



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

CULTURAL HYBRIDIZATION OR CULTURAL HOMOGENIZATION: THE
RESISTANCE OF THE OTHERS

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Introduction

This thesis basically tries to methodically discuss current trends and patterns in intercultural relations. In relation to this, it tries to see the main factors affecting the relationship between cultures.

Furthermore, philosophical analysis of various discourses related to this topic is one of the foci of this paper. The historical relationship among cultures shows that this relationship takes different forms. On the one hand we have this tendency in which some cultures dominate others. On the other hand we see some cultures isolating themselves from any strong relationship with others. Moreover, we also have harmonious relationships between cultures.

This discussion of the current trends in intercultural relations tries to see the power of cultures as one of its themes. Furthermore, it tries to see how some cultures come to acquire the current power that they possess by looking at their diverse sources and foundations in acting more powerfully than others.

The overall attempt of this thesis is to show the dialectical movement of the relationship of cultures. This dialectics basically is about the struggle between two sides advocating two different arguments. The first argument advocates homogeneity. The path followed by the advocates of this argument tries to express humanity in a single voice. In general, sameness rather than diversity is given more credit. On the contrary, we have arguments advocating diversity rather than sameness. The argument launched from this side tries to affirm the diverse voices in humanity.

Evaluating the theses and arguments of these two sides is based on some important discourses. First, an attempt will be made to see the contributions of some of the historical forces like modernity, stories of the West, cultural globalization, and capitalism in pushing humanity to a single form of life. In addition to this, these grounds are taken as forces affecting intercultural relations. This sameness is to be achieved by erasing the basic differences which are fundamental in a given culture.

On the other hand, postmodernism, cultural relativism, hermeneutics, and multiculturalism are used to show how an attempt is made to refute arguments which are in favor of domination from one side and, re-establish the notion of diversity in human culture.

But, the discussion of the arguments of these two sides alone would not be sufficient for it leaves us in the middle of nowhere. So, coming up with some different alternative to the problems at hand is mandatory. With regard to this, intercultural philosophy, which is a new orientation in philosophy, tries to overcome the limitations of both of these two sides while developing its own unique position.

So, rather than limiting oneself to one's dominant horizon alone, intercultural philosophy depicts how and what a just relationship of various centers should be. However, some of the theses and arguments coming from this side failed to see to what extent that extra-philosophical factors could affect the relationship among cultures. Having this in mind, liberation philosophy, which is mainly concerned about the liberation of the excluded and oppressed majority, is used to show the gap unfilled by the existing discourse of intercultural philosophy and relations.

Chapter One

The Power of Cultures

Before proceeding into the discussion of the power of cultures it would be appropriate to briefly look into the discussions held on the idea or the concept of culture.

1.1. What is Culture?

As is agreed by a number of intellectuals of different disciplines culture is among the most difficult terms or concepts to be attributed a dogmatic and single meaning. Despite the controversies about what constitutes this term, various scholars from different schools and disciplines attempted to develop a meaning that they thought could connote culture. This difficulty of defining culture in a certain way is caused by the width of the scope that it covers. Though this happens to be the case, various thinkers developed their own notion of culture. For instance, Zhu Majie indicated, the British anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn defined culture as: “culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, moral, custom, and habits acquired by man as a member of a society” (Yu, 2002:23)

For Clyde Kluckhohn, culture is a historically created system of survival types, dominant or recessive, having tendencies shared by the whole group or by some particular part in certain period of time. Kluckhohn has tried to show that culture is in history and serves as means of survival. I agree with Kluckhohn`s notion of culture for it tries to be inclusive of those elements of culture which we live by and are more important in our lives. The discussion held in this chapter and other consecutive chapters will be based on Kluckhohn`s conception of culture.

Culture, Chris Jenks states, embraces a number of elements which enables it to be part of both our everyday life and the academics. Talking about the role and place of culture Jenks uses C. Geertz who argues:

There is no such thing as human nature independent of culture. Men without culture would not be the clever savages of Golding's *Lord of the Flies* thrown back upon the cruel wisdom of their animal instincts; nor would they be the nature's noblemen of enlightenment primitivism or even, as classical anthropology would imply, intrinsically talented apes who had somehow failed to find themselves. They would be unworkable monstrosities with very few useful instincts, few recognizable sentiments, and no intellect: mental basket cases (Jenks, 1993:1)

In world history the late 18th c and 19th c were characterized by massive changes in various aspects of life including: social, political, and personal life. Various movements including industrialization, urbanization, and advances in technology echoed this idea of progress. Social structures were less stable. This instability was mainly because of proximities caused by urbanization and advanced means of communication.

In its early sense culture merely shows the existence of man apart from the natural. For Jenks, talking about culture is reaffirming the already established uniqueness of humankind. This uniqueness among others is manifested through a series of symbolic representations. We experience the natural in a different way than other animals do. Giving priority to the linguistic expression of our experiences of the natural, we also try to grasp and express it using other patterns like, custom, habit, convention and artifact.

Continuing his discussion of the genesis of the idea of culture, Jenks speaks of the cultural as a cognitive category. So, culture could be understood as a general state of the mind. The ideas of perfection, goal, individual human achievement and emancipation are parts that a culture carries with it. It is also the case that culture is viewed as whole way of life of a people. So, culture is a social category. Culture, for Coleridge, according to Jenks is, "a process, intangible but real in its consequences, goal, an ideal and most of all a condition of the mind in social life. (Jenks, 1993:17)

McClean states that etymologically the term culture is derived from the Latin term for tilling or cultivating. So, culture seen from this perspective is more about the creative potentials of human beings. Furthermore, this creativity does not limit its horizon to producing cultural objects, but also takes part in shaping the material, spiritual, economic and political aspects of our lives.

1.2. The Power of Cultures

This idea of the power of cultures is related to the superiority and achievements of some cultures as compared to others. In forwarding this idea I simultaneously want to state that I am familiar with arguments which totally oppose this hierarchical ontology of cultures for they are against comparison. But, still it is a fact that we as human beings and possessors of culture interact, communicate and influence each other. This in turn results in borrowing, assimilation, acculturation and adaptation of various values of other cultures.

