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RESEARCH ARTICLES

EMAAN: An Evolutionary Multiverse Argument against Naturalism

Ward Blondé

Abstract: In this paper, an evolutionary multiverse argument against naturalism (EMAAN) is presented: *E1*. In an evolutionary multiverse, phenomena have variable evolutionary ages. *E2*. After some time T , the development of the empirical sciences will be evolutionarily conserved. *E3*. The phenomena with an evolutionary age above T are methodologically supernatural. Entities are classified according to whether they are (1) physical and spatiotemporal, (2) causally efficacious, and (3) either observed by or explanatorily necessary for the empirical sciences. While the conjunction of (1) and (2) is taken to be sufficient for existence in reality, the negation of (3) defines methodological supernaturalness. EMAAN uses a generalization of evolutionary theory, namely cosmological natural selection, to argue that phenomena evolve that fulfill conditions (1) and (2), but not (3). This shows that methodologically supernatural phenomena have a clear epistemology according to a theory that is grounded in the commitments of naturalism. Supernatural phenomena are not observed by the empirical sciences because the empirical sciences themselves are supernaturally guided and predestined to develop according to an evolutionarily conserved plan. In spite of this scientific plan, there is room for afterlives and supernaturalism in the everyday experience.

Keywords: experimental falsifiability, methodological naturalism, Smolin's cosmological natural selection, supernaturalism, theory of everything, universal Darwinism.

1. Introduction

Multiverses are a hot topic in physics and cosmology and almost all the advocates of multiverses are naturalists who accept the evolutionary theory of Darwin. Indeed, multiverses can replace a supernatural designer of the fine-tuning for life of our observed big bang universe. The aim of this paper is to show that the conjunction of these beliefs, multiverse theory and evolutionary theory, sustains a worldview that naturalists will not easily accept: supernatural entities exist, not in the form of a strictly separate supernatural designer, but in the form of entities that are evolutionarily much older and more advanced than the entities that the empirical sciences can observe. The theory in this paper is not new, but has been extensively developed by Blondé (2015, 2016). Blondé shows that a maximally large multiverse evolves toward benevolence on computer scientific grounds (2015) and that we should expect that an eternal life starts in a universe that has the minimum fine-tuning for intelligence (2016). The current

paper adds a solidly defined distinction between natural entities and supernatural entities and has more emphasis on the commitments that underlie the theory.

2. Defining Naturalism

Naturalists concede the claim that all and only natural entities exist in reality. However, 'natural entity' can be defined in myriad ways depending on which necessary and sufficient conditions natural entities are assumed to fulfill. I propose to classify entities according to whether they (1) are physical and spatiotemporal, (2) have a causal effect on our observed universe, and (3) are methodologically necessary (i.e., are either subjects of observations in the empirical sciences or are necessary to explain the observations of the empirical sciences). Assigning condition (1) (Lewis 1986), or conditions (1) and (2) (Sellars 1927), as necessary and sufficient for natural entities results in a sort of ontological naturalism. Methodological naturalists (Forrest 2000; Miller 2009; Boudry et al. 2010) cannot deny that (1) and (2) are a sufficient set of conditions and that (1) and (3) are necessary conditions for entities to be natural.

Using these distinctions, it will be possible to analyze an evolutionary multiverse argument against naturalism (EMAAN¹) in an essential (*E*) three-step formulation (*E*1. In an evolutionary multiverse, phenomena have variable evolutionary ages. *E*2. After some time *T*, the development of the empirical sciences will be evolutionarily conserved. *E*3. The phenomena with an evolutionary age above *T* are methodologically supernatural.) and in an advanced analytic (*AA*), seven-step formulation (see Section 4).

Naturalism and supernaturalism have been thoroughly analyzed in the philosophic literature. According to Lewis (1986), modal realism is true: all the possible, causally and spatiotemporally isolated worlds exist in reality. Therefore, modal realism is a sort of ontological naturalism that does not require causal efficacy. Forrest argues that methodological naturalism, notwithstanding its lack of entailment relation with ontological naturalism, is "the only reasonable metaphysical conclusion" given, among other things, "the lack of a method or epistemology for knowing the supernatural" and "the subsequent lack of evidence for the supernatural." (2000, 7) This, Forrest concludes, leaves supernaturalism as "little more than a logical possibility." (2000, 7) Boudry et al. claim that while "science does have a bearing on supernatural hypotheses," such hypotheses are rejected on "purely evidential grounds, instead of ruling them out by philosophical fiat" (2010, 227). Although Miller admits that science is limited, he maintains that methodological naturalism works "only if science confines itself to the investigation of natural entities and forces," which are to be

¹ EMAAN imitates the abbreviation of Plantinga's (1993) "evolutionary argument against naturalism" as EAAN. The meaning of Emaan (or Iman) as Faith in the Islamic metaphysics is a coincidence.

understood “in terms of natural cause-and-effect processes.” (2009, 117) Articulating a stance common among supernaturalists, Plantinga (1997) argues that hypotheses about supernatural entities are hypotheses about a singular deity or god. Considering that Plantinga’s god exists in reality but is not natural in any sense, his argument counters both ontological and methodological naturalism.

In response to these positions, I will argue that supernaturalism, defined for the purposes of this paper as methodological supernaturalism, has a clear epistemology within the context of a generalized evolutionary theory in which physical, spatiotemporal entities are methodologically supernatural entities that exist in reality. To proceed with this argument, I must first provide a more stringent definition for methodological naturalism. *Narrow* methodological naturalism will be defined as the claim that, first, conditions (1) and (2) are necessary and sufficient, and second, condition (3) is necessary but not sufficient. The narrow methodological naturalist rejects causally isolated universes in a multiverse, even if they are explanatorily necessary for the observations of the empirical sciences. I argue that narrow methodological naturalism is not tenable for this reason. In contrast, *broad* methodological naturalism can be defined as the claim that, first, conditions (1) and (3) are necessary and sufficient, and second, conditions (1) and (2) are sufficient but not necessary. Broad methodological naturalists accept causally isolated universes in a multiverse as existing in reality if, and only if, they are explanatorily necessary and take causally efficacious entities to be a subset, albeit not necessarily a proper one, of those that exist in reality.

While ontological naturalism seems to be a commitment that one can adopt without arguments, methodological naturalism, including broad methodological naturalism, is vulnerable to argued reasoning. In launching an attack on naturalism, I will take naturalism to mean broad methodological naturalism and take, along with all the introduced types of naturalists, the conjunction of conditions (1) and (2) to be sufficient for existence in reality. This attack can be expressed in terms of methodological supernaturalism, with the negation of (3) serving as a necessary and sufficient condition for methodologically supernatural entities. I will thus argue that some methodologically supernatural entities also fulfill conditions (1) and (2) according to the generalized evolutionary theory, meaning they exist in reality according to the theory.

EMAAN starts from two hypotheses that, I argue, broad methodological naturalists have to accept: evolutionary theory (Darwin 1859) and the multiverse hypothesis (Carr 2007). Methodological naturalists claim that the biological entities in Darwin’s tree of life exist precisely because the conjunction of their existence and evolutionary theory has been proven to be methodologically necessary by more than a century of observations made by biologists. Evolutionary theory is therefore an inevitable hypothesis for the methodological naturalist. The inclusion of certain differently parametrized

universes in a multiverse as entities that are necessary to explain our observed universe is a more recent development in physics, particularly in the domain of string theory (Witten 1995). Such universes are necessary to explain, via an anthropic observation selection bias (Carter 1974), the high degree of fine-tunedness of the laws and fundamental constants of physics, which makes them natural according to broad methodological naturalism.

Methodological naturalists will not accept the existence in reality of universes that are not necessary to explain the degree of fine-tunedness of our observed universe. In particular, they will not accept the existence in reality of what I will call *super-tuned* entities. Super-tuned entities are entities in a multiverse (or in a universe, which can be considered a special case of a multiverse) that is fine-tuned for complexity to a higher degree than our observed universe. For example, a system that makes backups of the healthy bodies of biological beings and that transports them to an afterlife world when they die, might be an example of a super-tuned entity. Whereas lesser-and equally-tuned universes existing in reality can account, via an observation selection bias, for the degree of fine-tunedness of our observed universe, super-tuned entities are neither observed by the empirical sciences nor are they necessary to explain why the fine-tunedness of our observed universe is as fine as it is. Consequently, super-tuned entities do not fulfill condition (3), which is why the methodological naturalist claims they do not exist in reality.

However, the conjunction of evolutionary theory and the multiverse hypothesis opens a line of attack on this position. Within the set of all universes that the broad methodological naturalist admits exist, some of these universes must be able to self-reproduce and gradually increase in fine-tuned complexity. No good reason can be offered why such universes would stop increasing in complexity and fail to reach the super-tuned stage. Given that super-tuned entities do not fulfill (3), those that fulfill conditions (1) and (2) risk becoming methodologically supernatural entities that exist in reality.

There seems to be only one way out for the broad methodological naturalist: to seek shelter in physical, spatiotemporal entities that necessarily do not fulfill (2) and the negation of (3) simultaneously. The broad methodological naturalist claims that super-tuned self-reproducing universes, being methodologically unnecessary, do not exist in reality because they are also causally isolated from our observed universe. This results in a defence (*D*) against my attack on methodological naturalism: If a physical, spatiotemporal entity has a causal effect on our observed universe, then the empirical sciences either observe it or they need it as an explanation for their observations.

I will argue, starting from the conjunction of evolutionary theory and the multiverse hypothesis, that *D* is false. In the next section, I will propose a theory that generalizes evolutionary theory to cosmology. In section 4, both the three-step *E* version and the seven-step *AA* version of EMAAN are presented. After that, in section 5, both versions are analyzed theoretically. Section 6 provides

examples of the concepts of EMAAN for each of the steps in both versions. The generalized evolutionary theory of cosmological natural selection (Smolin 1992) is further supported in section 7. Finally, in section 8, the conclusions are given.

3. Generalizing Evolutionary Theory

In refuting *D*, I will argue for a generalized evolutionary theory in which some phenomena are methodologically supernatural phenomena that exist in reality: they are physical, spatiotemporal and causally efficacious, but not methodologically necessary. In arguing for a generalized evolutionary theory, I maintain that naturalists should accept evolutionary theory on two different grounds: first, for its a priori self-evidence that those entities that self-reproduce abundantly are observed with an increased probability, and second, for its a posteriori explanation of the observed evidence in biology. The a priori ground calls for a generalization of evolutionary theory to cosmology: our observed universe is observed by us because it, or a multiverse of which it is a part, modified successfully to an abundantly self-reproducing entity within an even larger multiverse that contains many cosmological entities that can possibly self-reproduce.

Generalizing evolutionary theory to cosmology could be accomplished via the generalization of five concepts in biology. Three generalized concepts are needed for the *E* version of the EMAAN argument: evolutionary multiverse, evolutionary age, and evolutionary conservation (Fraser and Bernatchez 2001). In addition to these, evolutionary dependence will be needed for the *AA* version of EMAAN. These four concepts fit in a fifth: the generalized evolutionary theory of cosmological natural selection.

3.1 Natural Selection to Cosmological Natural Selection

Darwin's (1859) theory of natural selection, also known as the survival of the fittest, predicts that those descendants that have favorable modifications in their DNA are selected for further reproduction as compared to less favorably modified descendants. More recently, physicist Lee Smolin has proposed the principle of *cosmological natural selection*, which states that those cosmological entities that reproduce most abundantly have the highest probability to be observed.

3.2 Biological Organism to Evolutionary Multiverse

Examples of biological organisms include human beings, bacteria, and trees, all of which have the capacity to reproduce. Biological organisms consist of cells that can also self-reproduce. Some cells have organelles that can, again, self-reproduce. Evolutionary multiverses extend this Russian nesting doll of self-reproducing substructures in the direction of always larger, older, and more diverse structures with more spatiotemporal dimensions.

3.3 Evolutionary Conservation

Evolutionary conservation is the observed fact in biology that evolving organisms retain certain characteristics that are fundamental in the reproduction plan of the organism. For example, the fact that the embryo of an animal always begins development in some form of fluid has been evolutionarily conserved since the origin of life in water.

3.4 Evolutionary Age

Biological entities require a certain time to evolve, depending on their complexity. This required time is their evolutionary age. Human beings needed about four billion years to evolve on Earth, whereas some single-celled organisms needed only some hundreds of millions of years to do so. Considering that atoms and biomolecules also had to emerge (develop) in the big bang universe, the evolutionary age of human beings in the big bang universe is around 13.7 billion years. Within an evolutionary multiverse, the evolutionary age of a complex, self-reproducing phenomenon has to be measured relative to a multiverse that has an origin. Complex (highly fine-tuned) phenomena have a greater evolutionary age than simple phenomena.

3.5 Evolutionary Dependence

Biological entities with an evolutionary age T_2 can be evolutionarily dependent on biological entities with a shorter evolutionary age T_1 . For example, eukaryotes, complex single-celled organisms, rely on mitochondria, which are more primitive organisms, to act as organelles. Evolutionary dependence might also hold for cosmological entities in an evolutionary multiverse. For example, human beings could be, within a multiverse, evolutionarily dependent on the formation of atoms, planets, biological cells, and primitive big bang universes.

4. The E and the AA Arguments

Via this generalized evolutionary theory and the definition of broad methodological naturalism, it is possible to formulate both the *E* version and the *AA* version of EMAAN in three and seven steps, respectively. The *E* version uses the concepts of evolutionary multiverse, evolutionary age, evolutionary conservation, empirical sciences, and methodological supernaturalness:

- E1.* In an evolutionary multiverse, phenomena have variable evolutionary ages.
- E2.* After some time T , the development of the empirical sciences will be evolutionarily conserved.
- E3.* The phenomena with an evolutionary age above T are methodologically supernatural.

The *AA* version is more detailed and uses evolutionary dependence and causality in addition to the *E* concepts:

AA1. In an evolutionary multiverse *M*, many phenomena *P* exist that are evolutionarily dependent on universes *U_T* and that can intervene in these *U_T*s. The *U_T*s have an evolutionary age *T* and intelligent, technological inhabitants *I* with empirical sciences *S*.

AA2. Some *I*-technology-caused phenomena in the *U_T*s are evolutionarily conserved. Let the *C*s be those that are most strongly evolutionarily conserved.

AA3. From *AA1*, *AA2*, and the nature of evolutionary dependence and evolutionary conservation, it follows that the *P*s must intervene in the *U_T*s in such a way that they facilitate, but do not alter, the *C*s.

AA4. The *C*s are more directly influenced by the developments of the *S*s in the *U_T*s than by most of the everyday interactions between the *I*s in the *U_T*s.

AA5. From *AA3* and *AA4*, it follows that the *S*s in the *U_T*s are evolutionarily conserved not to observe the *P*s, so as not to alter the *C*s.

AA6. From *AA3* and *AA4*, it also follows that the *P*s intervene in the everyday interactions between the *I*s in the *U_T*s, in order to facilitate the *C*s with more precision.

AA7. The *P*s are (1) spatio temporal and physical, (2) causally efficacious and (3) unobserved by the *S*s and unnecessary to explain the observations of the *S*s. Therefore, the *P*s exist in reality and are methodologically supernatural.

5. Analyses of the Arguments

EMAAN is a complex argument that requires a theoretical analysis for both the *E* and the *AA* versions. Together with the individual steps in the arguments, the analyses provide a complete defence of EMAAN. Let me begin, therefore, with an analysis of the three steps of the *E* version:

Step *E1* starts with the two base hypotheses that the broad methodological naturalist must accept: the multiverse hypothesis and evolutionary theory. Any sufficiently complex phenomenon that cannot self-reproduce will be outnumbered by similarly complex phenomena that can self-reproduce. Therefore, phenomena can be assumed to be subjected to cosmological natural selection, which implies they have an evolutionary age that sets the minimum time they require to come into existence within a certain multiverse.

Step *E2* requires the assertion that every phenomenon, no matter how small or insignificant, is evolutionarily conserved in the reproduction cycle of a sufficiently large (with respect to size, age, dimensionality, and diversity) multiverse in which the phenomenon occurs. The reason that this must be so is twofold. First, evolutionary conservation in relation to increasingly large multiverses is transitive, and second, every phenomenon can potentially result in a selective advantage in an evolutionary competition between sufficiently large

multiverses and, hence, become evolutionarily conserved. Transitivity means that if a phenomenon P is evolutionarily conserved in the reproduction cycle of a multiverse M_1 , and M_1 is evolutionarily conserved in the reproduction cycle of a multiverse M_2 , then P is evolutionarily conserved in the reproduction cycle of M_2 . The potential selective advantage can be corroborated with a biological example: the excretion products of mitochondria have no role in free-floating mitochondria, but they do result in a selective advantage if the mitochondria are organelles of eukaryotes.

The development of the empirical sciences is a process that spans many thousands of years within an intelligent civilization. The evolution of (the development of) the empirical sciences is a process that spans many multiverse (or universe) generations. Although the evolutionary conservation of any empirical science must be a gradual process, we could hypothesize, for any sufficiently large reference multiverse, a time T after which the empirical sciences and their development can no longer be altered.

Step $E3$ follows from the fact that phenomena P with an evolutionary age greater than T were not present in the worlds in which the empirical sciences were still evolving. Therefore, before time T , the P s were not methodologically necessary for the empirical sciences. After time T , the P s can come into existence; however, because of the evolutionary conservation of the empirical sciences, they will be such that they remain methodologically unnecessary. In other words, the P s exist in reality and are methodologically supernatural. This proves the case for the E version.

The E version of EMAAN can be validly applied to any civilization in an evolutionary multiverse that has empirical sciences. It works just as well for three-dimensional beings like us as for hypothetical seven-dimensional beings in a suited hyper-dimensional multiverse. According to the E version, reality is split into two sections for each civilization with empirical sciences: a natural section that can be observed by the empirical sciences and a methodologically supernatural section that is too great in complexity and evolutionary age for it to be observable by the empirical sciences.

The E version of EMAAN is conceptually relatively uncomplicated. However, there are two mutually exclusive objections that can be raised against it:

1. An evolutionary multiverse is self-destructive. Whenever more complex phenomena with a greater evolutionary age come into existence, they will disrupt the evolutionarily conserved empirical sciences of simpler worlds because they have no interest in them. Since we do observe a relatively simple world that is not disrupted, some of the underlying hypotheses of EMAAN must be false.
2. Because of evolutionary conservation, phenomena with different evolutionary ages cannot coexist and interact. More complex phenomena

therefore live in causally isolated multiverses, which is not necessarily enough for the broad methodological naturalist to assert that they exist in reality.

By introducing the generalization of the concept of evolutionary dependence in the AA version of EMAAN, both these objections can be rebutted. Let me therefore analyze the seven individual steps of the AA version:

Step AA1 follows from the generalization of evolutionary dependence. Of all the phenomena that have an evolutionary age that is greater than T , some phenomena will make use of the U_T s as resources that are essential to their reproduction plans. These phenomena are the P s. On the other hand, because of their evolutionary dependence, all the P s must have an evolutionary age greater than T , the evolutionary age of the U_T s. Therefore, all the P s can intervene in the U_T s, given that the U_T s are already present in their world.

Step AA2 is supported by the same analysis as that of step E2. Every phenomenon is eventually evolutionarily conserved, and some phenomena must therefore be the most strongly evolutionarily conserved phenomena that are caused by the technology of the I s in the U_T s.

Step AA3 uses the fact that evolutionary dependence on a universe also implies a dependence on the reproduction plan of the universe, including its evolutionarily conserved phenomena. By altering the C s, the U_T s would die, and, along with the U_T s, the P s themselves would die. Thus, by facilitating the C s, both the U_T s and the P s can thrive.

Step AA4 is implied by the empirical sciences being persistent, publicly available, and a direct source of many technological innovations. Most of the everyday interactions between intelligent beings get lost over time and do not directly result in technological innovations.

Step AA5 extends the evolutionary conservation of the C s to the evolutionary conservation of the S s, which is a result of the direct influence of the S s on the C s. Altered S s lead to altered C s, which is not allowed because of the C s' evolutionary conservation. Therefore, just like the C s, the S s become evolutionarily conserved at a moment when the P s have not yet come into existence. This means that the S s are evolutionarily conserved not to observe the P s. Because the P s are the latest to enter the scene, they have to intervene in such a way that they do not alter the S s.

Step AA6 shows what can happen to phenomena with an indirect influence on the C s. They can be altered in order to facilitate the directly influencing phenomena with more precision. In this way, the directly influencing phenomena that rely on a somewhat unlikely coincidence can be facilitated in a more systematic manner. For this reason, the P s will intervene in the everyday interactions between the I s. These everyday interactions also eventually become

evolutionarily conserved because of this, but later and less strongly than what is the case for the **S**s and the **C**s.

Step AA7 summarizes the conclusions that can be drawn with regard to the conditions (1), (2), and the negation of (3) about existence in reality and methodological supernaturalness. These conditions follow from steps AA1, AA6, and AA5, respectively. It then follows that the **P**s exist in reality and are methodologically supernatural. This concludes the theoretical analysis of EMAAN.

However, an analysis may be clearer if it is supported by examples. This follows in the next section.

6. Exemplary Scenarios

Both the *E* and the *AA* versions of EMAAN contain a series of concepts that can be instantiated by a variety of biological and cosmological examples. Without actually instantiating these concepts, the arguments and their analyses remain rather abstract. Therefore, I will expand step-by-step on a single exemplary scenario for both versions. However, the reader needs to be warned that giving examples of supernatural phenomena inevitably implies speculation.

Exemplifying *E1*: An example of an evolutionary multiverse **M** could be a Russian nesting doll of multiverses in multiverses, in which the smaller multiverses reproduce in multiverses that are larger and older and, probably, have more spatial dimensions. An example of phenomena with variable evolutionary ages can possibly be found in biological organisms in variable numbers of spatial dimensions, sustained by a hyper-dimensional biochemistry. But they do not need to be hyper-dimensional. Three-dimensional aliens that live in an older and larger three-dimensional multiverse must themselves be vastly older than we are, in case we imagine them to be evolutionarily dependent on multiple instances of reproducing big bang universes. They could be biologically fit for this task, for example as self-reproducing robust aliens that can stay intact for astronomically long periods of time. A third example of a phenomenon with a possibly high evolutionary age is a stable gateway between nearby big bang universes, which could be used by the robust aliens to travel.

Exemplifying *E2*: Given that **M** is evolutionary, it has an origin, a development, an end, and **M**-time that can be measured within **M**. Some (astronomically long) **M**-time after the origin of **M**, big bang universes **B** with three spatial dimensions might emerge that contain intelligent civilizations in which empirical sciences develop from century to century. These empirical sciences and their development will at some **M**-time T_i ($<T$) start to have some influence on the reproduction plan of the **B**s, or at least influence the probabilities of the **B**s' reproduction, due to the additional complexity of their technological footprint. We know from biology that the additional complexity of

all kinds of biomolecules also has been evolutionarily conserved. After the M -time T , this additional complexity will have become of vital importance for the reproduction of the B s, which means that the technological footprint and the empirical sciences that sustain it can no longer change much. In other words, they have become evolutionarily conserved.

Exemplifying $E3$: Assuming that some robust aliens, stable gateways, and hyper-dimensional aliens have an evolutionary age that is above T , it follows that the empirical sciences in the B s never had the chance to observe anything that necessitates the existence of these aliens methodologically. The empirical sciences got evolutionarily conserved before the advent of the earliest supernatural aliens. Because of this evolutionary conservation, the supernatural aliens might intervene in the B s' empirical sciences in such a way that they are not detected and documented by the methods of these empirical sciences, for example, by mimicking an alien civilization that sends a message. Even though the aliens are, in this example, physical, spatiotemporal, and causally active, they are not methodologically necessary for the B s' empirical sciences. Therefore, they exist in reality while being methodologically supernatural. This exemplifies the E version of EMAAN.

As previously discussed in the theoretical analysis, there remains a question to be answered. Why do the aliens intervene in the B s in such a way that they remain methodologically unnecessary? Why would they not disrupt the B s, or instead stay far away from them? The AA version of EMAAN provides the answer: the aliens are evolutionarily dependent on the B s. The explanatory logic of this answer is elucidated in more detail by extending the example above with examples of the concepts in the AA version of EMAAN.

Even though EMAAN is strictly speaking not committed to the possible existence of hyper-dimensional life, the belief in this possibility may be serviceable to those who hope that supernaturalism comes with an afterlife. Indeed, in the hyper-dimensional case the supernatural realm may contain hyper-bodies in hyper-bodies in which the larger hyper-bodies make backups of the smaller hyper-bodies. When the smaller hyper-body dies, it can be regenerated from the backup in a far-away place where it does not disturb the evolutionarily conserved plan of the multiverse in which the smaller hyper-body was born. Yet, the belief in higher dimensions is also serviceable to those who believe that the multiverse is either very large, or even maximal or plenitudinous. EMAAN explains why the commitment to higher dimensions does not come with the cost that these higher dimensions are unobserved. If these higher dimensions are there, we would not see them because higher-dimensional phenomena are evolutionarily dependent on the prior evolution of lesser-dimensional phenomena.

EMAAN is also not committed to the specific example that I will propose for the most highly conserved I -technology-caused phenomenon, because every

insignificant technological phenomenon will eventually become evolutionarily conserved in a sufficiently large multiverse. Yet, the most highly evolutionarily conserved technological phenomenon will most likely be a great achievement. An intergalactic laser beam will be chosen as an example, without suggesting that this specifically is ever a realistic possibility. Speculation is inevitable in building an example.

Seven concepts will thus be exemplified: the evolutionary multiverse M (as the 7D multiverse); the evolutionarily dependent phenomena P (as the stable gateways, the robust aliens, and the intelligence-specialized 4D organisms); the universes U_T (as the 3D big bang universes); the evolutionary age T (as the 10^{20} years); the intelligent, technological inhabitants I (as the intelligent 3D inhabitants); the empirical sciences S (as the 3D empirical sciences); and the evolutionarily conserved I -technology-caused phenomenon C (as the intergalactic laser beams).

Exemplifying AA1: Let the example of M be a (not necessarily string-theoretic) multiverse with seven spatial dimensions. Let the examples of the U_T s be string-theoretic big bang universes with three (non-compactified) spatial dimensions that contain civilizations of intelligent inhabitants, which are examples of the I s, and with empirical sciences developed by these inhabitants, which are examples of the S s. Let the astronomically long evolutionary age T of the 3D big bang universes be 10^{20} years, measured from the origin of the 7D multiverse. Within the 7D multiverse, the 3D big bang universes thrive from the 10^{20} years to, for example, 10^{40} years after the origin. Let our observed big bang universe be one of the 3D big bang universes at a random moment within this time frame, say, 5×10^{39} years after the origin of the 7D multiverse.

The evolutionary age T_P is the evolutionary age within the 7D multiverse of the P -phenomena: robust aliens, stable gateways between the 3D big bang universes, and 4D organisms with a 4D biochemistry. Consider, for example, that T_P is 10^{30} years. Given that the 3D big bang universes are already present in the world of the P -phenomena, some subclass of the P -phenomena will be evolutionarily dependent on the intelligent 3D beings in the 3D big bang universes, because they can shorten their evolutionary road toward higher complexity by building on the already extant complexity. The 4D organisms can literally graft upon the intelligent 3D beings by including them as an organ that they can control. The robust aliens can land on the planets of the 3D intelligent beings and the stable gateways can provide access to nearby big bang universes for the 3D intelligent beings.

Exemplifying AA2: Let us consider as an example that the transmission of an intergalactic laser beam is a C . The intergalactic laser beam may have acquired some function, such as signaling or triggering, in the reproduction plan

of the 3D big bang universes within the 7D multiverse. Given that the *P*-phenomena are evolutionarily dependent on the 3D big bang universes, they will facilitate the laser beam in order to reproduce themselves. For properly fulfilling its function in the complex physics of the 7D multiverse, the laser beam has to be right with regard to timing and strength. Not just an intergalactic laser beam is a suitable potential example of a *C*, but everything in the technological footprint of a civilization: electromagnetic waves, space ships, particle accelerators, etc.

Exemplifying AA3: Since the *P*-phenomena are evolutionarily dependent on the 3D big bang universes, they must facilitate the reproduction plan of the 3D big bang universes. This includes precisely reproducing the intergalactic laser beams that have a highly evolutionarily conserved function within the 7D multiverse.

