infancy. Many of even today's elite actually have faith in the validity of the religion and every fundamentalist lie in the Old and New Testaments. However, people continue to be innately driven toward an egalitarian love and worship of all human beings. The repression of this drive by the patriarchal

religions, which are even more unnatural than the matriarchal ones, only redirects people's desires to surrender to humanity into perversions and violence.

Ignorant adherents of christian and other anti-humanist religions often cry that there is no other explanation for the origin of everything than the existence of an external deity. However, the religions that pervade the world today have been documented to be designed to maintain existing hierarchies, and those religious beliefs are inconsistent with an enormous body of scientific evidence, thereby proving they don't explain reality. While the fact that the patriarchal religions are manufactured lies isn't a completely new finding, the development of a well-supported theory that humans evolved from nothing provides the final convincing evidence on the nature of the universe and the true creative deity in it.

The Evolution and Future Development of the Human Deity

The only deity that is consistent with the reality of quantum physics and that is harmonious with the evolved nature of human beings remains humanity as a whole. For instance, it has been conclusively proven that there is no reality independent of human measurement (Ananthaswamy, 2011d). It can thus be deduced that human beings create reality just by their formal choice to consciously observe anything. This conclusion is consistent with Leuten's (2011) theory of human evolution/ creation arising from nothing via will power. The development of the theory of human evolution from nothing was necessary in order to drive the final nails into the coffins of inhumane religions like christianity and thereby free humanity to exercise its full powers.

This research also provides additional supporting evidence and information on the true deity of this universe by incorporating the newest scientific research findings, and it thereby further clarifies the nature of those deities and their future direction. As opposed to being created by a fictitious deity, human beings came into existence from mere divisions of nothing in a manner summarized here. Just the possibility of nothing dividing by itself created everything, which remains nothing at the core despite charged attractions of divided pieces of nothing to their opposites and despite movement through space-time that itself is a mere division of nothing. Evolution is the process for this development, but humanity is the driving force of it.

Evolution, which is a process of survival for those most adapted to their situation, sometimes occurs very rapidly in response to a change in the environment, but it often reverts the organisms' characteristics back to old forms as the environment returns to its original state, thereby making long-term evolution seem rather slow (LePage, 2011). As human beings gain ever more knowledge which enhances will power, their

ability to impact the environment and the speed of evolution, including of themselves, may rise dramatically.

Divisions of nothing that develop through this process into human beings have been shown to be consistent with the well-established scientific facts of quantum physics, which itself allows for human free will because everything is merely a probability wave function of interrelationships between the divided pieces of nothing that can be collapsed by humans (Leuten, 2011). It has been documented that human beings can and do exercise the will power to affect those functions, including collapsing them on particular points across time, to allow each person to select the set of feasible parallel universes they wish to experience. Since people see their own actions as driven by their desires and intentions, while they perceive others' actions as more subject to their own actions and personalities (Jones, 2011), humans appear to be at least intuitively aware of the fact that they are partially in control of their own fate. In particular, while collective human will power can be perceived as having created humanity, each individual can choose to collapse the joint wave functions of the universe on points that are different from those selected by others, thereby enabling each person to live in a set of multiverses that is separate from what others may be choosing to experience through their own will power (Leuten, 2011). As human beings begin to become more aware these facts, human society and human beings themselves may evolve quite rapidly to a situation of greatly expanded control over their environment, albeit only by remaining coherent with their intrinsic cooperative nature that gives them their power.

The characteristics of the true deity of humanity are very human of course. In fact, human nature rules this deity by definition. While humanity itself can evolve in the future,[16] just as it has in the past, it does seem to have some well-defined traits that must be preserved in order for it to remain a deity that doesn't destroy itself and the universe it has created through its will to exist. This omnipotent will consists of the aggregated positive thinking of all human beings, including past, present, and future ones, but it is most influenced by the will of future humans to live. Without those beings of the future, humans today would never have evolved, as people today don't believe sufficiently, if at all, in their creative powers to produce themselves out of nothing. However, by believing in the people of the future and helping make a significant contribution to the future of humanity in general, each individual person can become one of them and thereby experience a better taste of the incredible things that can be willed via resonance with all human beings.[17]

Since extremes of uniformity or randomness must be avoided to insure the perpetuation of life and the universe itself, human beings will always be driven toward

both greater diversity and more coherent structure to it. Evolution also seems to be pushing toward an ever greater self-aware self-awareness that seems to have its current peak in human consciousness that itself is intrinsically diverse but motivated toward a harmonious co-awareness.

A useful perspective is thus supplied here to forecast where humanity is headed. In particular, the innate desire of human beings for feelings of self-fulfillment and happiness is driving people toward an egalitarian world where each individual can decide how to help maximize the happiness of all past, present, and future human beings. Only by doing so can a person maximize the individual's feelings of self-contentment and happiness. Humans evolved for this purpose and acting otherwise can only bring long-term negative feelings of worthlessness, emptiness, and depression, regardless of any short-term selfish pleasures.

Human beings in the aggregate created the universe in which they live, and a recognition of that fact can help people mold a better future. Since each person can select from the set of feasible multiverses they wish to experience,[18] each individual also has the freedom to choose both the exact reasons for which humanity exists and how best to contribute to those goals. However, selecting a purpose that prioritizes the goal of advancing humanity by trying to maximize the happiness of future human beings (that can include oneself in the future) is one that innately provides the maximum feelings of self-fulfillment and happiness for oneself as well as for others. Doing so also makes other subsidiary goals more attainable. In fact, many targeted accomplishments may be infeasible unless one always acts for the overriding purpose of seeking to serve future humanity, as the far greater psychic powers of future humans are directed only toward helping those who serve them.[19] Thus, in the process of helping future humans, one thereby serves oneself. A truly felt belief in this reality actually helps promote one's own potent freedom and happy future for reasons that are backed by scientific evidence as opposed to empty faith.

Appendix

The Nature of Gravity, Mass, Quarks, and Nucleons

An innate gravitational tug between objects exists only because of the curving of space-time caused by the combined spatial and temporal pulls of divided halves of nothing for their opposites that cause them to spin in different directions. That spin reflects a diversion of the temporal energy of the particles and antiparticles into space that causes these divided pieces of nothing to move slower through time in the space they occupy, thereby giving them greater concentration in the moment (i.e., mass) as well as also warping the spatial points around them.

The strongest form of gravity, which makes time slow down (Highfield, 2011), is exerted by particles that are composed of quarks and is caused by trapped combinations of electrons and positrons in triangular formation that freezes their opposite movements in time into points in space, thereby warping the movement of space-time. The fermion trio of quarks create a gravity-induced curvature in the universe because they are unable to travel in time and therefore dwell in the moment far longer than untrapped divided pieces of nothing that therefore don't warp time around their space.

The spatial tugs of fermions with opposite charges trapped in a triangular formation results in their energy being concentrated in a wave of equal possibilities of different spatial spins that reflect their alternating attraction to opposite halves of nothing in two different equidistant points in space that thereby freezes them in time (Leuten, 2011). Quarks generally appear as lasting particles only when they form into groups of threes inside a nucleon, where they each exhibit a partial charge such as 2/3 and -1/3 (Close, 2009). Those electrical pulls represent their averaged uncollapsed wave of potential that allows for an equal probability of each being in an area of the space occupied by these fermions trapped in alternating equidistant attractions to each other.

Quarks permanently exist only in groups of three because there are equidistant spatial tugs of opposites for all nine of the fermions in such tripled triangular formations. As a result, there are equal possibilities of different spatial spins for each of the fermions that reflect their alternating attraction to opposite halves of nothing at two different equidistant points in space that thereby freezes them in time. Each trio of such fermion triplets is called a nucleon, with protons consisting of 5 positrons and 4 electrons while neutrons have an additional electron trapped inside their triangular formations to give them their neutral charge (Leuten, 2011). Quarks are never observed individually (Smith, 2003) because the equidistant attractions to opposites for a loner quark of just 3 fermions wouldn't exist for two of the trio. While fermion triplets often appear in pairs consisting of a quark and an antiquark (that include 6 fermions), those pairs typically annihilate each other almost immediately. As a result, it is only the trio of such fermion triplets (i.e., protons and neutrons) that are instrumental in warping space-time (Leuten, 2011).

The proton contains 3 quarks, which includes two 2/3 quarks, each of which has an electron with 2/3 of its energy directed in space (for a spatial charge of -2/3) and 1/3 pointed in time (for a 1/3 tug forward), and two positrons with each having 2x1/3 of their charge directed in space (for a spatial charge of 2x[-2/3] for the two positrons) and -1/3 each in time (for a temporal tug backwards of -2/3 for the two). The 2/3 quark therefore has a net charge of 2/3 and a -1/3 pull backwards in time. Each proton also has a -1/3 quark, which consists of two electrons, each of which has a -1/3 charge

directed in space (for a total charge of -2/3 for the two electrons) and a 2/3 movement in time (for total temporal travel of 4/3), and one positron with a 1/3 charge in space and -2/3 pull backwards in time, thereby netting to a charge of -1/3 and a temporal movement of 2/3 forward.

The sum of the two 2/3 quarks and the one -1/3 quark results in the proton having a charge of 1 (Smith, 2003) and a temporal movement of 0. The former represents the observed electrical tug of the aggregate proton and the latter reflects their temporal freezing for the trio of quarks trapped in time by their equidistant charges to their opposites.

For the neutron, the added trapped electron adds a -1 spatial charge to one of the 2/3 quarks that transforms it into a -1/3 quark (Leuten, 2011). Frozen in time by equidistant electrical attractions, these electrons have their entire energy applied spatially with no temporal movement. Neutrons therefore have an electrical charge to 0 without any change or effect on the 0 net temporal movement for the entire nucleon.

Despite the temporal trapping of the quarks and nucleons within their triangular equidistant spatial tugs, their entire formations can move in space when they absorb light photons. The photon energy, which propels them to travel in space over time, doesn't disturb their internally frozen formation, although sufficient absorbed energy can cause nucleons to move so fast through space that their mass and gravity are reduced as their warping of space-time by their internal temporal freezing is offset by the rapid travel caused by the instantaneous movement of the absorbed photons across all points in time.

Neutrinos, which emanate from atomic reactions in stars like the sun, can cause the decay of neutrons into protons on earth (Mullins, 2009). They do so by drawing out the electron from one of the -1/3 quarks of a neutron via the electrical attraction of the positron half of the 2-dimensional neutrino, themselves are merely split wave functions of two positrons and two electrons trapped in a square formation of equidistant spatial charges that have their formation divided into two positron-electron combinations in the atomic reactions in stars that transform protons into neutrons (Leuten, 2011). Unlike for frozen triangular formations that is frozen in time, this square splits into two separate waves of potential possibilities, with each wave representing a near merging of a positron and an electron that isn't possible due to their equidistant alternative attractions in the square. That division of the wave function of the four trapped fermions into two separated components is roughly analogous to the splitting of a light photon wave into two via two small wall holes through both of which a photon passes unless it is collapsed first by human observation into going through only one.

Each of the square's waves, which consist of a neutrino and an antineutrino, has no electrical charge, since each consists of a positron and an electron. Although they are frozen in time by their electrical trapping together, their separated wave functions make them very similar to a photon. As a result, they have some characteristics that resemble such a reunited pair of opposite pieces of nothing, albeit without actually being the unified energy itself that they can only approach due to their trapping in the square. These particles and antiparticles should be massless according to standard theory but are thought to have a different mass depending on a flipping 'flavor' state (Shiga, 2011b) that may reflect their interactions with other particles and antiparticles trapped in two dimensional space like quarks and nucleons. The only significant difference between the two split waves of the squared formation is a different spin, which reflects a different directional movement in time that is frozen for each. For the antineutrino, the positron pulls in time permanently backwards while its paired electron is frozen in a spatial pointing toward the positron, which it therefore follows. For the neutrino, the opposite is the case.

The antiparticles in this system, like all positrons that comprise them, are perceived as travelling forward in the existing matter universe even though their actual movement in time is in the reverse direction. In particular, from the perspective of objects like human beings that are composed of matter pulling forward in time, cause and effect appears to be strictly relating to past events influencing future ones. Matter would similarly be construed to be moving backwards from the point of view of an antimatter conscious being in an antimatter universe. The laws of quantum physics that permit causality in either direction in time are consistent with this reality.

The relationships between these particles and antiparticles comprise the cosmic system of this matter universe. For instance, with the Big Bang that initiated the cosmos in which humans exist, quarks were drawn together to form nucleons that then electromagnetically attracted electrons to form basic elements like hydrogen atoms, which coalesced in groups via gravitational tugs on each other to form into stars. The gravity that caused the simple elements to gather in ever smaller spaces created friction among the atoms that produced photon emissions, whose heat eventually broke some of their nuclear bonds and thereby freed the frozen temporal energy into space in nuclear explosions. The released photon energy became starlight while some of the particles and antiparticles that were still being drawn ever closer to one another formed heavier elements. The stars eventually collapsed into black holes (from which separate antimatter universes could develop) or burnt out, with the latter ones often releasing some of their component elements that helped form new stars and planets elsewhere like the sun and the earth. The various interactions between

these particles and antiparticles on earth led to the development there of life forms, which eventually evolved into human beings, whose brain cells could create coherent electromagnetic waves via their electrochemical reactions that led to a self-aware self-awareness that could actually control its own thoughts through its own prompting of its own brain cell activity.

The divisions of nothing and their characteristics that led to the evolution of this cosmic system and the human beings in it were actually created by the brain waves of human consciousnesses willing their possible existence into being (Leuten, 2011). In particular, the collapsing of the past probability wave functions of divided pieces of nothing by the self-aware self-awareness of human beings in the aggregate into their own creation caused this reality only because it was possible and therefore inevitable. Everything that may happen will occur in some multiverse, and human consciousness can determine the set of feasible multiverses that will occur, subject to the uncertainty and other principles of quantum mechanics. Humanity thus represents the creative deity in this cosmic system, albeit without the omnipotent power that would cause humans' own demise.

Notes

1. There is one theory of long quantum gravity suggesting space is built of discrete units of geometry that can explain mass as well as integrate gravity with the other four basic forces observed in the universe (Gefter, 2011b). However, even this theory doesn't explain the origin of these forces, nor how everything evolved from nothing, whereas Leuten's (2011) hypothesis does.

2. Either the particle or the antiparticle of a fermion pair can fall into a black hole, while the other fermion is spun away, but black holes eventually disappear in any event as their energy is carried away from them by both attracted and repelled matter and antimatter (Brooks, 2011b). Any single fermion of a dividing pair repelled by the black hole's spin moves away with the equivalent energy but opposite sign of the other that is drawn into it. Whatever is attracted via the infinite warping of space by a black hole's extreme gravitational pull travels toward it in a process that never ends because time stands still in a spinning black hole, which never points in a temporal direction or moves in time despite everything around it doing so. An attracted particle/antiparticle entering the dense structure when the hole's energy had dissipated (or at the end of the universe that would end time itself), it may be flung away from it into an anti-matter universe that would move backwards in time with the energy that drew things into the black hole of the matter universe. Thus, when only one of a pair of fermions is pulled into a black hole, all the energy carried away by the pair sums to zero, as the travel in opposite directions in time reflects positive and negative amounts of it with equivalent absolute value. This process can actually enable virtual particles/ antiparticles to become real

in separate matter/ antimatter universes, thereby collapsing the wave functions of other particle/ antiparticle pairs into existence to create dark matter and dark energy.