I argue that all cultures may not have something to say on every theme or topic we have in other cultures. In other words experiences and elements of cultures may not be all the same. In the time we are living in today it is easy to notice to what extent this power of cultures extends. Basically this expansion of some cultures over the others has to do with a number of reasons including the mode of production, the mode of interaction, and achievements and advances in science and technology.

Along with this idea of the power of cultures what I can mention is that cultures could take the front line or the lead either in some of their aspects or almost in all of their aspects. Here I can state two cultures whose horizon and power differs. Two cultures with different power and horizons are the culture of the West and the culture of the Asian countries. Though the economic power of these two sides is not as such unequal, when we see the power that they have and are exercising in relation to intercultural relations things are different. Despite their economic strength you do not see Asian countries trying to disseminate their own values. This I think is for two major reasons. The first one is Asian cultures are partially free from the intension of dominating others. Second, the

system, capitalism has forced their economy to produce for the satisfaction of the provoked desire. They are forced to produce jeans, Nike shoes or any other materials. However, they have maintained their cultures and values. But, this does not mean that they are free of any influence of the West. When it comes to the West apart from maintaining its values, it tried to disseminate them across the world. In relation to this, we can state that the capitalist structure and mode of production has created conducive environment for such domination by the West. What is true for the West contrary to the East is that it is expansive.

The western cultures guided by the Anglo-American values today are more powerful than others in terms of disseminating its values to the non-western world, except some cases. The exception we have here represents the partially successful efforts of some Asian and Arab cultures in maintaining their values and cultures.

Western and developed nations have well established economic institutions which are one of their foundations in assisting the dissemination of their values. Even when it comes to politics, though challenged by some non-western countries of equivalent position, still there we can see the various interventions and intrusions of the West in the international political arena.

However, this does not imply the triumph of the West in all aspects of culture. This idea of the power of cultures which is the result of the comparison we make is not blind to the idea that there we still have incommensurable aspects of cultures. This incommensurability could emanate from factors like language, history and differences in values. It is true that what cultures could and could not speak about could be the source of their power. For instance western culture contrary to traditional African culture can speak about science. If it is given the chance (not suppressed) traditional African culture can speak about traditional medicine, but not modern science.

Despite its perennial domination, western culture has faced and is facing both successful and unsuccessful challenges. Since the West assigned to itself the role of civilizing others, it was with less challenge that it exercised its power over others. Such exercise of

power and imposition of one's own values is made possible based on both what it achieved and what it fabricated. i.e. stories. One of the ways to look to this exercise of power of the West could be by tracing it back to one of the biggest events in human history, which is colonialism.

As a result of some relative advances in economy, politics and so on, the western world gave itself this mission of civilizing others using any means available. This idea of colonizing others was corroborated by various scientific disciplines. In connection to the prevalence of colonialism on the Continent, that is, Africa, and the compulsion and imposition of values of the West by making the people leave their own values gave birth to two camps. One fought fiercely to avoid all western culture while resisting exploitation and oppression of colonialism; the other dreamed of being white accepting his/her inferiority and backwardness.

Yu Xintian contends that, the western society was lucky for it did not pass through such a dilemma. They were unlucky, for it is difficult for them to understand the greatness in many cultures of the world. Though it may not hold for few situations for that is not how we live and the relationship between cultures work, the West is blamed of not being open to others or as lacking the readiness to learn from others. Beside such weakness, Yu states, the West labels any resistance to its values and standards as a revival of nationalism. Those who say no to the West are listed as "nationalists" and stormed with condemnation. It is based on such a claim that some scholars argue the West has still continued its domination with a different strategy.

Advocating a similar position Tsenay Serequeberhan and Emmanuel Eze argue, despite the physical liberation, we are still in a period of neo-colonialism. In many ways the West still continued its inconspicuous exploitation and imposition. Contrary to this exploitation and imposition, if we are to talk of any meaningful resistance to western cultural hegemony we can refer to the experience of some Asian countries.

Though some western scholars denied the cultural values these people, especially Confucianism, as incapable of catalyzing development; what happened was the reverse. “The Confucian values, which had been criticized in the past, were universally recognized as an inherent driving force in this new growth.”(Yu, 2002:15)

According to Guo Jiemin China`s success in building socialism with Chinese characteristics and values have shown that there is not only one recipe for modernization. Furthermore, the economic triumph of East Asian and South East Asian countries made them confident in their cultures, for their culture is one of the reasons for their success. Having this in mind, Jiemin says, thinking of western cultural values as the only choice available for the whole of mankind is unrealistic, unscientific and unreasonable.

With regard to this idea of the power of cultures, we can also speak of the struggle among cultures. In this struggle to maintain one`s own values and supersede other cultures, cultures use different mechanisms. According to some scholars, western politicians considered the issue of human rights as one of their “sophisticated weapons” in the process of expanding their sphere of influence or power. Echoing this idea Deng Xiaping stated, “... their talk about human rights, freedom and democracy is designed only to safeguard the interest of the strong, rich countries, which take advantage of their strength to bully weak countries, and which pursue hegemony and practice power politics.” (Yu, 2002: 29)

Talking about this notion of the power of cultures Zhu Majie states that the western civilization, as compared to others, is currently enjoying a considerable amount of dominance. I agree with Majie and I think this dominance is not something that happened in a vacuum. Though power is not always dominating in its character, any kind of dominance requires some sort of power. This power could have different sources and could be maintained by various strategies.

Zhu in his discussion about western civilization/culture tried to spell out what characterizes it most. Primarily, designating a unique position to itself the West tried to compose a music which everyone should listen to. Some western thinkers by making

themselves blind to the truths, knowledge and in general the world of the other declared that there is only one world. I argue this imposition is not entirely the result of an ignorance of the others` world, but it also is caused by a wrong perception of the other and oneself. Perceiving oneself as the only superior power may provide us a wrongly justified moral ground to instruct others. In earlier times this self nomination was well exercised with the mask of Christianity. Various conquests were made in the name of a “God” who likes freedom. Additionally individualism, freedom, and morality could also be mentioned as central to the western civilization/culture.