Exemplifying AA4: The timings and strengths of intergalactic laser beams by a civilization is more directly influenced by the findings of scientists and the ideas of a world president than by some ordinary man ordering a drink in a bar.

Exemplifying AA5: If a world president would have been informed about the need to transmit an intergalactic laser beam by a winged angel that was directly materialized by the intelligence-specialized 4D organisms, the future technological footprint, including the timings and the strengths of the intergalactic laser beams, would have much more likely been altered than in the case that the world president developed his ideas in a less spectacular manner. The president might have lost his credibility, resulting in different plans for transmitting laser beams. This explains why the *P*-phenomena exert their control in a manner that does not betray the existence of the *P*-phenomena to anyone who has an impact on the scientific state of the art.

Exemplifying AA6: Contact with extra-terrestrial 3D intelligence may be an important factor in the decision to transmit an intergalactic laser beam. Therefore, the robust aliens could mimic such a contact. The 4D organisms can go a step further and directly take control of the conversations the world president has with his entourage. This enables the *P*-phenomena to facilitate the intergalactic laser beam in a more predictable manner than via sending an angel.

Exemplifying AA7: The *P*-phenomena (1) are physical, (2) intervene in the conversations between intelligent 3D inhabitants, and (3) are unnecessary to explain the observations of the 3D empirical sciences.

This proves the existence of phenomena that are methodologically supernatural for the 3D empirical sciences. All the steps of both versions of EMAAN are thus exemplified.

7. Cosmological Natural Selection as a Logical Ground for Reality

Given that EMAAN depends on cosmological natural selection, this paradigm deserves some more support. Cosmological natural selection was first proposed by Smolin (1992), but was soon rejected by physicists Rothman and Ellis (1993)

on technical, a posteriori grounds. It has been further explored in dozens of publications, most often by physicists (Harrison 1995; Vilenkin 2006; Gardner 2014; Vidal 2014; Blondé 2016). Apart from being relevant to physicists, I argue that cosmological natural selection has the status of a logical, a priori ground for reality, which makes it very relevant to philosophers.

Rothman and Ellis (1993, 204) try to dismiss cosmological natural selection as being merely an analogy to evolutionary theory in the biological world that might or might not hold. That would have been a valid objection if cosmological natural selection and evolutionary theory were empirical laws, like the speed of light being finite or the number of spatial dimensions being three. However, evolutionary theory in the biological world is merely an application of cosmological natural selection in which biological organisms are examples of cosmological entities, and cosmological natural selection itself is a fundamental logical law that grounds any possible reality. That evolutionary theory in biology is confirmed by empirical evidence is useful to know, but not required in deriving its universal validity. Consider three other possible grounds we might contemplate:

1. Reality has no logical, a priori basis. The empirical sciences have the most superior epistemology.
2. Anything that is not observed is not a part of reality. Therefore, the observed world cannot have an external explanation.
3. Reality consists of a non-maximal multiverse (or world) that does not reproduce. The apparent selection of this non-maximal multiverse among other possible non-maximal multiverses has no explanation whatsoever.

These three posits, which are variations on the same theme, are either irrational, or are no grounds at all. They have to be compared with cosmological natural selection in the maximal multiverse, which provides an explanation for any possible non-maximal multiverse: it is observed because it is naturally selected among other non-maximal multiverses. Cosmological natural selection grounds reality recursively via a series of non-maximal multiverses, all the way to the maximal multiverse. Because of its uniqueness, the maximal multiverse is not in need of a selection principle, and therefore valid as an ultimate ground.

Although cosmological natural selection has been discussed in the literature with respect to its falsifiability in physics, I conclude it has not sufficiently been considered as a philosophical project in which cosmological natural selection provides an a priori unfalsifiable logical ground for every possible reality.

8. Conclusions

The logical possibility of supernaturalism turns out to be a loophole in the worldview of the methodological naturalist. This worldview requires the impossibility, or at least the improbability, of cosmological natural selection and

its consequences, which seems hard to maintain for a naturalist. Evolutionary theory, when held to be universally applicable, backfires on methodological naturalism by inferring that the empirical sciences might very well be supernaturally predestined to develop according to an evolutionarily conserved plan. In this case, the methodology of the empirical sciences cannot determine what exists in reality.

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Empedocles without Horseshoes. Delphi's Criticism of Large Sacrifices¹

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Abstract: Scholars have generally analysed Empedocles' criticism of sacrifices through a Pythagorean interpretation context. However, Empedocles' doctrinal affiliation with this school is problematic and also not needed to explain his rejection of the 'unspeakable slaughter of bulls.' His position is consistent with the wisdom tradition that emanated from the Sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi, an institution that underwent significant political and religious changes at the end of the 6th Century B.C., the impact of which was felt all over Magna Graecia. The ritual practice of sacrifice played an important role in Delphi, but the sanctuary also gave birth to a school of wisdom that was highly critical of the arrogance (*hybris*) of large sacrifices. Asocio-cultural analysis of the Akragas of the first half of the 5th Century B.C. provides new arguments that support this interpretation. The work of Empedocles contains more evidence of being influenced by the Delphi school of wisdom than by Orphism or Pythagoreanism.

Keywords: Akragas, Apollo, Magna Graecia, Presocratic Philosophy.

Introduction

R. L. Cardullo recently made a disturbing observation: although there are over a hundred references to the work of Empedocles in the preserved texts of Aristotle, the founder of the lyceum never attributes a direct doctrinal affiliation with Pythagoras or the second-generation Pythagoreans to the Agrigentian sage (Cardullo 2011, 817). The same is true in Plato's dialogues, which contain a much smaller number of references, but this did not hinder Plato from relating Empedocles with the work of other philosophers (Gorgias (Men. 76c), Heraclitus (Sph., 242d-e), Protagoras and Heraclitus (Tht. 152e). Cf. Cardullo 2011, 817). The idea that Empedocles *Pythagorizes* (to paraphrase the expression W. Burkert discovered in his research, 'Πλάτων πυθαγορίζει,' cf. Burkert 1972, 15) was mainly coined by Neo-Platonism and was so successful that it still divides scholars today. For its proponents, the silence of Plato and Aristotle does not seem to be a serious problem. In the end, it could be that that Neo-Platonists were capable of finding in Empedocles something that they had overlooked (Kingsley 1996, 103-104).²

If Empedocles Pythagorized, it makes sense that he would do so to the rhythm of an Orphic lyre. Orphism and Pythagoreanism were two different things, but due to the extraordinary circulation of ideas that occurred between

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² For a criticism of this position, cf. Cardullo (2011, 822).

them specialized literature usually groups his influence under the 'Orphic-Pythagorean' tag (Cf., for example, Cornford 1912, 240 and Laurenti 1999, 278). However, the truth is that being Orphic was not the same as being Pythagorean and it cannot even be said that being Orphic was the same everywhere.³ But the most significant problems arise when we cast our gaze back in time, starting from the 5th Century B.C., as we begin to realize that the reliability of our convictions about the characteristics of the Orphic and Pythagorean movements has faded to the point that comparing them has become a risky proposition. The discovery of the *Derveni Papyrus* in 1962 has somewhat mitigated the situation, but not enough to dispel the many doubts that assail us when we try to compare Empedocles' thinking with that of Orphism. J.-P. Picot expressed it explicitly. The information available before Empedocles "sont maigres et toujours contestables," which weakens "la valeur des conclusions sur une influence présumée de l'orphisme sur Empédocle." (Cf. Picot 2007)⁴ We have the same problem with Pythagoreanism. We know many of the ideas of Archytas, a few of those of Philolaus, and almost nothing about what Pythagoras himself sustained. But the school inspired by his name filled in the blanks with such imagination that many scholars have not been able to avoid getting caught up in the legend.⁵ This was, literally, the case of W. Jaeger: "Empedocles of Acragas was a philosophical centaur (*philosophischer Kentaur*), so to speak – a prodigious union of Ionian elemental physics and Orphic religion." (Jaeger 1946, 295) The metaphor is certainly beautiful, but it is no more than an ingenious attempt to poetically resolve a historical contradiction, or in words of G. Casertano, an "anacronismo cronológico." (Casertano 2009, 124)

The centaurian Empedocles is a fantastic creature, but it probably did not exist in the same place as the historical Empedocles. If we go back to the middle of the 5th Century B.C. it is impossible to find a school or wisdom tradition from which such a contradictory figure could have emerged, being conscious of this, W.

³ For differences between Orphism and Pythagoreanism, cf. Casadesús Bordoy 2013.

⁴ The relationship between Empedocles and Orphism is a hotly debated in Empedoclean studies. Examples of the arguments in favour of his affiliation with Orphism in Cornford (1912, 224); Bignone (1916, 273); Jaeger (1946, 295); (1947, 130-131); Guthrie (1965, 190); Kingsley (1995, 250-277); Laurenti (1999, 292); and Bremmer (2002, 15); against: Dodds (1951, 146-149); Zuntz (1971, 263ss.); Casertano (2000, 214-236); and Picot (2000), (2007). A nuanced position, in Wersinger (2004, 131-132). A broad bibliography in Megino Rodríguez (2005, 17 n14).

⁵ The relationship between Empedocles and Pythagoreanism has occupied as many pages of Empedoclean studies as his relationship with Orphism. Often, proponents of his affiliation with Orphism also defend some kind of affiliation with Pythagoreanism, such as Kingsley (1995), Guthrie (1965, 141) and Laurenti (1999, 277-279). Nevertheless, in favour of a Pythagorean influence, but not Orphic, cf., for example, Trépanier (2004, 123-126). More arguments in favour in Primavesi (2006, 56) and (2016, 5-29). Against, Gallavoti (1975, xiv), Casertano (2000, 214-236) and (2009, 124) and Cardullo (2011). J. Bollack sustains that "Empédocle est pythagoricien, mais à sa manière, autrement." (2003, 11)

Jaeger was forced to employ the unsatisfying 'prodigious union' (*seltsamem Bunde*) description. However, the centaur exits the stage quietly if we simply stop trying to force Empedocles to wear Orphic or Pythagorean clothes.

The *poleis* of Magna Graecia had been immersed in a genuine cultural, political and religious revolution since the end of the 6th Century B.C., the epicentre of which was at what the Greeks considered the *navel* of the world: the Sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi. Apollo was not just the god of wisdom, but also the source of a wisdom tradition that radiated out from Delphi to every corner of Greece. The worship of Apollo had deep roots. But in the final third of the 6th Century B.C. Delphi underwent a series of political and religious changes that vigorously renewed and revitalized the cult of Apollo. This renovation spread throughout Magna Graecia where often, as in the case of Metapontium, new sacred areas were dedicated to the god of the silver bow and laurel wreath which openly competed with the ancient temples dedicated to Apollo (De Juliis 2001, 170-173). Over the past few years historical and archaeological researchers have provided us with many reasons to confirm G. Colli's thesis that philosophy originated in Delphi (Cf. Colli (1975; 1977 and Oñate 2004). The mark of Apollo is so evident in the fragments of Empedocles we have preserved that the scholar J. Bollack remarked "tout chez Empédocle est 'apollinien' – sans Apollon." (Bollack 2003, 115) In my opinion, this wisdom tradition is perfectly consistent with an interpretation of Empedocles free of the ideological context Orphism or Pythagoreanism, or to return to W. Jaeger's metaphor, with an Empedocles *without horseshoes*.

Although the hypothesis of a Delphic Empedocles is supported by many factors, it must grapple with a major criticism. Empedocles is well known for his rejection of bloody sacrifices, yet one thing about Delphi that is impossible to ignore is the extraordinary role such sacrifices played in the rites used to worship Apollo. According to Detienne's graphic expression, Apollo was the god with *le couteau à la main* (Detienne 1998), a reality that many scholars have not been able to ignore when discussing the nature of the relationship between Empedocles and Apollo.⁶ It is true that we have a broad collection of fragments and testimonies that deal with Empedocles' criticism of the institution of

⁶ Cf. J.-C. Picot and W. Berg: "Empedocles is in strong ethical opposition to the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, for the *Hymn* prizes sacrificial hecatombs, while the Agrigentine condemns all bloody sacrifice." (2018, 384) However, the position of these authors is difficult to reconcile with the fact that according to Diogenes Laertius Empedocles' poem may have been recited in Olympia (8.63), where sacrifices continued to be a key aspect of ritual. To address this problem J.-C. Picot and W. Berg are forced to assume that the rhapsode omitted the most compromising aspects of the poem: "Would Cleomenes, the rhapsode who lent his voice to the poems of Empedocles, have acquiesced in being involved with scandalous recitations that provoked the local authorities? Hardly likely. The *Purifications* declaimed at Olympia ought not therefore to have included fr. 128, 136 and 137. By contrast, fr. 127 and 146 – socially and religiously 'correct' representations of the blessed state – could have had a very favourable reception." (Picot and Berg 2015, 402 n47)

sacrifices,⁷ but the true scope of this criticism is not as evident as it seems at first glance. For example, it is striking that a man like Plutarch, an avid reader of Empedocles and high priest of the Oracle at Delphi, not only saw no contradiction between one thing and the other, but even wrote two small treatises on meat abstinence, with many allusions to Empedocles (Plu. *De esu carnium* I and II. Cf. Hershbell 1971), without seeming to care at all about what the owner of the knife might think. In my opinion, in one of these treatises Plutarch provides the key to unlocking this conundrum. In order to dramatize the sacrifices, he decides to give voice to one of its victims, who rebukes the butcher with these words: “I do not ask to be spared in ease of necessity; only spare me your arrogance!” (Plu. *Moralia* 994E)⁸ The true issue, therefore, is arrogance (ὑβρις) and the social and cultural meaning that the criticism of this *hybris* had in the context of Empedocles of Agrigento. In the Queen Cypris narrative, Empedocles places the focus on the ‘unspeakable slaughter of bulls’ (ταύρωνδ’ ἀρρήτοισιφόνοις, fr. 128.8). What I will try to demonstrate in this article is that Empedocles’ diatribe against such slaughter had a specific political meaning in the Akragas of the middle of the 5th Century B.C., and that this meaning, far from placing Empedocles at odds with the tradition of Apollo, allows us to recognize the lord of Delphi as the true source of his wisdom.

Delphi or Pythagoras? The Origin of Empedocles’ Criticism of Sacrifices

Traditions change. Much more so when they are linked to an institution whose survival depended on its ability to adapt to social and political changes. Delphi, as sustained by the historian I. Malkin, may have been in favour of conservatism in questions regarding worship and morals, but not “with regard to social and political problems.” (1989, 152) In the final third of the 6th Century B.C. the authorities at the sanctuary were increasingly caught up in the political maelstrom that was shaking the Greek world, which could be seen in many aspects, none more significant than the emergence of the Alcmaeonids. The ties established between the internal politics of the sanctuary and the political interests of the Alcmaeonids were so close that Herodotus could not help but point out how the verdicts of the Oracle always favoured the side from which the money of the illustrious Athenian family flowed (Hdt. 5.63.1, 5.90, 6.123. Cf. Scott 2014, 98-101). The panorama of the Sanctuary of Delphi was transformed at the same velocity as the political panorama of Athens, a fact that left an unmistakable imprint on Athenian democracy, but also on the sanctuary itself. After the Alcmaeonids restored the temple, the Delphic religion emerged with

⁷ The consensus among scholars is that Empedocles deals with sacrifices and meat abstinence in at least the following fragments: 31 B 128, 135-139, 143 and 145 DK and d.5-6 MP (from now on I shall omit the chapter and section for all DK Empedoclean fragments. Unless otherwise indicated, I will follow B. Inwood’s edition of the fragments.)

⁸ “οὐπαραιτοῦμαίσουτῆνἀνάγκηνἀλλὰτῆνὑβρίν” (transl. H. Cherniss and C. Helmbold).

such force that it had a massive impact on Magna Graecia (Bowden 2005, Scott 2010 and 2014). From Metapontium to Syracuse, a multitude of temples and holy grounds were established as authentic *branches* of the god of the laurel branch (Mazzarino 1947, 181. Cf. Lane 2009). The tyrannies fought to improve their prestige by investing in sumptuous offerings, but Delphi was a disputed space, a formidable tool to provide political legitimacy which the young democracies never stopped trying to appropriate. The sanctuary became the centre of wisdom of Greece, and the spread of its ideas was favoured by the creation of a wide network of political and religious information beyond compare at the time (Malkin 2003).

Those ideas, however, spread upon the rising smoke from altars. The altar and the sacrificial rite were at the heart of the institution of *temenos*, a fact difficult to reconcile with someone as critical of the butcher's knife as Empedocles. Nevertheless, Plutarch has already put us on guard against easy answers. The relationship between the name of Apollo and the institution of sacrifices was much more complex than it may seem at first sight. We know this not only through Plutarch, but also through the vestiges of Pythagoreanism that have reached us. One must only peruse the pages of Iamblichus, Porphyry or Diogenes Laertius to see that the members of the Pythagorean school (or at least the testimony that these sources provide about them) saw no contradiction between the rejection of bloody sacrifices and the belief that the source of their wisdom was in Delphi.⁹ If this was possible for Plutarch and the Pythagoreans, it could also have been for Empedocles.

Moreover, the debate has been weighed down by an overly simplistic vision of the reasons why a Greek could oppose the practice of bloody sacrifices or the consumption of meat. They could be religious, moral or simply dietary, none of which necessarily involves Pythagorean doctrine. It is possible to be in favour of one thing (bloody sacrifices) and against the other (the consumption of sacrificed meat) (Porph. *Abst.* 2.2.2.). In either case (even among Pythagoreans) there were frequent exceptions. For example, the sacrifice of oxen was generally prohibited, but roosters were usually not so lucky (Porph. *VP* 36. Cf. *VP* 34). Furthermore, there was no consensus regarding the most appropriate way to follow such prescriptions. Some, as we have just seen, only abstained from eating the meat of certain animals. For others, abstinence must be absolute. And for yet others, it depended on the person (complete abstinence for philosophers, but more leeway for everyone else) (Porph. *VP* 150). There were, therefore, many ways of complying with the practice of abstinence and the prohibition of sacrifices. In this sense, the example of Porphyry is quite revealing. Not only because he is one of our main sources of Empedocles, but also for the subtlety with which he deals with an issue whose main obstacle has always been the lack

⁹ Inspiration in Delphi: D.L. 8.8, 21; Porph. *VP* 16, 41; Iambl. *VP* 5, 82, 161, 213, 247 | Rejection of bloody sacrifices: D.L. 8.13, 20, 33, 37; Porph. *VP* 7, Iambl. *VP* 35, 54, 107, 177.

of nuance. Porphyry highlights three important aspects. The first, is that killing animals (which, for example, pose a threat to humans) does not necessarily imply that they must be eaten. The second is that it is also not necessary when obligated to make a sacrifice to the gods. And third, that abstinence is not recommended for everybody, but rather it is specifically for philosophers, and among them, only for those who pursue happiness through the divine and imitation of the divine (Porph. *Abst.* 2-3). These three aspects are interesting because they provide a much more complex representation of these kinds of practices, which from Porphyry's perspective are perfectly compatible with complying with civic religious rites. This does not imply that his convictions or arguments were weak. Ending the life of an innocent creature is a deep injustice, and such injustice cannot be whitewashed by converting it into a sacrifice. However, Porphyry distinguishes between when this injustice is committed for our enjoyment and when it is committed to comply with the laws of the city or of the gods. If there is no good reason to sacrifice an innocent animal, neither is there reason to not piously honour the gods or the laws of the city. The conflict can only be resolved in one way and it is no coincidence that it was Plutarch's solution a few centuries earlier. As we shall see, Porphyry expresses it in many different ways: "The god is pleased not by the size of sacrifices, but by ordinary things".¹⁰ Meanwhile, Plutarch presents it by giving voice to the victims: "I do not ask to be spared in ease of necessity; only spare me your arrogance! Kill me to eat, but not to please your palate!".¹¹ In both cases, the criticism centres on excess, on ὕβρις, referring to the Delphic wisdom tradition.

But before examining where this line of reasoning leads us, it is a good idea to reiterate the need to handle our sources carefully. Too often ancient sources tried to cover the distance that separated them from Empedocles by using the tool-kit of Plato and Pythagoreanism. A particularly significant case is Plutarch's allusion to fragment 137, in which he assumes that Empedocles is allegorically referring to souls, "ἀλληγορεῖ γὰρ ἐν ταῦθα τὰς ψυχάς." (Plu. *Moralia* 996b, and 997b)¹² This fragment, as we know, is one of the most common arguments used to support Empedocles' affiliation with Pythagoreanism. The text starts with a thunderous verse, where the first thing that comes on the scene is the transmutation of bodies:

1 μορφὴν δ' ἀλλάξαντα πατὴρ φίλον υἱὸν αἰείρας
σφάζει ἐπευχόμενος ἐμὴ γὰρ ἀνάγκη οἶδ' ἀπορεῖνται
λισσόμενον θύοντες, ὁ δ' αὐτὸς ἀκούστος ὁμοκλέων
σφάζας ἐν μεγάροισι κακὴν ἀλεγύνατο δαῖτα.
5 ὡς δ' αὐτῶς πατέρ' υἱὸς ἐλὼν καὶ μητέρα παῖδες

¹⁰ "Ὅτι δὲ οὐ τῶ ὄγκῳ χαίρει ὁ θεὸς τῶν θυσιῶν, ἀλλὰ τῷ τυχόντι" (Porph. *Abst.* 2.20), (transl. G. Clark).

¹¹ "οὐ παρὰ τοῦ μαιῶσου τὴν ἀνάγκην ἀλλὰ τὴν ὑβρίν, ἵνα φάγησά ποκτεῖνον, ἵνα δ' ἡδίων φάγησμήμ' ἀναίρει" (Plu. *Moralia* 994e), (transl. H. Cherniss and C. Helmbold).

¹² Plutarch does not explicitly cite fr. 137, but the allusion is clear due to the context.

Empedocles without Horseshoes. Delphi's Criticism of Large Sacrifices

Θυμὸν ἀπορραΐσαν τε φίλας κατὰ σάρκα σέξουσιν.

- 1 A father lifts up his dear son, who has changed his form
And prays and slaughters him, in great folly, and they are at a loss
As they sacrifice the suppliant. But he, on the other hand, deaf to the rebukes,
sacrificed him in his halls, and prepared himself an evil meal.
- 5 In the same way, a son seizes his father and the children their mother,
and tearing out their life-breath devour their own dear flesh (transl. B.
Inwood).

It is almost inevitable that someone educated in the Platonic tradition will think of metempsychosis when they hear of children meeting their parents again in the form of sacrificial victims. In reality, however, Empedocles never speaks of the soul (in the sense the word has for Plato or the Pythagoreans), and he had no reason to refer to it to explain the process by which life changes form. In all likelihood, Empedocles only sought dramatic effect to highlight his theory of the community of living beings. All living beings are made from the same roots. These roots are divine and always guided by the powerful influence of Love and Strife. Empedocles describes them as constantly running through each other (fr. 17.34), mixing and interchanging (fr. 8.3), giving rise, as a result of their union, to the diffusion of a 'thousand tribes of mortals' (ἕθνεα μυρία θνητῶν), 'fitted together in all kinds of forms' (παντοίαισι δέησιν ἀρηρότα) (fr. 35.16-17). Sometimes these forms are human; other times that of a savage beast; and others, that of a shrub or bird (fr. 9.1-3). According to Empedocles, everything that exists belongs to the divine, which is very different than considering that the divine belongs to everything that exists. Let me restate this. Men are made from divine roots, but we are not gods. However, we belong to them, just like the animals, trees and mountains. The pulse that makes the heart of all creatures beat is divine. That is why for Empedocles all life is sacred and deserves to be treated with the same respect and piety that we owe the gods.

I doubt that Empedocles believed, as Plutarch claims (*Moralia* 997e), that the sacrificial victim contains the life (or soul) of the child of the person who wields the knife. It is much more probable that his intention was to construct a powerful metaphor to express the profound bonds that unite all living beings. Above all, he wanted to express the ruthlessness involved in acts of violence. On various occasions, Porphyry refers to the fact that the invention of bloody sacrifices was closely related to the invention of war (Porph. *Abst.* 2.7.2, 2.12.1, 2.57.3. Cf. Plu. *Moralia* 998a-b).¹³ I believe that this relation was present in Empedocles and that it is impossible to comprehend the success of his discourse unless his contemporaries also had this relation in their heads. The blood on the altars evoked the blood on battlefields. Thus, what was important in Empedocles' narrative was not that the victim of the sacrifice was in fact the child of the butcher, but rather the attempt to make the butcher see the eyes of

¹³ In which the institution of sacrifice is related to war and tyranny.

his child in the eyes of the creatures whose throats he was slitting. Not just because life is sacred, but also because there is a relation between the way we treat animals and the way that we treat each other. When parents lose their compassion for life, their children, in one way or another, usually find themselves at the end of the knife.

‘Unspeakable Slaughter of Bulls’: Akragas and the Tyranny

Empedocles’ posture, therefore, was not exactly the same as that of Plutarch or Porphyry. But there was enough in common for those authors to consider Empedocles a rich source of material to use in their own discourses. Many fragments have come down to us thanks to this practice. Among them, fragment 128, which has also been preserved through other sources, but that in Porphyry plays a particularly important role for our topic. Porphyry mentions it in the second book of *On Abstinence*, where he pays particular attention to the question of sacrifices.

1 οὐδέτις ἤνκειοισιν Ἄρησθεοῦ δὲ Κυδοιμῶς
οὐδὲ Ζεὺς βασιλεὺς οὐδὲ Κρόνος οὐδ’ Ὀποσειδῶν,
ἀλλὰ Κύπρις βασίλεια...

...
τῆνοῖγ’ εὐσεβέεσσιν ἀγάλμασιν ἰλάσκοντο

5 γραπτοῖς τε ζώοισι μύροις ἰτεδαῖδα ἐόσμοις
σύνρνηστ’ ἀκρήτου θυσιάς λιβάνου τε θυώδους
ξανθῶν τε σπονδὰς μελιττῶν ῥίπτοντες ἐσόδας,
ταύρων δ’ ἀρρήτοισι φόνους οὐδέυετο βωμῶς,
ἀλλὰ μύσος τοῦτ’ ἔσκεν ἐν ἀνθρώποισι μέγιστον,

10 θυμὸν ἀπορραΐσαντας ἐέδμεναι ἡέα γυῖα. (128.8: ἀκρήτοισι Scaliger
DK/Inwood: ἀρρήτοισι Fabricius (Kirk, Raven and Schofield). Cf. Wright 1981,
143, 282-283)

1 They had no god Ares or Battle-Din,
nor Zeus the King nor Kronos nor Poseidon;
but Kupris the queen [Aphrodite]

...
her they worshipped with pious images,

5 painted pictures and perfumes of varied odours,
and sacrifices of unmixed myrrh and fragrant frankincense,
dashing onto the ground libations of yellow honey.
Their altar was not drenched by the unspeakable slaughter of bulls,
but this was the greatest abomination among men,

10 to tear out their life-breath and eat their goodly limbs (transl. B. Inwood,
modified).

In my opinion, this fragment, along with the others that seem to deal with the topic of abstinence and sacrifices, is part of a narrative that Empedocles

introduced, according to a valuable reference from Porphyry, when he addressed "the theogony and sacrifices." (Porph. *Abst.* 2.21.1) The narrative must be divided into at least two sequences: the first, around fragment 128, describes life under the reign of Cypris. Men follow the law of Aphrodite's Justice and do not carry out bloody sacrifices (Cf. fr. 135 and Arist. *Rh.* 1376b 14-17).¹⁴ The second, around 137, narrates the consequences of the increase in Strife among men. Bloody sacrifices are instituted, and friendliness (φιλοφροσύνη), which once gleamed in the reign of Aphrodite (fr. 130), is replaced by evil quarrels. According to this interpretation, Empedocles' narrative is not only meant to criticize the institution of sacrifice, but also the institution of strife among men, of which the blood spilled on the altars is merely a reflection. Without question Empedocles was scandalized by the cruelty of sacrifices, but he was far more scandalized by the cruelty with which men sacrificed each other. And in Ancient Greece, one of the most impressive celebrations of this cruelty was no other than the 'unspeakable slaughter of bulls.' The entire significance of the Queen Cypris narrative is related to the significance such slaughter had within the socio-cultural context of Empedocles. For us it is easy to disassociate one thing from the other, but for the people who listened to Empedocles, the 'unspeakable slaughter of bulls' immediately evoked the celebration of war and deaths on the battlefield. The more deaths there were, more bulls were sacrificed on the altar. And in Empedocles' era the greatest aficionados of this kind of boast were the tyrants.