3. In particular, when virtual particles appear inside a magnetic field, they can be made real as they rotate to become bar magnets themselves whose own magnetic fields align with the external magnet to have the same quantum state and form as a meson condensate (McKee, 2011). Since mesons consist of a quark and an anti-quark that are created as a result of positrons and electrons being trapped in a triangular attraction to each other that gravitationally warps space-time and thereby increases mass (Leuten, 2011), it does seem possible for the basic component of all atomic nuclei (the quark) to arise out of nothing. While an external magnetic field must be quite strong to create matter out of nothing, the required force may have existed in the early universe, and energy is conserved in any event because the internal magnetic field of the virtual particles aligns with the external one (McKee, 2011). A similar creation of actual particles from mere divisions of nothing by nothing could potentially occur due to the strength of the electromagnetic forces of attraction that might exist with fermion triplets trapped inside a triangular attraction of quarks. In any event, the mathematical infinities of quantum physics seem to allow subatomic particles (i.e., divided pieces of nothing) to cause interactions that prompt the creation of halves of nothing in nothing (Leuten, 2011), as subatomic particles act like tiny magnets that can be trapped by other magnets in space (Buchanan, 2011b). Nonetheless, even when the probability wave function of a virtual divided piece of nothing is collapsed into permanence, it has only a relative relationship without any absolute existence (Leuten, 2011). The presence of subatomic particles is normally detected only via observation of an excess of otherwise incomprehensible events concentrated in one region that is taken as evidence of the existence of a particle, such as the 64 events that aren't explainable by other means and are taken to indicate the existence of an electron-like particle called the tau (Gefter, 2011c). Space itself, which is associated with 10 numbers for each moment in time (Shiga, 2011a) that may reflect the 3 standard spatial dimensions and various parameters for the gravity-induced curvature of space-time as well as various probability distributions for divisions of nothing within itself, which can thereby create more subatomic particles and units of space-time that may also only have a probability distribution for their existence, is also merely a division of nothing, just as the time dimension is. In fact, everything else just reflects complex interactions between the myriad divided pieces of nothing that creates the immense diversity of all, which remains nothing at the core.

4. It must be pointed out that the absorption of photons by existing fermions can occur only with a particular probability unless their union is collapsed into existence by some event like human observation. Once any wave functions are collapsed into joint existence by interactions with actual particles/antiparticles, their future is determined by a probability wave function that is connected to the point of creation on its past wave function of potential existence. However, when the wave function of an existing photon is absorbed by the wave function of an existing fermion only with some uncollapsed probability, the result may be an averaged wave function of possibilities in their interaction or joint probability wave

function. Regardless, the division of opposite fermions created out of nothing by the time dimension makes it impossible for them to travel at the speed of united pieces of nothing without merging with their opposites instantaneously, and such a merging in the same moment would be inconsistent with the possibility of their divided existence for at least some moments in time. The absorbed temporal energy of the photons is therefore applied partially to faster travel in space through time, or by the possibility thereof that appears as an average when their joint waves of potential are uncollapsed.

5. A simple mathematical function of the tradeoff between temporal and spatial travel may therefore exist, just as there is a linear relationship between matter and energy. It is already recognized that there is a 'trade-off between time and energy' (Gefter, 2011c), and there could be a similar relationship between Planck units of space and moments in time that may exist only with some probability, especially since space-time just enables defining the relationship between divided pieces of nothing. Even the appearance and disappearance of virtual particles may cause new points in space to be created that themselves could have probability distributions of existence of various different magnitudes that include zero or non-existence. In particular, if virtual particles have some possibility of disappearing into unobserved dimensions, universes, or anti-universes, their disappearance in this universe back into nothingness could yield more nothingness of space that still sums to zero in any event, as in 0+0=0. There may therefore be some tradeoff between units of space-time and energy. The entire wave of potential multiverses must sum to zero regardless.

6. Such alternating directions in time for united nothingness result in switching between positive and negative temporal energy, which therefore sums to zero and which is essentially equivalent because the photons' timelessness causes them to traverse all points in time simultaneously. Despite the unification of two opposite halves of nothing that eliminates their electrical change, photons have an electric and magnetic fields, and they push on objects if they bounce off, (*NewScientist*, 2011b). The electromagnetic fields of united matter and antimatter into light may reflect a rotation around the photon poles of the particle's negative charge and pull into the infinite future with the positive charge and tug of the antiparticle into the infinite past in an instantaneous process that only seems to be divided by time.

7. New research indicates the importance of spins in the interactions that are reality in this universe. For instance, after aligning the spin of one electron per phosphorous atom in a cold crystal with a magnet, a microwave can send electrons' closest phosphorous nucleus to align with it and thereby produce billions of entangled objects (Courtland, 2011). Although two fermions with opposite spins bounce off each other, they otherwise sail past one another frictionlessly without interacting with each other in any way (Barras, 2011b). The latter effects are observed when other magnetic influences cause the passing fermions to have coherent spins. An opposite spin that reflects incoherent motion in space-time alternately allocated between space and time apparently induces the repulsion of the circulating electromagnetic fields of the fermions with the same charge, as the opposite spin twists space in different directions. Opposite spins for particles with the same electric charge

nearing each other may be caused by them trying to harmonize each's attraction to particles with the opposite charge by their pointing in a different direction of either space or time. In contrast, coherent spin states, which may result from the effects of other repelling or attracting electromagnetic fields, allows for movement without friction that can create superconductors. Interestingly enough, although electrons in typical superconductors bind together in pairs that all share the same quantum state and therefore flow without friction, they repel magnetic fields, whereas superconductor particles that can be created by application of a magnetic field to a vacuum align with the creating magnetic field (McKee, 2011). The spin alignment in the latter case may actually be instrumental in the creation of everything, as it enables the energy of the aggregate system to sum to zero over any unit of time because aligning spins causes harmony in movements across time and space that reduces friction between particles. Light photons emitted by stars through the vacuum of space, as well as magnetic fields such as those created by virtual quark black holes that appear in a vacuum, may thereby collapse virtual particles into real ones that could be the source of the dark energy and dark matter in the universe. In particular, as the virtual particles and antiparticles are made real by the starlight or black holes, they interact with others to collapse their wave functions, thereby creating dark matter which sometimes becomes dark energy when these tiny real divided pieces of nothing collide with their opposites. Spin states and their coherence affect other phenomena as well, including common occurrences. For example, electrons in atoms can only exist in discrete energy states, and this fact explains the spectrum of light emitted by a hydrogen atom (Ananthaswamy, 2011b) and anything else. Altering electrons' alignment changes the chemical properties of matter, including even in birds' eyes when the earth's electromagnetic fields are able to maintain coherence in the spins of the electrons in the molecules that enable their sight and that evolved to use signals of such coherence for navigational purposes (Courtland, 2011). Even will power, which harnesses quantum forces and potent 'psychic' waves via conscious thoughts that are coherent with those of other people (Leuten, 2011), may emanate from spin states being harmonized, such as in the process of enabling the innate group consciousness that exists in all human beings.

8. Given the reflecting of light to the left by most of the molecules of life (*NewScientist*, 2011f), it is interesting that this process is concentrated in the brain's left hemisphere that would thereby tend to more easily have light directed toward it. The fact that light itself tends to bend and sparkle more when it passes through denser matter (*NewScientist*, 2011k) may also play some part in consciousness.

9. Love often enough can enable overcoming life-endangering situations through the help of others as well as via the motivation to act with incredible abilities in order to be able to survive and continue providing the mutual benefits associated with love. Love actually supplies a reason to do everything possible to avoid death, at least partially in order to enable loved ones to do so as well. This emotion even promotes a group consciousness that permits individualized cooperation for a common goal that includes prevention of the death of any individual. When a person thinks of death, the right amygdala, which is associated with fear

and anxiety, is activated, but so is the caudate nucleus, which is associated with performing habitual behavior and with the feeling of love (Hamzelou, 2011a). The feeling of love is such an innately frequent emotion for humans that it is naturally associated with habitual behavior, and the fear of death may prompt this soothing feeling which can help provide security from that risk as well as the incentive to survive any threat.

10. The stability of atoms and molecules is determined somewhat by whether the outer electron orbits of the composite elements are completely filled, with the closest orbit having room for two electrons, and, for elements with more than two electrons, the next orbital has space for eight. Elements with outer electron orbits that are almost but not completely filled exert a positive charge that attracts the electrons of atoms with an even less filled outer orbital (Fellet, 2011a) that they borrow or share like acids that tend to bond with bases (Fellet, 2011b). As a result, a molecule consisting of two hydrogen atoms, each with its own single electron in orbit, is often bound with oxygen that needs the two electrons to fill in its own second orbit (Sanderson, 2011b). The latter attraction comes from the fact that the outer orbital of oxygen needs two more electrons to be filled, and two hydrogen atoms provide them (Fellet, 2011a). The positive charge that attracts the hydrogen's electrons to oxygen may actually derive from the missing electrons in latter's outer orbital, resulting in 'holes' in the electrons' negatively charged force field that enables the positive charge of oxygen's nuclear protons to pull occasionally on the electrons of the two hydrogen atoms.

11. The fact that a human cell has already been recently modified to create laser light by merely directing a light source through a genetically modified version of the cell between two semi-transparent mirrors that reflect the photons back and forth until they are concentrated with the same wavelength to break through in a powerful beam (Jabr, 2011b) provides an indication of what humans may be able to do subconsciously if their thoughts are coherent enough with their own human nature. Even personal traits that are deeply ingrained in people from experiences before, at, or after birth, such as the tendency of the first of twins out of a mother's womb to be the more dominant one (Leuten, 2011) can be modified if perceived to be environmentally useful, as is shown often enough by the existence of a sizable minority of twins not being characterized by this particular trait. The twin first-out effect, which is apparently learned at birth because the second baby out has neurons trained to follow to get through this incredible 'trip' that results in the release of internally produced DMT in the babies, then continues to follow in a self-reinforcing manner throughout life unless a reason to change exists (and this tendency may even have initially been learned in the womb as the first out may have already been more dominant when they were mere fetuses sharing the mother's belly). Similarly, the rocking during sleep (such as in a swinging cot) that improves the quality of sleep by resulting in more time in the deepest stage of that state and a higher density of bursts of sleeping brain activity called spindles, which have been linked to memory improvement and insulation from noise disturbances (*NewScientist,* 2011n), could be changed if sufficient energy of positive thinking were expended to do so (one reason for the productiveness of rocking may be the attuning of the brain of a fetus to movement while in the mother's womb that evolved to permit undisturbed

sleep, thereby improving the learning from fetal subconscious memories, although an evolutionary past of sleeping in rocking trees as adults could also have caused such a tendency, but such learned or innate traits can not only de-evolve but also be modified currently via the contemporary power of enlightened belief for the benefit of humanity). Both learned traits and innate tendencies of any sort are most easily changed with minimal energy if the individual unifies the self with the averaged will of all of past, present, and future human beings to enable a virtually frictionless flow of resonating energy and therefore almost omnipotent power to modify both the self and the environment through a collapsing of wave functions on points harmonious with those of all humanity (Leuten, 2011).

12. Macleod (2011) has noticed that human cooperation is similar to that of marmosets, which automatically feed each others' offspring, are good at reading each others' feelings, and are better teachers than chimps. He has therefore hypothesized that a more cooperative breeding and nurturing process which developed in the dire situation of the savannah may also have contributed to the evolution of human cooperative tendencies.

13. Offering smaller incentives has also been found to lead to better results than greater material rewards for tasks requiring thought or mathematical computations, including in tests involving really large incentives that actually make people try too hard, thereby increasing stress (Fleming, 2011). People often perform better when they leave more tasking to the subconscious which can process more information (Leuten, 2011), and too large an incentive may cause them to consciously try to carry out actions that might be more efficiently handled subconsciously. Large incentives also interfere with working memory as people worry too much about the consequences of failure, as well as divert thoughts into what to do with any rewards if successful (Fleming, 2011). Concentration on a task without distracting thoughts like concern about failure, has been shown to lead to greater success in anything (Leuten, 2011). While material rewards can increase work short-term for boring, repetitive stupid tasks (Fleming, 2011), this latter finding merely reflects the lack of internal reinforcement for unchallenging jobs that may require some external incentive for them to be done at all. In prehistoric times, the more mundane tasks may have been allocated in some fashion so that those more skilled in other tasks did less of the work requiring no skills, and those doing the boring jobs may have utilized the opportunity to think creatively during their jobs, which didn't require much attention, in order to be able to do more challenging or prestigious work.

14. A lengthy analysis of the evidence in support of this hypothesis is provided by Leuten (2011), who also explained that opposite-age partnerships are the most harmonious ones for human beings unbrainwashed by the artificial morals of the extremely cruel contemporary societies. More recent evidence has shown that hunter gatherer societies, which were once thought to be patrilineal, are flexible with respect to which sex is transferred between clans at puberty (Macleod, 2011), as is consistent with all the other evidence cited by Leuten (2011) indicating opposite-age matings were long the harmonious norm in the prehistoric past. The fact that human beings are the only species to cooperate in large numbers with unrelated individuals (*NewScientist,* 2011j) may possibly be explained by this switching of

teenagers at puberty across clans that provided strong sexual motivation for inter-clan cooperation and natural alliances through cross-clan mating of offspring. Intra-species violence, which even dolphins have been found to engage when they are sexually frustrated (Bhattacharya, 2011), would have been unthinkable in this harmonious environment, whereas the violence between human beings over the last few thousand years may alone be explained by the new cultures of encouraging sexual abstinence and disharmonious same-age matings (Leuten, 2011). In spite of the prehistoric clan switching at birth, any non-cultural preferences for intra-racial mattings today may stem from the skin pigment and other characteristics of races having evolved to be fitter for the different global environments in which human ancestors were once restricted because of past technological constraints on migration. Even any systematically preferred characteristics like blue eyes by some contemporary humans may stem from such effects that may remain genetically natural but could eventually evolve away with contemporary freedom on migration created by modern technology.

15. Leuten (2011) has hypothesized that the originators of matriarchal religions were older women, who left the society of modern humans to join the more matriarchal and 'psychic' Neanderthals out of disappointment at not being treated as well as when they were younger, and who there acquired 'magic' or 'magical power' like the art of hypnosis that they later used to awe the newer form of homo sapiens about 35,000 years ago, about the time that the Neanderthals died out. Since Calloway (2011) has concluded that modern humans outside Africa had dwindled to just a thousand people by 50,000 years ago (and only about five thousand in Africa), and since the gene that promotes risk-taking originated in modern humans around then (Pearson, 2011), it seems quite plausible that increased risk-taking was a primary factor in replacing the Neanderthals throughout Europe and Asia. Given that Neanderthals seemed to have become extinct as a result of the superior numbers and technology of humans as opposed to war and interbreeding (*NewScientist*, 2011q), it is quite probable that increased risk-taking led to humans experimenting and investing the time to develop better tools, weapons, and gear, as well as engage in more effective but riskier food gathering activities, that enabled them to out-forage and outhunt the Neanderthals into resettling into ever dwindling pockets. More rapid reproduction among the modern humans may also have been directly spurred directly by their increased risk-taking, and the more effective food accumulation would have helped support a rapid growth in their population. Until then, it is conceivable that competition and even conflicts with the Neanderthals, who had evolved longer periods in the environment outside Africa, and who may have interbred with modern humans 100,000 years ago but not thereafter, might have actually been responsible for the drop in the population of modern humans between 80,000 and 50,000 years ago. Since the Neanderthals died out about 35,000 years ago as modern humans settled Europe and Asia in expanding numbers, and since religion began about then, it seems quite possible that older women with some sort of 'psychic' powers could have learned them from the Neanderthals, and, with the demise of their matriarchal culture that treated older women better, they returned to modern human society and developed deity status through their learned knowledge of magic, hypnosis, etc. (Leuten, 2011). While these returning emigrants

from modern human society might have been too old to procreate, they could very well have taught their special powers to a priestess class which carried on the matriarchal religion that was based on sex, not heredity. While consistent with existing evidence, this conjecture remains very tentative (and it's even possible that the matriarchal religion was spread by the 'psychic' Neanderthals themselves).

16. Civilization has already re-sculptured the human body because it changes the environment for humans, with one of the biggest effects being that selection pressures are easing (due to 1/3 of all children no longer dying before 5 as they did a century ago), thereby possibly allowing for more variability and therefore greater adaptive strength in the species (*NewScientist*, 2011d).