This dominance of the western culture over others, according to Yu, has dual effects. Above all it destroyed most of the original values, customs and traditions of the natives and tried to give its own values in return. This replacement of the original culture by the imposed one is a reflection of the way the West misperceived its superiority, and the difference of the other.

However, as a result of the dissemination of various theories, ideologies and values the colonized were able to criticize the drawbacks of the pre-colonial period. So, it is on this basis that some contend that the West served as “unconscious historical tool” in giving the driving force for modernization.

The difference in power of cultures is not accidental rather it has its own independent causes. After the end of the `Cold War` the confrontation between the blocks (i.e. East and West) was passive and the competition in arms was not as it were. A country`s strength is no longer determined only by political and military power. This being the case, culture began to enjoy a crucial position in determining a country`s strength or weakness. It was after this that countries began to move along this line in order to achieve a power, which they might not achieve through political struggle and military force.

In order to make my argument more persuasive than merely assertive I have tried to see how the West came to acquire its current position using various mechanisms. Modernity, the constructs of the West about itself and others, cultural globalization and the role of

capitalism in shaping cultures are topics to be dealt with in this regard. This is because in one way or the other they have sustained the hegemony of the West over the rest.

1.3. The Foundations of Western Cultural Hegemony

Guo Jiemin equates cultural power with cultural hegemony or cultural imperialism. “By cultural imperialism Jiemin wants to signify imposed cultural values between states and ethnic groups.”(Yu, 2002:66)

Dealing with the foundations of western cultural power is a task to be done based on different grounds. As a result of the cultural struggle between various cultures, western culture, as part of this struggle, in some ways wanted first to expand itself throughout the world and then after achieving this position of being a leader, it wanted to maintain and sustain this position of being a chauvinist messiah.

Except for some historical events like colonialism, which basically lasted for about a couple of centuries, the intension of the West to dominate others is not direct. Rather different historical developments and forces sustained the cultural hegemony of the West. Despite recent consciousness that struggles among cultures should not always end up in subordination of some to others, it has been stated for years that some cultures are in fact superior and triumphant, so that they should be imitated.

For the reason that direct intrusion was not viable, especially after the end of the colonial era, it could be argued that, the West has pursued various strategies and instruments which could possibly help the persistence of its cultural hegemony over others. In relation to this, there is this debate whether the West has tried to intentionally impose itself or universalize its particulars. In relation to this argument I can state a couple of points. First, it is true that there were and are thinkers who thought that the West is superior to the rest. The physical anthropology of Emmanuel Kant and the discourses of George Wilhelm Fredrick Hegel could be examples for this. Even some think that the best of humanity is almost achieved in the West. However, the supremacy of the West should not be asserted in a way that it dehumanizes and negates the being of others. It is true that the West primarily develops different elements of its own culture to promote its own

better survival. But, it is undeniable that these elements of western culture were and are used to assert western supremacy. Furthermore, the total and radical critique of all those instruments that sustained the West's leading position would be unfair, for there were actually some benefits gained from these events.

It should not be denied that non-western people also have their own history, language, and culture. It is not only western medicine that should be appreciated but also Asian, African, Latin American and others.

Furthermore, it is true that, apart from asserting the supremacy of the West at a level of discourse, there were a number of historical developments and forces that pushed humanity to sameness. We cannot argue that there is no any intension of imposing one's own values (western values). But, the intension of these historical forces is weak as compared to the intension of various discourses having such intension.

Historical developments and forces by intruding and making themselves part of the way of living of the non-western societies has pushed this part of humanity to sameness rather than difference. It is against this thesis that various strategies of resistance were developed by others.

Meanwhile, if we are to speak of any of these forces of assimilation we must mention the enlightenment, modernity, capitalism, globalization, and western fabricated discourses of European history. All these events may not be related only to cultural hegemony, but in one way or another they part of it.

1.3.1. The Constructs of the West

The task of laying down the foundation for a wrongly justified dehumanization and subjugation of the non-westerners is given priority in the overall process of constructing western supremacy. The wholesale denial of western achievements and successes would by itself be a blind judgment. The point, however, is to question, as a number of scholars including Messay Kebede, Sophie Bessis and others agree, whether the given self image of the West is an authentic one.

Messay talking about how the West constructed some of the `truths` about itself and others reveals, that it was first necessary for the White man to believe lies about himself before labeling the rest as semi-human. According to Messay, one of the scholars to be mentioned for such characterization of the non-western part of humanity as semi-human is the French ethnologist Lucien Levy Bruhl.

In his discourse, Bruhl formulated these categories of `pre-logical` and `logical`. This distinction of Bruhl contributed or has been used as a basis to justify colonialism. Messay is critical about the way Bruhl developed such a portrait of the African. Rather than acknowledging difference or attempting to describe others as different, Bruhl used their difference as a ground to dehumanize them. Messay is skeptical about the given self image of the White man. He firmly believes that this is where our inquiry into the characterization of the rest by the West should begin.

For Messay, it is wrong to give the tag `rational` for someone who exclusively claims rationality. To construct a safe ground for his claims, Bruhl fetched African inferiority from its difference from the West than its immaturity. But, sometimes Bruhl also talks about a difference in the stage of societal development.

Declaring its uniqueness, the West exposes that the given self image is also the result of its own invention. This becomes very clear in the attempt to reduce, if not eliminate, the influence of irrational and mystic thinking in terms of their self image.

However, Messay argues, such picture of the White man is a distorted one, for that really is not what history in its various aspects tells us. As an instance, Messay mentions the Bible and the ordinary beliefs of the White man. As in the case of non-western societies, the White man too believes in a number of myths, in the Bible, and he also believes in dreams. In this regard Messay states that, Sigmund Freud who is the child of western intellectual history, rather than rejecting dreams tried to give them scientific interpretation.

Contrary to this attempted exclusion of any irrational elements of thought from its history, Messay, alongside Fredrick Nietzsche and Karl Marx, argues that it is with acknowledgement of irrationality that rationality begins.