If we return to *On Abstinence*, a few paragraphs before the Queen Cypris narrative appears we can find an extremely interesting anecdote regarding the tyrants of Sicily. Porphyry echoes the information of some historians who claim that "the tyrants, after their victory over the Carthaginians, offered hecatombs to Apollo with great rivalry among themselves for the most splendid." (Porph. *Abst.* 2.17.1) These sacrifices must have been truly impressive. In all likelihood, Porphyry refers to the hecatombs established by Gelo of Syracuse and Theron of Akragas after the battle of Himera (480 B.C.). Porphyry's anecdote places them in the Sanctuary of Delphi, but we know that these hecatombs were not even close to being the greatest expenditure carried out by Theron to celebrate his triumph over the Carthaginians. To discover the extent of his extravagance, we must travel to the tyrant's city, ancient Akragas, where we can find, according to Diodorus Siculus (D.S. 11.25, 13.82), the Temple of Olympian Zeus, one of the most colossal ever built in the Greek world (Mertens 2006, 261-266). Thanks to Diodorus' description, we know that its eastern and western façades were decorated with large reliefs that recreated scenes from the Gigantomachy and the Sack of Troy. Reflecting the opinion of most scholars, T. Van Compernelle, wrote that it must be understood as an integral part of the tyrant's propaganda,

¹⁴ Empedocles seems to be contrasting the law of Aphrodite's Justice (not to kill what is living) with the law of Zeus' Justice, which excludes animals (Hes. *Op.* 276-279). Cf. Wright (1981, 285).

the saviour of the city: “d’une part, par l’établissement d’un ordre nouveau et, d’autre part, par la défaite des Barbares.” (Van Compernelle 1993, 249) The Gigantomachy, therefore, was one of the most important decorations of Akragas in the 5th Century B.C. and there is reason to consider that Empedocles may have had it in mind as a symbol of the tyrant’s power. At least two authors from Antiquity, Plutarch and Proclus, established an explicit relationship between the strife (νεῖκος) of Empedocles and Zeus’ fight against the Titans and the Giants (Plu. *Moralia* 926E, Procl. in *Prm.* 849. Cf. Hershbell 1970, 157). It is unlikely that these authors knew the context of Empedocles, but what they did know was the context of the fragments in which Empedocles spoke of Strife and the fact that both of them related it to Zeus’ battle could be that it was taken from the text itself. Of course, it could have been established independently. But the reliefs of the Temple of Zeus were so famous in Antiquity that four centuries later they continued to impress an author such as Diodorus Siculus. If somebody would have wanted to launch a criticism against the excess of those who erected the temple it would have been enough to evoke the relief of its main façade. The question is if Empedocles really had motives to do so. We do not need to move far from the temple to find out that he did.

Only 50 metres from its eastern façade, just in front of the scene of the Gigantomachy, Theron ordered the construction of an altar as monumental as the temple itself. D. Mertens summed up his impressions with a single word: ‘Gigantesco.’ (2006, 265) It was as big as two basketball courts (placed one after the other: 54 x 15.70 m.) and visitors to the Archaeological Park are still left breathless by its ruins. Two centuries passed, as D. Mertens points out, before another monument of this category appeared in the West that could rival it. It was created (unsurprisingly) by another tyrant, Hiero II of Syracuse. The conclusion of D. Martens speaks for itself: “e dovette essere il centro di grandi feste, con sacrifici sulla piazza quasi quadrata e simmetricamente delimitata da tempio e altare.” (2006, 265) To sum up, if there was a place in Akragas that could be associated with the ‘unspeakable slaughter of bulls,’ it would be the altar of the Temple of Olympian Zeus, the largest altar in Magna Graecia and a symbol of the tyranny.

Let us return to Porphyry, who we had abandoned in the middle of his description of the splendid hecatombs that the tyrants of Sicily had offered Apollo. After carrying out these sacrifices, the tyrants asked the god which of them had pleased him more, “and his reply was wholly unexpected: that it was the ground grain from Dokimos.” (Porph. *Abst.* 2.17.1) A very disappointing answer for the vanity of a tyrant. Dokimos was a Delphian who farmed a hard, stony patch of ground who, according to Porphyry, “came down from his piece of land that day and offered a few handfuls of barley-groats from the pouch he wore, giving the god more satisfaction than those who had offered splendid sacrifices.” (Porph. *Abst.* 2.17.2) The meaning of this story seems quite clear. As Porphyry himself points out, what most pleases the divine power is not the size

of the sacrifices, but rather ordinary things (Porph. *Abst.* 2.20.1). A completely Delphic interpretation, which Porphyry illustrates with other examples. Among them, the narrative of Queen Cypris, and two new anecdotes that are also related to Delphi (Cfr. Porph. *Abst.* 2.15-16).¹⁵ The message of these anecdotes is the same as the prior one. The first is about a citizen from Hermione whose sacrifice of three finger-breadths of ground grain from his pouch pleased the deity more than the sumptuous hecatombs offered by a Thessalian. The other is about a rich citizen from Magnesia who is dismayed to discover that the gods favour the humble sacrifices of a poor farmer from a backwater in Arcadia who offered no more than incense, ground grain and cakes, while honouring all the divine precepts and festivals. H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell recorded these three stories in their catalogue of oracular responses, numbered 241, 239-240 and 238, and based on a reflection by M. P. Nilsson, proposed interpreting them according to the best-known aspect of Delphic wisdom: "The Pythia has been made to express the Greek aversion from *hybris*." (Parke y Wormell 1956a, 384. Cf. Nilsson 1949 [=1925], 198) "Man – says Nilsson – is not to exalt himself even in his piety." (Nilsson 1949 [=1925], 198) The arrogance of those who make sumptuous gifts to the gods must be condemned. And M.P. Nilsson highlights that this has to do with Apollo's opposition to tyrants, such as the Peisistratids of Athens and the Orthagorids of Sycione. Although many Greeks hated the tyrants, they "could not help admiring them as 'the equals of the gods', who, like the gods, could permit themselves to do whatever they pleased." (Nilsson 1949 [=1925], 198. Cf. Plu. *Moralia* 998a-b) The god condemned this impiety with a sentence that was inscribed in the stone of the Sanctuary at Delphi: μηδὲν ἄγαν ('nothing in excess').

The fragments of Empedocles do not reveal many details regarding his criticism of the institution of sacrifices or of his position on abstinence. Many questions still up in the air. Is the speaker who laments having devoured meat in fragment 139 referring to any kind of meat or a specific type? And what really provoked his lament, the act of eating the meat itself, or perhaps the abominable action that led to it (cf. the alternative version of fr. d.6 MP)? Should only he regret the action or every other person who hears him? Is it a man speaking or a god? Do the same rules that apply to men also apply to the gods? These are questions for which not even the Pythagoreans had a unanimous answer. Earlier I provided various citations to demonstrate that the Pythagoreans rejected the institution of sacrifice, but we have also seen that the same sources offer more nuanced positions. For example, if we read Diogenes Laertius, we see how after speaking about Pythagoras and bloodless sacrifices he immediately backtracks and points out that others say that Pythagoras sometimes sacrificed animals, although only roosters, kids, and, as little as possible, lambs (D.L. 8.20). We find similar information in Porphyry. Either with a rooster or 'a very young piglet,'

¹⁵ Porphyry cites Theopompus (4th Century B.C.) as the source of the second story.

some Pythagoreans found a way to circumvent the prohibition (Porph. *VP* 36. Cf. *VP* 34). On other occasions, it was not so much a question of the type of animal but rather of the type of person who made the sacrifice. Contemplative philosophers had to abstain completely, but everyone else could sacrifice the occasional rooster or lamb (Porph. *VP* 150).

In my opinion, more than a defence of 'végétarisme radical,' as claimed by J.-F. Balaudé (1997, 33) Empedocles' narrative is a condemnation of the arrogance of large sacrifices. To this end he ruminates about the times in which men lived in community with all other living beings and denounces that the spectacle of long chains of bulls walking to the altar only contributed to the vanity of men and the corruption of our view of life.¹⁶ For Empedocles all the creatures with which we share the world have divine roots, from abundant schools of fish, to a simple snail, or a fierce lion who sleeps on the mountain, and all that is divine deserves to be treated with piety and respect. This perspective on life can lead to an ethics based on abstinence, but more commonly it results in one based on moderation and the pious treatment of all living beings. Vegetarianism (not to mention radical vegetarianism, what today we refer to as veganism) was an exception and it continues to be so in any other part of the world. In my opinion, the interpretation most consistent with the historical context of Empedocles puts his discourse in the sphere of influence of Delphi and of narratives regarding the unapologetic ὕβρις of the powerful and the tyrants, a ὕβρις that on many occasions the democrats did not hesitate to imitate. Fifteen years after the battle of Himera, the dictatorship of Thrasybulus, the brother of Gelo, was overthrown in Syracuse and to celebrate the city instituted festivals to honour Zeus *Eleutherios* in which four hundred and fifty bulls were sacrificed and consumed in a banquet for the citizens (D.S. 11.72). Syracuse was not Akragas, but such a slaughter must not have gone unnoticed, and there is no reason to doubt that Empedocles could have had it in mind when he launched his diatribe against the 'unspeakable slaughter of bulls' and how abominable it was "to tear out their life-breath and eat their goodly limbs." (fr. 128.8-10) Empedocles' criticism was fed by the alimentary substrate of democracy, but it was a criticism directed at any type of ὕβρις, including that of democracy itself, and this was probably what made him a sage worthy of the Delphic tradition.

In a noteworthy take on our topic, G. Wersinger observed that the target of Empedocles' barbs was the deeply-rooted worship of chthonic deities in Akragas. This worship was closely tied to the tyranny and to the large sacrifices that were held around the altar of Zeus (Wersinger 2004). I think G. Wersinger was correct, but I do not agree with the arguments that lead her to claim that Empedocles

¹⁶ Cf. G. Casertano: "V'è, certamente, ancora, la condanna dei sacrifici sontuosi e cruenti; ma più che in un'ottica vegetariana, essa andrebbe inquadrata nell'ambito di una polemica contro il lusso e lo spreco delle classi ricche (...). Se non esiste dunque in Empedocle la persistenza del divieto orfico di mangiar carne, a maggior ragione non esiste a rigore nemmeno la prescrizione di una dieta vegetariana." (2000, 230-231)

was part of this tradition. There is, first of all, an obstacle to identifying Orphism with the large cults of chthonic deities. Both are mystery religions, so needless to say the worship of Demeter and Persephone played an important role in both. But their rituals, their historical dating, and how deeply they penetrated the urban fabric of the city were very different. What has left a clear trace in Akragas is the worship of chthonic deities, not Orphism. Furthermore, considering Empedocles a follower of Orphism is problematic, as pointed out by G. Wersinger herself,¹⁷ and his discourse is not consistent with that of a reformer, but rather that of an adversary from a rival school of wisdom. In reality, I think that it is more likely that Empedocles' criticisms were directed against the political sphere of the two most important religious centres of his city, the magnificent Temple of Olympian Zeus and the Sanctuary of Chthonic Deities. Both had a prominent place in the sacred area known as the Valley of the Temples and close ties with the tyranny (De Miro 1994, 29-30). The main areas from which these cults radiated were Olympia and Eleusis, whose sanctuaries must have been shaken by the inexorable rise of Delphi that began in the final third of the 6th Century B.C.¹⁸ But there is another one important aspect. Archaeological excavations have allowed historians to confirm that the construction projects in these temples sponsored by Theron were abruptly stopped with the fall of the tyranny, a circumstance that could not be explained by economic reasons (temples continued to be built in Akragas) and therefore must have been politically motivated: the democracy was reluctant to continue the tyrant's projects (De Miro 1994, 29-30; Greco 2007, 200-201). If democrats associated the Temple of Olympian Zeus and, by extension, the great extravagance of the Gigantomachy and the large sacrifices carried out at its altar, with the tyranny, then it is possible that Empedocles' discourse could have acted as narrative to legitimize the democracy. There has been much discussion regarding the soundness of the testimonies that render account of Empedocles' democratic

¹⁷ Wersinger is unconvinced by the arguments made by Kingsley (1995, 260 ss.) to downplay the fact that Dionysus was not mentioned even once in the fragments that we have preserved, cf. Wersinger (2004, 131-132).

¹⁸ For the differences between Orphism and the large cults worshipping chthonic deities, cf. Ricciardelli (2005, 276); for the archaeological remains in the environs of the Temple of Zeus and the Sanctuary of the Chthonic Deities of Akragas, cf. De Miro (2000) and De Miro and Calli (2007); in particular, for the parallels between the sacred area of the *terrazzo dei donatori* and the *Eleusinion* of Athens, cf. De Miro and Calli (2007, 47); for the relations between the sanctuaries of Delphi and Olympia, cf. Scott (2010): "The two sanctuaries were the de facto possession of two increasingly competing poleis, Athens and Sparta. Most mainland Greek poleis were allied to one or the other, although those alliances kept shifting over time." (235) It is noteworthy that the Alcaemonids' rapprochement with Delphi in the final third of the 6th Century B.C. coincided not only with Peisistratos distancing himself from this sanctuary (Scott 2014, 99-100), but also with the broad programme of reforms that occurred during the tyranny in the Sanctuary of Eleusis (Mylonas 1961, 77-106). This might imply that at the end of the 6th Century B.C. the rivalry between the cults of Delphi and Eleusis had gained political significance.

affiliation.¹⁹ The debate is complex. We do not know much about the type of democracy that was instituted in Akragas, and the epithet 'δημοτικός' attributed to Empedocles by Diogenes Laertius can be interpreted in different ways. But everything we have seen to this point indicates that Empedocles must have had some kind of commitment to the democratic changes that took place in his city after the fall of the tyranny. If this is the case, it is difficult to believe that the new democracy would not have reserved a significant role for a sage of his calibre.²⁰

Conclusion

Empedocles' criticism of the institution of bloody sacrifices has traditionally been framed within the ideological context of Pythagoreanism. Our research has allowed us to establish that the source of this criticism can be found in the wisdom tradition that emanated from the Sanctuary of Delphi. For many authors the emergence of a personality such as Empedocles was an exceptional case, a rare confluence of different traditions, combining Pythagoreanism, Ionian elemental physics and Orphism. Empedocles was, in the words of W. Jaeger, a 'philosophical centaur.' However, our approach to the social and cultural context of Magna Graecia has provided a much more consistent image of Empedocles, that of a sage trained in the Delphic tradition who was heavily involved in the political changes taking place in his city. His criticism of the institution of sacrifices coincides with the Delphic criticism of the arrogance of large hecatombs, a criticism that the sources associate with tyranny in particular. The problems with the Empedocles without horseshoes interpretation, that is, of an Empedocles liberated from the Orphic and Pythagorean influences, are much smaller than the problems that arise from W. Jaeger's centaur interpretation.

Empedocles' objection to the violence, vanity and absurd waste of life characterized by the hecatombs, were undoubtedly directed at the impiety that these hecatombs usually celebrated, which was the slaughter perpetrated among Greeks, whether to dominate others or with the vain excuse of being liberated from domination. There are many things we cannot confirm about Empedocles, but his disdain for those who spilled the blood of others is not one of them. His voice was an outcry against strife. His narrative, a warning that life is rooted in the divine and that we cannot dispose of it any way we please. Life does not belong to us. It is we who belong to life. Ultimately, Empedocles' narrative was an invitation to the Greeks to put out the fire of their strife and to feel the benevolent and sacred breeze of Friendship, a breeze whose presence was impossible not to feel in Delphi, the navel of the world and the cradle of wisdom.

¹⁹ For more on Empedocles as a political reformer, democrat and his aversion to accepting public office, cf. 31 A1 DK (=D.L. 8.64, *FHG* 214 fr. 88a; D.L. 8.66; D.L. 8.63 [=Arist. *Fr.* 66]).

²⁰ Difficulties with a democratic interpretation, in Asheri (1992). In favour, Kirk and Raven (1957, 321), Guthrie (1965; 131), Capizzi (1982, 369-378), Inwood (2001, 7), Palumbo (2008, 139-142). Some, such as Chitwood (1986), are sceptical regarding the sources.

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Impartiality or Oikeiôsis? Two Models of Universal Benevolence

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Abstract: ‘Universal benevolence’ may be defined as the goal of promoting the welfare of every individual, however remote, to the best of one’s ability. Currently, the commonest model of universal benevolence is that of ‘impartiality,’ the notion promoted by Peter Singer, Roderick Firth, and others, that every individual (including oneself) is of equal intrinsic worth. This paper contends that the impartialist model is seriously flawed. Specifically, it is demonstrated that impartialist accounts of benevolence (1) attempt to draw positive moral conclusions from negative premises, (2) draw actual conclusions from merely counterfactual premises, (3) fail to live up to stated claims of naturalism, and (4) give no compelling account of moral motivation. By contrast, I propose an alternate model of universal benevolence, grounded in the Stoic, cosmopolitan theory of *oikeiôsis*, i.e. ‘appropriation.’ Such a model, in contradistinction to impartiality, would see benevolence as the positive identification between moral agent and moral patient, rather than a charitable sacrifice of oneself for a distinct but equal other. An ethics of *oikeiôsis* has the further benefit of avoiding each of the four abovementioned conceptual pitfalls common to impartialist theories.

Keywords: impartiality, *oikeiôsis*, Peter Singer, stoicism, Spinoza, utilitarianism.

I define ‘universal benevolence’ as the goal of promoting the welfare of every individual, however remote, to the best of one’s ability.¹ A lovely sounding concept, it is remarkably unpopular amongst professional ethicists today. The notion is frequently criticized as being overly idealistic, impersonal, impractical, and even politically dangerous (Narveson 2003; Miller 2004; Ebels-Duggan 2008).² What of the concept’s few defenders? The advocates of universal benevolence have, with few exceptions, grounded their view upon a principle of impartiality.³ Admittedly, there are a number of sophisticated variants of this principle, but Peter Singer expressed its essence plainly enough in his early, yet pivotal article “Famine, Affluence, and Morality.” “If we accept any principle of impartiality... we cannot discriminate against someone merely because he is far away from us (or we are far away from him)” (Singer 1972, 232). No individual

¹ I use the term ‘benevolence’ in the same manner as some ethicists use the term ‘beneficence.’

² Narveson (2003) encapsulates most of these critiques, claiming that a strong principle of benevolence is not only impractical, but also grates against his libertarian political values.

³ Likewise, criticisms of universal benevolence have often taken the form of objections to impartiality. See, for example, Walker 1991; Friedman 1989; Luo 2007.

is inherently more valuable than any other, and certainly an individual's proximity to us (whether geographic, cultural, religious, etc.) does not change this fact.

The breathtaking impact of Singer's argument lies in this: An intuitively credible principle of impartiality, if taken to its logical conclusion, implies an ethical outlook drastically out of step with common practice. Namely, it implies an imperative to pursue the interests of any number of unfamiliar, alien persons, possibly at great expense to oneself, one's loved ones, or local community.

Nonetheless, I contend that a doctrine of impartiality, though it is by far the commonest basis for universal benevolence, is inadequate for that end. As such, this paper will argue for the viability of an alternate model, one based instead upon the Stoic, cosmopolitan theory of *oikeiôsis*, i.e. 'familiarization.' This alternate model of benevolence emphasizes the positive identification of the ethical agent with the ethical patient. We choose to aid other individuals not because they are of equal import to ourselves, but rather because we no longer see them as substantially 'other' than ourselves in the first place.

Our natural egoism, or self-concern, is therefore not the enemy of benevolence, but is instead its basis. Hence, the Enlightenment philosopher Baruch Spinoza, in continuing this Stoic line of thought, asserted that the "striving to preserve oneself is the first and only foundation of virtue." (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E4 P22, Cor.)⁴

This is in stark contrast to the impartialist framing of ethical dilemmas, wherein charity always implies a personal sacrifice for the benefit of a distinct, but equally important 'other.' Giving, on the impartialist view, essentially comes down to a question of marginal utility; I forfeit some luxury or enjoyment so that an equally worthy recipient may gain the necessities of life.⁵ The ultimate end of *oikeiôsis*, on the other hand, is a personal identification with all moral subjects, and not merely the recognition of our formal equality with them. Thus, instead of altruism, sympathy, or sacrifice for those worst off, it promotes a positive and universal solidarity.

Affirming the *oikeiôsis* model does come at a cost; for it requires accepting a certain metaphysics as its basis. This ontology is the deterministic monism of the Stoics, later adopted and modified by certain Enlightenment rationalists, especially Baruch Spinoza. Still, the benefit of this rather more speculative approach is that it will be seen to avoid many of the conceptual pitfalls which

⁴ For purposes of clarity, original works by Spinoza will be cited according to the standard abbreviations. ('E' for the *Ethics*, 'TTP' for the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, and 'Ep.' for selected Letters). In the case of the *Ethics*, the letters D, A, and P indicate definition, axiom, and proposition, followed by their respective number.

⁵ See for example Dale Dorsey's 'strong' principle of impartial beneficence in (2009, 139). His formulation was that, "Persons of affluent means ought to give to those who might fail basic human subsistence until the point at which they must give up something of comparable moral importance."

currently plague impartialist arguments. Specifically, impartialist theories are problematic in that they (1) attempt to draw positive moral conclusions from negative premises, (2) draw actual conclusions from merely counterfactual premises, (3) fail to live up to stated claims of naturalism, and (4) give no compelling account of moral motivation. In short, it is precisely by affirming oikeiôsis, the admittedly more speculative and radical model, that an ethics of universal benevolence can be made viable at all.

The 'Expanding Circle' of Benevolence

In *The Expanding Circle*, Peter Singer outlined the case for his very demanding moral outlook (Singer 2011b). It is to this account that we now turn, for it is largely paradigmatic of the impartialist strategy. Breaking new ground in 1981 and thoughtfully updated in the 2011 edition, Singer was amongst the first ethicists to take seriously the contribution of sociobiology to our understanding of morality. As will be seen, engagement with sociobiology extended to his recent collaboration, *The Point of View of the Universe* (de Lazari-Radek and Singer 2014). The central contention in *The Expanding Circle* was that the origins of impartial ethical concern are in fact natural, and specifically, that they can be traced back to our species' evolutionary past. Importantly, Singer's argument was always meant to be 'metaphysically unproblematic,' avoiding the need for transcendental moral principles, and requiring no comprehensive view of 'reality as such' beyond our ordinary empirical observations (Singer 2011b, 200). This is in keeping with many earlier proponents of impartiality, notably William Godwin, Jeremy Bentham, Henry Sidgwick, J.S. Mill, and Roderick Firth, who likewise had strongly empiricist proclivities.

Building off the work of E.O. Wilson, Singer noted that evolution favors a limited concern for others. 'Kin altruism' is the readily observable phenomenon in which animal parents act selflessly to rear and protect their offspring, even at the cost of their own lives. This is not altogether surprising since natural selection involves the survival of genes and traits, rather than individuals. Thus amongst early humans, far from a 'war of all against all,' evolution favored this limited benevolence towards offspring, likely offspring, as well as brothers and sisters who share as much of one's own genetic makeup (50%). Singer went on to outline how more expanded sorts of concern, 'reciprocal altruism' and 'group altruism,' might have subsequently been selected for. For instance, small groups within a species that practiced food-sharing and common defense would tend to thrive, and have an improved chance at transmitting their genes to the next generation, compared to other less cooperative groups (Singer 2011b, 16-20). Hence, empirically verifiable facts help to explain the gradually 'expanding circle' of our moral concern.

Thus far, a similar thesis could be attributed to the popular works of any number of neuroscientists, evolutionary biologists, or eliminative-materialist philosophers. The goal of explaining (or explaining away) common morality

through genetic makeup, brain structure, or evolutionary history first gained wide notoriety in Richard Dawkins' *The Selfish Gene* (1989), with iterations of the same theme readily seen in Michael Shermer's *The Science of Good and Evil* (2005), Sam Harris' *The Moral Landscape* (2011), and more recently, Patricia Churchland's *Touching a Nerve: The Self as Brain* (2013).⁶

Nonetheless, Singer objected to the 'takeover bid' approach of some in the hard sciences who claimed that ethics ought to consist solely in a scientific description of the causes of human sociality or non-sociality. Hence enters the significance of human reasoning, and the advent of a genuine principle of ethical impartialism. According to Singer, as humans developed language and the ability to reflect upon their actions and the actions of others, something new occurred. For the very first time, instead of simple growls and snarls, individuals were compelled to 'make their case' to their fellow human beings in the context of reciprocal agreements (Singer 2011b, 93). That meant appealing to rules and customs in a disinterested way.⁷

This requirement to speak 'as though we cared about being impartial,' allegedly gave genuine ethical reasoning a strong foothold in our evolutionary development. Like a genie let loose from a bottle, once we started to reason (even for flagrantly political and selfish ends), we were condemned to continue reasoning, even to ourselves, even in private. As Singer explained, "... if we sense an inconsistency in our beliefs, or between our beliefs and our actions, we will try to do something to eliminate the sense of inconsistency, just as when we feel hungry we will try to do something to eliminate our hunger..." (Singer 2011b, 143)

Once we realize that we are "just one person among many," and that my interests are "no more important, from the point of view of the whole, than the similar interests of others within my society," then our circle of ethical concern is set to expand even further. For just as I am only one person amongst many, so my society is only one of many. As such, the interests of individuals close to me are no more important than the similar interests of individuals the world over. "Ethical reasoning, once begun, pushes against our initially limited ethical horizons, leading us always toward a more universal point of view." (Singer 2011b, 119) Reasoning elevates 'disinterested impartiality' from a mere survival

⁶ It should be noted that these authors, along with Singer, share something else in common as well. Namely, they tend to equate moral behavior with 'altruism.' By using this term, they denote something rather more specific than my preferred term 'benevolence.' While benevolence simply means acting to benefit the welfare or interests of another, altruism assumes the further idea of their being also a cost to oneself. Therefore, such writers uncritically preclude the moral alternative which this article ultimately proposes (i.e., a positive identification of my welfare with the welfare of others).

⁷ As Singer here illustrated, "I cannot say that I may take nuts from others because it benefits me, whereas when others take nuts from me, I lose. If I hope to gain the assent of the group as a whole, I must at least give my case an impartial guise." (Singer 2011b, 93)

technique – a way of verbally convincing group members to your aid – into a genuinely held ethical principle.

The Drawbacks of Impartialism

The essence of Singer's approach was this: Natural processes propel us to imagine a perspective outside of our own narrow subjectivity, a 'third-person' or bird's eye view of the world. This external perspective is then sufficient to yield genuine moral judgments. Similarly, other impartialists, in seeking to define correct moral judgment, have employed the image of an 'ideal observer.' Such a figure is conceived as omniscient, and so aware of every descriptive fact, both actual and possible, while transcending the particular interests and biases of specific individuals (Hare 2011, 44; Robinson 1982).⁸ The key in both cases is that a disinterested observer needn't possess any special moral knowledge, noble character, charitable disposition, or any other such trait in order to yield veracious judgments, and to recommend just actions. As Roderick Firth emphasized, "The adjective 'ideal' is used here in approximately the same sense in which we speak of a perfect vacuum or a frictionless machine as ideal things; it is not intended to suggest that an ideal observer is necessarily *virtuous*..." (Firth 1952, 321)

This consistent naturalism is certainly a potential strength of impartialist ethics. If such an ethics could be worked out, it would have the distinct benefit of avoiding recourse to ineffable moral duties, unseen transcendental principles, or unverifiable intuitions. It would render morality a true science, or at least, a field of inquiry strongly illuminable by the quantitative disciplines. The question remains, however, as to whether it does work. Can impartialism truly underwrite a universal imperative to be benevolent?