17. All people, including past, present, or future ones, can only exercise their wills within the constraints of the feasible set of joint wave functions of everything that are determined by quantum physics, which nevertheless permits an enormous host of possibilities, including phenomena like the stock market rising with the moon and the existence of psychic powers (Leuten, 2011). Even cosmic rays, which have energies that exceed anything that can be created in the most powerful particle accelerators in existence on earth, which contain more positrons but less antiprotons than existing theories predict, and which tend to be too heavy for their electrical charge (Clark, 2011), impact the environment on earth and thus the feasible set of possibilities that humans can will, including those in the past as well as the future (Leuten, 2011). However, examples like a belt of antiprotons ringing the earth due a trapping of cosmic rays in the planet's magnetic fields possibly being usable to fuel spacecraft in the future (Muir, 2011) provides evidence in favor of the hypothesis that humans may be able to utilize those strange phenomena, as well as affect them, just as they created the universe in which they live with their consciousness (Leuten, 2011). The incredible phenomena that are known to occur daily to human beings in this universe provide some perspective of the incredible possibilities that exist. For instance, a person at the equator moves at 465 meters per second (versus 280 m/s for a person in London which is closer to the planet's pole) because of the earth's daily rotation, at the same time that the earth itself is moving at 30 kilometers per second around the sun, which itself is rotating at 210 kilometers per second around the Milky Way, which itself is moving at 600 kilometers per second (Highfield, 2011). People may actually be able to control these forces, although they themselves are also influenced by them (Leuten, 2011). For example, looking forward on a moving object causes a person to think into the future, whereas looking backward inclines people to think about the past (Highfield, 2011). People can therefore possibly help themselves to have greater control over their future by looking in the direction in which the earth turns (i.e., to the east) to promote predicting and impacting the future.

18. Because time is circular, each choice will be repeated an infinite number of times and, thus, each moment will persist eternally. This thought can provide some soothing relief from anxiety about the termination of consciousness at death. At the same time, the fact that each set of the infinite number of feasible multiverses will also be experienced in the temporal circle facilitates choice without regrets, as all possible selections will also be made an

infinite number of times (Leuten, 2011). Even unpleasant situations can be happily endured, especially if one recognizes that the anticipation of future pleasant events actually bring more pleasure than their actual experience. To enable living in a set of multiverses that brings the most happiness, feelings of self-fulfillment, and successful accomplishment of tasks, it is only necessary to follow one's basic human nature of doing everything to try to serve future human beings. Making the innately rewarding decision to dedicate one's life to humanity ensures a happy self-contentment regardless of the sensory or emotional environment and regardless of mistakes in decision-making that themselves can be enjoyed via the humor of learning from them. It is only necessary to surrender one's ego to future humans by recognizing that meeting one's own needs and desires is useful only insofar as doing so serves future people and thus oneself as a future human being, who must be obeyed without question, albeit in any playful manner one chooses in the present.

19. In fact, those who have made positive contributions to humanity could even be resurrected by future humans out of gratitude, curiosity, and desire for diversity in order to allow them to live an even more enjoyable life of advanced technology and enhanced harnessing of the forces of the universe (such as via better spin alignments that can be achieved today with a compassionate feeling and belief in human beings of the future). In contrast, future humans could conceivably sentence all those serving some other purpose than advancing humanity to eternal hell on a computer chip, including even those in the past who might be raised from the dead via their DNA (Leuten, 2011). Many Christians and other believers in inhumane religions may therefore face the very fate of hell after death that they threaten for those who believe instead in humanity.

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Allama M. T. Jafari on Global Future of Religion

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Abstract

Although it may appear totally odd to some minds to ask of the future of religion as it has seemingly no place in the very fabric of modern society today and thus would supposedly be doomed to disappearance, according to the prophets of modernity. But it is also needless to say that the modern society is no longer the utopian ideal that man has been incessantly in search of. On the other hand, institutional understandings of religion which are dominant in the contemporary discourse of religion will not apparently tile the way for the actualization of unconceivable societal and individual potentials of religion. Then, we need to appeal to unconventional future theories of religion that could open new horizons before our eyes. Allama M. T. Jafari (1923-1998), contemporary Iranian social philosopher, is one of those theorists whose concepts of religion meaningfully address the global issue of future of religion. Jafarian definition of religion is anthropo-bio-centric as he defines it in close relation with humanity and the primordial issue of life. It is indeed only within the parameters of Allama Jafari's theory of intelligible life–which is also the leitmotif of the total body of his writings–that we could understand the Jafarian future conception of religion. This essay is an effort to uncover the different sides of this theory and expound its relation with the global issue of the future of religion.

Keywords: Allama Jafari, Future, Religion, Intelligible Life, Primordialism, Naturalism, Anthropo-bio-centrism

Introduction

Allama M. T. Jafari (1923-1998) represents an iconoclastic figure within the Islamic tradition of philosophy as his philosophy does not anymore address the perennial issues of ontology a la his predecessors E. g., Muslim philosophers like Avicenna, Averroes, Sadridin Shirazi and Allama Muhammad Hussein Tabatabaei. Instead, it is *menschenleben* and *the Social* that has preoccupied him for more than five decades of his intellectual life. Allama Jafari's philosophical thought has also other idiosyncrasies

that make him an iconic figure in the contemporary history of Islamic philosophy. Jafarian philosophizations are *historical* in the sense that they have mostly been developed in an active dialogue with both oriental and occidental distinguished thinkers[1]. They are *poetical* as Allama Jafari regards the poetry as an indispensible form of human openness to **Sein** a la Heidegger (Jafari, 2005: 13-14). His voluminous work on Mowlana Jalaloddin Rumi[2] vividly shows the importance of poetical meditations for Allama Jafari. His whole body of writings is penetrated with Rumi's lines as if in them Allama seeks a new form of expression to convey his unconventional ideas. Jafarian meditations have often been inscribed in an aphoristical fashion just like those of Nietzsche and Wittgenstein. Briefly speaking, Allama Jafari is an authentic thinker whose intellectual heritage has sorely been neglected even in his native country let alone in international philosophical circles.

Religion is certainly an indispensible item in Jafarian philosophy as his religious background and education as an Islamic cleric clearly attest. Like other concepts Allama Jafari defines religion in terms of *menschenleben*. Since menschenleben is the *Grundfrage* of Jafarian integralistic philosophy. He is to lay the contours of human transcendence[3] so as to deconstruct the devilish project of reification of humanity. In doing so, he de-routinizes some crucial concepts such as religion. His characterization of religion within the parameters of intelligible life—as an ideal style of life—represents a future conception of religion that might meaningfully address the global future of religion too.

Menschenleben as the Grundfrage of Jafarian Philosophy

Every philosophy *Willy Nilly* starts its course of evolution within the parameters of a grand philosophical tradition. Since *philosophical* ideas are context-bounded and born when the society comes across dead-ends[4]. As a philosopher, Allama Jafari would be categorized as a Muslim philosopher although his intellectual idiosyncrasies might face the historian of philosophical ideas with indomitable hesitations in relation to such a categorization. Allama Jafari begins his philosophical career not with the question of '*Being*' but with the question of human life. In doing so, he has exposed, whether consciously or unconsciously[5], Islamic tradition of philosophy to an anthropo-biotic *Kehr*. From this time forward, he exclaims, humanity and his life must be at the heart of philosophical thought. A true philosopher is the one who sincerely devotes himself to the understanding of the mysterious phenomenon of human life which is the clue to all human inextricable knots. Taking human life as a routine phenomenon of everydayness is far from the keen-sightedness is expected from a philosophical mind. As Allama Jafari argues,

> Human life during its course of evolution has not been a simple and limited phenomenon neither requiring deep thinking nor analysis like many simple animals' life. In fact, if we consider human life as a 'sudden' phenomenon and not an 'emergent' one; it becomes difficult to justify it. The secret of life is enfolded in many covers and may lead to varying interpretations when we discuss its point of origin and development. The reality of life is a shrouded mystery and while uncovering we find a number of reasons layered over one another. Some people go for the surface explanation and some go for a little in depth … As we probe deeper in the phenomenon of human life the explanation becomes more difficult as all explanations are coining of human reason having the capacity of generating innumerable possibilities. (Jafari 2012, 30)

Thus, Allama Jafari proposes new subject-matter for philosophical deliberations—*vitae humanus*. This is surely not to say that Allama is the one who has ushered the philosophical discourse of human life for the first time. Rather this discourse has as long history as humanity itself. What makes Jafarian perspective of menschenleben a philosophical paragon is its unprecedented modality of discourse. Allama Jafari's debates of human life are neither naturalistic a la positivists and scientists nor rationalistic a la afklärungists but his discourse of human life is integralistic. Integralism in this context does not imply that Jafarian perspective of life merely represents a mixture of the other two alternatives of naturalism and rationalism. Rather Jafarian philosophy of life unveils a third realm of beingness before human eyes over the two previous realms of naturality and rationality. He calls this new step of human life the realm of *intelligibility*.

The Unknown Phenomenon of Menschenleben

Allama Jafari begins his *fundamental anthropo-bio-logy*[6] with an analytical study of '*Purely Natural Life*' as the dominant form of life in human societies throughout the history. This form of life represents a total realization of the ideals that make the building blocks of occidentally originated agenda of naturalism.

Allama invites us to get acquainted with the true coordinates of purely natural life through contemplating on the grievous havocs that it has brought upon humanity like the departure of constructive love and ambition from our lives, confrontation of right against might, narcissism and self-centeredness, relationships grounded in selfish motives and personal wellbeing, viewing the 'self' as the end and others as the means while understanding that ends would be justifying the means, shattering traditions without any moral reason, absence of Telos, philosophy and objective of life, nihilism, insecurity and anxiety about the future, self-alienation, inability to reach balanced relationship between self and society, the dissolution of the feeling of 'transcendental unity in existence', loosing grip over various aspects of one's life by gradual

weakening of sublime feelings and humane thoughts, making life-giving foundations of noble cultures unstable, and finally the regrettable failure in interpreting and analyzing connection between relative and absolute issues (ibid: 40-70).

Needless to say, Allama Jafari is an irreconcilable opponent of what we would term as commensurabilism which refers to the hegemony of scientism in the twentieth century that has once been heralded by Cartesianism. In this respect, we could align Jafarian anti-reductionist criticisms of naturalism with Husserl's phenomenology which targets 'commonly approved view of nature' initiated by Galileo and Descartes according to which nature is a spacio-temporal unity that could be reduced to a definite set of laws[7]. Although Husserl remains entrapped in the steel cage of Cartesian subjectivism by grounding his philosophy on transcendental ego, Allama seeks to show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle. This enterprise needs enough boldness originated in a genuine and authentic creativity so not to see scratching where it itches as a progress[8]. To put the matter differently, we need to replace our whole ontological perspective with a more integrated one. Allama Jafari argues that such an ontological integration can only be found within the parameters of Intelligible Life which he defines it as,

> A conscious life which canalizes deterministic and pseudo-deterministic forces and activities of natural life into the course of relative evolutionary goals through the development of liberty which flourishes in human will as it would assist human self, which is gradually developed in this process, to realize the Ultimate Telos of Life, i.e. participation in general cosmic movement toward Supreme Perfection (Ibid: 79-80).

Thus Allama shows the fly how to make its way out of the fly-bottle. He believes that we humans are fairly equipped with required apparatus to touch upon such a lofty dynamicity through which our true essence as *homo sapiens* becomes realized.

Allama Jafari's definition of intelligible life is anthropocentric in a very specific way as he defines this ideal form of life in close relation with humanity and human being. Humanism in this context, however, does not refer to universally received narrative of humano-centrism that is static and basically founded on the metaphysics of presence which has been severely targeted by Jacques Derrida in his philosophy of deconstructionism. This represents a novel, genuine and dynamic conception of humanism that in my view has well been articulated by Seyed Javad Miri in his *Reflections on Erich Fromm* (2010) where he argues,

> Humanism is about the 'Absence of Man' which is an ideal that could be but is *not* yet. This dilemma was aptly expressed by Rumi who focused on the dialectical nature of human reality that is based on an absent presence:
>
> > Wearied I am in seeing demons and beasts
> > Delighted I shall be by seeing a human being

In this poem we can discern an interesting paradox, namely, the presence of beings that could be qualified as human beings in corporeal sense and the absence of beings that could be qualified as human beings in spiritual sense. In other words, Rumi is leading us to see a very simple but profound fact which is mostly neglected or forgotten *in toto*, i.e. the state of humanity or becoming a human being in the sense that the being of an individual is upgraded to the level of humanness—which in quality is different than the level of carnality or simply being born into society of human beings. In other words, it seems the unrecorded pioneers of humanism had this notion in mind when they spoke of humanity as the yardstick of everything as accomplished man is not a man in tutelage but emancipated in the true sense of the term. Of course we need to pay profound attention to the existing distinction between 'emancipation' and 'redemption' and the fashions Fromm attempts to bridge between the public realm and the domain of conscience. Again here we seem to arrive at the terrain which Raymond Aron arrived a century ago, i.e. the question of sociodicy and the issue of theodicy of the nature of sociology and the conditions of theology. If we are to believe that 'emancipation' is a term to describe various efforts to obtain *equality* in modern society then it is not implausible to conceive 'redemption' as a term that describes various efforts to achieve *quality* of life in a deeply quantified societal order that has cut its sacral umbilical cord in an aggressive fashion which willy nilly would lead to transfiguration of Man as the sum of reality (Miri, 2010: 86).

Thus conceived, intelligible life is a call for humanity which pulls the man towards uncovering her/his true nature while its realization does also need consciously active participation of humanity in cosmic movement toward supreme perfection. This seemingly paradoxical dialectic becomes even odder when we are told that religion (in its authentic and esoteric sense) is the synthesis of *intelligiblization* (lebenization) of life by a conscientious human being (the quality of a man whose ears are open only to his sound sense and moral conscience). To state the matter otherwise, everything depends on human decision. This also reveals, to my mind, the harshest face of Sartre's claim that *man is nothing but what he makes of himself.* Thus humanity should decide very carefully whether he/she is to enter the realm of intelligible life or he/she prefers to continue his/her hedonistic and inhumane style of natural life. If he/she takes courage and embarks upon the thorny path of intelligible life he/she needs, Allama argues, to go through an eleven-fold transformations in advance:

The following transformations render the evolution from 'natural life' into 'Intelligible Life' possible.

1. Transformation of naïve sensations into 'escalated sensations/ perceptions';
2. Transformation of disrupted mental streams into 'an integrated system of ideas';

3. Transformation of naïve loves into 'intelligible loves';

4. Transformation of chimerical hopes into 'inspiring hopes';

5. Transformation of informal infatuations into 'concrete love';

6. Transformation of futile arguments about perfection and goodness into 'real efforts to achieve perfection and goodness';

7. Transformation of imitation and blind following into 'creativity';

8. Transformation of intelligent moves of speculative reason into 'wisdom seeking harmony between pure reason and moral conscience';

9. Transformation of self-indulgence and lechery into 'strong will, escalated freedom and liberty';

10. Transformation of egotism and self-centeredness into 'philanthropy and egalitarianism';

11. Transformation of the state of being satisfied with easily obtainable goals in life into 'always searching for the better' (Jafari, 2012: 121-122).

Religion in the Balance of Intelligible Life

Religion in Jafarian lebensphilosophie is rendered a novel meaning as it is defined in a dialectical fashion in close relation with humanity and an ideal lebenform that Allama calls it *vitae intelligiblis*[9]. Allama sees religion as an emerging authentic *necessity* whose emergence is totally hinged upon human decision. Allama Jafari elaborates on this existential interrelation in a dialogue with Dr. Klaus when the German psychiatrist asks him whether religion has any place in the very constitution of human self and society. Allama argues,

> To answer this question we must come to grips with the significance of leben and religion. If our meaning of life is the ordinary phenomenon that is observable in all living beings even in human beings albeit with some complexities, not only religion is unnecessary for such a phenomenon, but there would not be any conceivable telos for it other than its very ordinary coordinates and properties (eating and sleeping and wrath and lust). Moreover, if religion represents a shallow and baseless set of creeds and deeds, not only religion in this sense is unnecessary for human life, while it is also the very destroyer of intelligible life. But if we mean by human life a meaningful reality in a logocentric world, it will never be possible without answering, both theoretically and practically, the four questions of: Who am I? Whence have I come? Whither will I return? Why have I come? As you know, ordinary answers based on limited knowledge have never satisfied the humanity and will not do so even in future. Thus the necessity of religion for human life is demonstrated (Jafari, 2010: 91-92).