Proceeding with his polemics Messay states that, though submission to the principle of non-contradiction has been taken as a criterion of correct thinking, we can mention a number of thinkers in the history of western philosophy who developed their philosophies without taking into account the principle of non-contradiction. Among others Messay began with Heraclitus, who argued, “the path up and down is one and the same”. Not only Heraclitus, Messay says, even Plato talking about the world of ideas used mystic thinking. In general western idealism is highly surrounded by mystic notions in its overall attempt to lay down the ground for its discourse. Above all, it is the inflexible denial of irrationality that entitles us to speak about the invention of the White man.

In an attempt to falsify this claim that western thinking is free of irrational elements of thought while the rest is totally incapable of rational thinking, Messay asks, how a group could stay alive without being able to manage its relations with the environment it lives in. This management of one`s relationship to the environment requires knowledge of the laws of nature and other various laws. Some scholars argue Bruhl`s failure to acknowledge this fact was on purpose, primarily because it contradicts the exclusive possession of rationality by the West.

A number of thinkers including Hegel and Kant characterized the non-western part of human society as incapable of rational thinking and ahistorical. Despite such controversial assertions concerning non-western societies` inferiority by a number of western thinkers, there were also thinkers who stated the reverse. Jean Jacques Rousseau who is from the same continent, that is, Europe, unlike Kant and Hegel, contends that the primitives are free from the contamination of vain knowledge. Rousseau`s premise in defending the primitives is that nature created human beings good so that the march to perfection and the desired end is possible by getting closer to nature. The godness of primitive people is not the result of childlike innocence but is the result of constructive understanding that the best way of life is the one that listens to nature.

With the purpose of both defending the excluded other and showing how the West established itself over the rest, Sophie Bessis in her book *Western Supremacy: the triumph of idea?* States, the advance in secular type of thought in certain way became less favorable ground to justify the western desire for conquest. This was mainly due to the reason that, in earlier days, religious stories were used to manipulate others. For hundreds of years religious arguments were used as a means of subjugation. Later science began to take over from the old enlightenment probing. Bessis adds 19thc physical anthropology brought with it the birth of modern racism. Superiority was simple to define. Whiteness alone was enough to justify why advances in science, technology, and politics happened.

Though the Greeks themselves witnessed how and to what extent they were influenced by Egyptian wisdom in developing their thoughts, many historians of the West failed to consider this fact. This is primarily due to the contradiction they would fall into, if they accepted that Egyptian civilization had influenced the thoughts of Greek thinkers and philosophers. Accepting the thesis that Egypt is the center for European philosophy refutes the argument that Greece is the center of European philosophy. Bessis says:

“By `relocating` ancient Egypt, western historiography achieved two aims: it permanently deprived sub-Saharan Africa of the possibility of being in the world as part of its recognized history; and it appropriated Egyptian civilization (too close and too significant to be wholly alien to the European spirit), by making it a civilization of the Mediterranean mare nostrum of the Greeks and Romans.”(Bessis, 2003:31)

Showing how Europeans attempted to construct their qualitative difference from the non-western people, Bessis wrote: “purity of blood, divine and natural selection of the white Christian male, the old need to justify enslavement of dark-skinned peoples, laborious efforts to legitimate exploitation, segregation and elimination: all this was somehow sublimated in the dogma of biological determinism.”(Bessis, 2003:31)

By being reluctant to a retrospective identity the enlightenment sought the best in the future. Though it set the best of itself for itself it failed to let others have their own best. In its approach it really was moving to teach what really is worthy and true, assuming that it exclusively possesses it.

In general, such stories of the West about itself and others resulted in this conception of the West as superior to the rest. It even made some others to accept that they are inferior. But, they are inferior not because they lack something worthy for themselves but because they are not the same as the West, who claimed that, there is one path of human development. Difference of the other from the other is taken as a ground to justify the sub-humanity of the other.

1.3.2. Modernity`s Role and Place Vis-à-vis Non-Western Cultures (Others)

Modernism is one of the most important developments in history. It is construed in different ways by different thinkers. Different scholars from various disciplines tried to argue for various indicators of this period. Some identify modernity with the beginning of the renaissance. Others relate it with the industrial revolution. For still others, modernity began with the enlightenment. In general the markers of this period are very controversial. This in turn has resulted in multiple understandings and interpretations of this period. Some contend that the term modernism refers to a period, style or the combination of both.

According to Peter Childs, who is one of the well distinguished scholars of the discourse of modernity, modernisms portrait has been dominated by white, male , heterosexist, Euro-American, middle class components. Any of the challenges to these established narratives brought into display the plurality that is there in the modern period. The challenges to the narratives of modernity brought into light multiple voices. In other words ignoring and making oneself blind to the existing diversity was implausible. In most of its dimensions modernity made assertions which were severely criticized as a result of its weakly established justifications. Peter Childs contends that, though

modernity is characterized as Euro-American that really was not the case. Especially when it comes to art we see other artistic traditions giving their breath to the fading western art. “Modernity is both the culmination of the past and the harbinger of the future, pinpointing a moment of potential breakdown in socio-cultural relations and aesthetic representations.” (Childs, 2000:16)

Among the major points that could be said of the term modernity one would be its imprecise essence. For some, modernity is attached to the great scientific movements by Galileo Galilei, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, and Rene Descartes. The enlightenment as an intellectual movement brought reason as a key to the problems of humanity and any possible advance in the future. Some identified this point as the beginning of modernity.

Albeit represented as a universal emancipatory force the critique of modernity says, modernity is a refined and reformed mechanism of enslaving and controlling people. Contrary to this Jurgen Habermas says modernity is a project of the enlightenment thinkers based in notions of objective science, universal morality and law, and aiming at rational organization of everyday life. He argues that modernity is an unfinished project which tries to redefine itself through various instances.

Disagreeing with Habermas`s claim, others argued, apart from material benefits gained from modern science and reason, modernity failed to maintain individual autonomy or knowledge of oneself. According to some scholars, rather than being listener modernity was working to universalize its particulars in the name of rationality, science and so on.

Meanwhile, the crisis that happened as a result of the First World War was unexpected. The invention of various weapons, the presence of military casualties, and the death of five million civilians were all consequences of the war. This made people to be pessimistic about modern rationality which was not able to surpass all these horrors.