There are two initial reasons to doubt that this is the case. First, the impartialist illicitly attempts to derive a positive moral claim from negative empirical premises. 'I ought to promote the interests of all' is clearly not entailed by the empirical discovery that 'I am not the only person with interests.' Singer's evolutionary narrative tells a story (perhaps a true one) of how early humans adapted to think disinterestedly about the facts, i.e. to imagine a perspective beyond their own. The 'ideal observer' image represents the perfection of such disinterested objectivity, wherein we take objective note of every diverse concern around us. However, as Richard Brandt neatly put it, "Obviously a person with no particular interests will not be inclined to favor himself or his friends in his decisions. Indeed, he might not, as far as the definition goes, have *benevolent* attitudes either." (Brandt 1998, 226) Put otherwise, the mere disinterested awareness that others have interests implies no positive

⁸ The favored image of R.M. Hare was that of an archangel. H.M. Robinson offers an extended and compelling argument in favor of viewing Hare's ethics as a form of naturalism, despite perennial claims to the contrary in the current literature.

imperative whatsoever. We may coolly acknowledge this descriptive fact and, quite consistently, be entirely indifferent to the wellbeing of others. Indeed, our very 'disinterestedness' tends to imply such a result.

Second, this disinterested perspective is, by the impartialist's own lights, a mere counterfactual image. It is thus a dubious basis for actual moral imperatives. Whether we consider Peter Singer's fully 'expanded circle' or the 'ideal observer' figure proposed by other impartialists, their status is the same. Empiricism cannot support the reality of a universal, disinterested perspective. All knowledge is rather conditioned by our finite, concrete experiences. Accordingly, all talk about transcending one's own sense experience is, by the empiricist account, either erroneous or merely a counterfactual aid to the imagination. At most, the impartialist can counsel us to act 'as if' we had transcended our particular, situated set of experiences. We will be universally benevolent *if we imagine* a perspective beyond our own. Of course, an even more consistent empiricist will simply object that in fact we do not, and in principle cannot, ever have such a universal perspective; for such a perspective is simply not real.

These are fairly standard objections and require no lengthier exposition here. What is far more instructive is the manner in which Singer himself both recognized, and sought to overcome, such difficulties. Here we have a rare opportunity to witness the long evolution of a single argument in the hands of its original author. For it is in the new materials, added to the 2011 edition of *The Expanding Circle*, that Singer expressly engages with the types of criticisms outlined above. These are modifications which Singer retained, moreover, in *The Point of View of the Universe* (2014). However, as we will see, this revised strategy only further illustrates the inherent inability of impartialism to underwrite a universal, moral imperative of benevolence.

In 2011 Singer made two crucial departures from his original, straightforwardly empiricist argument. These moves were inspired by Derek Parfit's massive work *On What Matters*, published that same year (Parfit 2011). To begin with, Singer now asserted the need for objective normative truths in ethics, arguing that without positing these, we inevitably fall into moral skepticism (Singer 2011b, 201-3; cf. Parfit 2011, 1:47-48). For the mere historical fact that evolution favored a limited altruism does not itself entail that one ought to be altruistic today. Likewise, a mere apprehension of empirical facts, however thorough or disinterested, gives no positive guidance in the way of moral praxis.

Objective moral truths are supposedly a remedy to such deficiencies. Just as it is objectively true that one ought to accept the conclusions of sound arguments, likewise, we can supposedly assert as a matter of objective truth, that there are certain ends which we simply ought to pursue. We ought, for instance, to save many lives instead of indulging in frivolous luxuries. We ought, as a matter of objective normative truth, to seek the overall greatest happiness

possible. Thus, a sociable benevolence, the trait which originally proved a successful survival strategy amongst *homo sapiens*, in the end turns out to match up rather neatly with a trans-historical, fixed moral truth. It is a truth, moreover, which is potentially accessible today to any reasoning person, anywhere in the world.

Singer thereby avoids the charge of moral skepticism. However, he does so at great cost, exposing himself to a third major objection. Namely, the ambitious naturalism of his original argument is all but lost. The objectivity of his ethical claims clearly no longer rests upon the factual description of human beings, their evolution, or the non-moral facts of the world they inhabit.

In *The Point of View of the Universe*, Singer gives a lengthy discussion of how evolution may explain some local forms of sociality, but never the universal sort of benevolence he is after (de Lazari-Radek and Singer 2014, 185-96). Instead, certain self-evident moral maxims are required. Evolutionary facts now occupy a negative, contrasting role only. Indeed, as early as “Ethics and Intuitions,” Singer claimed that separating rationally-based moral imperatives from evolutionary-inspired ones is the “only way to avoid moral skepticism” (Singer 2005, 351). Ethical objectivity must instead be guaranteed by *sui generis* moral imperatives, of which we have independent rational, rather than empirical, bases for affirming (cf. Parfit 2011, 1:110).⁹ Unfortunately, Singer gives no account as to precisely why or how these independent ‘oughts’ are indeed objective features of existence.¹⁰

Yet even if we grant that impartial benevolence is an objective moral truth, we are posed with a new problem. Namely, there are apparently some mentally competent individuals who are fully aware of the preventable suffering of their fellow human beings. Nonetheless, they fail to alleviate this suffering, even at little expense to themselves. This casts doubt on whether there really are such objective, rationally accessible moral truths after all.

To avoid this difficulty, Singer is forced to make yet another costly move, again inspired by Parfit. He separates the objective reasons for impartial benevolence from people’s actual motivation to behave in such a manner. In Parfit’s own words, “we have such reasons even if we would not be moved or motivated to act upon them” (Parfit 2011, 1:110). Again, in *The Point of View of the Universe*, Singer continues this thinking, asserting that “it seems impossible to prove that normative reasons actually do motivate human beings directly.” (de Lazari-Radek and Singer 2014, 55) This is a significant departure from

⁹ Singer’s move appears to be specifically modeled after Parfit’s notion of ‘object-given value-based reasons’.

¹⁰ Indeed, it seems that such axioms and principles are not ‘features of existence’ at all, but rather self-evident moral intuitions, following the lead of Henry Sidgwick (de Lazari-Radek and Singer 2014, 120).

Singer's original account of moral motivation which, we recall, he compared to the desire to eliminate a feeling of hunger, i.e. *an internally compelling force*.¹¹

A fourth objection against impartialism is therefore one of insufficient moral motivation. Since reasons and motivations are uncoupled, one may understand that acting to promote the welfare of all is objectively correct, and nevertheless choose to act egotistically instead. To use Platonic parlance, Singer is pushed into accepting some strong version of *akrasia*. Selfish actions are not the product of mere ignorance, but rather of a weak will, a flaw in one's moral character. The impartialist is thus left in a rather impotent position. Faced with a world of diverse, often selfish individuals, he is left only with his formal rule as comfort.

Impartiality is thereby transformed from a neutral manner of viewing the world, to now an objective imperative. The impartialist comes full circle: He begins as a hard-nosed ethical naturalist, *but through the inherent limitations of his original position*, transforms into the ultimate transcendental moralist. The impartialist starts off decrying the formalism of deontological ethics, and the ineffability of moral intuitions. Yet what he ends up with is precisely a duty or command – one which he calls objective – but which is not reducible to the ordinary facts describing human beings or nature. It is simply a rule, standing on its own, allegedly rational and binding for all, though not always compelling positive action from actual persons.

An Alternative Basis: Oikeiôsis

As stated earlier, there is an alternate model for universal benevolence which entirely avoids each of these four objections. For nearly five centuries, the doctrine of 'oikeiôsis' served as the principal foundation for Stoic cosmopolitanism. Unlike impartialism it seeks to utilize, rather than moderate, our natural impulse towards our own welfare (*hormê*), and those things congenial to our own wellbeing (*oikeion*). Instead of seeking a disinterested perspective external to oneself, it endeavors to establish benevolence through an expansion of the self, and of our inherent self-concern. Its movement originates from the inside and expands outward, an ever-increasing annexation and identification with the surrounding ethical subjects. As we will see, this oikeiosis model is both fully naturalistic and sufficiently motivating, and moreover, relies on positive, (not merely counterfactual) premises for its universal moral conclusions.

¹¹ In this, Singer and Lazari-Radek do not argue that normative reasons can never motivate action, especially indirectly (a criticism they hold against Hume). Nonetheless, this revised ethical thesis is that normative principles are not necessarily motivating in themselves, and that objective knowledge of right and wrong may not even be accompanied by any subjective feelings whatsoever. This is addressed in the authors' discussion of psychopathy (2014, 55-58).

Modern scholars translate the term in a number of different ways. Its root, '*oikos*,' originally denoted a central room in a family dwelling, and later came to signify the household or family itself. As such, the moral concept '*oikeiôsis*' can well be translated as 'familiarization,' though the term 'appropriation' is more common (Long and Sedley 1987, 1: 351). Like Singer, the proponents of *oikeiôsis* have sometimes illustrated their concept through the image of an expanding circle. Most notably, the Stoic philosopher Hierocles depicted each individual as being surrounded by several circles, concentrically arranged, and encompassing various spheres of reality.

The first and closest circle is that which each person draws around his own mind, as the center... The second after this one... is that within which our parents, siblings, wife, and children are ranged. Third, after these, is that in which there are uncles and aunts, grandfathers and grandmothers, the children of one's siblings, and also cousins... next that of one's fellow citizens, and so, finally, that of those who border one's city and that of people of like ethnicity. The furthest out and largest one, which surrounds all the circles, is that of the entire race of human beings. (Ramelli 2009, 91)

For Hierocles, as with the other Stoic cosmopolitans, the point of ethical development is to draw in progressively larger and more distant circles of reality into one's own domain of comprehension and self-interest, ultimately identifying oneself with the interests and welfare of all humanity. We see in the theory of *oikeiôsis* an attempt at establishing a principle of benevolence, equally demanding as that proposed by impartialists like Singer, Firth, Sidgwick, or Godwin, yet based upon a nearly opposite view of the role of egoism and self-concern. What was the primary obstacle for the impartialist is the necessary springboard for an ethics of *oikeiôsis*.

It is fair to ask, of course, why contemporary moral philosophers ought to buy into such an odd concept in the first place. In fact, it is hard to pin down any one, precise defense of the *oikeiôsis* doctrine in Stoic literature. Interpretations vary in myriad ways, from Zeno of Citium's early fragments, through the Roman moralists Cicero and Seneca, and within the later historical works of Diogenes Laertius.¹² Contemporary ethicists, in any case, are likely to be skeptical of an ethical system involving ecstatic sounding notions such as the 'expansion of the self' or the real identification of one individual with another. To twenty-first century ears this smacks of ancient mysticism, or at the very least, a highly speculative and counterintuitive view of reality, appropriate only to antiquity.

Nonetheless, it must be remembered that elements of Stoic ethics, including the concept of *oikeiôsis*, were enthusiastically adopted by some of the most rigorous and systematic philosophers of the Enlightenment era. Notably

¹² Indeed, a focus on metaphysics was more pronounced in the early, now fragmented works of the Greek 'Old Stoa.' Later Roman Stoics enthusiastically expounded on issues of morality, politics, and the good life, but spent comparatively little time grounding their own moral claims upon a thoroughly worked out system of nature (Sorabji 2006).

Francis Hutcheson, following Cicero's *De finibus*, wrote of the innate sociability of human nature (Hutcheson 2006). He further developed Lord Shaftesbury's concept of *sensus communis* (itself borrowed from Marcus Aurelius), whereby we naturally rejoice in the wellbeing of others, and are saddened by their misfortune (Earl of Shaftesbury 1999, 167-88). Likewise Joseph Butler affirmed the unity of self-love and benevolence, and of a "natural principle of attraction in man towards man" (Butler 1726, Sermons 1, 10). Butler went so far as to equate the expansion or contraction of one's own spirit to the degree of compassion one shows others.¹³ Indeed as late as the 19th century, Ludwig Feuerbach would exclaim that "Love is objectively as well as subjectively the criterion of being... The more one is, the more one loves, and vice versa" (Feuerbach 1986, 54). Finally, Karl Marx, hardly an ancient mystic, sought to identify the very being of man with the whole of humanity.

... the essence of man is the true community of man... men, by activating their own essence, produce, create this human community, this social being which is no abstract, universal power standing over against the solitary individual, but is the essence of every individual, *his own activity, his own life, his own spirit, his own wealth*. (Marx 1992, 265 Emphasis is mine.)

Rather than chastising egoistic self-interest, it is through 'activating their own essences' that people recognize their real identity with the whole of humanity. Notably, unlike the empirically-minded impartialist, human community is here no mere aggregation of individuals, a sterile placeholder, or 'useful fiction,' as Bentham would have it, but rather constitutes the actual essence of individuals from their very beginning. Man is irreducibly, not incidentally, a social being. What's more, it is the activity of individuals which manifests this common identity, a mutual projection of ourselves ever outward. Or, to use Marx's own words once more, "Our production would be as many mirrors from which our natures would shine forth. This relation would be mutual: *what applies to me would also apply to you*" (Marx 1992, 278).¹⁴

However, it is upon the rationalist metaphysics of Baruch Spinoza that a modern ethics of *oikeiôsis* is most systematically, and satisfactorily, grounded.¹⁵ Though Spinoza is well known for advocating a prudentialist form of ethics,

¹³ To this we may also add Hugo Grotius' concept of 'appetitus societatis,' likewise borrowed from Cicero's *De finibus*. For an excellent discussion of Grotius' continuation of Ciceronian thought, as well as its applications to Just War theory, see Benjamin Straumann (2003).

¹⁴ I would like to thank my colleague, Harrison Fluss, for bringing this quotation to my attention.

¹⁵ Recent trends in Stoic literature have tended to deemphasize the necessary connection between Stoic ethics and metaphysics (Annas 1993; Irvine 2009; Pigliucci 2017). However, this approach obscures the original intent and unique strength of Stoic thought: Educating the practitioner on how to comprehend, and to live in accord with, objective reality. In Cicero's formulation, 'all duties derive from principles of nature.' This crucial aspect of Stoic thought is well highlighted by other contemporary commentators (Brunschwig 1994, 72; Cooper 1996).

where self-love is the guiding principle, he notably promoted a strikingly universal form of benevolence as well.

...a man strong in character hates no one, is angry with no one, envies no one, is indignant with no one, scorns no one, and is not at all proud. For these and all things which relate to true life and Religion are easily proven... that Hate is to be conquered by returning Love, and that *everyone who is led by reason desires for others also the good he wants for himself*. (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E4 P73, Schol. Emphasis is mine.)

Indeed, it pertains to Spinoza's metaphysics that personal self-interest comes to be expressed through a substantial identification with others.

Man, I say, can wish for nothing more helpful to the preservation of his being than that all should so agree in all things that the Minds and Bodies of all would compose, as it were, one Mind and one Body; that all should strive together, as far as they can, to preserve their being; and that all, together, should seek for themselves the common advantage of all. (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E4 P18)

A thorough accounting and defense of Spinoza's philosophy goes well beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, what follows is an exposition of how two key aspects of Spinoza's system form the foundation of a modern oikeiosis doctrine. These are first, *Egoism*, and second, *Weak Individualism*. The contextualizing of oikeiosis within such a modern, rationalist system will then allow us to more seriously determine whether we have here a viable alternative to the impartialist model.

Foundation I: Egoism

Like the Stoics before him, Spinoza's anthropology was marked by a thoroughgoing egoism. That is to say, human beings necessarily seek their own welfare, and only engage in self-destructive behavior because of countervailing, external factors. This is illustrated in Spinoza's consideration of suicide, especially that of the Stoic Seneca at the behest of the Emperor Nero:

Someone may kill himself because he is compelled by another, who twists his right hand (which happened to hold a sword) and forces him to direct the sword against his heart; or because he is forced by the command of a Tyrant (as Seneca was) to open his veins, i.e., he desires to avoid a greater evil by (submitting to) a lesser; or finally because hidden external causes so dispose his imagination, and so affect his body, that it takes on another nature, contrary to the former... (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E4 P20, Schol.)

For most of the Stoics, and certainly for Spinoza, there is no room for *akrasia*, or willfully choosing what is suboptimal, let alone self-destructive.¹⁶

¹⁶ One may object that Epictetus does appear to hold a doctrine of *akrasia*. However, this is not the same as the notion of *akrasia* most famously affirmed by Aristotle, or of modern discussions of 'weak will' (*astheneia*). Epictetus instead expounded on the phenomenon of *propeteia*, which did not involve voluntarily acting against the prior counsel of reason, but

This stance is grounded in a determinist ontology, wherein the universe is governed by *logos*, or intelligible natural laws (Sharples 1992, 22-25). Determinism, applied consistently, precludes a 'weak will' since all apparently self-destructive decisions must originate, instead, from some definite, intelligible cause in the world. Positively, Stoic doctrine asserts that our own intentions can aim only at our increased welfare and continued existence; for the will cannot be considered as independent from our faculty of reason. *Logos*, or divine rationality, permeates the microcosm of our minds just as well as the macrocosm of the universe at large (DeBrabander 2007, 14). Hence, according to Diogenes Laertius, that sentient beings are egoistic is not merely an empirical fact, nor an accident of our biology, but a necessary consequence of Stoic metaphysics.

An animal's first impulse, say the Stoics, is to self-preservation, because nature from the outset endears it to itself... for it was not likely that nature should estrange the living thing from itself or that she should leave the creature she has made without either estrangement from or affection for its own constitution. (Laertius 1925, 2:7.84-85)

To be sure, this claim may strike the modern reader as exceedingly providential. Indeed, the Stoics often spoke in teleological terms, attributing to nature a purposive goal for each of her creations – a claim starkly inconsistent with the contemporary insights of evolutionary biology. Yet this is precisely why Spinoza's system is such a vital conduit for the reception of Stoic thought today. His thoroughgoing naturalism consistently eschews all teleological language, while still preserving the fundamental assertion that all sentient creatures have an innate impulse toward self-preservation (*hormê*).

Spinoza accomplishes this through a consideration of monism, or the idea (shared by the Stoics themselves), that the universe is a singular, infinite, and eternal entity, of which we are but dependent modifications (cf. Aurelius 2011, 31). If monism obtains, then our human essence is not something *sui generis*, but rather who we are – the very definition of 'human being' – is derived from the essence of Nature itself. If this is the case, then intentional self-destruction, excluding all external causes, becomes an ontological absurdity. For as all things derive from the positive, non-contradictory essence of Nature, then it follows that "the definition of any thing affirms, and does not deny, the thing's [own] essence." (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E3 P4, Dem.) This is the basis of Spinoza's famed 'conatus doctrine' wherein our very essence, or definition, is bound up with our continued striving to persevere in our being (1985, E3 P6).

Indeed, the notion of egoism is so dominant within Spinoza's system that he assigns it as our fundamental psychological drive, not subordinated to any further end, whether moral or material. "No one strives to preserve his being for

instead, simply acting without the benefit of rational deliberation at all. This involves none of the metaphysical problems which come with the former conception of 'weak will,' which clearly grates against the causal determinism common to Stoic thought (Salles 2007).

the sake of anything else.” (1985, E4 P25) “No one can desire to be blessed, to act well and to live well, unless at the same time he desires to be, act, and to live, i.e., to actually exist.” (1985, E4 P21)

Politically, this same indelible striving, or *conatus*, compels us to actively reach out to our fellow human beings. The underlying monism of Spinoza’s system makes it clear that we cannot ever escape infinite Nature or her immutable laws. However, if we combine forces with creatures like ourselves, then it is at least possible to maintain one’s existence without, at the same time, greatly changing oneself (1985, E4, Appendix 7).

That is, we can continue to live as rational, bodily individuals so long as we mutually rely upon others within a lawful society. This is not altogether dissimilar from the Stoic claim that, just as food and drink are appropriate to our continued existence, so is the company of other human beings. They are both, equally, our ‘oikeion’ insofar as we can ably supply each other’s wants and needs (Cicero 1999, 1.12). In this way the Newtonian phrase, *Conatus centrifugus* is altogether fitting, even as eccentrically applied to human affairs (Newton 1850, 311). For it neatly captures the unity of our inner drive for self-preservation, and the centrifugal impetus to seek outward those things appropriate to us.

Nevertheless, Spinoza’s language when it comes to social relations is consistently prudentialist. “Men still find from experience that by helping one another they can *provide themselves much more easily with the things they require*, and that only by joining forces can they avoid the dangers which threaten them on all sides...” The phrasing is always of there being “more advantages than disadvantages” in forming a common society. (1985, E4 P35, Appendix 14. Emphasis is mine.) Our cooperation with others is never a question of magnanimity or charitable disposition, but always one of self-satisfaction.

Foundation II: Weak Individualism

Thus far, monism may appear incompatible with a genuine ethics, let alone universal benevolence. Spinoza’s naturalism seems, instead, to anticipate a Nietzschean ethos of mastery, wherein other people are overcome, or strategically used, in the pursuit of one’s own desires.

Elements within Spinoza’s writings do lend credence to such an interpretation. He does, for example, consider the concepts ‘just,’ ‘unjust,’ ‘sin’ and ‘merit’ to be merely extrinsic notions, and ‘right’ is repeatedly equated with the sheer power to act (1985, E4 P37, Schol. 2; 2007, TTP 195). There is, moreover, a denial that abstract ethical principles pre-exist our concrete longings; “it is clear that we neither strive for, nor will, neither want, nor desire anything because we judge it to be good; on the contrary, we judge something to be good because we strive for it, will it, want it, and desire it.” (1985, E3 P9, Schol.) This has led critics to complain, along with Schopenhauer, of Spinoza’s wanton misuse of words. Where he says ‘justice’ he actually means ‘power’ (Schopenhauer 1974, 1:13). It has led contemporary Spinoza scholars to

question whether the esteemed author of *Ethica* could be considered a true moralist at all (Melamed 2011; Chomsky and Foucault 2006, 51).¹⁷

Nonetheless, Spinoza's naturalism is not of the Nietzschean sort. This is clearly shown through his 'weak' or functional concept of the individual. It is this weak individualism which transforms a consistent egoism into a genuine affirmation of universal benevolence. Here we notice a certain degree of elegance within the monistic worldview. For it is this very same monism which entails *both* the positive striving of each individual, and also that each finite individual is merely a dependent entity, rather than an atomistic being. If Nature is the one, self-affirming substance, then all other entities must not only be affirmative in themselves, but at the same time, also dependent upon Nature for their positive definition and existence. Finite things are considered the modifications of a Nature common to them all, each an integral part of one, mutual identity (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E2 P8, Schol.).

A colorful illustration of this, in one of Spinoza's most famous letters, may help to clarify matters. He asks us to imagine a small worm living inside someone's veins, and observing his surroundings. The blood, of course, is not uniform but composed of several distinct elements. The movements of these individual elements would be seen, by our worm, as the product of their mutual interactions. That is, "each particle, on colliding with another, either rebounds or communicates some degree of its motion, and so forth." (1995, Ep. 32) Each one is perceived as a whole, affecting other distinct wholes.

The worm's insights end there, for the blood stream is to our worm his entire universe. He would not see, as we do, "how all the parts are controlled by the overall nature of the blood" and thus compelled to adapt themselves according to the overall character of the blood stream. (1995, Ep. 32) By extension, we can notice also that the blood is not merely a whole, but is itself also a part. It is a part of the body, and is thus determined to move according to the body's overall structure, i.e. the organization of veins, capillaries, and arteries, the beating of the heart, and so on.

The point of the letter is easily missed. It is not that the worm is simply wrong about the interactions of elements within the blood. These are, in fact, real and determinate. It is only that this view is incomplete: For no determinate, finite things are ultimately wholes unto themselves; but all are parts of an overall,

¹⁷ Melamed draws a line from Spinoza's consistent naturalism and prudentialism to the conclusion of amorality. Considering Spinoza's equation of 'right' with 'power,' Melamed opines that, "Fortunately, Spinoza did not believe that there are species of human beings that are superior... to other humans; for otherwise Spinoza would have to be counted among the fathers of modern racism."

Similarly, in his 1971 debate with Noam Chomsky, Foucault asserted: "I would like to reply to you in terms of Spinoza and say that the proletariat doesn't wage war against the ruling class because it considers such a war to be just. The proletariat makes war with the ruling class because, for the first time in history, it wants to take power." In other words, power is understood as entirely detached from questions of justice or morality.

unchanging Nature. Put otherwise, “the whole of nature is one Individual, whose parts, i.e., all bodies, vary in infinite ways” without Nature itself changing at all (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E2 “Physical Digression,” Lemma 7, Dem.).

It is this unchanging character of the universe, its intelligible laws, which immanently determine the essences of all finite individuals which subsist within it. Likewise, Epictetus will affirm that individual human beings should not be viewed ‘in isolation,’ but rather as part of a ‘community of gods and men’ – just as integrally connected to the whole as is a person’s foot to their body (Epictetus 2008, 2.5.24-26). An individual’s form, essence, or ‘internal *ratio*’ is only comprehensible with reference to these conditioning factors (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E2 D7; “Physical Digression,” Lemma 5).¹⁸

This is yet another example of how Spinoza’s system extends (even while desacralizing) a basic precept of Stoic doctrine, namely that of ‘*pneuma*,’ or cosmic breath. *Pneuma* denotes Nature considered as an intelligible, patterning force, actively giving intelligible form to all material things (Sedley 1999, 388). Unlike theistic notions of *creatio in fieri*, this posits no personal creator outside of the world, but instead a pantheistic, self-patterning monism. Specifically, *Pneuma* serves roughly the same function as ‘*Natura naturans*’ (the active principle of nature) in Spinoza’s system (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E1 P29, Schol.). Importantly, the Stoic imperative to ‘live in accordance with nature’ necessarily involves our rational apprehension of *pneuma*, and by extension, our common identity with all that it patterns.

While this patterning of nature is often spoken of with reference to our physical bodies, the same holds for our minds as well. My faculty of reason is not something unique to me, my Western culture, or even *Homo sapiens* as a whole. Rather, my ideas, and how they are necessarily connected to one another, are but a part of an infinite domain of objective ideas which precede my finite mind altogether (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E2 P11, Cor.). My mind is only a local participant in this ‘infinite intellect,’ this ubiquitous intelligibility of all things. (cf. Baruch Spinoza 1995, Ep. 32).

It is in this sense, and only in this sense, that the monistic worldview embraces a concept of eternal life. It is not that our body or our specific personality has a duration beyond our natural lifespan. Rather, our comprehension of eternal truths (the formal essences of things) itself transcends time, space, and duration (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E5 P23, 34). When we attain the apex of rational power, what Spinoza called ‘intellectual intuition,’ then we come to understand ourselves as having real identity with ‘God or Nature’ as a whole. “Insofar as the Mind knows itself and the Body under a species of eternity, it necessarily has knowledge of God, and knows that it is in God, and is conceived through God.” (1985, E5 P29 Schol, E5 P30; E2 P45)

¹⁸ This is because discrete parts have no ontological priority in Spinoza’s worldview, and so do not determine the essences of things. It is rather the ‘form’ or internal ratio of matter that makes something what it is.

Thus, Spinoza affirms that from this highest point of view, it is clearly perceived that “substance is not manifold, but single,” and with regards to individual things which compose Nature, that “*each individual part* has a more intimate union with its *whole*.” (1995, Ep. 12, 32. Emphasis is mine) This, likewise, accords with Marcus Aurelius’ view that “there is a single harmony that embraces all things [and that]... all bodies combine together to make up this single great body.” (Aurelius 2011, 37)

Such holism is in stark contrast to the empiricist view, wherein each person is an atomistic unit, and subsists in a universe that is at most an aggregate of such discrete elements. Instead, monism asserts that we cannot adequately conceive of ourselves without at the same time recognizing the unitary Nature from which our essence proceeds. The corollary to this, of course, is that we cannot think of ourselves without also thinking *immediately* of the other beings who likewise proceed from this same Nature. Each such being shares in a substantial identity with all the others.

The Ethical Consequences of Monism

What, then, is the ethical import of affirming ‘egoism’ alongside ‘weak individualism’? It is primarily this: If we rationally identify with the whole of Nature, it follows that our innate egoism takes on an entirely new expression. For our self-affirmation cannot, if we are fully rational, be limited to our own skin or finite mind. Rather, it would be fully generalized; The “intellectual Love of God [i.e. Nature] is part of the infinite Love by which God loves himself.” (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E5 P36)¹⁹ An infinite understanding is accompanied by an equally infinite self-identification, and thus self-affirmation. We have here our original egoism, only now writ large.