It is needless to say, however, Allama approaches the issue of religion in a metatheoretical fashion. He shows us that the meaningfulness of human life is

inseparably bonded to the answers that are given to four fundamental questions of who, whence, whither and why. These existential queries, Allama states, could only find their relevant answers within the context of religion. Thus religion is the last resort for purposefulness in life (ibid: 94).

Now we should turn to the relevance of Allama Jafari's conception of religion in regard to the question of 'global future of religion'. As we have mentioned before, Allama's depiction of religion is idiosyncratic[10] in the sense that he defines it as concatenated with humanity and intelligible life. The dynamic chain of this ontological concatenation is humanity as the whole destiny of this triad is at his hands. Thus conceived, religion is a *coming reality* that has not yet been wholly realized since its full realization is dependent on a big decision that humanity is on its verge, i.e. embarking upon the thorny path of intelligible life.

Notes

1. See for instance: Translation and Interpretation of Nah-jol-Balagha (Vols. 27) (2000), The Allama Jafari Institute, Tehran; An Interpretation of Whitehead's Adventures of Ideas (1998), Daftare Nashre Farhange Islami.

2. Rumi the Man and His Ideas: An Interpretation of Spiritual Couplets of Mowlana Jalaloddin Rumi (Vols. 15) (1984), Islamic Press, Tehran.

3. See for instance: Arif, Seema (2011): *Transcendence Model of Human Evolution*, Transcendent Philosophy, Vol. 12, p. 223-252.

4. This definition of philosophical career seems inapplicable to Islamic tradition of philosophy. To tell the truth, Islamic philosophy started its course of evolution by a wrong turn. From first to last, this philosophy was always plagued by Western philosophical prophets' ideas. Seeing Aristotle as the interpreter of Qur'an, Muslim philosophers, from Al-Kendi to Allama Tabatabaei, became bogged down in the swamp of Aristotelian logical thought. Having propositionalized the cardinal concept of truth a la Aristotle, Islamic philosophers closed their unopened *listung* toward *Being*. Allama Jafari has embarked upon a new path in Islamic tradition of philosophical thought. Addressing Islamic intellectual and literary heritages, he is to experience the authentic Islamic openness to Being. I hope to have enough taste and time to elaborate more on the relevance of Jafarian philosophical enterprise to the issue of Westoxification in the context of Islamic philosophy in an independent essay in a near future.

5. Allama Jafari has not seemingly shown such pathological interest toward Islamic tradition of philosophy. There are almost few citations of Muslim philosophers in his works as compared to Allama's numerous debates of Occidental philosophers and the status quo of philosophy and philosophical thought in the West. It appears to me that Allama has, whether consciously or unconsciously, targeted the fountain-head. In this respect, Allama

Jafari's agenda which is deeply rooted in primordial teachings of Islam is comparable with Heidegger's fundamental criticisms of western tradition of philosophy. Although both philosophers seek to touch the authentic *primordiality* through their philosophizations of human being and his life affairs but Heidegger's efforts are retrospective in the sense that he is toiling to resuscitate the ancient philosophical sensitivity toward Being while Jafarian life philosophy is prospective and uncovers a new face of reality that has not been previously touched by human communities and must be realized in a glorious future through actualization of human great potentiality for intelligiblization of his life and thus the reality.

6. Fundamental in this context should be understood in a Heideggerian fashion.

7. There is a wonderful consonance between Allama Jafari's intelligiblism and Husserlian phenomenology, which could be seen as the fountain-head of both continental and analytic traditions of western philosophy as renowned contemporary British philosopher and logician Michael Dummett argues in his seminal book on *Origins of Analytic Philosophy* (1995), in terms of their critiques of ontology of modernism as Seyed Javad Miri has also noted in his newly published essay (2012) on Allama Jafari's alternative sociology of primordialism where he argues: 'it seems there are profound similarities between proponents of continental phenomenology and Allama Jafari on the importance of 'life' in the context of human self. For instance, the importance of phenomenological concept of *erlebt* and intelligible idea of *being* have not been explored thoroughly yet but could have profound consequences for conceptualization of sociological analysis as both are pre-epistemological stepping stone for interpretative analyses and configurations'.

8. 'Die philosophie hat keinen fortschritt gemacht?' this is the question that Wittgenstein starts his grievance of status quo of philosophy in the twentieth century and continues, 'Wenn einer kratzt, wo es ihn juckt, muss ein fortschritt zu sehen sein? Ist es sonst kein echtes ein kratzen, oder kein echtes jucken? Und kann nicht diese reaktion auf die reitzung lange zeit so weitergehen, eh ein mittel gegen das jucken gefunden wird? (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Vermischte Bemerkungen*, Frankfurt, 1977, p. 163-164)'. Wittgenstein invites philosophical community to find a true remedy for the itching that is brought about by primordial questions of philosophy since time immemorial and have not yet even been approached from right angle. We need to change our *standpoint* and brush our eyes and see the world anew as contemporary late Iranian mystic Sohrab Sepehri says. This is where the ideas of Austrian philosopher meets Allama Jafari's fundamental anthropo-bio-logy that is to reshuffle the reality and uncover some very significant aspects of human life that have been hidden under heavy dust of ontological forgetfulness for a long time and are supposed to play an indispensible role in revolutionizing our perspective of life.

9. See for instance: Jafari, 2000/ Vol. 1: p. 264; vol 10: p. 196; Vol. 25: p. 66; ibid: p. 72; Vol. 3: p. 63; Vol. 22: p. 12-13; Vol. 2: p. 34; jafari, 2008: p. 118; 252; 346.

10. Allama Jafari's delineation of religion is an *event* in the history of Islamic tradition of philosophy due to its humano-centric modality.

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The Role of Muslim Leadership in Nigeria:
A Critical Introduction to NSCIA

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Abstract

Nigeria is a leading African country with a Muslim majority population. Yet Nigerian Muslims, since the spread of Islam to the country in the thirteen century, had continued to operate in disarray and were never known to have spoken in one voice until the founding of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) in 1973. Rather, they operated as different Islamic entities and autonomous societies with diverse aims and disparate objectives. The purpose of this paper is to trace the origins of the Nigerian Muslims' quest for a united front and articulate the factors that stimulated in them the need for such a platform. The paper is also aimed at enumerating the early initiatives of the Council as well as its significant roles in making formal representations to the government on behalf of the Muslims. The paper employs the philosophical method in its historical analysis and concludes after an evaluation the performance of the Council with regards to its mission, that the NSCIA now seems moribund.

Keywords: Muslim Leadership, Nigeria, NSCIA, United Front, Philosophical Method, Historical Analysis

Introduction

There has been a concentration of recent scholarship about Islam in Nigeria on Muslim youth and also on political Islam, which may be described as the radicalization of Muslim youth. I seek to deviate in this paper from such direction of research as I investigate the role of Muslim leadership in Nigeria, with a focus on the umbrella body of Nigerian Muslims known as the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA). The body occupies a central place in religious matters as it is frequently referred to in connection with issues revolving around Muslims in Nigeria as well as those concerning inter-religious questions. Yet there has not been a single work of

scholarship devoted to the study of the leadership roles of the body, since its almost four decades of existence. Although there have been a handful of media presentations in the form of newspaper reports and magazine stories, such publications cannot be regarded as systematic enough to play the role of sophisticated scholarship. That explains why this historical survey and critical analysis relies more on primary sources and oral information formally collected from a number of individuals who were not only eye witnesses but also dramatic personae in the politics of Islamic leadership in contemporary Nigeria. In this regard, it should be noted that all the personal interviews cited in this work were conducted by this researcher. After an introduction to the NSCIA which also comprises the factors responsible for its emergence as well as its mission, the paper discusses the early initiatives and preliminary activities of the body. It also makes an analysis of the various efforts made by the NSCIA in its quest for peaceful coexistence between Nigerian Muslims and people of other faiths in the country, especially Christians. In a similar token, the paper discusses the national crisis that almost erupted in the wake of Nigeria's association with the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). Also addressed in the paper are the roles played by the body during the various political crises that constituted a turbulent experience to it owing to the involvement of some of its members. The paper thereafter evaluates the performance of the body especially with regard to its mission with a view to exposing the extent to which it has been committed to its focus. There is no gainsaying that the need for a critical work on the NSCIA is a long-felt one and is hereby fulfilled by the present paper.

NSCIA: An Introduction

In the year 1973, an assembly of all Muslim leaders in Nigeria was convened in the City of Kaduna under the auspices of *Jamatu-Nasril-Islam* (JNI) which is the umbrella body for all the Islamic organizations in Northern Nigeria.[1] Kaduna in that year played host to an unprecedentedly large crowd of Muslim leaders from different parts of the country who had all come overlooking the remoteness of their various locations. The main issue meant for discussion at the historic assembly was the timeliness of the fulfillment of the long felt need for an all-embracing central platform of leadership for Nigerian Muslims.[2]

The assembly wanted the proposed Council to 'act as a bridge between the various Muslim communities in Nigeria and also enable Muslims to speak to the government of the day in one voice on matters concerning Islam.'[3] The emergence Of the Council in 1973 has been described as 'the culmination of many years of tireless efforts to get

Muslims in this country under one central organization.' A major contributory factor in the quick formulation of the Council was the Nigerian Muslims' failure to speak with one voice at an lnternational Islamic Conference held in Libya earlier in the same year and to which various Islamic organisations were invited from Nigeria. Every Nigerian delegate at the conference rose to protect the interest of his own organisation and not that of the generality of the Nigerian Muslims whereas their counterparts from other countries made common presentations. On their return to the country, a quick move was made towards the fulfilment of the need for a central Islamic body which was formally inaugurated as Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) in 1974. The Nigerian Muslims have since the inauguration of the Council, been able to 'debate, discuss and state at the Federal level, their point of view on such matters as education and the law.'[4] The body unites the Nigerian Muslims and coordinates the aspirations and activities of all Muslim Communities, organisations and individuals in the country. The Council is registered under the Laws of Nigerian like many of the religious bodies and is being accorded recognition by both the Federal and State Governments as the umbrella by for the Nigerian Muslims.[5]

Given the importance of constitutional stipulations to the administration of such a Central Council, a former Attorney-General in the Old Western State of Nigeria who later rose to become Secretary-General of the Council, Dr. Abdul-Lateef Adegbite, was appointed Chairman of the Committee which drafted the Constitution of the apex Islamic body, while former Sultan of Sokoto who was then the Secretary-General of *Jamatu-Nasril-Islam*, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki was appointed Secretary. The drafting exercise took place at Green Spring hotel, Ibadan in Oyo State where the Committee met several times in 1974, in a bid to prepare the Constitution.[6] There was a serious argument over the office of the President-General which the constitution reserves for the Sultan of Sokoto who is believed to be the descendant of Shaykh Uthman Dan Fodio. The Chairman was of the opinion that the Southern Muslims would prefer an elective leadership while Secretary maintained that the office should be an exclusive preserve of the Sultan.[7] After several adjournments and meetings, the Southern Muslims accepted the arrangement as a sacrifice for the sustenance of unity among the Nigerian Muslims.[8] Yet the Chairman later fashioned out an impressive statement that 'the Sultan of Sokoto, *Sarkin Musulumi,* shall be invited to assume the leadership of the Council as President-General.'[9] Such a provision appears to have logically taken care of a situation where there is a Sultan who is not well disposed to Islam and the Muslims or who is not acceptable to the Nigerian Muslim Community.

The foundation President-General of the Council was therefore the then Sultan of Sokoto, late Sultan Abubakr Siddiq II. All the other principal offices of the Council

were also reserved for the northern part of the country as the Deputy President-General is constitutionally the Shehu of Borno. Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki who later rose to become Sultan of Sokoto was made the Secretary-General on account of a request by the late Sultan who felt that Alhaji Dasuki had been functioning as Secretary-General in the north-based *Jamatu-Nasril-Islam* of which he was President-General and as such would not find any strain in working with him on the Council.[10] Yet former Minister of Works late Alhaji Isa Kaita, also a northerner, was appointed National Treasurer. That explains why late Alhaji Aminu Kano, a prominent Northern Muslim politician, sought to know from the leaders of the Council the extent to which such a distribution of leadership positions could be regarded as representative of the Nigerian Muslims. The question he raised prompted a critical reconsideration as the office of the National Legal Adviser was quickly created for Dr. Lateef Adegbite, who himself chaired the Constitution Drafting Committee. This probably served as a compensation or consolation for the Southern Muslims from among whom ought to have emerged the Deputy President-General and the Secretary-General, at least, to strike a balance between the two regions more so that the leader of the Southern Muslims was responsible for the generation of the idea of a central Islamic body in Nigeria.[11]

Early Initiatives of the NSCIA

The Council, since its inception, has been using its position to protect the interest of the Muslims. An instance of this was when the then government of the Western State decided to discontinue Advance Level (Higher School Certificate) programme from the Ijebu Muslim College, Ijebu Ode, Ogun State. The government had selected only ten schools for that exercise and none of them was a Muslim school. The Muslims felt a serious sense of injustice and, as such, reacted promptly; the Islamic Council sent a protest delegation to the government of the old Western State. The Council was later to politely suggest to the Chief Executive of the State to either kindly add one more school to the list of schools or make the arrangement effective from the following year. The Governor, in turn, promised to think about it and eventually did well on the matter.[12]

Another experience of similar nature was recalled by a renowned Media executive and former Editor of *The Punch* Newspaper, Alhaji Liad Tella who faced some persecution at Baptist High School, Iwo in the then Oyo State where he was taking a Higher School Certificate programme.[13] The Muslim Students in the School were horrendously oppressed as no provision was made for the teaching or practice of Islam. Young Liad Tella sold the idea of forming a branch of the Muslim Students' Society (MSS) in the school, to his colleagues who readily embraced it.[14] The Muslim Students organized themselves and began to speak in one indivisible voice.