Most people agree that modernism began from the mid 19thc and came to lose its influence in the mid 20thc. Most of the modernist literature written around this period was discarded for they do not fit into the new essence of the later coming features of modern

literature. This aspect of modern literature reflected on themes like radical aesthetics, technical experimentation, and skepticism.

Modernism can also be seen as a response of artists and writers to various issues like industrialization, urbanization and shifts in science and technology and to new philosophical notions.

In Europe the 19thc experienced a considerable amount of clarity in relation to the existing models of the individual and the social. This was mainly due to various reinterpretations developed by some prominent thinkers like Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud and Charles Darwin. These thinkers revolutionized the prevailing model and understandings of the individual, the social and the natural.

The other possible way of understanding modernism is in terms of its exclusions and its critical reformulations. Modernism is accused of being Euro- centric. But, it has also been perceived as a move against mass culture and feminization, which in turn is affirmation of patriarchy. Some contend that, though modernism began with exclusion of certain groups from the ongoing interaction within it, later on this problem is partially solved by redefining its various components.

What is unique to modernity is that it questioned everything, every value ascription. Let alone others even religious truths were subject to reason and scientific inquiry. Any claim to truth is expected to be justified by reason and evidence. But, some asked what the ground is for the ground of reason and evidence. For Habermas, modernism has always been self-critical movement. It is highly characterized by self doubt. Meanwhile, postmodernism for him is little more than that self doubt, with a new tag. According to Habermas, a modernist can be characterized in terms of the priority and privilege it fully gave to the values in European enlightenment.

The American cultural critic Marshal Berman states that modernity is a period of the new. Additionally modernity is:

“...to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world- and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are... it pours us into a maelstrom of perpetual disintegration and renewal, of struggle and contradiction , of ambiguity and anguish....” (Berman in Malpas, 2005:46)

According to some scholars this equation of modernity with the new, the rapid, and the inevitable and continual change is problematic. Such a claim is open to many questions. In relation to this, they ask, can we imagine a time without change?

Simon Malpas in his book *The Postmodern (2005)*, states whichever our choice is from the given characterizations of modernity, modernity did not cease to be a period echoing continuous change. Fredrick Jameson supporting this view argues that modernity is not a concept but a narrative category. So the various characterizations of modernity are part of it, describing changes in various spheres of life by being the standard.

Narratives of modernity could originate from various sources. Having said this Jean Francois Lyotard and Fredric Jameson argue these sources could be religious, philosophical, or political. For instance, they say, look the way capitalists portray modernity; industrial revolution alongside its consequences including material wealth and the ability to choose the life style one prefers are seen as markers of modernity. However, the socialist version of modernity is not the same with this one.

Habermas in his account of modernity follows Marshal Berman`s notion of modernity, that is, an era of continual change and the new. Modernity is a period which had opened itself for the newness of the future. In his essay *modernity: an unfinished project* Habermas characterized modernity as a:

separation of substantive of reason, formerly expressed in religious or metaphysical world views into three moments, now capable of being connected only formally with one another... in so far as worldviews have disintegrated and their traditional problems have been separated under perspectives of truth, normative rightness and authenticity or beauty, and can now be treated as questions of knowledge, justice, or taste respectively, there arises in the modern period a differentiation of value spheres of science and knowledge of morality and of art. (Malpas, 2005:52)

According to Malpas, Habermas in the above quotation is showing the bifurcation of number of things from the religious mythologies which used to explain versatile events. This is mainly due to the development of scientifically and logically justifying accounts of human existence.

This rejection of the mythical in turn resulted in rejection of the idea of eternal truths and transcendental structures. Rather than a reliance on such notions, analysis based on historical development and progress towards the better overtook the place.

Habermas underlines that it is Hegel who should be regarded as the first philosopher to develop a clear conception of modernity. Showing how this is the case, Habermas quotes Hegel's idea from the preface of the 'Phenomenology of the Spirit.' Hegel writes:

Our time is a birth and transition to a new period. The spirit has broken with what was hitherto the world of its existence and imagination and is about to submerge all this in the past: it is at work giving itself a new form... [F]rivolity as well as the boredom that open up in establishment and the indeterminate apprehension of something unknown are harbingers of a forthcoming change. The gradual crumbling... is interrupted by the break of day that like lightning, all at once reveals the edifice of the new world. (Malpas, 2005:53)

In spite of its positive contributions modernity for almost all parts of the non-western world sustained the previously existing hegemony. If we are to talk of modernity in terms of its markers, industrialization and advances in science and technology are on the front line to be mentioned. These events which specifically emerged in the West have not limited themselves only to the European continent. Despite few attempts of the West to establish few industries in the colony lands, industrialization on a large scale was not there in Africa during the colonial period. Though not the industry Africans were expected to use some products of the industry.

Among the major events which intensified capitalism, industrialization and advances in communication technology are the crucial ones. My point here is that, the West, as it has been argued by a number of scholars nominated itself so as to impose what it likes without the will of the recipients.

This imposition is multifaceted. Those different sources of modern narratives including: religion, philosophy, politics, and economics were the areas used in this imposition. Modernity, though aimed at emancipation and more freedom, it at the same time made the non-western part of human society unfree by imposing what it thought is “important” for everyone.

Epistemologically speaking, the non-westerners by denying their own ways of knowing were expected to employ European reason as the sole means of knowing and controlling the natural and human world. Every truth claim is supposed to be freed from any mythical and mystical justifications. Comprehensive knowledge of both the natural and human world is to be conveyed by science alone. All these declarations of the West were entirely against the diverse ways of comprehending the universe we live in.

Jan Aart Scholte in connection to this contends, beginning from ancient times we can find a number of instances of rationality including: secularism, anthropocentrism, scientism and instrumentalism. According to Scholte, it is enlightenment`s rationality that excluded other forms of knowing. The enlightenment movement snatched the license of other forms knowing, and gave the entire authority and legitimacy to reason in general and

European reason in particular. As a movement guided by reason and science, modernity failed to see that others could also have their own reason for what they think/thought. So modernity in this respect failed to move from appearance to reality.