The major ethical consequence is that “God’s love of men and the Mind’s intellectual Love of God are one and the same.” (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E5 P36, Cor.) Or to use a secularized vocabulary, we may say that once we comprehend our substantial identity with Nature as a whole, then we necessarily also *affirm* the entirety of Nature (as ourselves), and so we cannot help but to identify with and affirm those persons who likewise arise from this common Substance. Again, we affirm all persons as quite literally one with ourselves.²⁰

¹⁹ Again, this must be understood in an entirely non-theistic sense. Spinoza’s monism does not allow for any personal (i.e. personally reciprocal) relationship to a deity (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E5 P19).

²⁰ It may be objected that all of this proves too much. For if we do identify with all of Nature, then why not also affirm the wellbeing of buildings, boulders, and mud, all of which are undeniably equally a part of Nature as any human being. Here I would note an interesting, if momentary, convergence of Spinoza’s thought with that of Peter Singer (2011a, 50). Singer here similarly argues for taking a universal perspective when determining moral action. However, he excludes inanimate objects from ethical consideration. His rationale is that, even if one takes a fully universal perspective, this makes no practical difference when considering

The process of *oikeiôsis*, then, operates at two distinct levels given a monistic worldview: On one level, I do appropriate the things around me for straightforwardly practical ends. I procure food, absorb sunlight, breathe air, and assimilate all these within my body in order to thrive. So too, do I familiarize myself with other people, and join with them in order to secure the safety and benefits of civilization. Mentally, I comprehend my surroundings out of a straightforward prudence. I familiarize myself with the “order and connections” of my environment, and in noting this intelligible order, can better provide for myself, and “conquer fortune,” as Spinoza would put it (1985, E4 P47, Schol.).

In addition, I mentally appropriate my surroundings so as not to be inordinately disturbed when unavoidable setbacks befall me; for these too would be tranquilly understood as a necessary feature of this intelligible order. All of this is a great personal boon, secured through the diligent use of ordinary, discursive reasoning.

Yet at the level of intellectual intuition, our highest rational faculty, *oikeiôsis* takes on a whole new significance. We not only draw in foreign elements and assimilate them, but we come to see ever larger spheres of reality as not at all foreign to begin with. Whereas before we appropriated material, people, and ideas for narrowly pragmatic ends, now the formula is reversed. We immediately identify with the beings around us, and thus apply our indelible prudence to them.

We desire the welfare of all other people, not for indirect, instrumental reasons, but now in a direct and immediate fashion (Brennan 2005, 159).²¹ For at this height, I see clearly that such persons are, literally, me. Therefore, it is equally true that reason “demands that everyone love himself, [and] seek his own advantage,” and also that “everyone who is led by reason desires for others... the good he wants for himself.” (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E4 P18, Schol.; E4 P73, Schol.) There is no contradiction or compromise here; no balancing of personal interests with the interests of others. Instead, both imperatives flow from the very same monistic premises. Indeed, the former statement both motivates, and is perfected within, the latter expression.²²

such objects. As he says, “It would be nonsense to say that it was not in the interests of a stone to be kicked along the road by a schoolboy. A stone does not have interests because it cannot suffer. Nothing that we can do to it could possibly make any difference to its welfare.” As such, we can sympathize with or even identify with the stone all we like, and this is not itself illicit, but only rather useless. It would have no practical effect on our actions since the stone, itself, has no degree of self-reflection, and thus no interests at all. A similar distinction may likewise save Spinoza’s ethics from an absurd solidarity with any given object in Nature.

²¹ Brennan distills this insight thusly: “When we add something to the list of things that are *oikeion* to us, whether it is our soul, our reason, our cousin, or our fellow citizen, we are not elaborating our conception of what is good for us, we are expanding our sense of whose welfare matters to us.”

²² In an analogous way, Hierocles asserts our immediate concern for the community at large with the illustration of a fool who saves one finger at the expense of his whole hand. Such a

The Benefits of Oikeiôsis over Impartiality

The obvious cost of accepting an ethics of oikeiôsis is affirming the monistic metaphysics upon which it is based. Frankly, few contemporary ethicists will find this to be an attractive option. Systematic metaphysics, especially of the strongly rationalist sort, has had few serious proponents in the English-speaking world since the dawning of the age of positivism in the last century. This tendency is even more pronounced amongst applied ethicists and social theorists. These individuals will naturally see substance monism as, at best, a costly hypothesis which has little to do with the concrete interpersonal relations about which they are primarily concerned.

Nevertheless, if universal benevolence is to be successfully defended, then the oikeiôsis model clearly has several advantages over the 'less costly' model of impartialism. First, an ethics of oikeiôsis avoids the logical fallacy of deriving positive conclusions from merely negative premises. For such an ethics, grounded in a metaphysical monism, asserts that we will promote the welfare of others because of our positive identity with them, and our positive *conatus* to improve our condition (i.e., egoism).

By contrast, impartialist theories are generally not grounded upon such a positive metaphysics, monistic or otherwise. Rather, they are most often based upon a simple denial that our interests are uniquely important. As Henry Sidgwick summarized, "The good of any one individual is of no more importance, from the point of view (if I may say so) of the Universe, than the good of any other." (Sidgwick 1981, 382) Yet, as we have seen, such purely negative premises can never imply a positive imperative to act one way or another. Our not being more important than others entails nothing, on its own, about positively aiding other people.

Second, an ethics of oikeiôsis avoids drawing actual conclusions from merely counterfactual premises. Sidgwick's above caveat 'if I may say so' is not an incidental phrase, but rather highlights a serious deficiency in impartialist thinking. For in eschewing speculative metaphysics, and maintaining a basic empiricism, such theorists cannot affirm the reality of a universal viewpoint. Yet this viewpoint is supposed to be the basis for all subsequent moral judgments. This is true whether we consider Firth's ideal observer, or R.M. Hare's omniscient 'archangel' figure, or in politics, John Rawls' famous 'veil of

person, who would save himself before his community "in addition to doing what is unlawful, is also senseless, since he desires things that are *impossible*..." (Ramelli 2009, 69-71. Emphasis is mine.) Critically, Hierocles not only considers such an act imprudent, but entirely absurd since one's own good is entirely inseparable from the good of the community. That is, there is more than a mere incidental convergence of interests between individual and community; there is instead a real identification.

ignorance.' It may even be traced back to Plato's Noble Lie wherein the populace is told a 'Phoenician tale,' about universal brotherhood.²³

The common feature among all these diverse images is that they are, indeed, mere fictions. We are to act 'as though' we were all brothers, 'as though' we were ignorant of our particular station in life, 'as though' we were a disinterested observer on high. By contrast, monism holds the universal viewpoint to be not only real, but in a sense *more* real than its particular modifications. The body of Nature precedes and determines our own finite bodies, just as infinite Reason precedes and determines our individual intellects. It is precisely this *reality of the universal* that motivates and effectively secures a modern ethics of oikeiôsis.

Third, an ethics of oikeiôsis successfully maintains naturalism. As we recall, this was originally one of the professed strengths of impartialist theories. That is, our imperative to aid others was supposedly born out of the empirical observation that we are but one of many individuals, and that our interests are but a small subset of all worldly interests. Nonetheless, such empirical observations were shown to be insufficient to ground universal moral imperatives. Thus, (at least in the case of Singer) a departure from naturalism was ultimately deemed necessary; there was instead an affirmation of objective normative values, not reducible to the ordinary descriptive facts of reality. On the other hand, our modern oikeiôsis theory is consistently naturalistic, while also maintaining ethical universalism.

This last point may strike the reader as surprising. After all, it is commonly thought that moral naturalism goes hand-in-hand with empiricism. That is, to have a naturalistic outlook is to reduce all moral claims to what one observes with one's senses. This, however, is a misrepresentation of the concept. The essence of ethical naturalism does not have to do with the source of moral knowledge (*a priori* or *a posteriori*), but rather with the status of moral claims. Specifically, can moral imperatives be reduced to descriptive facts, or not? In fact, it is precisely a rationalist worldview which can best support a naturalistic ethics. For only reason can provide universally descriptive facts, such as that all rational beings are egoistic, or that all finite beings share in the same substantial identity. Only these kinds of universal descriptors can support equally universal moral imperatives – such that we will act (insofar as we are rational) to promote our own welfare, as well as the welfare of all persons. For on the monistic view, Nature itself is not neutral but, we may say, 'positively charged.' It is a self-positing, self-determining entity in which we necessarily participate.

By contrast, all that an empiricist may claim about the world is that most people are observed to desire their own welfare, most of the time, or that people are often social, or that, evolutionarily, it has often been an advantage to act

²³ Compare the Noble Lie sustaining Plato's *Republic* to Zeno of Citium's own (stoic) *Republic*. In the latter, an egalitarian society is sustained by the *actual* common nature of each citizen, and their common participation in Nature's rational essence (Laetius 1925, 2:8.32-34).

impartially within a local group. The empiricist, because of the very nature of empirical claims, can never assert any of these features to be wholly ubiquitous, indelible to our character or to the character of the world. Hence there arises the need to eventually assert non-naturalistic values, to 'stand above' nature, as it were, and to demand our conformity to said ideals.

Fourth, and finally, an ethics of *oikeiôsis* solves the vexing 'motivation problem.' We saw earlier that the inability of the impartialist to maintain naturalism meant, in the case of Singer, a recourse to non-reducible 'moral truths.' But that there exist such objective moral truths, and that nonetheless people frequently ignore these in practice, in turn necessitated a Parfitian separation between ethical knowledge and our actually acting morally. We never really answer the question, 'Why be moral?' Perhaps it is more reasonable to be moral; perhaps good people are the sorts of people who act morally. However, this only delays the question and does not answer it. For we may respond, 'Why be reasonable?' 'Why be a good person?' This is the perennial difficulty of all formalistic ethical systems.

The monistic worldview directly answers the motivation problem. We simply *do* desire our welfare and the welfare of all others, insofar as we are rational. This is a metaphysical certainty. Not only this, but we could never choose to be irrational (even as our environments sometimes induce this result). For reason is a power, and intellectual intuition is the height of "the Mind's power, or nature, or its greatest striving." (Benedictus de Spinoza 1985, E5 P25, 27, 42)

The goal of the ethicist, on this account, is therefore quite different than under the impartialist scheme. It is not to 'speak truth to power,' or to confront people's selfish acts with objective moral rules. It is rather to empower people by putting them in touch with their own rational faculties. Ethical behavior will follow as a matter of course.

Ultimately, there may be a great overlap in how impartialists and proponents of *oikeiôsis* actually act. Admittedly, both groups will likely disdain the common forms of chauvinism and parochialism endemic to society today. Positively, both groups will likely do what they can to aid those most in need. However, to quote that most famous of impartialists, J.S. Mill, "It really is of importance, not only what men do, but also what manner of men they are that do it." (1989, 59) Not only our actions, but our motivations for acting, and how we conceive of ourselves while acting, actually matters. For the sake of intellectual integrity, it counts whether or not we have coherent reasons behind our benevolent endeavors. This alone should recommend the import of the above discussion.

Yet, even at the level of praxis, how we think about benevolence may very well influence the specific ways in which we act. We will approach those in need in concretely different ways whether we view them as a victim, whom we must serve and sacrifice for, or else as a fellow rational being, with whom we must

have solidarity with in order to secure a better, common future. Perhaps what is finally needed is not only an ethics of oikeiôsis, but a politics of oikeiôsis as well.

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The Expansionist View of Systematic Testimonial Injustice: South Asian Context¹

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Abstract: In this paper, I offer an expansionist view of the Frickerian central case of testimonial injustice, citing examples from the South Asian context. To defend this expansionist position, I provide an argument in three parts. First, I argue that credibility deficit and credibility excess are entangled with each other in such a way that often, one produces the other. Secondly, I contend that we should not say that systematic testimonial injustice is a consequence of credibility deficit only because of the entanglement between them. I also contend that for being the central case of testimonial injustice, identity prejudice should not be necessarily negative; it can be positive as well. Propounding a twofold condition of the status of a knower, the last part claims that testimonial injustice occurs when one of the two conditions remains unmet.

Keywords: credibility, epistemic injustice, injustice, social epistemology, South Asia, testimonial injustice.

Introduction

Miranda Fricker, in her ground-breaking book *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (2007), expounds the notion of testimonial injustice, which she believes a hearer perpetrates if he wrongs a speaker *qua* subject of knowledge. In this paper, citing some examples from South Asia, I will present her account of testimonial injustice and argue that it is at least incomplete, if not actually mistaken. The main purpose of choosing South Asian examples is to make explicit the fact that testimonial injustice is a global phenomenon which is possibly one of the most significant contributions of this paper to the literature of epistemic injustice.

To this end, I will argue that the Frickerian central case of testimonial injustice should incorporate both credibility excess and credibility deficit because both can produce systematic testimonial injustice. My argument will be divided into three parts. Firstly, I will show how credibility excess and credibility deficit are so entangled with each other that their separate causal effects cannot easily be distinguished. Secondly, citing an example from a South Asian country, I will show that credibility excess can generate systematic testimonial injustice via

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identity-prejudice. Lastly, referring to that same case, I will argue that a knower is wronged if a twofold condition of the status of a knower – responsibility of showing reasons and rights to unprejudicial credibility – is not fulfilled.

Fricker on Systematic Testimonial Injustice

According to Fricker, “Testimonial injustice occurs when prejudice causes a hearer to give a deflated level of credibility to a speaker’s word.” (2007, 01) So, the primary characterization of testimonial injustice is that “it is a matter of credibility deficit and not credibility excess.” (2007, 21) Fricker also thinks that not all credibility deficit caused by prejudices can produce systematic testimonial injustice because some testimonial injustices are highly localized or incidental. Hence, they do not have any structural social significance. In other words, “the prejudice in question [...] does not render the subject vulnerable to any other kinds of injustice (legal, economic, political).” (2007, 27) In contrast to incidental testimonial injustice, Fricker mentions systematic testimonial injustices that are connected with other sorts of injustice through negative identity prejudice. Systematic testimonial injustices are produced only by *tracker* prejudices. Fricker defines the latter as “those prejudices that ‘track’ the subject through different dimensions of social activity – economic, educational, professional, sexual, legal, political, religious, and so on.” (2007, 27) Tracker prejudices have the power to lead one to testimonial injustice as well as other forms of injustice. Fricker says,

Being subject to a tracker prejudice renders one susceptible not only to testimonial injustice but to a gamut of different injustices, and so when such a prejudice generates a testimonial injustice, that injustice is systematically connected with other kinds of actual or potential injustice. (2007, 27)

Though identity prejudice can be positive or negative, Fricker is concerned merely with negative identity prejudice since she is interested in credibility deficit. So, she maintains that the central case of testimonial injustice – that is, systematic testimonial injustice – is produced only by negative identity-prejudicial credibility deficit. Fricker thinks that though credibility excess has some disadvantages which can generate testimonial harm, it is not the kind of systematic testimonial injustice with which she is concerned. She argues that credibility excess does not produce the sort of testimonial injustice that is related to other forms of injustices via identity prejudice. She says,

[Testimonial injustice is generated when a speaker] is *wronged specifically in her capacity as a knower*. Clearly credibility deficit can constitute such a wrong, but while credibility excess may (unusually) be disadvantageous in various ways, it does not undermine, insult, or otherwise withhold a proper respect for the speaker *qua* subject of knowledge; so in itself it does her no epistemic injustice, and *a fortiori* no testimonial injustice. (2007, 20; original emphasis)

The Entanglement between Credibility Excess and Credibility Deficit

An action can have both short-term and long-term effects. I, therefore, argue, contra Fricker, that credibility excess in itself can constitute systematic testimonial injustice. When X gives excessive credibility to Y, the immediate effect could be that Y is emboldened to become an arrogant person, becomes impervious to criticism, and so on. This is what happens in Fricker's example of the ruling elite member (2007, 20-21).² Y may also become to some extent confused, as Fricker's example of the general physician (GP) illustrates (2007, 18-19).³ These are immediate effects. But as time passes, if excessive credibility is given to Y repeatedly by X or many other people, Y may become negatively prejudiced and start to give credibility deficit to others by insulting them, including those, such as X, who gave him excessive credibility. This is an outcome of multifaceted and complex interactions typical of our social lives.⁴ This is what happens to the jurors of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* as interpreted by Fricker (2007, 23-29).⁵ So, one of the remote effects of credibility excess is credibility deficit. It shows that credibility excess may lead to credibility deficit. Thus, credibility excess and credibility deficit are entangled with each other.

The entanglement between credibility excess and credibility deficit can be described as a two-way process as well. I have already shown that credibility excess can lead to credibility deficit. But the process of how credibility excess is an upshot of credibility deficit is not simple. In many cases, many people who get credibility deficit consequently tend to attribute more credibility to the people from whom they get less credibility.

Consider the following practice often seen in South Asia. In South Asian countries, it is often seen that a male marries a female from a poor background so that he can dominate her. In many such cases, if the wife has a conflict with the extended family of the husband, he does not believe her testimony. Rather, his parents' and siblings' words are given more credibility. The husband's belief that his parents or siblings would not lie is responsible for such attribution of

² A member of the ruling elite is surrounded by other people who always give him credibility excess. As a result, he becomes "close-minded, dogmatic, blithely impervious to criticism." (Fricker 2007, 20) Fricker mentions this case as an instance of testimonial injustice, which resulted from cumulative exercise of credibility excess. But she thinks that every moment of credibility excess cannot be shown as an instance where "a person receives as in itself an instance of testimonial injustice." (Fricker 2007, 21)

³ A GP is asked by a patient a medical question about an area of which he is not an expert. The GP feels ambivalent. If he answers, there is a chance of providing a misleading answer. On the other hand, if he does not answer, the doctor-patient relationship would be damaged by lowering the patient's confidence.

⁴ Medina (2011) has something to say about it. Against Fricker, he argues that since credibility deficit and credibility excess are intimately interrelated, we cannot say that credibility excess does not play any role in the formation of testimonial injustices. He, therefore, offers a view that defends the interactive, comparative, and contrastive nature of epistemic justice.

⁵ I will examine this case more carefully later.

credibility deficit to his wife. The prejudice involved here originates from the husband's financially rich background and male chauvinism. Interestingly, his credibility deficit contributes to his wife's attribution of credibility excess to him. The wife's attribution of credibility excess to her husband is an attempt to smooth the situation and to win his heart. Traditionally it is seen in that part of the world that many women often view that their husbands are superior to them. So, they excuse many sins committed by their husbands. The thought that men are superior is intense and deeply ingrained in the minds of many women. So, many of them cannot think of the fact that many times they are ill-treated, and their words are not given deserving credibility by their husbands due to identity prejudices. We see that the husband's attribution of credibility deficit to his wife can cause the wife's attribution of credibility excess to her husband.

The case I just described shows how a husband's attribution of credibility deficit to his wife makes her give more credibility to him. In this case, credibility deficit leads to credibility excess. Here, the husband's social identity plays a role in attributing credibility deficit to his wife, who is from a lower social class. Her class identity creates a kind of insecurity or inferiority in her mind which makes her give prejudicially more credibility to her husband. Hence, it is possible that identity-prejudicial credibility deficit can lead to identity-prejudicial credibility excess. The husband's attribution of credibility deficit to his wife creates in her a feeling of insecurity about losing him. The wife who is from a poor socioeconomic background thinks that if she is abandoned by her husband, it will be very difficult for her to survive. Her parents cannot afford to help her. As a result, she starts to believe what her husband says. This attribution of more credibility to her husband is a result of her poor social identity, and thus, it is prejudicial. It is also an upshot of the husband's attribution of less credibility to her. This example, I believe, shows how complicated the relationship between credibility excess and credibility deficit is.⁶

Testimonial Injustice as a Consequence of Identity Prejudice

In this section, I will argue that excessive credibility may not be merely *cumulative*, *incidental* or *highly localized*. Rather, it may be very *systematic*. I will also argue that imbalance in credibility attribution can be due to both positive

⁶ This point is also suggested by Medina to depict his disagreement with Fricker. He points out, "Epistemic injustices have robust temporal and social dimensions, which involve complex histories and chains of social interactions that go beyond particular pairs and clusters of subjects. And these thick historicity and sociality are lost if our analysis is restricted to particular interactions between individuals at particular moments. Because epistemic injustices are a holistic matter, their analysis too must be holistic. Because epistemic injustices are temporally and socially extended, they call for a sociohistorical analysis that contextualizes and connects sustained chains of interactions, being able to uncover how contributions to justice and injustice appear and develop in and across concrete sociohistorical contexts." (2011, 17)

and negative identity-prejudicial via which testimonial injustice is related to other kinds of injustice.

Consider the following example, which is based on a true story that took place in one of the South Asian countries.⁷ Shilpi (28), who is three-months pregnant, visits a nearby hospital for treatment. A doctor named Bakul (51) rapes her after injecting a narcotic into her body in the name of treatment. Shilpi understands what has happened to her when she gets her senses back. She returns home and informs her husband and other family members about what Bakul has done.

Politically, Bakul is a very influential person in the village, whereas Shilpi is a housewife, and her husband is a poor farmer who earns less than two dollars a day working others' land. Moreover, Bakul is a member of a religious group which is the majority in the country, whereas Shilpi belongs to the religious minority. So, they are afraid of taking any legal measure against Bakul, but in the end, they complain about the incident to a very powerful political leader of the ruling party.

The leader arranges arbitration⁸ at the premises of his home and hands over the responsibility of being the arbiters to some other influential members of the village, who are all men who belong to the religious majority of the country. Thus, the arbitration sets the power of evidence against the power of class, religious and gender prejudices. Since Bakul is very powerful, the arbiters believe whatever he says, and that encourages Bakul to tell even more lies. He is believed automatically because the arbiters find an affinity with Bakul, given his class, religion, gender, and political affiliation. They see him sympathetically. Bakul is smart enough to capitalize on the opportunity by uttering lie after lie without providing any independent evidence in his favor. At a crucial moment of the arbitration, Bakul claims that he did not intentionally do anything wrong to Shilpi. Rather, Shilpi blackmailed him by saying that she would shout out that he was trying to rape her if he did not meet her sexual advances. He then goes from lying about the case itself to lobbing baseless accusations against Shilpi, in order to embarrass her and her husband. He even suggests that he is the real victim.

Bakul succeeds: his words are considered believable, and the cries of the victim remain unheard, even though Shilpi manages to present some substantial evidence in her favor. In this way, the arbitration has become a zero-sum competition between the word of a poor person and that of a well-off, between the word of a powerful political person and that of an ordinary person, between the word of a male and that of a female, and between the word of a religious majority and that of a minority.

⁷ In describing the story, I will use pseudonyms of the characters. To avoid the risk of belittling any religion, I will camouflage their religious identity by choosing such names that are common among the followers of all major religions in South Asia. For the same kind of reason, I will also refrain from mentioning the name of the country where this incident happened.

⁸ This sort of informal legal procedure is very common in the rural areas of South Asia.

Apparently, it is seen in the process of the trial that the arbiters give more epistemic trust to the well-off and to the male which is often seen in the informal legal practice in rural areas of South Asia. Trusting a female in such cases is a sort of psychological impossibility for many, and hence, they assume that the female is the culprit. The arbiters adjudicate that Bakul is innocent and Shilpi should sign a paper that she will not take the case to the formal legal procedure. If she takes the case to the formal legal system, she will be socially ostracized. On that very night, Shilpi commits suicide, hanging herself from the ceiling fan, using her scarf.

In order to see if credibility excess given to Bakul is a systematic testimonial injustice, we have to know whether the resulting injustice in the arbitration is localized. We also need to know if the concerned testimonial injustice is connected with other dimensions of injustice through a common prejudice. Then we need to know whether the given credibility is caused by the negative identity-prejudicial only or if it can be due to positive identity-prejudicial as well.

The testimonial injustice involved here is not localized or incidental. To understand it, we need to know the connection between credibility excess and credibility deficit. Here, I want to add to what has already been said in the previous section: we can think of the credibility deficit given to Shilpi as due to the credibility excess given to Bakul, and vice versa. My point is that we give credibility deficit to one because we want to give credibility excess to another, and vice versa. In the given arbitration, the primary target of the arbiters is to save Bakul.

The testimonial injustice involved here is not localized or incidental, but it is different from Fricker's example of Robinson. The Robinson's case is a story interpreted by Fricker, one that she borrowed from Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It is the story of a 1935 courtroom in Maycomb County, Alabama. The defendant is Tom Robinson, who is a young black man. He is charged with raping a white woman, Mayella Ewell. Though Robinson is completely innocent, he is treated prejudicially by the jurors, who undermine him as a speaker. Thus, he is not able to communicate all the things he knows. Even what he says is not believed and is viewed suspiciously. Robinson is the subject of testimonial injustice as a result of credibility deficit. He is vulnerable to other forms of injustice too, via prejudice. But in my example, the concerned testimonial injustice does not make Bakul susceptible to other injustices; it makes Shilpi vulnerable to them. I think this is one of the main differences between testimonial injustice produced by credibility excess and testimonial injustice produced by credibility deficit. In the case of testimonial injustice produced by credibility deficit, the person who is a victim of other forms of injustice is the very person to whom credibility deficit is attributed. But in the case of testimonial injustice produced by credibility excess, the person who is a victim of other injustices is not the person to whom credibility excess is attributed.

Though in both cases, testimonial injustice takes place, testimonial injustice produced by credibility excess does not make Bakul-like people victims of other injustices, and testimonial injustice generated by credibility deficit does so to people like Shilpi. But it is not to say that testimonial injustice produced by credibility excess is localized in the similar sense Fricker uses in the example of science conferences (Fricker 2007, 28-29).⁹ The testimonial injustice generated by credibility excess attributed to Bakul produces other injustices of which Shilpi is a victim. It is also true in Fricker's example of Robinson. To save the white woman, the jurors give credibility deficit to Robinson and credibility excess to the white woman. It is tough to say which one comes first. The fact is that there is a prejudicial attitude for which we see maldistribution¹⁰ of credibility that results in testimonial injustice, which is connected with other forms of injustices. Since credibility excess and credibility deficit are so entangled that we cannot separate them from each other¹¹, and also often we cannot tell which one of them comes first, we cannot conclude that testimonial injustice as connected with other injustices is a consequence of credibility deficit only. In the Bakul case, Shilpi is given credibility deficit because the arbiters attribute credibility excess to Bakul. We can interpret the same case by saying that Bakul is given more credibility because the arbiters attribute less credibility to Shilpi. The same thing can be said about Fricker's example of Robinson. Thus, it is arbitrary to insist that credibility deficit always precedes credibility excess. But whichever comes first, it is true that testimonial injustice along with other injustices always takes place in such cases. My point, therefore, is that an interpretation is possible according to which credibility deficit is an outcome of credibility excess, and vice versa.¹² So,

⁹ At international science conferences, the presence of philosophers of science is minimal. Fricker thinks that the greater scientists' community's intellectual disdain for the philosophers of science is responsible for that. Though this is a good example of identity-prejudicial credibility deficit, Fricker argues that "it does not concern the kind of broad identity category that makes for a tracker prejudice; on the contrary, its social significance is highly localized to the specific conference context described. It therefore produces only an incidental testimonial injustice." (2007, 29)

¹⁰ I understand that Medina would not like the use of the term 'mal-distribution' in this regard. He says, "Although I am identifying a crucial role for credibility excesses in patterns of epistemic injustice, I remain in full agreement with Fricker's proportional view: the epistemic injustices concerning credibility and epistemic authority are not to be thought of as resulting from 'misdistribution,' but rather from disproportion – lack of proportionality – or undeserved disparity in the epistemic reputability of social groups." (Medina 2011, 20-21) Though I do not have much to say to Medina's view of comparative and contrastive nature of credibility, I think the idea of fairness of distribution of credibility, i.e., distributive model of justice in credibility is possible. If this is possible, then the application of the difference principle of Rawls (1999), in the cases of epistemic resources like credibility, will also be possible. This is my primary proposal, which needs the detailed explanation that I hope I can offer in near future. See also Anderson (2012).

¹¹ It is discussed in the first part of the argument.

¹² It is discussed in the first part of the argument.

the testimonial injustice generated by credibility deficit may also be interpreted as the testimonial injustice generated by credibility excess.

The Bakul case shows that it is immaterial whether testimonial injustice is generated by credibility excess or credibility deficit in determining whether testimonial injustice is systematic. Testimonial injustice perpetrated in the Bakul case is a result of what Fricker calls identity prejudice. Through this prejudicial identity, testimonial injustice is systematically connected with other injustices like economic, political, gender, religious and so on.