The School authorities soon began to feel threatened and insecure and therefore wasted no time in setting up a panel to fish out all the students involved in the activities of the MSS. Being a frontliner in the effort, young Tella was identified expulsion. As a result, he too wasted no time in contacting M. O. A. Abdul, who was then a professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of lbadan. The professor later took him to the Secretariat where they both stated the case before the Attorney-General and Commissioner of Justice, Dr. Lateef Adegbite who, incidentally was then the Legal Adviser of the apex Islamic body. The Attorney-General later intimated the Commissioner for Education about the development. —On the following day, the school principal involved received a letter from the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Education concerning why no student should be compelled to embrace a religion other than that of his parents.[15] Consequently, the position of the Council as presented by its Legal Adviser was respected and the student was reinstated.[16]

The NSCIA in Quest for a Truly Multi-Religious Nigeria

The Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs has always enjoyed an adequate representation at various levels in the country. So when the Constitution Drafting Committee was inaugurated by the Federal Government to commence its work in 1975, the Council was actively involved in its deliberations. Of particular interest to the Council in the proposed section of the constitution on the state and its fundamental objectives, was the suggestion that Nigeria be described as 'One and indivisible sovereign Republic, secular, democratic and social'. Prompting the Committee to drop the term 'secular', scholars, intellectuals, public commentators, and opinion leaders debated over the appropriateness or otherwise of describing Nigeria as a 'secular' state. The Council insisted that Nigeria could not be a secular state in that the concept 'Secularism.' The Council also elucidated that Nigeria is neither a theocratic state like Saudi-Arabia and a host of other states nor a secular state like Turkey, and even illustrated with the point that the Nigerian government facilitates pilgrimages (to the holy lands), provides for the teaching of religious studies in schools, and declares public holidays for religious festivals. It was further argued by the Council that the Nigerians have a work-free day on Sunday because christians are required to worship on that day owing to the insistence of their religion that the day be work-free and that the government also recognises the Vatican and allows them to have an ambassador in Nigeria and in response, sent an ambassador to the state of Vatican. In a similar token was it argued that the Government declares national days of prayers either in Christian Churches or in the Mosques and concluded that it would be hypocritical to say that Nigeria is a secular state and therefore should have nothing to do with religion.[17]

The Shariah question was another issue that generated a heated debate in the Constituent Assembly in 1978. During this period, the Council posited that Shariah is an inseparable part of Islam and that the Muslims should not be deprived of living and operating in line with the stipulations of their religion. The Council enjoined the non-Muslims to eschew intolerance by stating profoundly that 'once two or more communities are united by political bonds sanctified by the constitution which is a fundamental treaty of permanent brotherhood, common action and destiny, it would not only be criminal but a grievous sin in Islam for the terms of the treaty to be violated by acts of discrimination and intolerance.'[18] The Council articulated the beauty of Shariah and even argued that 'aspects of Islamic commercial law, of Islamic law on theft, properly understood, might well find a place in the Nigerian code of law and be of benefit to the country as a whole'[19]

The resistance of the moves to introduce the Shariah Court of Appeal into the federal constitution led to a walk-out by eighty-eight Muslim members of the Constituent Assembly led by Alhaji Shehu Shagari who later became Nigeria's first executive president in 1979. The then Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo (retired and later Nigeria's Civilian President) intervened to appeal to the members to let wise counsel prevail and not to allow 'personal feelings and sectional interest to override the need to fashion a new constitution that will be flexible and workable as well as guarantee the existence of the nation.'[20] The general impression was that the speech read by the Head of State pricked the conscience of the members of the Assembly and navigated a good way for the provisions under the 1979 constitution making the establishment of shariah court of appeal by the states voluntary.[21]

The Council was also represented at the 1989 Constituent Assembly when the Shariah question arose again on account of the fact that the non-Muslims were not only opposed to the idea of the Shariah Court of Appeal but also determined to 'wipe out the gains the Muslims made in the 1979 constitution'. The Council has always maintained that 'no rational government would deviate from the constitution for no one would deliberately want to destabilize its country.'[22] Consequently, the position of Shariah in 1989 remained the same as what it was in 1979. Yet it was a partial success for the real idea almost materialised.

The NSCIA and the OIC Connection

The leadership traits inherent in most of the executive members of the NSCIA were later appreciated by the government of the day. In 1986, for instance, some of them were appointed by former Head of State, General Ibrahim Babangida as members of

the presidential commission on the implications of Nigeria's membership of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).[23] The Commission chaired by the then Internal Affairs Minister. Lt. Col. John Shagaya and inaugurated by the Head of State on the 3rd of February, 1986, comprised alongside the leaders of the NSCIA a former Vice Chancellor of the University of Lagos, Prof. Nurudeen Alao, Archbishop Olubunmi Okogie of the Catholic Mission, Pastor Alexander Bada of the Celestial Church, former Grand Qadi of Niger State Shaykh Ahmad Lemu and others.[24]

The OIC question had earlier generated a heated debate as some non-Muslims grew 'hypertensive' over Nigerian's membership of the body. The NSCIA quickly came out again to correct the wrong impression created that Nigeria is a secular state and therefore should not associate with groups of state that have a religious platform. The Council also enjoined Nigerians to discard that erroneous belief and be watchful and alert that no attempt is made for any group to gain an undue advantage over the other. It also stated that it is very sad that people believe that being Christian group or an Islamic group is inimical to the interest of Nigerians. The Council instanced the memberships of Sierra-Leone, Uganda and Garbon, the three being countries with insignificant proportions of Muslims in their population. The Council emphasised that people should stop fearing Islam, a religion of peace which has no hidden agenda. 'We must look at the aims and objectives of the OlC, in order for us to appreciate the implication of Nigeria's membership,' the Council submitted.[25] When asked why the benefits being expected from the body have taken so long in coming to Nigeria, the Secretary-General of the Council answered that the country is a full member which is not active enough in the Islamic Development Bank which, itself, is 'where lies the beaf.'[26] 'If a country claims to be a full member and is not active enough in the activities of the body it should not expect to get all the benefits.'[27] By the time Nigeria joins the Islamic Development Bank we shall begin to receive soft loans and attract social, health, economic and other projects to this country which will benefit all Nigerians whether Muslims or Christians.[28]

The Challenge of Coping with Political Crises

The Federal Government of Nigeria appointed a number of the executive members of the NSCIA unto the Advisory Council on Religious Affairs in Nigeria[29] established in 1987 by Decree and consisting of twelve (12) Muslim and Christian leaders. One of the objectives of the Council was to consider the possibility of resolving all religious crises. It was wisely thought that the body would be well run by joint chairmanship an arrangement to which the Military government of General Ibrahim Babangida never

consented as it only favoured the idea of one chairman, who was the then Minister of Internal Affairs, Lt. Col. Shagaya who was very focused and energetic in steering the ship of the Council. His successors were probably not favourably disposed to the activities of the body which was supposed to be supported and serviced by the Chief Executive of the Internal Affairs Ministry. However, the Advisory Body has got into a state of lethargy and is today more or less moribond, as it's impact is hardly felt now anywhere in the country.[30]

The NSCIA seemed to have reached the peak of its glory and the zenith of its strength with the demise in 1989 of its foundation President-General, Sultan Siddiq Abubakr III. The mantle of its overall leadership was thereafter passed unto Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, the hitherto Secretary-General who automatically rose to become President-General on account of his appointment as the new Sultan of Sokoto. As Alhaji Dasuki became Sultan and President-General, Dr. Abdul-Lateef Adegbite who was hitherto the Legal Adviser of the Council, was appointed to fill the vacancy in the office of the Secretary-General, created by Dasuki's elevation to the throne.

The greatest test or trial came for the apex Islamic body when the 1993 Presidential elections believed to be the freest and fairest in the history of the country and overwhelmingly won by Chief Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola who incidentally was a Vice-President of the Council. In the morning of June 23, Nduka Irabor, at the time, the Chief Press Secretary to the Vice President went on air to announce the cancellation of the election which had been held since the 12th of June, 1993. The Nigerian people naturally expected the apex body to hit hard on the Babangida administration over that unjust move but that was never to be as it (the Council) maintained what could be aptly described as 'an embarrassing silence.'[31] It kept mute for so long that some began to think that its leaders found it difficult to take a common standpoint. In an early newspaper review on Radio in 1994, a statement was credited to the then Sultan of Sokoto and President-General of the apex body, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki enjoining the undeclared winner of the June 12 elections to accept the annulment as 'an act of God.'[32] The Secretary-General wasted no time in phoning the Sultan for confirmation of what was credited to him. He (the Sultan), too claimed to have been trying to reach him on phone. The scribe sought to know from the Sultan whether he said so or not. The Sultan said he never made such a statement and that he even wanted to ask Secretary-General whether he instructed the Administrative Secretary of the Council to make a release on 'our behalf.'[33] The Secretary-General would hardly believe that Sultan could say so more so that he had sharply denied it stressing that 'Islam teaches us to stand by justice and not to partake in oppression and cheating. It must be a forgery in the Sultan's name', the scribe of the Council

reasoned.[34] *The Tell* Magazine was later to devote a cover story to how '*June 12 divides Muslims*' by stating clearly why the Secretary-General would never subscribe to the 'act of God' pronouncement attributed to the President-General. In fact, the June 12 crisis, as noted by the publication, more or less affected the inter-personal relationship of the two leaders of the apex body.[35]

The Secretary-General, on behalf of the Council, dispelled beyond any reasonable doubt the insinuations that Muslim leaders are indifferent about political crises in the country especially the June 12 issue. He made several releases and presented many position papers in stating why the Babangida government and later the Abacha administration would only be committing 'a daylight robbery'[36] by depriving Chief M.K.O. Abiola of his right to the presidency having won overwhelmingly. He made it clear in several ways that Muslim leaders felt very strongly about the annulment of the election results. Stressing that it was not only a daylight robbery but also the mother of all rigging 'which no Muslim will accept, he established that he and other Muslims leaders would continue to speak in the hope that government will have a change of mind.'[37] He however explained that it was impossible for emirs and sultans who play both religious and political roles to sound confrontational to the government because they are also part of it. 'Till today other religious leaders who do not play political role still raise the issues of truth and justice with respect to the annulment of June 12, even in their sermons,'[38] he added saying that it is not as if Muslim leaders with religious and political responsibilities tolerate injustice.[39]

The Council even stated in some newspaper publications how its members and other Muslim leaders in the country advised the Head of State to release Chief M.K.O. Abiola from detention for a round-table talk on the way out of the logjam and promised that since they had not seen 'positive signs'[40] they would continue to make representations to government on the imperative of direct dialogue with Chief Abiola. After five years of continued incarceration Chief M.K.O. Abiola, a Vice President-General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, died in prison. Nigerians later recalled publicity with deep grief the life and times of this great Muslim personality 'who gave so much to make others happy and who contributed enormously to the development of Nigeria and the uplift of the African and the Blackman wherever they may be. Islam occupied a special spot in his heart as was evident in the immense support he gave to Islam causes nation-wide.'[41]

An Evaluative Look at the NSCIA

The enviable leadership qualities possessed by various individuals involved in steering the ship of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs have been attested to by

some of those who were close to the Council. For instance, the late Wazirin Minna, Alhaji Umar Audi who, as noted earlier, arranged for Dr. Abdul-Lateef Adegbite in 1971 the meeting with late Sultan of Sokoto, that culminated in the founding of NSCIA, later observed that the Council was blessed, from its inception, with leaders who never refused to sacrifice even their career for Islam.[42] The leadership of the body was carefully observed over the years and has been described as having been constituted by qualities of someone who is sincerely interested in Islam, the welfare of the Muslim *ummah* and peaceful coexistence between the Muslims and non-Muslims in Nigeria. Their utterances, as recorded in newspapers from time to time, are always consistent and clearly indicative of their understanding and refinement.[43] They have even been described as 'a result-oriented individuals, efficient operators, great achievers, sincere Muslim leaders who are full of energy and dedication.'[44] However, there are other Muslim personalities who believe that the leaders of the NSCIA are fond of making unnecessary compromise to the favour of the non-Muslims. Yet others see them as fulfilling satisfactorily the role of bridge-builders between the south and the north.[45]

It is saddening to note that the apex lslamic body does not earn a pass mark in the estimation of some of its leaders who see it as performing poorly owing to 'structural defects, weak administrative backup, poor funding, lack of full national acceptance, and insufficient commitment of its members.'[46] The Muslims in the southern part of the country have long ago been questioning the idea of making the Office of the President-General of the Council an exclusive preserve of the Sultan of Sokoto in the north while the Office of the Deputy President-General is also reserved exclusively for the Shehu of Borno also in the north whereas the south was only considered for the Office of the Secretary-General after much pressure, following the elevation of Alhaji Dasuki to the position of President-General by virtue of his installation as the Sultan of Sokoto. This explains why a relationship of hostility has persisted between the Council and the League of Imams and Alfas operating in the south-western part of the country.[47]

Yet it is worthy of mention that nothing is meaningfully heard about either of these two organizations except, of course, when it comes to the announcement of the date of the commencement or termination of Ramadan fast.[48]

Neither of the two bodies seems to be on the right path, with regards to Ramadan moonsighting. Experience has shown that both Organizations have always fed the public with wrong and inaccurate pieces of information on moonsighting. For instance, many Muslims in Nigeria have been fasting only for 29 days of Ramadan consistently for more than 40 years. This experience is arguably a product of misleading information and incompetent Islamic leadership offered by the two Organizations. Ramadan, like any other lunar month, is normally 29 or 30 days and astronomical

calculations have shown that it is impossible to have a cluster of 29-day Ramadan months without break for 30 years as the NSCIA would have the Nigerian Muslim Community believe. The League of Imams of Southwestern Nigeria is not helping the situation either, as the body normally meets weeks before Ramadan to fix dates for the commencement and termination of the fast, regardless of the Islamic tradition that Muslims must sight the moon to begin or end Ramadan fast. Nowhere else in the Muslim world are Muslims picking dates for beginning of Ramadan and its termination without bothering to search for the new moon. It is worthy of note that the essence of assessing, at this juncture, the performance of the NSCIA on Moonsighting which is the only service it renders Nigerian Muslims, is to underscore the fact that the body has not lived up to expectation, even in its only obligation or duty.

Nonetheless, there is more to the propagation of Islam than moon-sighting. Concerning the question of leadership in the organization, Nigerian Muslims seem to be favourably disposed to the idea of a further zoning of the Council's offices by providing for an additional Deputy President-General with a view to zoning this to the Western states. This arrangement 'would deflate the contention of those who feel that the distribution of key offices of the Council is lop-sided.'[49] Similarly, the Office of Secretary-General will be zoned to the Southern states to balance the position of the President-General which, as stated earlier, is permanently reserved for the Sultan of Sokoto. The most impressive recommendation being made by Muslims in various parts of the country is that it be added to the constitution as part of the aims and objectives of the Council that it be responsible for the co-ordination of *Da'wah* in Nigeria. One finds no strain in subscribing to such an idea and wonders why the Council can be competent to lay claim to being in charge of Islamic Affairs in the country without having any viable *Da'wah* programme.

Aside its total concentration on Ramadan moonsighting, another shortcoming of the NSCIA lies with its leadership structure which makes the office of the President-General an exclusive preserve of the Sultan of Sokoto. Such an arrangement represents a total departure from the Islamic tradition which favours the shura-oriented system of leadership. The implication of the NSCIA's zoning of its presidency to Sokoto is that Sokoto is home to the spiritual head of the Nigerian Muslims. The present leadership structure of the body seeks to promote the growing perception among Nigerian Muslims that northern Muslims see themselves as superior to their southern counterparts. Given that Islam favours consultation in leader selection, there is no strain in declaring the current leadership of the body as inconsonant with Islamic principles.

Closely related to the above argument is the zoning of the body's Deputy President-General to the Shehu of Bornu, also a northerner. This shows that it is not

only the office of the President-General that is reserved for the north but also that of the Deputy President-General. This lends credence to the argument of the southern Muslims that NSCIA was originally founded to serve the interest of northern Muslims at the expense of their southern counterparts. It would be recalled that all the first generation of the national officers were from the north, which was why late Alhaji Aminu Kanu questioned the credibility of such an arrangement, as noted earlier.

Consequently, the office of the National Legal Adviser was created for Dr. Abdul-Lateef Adegbite, a southerner, as a compensation for the south which had hitherto not received any share or attention in the power sharing arrangement. It is pertinent to note that it was the same line of argument that further worked to the favour of the south as the National Legal Adviser was made Secretary-General sequel to the demise of the then President-General, Sultan Siddiq Abubakr II, which created a vacuum filled by Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki who had served as Secreatary-General of the Council under the late Sultan.

Furthermore, the performance of the NSCIA seems to be far below the expectation of the Nigerian Muslims. As an apex Islamic body, the presence of the NSCIA is expected to be felt in various directions in the country, in the form of Islamic projects, business ventures, educational structures and enlightenment programmes. The reverse is however the case as there is hardly any indication that the body is alive. This situation is so terrible that it is just a section of the National Mosque in Abuja that currently houses the Secretariat of the Council.

It is not out of place to recall, at this juncture, that even the moonsighting exercise which seems to be the only Islamic obligation that currently engages the attention of the NSCIA, is decided and championed by traditional rulers and not Islamic scholars. Traditional rulers are more active in the body than are Muslim intellectuals which is why it commands little or no respect among most Muslims who attach importance to learning and expected a performance of high standards from the Council, in that regard.

Conclusion

This paper has traced the evolution of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and enumerated its early initiatives and activities. The paper gave specific details of some of the Council's roles in protecting the interest of the Muslims at home and abroad. It also gave a clear picture of the survival strategies employed by the Council in the face of political crises especially that which greeted the annulment of June 12, 1993 presidential elections. The paper concluded with an appraisal of the leadership of the body alongside its current role and degree of

relevance in the country, and posited that the Council has not lived up to expectation. The paper offered some ameliorative proposal as a way out of the current lethargic condition of the Council, with regards to its role in the leadership of Muslims in Nigeria.