When it comes to economical matters, driven by the capitalist mode of production the West was highly engaged in expanding structures compatible with such mode of production. Different outputs of the industry were well disseminated across the world using modern means of transportation and communication. Not only material goods but also ideas were among the important things which were disseminated. The meaning of life, the best political system, the standard of life, and in general what to be modern has already been defined by the West, so that others would also follow it.

After having questioned every value claim and every claim to knowledge, modernity in the West has tried to free itself from any unjustified claim. After having reached what it thought is the result of science, reason and evidence, dispersed this unfinished and pathogenic truth to the rest or non-western world. The West by imposing all these stuffs of its own is totally denying that the rest of humanity has its own way of value ascription as apt to life, its own way of knowing and its own way of being. That is why modernity is mentioned as a paradigmatic example of expansive centrism. Though this is not all what modernity is, but in the context of what is mentioned above, modernity as some scholars say is chauvinist than liberationist.

In addition to all what has been said above, looking into some non-western cultures which really are resistant to the Euro-centric ideas of the modern period would make my discussion fair. Despite the persistent efforts of the West to disperse its values across the world, some Asian countries were so impolite to this.

This achievement of Asian countries, I think, to some extent shows our (African) failure in sorting out what really is important and our inability to debunk the claims of the West. Yu says: “the West once sharply criticized the “autocracy” and “centralization” of south Korea, Singapore, and China`s Taiwan but these countries and regions ensured economic prosperity and promoted market development. On the contrary the economy of the

Philippines whose political system was most similar to the US long was stagnant.” (Yu, 2002: 17)

1.3.3. Cultural Globalization and Non-Western Cultures

Though globalization is not a recent phenomenon its intensification varies in different periods and social structures. Globalization is one episode in the historical continuum of human history. I think globalization is among the giant processes in human history. As a result of its relation to most aspects of our lives it needs to be examined critically. As a multidimensional event it affects almost all aspects of our existential situation either negatively or positively.

Despite all these facts what is of much worth here is its interaction and relation with culture and cultural units. Generally speaking, when it comes to this idea of the relationship between cultures and globalization or cultural globalization there we come to some well identified polemics which advocate different trains of thought. A number of scholars from different disciplines argue that globalization in its current form has contributed for the formation of a cosmopolitan community.

Showing how this really is the case Scholte used Anthony Giddens who contends that, with globalization humankind in some respects becomes “we”, facing problems and opportunities where there are no “others”. Yes, that is the case, but this may not extend to every aspect of our lives. Despite such commonality in facing grief and pleasure, there are also particularities which are out of such an environment.

Continuing his contention Scholte states that, among the major expressions of these cosmopolitanism different international relief activities, transworld human rights movements can be mentioned. Furthermore, globalization`s increased cosmopolitan impulse lies in environmentalism.

All this being the case when it specifically comes to the issue of culture, we come to this notion of hybridization. A hybrid identity, Scholte states, draws from several different sources so that no single marker holds clear and consistent primacy over others.

Scholte emphasized that this idea of hybridization is not a new event. In earlier times too, people were part of and practice collective identities. Showing the tendencies in the blend of cultures Scholte states:

A Fijian citizen of Indian descent works in Paris for a US based accountancy firm: who is she? What collective identity do we ascribe to the computer programmer (sitting beside me on a flight from Chicago to London) who moves between South Africa, Western Europe and North America, having no fixed address and never staying in any country for more than a fortnight? What do we make of prostitutes from Africa lining Tverskaya Street, Moscow, dressed in traditional Russian costume that hardly any local would today wear? (Scholte, 2000:181)

I think the problem with characterizing globalization only as facilitating cosmopolitanism or hybridization is that it would be one sided. Such characterization takes only selected instances which support the fact that it intends to magnify. However, this simply is what could be characterized as the suppressed evidence fallacy, and is not the genuine image of globalization or cultural globalization.

Cultural globalization in its current form according to a number of scholars is leading to homogeneity or sameness rather than heterogeneity. Global culture which is to emanate from cultural globalization would be a culture that includes the footprints of only a few rather than the experiences of most cultures. The western culture which really is a particular culture, by denying its particularity situates itself on the top of others.

Although some argued that interdependence, diffusion and flows are the main features of the world, Eghosa E.Osaghae says, this by itself is not a guarantee that there is equal exchange or mutuality. He emphasized the need to question which side of the world is engaged in producing and which at receiving these various structures, trends, patterns and processes.

Cultural globalization is about the intensification and movement of cultural values all over the world. Manfred states that, despite quick changes of a number of things as a result of modernity, expansive civilizational exchanges are much older than modernity. Taking into account the current interaction between cultures within the horizon of globalization scholars argue that we are heading towards homogeneity.

A group of commentators called `pessimistic hyperglobalizers` strongly contend that, we are not moving towards an all inclusive type of culture which really embraces other`s experience. Rather guided by the cultures of the West we are moving to a situation where we are to end with sameness. Despite few successful attempts to resist this homogenizing force of the Anglo-American values and consumer goods, their movement seems unstoppable.

Benjamin Barber who is one of the pessimistic hyperglobalizers argues that, this attempt to colonize and impose one`s own values on others provokes cultural and political resistance. In support of his claim Barber presents the confrontation between MacWorld, which he thought is a product of a superficial American popular culture assembled in 1950`s and 60`s, driven by expansionist commercial interests; and the rejection of this homogenizing force by the jihadists and jihad. Barber says “Fuelled by opposing universal aspirations, jihad and MacWorld are locked in a bitter cultural struggle for popular allegiance” (Steger, 2003:73).

Though this happens to the case Barber contends that, both sides basically reflect elements of undemocratic participation for they equally override civil liberties, thus jeopardize a global democratic development.

Unlike the pessimistic hyperglobalizers, optimistic hyperglobalizers took homogeneity as something good. Among others Francis Fukuyama accepts the expansion of Anglo-American values as something good. This is mainly because this expansion is the expansion of democracy and free market. People like Ronald Robertson refraining from both sides tell us that cultural globalization will end up neither in sameness nor difference rather in hybridization.