Fricker's central case of testimonial injustice is interested in negative identity prejudice which works against "people owing to some feature of their social identity." (Fricker 2007, 28) Since I have shown how testimonial injustice generated by credibility excess is systematic in many cases, I am also interested in positive identity prejudice, which works for "people owing to some feature of their social identity." (Fricker 2007, 28) The positive prejudicial outlook of the arbiters works for Bakul since he has a favorable social status.¹³ It shows that for being the central case of testimonial injustice, identity prejudice should not be necessarily negative; it can be positive as well. So, I want to say that Fricker's refined characterization of the central case of testimonial injustice as negative identity-prejudicial credibility does not grasp the full picture. My standing is that to know whether an occurrence of testimonial injustice is central or not, it is enough to know whether it has identity-prejudicial credibility. Systematic testimonial injustice can be generated by both credibility excess and credibility deficit.

How is the Speaker *qua* Subject of Knowledge Wronged?

A close examination of the Bakul case mentioned in the last section will show that giving more credibility to Bakul helps him get away with his crime, and thus, Bakul is wronged in his capacity as a knower. It is important to understand how Bakul is wronged in his capacity as a knower. So, let me shed some light on this point.

The status of a knower depends on the fulfillment of two conditions: responsibility of showing reasons, and rights to unprejudicial credibility.¹⁴ The

¹³ About the case of Robinson, Riggs (2012) argues that convicting Robinson can be motivated also by community solidarity, loyalty to friends and family etc. which are not ethically problematic *per se*. My position goes beyond Riggs in the sense that I want to add credibility excess as the *affective investment* too. Credibility excess is an affective investment in the sense that it motivates the jurors of Robinson's trial and the arbiters of Bakul's trial to favor or to give more credibility to the white woman and Bakul, for white class solidarity and religious and economic-political solidarity, respectively.

¹⁴ The issue of responsibility is so complex that it deserves a separate discussion. However, this paper assumes epistemic conditions as necessary for being morally responsible. Epistemic conditions include access to knowledge, ability to know, responsibility of showing reasons,

absence of one of them will nullify one's capacity as a subject of knowledge because it will wrong the speaker *qua* subject of knowledge. After setting these two conditions up, I will show how credibility excess does epistemic injustice (here, testimonial injustice) to the speaker like Bakul.

If one claims that he knows something, it implies that he has a responsibility to provide reasons for his assertion if asked. If he cannot show any reason, it will undermine his status as a knower. Moreover, if he is not asked by anyone else to provide reasons, it does not mean that he does not need to have reasons at all in his repertoire. Rather, a speaker's status as a knower depends on the responsibility of providing reasons for his claims to himself and others.¹⁵

The condition of the rights to unprejudicial credibility is more extensive than the first condition, in the sense that the involvement of others is essential to recognizing one's rights. But in the first condition, such involvement is not necessary because one can even be responsible to oneself in the absence of anybody else to ask for reasons. The rights to unprejudicial credibility can mean that if one can defend one's claims with proper reasons, one earns the right to be believed impartially. In this sense, the right to unprejudicial credibility can also mean that one's testimony will not be discounted without substantial countervailing evidence. This condition involves a kind of empathy from the hearer. The hearer should not be skeptical from the very beginning. The hearer needs to try to understand what the speaker claims and what reasons he provides. Then he should try to evaluate the connection between claims and reasons. If the reasons are credible, then the speaker earns the rights to unprejudicial credibility. The rights to unprejudicial credibility never ask to believe someone unreasonably. Rather, it asks to behave impartially and to give deserving credibility to anybody in question. The hearer should listen very carefully and with empathy so that the speaker gets no feeling of fear and can say everything that is needed to be said. And this is what I mean by rights to unprejudicial credibility condition.¹⁶

Now, I will explain how Bakul is wronged as a knower on the basis of the two conditions of the status of a knower. Bakul has a responsibility to provide reasons for his claims or beliefs if he wants to be considered as a subject of

and so on. To substantiate my position, I will develop some further arguments in a separate paper.

¹⁵ It is pertinent here to mention what Williams says, "To be an epistemic subject just is to be accountable (responsible) *for* what one believes, in the way that to be a responsible agent is to be accountable for what one does. This involves being accountable *to* ourselves and others." (2015, 257-258; original emphasis) About epistemic responsibility, Origgi also points out, "If I take the time to ask myself: 'Why should people trust what I say?' I take responsibility of my epistemic practices." (2012, 227) This idea is more originally found in Brandom (1983).

¹⁶ In this connection, it is relevant to mention Gerald Marsh, who argues, "We have a moral responsibility to avoid making prejudicially diminished assessments of our fellows' credibility. This means we have a moral duty to refrain from withholding trust on prejudicial grounds. If this is right, we have a duty to avoid committing trust injustices." (2011, 285)

knowledge. Though he knows what he did, he claims the opposite in front of the arbiters. So, as a knower, he fails to behave responsibly. He fails to be responsible to himself. On the other hand, the arbiters do not ask Bakul to provide evidence to support his claims because they give him excessive credibility. So, they believe whatever he says. That encourages Bakul not to behave responsibly. Indeed, the arbiters wrong Bakul as a knower by not asking him to act responsibly to himself and to them.

On the other hand, as a result of over-empathetic outlook to Bakul, he enjoys prejudicial credibility. His enjoyment of credibility is endless because he is given an environment of free license about credibility from the start of the play. The arbiters silently provide more credibility to Bakul in an atmosphere the motto of which for Bakul and the arbiters is 'You say, we believe.' The credibility given to Bakul is too empathetic to work properly. The attitude towards him shows partiality; Bakul is protected and mollycoddled. Thus, he is epistemically wronged as a knower. He is wronged in his capacity as a subject of knowledge because he is given unlimited rights to the credibility that he enjoys due to too empathetic and partial attitude of the arbiters. This clearly shows that the arbiters' behavior was not impartial (hence, not just) in this regard.

Bakul's status as a knower is undermined because he is not asked to show epistemically responsible behavior by providing (proper) evidence and by not giving the kind of rights to the credibility that is appropriate. Thus, he is a victim of testimonial injustice, which is produced by credibility excess (in itself).

Conclusion

This paper is not intended to refute the account of testimonial injustice offered by Fricker. My intention is to modify her view so that I can form a more proper account of testimonial injustice. I have argued that the expansion of Fricker's central case of testimonial injustice is possible because both identity-prejudicial credibility excess and credibility deficit produce systematic testimonial injustice. I have done so by borrowing examples from the South Asian context, the implicit reason for which is to make the readers aware of the fact that testimonial injustice is a global phenomenon, which should be read as one of the most significant contributions of this paper to the literature of epistemic injustice.

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The Exemplar Approach to Science and Religion¹

Seungbae Park

Abstract: We can judge whether some activities are scientific or religious, depending on how similar they are to exemplar scientific activities or to exemplar religious activities, even if we cannot specify the necessary and sufficient conditions for science and religion. The absence of the demarcation between science and religion does not justify the school policy of teaching the creationist hypothesis that God created the universe any more than it justifies the religious policy of teaching evolutionary theory, quantum mechanics, and the Big Bang theory in religious institutions.

Keywords: creationist hypothesis, demarcation, exemplar theory, religion, science.

1. Introduction

How should we distinguish between science and religion? Are there distinctive features of science that set it apart from religion, and distinctive features of religion that set it apart from science? These questions are interesting in themselves, but they also have grave practical implications. As Gregory Peterson (2002) and William Hasker (2009) note, some creationists argue that schools should teach the creationist hypothesis that God created the universe. If there is, however, a tenable criterion for distinguishing between science and religion, we can use it against the creationists' suggestion.

Larry Laudan (1982) is reputed to have demolished the demarcation between science and religion. As Robert Pennock (2011, 180) observes, creationists cite Laudan's putative destruction of the demarcation between science and religion to argue that schools should teach the creationist hypothesis. Those creationists are J. P. Moreland, a philosopher at Biola University, Stephen Meyer, a philosopher at Discovery Institute, and Casey Luskin, a staffer at Discovery Institute. The aim of this paper is to show that Laudan's alleged obliteration of the demarcation between science and religion does not establish that the creationist hypothesis should be included in science texts.

My discussion proceeds as follows. In Section 2, I present Laudan's case against some philosophers' attempts to demarcate between science and religion in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. In Section 3, I criticize the aforementioned creationists' inference that since there is no strict distinction

¹ I am deeply grateful to the anonymous referees for their useful comments on this paper.

between science and religion, the creationist hypothesis should be taught in science classrooms. In Section 4, I invoke the exemplar theory of concept representation in cognitive psychology to explain why it is inappropriate to teach the creationist hypothesis in schools. In Section 5, I argue that our children should be exposed to exemplar scientific activities, as opposed to exemplar religious activities and borderline activities, in science classrooms. In Section 6, I reply to some possible objections.

2. Laudan's Criticism

What feature of science makes it what it is? What is the feature of science such that if an enterprise does not have it, it is not science, and if an enterprise has it, it is science? In other words, what is the necessary and sufficient condition for science? This question is answered by some philosophers of science. This section examines their answers and Laudan's critiques of them.

Carl Hempel proposes testability as the hallmark of science. On his account, if a hypothesis is not testable, it is not scientific. If it is testable, it is scientific. He says, "no statement or set of statements *T* can be significantly proposed as a scientific hypothesis or theory unless it is amenable to objective empirical test, at least 'in principle.'" (Hempel 1966, 30) A hypothesis is testable if and only if we can obtain observational data to determine whether it is true or false. A hypothesis is confirmed when it agrees with the experimental outcome, and disconfirmed when it disagrees with the experimental outcome.

In contrast, Karl Popper proposes falsifiability as the hallmark of science. On his account, if a hypothesis is not falsifiable, it is not scientific. If it is falsifiable, it is scientific. He says, "The criterion of falsifiability is a solution to this problem of demarcation, for it says that statements or systems of statements, in order to be ranked as scientific, must be capable of conflicting with possible, or conceivable, observations." (Popper 1963, 51) A hypothesis is falsifiable just in case we can conceive of an observation that proves it to be false. Popper's proposal stems from his observation that we can prove a general hypothesis to be false, although we cannot prove it to be true.

Can we use Hempel's or Popper's criterion to distinguish between science and religion? Can we say, for example, that evolutionary theory should be taught in science classrooms, but creationism should not be, on the grounds that evolutionary theory is testable or falsifiable whereas creationism is not? Laudan says no. He observes that creationists make many testable claims. They claim, for example, that "the earth is of very recent origin (say 6,000 to 20 thousand years old)," and that "animals and man were created at the same time." (Laudan 1982, 16) These "claims are testable, they have been tested, and they have failed those tests." (Laudan 1982, 16) Thus, some creationist claims are testable and falsifiable.

Let me now turn to Thomas Kuhn's distinction between science and other enterprises. He claims that to be scientific is almost the same as to do normal

science. He says, “this is for now my main point, a careful look at the scientific enterprise suggests that it is normal science, in which Sir Karl’s sort of testing does not occur, rather than extraordinary science which most nearly distinguishes science from other enterprises.” (Kuhn 1970, 6) When scientists do normal science, they solve puzzles within a paradigm, i.e., they articulate the paradigm, they apply it to diverse parts of the world, and they develop scientific instruments, such as electron microscopes and particle accelerators. Most importantly, they do not discard the paradigm, even if it conflicts with experimental results. When experimental outcomes clash with the paradigm, blame is put not on the paradigm but on scientists’ ability to perform experiments.

Can we use Kuhn’s criterion to distinguish between science and religion? Park (2016, 48) says no on the grounds that there is an aspect of science that Kuhn’s philosophy of science cannot account for. Theoretical physicists today attempt to unify quantum physics and general relativity. These two theories are fundamental physical theories belonging to different paradigms. It is not clear whether the theoretical physicists are doing normal science. It is clear, though, that they are doing science. So doing normal science is not the hallmark of science.

Can we say that scientists are open-minded, so they revise their beliefs in the light of new experimental results, whereas creationists are closed-minded, so they do not revise their religious beliefs in the light of counterevidence? Laudan says no. He observes that creationists sometimes modify their opinions in response to new evidence, changing “their minds from time to time.” (Laudan 1982, 17) Moreover, “the scientists of any epoch likewise regard some of their beliefs as so fundamental as not to be open to repudiation or negotiation.” (Laudan 1982, 17) In short, creationists are open-minded just like scientists at times, and scientists are closed-minded just like creationists at other times.

Laudan has made a valuable contribution to the debate over the demarcation between science and religion. He has shown that it is difficult to define science and religion in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. Counterexamples spell doom for the proposals that the hallmarks of science are testability, falsifiability, normal science, and being open-minded.

3. Critiques of the Creationist Inference

What can we conclude from the fact that Laudan has provided counterexamples against some philosophical attempts to demarcate between science and religion in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions? As already noted in the introduction of this paper, some creationists conclude that the creationist hypothesis should be taught in schools. Their inference exemplifies the inference scheme that since there is no demarcation between two enterprises, a view taught in one enterprise should also be taught in the other enterprise. This section aims to reduce this creationist inference scheme to absurdity.

The creationist inference scheme has the following three absurd consequences. First, we should also teach science in religious institutions. For example, we should teach evolutionary theory and the Big Bang theory in religious institutions, such as churches, Buddhist temples, mosques, and Hindu temples. To implement this policy, religious institutions should be equipped with scientific instruments, such as particle accelerators and electron microscopes, and religious leaders, such as ministers, priests, and Buddhist monks, should be required to have at least master's degrees in science. After all, it is wrong to say that the absence of the demarcation between science and religion justifies the policy of teaching the creationist hypothesis in science classrooms, but not the policy of teaching evolutionary theory and the Big Bang theory in religious institutions.

Second, different religions have different creation stories about how the universe came about. The creationist hypothesis is just one of them. Muslims reject it, and accept instead that Allah created the universe. If we should teach the creationist hypothesis in schools, we should also teach the creation stories of other religions in schools. After all, it is unfair to teach the former, but not the latter, in schools.

Third, there is no strict distinction between different religions. So if the creationist inference scheme is correct, we should also teach Christian doctrines in Hindu temples, Islamic doctrines in churches, Hindu doctrines in mosques, and so forth. Furthermore, ministers should cut their hair short like Buddhist monks, and chant Buddhist scripture in churches. Buddhist monks should grow their hair long like ministers, and sing hymns in Buddhist temples. Muslims and Hindus would also have to follow the customs of other religions.

In sum, Laudan has opened a street between science and religion. On close examination, however, the street is not a one-way street but a two-way street. Moreover, it obliterates not only the separation between science and religion but also the separation between different religions. The obliteration of the separations would be unsavory even to creationists. They would find it disagreeable that we should teach the Big Bang theory in religious institutions, Muslims' creation story in science classrooms, Buddhist doctrines in churches, and so forth.

An interesting question arises. Why is it inappropriate to teach the Big Bang theory in religious institutions, the creationist hypothesis in schools, Christian doctrines in Buddhist temples, and so on? A tenable answer to this question cannot be found in the definitions of science, religion, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism, appealing to necessary and sufficient conditions for these enterprises. It can rather be found in the exemplar theory of concept representation to which I turn now.

4. The Exemplar Theory

Ordinary concepts are not represented by necessary and sufficient conditions. Think about the concept of bird. An animal does not have to be able to fly to be a bird, given that there are birds that cannot fly, such as ostriches and kiwis. So the ability to fly is not a necessary condition for a bird. Even if an animal can fly, it might not be a bird. For example, a bat and an insect can fly, but they are not birds. So the ability to fly is not a sufficient condition for a bird. It is difficult to provide the specification of the necessary and sufficient condition for a bird. Naturally, it is also difficult to provide the specification of the necessary and sufficient condition for science.

Even if ordinary people do not know the necessary and sufficient condition for a bird, they do not usually have a problem in classifying an object as a bird or a non-bird. Show a picture of a crow to children and ask them whether it is a bird or not. They will immediately answer that it is. Show a picture of a dragonfly to them and ask them whether it is a bird or not. They will immediately answer that it is not. How can ordinary people classify an object with ease, when they do not know the necessary and sufficient condition for the object? An answer to this question can be found in cognitive psychology.

Cognitive psychologists (Medin and Schaffer 1978; Estes 1986) argue that we use excellent examples called 'exemplars' to classify objects. For example, we use such birds as an eagle and a pigeon to classify birds. When asked to judge whether a crow is a bird, we compare the crow with the exemplar birds for similarity. The similarity between the crow and the exemplar birds is above the threshold. So we classify the crow as a bird. How about a dragonfly? The similarity between the dragonfly and the exemplar birds is below the threshold. So we classify the dragonfly as a non-bird. To generalize, when asked to judge whether an object is an instance of a certain kind, we compare the object with exemplars of that kind for similarity. If the similarity is above a threshold, we classify the object as an instance of that kind. If the similarity is below the threshold, we classify it as an instance of another kind. Thus, it is exemplars, not necessary and sufficient conditions, that enable us to classify objects.

The exemplar theory of concept representation sketched above has three interesting implications for the present issue of demarcating between science and religion. The first implication is that it is inappropriate to look for the necessary and sufficient condition for science. Hempel, Popper, and Kuhn put forward testability, falsifiability, and normal science, respectively, as the necessary and sufficient condition for science. They undertook a task that was fated to fail. We do not use a necessary and sufficient condition, but rather exemplars, to determine whether a target activity is scientific. When asked to judge whether a given activity is scientific, we compare it with exemplar scientific activities for similarity. If the similarity is above a threshold, it is classified as scientific. If it is below the threshold, it is classified as non-scientific.

What are exemplar scientific activities? My tentative answer is that setting up a hypothesis, performing an experiment to test it, operating scientific instruments, publishing research results, securing research funds from funding agencies, and so forth, are exemplar scientific activities. Let me emphasize that these activities are neither individually necessary nor jointly sufficient for being scientific. All I am saying is that if a certain activity is sufficiently similar to them, it is classified as scientific.

Let me focus on the first exemplar scientific activity, viz., setting up a hypothesis. Scientists do not advance any hypothesis, but only certain kinds of hypotheses. The following two hypotheses can be regarded as exemplar scientific hypotheses:

(S₁) $F=ma$

(S₂) Antarctica, Australia, and South American once formed a giant continent, and marsupials moved from South America to Australia via Antarctica millions of years ago.

(S₁) is Newton's second law of motion. It depicts how force, mass, and acceleration are related to one another. (S₂) is a hypothesis about the continents and the marsupials. It makes the true novel prediction that marsupial fossils exist in Antarctica (Woodburne and Zinsmeister 1982). We can classify a hypothesis as scientific or non-scientific, depending how similar it is to hypotheses like (S₁) and (S₂).

I have chosen (S₁) as an exemplar scientific hypothesis because it is a law of nature. Scientists are more interested in discovering regularities of nature than in collecting facts that bear no relationship to one another. (S₁) enables us to make quantitatively accurate predictions about objects. It tells us what acceleration an object will have, if a certain amount of force is imposed on it. By contrast, religious hypotheses, including the creationist hypothesis, do not yield such precise predictions. Moreover, even if they do, it is not clear whether they can be regarded as exemplar religious hypotheses. Imagine that ordinary religious followers go to churches or to Buddhist temples. To their surprise, however, ministers and Buddhist monks deal with mathematical equations like (S₁), demonstrating quantitatively accurate predictions instead of performing religious rituals. The followers would think that that is not an exemplar religious activity, and hence that is not what they would expect from their religious leaders.

I have chosen (S₂) as an exemplar scientific hypothesis because it made a novel prediction as a result of combining the knowledge from different fields of science. Scientists combined biological knowledge with geological knowledge to think up (S₂). In contemporary science, different fields of science are not isolated from one another, but interact with one another (Trefil and Hazen 2012). Interdisciplinary research is common in contemporary science. In contrast, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus seldom form joint research teams for

common religious agenda. Even if they do, they neither make nor confirm novel predictions comparable to (S₂). Even if they do, it is not clear that their activities can be regarded as religious. Imagine again that ordinary religious followers go to churches or Buddhist temples for religious purposes. To their surprise, however, ministers and Buddhist monks combine the information from Christianity and Buddhism to make novel predictions instead of performing religious rituals. The followers would again think that that is not an exemplar religious activity, and that their religious leaders are not doing what they are supposed to do.

The second implication of the exemplar theory for the issue of demarcating between science and religion is that there is no necessary and sufficient condition for religion either. There is no feature of religion that makes religion what it is. We can only judge whether an activity is religious, depending on how similar it is to exemplar religious activities. What activities are exemplar religious activities? My tentative answer is that believing a scripture, worshipping a deity, participating in congregations, giving prayers, and singing songs like *Amazing Grace* are exemplar religious activities.

Let me focus on the first exemplar religious activity, viz., believing a scripture. A scripture is different from a science text in that it contains statements not like (S₁) and (S₂) but like (R₁) and (R₂):

(R₁) God resurrected Jesus on the third day of his death.

(R₂) The Sun stood still, and the Moon stayed, until the people avenged themselves upon their enemies.

We classify a statement as religious or non-religious, depending on how similar it is to exemplar religious statements like (R₁) and (R₂).

The third implication of the exemplar theory regards the fact that there are many religions in the world, including Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, and Hinduism, to name a few. How do we differentiate between different religions? Each religion has its own exemplar activities. Believing the Bible and singing a hymn in front of a cross in a church are exemplar activities of Christianity. Having a very short hairstyle, chanting a Buddhist scripture, and making deep bows in front of a Buddha statue in a Buddhist temple are exemplar activities of Buddhism. Islam and Hinduism have their own exemplar activities too. Imagine that you go to a church. To your surprise, however, some people in the church wear hijabs on their heads. You would think that their behavior is inappropriate in a church. But why is it inappropriate? A natural answer to this question is that wearing a hijab is more similar to exemplar activities of Islam than those of Christianity. So it is an appropriate behavior not in a church but in a mosque. In short, each religion has exemplar activities. We judge whether a target activity belongs to Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, or Hinduism, depending on how similar it is to the exemplar activities of those religions.

5. The Exemplar Theory and Science Education

Suppose that you aim to help children to acquire the concept of bird. The exemplar theory implies that the best way to achieve your aim is to show them exemplar birds, such as an eagle and a pigeon. You should not present to them the objects that are near the borderline between birds and non-birds, such as a penguin and a bat. A penguin is a bird, although it swims in the sea. A bat is not a bird, although it flies in the sky. Showing such objects to children is not the best way to help them acquire the concept of bird.

How should we teach science to school children? The exemplar theory implies that the best way to do it is to expose them to exemplar scientific activities, such as setting up hypotheses and performing experiments. We should expose them neither to exemplar religious activities nor to borderline activities. An interesting question is whether the creationist hypothesis that God created the universe is an exemplar scientific hypothesis, an exemplar religious hypothesis, or a borderline hypothesis. Intuitively, it is more similar to (R_1) and (R_2) than to (S_1) and (S_2) . After all, it is not a law of nature. It does not enable us to make quantitatively accurate predictions, as (S_1) does. Nor is it a result of knowledge from different fields of science, as (S_2) is. Neither does it make a novel prediction, as (S_2) does. Moreover, it clashes with the first law of thermodynamics, which states that mass-energy can neither be created nor be destroyed. The first law implies that it is impossible to create even an atom, let alone the universe, although it is possible to move an atom from one place to another.

Creationists would reply that God is omnipotent, so he can break the first law of thermodynamics. If they say so, however, the creationist hypothesis only moves farther from exemplar scientific hypotheses, for no scientist defends his or her hypotheses by invoking the omnipotence of God. If a manuscript invoking the omnipotence of God were submitted to scientific journals, such as *Nature*, *Science*, and *Cell*, editors would reject it without even sending it to external reviewers. Their decisions are based on the fact that the statements invoking the omnipotence of God are more similar to exemplar religious statements than to exemplar scientific statements.

Some creationists try to justify the creationist hypothesis by tapping into science. For example, they claim that they have found the remains of Noah's Ark near the top of Mount Ararat in Eastern Turkey and the archaeological evidence for the location of the Garden of Eden.

Let me say, however, that even if such attempts are successful, the creationist hypothesis can at best be viewed as a borderline hypothesis between scientific and religious hypotheses. As I argued earlier, a borderline hypothesis between science and religion does not have a place in science texts.

My suggestion that we should expose our schoolchildren to exemplar scientific activities, as opposed to exemplar religious hypothesis or borderline hypotheses, goes well with Kuhn's philosophy of science education. According to

Kuhn, students become scientists by being exposed to exemplars. In this context, exemplars are problem-solutions that set the precedents for future research. For example, the outcome of the Michelson-Morley experiment was a puzzle to physicists in the nineteenth century who had been working under the framework of the ether theory. Einstein solved the puzzle with his special theory of relativity, which led scientists to think that it can be used to solve other puzzles as well.

6. Objections and Replies

Many readers will take issue with my suggestion that (S_1) and (S_2) are exemplar scientific hypotheses, and with my suggestion that (R_1) and (R_2) are exemplar religious statements, and with the suggestion that wearing a hijab is an exemplar Islamic activity. There are other scientific hypotheses that can better serve as exemplar scientific hypotheses, and there are other religious statements that can better serve as exemplar religious statements. Moreover, any similarity judgment about a target activity and exemplars is controversial. Different people make opposite similarity judgments about an activity and exemplars. For example, some people may claim that a certain activity is more similar to exemplar activities of Christianity, while other people may claim that it is more similar to exemplar activities of Islam.

The existence of such problems, however, does not mean that religion should be taught in science classrooms, that science should be taught in religious institutions, and that a doctrine of a religion should be taught in the religious institution of another religion. Critics disagreeing with this reply owe us an account of why it is inappropriate to teach science in religious institutions, and to teach a doctrine of a religion in the religious institution of another religion. Why is it inappropriate to wear a hijab in a church? Why is it inappropriate to sing a hymn in a Buddhist temple? Christians cannot say that wearing a hijab in a church is inappropriate because such behavior does not fit the definition of Christianity. Nor can Buddhists say that singing a hymn in a Buddhist temple is inappropriate because such behavior does not fit the definition of Buddhism. After all, it is extremely difficult to provide the specification of the necessary and sufficient conditions for Christianity and Buddhism.

Creationists might now argue that the creationist hypothesis deserves a place in the US public schools, whereas the creation stories of Buddhism, Islam, and Hinduism do not, because the majority of the taxpayers in the US are Christians. On this account, it is legitimate to teach the creation story of Buddhism in the public schools of Buddhist countries, that of Islam in the public schools of Islamic countries, and that of Hinduism in the public schools of Hindu countries. Let me call this argument 'the argument from politics.'

The argument from politics is reminiscent of Pascal's wager. It holds that we should believe in God because he might exist. If he exists, we will go to heaven. If he does not exist, we have nothing to lose. Pascal has provided the pragmatic justification for the view that God exists. To advance such an argument is to

admit that there is no good epistemic justification for the view that God exists. Similarly, to advance the argument from politics is to admit that there is no good epistemic reason for teaching the creationist hypothesis in schools. It is not clear whether creationists are willing to go this far or not.

The traditional approach to science and religion attempts to find necessary and sufficient conditions for science and religion. By contrast, the exemplar approach to science and religion attempts to determine whether an activity is scientific or religious, depending on how similar it is to exemplar scientific and religious activities. Objectors might point out that there is a similarity between the two approaches. Defenders of each approach can agree that we learn important scientific and religious ideas by looking at the practices of science and religion.

The objectors are right on this account. I want to, however, emphasize an important dissimilarity between the two approaches. The traditional approach affirms, while the exemplar approach denies, that we can define science and religion in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. It follows that the defenders of the traditional approach need to specify the conditions to prove that the creationist hypothesis does not count as scientific. In contrast, the defenders of the exemplar approach need not specify the conditions to prove that the creationist hypothesis does not count as scientific. They need only to prove that it is more similar to exemplar religious hypotheses than to exemplar scientific hypotheses. Laudan's case against the traditional approach makes it clear that the exemplar approach is preferable to the traditional approach.

7. Conclusion

Laudan has refuted a few philosophers' attempts to define science in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. Even so, we can judge whether certain activities are scientific or religious, depending on how similar they are to exemplar scientific activities or to exemplar religious activities. Also, we should teach exemplar scientific hypotheses to our children in science classrooms, and we should not teach exemplar religious hypotheses or borderline hypotheses to them. The creationist hypothesis that God created the universe is an exemplar religious hypothesis. Therefore, it should not be taught in science classrooms.

Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, and Hinduism are different religions, although they cannot be defined in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, because each of them has its own exemplar activities. Analogously, science and religion are different enterprises, although they cannot be defined in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, because there are exemplar scientific activities and exemplar religious activities. Science and religion can maintain their identities and can have their independent domains, as long as there are exemplar scientific activities and exemplar religious activities. Science education and religious education ought not to encroach upon each other's domains, even if there is no demarcation between science and religion.

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The Dissolution of the Social Contract in to the Unfathomable Perpetuity of Caste: Questions of Nature, the State, Inequality, and Sovereignty in Hobbes, Hegel, and Ambedkar

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Abstract: This paper examines Ambedkar's critical view of certain distortions, contradictions, and instabilities in democratic norms, constitutional validity, and citizens' rights in India's secular, constitutional, legal, pluralistic democracy. Through a strident deconstruction utilizing Hegelian resources, the paper exposes the contortions and contradictions underpinning Hindu metaphysics in some of its most abstract texts, namely the ancient Upanishads. Through this deconstructive lens we unpack various aporias embedded in concepts of selfhood that render a truly liberal democratic political notion of citizenship impossible. The paper concludes with the necessity of further research on comparative philosophies of religion and political philosophy to better understand the limits of secular democracy, particularly for minority rights, in different metaphysical and civilizational traditions.

Keywords: Hobbes, Hegel, Ambedkar, caste, philosophy of religion.

Introduction

This paper will use two concepts from Hobbes's political treatise, *The Leviathan* (1651): namely the 'state of nature' and the 'social contract/obedience to the sovereign constitutional state.' Our aim is to show how both are at work, paradoxically, in the Indian caste system: the latter is an archaic phenomenon buttressed by modern Hindu nationalism in which neither liberal, secular, constitutional democracy nor rampant market capitalist society can overcome or eradicate. Regardless of globalization and the dissemination of Western culture and ideals, the phenomenon of caste not only persists and subsists, it deepens and evolves in ever more complex ways. By contrast, for the seventeenth century Hobbes, the social contract and modern idea of the state replaces the state of nature in Western history. But in the postcolonial Indian context, the distinction between the two concepts is blurred.

In the Indian/South Asian context (or in other democratic states where caste persists) the matter is different.¹ India's non-linear temporal paroxysm requires us to reread Ambedkar's *Annihilation of Caste* and other lesser-known works. In particular, we will look at Ambedkar's "States and Minorities: What are Their Rights and How to Secure them in the Constitution of Free India" (1947). Parts of this text form the progenitor of the eventual Constitution accepted by the General Assembly in 1949 post-Independent India. Ambedkar was the chairman of the drafting commission of the Constitution. However, what is missing in the Constitution from this early text is state socialism that guarantees and protects minorities from the 'tyranny of the majority.' This includes strong enforcement of duties to protect against economic exploitation and other forms of discrimination. Beyond that, the preface to this short text by Ambedkar grapples with the very meaning of the concept of 'minority' given that Dalit (formerly known as 'untouchables') as an outside caste suffer to this day from a combination of state violence, legally sanctioned political-economic exploitation, and mob violence from a Hindu nationalist majority. Their plight can be likened somewhere along the spectrum from African-American slavery to pre-Civil Rights Jim Crow segregation to current forms of structural and state-level violence that Black Lives Matter protests. Hence Ambedkar's is seeking a revolutionary notion beyond our normal connotations of what minorities are and therefore what their rights should be. He states in the preface:

Soon after it became definite that the framing of the future Constitution of India was to be entrusted to a Constituent Assembly, the Working Committee of the All-India Scheduled Castes Federation asked me to prepare a Memorandum on the Safeguards for the Scheduled Castes for being submitted to the Constituent Assembly on behalf of the Federation. I very gladly undertook the task. The results of my labour are contained in this brochure.

The Memorandum defines Fundamental Rights; Minority Rights and Safeguards for the Scheduled Castes. Those who hold the view that the Scheduled Castes are not a minority might say that. In this matter I have gone beyond prescribed bounds. The view that the Scheduled Castes are not a minority is a new dispensation issued on behalf of the High and Mighty Hindu Majority which the Scheduled Castes are asked to submit to. The spokesmen of the Majority have not cared to define its scope and its meaning. Anyone with a fresh and free mind, reading it as a general proposition, would be justified in saying that it is

¹ Just to note, movements are afoot in Western democracies as well to mount legislation to protect against anti-caste discrimination in the diaspora. For example in the British parliament and nascent lobbying efforts by NGOs in the United States, there are ongoing efforts to bring greater awareness to the phenomenon of 'caste' if in fact it cannot be reduced to existing human rights instruments that center race, ethnicity, and indigenous identities. Caste indeed is not only unique to the South Asian context, particularly 'Indian civilization,' it is unique as a concept in comparison and contrast with other forms of descent-based segregation and discrimination that occurs in various countries, histories, and cultures around the world. See this report by the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights: <http://www.ncdhr.org.in/publications/>.

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capable of double interpretation. I interpret it to mean that the Scheduled Castes are more than a minority and that any protection given to the citizens and to the minorities will not be adequate for the Scheduled Castes. In other words it means that their social, economic and educational condition is so much worse than that of the citizens and other minorities that in addition to protection they would get as citizens and as minorities the Scheduled Castes would require special safeguards against the tyranny and discrimination of the majority. The other interpretation is that the Scheduled Castes differ from a minority and therefore they are not entitled to the protection which can be claimed by a minority. This interpretation appears to be such unmitigated nonsense that no sane man need pay any attention to it. The Scheduled Castes must be excused if they ignore it. Those who accept my interpretation of the view that the Scheduled Castes are not a minority will, I am sure, agree with me that I am justified in demanding for the Scheduled Castes, all the benefit of the Fundamental Rights of citizens, all the benefit of the Provisions for the Protection of the minorities and in addition special Safeguards.

The memorandum was intended to be submitted to the Constituent Assembly. There was no intention to issue it to the public. But my caste Hindu friends who have had the opportunity to read the typescript have pressed me to give it a wider circulation. Although it is meant for members of the Constituent Assembly, I do not see any breach of decorum in making it available to the general public. I have therefore agreed to fall in line with their wishes.

Instead of setting out my ideas in general terms, I have drafted the Memorandum in the form of Articles of the Constitution. I am sure that for the sake of giving point and precision this method will be found to be more helpful. For the benefit of the Working Committee of the Scheduled Castes Federation, I had prepared certain explanatory notes and other statistical material. As the notes and the statistical material are likely to be useful to the general reader, I have thought it better to print them along with the Memorandum rather than keep them back.

Among the many problems the Constituent Assembly has to face, there are two which are admittedly most difficult. One is the problem of the Minorities and the other is the problem of the Indian States. I have been a student of the problem of the Indian States and I hold some very definite and distinct views on the subject. It was my hope that the Constituent Assembly would elect me to the States Committee. Evidently, it has found men of superior calibre for the work. It may also be because I am one of those who are outside the tabernacle and therefore undesirable. I am not sorry to find myself left out. My only regret is that I have lost an opportunity to which I was looking forward for placing my views for the consideration of the Committee. I have therefore chosen to do the next best thing - namely, to incorporate them in this brochure along with the Rights of Citizens, of Minorities and of the Scheduled Castes so that a wider public may know what they are, may value them for what they are worth and may make such use of them as it may deem fit. (Ambedkar 1947)

This short set of passages are ripe for philosophical interpretation. Here we experience a type of moral, political, and philosophical vertigo through a bizarre collapse of Hobbesian categories in which all these intermingle in the phenomenon of caste: state of nature, hierarchical society, inequality, obedience

to the sovereign state and emergent market society in which equality within each class (albeit inequality between classes based on wealth, property, and incomes) gives way to the inequality of hierarchical castes within each class, i.e. Ambedkar's 'graded inequality.' (Ambedkar 2014, 233-234) Ambedkar's correct intuition is that we need something more than the traditional constitutional (i.e. Western) concepts of the 'minority,' or as he says something 'more than a minority,' to truly deal with the profound nature of this systemic oppression known as the caste system.

We say a temporal paroxysm is at work because we need to probe the complexity of how caste persists in a modern, secular, constitutional, legal, democratic context whose roots are founded in the 'social contract' and the dynamic forces of today's aggressive deregulated market capitalism leading to a profound economic concentration of wealth and massive inequality in Indian society.² We are talking about an impossible simultaneity of the 'state of nature' and the 'obedience to the sovereign state' in which the state is ultimately responsible to protect the equality and liberty of all citizens; but this is a mere fiction, according to Ambedkarite philosophy, which does not see true freedom or liberation until caste is 'annihilated.' In other words, before political and economic reform before or after decolonization, we need a total remaking of society as a whole.³

All the while, the state is becoming increasingly decentralized within the economy while a mob concentration of wealth supports a Hindu nationalist ideology that keeps the caste system in tact while accruing wealth to a handful of individuals and families.⁴ Indian society is past (precolonialism), present (postcolonialism), and future (somewhere between plutocracy and oligarchy), but also something beyond three aspects of time; perhaps a fourth aspect or vector of time needs to be conceptualized to understand the unique historical temporalization beneath the other three. And despite all 'postcolonial' or 'neocolonial' obfuscations of the 'historical present,' the question remains: can Indian society truly treat all individuals as free and equal citizens? If one examines Indian society up close today, and not just from Ambedkar's early to mid-twentieth century context, i.e. from colonization to Independence, does

² India is now number three in terms of the most billionaires behind the U.S. and China. Ninety plus individuals own nearly one third of the monetary value of the country's GDP while nearly seven hundred million people live at the poverty line with extreme lack of proper sanitation facilities and consistent access to electricity. See Amarty and Dreze (2013). On the list of world's billionaires, see this source. Retrieved from: <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2018-05-23/the-10-countries-with-the-most-billionaires>.

³ See chapters 2 and 3 of Ambedkar (2014, 210).

⁴ Obviously the two highest castes represent the smallest percentage of the population – the Brahmins at the highest with about 4% and with the Kshatriyas/warriors they comprise about 20% of the population. Retrieved from: <https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/rel100hinduism/2015/11/25/the-caste-system-brahmin-and-kshatriya/>.

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India really fulfill the ideals and aspirations of the 1948 UN Declaration on Human Rights?

Basically, we need to read Hobbes's classic, *Leviathan* (1651), again while philosophically reconstructing in innovative ways missing dimensions of Ambedkar's critique of caste.⁵ We need another philosophical model/alternate to the purely Western Hobbessian universe to explain the complexity of caste in postcolonial modernity. For example, as mentioned before, we must look at Ambedkar's "State and Minorities" (1947), many parts of which did not make its way in to the Indian constitution of 1949. Perhaps we need a concept beyond the idea of 'minority itself.'⁶ Radical state socialism guaranteed through the Constitution, not parliamentary democracy, let alone dictatorship, did not emerge; but the dictatorship of the caste system persisted through the electoral veins of a secular, liberal, pluralistically, constitutionally ambitious nation. And the concentration of wealth at the top is simply staggering.⁷ Caste is a type of internal-metaphysical-anatomical dictatorship underneath the artifice of electoral politics and the cherished Indian constitution. Ironically, the post-Independence Indian constitution, the drafting of which was chaired by no other

⁵ Truth be told, although Ambedkar spent a lifetime studying Hindu philosophy and religion and was a doctoral student at the turn of the century American pragmatist philosopher John Dewey, his dissertation was more anthropological and subsequent higher degrees were in law and economics. See Stroud (2019). No doubt, he was a brilliant polymath and one of the greatest minds of twentieth century Indian intellectual history. But his depth and grounding in Western philosophy was minimal at best, i.e. from Plato to Hegel to the early twentieth century context of Husserlian phenomenology and the mammoth achievement of Heidegger's *Being and Time*. Of course that was not his focus and does not detract from his genius as a broad multidisciplinary thinker, social movements leader, and founder of the Indian constitution. For our enterprise, these Western resources are crucial to imagine frontiers beyond what Ambedkar could conceive, or anyone in the twentieth century for that matter – Western or Eastern – when it comes to an unrelenting critique of the caste system.

⁶ Numerical categorization of minorities, for example racial, ethnic, gender/sexuality, in contrast to the non-Latino/Hispanic white (of European and Russian descent), heteronormative majority of Western societies will not suffice. In India, Dalits constitute about 250 million people (regardless if they converted generations ago or recently out of Hinduism into Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism) and tribals/indigenous are roughly 70 million. That is over 300 million and Muslims in general (of any caste) comprise the second largest Muslim population of any country in the world, except Indonesia. That is over 200 million Muslims in India. Do Hindus across the four castes constitute the majority? Of course, at roughly 800 million. But if you only take 20% of that to comprise the top two castes (Brahmans, Kshatriyas) and then aggregate Dalits, tribals and Muslims, the latter groups do not comprise a statistical minority. Far from it. See 2007 data from the Times of India: retrieved from: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/OBCs-form-41-of-population-Survey/articleshow/2328117.cms?from=mdr>.

⁷ See again footnote 2.

than Ambedkar himself, has more ambition and progressive measures than its forbearers, namely the American, British, and French constitutions.⁸

For us, the shadow of Schmitt looms for all contemporary attempts at political theory and the philosophy of constitutionalism. But prior to examining the Western political philosophical tradition that spans Hobbes to Schmitt, we must also examine the still relevant, powerfully speculative sections of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*: (BB.) SPIRIT, VI. SPIRIT. This astounding section begins with "A. The true Spirit" and passes through "B. Self-Alienated Spirit. Culture, section III. Absolute Freedom and Terror" and ends with "C. Spirit that is certain of itself. Morality, section c. Conscience. The 'beautiful soul,' evil and its forgiveness." (Hegel 1977) Its resources are immense, and some could argue that its mysteries are inexhaustible and will continue to be plumbed indefinitely. Hegel and Kant can always be revisited just like philosophers continue to revisit Plato and Aristotle 2400 years later. My contention is that many of the innovations in continental European philosophy after Hegel could not have been possible without his ingenious creations and perhaps the so-called great moves of later philosophers can be derived from moments in Hegel's *Phenomenology* and some parts of his corpus.⁹

There, Hegel begins to unravel the dizzying dialectical and paradoxical movements that take place after the French Enlightenment, French Revolution, and the Counter-Revolution of the Terror before Bonaparte's dictatorship is established. Of course, Hegel is not writing empirical history; nor are the historical references explicit. Rather, he is interested in the self-conceiving movement of Spirit as these dialectical forms expose their inner-contradictions on their way to a higher sublation (*aufheben*) that anticipates the 'Notion' of Spirit's consciousness of itself, its true self-consciousness as substance. But even the distinction of self and substance is cancelled/overcome and Hegel reaches deep in to the very mystery of what time is, a complex event of movement, which is not simply that of linear time and history.¹⁰ Just as Hegel said of Plato and

⁸ Ambedkar drew from these great Western models when conceiving the basic features and dimensions of the Indian constitution. See the *Introduction* to Thorat and Kumar (2008).

⁹ Even contemporary giants in analytic philosophy find resources in Hegel for their own innovation. One thinks of the work of John McDowell and Robert Brandom beyond obvious specialists on Hegel who are analytically trained, namely Charles Taylor, Robert Pippin, and Terry Pinkard. As for great continental European philosophers, it is hard to ignore the backdrop of Hegel, even vociferous attempts to critique or simplify him, namely Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Levinas, and Derrida.

¹⁰ We are getting ahead of ourselves. After the section on (BB.) SPIRIT comes (CC.) RELIGION and (DD.) ABSOLUTE KNOWING. Only in the dark regions of 'absolute knowing' are the most ambitious and difficult speculative reflections on the metaphysical mystery of time and movement that the West had ever seen. One would have to go back to Plato and Aristotle to find such depths. Hegel himself acknowledges his titanic predecessors in the Preface to the *Phenomenology*: "I can bear in mind that if at times the excellence of Plato's philosophy has been held to lie in his scientifically valueless myths, there have also been times, even called

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Aristotle in terms of 'ecstatic dreaming' and 'true disclosure and positive expression of the divine life,' we can say of Hegel's reflections in the last two sections of the *Phenomenology* carry an uncanny and enduring metaphysical complexity whose fecundity remains untapped. Its destiny and future perhaps await a greater articulation of that complexity by inventing new terms that Hegel himself did not accomplish in the concluding moments of his masterpiece. But this piece is not a study of Hegel in isolation.¹¹

Rather, in trying to understand the metaphysical foundations of Hinduism the religion, we will think analogously about the Horse Sacrifice at the beginning of the *Brhadāranyaka Upanishad* – when death becomes the 'subject' and 'object': a phenomenology of the horse sacrifice constitutes a cosmic event turning death into a being by which to situate the twin pillars of Hindu wisdom, namely the 'brahman' and the 'atman.' Unlike most mythological and religious traditions across world-civilizations death becomes some kind of being whose twisted logic demands inhuman commitments. This Upanishad is perhaps the greatest and longest within the corpus, and there is much to be gleaned in it regarding essential elements and traits that one can read to understand how and why the caste system continues to operate through modern Indian society. Death of course is not a being, thing, or entity in an ontic sense but carries within itself an ontological status.¹² Our hypothesis is that until we get to this deeper understanding, we will not be able to engage in effective discourse about the possibility of 'minority rights' and revolutionary social transformation, i.e. an Indian society without the caste system.

Hinduism is a literal mythology passing itself as a logocentric yet decentered religion, which claims access to a higher essence beyond all reality, and hence is irreducible to any notion of myth as a fictitious amalgam of the human imagination; myth is the intermixture of imagination with an essence that requires some intuition of the real, otherwise it would not be recognizable at all. Hinduism blurs these distinctions in which the metaphysical description of a transcendental reality requires that myth divorce itself from the imaginary fictive trope and hence present itself as wisdom and truth which only religion

times of ecstatic dreaming, when Aristotle's philosophy was esteemed for its speculative depth, and Plato's *Parmenides* (surely the greatest artistic achievement of the ancient dialectic) was regarded as the true disclosure and positive expression of the divine life, and times when, despite the obscurity generated by the ecstasy, this misunderstood was in fact supposed to be nothing else than the pure Notion." (Hegel 1977, 44)

¹¹ Again it's virtually impossible to treat any subsequent thinker after Hegel without consciously or unconsciously having to deal with Hegel himself. Derrida says as much in arguably his most ambitious work, *Of Grammatology*, in trying to set himself apart from everything that came before him: "The hesitation of these thoughts (here Nietzsche's and Heidegger's) is not an 'incoherence': it is a trembling proper to all post-Hegelian attempts and to this passage between two epochs." See Derrida (1974, 24).

¹² All this goes to say that we cannot ignore Heidegger (1963). On the contrary, we must reckon with *Being and Time* down to the depths in an unrelenting manner.

can reveal. Once myth becomes more real than reality, and religion becomes its mechanism to enforce its truth, or to discipline the human mind to accept it so that it is as real as history itself. Only then can we see how powerfully binding Hinduism becomes as a way of life as phantasmagoria and heightened but embodied delusion. No Western concept can contain it – be it secular democracy, political and civil rights, and even the atheistic majorities emerging in some Western societies who are spellbound by a combination of ecological justice averting the apocalyptic event of climate change extinction or Westerners turning to indigenous naturalist spiritualities or Eastern mysticism, say Buddhism. The outsider, say a Western secular mind, cannot penetrate this realm of Hindu metaphysics without peril.

Hinduism requires a suspension of the ordinary, or rather the insinuation of the extraordinary into the ordinary and the ordinary thereby becomes unquestioned. The extraordinary becomes normalized in everyday cultural and institutional practices that permit unjust and unequal relations between human beings. But none of this is possible without a social system based on an aberrational notion that presents domination, humiliation, and inequality as the paradoxical condition of virtue and moral transcendence. And the relations between these terms are non-dialectical, meaning they never lead to a higher synthesis in a single conception or Notion. Ambedkar, for sure, was among the first to uncover this diabolical and sinister underbelly of Hindu society.¹³

Organizational Structure:

In terms of the organizational structure of the paper as a whole, here are our main textual resources:

- Ambedkar's "State and Minorities" and Annihilation of Caste
- Hobbes's 'State of Nature' and the Reason to Embrace the 'Social Contract'
- Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit – "Absolute Freedom and the Terror"
- *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and the Horse Sacrifice

¹³ In the *Annihilation of Caste*, Ambedkar speaks of the positive fostering of an 'anti-social spirit' or an assertive antipathy towards anything below one's caste: "this anti-social spirit, this spirit of protecting their own interests, is as much a marked feature of the different castes in their isolation from one another as it is of nations in their isolation. The Brahmin's primary concern is to protect 'his interests' against those of non-Brahmins; and the non-Brahmins' primary concern is to protect their interests against those of the Brahmins. The Hindus, therefore, are not merely an assortment of castes, but are so many warring groups, each living for itself and for its selfish ideal." (2014, 246) Eventually, we will open up the dialectical contradictions of selfhood, law, morality, and culture in Hegel's *Phenomenology* as a way to further deepen this Ambedkarite insights. We assert that he is only scratching the surface of the malignancy of Brahman and other sub-castes' forms of supremacy or the 'selfish ideal.'

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Our thesis is that an utter incommensurability between Hindu metaphysics of caste as the basic anatomy of Indian society and the true realization of a secular, constitutional, legal, pluralistic democracy that guarantees the true equality, liberty and dignity of each individual, particularly religious minorities, tribals and Dalit outsider caste, has yet to be surmounted. The incommensurability is then confounded within the *Hindutva* ideological attempts to present Hinduism as diverse, inclusive, peaceful, and accepting of all other world religious faiths (say Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism) because Hinduism transcends normative concepts of religion while concealing the myth that it is and presents as real: namely the need to justify the continuation of the caste system as a moral and spiritual system that is not simply a division of labor.¹⁴ To dissolve this pathological aporia, we prefer the Hegelian term ‘aufheben’ – as in a cancelation, negation of negation, lifting, and raising of the double movement of sides (each side constituting the contradiction with the other in its own unique way) into another whole. The idea is not a simple synthesis but a cancellation of harmful differences in the creation of a positive and healthy complexity. The incommensurable, or the paradox of a caste-based secular, legal, constitutional democracy, must be sublated.¹⁵ Sublation relates to a complex event of movement self-conceptualized beyond all contradictions that beset previous political, legal, and moral shapes of being that descend from our Western Enlightenment historical culture. In short, we can learn from Hegel in our attempt to go beyond Ambedkar.

Reading Hegel’s *Phenomenology* as a lens to interpret Ambedkar’s Preface to “States and Minorities”

In this section we will read Hegel while trying to develop further Ambedkar’s reflections in the preface to “States and Minorities.” There he discusses briefly the paradoxes and limits of applying normal intuitions and concepts of what minorities are and why those concepts fail to capture the status of the Scheduled Castes (Dalits). This in turn forces a rethinking of the constitutional underpinnings of what types of rights and as he says ‘special safeguards’ they should be accorded. We see an undetected resemblance between Ambedkar’s hesitations prior to the final crystallization of the Indian constitution and Hegel’s 1807 context where he deconstructs the self-assurances of the Enlightenment and French revolution, which gave birth to secular, constitutional, legal democracies in the West. Between the Dalit’s self-consciousness as a being other than the typical legal constructions of minorities (say race, ethnicity, religion, or alternative, non-heteronormative gender and sexual identities with Western devices of political and civil rights) and Hegel’s awesome set of interrelated

¹⁴ Ambedkar makes this point clearly. Caste is not simply a ‘division of labor’ but a ‘division of laborers.’ See Ambedkar (2014, 233).

¹⁵ ‘Sublation’ as the English substitute for Hegel’s German term – ‘aufheben.’

movements in self-consciousness, morality, and culture we can illuminate the current modalities of domination and oppression at work in the Indian caste system. Our goal is to prepare the phenomenological-ontological conditions for a radical social transformation of Indian society as a whole.¹⁶

We will not attempt to interpret philosophical and linguistic complexity of the Upanishads because we lack the capacity to read the Sanskrit.¹⁷ Having said that, contributing to scholarship in South Asian studies is not the aim of this work. So let us consider our hermeneutical act as one of an appropriation and juxtaposition with Hegel's text to expand on Ambedkar's critique of Hinduism as he tries to imagine anew the constitutional category of the 'minority' of the Schedule Castes (Dalit/'untouchables'). We are not trying to get the right interpretation of the Upanishads, the so-called 'crown jewel' of Vedic Hinduism, its philosophical essence, which for many constitute one of the greatest and most complex philosophical traditions in the history of human consciousness.¹⁸

¹⁶ Towards the very end of his life, Ambedkar started to think about the relations, similarities, and differences between Buddhism and Marxism as an alternative to both Hinduism and Capitalism. Buddhism is a response to the Upanishadic Horse Sacrifice that gave birth to the Hindu social body. But prior to that, we still need to take care of matters within phenomenology and ontology and hence our use of the phrase - 'phenomenological-ontological.' Otherwise, we have no chance to destroy the metaphysical obfuscations inherent in ancient Hindu wisdom texts. For example, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad* opens up with a discussion of the horse sacrifice:

"The head of the sacrificial horse, clearly, is the dawn-its sight is the sun; its breath is the wind; and its gaping mouth is the first common to all men. The body of the sacrificial horse is the year... When it yawns, lightning flashes; when it shakes itself, it thunders; and when it urinates, it rains. Its neighing is speech itself." See *Upanishads* (1996, 7)

Furthermore, "this is brahman's super-creation. It is a super-creation because he created the gods, who are superior to him, and, being a mortal himself, he created the immortals. Anyone who knows this stands within this super-creation of this." (*Upanishads* 1996, 14)

And finally "this innermost thing, this self (ātman) – it is dearer than a son, it is dearer than wealth, it is dearer than everything else. If a man claims that something other than his self is dear to him, and someone were to tell him that he will lose what he holds dear, that is liable to happen. So a man should only regard his self as dear to him. When a man regards only his self as dear to him, what he holds dear will never perish." (*Upanishads* 1996, 15)

¹⁷ To reiterate this is not a work that sits within the technical field of South Asian studies.

¹⁸ Hegel too takes stock of Hindu civilization in his *Philosophy of History* while making a critique of it. Our intention is not to reproduce what some would retrospectively characterize as Hegel's Eurocentric 'racism' in these *Philosophy of History* lectures. The entire non-West for Hegel, which constituted Africa, ancient China, India, Babylon, Persia, Egypt and even the Jews, were part of 'pre-history.' 'Original history' begins with the genius of the ancient Greeks and then passes to 'reflective history' and culminates in Hegel's own speculative 'philosophical' history: the latter is when history is teleologically consummated in a new metaphysical notion of freedom that overcomes the dialectical contradictions of all previous shapes of Spirit, i.e. all previous religions, philosophies, and civilizations. See Hegel (1956).

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Rather, we will turn to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* instead and its presumably exclusive focus on the history of Western philosophy and religion, most notably Christianity. We have to read the (BB.) SPIRIT. Our assumption is that paradoxes and contradictions inherent in the Upanishadic focus on the 'head' of the horse sacrifice relates to speech, which in turn relates to the 'brahman' and 'atman.' The brahman is given transcendental status in the illogical nature of a mortal that gives birth to the ('gods' as superior to them and the 'immortals' who are imperishable) in the act of a 'super-creation.' And the 'atman' is singular, non-relational, interminably finite focus on the self as pure selfishness, which puts the individual self as the alpha and omega of all human concern and that nothing can be 'dearer' including one's own children or wealth. This infintization of the finite burrowing of concern for self is not selfishness in any psychologistic or narcissistic sense. Rather, it is an obsession of what the self even is as itself and this requires detachment from everything, and in the detachment the self is preserved beyond all that perishes. The self is a transcendental being infused with an extreme immorality of indifference as difference of which 'ontic' sciences (sociology, anthropology, political science, and psychology) cannot help us.¹⁹

When we think of these elements while appropriating insights from Hegel's *Phenomenology*, particularly on the self and self-consciousness in relation to culture and morality, we can expand on the intuitive impulses of Ambedkar's critique of Hinduism and its concept of the 'minority' at the dawn of the Indian constitution's birth. Then we can see how an intermixture of the poles of the Hobbesian dichotomy of 'state of nature' and 'obedience to the sovereign' in the formation of the social contract dissolves within a caste-based society passing itself off to others trapped within the system and the rest of the world outside it in terms of a false self-consciousness of a liberal, secular, constitutional, legal, peaceful democracy.²⁰

At least in 1947, Ambedkar was inherently suspicious of the Hindu majority's capability of conceiving an adequate concept and meaning of the term 'minority' and why the Scheduled Castes will require a special set of additional safeguards in terms of rights and therefore the state's duty to protect those rights. We will try to probe the depths of his suspicious attitude by unraveling the paradoxes and contradictions of Hindu metaphysics by way of Hegel's

¹⁹ This is a play on Heidegger's distinction between fundamental ontology and the ontic human sciences in the Introduction to *Being and Time*. See Heidegger (1963, 28, 32).