Notes

1. Personal Interview with Dr. L. O. Adegbite, Lagos, August, 1996. The author likes to express his profound appreciation to Dr. Lateef Adegbite for the kind audience granted him and for his moral support throughout the period of data collection for this research.

2. ibid.

3. For details of the Mission of the NSCIA, see, the Constitution and the Report of the Task Force on Reorganisation, approved in Ibadan on 5th Nov. 1989.

4. See, Peter B. Clarke, West Africa and Islam, Edward Arnold Publishers, London, 1982: p. 258.

5. See, the Constitution (NSCIA), op.cit.

6. Personal Interview with Dr. Lateef Adegbite, op. cit.

7. ibid.

8. ibid.

9. ibid.

10. ibid.

11. This is only a personal observation by the writer.

12. Any critical observer probably finds no strain in detecting that it is characteristic of Dr. L. O. Adegbite to defend Islam in the face of any form of oppression.

13. Alhaji Liad Tella discussed this issue with the present writer in a casual interaction at MITV Plaza, Alausa, Ikeja, September, 2000.

14. ibid.

15. ibid.

16. ibid.

17. See, West African and Islam, op.cit. p. 249-257

18. ibid.

19. For details, see, Weekend Vanguards, January 18, 1997, Cover Story

20. See, West Africa and Islam, op.cit.

21. This is yet another personal observation by this writer.

22. See, West African and Islam, op. cit.

23. See, Weekend Vanguard, op. cit

24. L.O. Adegbite's Bio-data: Public Service, 'Religious Activities'

25. See, Newswatch, February 24, 1986: p. 14-15

26. See, Weekend Vanguard, op. cit.

27. ibid.

28. ibid.

29. ibid.

30. Personal Interview with Dr. L. O. Adegbite, Lagos 1996.

31. ibid.

32. ibid.

33. ibid.

34. ibid.

35. ibid.

36. ibid.

37. ibid.

38. See, for instance, a Memorandum submitted by Dr. Lateef Adegbite, the Seriki of Egbas, to the National Constitutional Conference Commission p. 5. See, also, THISDAY, Vol. 2. P. 331, Monday, March 18, 1996: p. 17.

39. The material losses counted by Dr. Lateef Adegbite in his professional engagement were innumerable.

40. See, Tribute to the Late Alhaji (Chief) M.K.O Abiola, Baba Adinni of Yoruba land and Vice President-General, Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) by Dr. Lateef Adegbite, Baba Adinni and Seriki of Egba land, Secretary-General, NSCIA, at 40th day Fidau Prayers held by Ogun State Chapter of NSCIA on Wednesday, August 19, 1998, at Abeokuta.

41. Personal Interview with the late Wazirin Minna, Alhaji Umaru Audi, Minna, April 2nd, 1997.

42. Personal Interview with Shaykh Ahmad Lemu, Islamic Education Trust (IET) Headquarters, Minna, April 2nd, 1997.

43. Personal Interview with the Emir of Bida (Estu Nupe), Alhaji Umaru Ndayako, Emir's Palace, Bida, April 2nd, 1997.

44. Personal Interview with the Makaman Nupe, Alhaji Shehu Ahmadu Musa, Saka Tinubu Street, Lagos Saturday, March 29, 1997.

45. Personal Interview with Hon. Justice Bashir Sambo, Federal Secretariat Complex, Abuja (FCT), April 2nd, 1997.

46. Personal Interview with Alhaji Sulaiman Onyeama, Enugu, March 22nd, 1997.

47. Personal Interview with Alhaji Salami Edobo Lawal, Benin City, Edo State, March 21st 1997.

48. See, for instance, a Memorandum submitted by Dr. Lateef Adegbite, the Seriki of Egbas, to the National Constitutional Conference Commission p. 5. See, also, THISDAY, Vol. 2. P. 331, Monday, March 18, 1996.

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Brain Drain: Problems and Solutions

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Abstract

After reviewing the literature on theories related to the problem of Brain Drain (namely the departure/ migration of intellectuals, knowledge workers, and/or specialized manpower from their countries of origin to host countries—mainly western and advanced countries) this paper quickly goes through the ways Asian countries have met the problem. To explain this costly and normally bitter phenomenon—and in order to combat, to counter, to face, to exploit it—the paper goes on to review a range of theories: Brain Return, Brain Circulation, Brain Share, and finally Virtual Connection with the Diaspora. These theories help the study to suggest causes and reasons (national and international) for the phenomenon; as well as an overview of the successes and failures in policies implemented in different sample countries. The countries to be referred to in this regard are: China, Korea, Malaysia, India, Philippines, Iran, and Turkey. For this purpose sources and data from international agencies are reviewed, as well as academic and other research papers. National reports are one example of other sorts of reports taken into consideration. The paper concludes with a set of general and specific suggestions, from a sociological standpoint, for Asian countries facing the phenomenon of Brain Drain, within a sociological theory framework.

Keywords: Brain Drain, Developing Countries, Statistics, Sociology, Social Analysis

Introduction

The term 'Brain Drain' was coined a few decades ago by the Royal Society in Britain, as a mostly negative term. Over time this original usage has moderated and it is used in some contexts in a neutral sense today.

Definition, Causes, and Consequences

The process of brain drain implies the outflow of highly qualified workers, scientists, technologists, or specialized people. This flow has generally been towards the West—but also exists within the West.

In recent years, terms like 'brain exodus,' 'brain migration,' 'brain export,' 'exodus of talent,' or 'brain exchange,' 'brain gain,' 'brain circulation,' and 'international mobility' have been introduced, alluding to the potential benefits of highly qualified migration; as compared to terms like 'brain waste', which imply loss of intellectual potential. However the concept generally remains associated with the flight of 'brain power' or 'loss of human capital.'

Highly qualified migration is basically driven by negative factors in the source countries (outflow/ push factors) and positive incentives in the receiving countries (inflow/ pull factors). Motivations for people leaving their home countries are various and range from personal (cultural pressures, religious and ideological discriminations, poor career prospects, constraints on freedom) and economic (low wages, unemployment), to social (low education, bad living and working conditions, social insecurity) and political (persecution, political instability and insecurity) reasons. Additionally, the north-south dominated flow of information provided by 'de-territorialized media' and accelerated 'cultural globalization' following Western ideals (knowledge, consumption, individual liberty) leads young people, marginal groups, and dissatisfied individuals (especially) in developing countries to consider emigrating to the Western world (Gebrewold, 2007, pp. 97-102). Pull factors largely correspond to the scarcities found in source countries.

For source countries, remittances, knowledge transfer, new or enhanced foreign trade relations, foreign education and values, increased human capital through motivating those who stay in the source country, are positive impacts of the Brain Drain; while loss of intellectual potential, staff shortages (especially in strategically important sectors like medical care, technical areas, administration and education), loss of economic investment (cost of tertiary education) and loss of tax revenue represent the negative consequences. By contrast, receiving countries 'accumulate skill,' offset labor shortages, augment the 'average skill level' of their labor force and usually increase the economic profit ratio by increasing wage pressure in the national labor market (Exenberger, 2007, p. 15).

The consequences of the Brain Drain cannot be generalized as they vary significantly according to conditions in source and receiving countries. Religious fractionalization intensifies the negative impacts. Another major factor in the extent

of negative impacts is the amount of native human capital in the source country; this determines whether or not the Brain Drain causes an appreciable lack of human resources in strategic sectors such as health industry, and education. Consequently, the Brain Drain can benefit large populations and middle income countries if planned and exploited properly, while significantly weakening small and less developed countries.

Slowing Brain Drain has proved not to be as simple as imposing legal restrictions or reducing poverty (Gebrewold, 2007, p. 101), because migration motives are manifold; people are willing to defy prohibitions (undocumented migration) despite the fact that migration also implies costs (usually the poorest of the poor can't migrate). By contrast, in the case of highly qualified worker migration, increasing poverty causes growing numbers of emigrants (Exenberger, 2009, p. 39) to leave their source country, to a large degree voluntarily and via legal channels (Kelo & Wächter, 2006, p. 16). Regrettably, most data regarding international migration flows are unreliable and lack harmonization, which makes analysis difficult. Moreover, most statistics concentrate on education levels and neglect the professions of migrants in receiving countries. Indeed, as affirmed in the Brain Waste Debate, many qualified migrants work in low skill jobs (Kelo & Wächter, 2006, p. 17, quoted in Hartman, Simon, Langthaler, Margarita, p. 1)

Brain Drain: World Statistics

It is estimated that there are 1.5 million migrant professionals from developing countries in the industrial countries alone. The number of migrants residing in OECD countries increased by 50% in the ten years 1990-2000, and the increase in the number skilled migrants is equal to 2.5 times the number of unskilled migrants (Koser-Akcapar, p. 2). It is also estimated that 1 million skilled persons from Least Developed Countries (LDC's) worked and lived in developed countries in 2004. Five LDC's lost more than half of their University educated professionals in recent years while seven others lost up to a third (UNCTAD LDC's report 2007; Nxele, p. 5). Since the early 90s some 900,000 highly skilled professionals, mainly IT workers, from India, China, Russia and a few OECD countries have migrated to the US (Cervantes & Guellec, p. 4) .

Brain Drain; Some Asian Examples

Iran is one of the top countries suffering from Brain Drain. The table below shows only the official figures.

Table 1. Iranian Immigrants Admitted to the United States, Canada, Germany, the UK and Sweden: 1961 to 2005

	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000	2001-2005
USA	10,291	46,152	154,857	112,597	55,098
Germany	7,298*	14,173	67,022	24,131	6,024**
Canada	620	3,455	20,700	41,329	25,350**
Sweden***	384	3,249	38,167	16,804	6,086
UK	---	---	---	12,665	8,640

Notes:
*excludes 1961
**excludes 2005
*** In some years Swedish data was based on Iranian immigrants by place of birth while in other years it was based on place of last residence.

Sources:
US Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics; Federal Statistical Office of Germany; Sweden Statistics; Statistics Canada; UK Home Office

Diasporas are rarely homogenous groups, and the Iranian Diaspora is no exception. Although the exact size of the Iranian Diaspora remains unknown, a commonly referred to yet disputed estimate of the Diaspora's size is two to four million people. However, a compilation of the most recent national censuses from major receiving countries supports a population estimate in the range of one million (Hakimzadeh, p. 4).

In January 2006 the International Monetary Fund claimed that Iran ranks highest in Brain Drain among 91 developing and developed countries, with an estimated 150,000 to 180,000 educated people exiting per year. According to a 1999 study, the Brain Drain from Iran to the United States, measured by migration rates of the individuals with tertiary education, was the highest in Asia. The majority of those leaving are scholars and university graduates. In fact, as many as four out of five of those who recently won awards in various international science Olympiads have chosen to

emigrate to the United States, Canada, and Western Europe. The impact of Brain Drain on Iran is catastrophic. Estimates by the Iranian Ministry of Science, Research and Technology indicate that the flight of human capital costs the government over $38 billion annually; two times the revenues received from selling oil (Hakimzadeh, p. 7).

Bozorgmehr and Sabagh have investigated the profile of Iranians who have emigrated to the United States. Their study reveals that Iranians are one of the high status immigrant groups, whose educational achievements are significantly higher than those of other immigrants. Also Maboud Ansari's research indicates that Iranians are one of the most educated foreign-born groups in the US, as measured by rapid economic success (Torbat, p. 23).

According to the 2000 census, the Iranian ancestral group in the United States (those who claim Iranian ancestry) is among the most highly educated in the country. More than one in four Iranian Americans over the age of 25 hold have completed one or more graduate degrees, the highest rate among 67 ethnic groups, according to the Iranian Studies Group. In addition, their per capita average income is 50 percent higher than that of the overall US population (Hakimzadeh, p. 5).

Other Countries

Philippines

As of 2006 it was thought that approximately 8 million Filipinos were working abroad. The Drain has a damaging effect on the country's health care system. It is estimated that approximately 100,000 nurses emigrated between 1994 and 2006.

Pakistan

It is estimated that only 30 percent of the 100,000 Pakistani students who study abroad annually return to Pakistan. The fact is there are many more job opportunities, higher standards of living and education opportunities for Pakistanis living abroad. As a result Pakistan suffers severe Brain Drain. The Pakistani government is trying to bring back its foreign educated professionals by increasing their salaries, better housing opportunities and job incentives.

Malaysia

Malaysia's Brain Drain also appears to be picking up speed. According to a recent Parliamentary report, 140,000 left the country in 2007. It is claimed, between March 2008 and August 2009 that figure more than doubled to 305,000, as talented people

pulled up stakes. According to these sources this is because of rising crime, a tainted judiciary, human rights abuses, an outmoded education system and other concerns (Mokhtar, p. 1) .

New Zealand

Even New Zealand has suffered from Brain Drain. During the 1990s, 30,000 New Zealanders were emigrating each year. An OECD report released in 2005 revealed that 24.2% of New Zealanders with a tertiary education were living outside of New Zealand, predominantly in Australia. In 2007, around 24,000 New Zealanders settled in Australia (Wikipedia, Brain Drain: Philippines, Pakistan, Malaysia, NZ).

The Importance of the Talent

There is now a consensus in the global business community as well as in development circles, that acquiring and retaining talent is the biggest challenge facing organizations and nations. There is also an acknowledgment of a global talent shortage across nations and across sectors, and that the shortage is set to increase. Skills shortage has been found to be the number one challenge in China and South East Asia, the number two challenge in Japan and the number four challenge in India. Talent management is also one of the most challenging factors facing companies in Europe, according to a 2007 HR Transformation Survey by Mercer Consulting (Nxele, p. 1) .

Talent has become central to business survival; yet as was mentioned talent is in short supply, and this shortage is set to get worse. Organizations and even nations will do everything to get that talent from anywhere and everywhere, and it can amount to a war for talent. The war for talent was predicted as early as 1998 by McKinsey in its survey report 'The War for Talent'. But the scale and intensity of this 'war' was probably not foreseen at that time (Nxele, p. 2).

Reverse Brain Drain

In the past few years the attraction of the United States has clearly lessened for migration of the highly skilled as entry barriers for immigrants have become more formidable, and rapid economic development in India and China now provides enhanced professional and entrepreneurial opportunities as well as a better quality of life than was previously possible in those countries. More recently, long waits for permanent or extended work visas have discouraged hundreds of thousands of immigrants. And the ongoing financial crisis in the United States has caused a

xenophobic backlash, including legal steps taken by the U.S. Congress to limit the award of temporary H-1B visas by U.S. financial corporations receiving bailout funds.

These changes have made life in China and India a more attractive substitute for residency. This has resulted in a new demographic trend: a 'Reverse Brain Drain' as thousands of Chinese and Indians who were studying in, or working and living in the United States on a permanent basis, have returned to their Asian homelands or other parts of Asia. To date, the evidence is largely anecdotal. No official statistics, or even reliable estimates, on reverse immigration yet exist. However, the topic has become a constant theme in immigrant communities in the United States and abroad. However, the trend has potentially profound implications for the global economic balance of power and it could augment technological upgrading in Asia while slowing technology development in the US.

Some new research has begun to explain the decision-making processes behind this Reverse Brain Drain, looking at the feelings of Chinese and Indian immigrants and students who make up this trend cohort. A research team including Vivek Wadhwa and Gary Gereffi of Duke University; Anna Lee Saxenian of University of California at Berkeley; Richard Freeman of Harvard University; Guillermina Jasso of New York University; and Ben Rissing of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology spent three years conducting multiple surveys of thousands of technology and engineering startup companies. The team interviewed hundreds of company founders, surveyed more than 1,000 foreign students and more than 1,000 returnees, and made multiple trips to India and China to understand the on-the-ground situations in those countries. This research built on Anna Lee Saxenian's 1999 report on Silicon Valley's New Immigrant Entrepreneurs. This was the first broad assessment of the critical role that immigrants played in Silicon Valley's regional economy. Saxenian found that Chinese and Indian engineers were represented on the founding teams of 24% of Silicon Valley technology businesses launched between 1980 and 1998. Subsequent research carried out undertook an expanded nationwide survey of 2,054 randomly selected engineering and technology firms founded between 1995 and 2005. In one-quarter of those companies, the chief executive officer or chief technology officer was foreign born. Assuming this data is broadly representative nationwide, in 2005 immigrant-founded tech companies generated $52 billion in revenue nationwide and employed 450,000 workers. The research team also examined the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) records. They found that foreign nationals residing in the United States were named as inventors or co-inventors in one quarter of WIPO patent applications filed from the United States in 2006, up from the 7.6% of applications filed in 1998 (Wadhwa-Gereffi-Salkever, p. 1).