Scholars dealing with the changes in areas of culture made language one of their foci. In connection to this, they underlined the existing domination of a few languages in international communication. In addition to this, scholars have tried to statistically show the decline in the number of languages and also argued that this should not be where we should end up.

Despite fast changes in our cultures, I think, what people could learn about other`s culture has increased as a result of the increased interconnectedness. But, the problem that we could possibly have at this point is that this knowledge might not be very deep. They may not know how that culture came into being and what features it has. I think it is this superficial understanding of the other`s culture that causes some troubles and conflicts both with the other, and even when we try to import and use the other`s culture.

1.3.4. Capitalism Portrayed Picture of Cultures

Scholte using Marx argued capitalism has an essence of crossing and crushing borders in search of markets in which it could function. Additionally, it would be more difficult to see a transworld link without a room for capitalism.

It is an obvious fact that different modes of production, different social structures and organizations result in different cultures. As it has been stated in history human beings who lead their lives by hunting and gathering lived simple and unsettled life as compared to life in today`s globalized world.

In comparison to their past, human beings today are living in an environment which is intertwined more than ever before. So, every period is a makeup of what it entertains. This provides the ground for the difference between periods in history.

A culture in a predominantly feudal society is for sure different from the culture in a capitalist or communist society. So, the horizon within which we live, or to use Heidegger`s term we are thrown into, strongly affects the way our culture and cultural units are brought and function.

Capitalism as the dominant paradigm of the day has strongly influenced or molds culture. Capitalism, Scholte says: “is a structure of production where economic activity is oriented first and foremost to the accumulation of surplus” (Scholte, 2000:96). He continues saying, it is all about a question of time that education, housing, and social insurance, like agriculture, mining and transport will be ways of accumulating capital. I think, let alone other nations where capitalism has flourished and is at its zenith, we are observing the commodification of the above stated things here in Ethiopia too. By commodification I am referring to the situation in which things which were not part of the market system and structure are brought into the system, and they are made part of the business interaction.

Modernity as an aspiration is based in the idea of a better life. Though it cannot provide by itself the materially defined idea of the good life, with no effort it appealed to its big brother capitalism. So, once the definition of what a modern and good life has been laid down the next step will be all about fulfilling the provoked desire.

In the previous part of my discussion I have raised how the non-material aspect of modernity tried to impose itself upon others. But, one should not totally separate the non-material aspect from the material one. For instance, knowledge of designing has to do with how to design and fabricate an attractive cloth. Knowledge of modern medicine has to do with how to produce this medicine, and also show others that you are an expert of such things.

In terms of its expansion we may not see the same pictures of capitalism in all places. However, it is stated by a number of scholars that capitalism has expanded in the 20thc more than ever before. Today most people think surplus accumulation as something `natural` or obvious and are in a difficulty of imagining other alternative modes of production. One of the very powerful ways that capitalism used to expand more is the production and distribution of goods and services. This production and especially distribution of goods and services is not a mere event to be seen carelessly. Look at many of the things we use in our day to day life. The clothes we wear, the television sets we buy, the brand perfumes we use, and the cell phones we buy and so on. All these are not

just simply commodities but they strongly function in our lives and even direct it. Is it not the case that the clothes we put on, what we watch on the television and so on in one way or the other is affecting our culture or are not they making us to leave our values without being critical?

Wearing jeans, putting on a Nike shoes, using Black Berry cell phones, they may be good because they are comfortable. But, are not they taking us from where we are to somewhere else. Who are we? Of course someone may come and say, what is wrong with doing all these things? Because, in the first place culture is dynamic and also cultures cannot be independent and pure. So, hybridization is inevitable. This is true, but the point is, are we really conscious of what is going on? And is our choice of such things critical or even could it be?

Having all these ideas in mind what could be noticed easily from what is going on is that, the Western world is moving to fulfill its conceptually defined values and standards through material fulfillment by capitalism. So, in a situation where we are not conscious of such things we are heading to one form of life.

That is to mean, even if this is what the West intends, by being critical of such matters we can at least minimize though not eliminate an imposition which leads to both forced and unforced carelessness towards our values. Are not a number of Hollywood movies strictly challenging Ethiopian values? Think of Ethiopia which is free of such import of movies or other possibilities to access them. I think it would be different. Some ideas and things could be universal and human but at the same time there are so many new cultures which capitalism gave birth to.

Here I am not denying that there are segments of humanity which do not dream of such life, the life of desire. In this regard we can mention Buddhists. But, apart from such exceptions, what is happening to the majority is the same.

What life is and should be is defined for us by others and we struggle to achieve this. I think in this case we may fail to know the meaning of life for we have not defined it ourselves. We are thinking that there is one horizon having some discourses to attain one project.

Today, in a world dominated by a capitalist system and structure it may be difficult to think that survival is possible without being an advocate of it. So the point I think, as East Asian countries did, is to make ourselves busy in sorting out what really is fitting to where we are and where we want to be, given that contact between cultures is inevitable. Yes, we need the industries, the products, the goods, and the services. But, is this the exact way that we should use them?

Capitalism as a system upholding capitalists leads to sameness rather than difference. The effects of science and technology are there in every society despite their difference in quantity and quality. This idea of capitalism is related to the notion of globalization. Scholte talking about the connection between capitalism and globalization says, although capitalism as a structure of production remains unreplaced, globalization has brought some changes to this structure, and this is mainly in areas of commodification and the organizational context of accumulation. Despite its failure to take us to a new structure of production globalization has triggered crucial changes in capitalism.

Modern science and technology driven by reason, evidence and experiment transformed its theoretical knowledge into tangible material things or objects. The invention of the mobile phone technology, the internet, and modern air transportation all these caused an intensified connection more than ever before. It is this intensified flow of both ideas and things/objects beyond boundaries that is named globalization. The interconnectedness we have could be in trade, information and environment.

Some say as a result of globalization challenges and opportunities are faced as “we” without the presence of the “other”. This is true especially in recent movements on environmental issues. The horrors of environmental pollution are for all of us. But, this is totally independent of our knowledge of each other, I think. Even if we do not have the

current proximity we have, once the gases are emitted everyone will be part of this pollution. So, this is more about the natural setting of the universe or the natural world than globalization. But, still we can cooperate to work on problems of such type.