²⁰ India continues to present itself to the outside world as the 'largest' and 'most peaceful' democracy in the world with the greatest diversity, pluralism, and complexity of any democracy in the world. All the major world religions are present in India coupled with traditional and indigenous tribal groups, different racial groups, and of course the unique complexity of the caste system.

dialectical deconstruction of self, ethics, morality, and culture in one of the most researched sections of the entire *Phenomenology of Spirit*.²¹

Section (BB.) barely gives the reader a chance to prepare before hurling them into the depths of an awesome set of interpenetrating and interrelating reflections. Long before we can even begin to think anew the concept of the 'minority' – with regard to the Hindu context and the Dalit/outsider context for which Ambedkar felt a novel set of constitutional principles would have to emerge – we have to return to those crucial foundational elements of Hindu metaphysics: namely the horse sacrifice, the head as brahman as speech, the brahman itself as the super-creation of gods and immortals from mortals, and finally the ātman as the indwelling of self as pure concern for self above all else but in a non-psychologistic way. Then only can we possibly begin to understand the stranglehold that Hinduism has on Indian society, let alone any kind of democracy that tries to guarantee equality and liberty for all. The minority as an idea within the Hindu context is an Other that cannot be reduced to any simple concept of a numerical minority with special protected rights.²²

There are several main passages in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* that will preoccupy the remainder of our time and attention. And then we can try to bring them in to dialogue with both Ambedkar's Preface in "States and Minorities" and the previous passages we offered from the *Brhadāranyaka Upanishad* in a concluding set of reflections.

In the opening pages of (BB.) SPIRIT Hegel states: passages below are full quotations.

The living ethical world is Spirit in its truth. When Spirit first arrives at an abstract knowledge of its essence, ethical life is submerged in the formal universality of legality or law. Spirit, which henceforth is divided within itself, traces one of its worlds, the realm of culture, in the harsh reality of its objective element; over against this realm, it traces in the element of thought the world of belief or faith, the realm of essential being. Both worlds, however, when grasped by Spirit – which, after this loss of itself, withdraws into itself – when grasped by the Notion, are confounded and revolutionized by the insight [of the individual] and the diffusion of that insight, known as the Enlightenment; and the realm which was divided and expanded into this world and the beyond, returns into self-consciousness which now, in the form of morality, grasps itself as the essentiality and essence as the actual self; it no longer places its world and its ground outside of itself, but lets everything fade into itself, and, as conscience, is Spirit that is certain of itself. (Hegel 1977, 265)

²¹ For more on Hegel's thought on ethics and morality, see Pinkard (1996); Pippin (2008); Honneth (2016).

²² Perhaps Levinas's work on the Other and alterity and his critique of fundamental ontology in which ethics is prior to any metaphysics of Being can be helpful in this regard. We defer that project to a future enterprise. In particular his 1963 essay, "The Trace of the Other," can provide us with essential insights and deconstructive maneuvers against traditional notions of self and other and against the lure of any kind of simplistic, uncritical dialectical metaphysics, i.e. prior to Kant and Hegel. See Levinas (1986, 345-359).

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And then in *b. Ethical action. Human and Divine knowledge. Guilt and Destiny* he states:

This ruin of the ethical Substance and its passage into another form is thus determined by the fact that the ethical consciousness is directed onto the law in a way that is essentially *immediate*. This determination of immediacy means that Nature as such enters into the ethical act, the reality of which simply reveals the contradiction and the germ of destruction inherent in the beautiful harmony and tranquil equilibrium of the ethical Spirit itself. For this immediacy has the contradictory meaning of being the unconscious tranquility of Spirit. On account of this natural aspect, the ethical nation is, in general an individuality determined by Nature and therefore limited, and thus meets its downfall at the hands of another. But with the vanishing of this determinateness – which in the form of a real existence is a limitation, but equally the negative element in general and the self of the individuality – the life of Spirit and this Substance, which is self-conscious in everyone, is lost. The substance emerges as a formal universality in them, no longer dwelling in them as a living Spirit; on the contrary, the simple compactness of their individuality has been shattered into a multitude of separate atoms. (Hegel 1977, 289)

And then at the end of B. SELF-ALIENATED SPIRIT. CULTURE he states:

Absolute freedom has thus removed the antithesis between the universal and the individual will. The self-alienated Spirit, driven to the extreme of its antithesis in which pure willing and the agent of that pure willing are distinct, reduces the antithesis to a transparent form and therein find itself. Just as the realm of the real world passes over into the realm of faith and insight, so does absolute freedom leave its self-destroying reality and pass over into another land of self-conscious Spirit where, in this unreal world, freedom has the value of truth. In the thought of this truth Spirit refreshes itself, in so far as *it is* and remains *thought*, and knows this being which is enclosed in self-consciousness to be essential being in its perfect and completeness. There has risen the new shape of Spirit, that of the *moral* Spirit. (Hegel 1977, 363)

And lastly in *c. Conscience. The 'beautiful soul,' evil and its forgiveness* in C. THE SPIRIT THAT IS CERTAIN OF ITSELF. MORALITY he states:

The absolute certainty of itself thus finds itself, qua consciousness, changed immediately into a sound that dies away, into an objectification of its being-for-self; but this created world is its *speech*, which likewise it has immediately heard and only the echo of which returns to it. This return, therefore, does not mean that the self is in essence and actuality present in its speech; for essence is not for it an *it-self* or merely *implicit* being, but its very self. Just as little has consciousness an *outer existence*, for the objective aspect does not get as far as being a negative of the actual self, in the same way that this self does not attain to an actual existence. It lacks the power to externalize itself, the power to make itself into a Thing, and to endure [mere] being. It lives in dread of besmirching the splendour of its inner being by action and an existence; and, in order to preserve the purity of its heart, it flees from contact with the actual world, and persists in its self-willed impotence to renounce its self which is reduced to the extreme of ultimate abstraction, and to give itself a substantial existence, or to transform its thought into being and put its trust in the absolute difference

[between thought and being]. The hollow object which it has produced for itself now fills it, therefore, with a sense of emptiness. Its activity is a yearning which merely loses itself as consciousness becomes an object devoid of substance, and rising above this loss, and falling back on itself, finds itself only as a lost soul. (Hegel 1977, 399)²³

It would take more than a book, and probably no less than a corpus of works, to scratch the surface of these formidable paragraphs. One could write endlessly in what is offered in these assertions, arguments, and deductions, and also what is in the margins or missing in them. One can try to witness 'beyond the crevice' as Derrida might say in the passage between this Hegelian 'epoch' and all 'post-Hegelian attempts' to think (1974, 24). But we cannot do that here.

We have to find moments in these paragraphs that can help us excavate the deepest intentions and motivations – phenomenologically reduced – in those passages in the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upanishad* that are not fully articulated philosophically in Ambedkar's attempted critique of Hindu metaphysics. This will foreground any attempt to think of 'minority rights' and radical social transformation – or the unthinkable, namely India as a new secular, constitutional, legal democracy, which although bans discrimination on the basis of caste, has yet to eradicate the caste system itself.²⁴ Can Hinduism exist without the caste system? For Ambedkar, the answer was no and after a lifelong journey, his answer was a mass conversion to Buddhism. And looking back, it was not sustained or scaled but seems to one moment in twentieth century post-Independence, postcolonial India.²⁵ In other words, the turn to Buddhism may not provide the full answer.

Let's return to the Hegel passages. We will isolate these words and phrases (which are single quotes in their exact language from his translated text) as we try to imagine an eerie set of family resemblances between the Upanishad's metaphysical concepts and Ambedkar's presuppositions about the Hindu majority's incredulity as to whether the Scheduled Castes (Dalits/untouchables) constitute a 'minority' deserving of special rights. Hegel's words are:

'Living ethical world'

²³ For an excellent commentary, particularly from the twentieth century continental European philosophical context, see the Hyppolite (1979).

²⁴ The Indian Constitution bans discrimination on the basis of caste and untouchability and yet the caste system continues. For the Indian Constitution, see: retrieved from: https://www.india.gov.in/sites/upload_files/npi/files/coi_part_full.pdf. See pages 7 and 8 in particular. An interesting project would be comparative constitutional law that sees how different national constitutions deal with minority rights and how most democratic constitutions do not have the conceptual resources to deal with the sociological, anthropological, political and philosophical dimensions of caste and caste inequality, discrimination, marginalization, exclusion and oppression.

²⁵ See Arundhati Roy's Introduction to "The Doctor and the Saint" in Ambedkar (2014, 139).

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'Formal universality of legality and law'

'Realm of culture – harsh reality of its objective element'

'World of belief and faith – the realm of essential being'

'Insight [of the individual]'

'Diffusion of that Insight – Enlightenment'

'Self-consciousness – in the form of morality'

'Conscience'

'Immediacy – Nature'

'Compactness of their individuality'

'Absolute Freedom'

'Self-alienated Spirit'

'New shape of Spirit, the moral Spirit'

'Created world is its speech'

'Self-willed impotence to renounce its self which is reduced to the extreme of ultimate abstraction'

'Hollow object which it has produced for itself now fills it, therefore with a sense of emptiness'

'Lost soul'

Reading Hegel

The tapestry is so rich – from a theoretical point of view – to imagine an Ambedkarite critique of Hindu metaphysics. First of all, one can ask about the linkage between the Upanishadic cosmic sacrifice in which speech emerges as primary, as soul, living, breathing being and hearing in AND lost-ness in general: that is the silent voice or the internal one either by the unconscious, memory or in silent mediation during wakeful consciousness relates to some 'self' seeking itself. The fact that the self can hear itself speak at all is a mystery.²⁶ The self is an illusion that has to posit itself as a possibility of unification amidst its own internal impossibility of semblance and gathering; it persists for no reason, with no possibility of achieving a goal, but it persists and it doesn't reflect on the motion of that persistence because it does not relate to it (the motion) at all. That is the issue: a dispersion at the origin that tries to recollect itself at any moment in order to continue by pretending there is an origin to begin with. We will

²⁶ We have to bracket, phenomenologically speaking, which means to reduce it and avoid any automatic intuition from the sensible, empirical realm without giving into imaginary impulses, what this statement could possibly mean. The reduction does not intend to give way to myth in so far as we are trying to understand the experience of the essential features of the 'thing' in question, namely the 'self.'

bracket for a moment that this original presence is linked to the cosmic body of a horse sacrifice, and that speech is literally this act of sacrifice.

Perhaps, we can hypothesize that the hermeneutic circle that presupposes a self²⁷ to begin with is not only flawed; it is dangerous and harmful for reasons we have to explore in this reading of Hegel while considering the non-Western context of Hindu civilization. For the birth of an unbounded self is also one that searches for itself, and therefore a birth that is not unified but split apart in multiple dimensions. And then the self tries (ultimately in a futile manner, beyond the innocence of its first attempt to be 'itself') to collapse its mirror image into an 'external occurrence' in the absolute freedom of individuality. Individuality is the horror and the possibility of being, raw, unbounded, untotalized, and naked; it is an exposure that cannot be tolerated because from that moment birth and death have to be accounted for too, and yet they ('birth' and 'death') accompany the 'self' seeking itself. And that is a historical aberration in Hegel's phenomenological treatment of history. But 'history' is not the philosophical object of inquiry.²⁸

In the process of trying to implode the hermeneutic circle, through culture and morality, the self or 'it' (or the 'self' or it) fails to truly relate obedience to universality of law with the messy reality of indiscriminate behavior and action and perhaps the thoughts and feelings embodied in them; conscience is not something natural in order to determine right and wrong, but rather is the after-effect, or afterglow of guilt, when a self realizes that it is responsible for itself prior to the external intervention of law. Guilt itself is not a thing because its origin is nothing but dispersion. The self is a myriad picture, a mirage that will always attract but never appear. It is truly lost but not because of something primordial; because otherwise it would have some semblance of itself to keep searching for its other parts to become one; and the more it searches for itself, the more exclusive it becomes in trying to recognize the truth (Notion) of its own self-consciousness, consciousness of what it truly is. Speech is the 'echo' of

²⁷ Sometimes we will use the term 'self' as the subject of the sentence; but that does not mean we assume any meaning to it. So if the reader sees the term with single quotes or not, do not assume the author has attributed any meaning to it. All sentences need subjects and predicates. We must conduct more research on the early Derrida's reading of Husserlian phenomenology in our continued attempts to deconstruct the Hindu metaphysics of caste, speech, soul and breath.

²⁸ This is not to say that the philosophical concept of history in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in contrast to the *Philosophical Lectures on World History* are not of paramount importance as a horizon for understanding being in general. We rely heavily on Hegel's great formulations in our deconstruction of Hindu metaphysics, but also seek our own path and own invention of philosophical concepts that are irreducible to Hegel's awesome terminology. Let's not forget that Hegel is a European philosopher from the early nineteenth century, someone who never experienced anything outside that specific European context. See Stewart (2011).

shadow of what it really is, and never a true revelation of what self is.²⁹ But as we shall see in the Hindu caste system this occurs at the expense of others while comprising the primordial moment of the genesis of all supersensory reality itself.

The singularity of a self – as absolute creation and freedom in moral form – is the question. But in giving the law to itself, laws that are manufactured by the limits and flaws of human cognition and not divine dispensation, the self flounders in applying to itself any possible way to deal with the futility of self-realization through the law as the self exists in lawless nature: nature, law, and self will always try to reconcile themselves in a higher unified truth but will also succumb to exhaustion, bordering on obsolescence. Law is a fiction that always tries to become more real than nature itself in attempting to tame nature, which always surprises. The ‘self’ reconciling its ‘self’ with its ‘self’ as its ‘self’ leads to the infinite regress, which Hegel already knew. Mistaking the process of transcendence at the expense of the other within one-self is pathetic to say the least, and even more egregious an unconscious waste of time. As we shall note, the self-centric and ‘selfish ideal’ at the heart of Brahmanical supremacy in Ambedkar’s critique of caste exacerbates all the contradictions that Hegel diagnosed in the Western Enlightenment. Without the Enlightenment, there would be no individual secular morality, law, and hence democracy.

This circular strangulation of self with its maximum push towards limitless freedom *and* the rationalization of law that could contain the expansion of the self’s growth through reason, discipline, and efficiency runs against many contradictions. This occurs not only because the self seems isolated in its own recognition of some outside being called ‘it’s’ ‘self’ independent of the contradiction, or at least distinction, between law/order/reason and the reality of unpredictable, violent nature. The ‘self’ searching for ‘its’ ‘self’ in this non-circular and non-linear motion is morose at best. The self is and has been tortured to seek ‘itself,’ deny ‘itself,’ come to grips with this forsakenness, and search again; some dubious intuition of ‘time’ is partly guilty for this torture while it escapes any possible conceptualization by the self about time, let alone the relation between self and time.³⁰

²⁹ It would be very interesting to read these particular sections in Hegel’s *Phenomenology* with Derrida’s early corpus, particularly *Of Grammatology*, on his equation of speech with metaphysic of present as presence, self-sameness of self with the soul, and the dominance of speech over writing in the ‘logocentric and phallogocentric’ over-determination of Western identity and thought.

³⁰ Hegel will return to the self-time relation, particularly with regard to Spirit’s true self-consciousness of itself and the ‘Notion’s time’ in the last few sections of ‘Absolute Knowing,’ the last chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. See Hegel (1977, 487-493). Heidegger, for his part, will try to deconstruct Hegel on time by equating him with the inauthentic, vulgar, linear notion of time as passing of ‘now’ points. See Heidegger (1963, 484-486). Whether Heidegger succeeds in this critique and therefore succeeds in separating his project from Hegel’s is another matter for another project. In his 1931 lecture on Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,

At least Hegel, the great thinker, is concerned with what this movement means in its ontological fullness: that is, he is asking in some way or another what the meaning of such an absurd movement is, and he will not stop with the subjective view point of any human being. The human being is the one 'thing' that has to be overcome; and the logic of 'morality' has to be overcome as well if in fact it emanates from human beings trying to imagine the relation between the human as an isolated object and the divine as the supersession of all objects; it is a transcendental will (transcending the human) as the 'ethical life as Spirit in its truth' as something that can be grasped, articulated, announced, and consecrated in speech, symbol, or auspicious occasions of celebration. Ritualized inscription through action, belief, or speech does not mean the Living Spirit is revealed as the substance of its self-consciousness and the self-consciousness of its substance. The human being as self-created law beyond natural law is more ambitious than any deduction of law from divine will in nature. [The relation between the human intuition of the relation between human and divine and the non-human intuition of that relation is not the issue.]

Because 'it' or the 'self' – whatever 'it' 'is' – can try to reconcile consciousness of itself with an external reality that is called the messiness of culture: the latter includes therefore all human interactions by speech and writing to become other than its own self-representation, but that always seems to go wayward. And the embarrassment of being a human being starts to fill up, filling up the void with more delusions that what is actually happening is not really happening and that something else is actually happening. Hence 'it' (whatever 'it' 'is') 'is' that which does not give up. The motion does not seem to end, and motion would seem to appear to engulf any notion of beginning and end while denying a static eternity of the very thing that is being discussed.

Heidegger is not so hasty in trying to separate his project from Hegel's. He is a bit more nuanced and guarded in trying to accord Hegel respect while also saying his – Heidegger's – own project is irreducible is fundamentally different, not greater, but just different. He states: "To summarize in the form of theses, we can say: For *Hegel*, being (infinity) is also the essence of time. For *us*, time is the original essence of being. These are not theses which can be simply played against each other antithetically. Rather, the term essence [*Wesen*] says something fundamentally different each time, precisely because being is understood differently." See Heidegger (1994, 146). Not only do we disagree with Heidegger's characterization of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* on the time-Spirit relation, we disagree with his formulation of Hegel ['being (infinity) is also the essence of time'] in the 1931 lecture. We reserve a treatment of this dispute for a later work. We will say that this is not tangential or incidental to the current project underway, i.e. the critique of caste. We must work through the time, being, self, Spirit, Dasein relations in both Hegel and Heidegger in our destruction of the metaphysical ontology of Hinduism and its consecration of the caste system; our purpose *here* is to extend and deepen Ambedkar's critique and attempted overcoming of the caste system. One can only imagine how complex questions of birth, death, rebirth, transmigration, Brahman, Atman, become and why the Western categories available in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and Heidegger's *Being and Time* are limited in that regard.

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When Ambedkar questions why the Hindu majority cannot accept the idea of the Schedule Castes as a 'minority' and even if they did, they cannot define the 'scope and meaning' of minority-ness, then he asking a very fundamental question about the nature of individuals claiming to declare and defend equality and liberty. But we can ask – what comprises the individual when one is dealing with a caste system: a hierarchy of unrelated, self-defined groupings of human beings that have no basis in nature to define such difference? The Upanishad speaks of an extreme detachment and indifference in the Brahmanical identity – to search for the 'self' for nothing is more 'dear' (neither 'progeny' nor 'wealth') than the 'self' itself. But this self-proclaimed, prioritized highest self, the living speech from the head of the horse that was sacrificed, and the being that created the 'gods' and the 'immortals' deserves greater scrutiny. A phenomenological destruction of this will is what is necessary before talking constitutionally about equalities, liberties and rights between citizens. This strange 'will to power'³¹ that moralizes transcendence through detachment while it metaphysicalizes the essence of reality, truth, and being – through mythic cosmogony – as the guarantor of the 'super-creation' must be dismantled.

The four quoted paragraphs from Hegel can help us in this task. By reading those passages we can slowly uncover the myriad dimensions of Brahmanical supremacy, which cannot exist without the persistence of caste. But this requires new philosophical categories that Hegel did not articulate in so far as his investigation was a philosophical *aufheben* of the Western historical context from the ancient Greeks and Romans to his early nineteenth century context in continental Europe. For Hegel, something about the birth of the 'individual' in secular modernity is truly problematic. Once the individual is born, the dispersion of a 'multitude of atoms' sets in. Each one is out for itself, sheltered with the illusion of the law, as if they have transcended the state of nature and entered the protection of the social contract. Whereas, in the Hindu context, the

³¹ In reference to Nietzsche's phrase, which in many respects can be reinterpreted and expanded on in so far as we are on the hunt for the deepest pathological roots that underpin Brahmanical identity as a kind of merging of the 'will to self' with a profound detachment from everything, including nothing, and hence more than an 'ascetic ideal.' Nietzsche's critique is focused on institutional Christianity and the birth of the good and evil distinction in all Western moral and metaphysical systems. He states: "It is absolutely impossible for us to conceal what was actually expressed by that whole willing that derives its direction from the ascetic ideal: this hatred of the human, and even more of the animalistic, even more of the material, this horror of the senses, of reason itself, this fear of happiness and beauty, this longing to get away from appearance, transience, growth, death, wishing, long itself – all this means, let us dare to grasp it, a *will to nothingness*, an aversion to life, a rebellion against the most fundamental prerequisites of life, but it is and remains a *will!*... And, to conclude by saying what I said at the beginning: man still prefers to *will nothingness*, than *not* will..." See Nietzsche (2007, 120). Although we are focused on Hegel's critique of morality, one cannot ignore Nietzsche's critique of what he thought was everything prior to them. Both can be summoned in further reflections on the Ambedkarite critique of the Hindu metaphysical roots of the caste system and what that means for moral and ethical reflective critique.

cosmological origin is that of an original individual co-valent with a primordial sacrifice, which consecrates as its diabolical morality – love of self in the search for self over anything else. No other human criteria can be used to judge this quest by the highest individuals, the Brahmans, through the contingency of human birth, which in turn gives them the metaphysical privilege to search for the individual self. That privilege, however, is maintained through the separation and more than that disdain, repulsion, oppression, and enslavement of the outsider caste – the Dalits – who cannot be seen or enter into the same space as the highest self, namely the Brahmanical space. Hence any simplistic notion of the ‘minority,’ let alone ‘minority rights,’ completely dissolves in the face of this complex monstrosity.

The Dalit, which is equated with the ‘impure’ and relegated to the most impure tasks (the collection of excrement and the burning of bodies), is contrasted with purity of the moral Self – the latter is the supersensory consciousness of the transmigration of the soul prepared by ritual laws, dietary restrictions, and investment in the wisdom of the Scriptures, namely the Vedas, Upanishads, epics, and various schools of Hindu philosophy. One cannot exist with the other, and the two worlds like Hegel’s characterization (‘the realm of culture in its harsh objectiveness’ and the ‘realm of faith, belief and essential being’) comes in to clash with one another. But it is not a fair fight. In the system of Hinduism, the upper caste always has the upper hand.

In Hegel’s model, the two worlds of the messiness, mortality, frailty, and flaws of the real world of ‘culture’ clashes with the pure other-worldliness of ‘belief, faith, and essential being.’ But the distinction collapses and is overcome when ‘grasped by Spirit’ in the ‘Notion,’ which then ‘confounds and revolutionizes’ the profound ‘loss’ that ensues from the collapse of the distinction. The result is the birth of the ‘insight’ (which emanates from the ‘individual’) and the ‘Enlightenment’ is the ‘diffusion of this insight.’ Let us compare and contrast with the state of affairs of Hindu speculation grounded in its ancient texts, such as the Upanishads, which Ambedkar thinks is antithetical to any notion of a fair and just democracy: one that can guarantee minority rights, particularly for a group whose long-standing oppression one can argue is unmatched in the history of human civilizations. When human beings are equated with the impurity of excrements and dead bodies (these Eastern bodies outside their sacred construal in the Abrahamic faiths, which require burial and not cremation), then what else can one say in terms of the grossest and most inhuman devaluation of human beings?

In the system of Brahmanical supremacy, there is no original distinction of ‘culture’ on the one hand and the ‘faith, belief, and essential being’ in the other-worldly realm on the other. The ‘insight of the individual’ is not born out of a loss when a distinction collapses and the clash of two worlds gives way to a ‘diffusion’ of practical self-reflection: for the Enlightenment is nothing but the constant dispelling of myth and superstition in the attempt rationalize publically

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what can be verified through reason what is best for human relations and society, namely secular law and policy. The Enlightenment delivers to human beings the ultimate self-responsibility for guaranteeing their own progress towards justice and liberty rather than relying apocalyptically on a messianic savior who can deliver human beings from their depravity and sin in the state of nature. In the Hindu context, the matter is a bit more convoluted, taking aspects of this progression of Spirit in Hegelian phenomenology and turning it around within itself.

The primordial sacrifice is a cosmic-mythic confusion in which 'culture' and individuality of castes emerge. Metaphysical transcendence in the selfish quest of self for itself (with total disregard for others but also presupposing the labor and oppression of others) so that one is free to engage in the quest does not lead to 'insight' into moral ideals to govern human relations. Rather, the 'individuality' is a tyrannical, autocratic entity that asserts the teleological goal of self-discovery through extreme detachment from the senses; for only in the senses can impurity set in and impurity is the evil that must be guarded against to protect its migration to the next body until it achieves the bodiless Enlightened state; that is when death itself is overcome because the passage is no longer back to the world of bodies. But this can only take place if other bodies are marked from the beginning through the illusory and arbitrary nature of karmic cycles as sinful, evil, and demonic. The present state of the body is given its meaning from a past soul, which then predetermines or forecloses the chance for upward mobility in this life-time, let alone another. Reducing the entire stretch of a life-time (inclusive of birth to death) in an eternal moment of impurity, means the revision of the past life of sin and foreclosure of a future life from bondage, is impossible: a contorted and twisted eternal return presents itself.³² Therefore Enlightenment is not the Hegelian paradox of the individual using their own insights (rather than divine, metaphysical, or transcendental myth giving the law to humans from God as the Abrahamic faiths declare) to achieve perfect, communal, ethical life that is Spirit. For Hegel, this does not occur in the stage of history of the Enlightenment, Democratic Revolution, and Counter-Revolution of the Terror. Although individual conscience is born, so is the 'lost soul' – and the Kingdom of God – cannot be realized in the secular, rational law.

This is not the case in the Hindu structure of caste, which continues to exist within the confines of secular, constitutional, and legal democracy. For

³² Perhaps we can compare the Hindu mechanics of karmic cycles of sin and transcendence with Nietzsche's reflections on the eternal return. This is what Heidegger says is Nietzsche's culmination of the metaphysical tradition rather than its overcoming. See Heidegger (1982, 159). In other interesting task would be a deconstructive reading of Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche in these volumes while comparing and contrasting with an innovative Ambedkarite critique of the central feature of all Hindu metaphysics: the transmigration of the soul and the mystery of reincarnation.

Ambedkar, one would have to first destroy the hierarchy of castes to reconceive individuality not on the basis of specious differentiation of the value of different identities based on a ranking of purity. One must first recognize that a class of people are oppressed and constitute the minority. And then one has to reconceive their equality and dignity from within their own articulation; this requires hearing and listening to their needs. One has to plumb why special provisions will be needed for them to succeed in the current generation by recompensing for the history of their atrocious oppression by the hands of the upper castes, uppermost of which are the Brahmins. Ambedkar's prolegomena to a constitutional framework requires that we read Hegel's sections very carefully but outside the Western context from which they are extrapolated.

This means we need new philosophical insights, intuitions, and ultimately categories beyond what Hegel was able to articulate in his early nineteenth century work, the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. We are in search of the deepest motivations and intentions – phenomenologically reduced – beyond any human intuitions of what the horse sacrifice, the Brahmanic 'super-creation,' and the atman detachment of self from anything more 'dear' to itself than itself to understand why the system of caste persists. Then only can we begin the resumption of the Ambedkarite task of 'annihilating' caste once for and all. And perhaps then, only, can a true democracy be said to exist in the Indian context specifically, and perhaps South Asia in general where caste continues to subsist.

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