In India the number of returnees is on the increase with a strikingly high figure of 40,000 reported arriving in the IT City of Bangalore in 2007, all of them Indian professionals arriving back from USA and the UK. Between 1964 and 2001, 35% of India's most promising graduates moved abroad, but after 2002, that number dropped to 16% (Nxele, p. 7).

China has been registering an increase in the number of returnees from abroad, thanks to the growing job opportunities and government policies that have aimed at enticing back senior scientists, engineers and corporate managers to China. In the mid to late 90's the average annual increase in the number of returnees was 13%, but since 2000 the rate has increased sharply. Of the 100,000 students estimated to have gone abroad yearly, 20,000 returned in 2003, 25,000 in 2004 and 30,000 in 2005. The City of Shanghai is estimated to receive 2,000 to 3,000 returnees a year (Nxele, p. 8).

According to Saxenian, Shanghai leads low cost, high quality manufacturing; as Bangalore leads low cost, high quality software and services; and Taipei specializes in global logistics and design (Saxenian, p. 18).

Successful practices to reverse Brain Drain show that it is necessary to understand the motivations driving talented people today, and to try to address those. People with talent want different kinds of freedom: freedom of thought, movement, and association. Restrictive immigration laws, for example, will not attract talented people. People with talent also want challenge, the opportunities to put their skills to use and the space to do so (Nxele, p. 8-9)

Good Examples in Facing Brain Drain

Historically speaking, before the new success story of India and China cited above, South Korea had been a successful example in reducing its Brain Drain and exploiting the presence of its brains remaining abroad. Comparatively speaking, Turkey, also, has shown some signs of success.

Turkey was a typical emigration country for decades—24th among countries sending skilled workers abroad (Gungor & Tansel, p. 3). Today, however, it reaches almost a balance between emigration and immigration (Elitok, et. Al., p. 2). In 2009, 25.5 million foreigners arrived in Turkey, more than twice the number of 2000 and eleven times the number of 1990.

Turkey has become a magnet for people from neighboring countries. The dynamically growing Turkish economy attracts people with all kind of qualifications and skills and thus attracts citizens from neighboring countries. While Turkish migration to the EU has declined significantly due to the fact that Europe has become

more and more difficult to immigrate to, Turkey has begun to act as a migration hub for Black Sea and the Middle Eastern countries. In addition, these movements to Turkey have been only the first transit step on the way to other destinations in Europe or elsewhere (Elitok et. Al., p. 4-5)

As the vast majority of Turkey's international migrants have been in Germany (in 2007 there were more than two million Turkish citizens in Germany, which is more than half of all Turkish migrants), and usually stayed there for many years or even decades (73.5% live in Germany for 10 years and more, and 35% of the Turkish citizens in Germany were born there as revealed by the micro census of the German Statistical Office). Returnees from Germany have been getting new attention. In fact, it is observed that not only first generation migrants move from Germany to Turkey, but also second generation (a significant number of those who hold a Turkish passport but were born in Germany). In 2006, 33, 229 persons left Germany for Turkey (5.6% of all emigrants). In 2000, 1,279,000 persons living in Turkey were born abroad, and 274,000 of them were ethnic Turks born in Germany. More than 2.5 million Turkish citizens who have lived, worked and/or studied in Germany have returned (since 2007). At the same time, since the late 1990s, a sharp decline in the migration of Turkish citizens into Germany can be observed; and since 2006, net migration is even negative as more Turks are leaving Germany than are arriving. Although their educational level, especially young Turks in Germany, is significantly below average, and their rate of unemployment is particularly high, this might not apply to those who leave. A recent survey shows that 36% of young academics with Turkish roots in Germany see their future in Turkey (Knerr, p. 3).

These changes have occurred in a Turkey which still has one the worst income distributions in the world and ranks among the top 20 countries in terms of income inequality (Sonmez, 2001; quoted in Gungor & Tansel, p. 11). If the problems of this sort were overcome the success in facing the migration of highly skilled manpower and qualified professionals would become even greater. There are also the additional problems of shortcomings in research facilities and materials; existing non-competitive environments; outdated scientific information; undeveloped networking and collaboration with other sectors of society, economy, and production in the country; lack of integration with international scientific centers, etc. If these were corrected, and the discrepancies between salaries of researchers and academic staff at public universities and research institutes with those of abroad and even with private universities in Turkey decreased (as in the case of Iran) even more reverse Brain Drain could be achieved. And one could add a few crucial socio-political items as well.

To sum up, what should be done in the developing countries, in general, facing the fact of Brain Drain? The capsulated answer would be: qualified professionals and highly skilled workers need, at the micro level, security, better employment opportunities and job satisfaction, economic and financial stability, an academically progressive environment, better pay and service conditions, a higher standard of living, mutual respect for themselves and their families. At the intermediate level they need a good S&T infrastructures, sound S&T policies, a bigger share of GNP for science and research, enough attention to enterprise development, strong linkages between research institutions and industry, active scientific communities and associations, stronger networking among scientific circles within the country and with the scientific Diaspora abroad, and other institutional reforms and improvements. At macro level they require political stability, cultural openness, peace, and for other national, regional, and international to be just systems of relations. These are structural, institutional, and individual requirements generally demanded if a government, a nation, or a people do not want the drain of brains.

Concluding Thoughts on Sociological Theory and Analysis

So far different theoretical theories, frameworks, and approaches have been used in studying the migration of skilled workers, specialized human resources, and highly qualified professionals. They include the world systems theory, built on the work of Wallerstein, which has insights at the macro level and tackles aspects like international migration facilitated through the globalization process. Human capital theory constructed at the micro level has been used to study the personal pull and push factors of the migrants. The structural approach of sociologists like Giddens, which has the potential to shed light on the formal and informal institutions and networks and their important role in Brain Drain, can be located at the intermediate level (Koser-Akcapar, p. 5).

Considering the merits each of these frameworks have, and the necessity of attending to these different levels, this paper suggests a multi-layer theoretical approach for the sociological study of Brain Drain which includes micro, intermediate, and macro variables. Through such an approach different angles of Brain Drain can be better seen and its aspects better analyzed and understood. In this paper the same route has been followed. And finally suggestions have been put forward in the last section of the paper to meet better the phenomenon of Brain Drain and differentiate the levels categorized in the above mentioned approach from sociological theory.

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Book Reviews

***The Monstrosity of Christ: Paradox or Dialectic*? Slavoj Žižek and John Milbank, Edited by Creston Davis, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, ISBN 978-0-262-01271-3**

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The Monstrosity of Christ is an exchange between Christian theologian John Milbank and the Lacanian Marxist Slavoj Žižek with an introduction by Creston Davis. As such, it is a debate between a theologically informed Marxism and a materialist informed theology (4, 7). After the Introduction by Davis, there is an essay by Žižek, a response by Milbank, and a closing chapter by Žižek.

Davis in his Introduction, 'Holy Saturday or Resurrection Sunday?: Staging an Unlikely Debate', clarifies that while Žižek is a proponent of rationalism and atheism (secular reason), Milbank affirms faith and longs for the return of theology (7). Separating Žižek and Milbank is Hegelian/ Marxian dialectics from postmodern paradoxes. While Milibank thinks that dialectics are irreconcilably dualistic, Žižek holds on to negation and *Aufhebung*. Both Žižek and Milbank are arguably 'materialist theologians.'

The first essay by Žižek is 'The Fear of Four Words: A Modest Plea for the Hegelian Reading of Christianity.' The four words, taken from a quotation by G.K. Chesterton, are: 'He was made Man' (25). To be more precise it is that God becomes man—particularly in the form of Christ. In doing so, man also becomes God (30). When God became man in Christ, and Jesus was crucified on the cross, then this constituted the death of God. Žižek points out that the contradictions between idealism and materialism are contained within the thought of Hegel himself. Therefore, the break with idealism is not a clear one (26). What Žižek is playing with, in a Hegelian manner, is the contradictions contained in the belief in God—i.e. the nothingness of God (or atheism). Žižek engages in a Hegelian dialectical analysis of some of the contradictions contains in the Abrahamic faiths—of which there are many. The title for the book is also explained in this essay. The word 'monstrosity' designates 'the first figure of Reconciliation, the appearance of God in the finite flesh of a human individual' (74).

The last section of the essay is entitled 'Towards a materialist theology.' Žižek points out the many contradictions contained in the idea of materialism-conceding that dialectical materialism itself is a theology (98). In arguing for materialism, Žižek ends up more in postmodern paradoxes. To counteract postmodernism, he argues that the true materialist should refuse to accept 'objective reality' in order to undermine subjectivity (100). Žižek's solution to the problem of the atheist, who in denying the existence of God, still ends up in belief, is unbelief (101).

John Milbank's essay, which is a response to Žižek, is entitled 'The Double Glory, or Paradox Versus Dialectics: on Not Quite Agreeing with Slovoj Žižek.' Milbank points out that while Žižek argues for dialectics, he ends up in paradoxes. Although Žižek treats paradoxes as a logical static moment which needs to be surpassed by 'the dynamism of negative dialectics,' there is a latent Žižek who moves back into paradoxes from dialectics. While Milbank does see some merit in a dialectical perspective, he prefers paradoxes (112-113). This is because Žižek's Christianity ends up in atheism and nihilism. Milbank's sees paradoxes as a radical Catholic humanist alternative which is transcendent (117, 137). His Catholic paradox stands in contrast to both Hegelian dialectics and postmodern difference (131). According to Milbank, Žižek engages in a 'Hegelian modification of Marxism' (179). Millbank argues for a paradoxical philosophy as opposed to a Hegelian dialectical one (159). A paradoxical understanding is not static, as is assumed by dialecticians, but dynamic (171). For paradoxical logic, which is not dialectical, 'there is never any contradiction, conflict, or tension' (185). 'Paradox affirms the full reality of the impossible and the contradictory, whereas dialectics declares than an existing contradiction, because it is a contradiction, must be destroyed even though it exists' (198). The logic of Christianity is not dialectical but rather paradoxical (216).

In the final essay, 'Dialectical Clarity Versus the Misty Conceit of Paradox,' Žižek describes the difference between himself and Milbank. It is between a Christianity that asserts the paradox of the coincidence of opposites in 'the transcendent God' versus the atheist-Hegelian Christianity which treats paradox as 'a logical moment to be surpassed. It's stasis 'advances toward the dynamism of negative dialectics' (247, 253). While Milbank advocates a postsecular reenchantment of reality, Žižek argues that we should 'live in a disenchanted world without wanting to reenchant it' (247). Žižek claims that in his atheism, he is more Christian than Milbank (248). He argues that the death of God paradoxically opens up the way for a postmetaphysical religion (255). In the postsecular turn, religion is the vehicle through which resistance to alienation takes place (255-256). Žižek concludes with the remark that 'atheism is the secret inner conviction of believers who externalize their belief, while belief is the

secret inner conviction of public atheists.' This is why 'theologians are the only true materialists' and why 'materialists are the only true believers' (298).

The difference between dialectics and paradoxes is that dialectics are dynamic while paradoxes are static. Milbank is correct in arguing that Žižek while claiming argue for dialectics seems to end up more in paradoxes. The same can be said for Milbank whose paradoxes are not static but dynamic like dialectics. There is a tendency for both authors to 'spin their wheels' and at times they seem to be merely engaged in 'word games.' Žižek has a tendency to go off on tangents telling interesting anecdotal stories leaving one to wonder what the point is. While there are clear differences in their positions regarding religion, when it comes to the difference between dialectics and paradoxes, their positions and thus the difference between dialectics and paradoxes tend to melt into each other. Neither should be allowed to get away with this. By definition, paradoxes pose seemingly unsolvable problems the solution to which is dialectics.

Wanted: Equality and Justice in the Muslim Family, **Edited by: Zainah Anwar, Kuala Lumpur: Musawah/ Sisters in Islam, ISBN: 978-983-2622-26-0**

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Muslim family laws have for long been—and continue to be—a hugely controversial subject. Critics contend that these laws seriously militate against basic human rights, especially of women. On the other hand, conservative *ulema* and Islamist ideologues hail these laws as the epitome of divine justice and refuse to consider any changes therein.

This book—a collection by leading international Islamic scholars and women's rights activists—advocates a middle-of-the-road position. The contributors to the book claim that while Islam can be interpreted as upholding women's rights, dignity and equality, Muslim family laws, as they exist in most countries, simply do not. Hence, they argue, the need for urgent changes in these laws—in order not just to provide women the rights that these laws deny but also for these laws to conform to what they regard as the underlying spirit of Quranic teachings, particularly concerning justice and equality.

The papers included in this volume emerged from an international conference on Islam and Gender Justice recently held in 2006 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, at the

initiative of Sisters in Islam, a well-known Muslim women's group that has been in the forefront of articulating Muslim women's rights and equality within an Islamic framework. The conference led to the formation of a group which was named Musawah ('Equality' in Arabic). Its mandate is to coordinate international efforts to promote legal reforms in Muslim countries in family matters in consonance with what it believes to be the basic Islamic principles of justice, equality and dignity for all human beings, including Muslim women and people of other faiths.

The book, the first of a series of publications that Musawah plans to bring out, begins with a detailed statement of the organisation's basic principles and charter of demands. It sets out the claim that the Quran, if understood in an expansive, and what it regards as an 'authentic' manner, is not incompatible with contemporary international human rights standards. Hence, it demands, relations between Muslim women and men, in both the private and public spheres, must be governed by principles and practices that uphold equality, fairness and justice. All Muslims, including women, it stresses, have 'an equal right and duty to read the religious texts, engage in understanding God's message, and act for justice, equality and the betterment of humankind within their families, communities and countries.' In other words, it asserts, the study and interpretation of Islam cannot be considered the sole preserve of the male ulema or Islamic clerics.

The statement notes that many laws related to personal status and family codes in Muslim contexts are patently unjust to women. Human affairs, it stresses, constantly change and evolve, and so must laws and social practices that shape relations within the Muslim family. This is necessary, so it argues, in order that the laws reflect Islam's stress on equality, justice, love, compassion and mutual respect between all human beings. Such legal reform, it contends, is by no means a new innovation, for changes in rules for the public interest (*maslahah*) have always been part of the Muslim legal tradition.

Seeking to preempt critics who might argue that reforms in Muslim family laws would be tantamount to interference in what they regard as the divinely-ordained *shariah*, the statement observes that family laws in today's Muslim countries and communities are actually 'based mainly on theories and concepts developed by classical jurists (*fuqaha*) in vastly different historical, social and economic contexts.' In interpreting the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the practice of the Prophet (Pbuh), the classical jurists were 'guided by the social and political realities of their age and a set of assumptions about law, society and gender that reflected the state of knowledge, normative values and patriarchal institutions of their time.'

The idea of gender equality had no place in, and little relevance to, the conceptions of justice of the classical *fuqaha*, the statement contends. This, it continues, was

reflected in the fact that the concept of marriage upheld by the *fuqaha* was 'one of domination by the husband and submission by the wife.' But today, it remarks, social conditions have vastly changed and 'the world inhabited by the authors of classical jurisprudential texts (*fiqh*) ha[s] begun to disappear.' Yet, family laws that militate against equality and dignity for women continue to linger on despite the fact that they are now 'irrelevant to the needs, experiences and values of Muslims today.' Furthermore, these laws are also at the root of marital disharmony and the breakdown of the family.

The statement argues the need for a critical re-reading of these laws, not from a secular point of view, but, instead, through the prism of Qur'anic teachings, based on justice (*adl*), equality (*musawah*), equity (*insaf*), human dignity (*karamah*), love and compassion (*mawaddah wa rahmah*). These principles, it says, 'reflect universal norms' and are 'consistent with contemporary human rights standards.' Formulating new laws based on these principles would not, it argues, constitute a deviation from the *shariah*, the 'revealed way', contrary to what is often alleged. It would certainly be a departure from classical *fiqh*, though, but *fiqh*, it notes, is distinct from the *shariah*, being the result of human effort in seeking to interpret and draw rules from the *shariah*. Hence, being human and fallible, *fiqh*, unlike the shariah, is also changeable, through resort to *ijtihad* or independent reasoning. Hence, reforming existing gender-just laws that form a part of the corpus of *fiqh*, many of which are still enforced, is, the statement claims, fully in accordance with the aims of the *shariah* rather than constituting a violation of it, as might be alleged. The statement backs this assertion with this approproate quotation from Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, the noted fourteenth century Islamic jurist:

'The fundamentals of the *shariah* are rooted in wisdom and promotion of the welfare of human beings in this life and the Hereafter. *Shariah* embraces justice, kindness, the common good and wisdom. Any rule that departs from justice to injustice, from kindness to harshness, from the common good to harm, or from rationality to absurdity cannot be part of *shariah*, even if it is arrived at through individual interpretation.'

The opening essay of the book, authored by the Malaysian scholar-activist Zainah Anwar, head of Sisters-in-Islam and convenor of Musawah, is a trenchant critique of patriarchy in the name of Islam and a passionate advocacy of gender equality as an Islamic mandate. The essay elaborates on the themes contained in the Musawah statement, and calls upon women's rights activists to seriously engage with the Islamic religious tradition instead of leaving it to die-hard clerics and misogynist Islamists to monopolise. Anwar makes it clear the Musawah seeks to raise the issue of equality for

Muslim women within and through an Islamic paradigm. Rather than constituting a betrayal of Islam, as its detractors certainly would allege, demanding full legal equality for Muslim women (and non-Muslims in Muslim countries) would, she insists, be entirely in accordance with the Quran's 'revolutionary' spirit and its stress on the fundamental equality and dignity of all human beings.

The second paper, by the noted Iranian scholar Ziba Mir-Hosseini, examines conceptions of gender in Islamic legal thought and the challenges they present to the construction of an egalitarian Muslim family law. She argues that 'there is neither a unitary nor a coherent concept of gender rights in Islamic legal thought.' Rather, there is a welter of conflicting concepts that reflect both Islam's 'ethical egalitarianism' and the patriarchal contexts in which classical *fiqh* emerged and developed. This she relates to the distinction—often ignored by Islamists and conservative *ulema*—between *shariah* and *fiqh*, the former being God-given and eternal, and the latter being a product of human reasoning and thus fallible and amenable to change. She insists that patriarchal *fiqh* does not represent the *shariah* and violates its stress on human equality and dignity. Hence, she insists, it is in urgent need of reform.

Mir-Hosseini's point is well-taken and fully in accordance with Islamic teachings. But where she is on less firm grounds is her claim that legal rulings (*ahkamat*) in the Quran that relate to transactional or contractual acts (*muamilat*) can be changed, in contrast to those rulings that relate to relations between the individual believer and God (*ibadat*). She contends that rules governing *muamilat*, which include those relating to women and gender relations, 'remain open to rational considerations and social forces' in order to adjust to changing social conditions. Controversially, she writes that it is indeed possible for *ijtihad* to extend to this realm as well, based on a re-reading of the scriptures. In making this claim, she does not engage with the *ulema*'s claim that *ijtihad* on matters that have clearly been specified in the divine texts (*nass*) is not permissible. This clearly limits her case for an Islamically-grounded argument for legal reforms.

Mir-Hosseini subjects the rules laid down by numerous classical *fuqaha* concerning marriage to a critical evaluation, judging them by the criterion of justice that she identifies as a key Quranic principle. Many of these rules, she argues, reflect deeply-rooted patriarchal prejudices. For instance, they define marriage basically as 'a contract of exchange […] whose main purpose is to make sexual relations between a man and woman licit.' In discussing marriage and its legal structure, some classical jurists, she notes, even used the analogy of the contract of sale, in which the wife sells a part of herself and the husband buys her sexual organ, owing to which the wife is needed to completely submit, as a slave would, to him. The notion of a husband's

'ownership' of his wife also defined how many classical jurists viewed divorce. Some of them drew an analogy between *talaq* and the manumission of a slave. In this regard, Mir-Hosseini quotes the noted Sunni scholar Imam Ghazali as writing, 'The man is the owner and he has, as it were, enslaved the woman through the dowry and […] she has no discernment in her affairs' This logic of 'ownership' of the woman, Mir-Hosseini submits, is a complete inversion of the Quranic insistence on equality.

When compared to the numerous reforms wrought by the Prophet in the conditions of women in his time, the *fiqh* tradition, Mir-Hosseini argues, reflects a process of the increasing marginalization and silencing of women. There are, she writes, '[m]any verses in the Qur'an condemn women's subjugation, affirm the principle of equality between genders and aim to reform existing practices in that direction. Yet […] subjugation is reproduced in *fiqh* […]'.

Numerous assumptions underlying *fiqh* rulings concerning women, Mir-Hosseini argues, do not have any basis whatsoever in the Quran. These include the claims, repeatedly stressed by numerous *fuqaha*, that women were allegedly created from and for men; that God allegedly made men superior to women; and that women were allegedly defective in reason and faith. Notions such as these worked to remove women from public life and confine them to the seclusion of their homes—again a departure from the practice of the Prophet. Inspired by the Prophetic practice, Mir-Hosseini concludes, socially-engaged Islamic scholars, men and women, need to critically engage with the *fiqh* tradition and to formulate new laws that reflect the Quranic insistence on human equality for both men and women.

Unlike Catholicism, for instance, which has a Church hierarchy that lays down orthodox doctrine and laws, Islam allows for a diversity of views, or *ikhtilaf* as it is called in the terminology of the *fuqaha* or Islamic clerics. In his essay, Muhammad Khalid Masud, noted Pakistani Islamic scholar and, till recently, Chairman of his country's Islamic Ideology Council, points to the possibilities afforded by the doctrine of *ikhtilaf* as a means for articulating an alternate, gender-sensitive understanding of Islam and Islamic laws.

According to a saying of the Prophet Muhammad, writes Masud, diversity among the Muslim people is a blessing (*ikhtilafu ummati rahma*). In line with this, the *fuqaha* not just tolerated, but also respected, differences in understanding and interpreting the Quran and in matters of *fiqh*, within certain broad boundaries laid down by the clear texts of the Quran and Hadith. This suggests, Masud opines, the need for *fiqh* to remain 'a continuous process that allows legal norms to remain relevant to social norms'. This would entail 'going behind the text to find universal legal principles that can accommodate social changes.' One of these 'universal principles' is gender

justice, which, Masud notes, is not reflected in the corpus of classical *fiqh*, and which, he insists, is in urgent need of *ijtihad* in this respect.

Needless to say, what Masud here advocates is in sharp contrast to the stance of the conservative *ulema*, who stress the need for *taqlid*, or rigid adherence to the rules laid down by the classical *fuqaha* as a means to strictly limit *ikhtilaf*. Aware that his suggestion would leave him open to the charge of advocating changes in the *shariah*, Masud explains:

> 'We cannot appreciate the reforms introduced in the Quran and the *Sunnah* without relating them to the social context when they were introduced. The jurists also interpreted the *shariah* with reference to their social contexts. Today, when the social context has again changed, we need to reinterpret the *shariah* in these new social contexts.'

'*Islam Beyond Patriarchy Through Gender Inclusive Quranic Analysis*' is the title of a provocative paper by the well-known American Islamic scholar Amina Wadud. Reiterating a point made by the other contributors to this volume, she stresses the distinction between *shariah* and *fiqh*, highlights numerous instances of patriarchal prejudice in the corpus of *fiqh* and pleads for reforms in the fiqh rules so as to make them consonant with what she argues is the insistence on the ontological equality of men and women as envisaged in the Islamic *shariah*. This would mean, she suggests, equal access to the public space and decision-making processes for both women and men, for both, she says, have the potential to fulfill their common human destiny as upholders of moral agency or *khilafah*, as potential *khalifa*s or trustees of God, entrusted with the task of fulfilling God's will on earth.

In this regard, Wadud persuasively argues that patriarchy or any other force that compels abject submission of one human being to another is akin to *shirk* or associating partners with God, the only sin that God would never forgive. The foundational idea of gender equality, she stresses, 'is derived from the Qur'anic worldview.' Hence, she insists, '[E]qual human rights for women have their confirmation in this Qur'anic worldview.'

Khaled Abou El Fadl's paper, titled '*Human Rights Commitment in Modern Islam*' critiques contemporary Islamist thought for its obvious indifference to basic human rights of women and non-Muslims, discusses major points of tension between the Islamic tradition and modern conceptions of human rights and explores the possibility of reconciliation between the two.

El Fadl rightly points out the failure of both the apologetic and what he calls the 'defiant' or 'exceptionalist' Islamic responses to modern or Western critiques of Islam, that took the form of assertions that Islam had itself invented modern human rights norms or else that its norms were, in fact, far superior to modern conceptions. These,

however, he points out, failed to provide an adequate defence of human rights, primarily because, they sought to defend the inherited *fiqh* tradition, which he regards as indefensible. Rather than representing a serious commitment to human rights, these responses were meant simply to counter Western criticism, and, as El Fadl puts it, 'affirming self-worth, and attaining a measure of emotional empowerment'. This led, he says, to 'an artificial sense of confidence, and an intellectual lethargy that neither took the Islamic tradition nor the human rights tradition very seriously.' These responses were thus 'far more anti-Western than […] pro-Islamic.'

El Fadl stresses the need for a reconstruction of contemporary Islamic discourse, grounded in human-rights commitments and based on what he terms as 'a rethinking of the meaning and implications of divinity, and a reimagining of the nature of the relationship between God and creation.' Such a reconceptualisation should be based, he suggests, on the notion of God, not as a brutal and vengeful dictator, as Islamists conceive Him to be, but as the epitome of beauty, love, mercy, justice and goodness. This would be reflected in an understanding of the divine will being manifested in human acts based on these values. This would represent, El Fadl says, nothing less than a 'serious paradigm shift in Islamic thinking.'

Obviously, seen from this perspective, numerous rules contained in the corpus of traditional *fiqh* that relate to women and non-Muslims and that rob them of basic fundamental rights, would be regarded as negating God's will. This new paradigm could then possibly help usher in a reconciliation between Islamic discourse and contemporary human rights standards.

In her paper, Amira El-Azhary Sonbol traces the overlapping of *fiqh*-based laws, customary laws and colonial laws in shaping personal status codes in a range of Muslim countries and communities. Her basic point is that, contrary to what is commonly asserted, many of the personal laws today applied in Muslim contexts are not based simply on the Islamic *shariah*. As such, they should not be regarded as immutable and as beyond reform.

Pre-colonial *shariah* courts, Sombol writes, were considerably more flexible than their counterparts that developed in period of European colonial rule over most of the Muslim world and that have continued thereafter. Judges were not bound, unlike today, by codified rules, and had considerable discretion to make decisions, including resorting to customary laws (*urf* or *adat*) and other schools of *fiqh* and considering the specific conditions of specific cases to reduce hardship to litigants. This often worked to the advantage of women.

In several respects, Sombol claims, the Muslim personal laws that came to be constructed in the colonial period worked against the interests of women by doing

away with the flexibility and maneuverability of the pre-colonial *shariah* courts and imposing a single, centralized code on the entire Muslim populace. This was exacerbated by the 'Victorian' patriarchal worldviews of the colonial administrators. In several Muslim countries under European rule, this was reflected in the new standardized marriage contracts which defined the husband as the head of the family, and did not provide—in contrast to pre-colonial marriage contracts—for brides to specify conditions to the marriage in order to protect their rights.

Sombol perhaps risks making a untenably broad generalization when she argues that under the colonial state 'the very act of codification [of 'Islamic' family laws] entrenched discriminatory gender relations', but her point that, while these patriarchal laws could be found in the corpus of fiqh, they could, in the past, be contested on the basis of *maqasid-e shariah* ('aims of the *shariah*') or *maslahah* (public interest), principles familiar to scholars of *fiqh*, is well taken.

In other words, Sombol stresses, the codified Muslim Personal Laws that operate in many Muslim contexts today cannot be seen as identical to the *shariah*, contrary to what conservative *ulema* and others might believe. This recognition opens the way for reforms in these laws or their replacement by others that can better serve the core Quranic principles of justice (including gender justice) and public interest (*al-masalah al-mursalah*).

One of the most active groups at the international level today working for gender justice in Muslim contexts is the London-based Women Living Under Muslim Laws Network. In her piece, Cassandra Belchin, the coordinator of the Network, makes a broad survey of the strategies that have been used by women's groups in different countries to bring about legal reforms in Muslim personal laws to ensure justice and equality for Muslim women. Increasingly, she points out, secular feminist groups working with Muslim women are now joining hands with newly-emerging Muslim women's groups that articulate their demands for gender justice from within an Islamic framework and as precisely an Islamic mandate. The latter represents, she points out, an emerging generation of Muslim women confident in their ability to study, reflect on and contextually interpret the Islamic scriptural tradition on their own, challenging the monopoly over religious exegesis of the patriarchal male *ulema*. These women see themselves not as radical feminists, but, rather, as believing Muslims who are struggling to revive a long-lost tradition of women Islamic scholars that they trace back to the time of the Prophet and immediately after.

In articulating a gender-just vision of Islam and in critiquing the patriarchal prejudices of the *fiqh* tradition, these women seek to reclaim the right to *ijtihad*, and also resort to *takhayyur* and *talfiq,* selecting context-appropriate interpretations from across

the various schools of law as a basis for positive family law reform, a practice frowned upon by many conservative *ulema* who insist on *taqlid* or the rigid following of just one school of *fiqh*.

Some of these efforts by these women scholar-activists have met with success in instituting legal reforms, as in Morocco and Iran, but, Balchin writes, in the face of the continuing influence of conservative *ulema* and the menacing clout of fiercely patriarchal Islamist groups, much more needs to be done.

The concluding essay of the book, by Kamala Chandrakirana, Chairperson of the Indonesian National Commission on Violence Against Women, provides a broad summary of the lived realities of Muslim women today, in the context of which, she argues, strategies for reform, including legal change, have to be considered. She argues that these realities 'compel us to acknowledge that gender equality and justice in the Muslim family have become undeniable necessities'.

Millions of Muslim women, Chandrakirana points out, now work out of their homes and in public spaces; educated Muslim women, although still a minority, are now increasingly vocal about their rights and unwilling to accept the subjugation to which the traditional *ulema* seek to confine them; many Muslim women are now the sole breadwinners of their families; a large proportion of internally displaced people and refugees are Muslims, many of them women. These realities demand, Chandrakirana persuasively argues, that *fiqh*-based laws that continue to deny women physical mobility, higher education, employment opportunities, access to decision-making processes and institutions and equality within the family are no longer tenable. So, too, are laws that allow Muslim men unrestrained rights to enter into polygamous marriages and to divorce their wives at will.

Given the new realities of Muslim women's lives today, she warns, 'a stubbornly unchanged vision of Islam that regards women as inferior to men and therefore undeserving of a life of equal worth and dignity, could lead to the religion losing its relevance for men and women of the future.' Hence, she stresses the need for 'a new vision of Islam which affirms women's humanity and articulates itself in the form of gender-sensitive laws.'

Taken together, the essays contained in the book make a passionate and persuasive case for urgent reforms in existing Muslim personal status laws. The crucial point that the contributors make is that their advocacy for legal reforms is itself an Islamically-legitimate demand, rather than, as their traducers would allege, a deviation from or subversion of Islam. Turning the tables on their detractors, they go so far as to suggest that it is the patriarchal *fiqh*-based laws that militate against gender justice (which many conservative *ulema* and Islamists uphold as authentically 'Islamic') that actually represent a cruel betrayal of the basic principles of the Islamic faith and tradition.