Globalization, according to Scholte, gave capitalists the mechanisms to tackle strategies of socialism and economic statism that was well celebrated in most parts of the south around the mid twentieth century.

This notion of rationality has also to do with capitalism. Rationalism's emphasis on anthropocentrism has pushed us to be concerned with life on earth or earthly life. Anthropocentrism views the world not as a world of the gods or as a place of connected life forms. The scientific and instrumentalist aspect of rationalism has also been comfortable to capitalist expansion.

For Scholte, consumerism as a ritual of the capitalist society works both on generations of desires and their satisfaction. He continues, consumerism has been closely related to globalization. Primarily, consumerists focus on transworld products. Consumerism has been facilitated by transborder productions. Global contexts like communication technologies played a crucial role in generating instant desires. Scholte concludes, what could be said of globalization and consumerism is that, globalization contributed a lot for consumerism to be a strong force than ever before.

Unlike the rest of the world who both willingly and unwillingly accepted the West's systematic assertion of power, some Asian and Arab countries firmly resisted and fought to sustain and maintain their own values. In this regard we can mention even recent actions of some states like Pakistan.

The Pakistani government has blocked the social network website facebook for a couple of months. China has also blocked some unnecessary websites which she thought are more of destructive than constructive to the society. All these are resistances to the western led journey to the preferred site.

Once the West had chosen the capitalist mode of production, I think, it should act according to the requirements of the system. The goal here is not keeping products rather having more and more surplus.

Unless the less industrialized countries pay more attention to their values and standards along their attempt to be more industrial and capitalist, there would be no change in the current relationship of more capitalist countries, where capitalism has reached its climax, and less capitalist countries. If not the more capitalist nations would continue to be producers not only of most commodities but also of world cultures.

I ask though some Asian countries are as powerful as and even in some instances greater than the western countries, I do not see the culture of these people disseminated across the world like their western counterparts. For instance, China exports multiple kinds of goods and services to a number of African countries including Ethiopia. But, why is that we are not attracted to Chinese cultures as we did to the West?

I think this has to do with the long established influence of the West in a number of ways. As compared to its Chinese equivalent the western culture moved in various ways to be the culture of everyone, and different historical developments contributed for the current position of the West.

Though the Chinese civilization was one of the earliest civilizations in the history of the world, history does not show strong and strategic attempts of the Chinese culture to impose its values or universalize its particulars in equivalent manner to western culture. The expansionist intension of the Chinese culture is so weak as compared to its western counterpart. I think the current power of Chinese culture is in some ways unable to break into the long established cultural hegemony of the West. English is spoken in most parts of the world but not Chinese. Not only language but in terms of many cultural elements the West is still dominant. In addition to this, this power, as I have tried to discuss it, is the result of many factors. Unlike the Chinese culture, the West for its most part is expansive.

I do not think that there is a community without cultural values of its own. So, if this is the case, why do we need to totally abandon our own values, which reflect our own being, and why do we succumb to other context specific values? When we buy a commodity we are buying not only the commodity but also a culture. By doing so you are reflecting a culture which is not yours and which you allowed it to be part of your culture. This is both good and bad.

In general, it is by industrializing that we can both transform and to a greater extent tackle assimilation. This is to mean, the more we are producers of our own culture the less we will be assimilated. It is when we maintain and transform our cultures in a strict sense that we can defend and also communicate and contribute something to the world. Less developed and understood cultures are more easily assimilated than those which are well developed and understood by the members of a given culture. Furthermore, the western hegemonic power over others is not something magical but it is a cumulative effect of many historical forces and developments. Though it is not genuine to refer to only one source as a basis of this power, the advance of science and technology along with other factors contributed for such a position of the West.

Chapter Two

Against Totalization

Culture has been and is a very powerful entity in society. Given that culture enjoys such a position, it has been used both to manipulate and transform human life. Both, manipulation and transformation could be motivated by various internal and external factors. As Hassan Hanafi and other scholars forward, intercultural relations can be represented either in the conflict model or the dialogue model. But, this point should not ignore that there are cultures which are neither in conflict nor in dialogue with other cultures. The history of intercultural relations tells us that cultures of the world have influenced each other in many ways.

In the previous chapter, concerning the power of cultures, I have tried to talk about how cultures struggle to maintain their position and how the West tried to establish itself over the rest. The West in assuming such a position was and is assisted by various strategies and historical forces including physical force, modern science and technology, religion, science, and myth.

This chapter tries to deal with the major strategies of resistance to the totalizing efforts and successes of the West. Modernity which was one of the great intellectual movements in the West played a pivotal role in developing and sustaining its cultural hegemony. Having this in mind I have selected some topics which could possibly show both the radical and moderate deviations from the overall notions and projects of modernity. In this chapter I will try to discuss postmodernism, cultural relativism and hermeneutics, which I think were major strategies of resistance to totalization or any attempt to homogenize. Historically, hermeneutics is older than postmodernism. But, I will start with postmodernism and cultural relativism and then come to hermeneutics.

2.1. Postmodernism and Cultural Relativism

2.1.1. Postmodernism

In dealing with postmodernism one of the first tasks that need to be done would be having a working definition or characterization of this term. Practically speaking this is one of the most difficult tasks to be performed, even for the postmodernists themselves.

For some, Postmodernism is a period of crisis. This characterization of postmodernism as a period of crisis, according to Simon Malpas, is justifiable. Here he refers to what Stuart Sim says about the British historian Arnold Toynbee's view of postmodernity, as a journey into an unknown territory where the old norms no longer work and our collective security is potentially compromised.

According to Steven Best and Douglas Kellner the certainties and projects of modernity, which were central to it are now challenged and dismantled by the forces of new ideas and possibilities. "The result of this, for some critics, is that what the postmodern serves to promote is a skeptical ethos which simply takes for granted the collapse of all realist or representationalist paradigmsand the need henceforth to abandon any thought of criticizing social injustice from a standpoint of class solidarity" (Norris in Malpas, 2005:35)

Postmodernism, for Jean-Francois Lyotard, is a condition we live in. According to Malpas, in his book *The Postmodern Condition*, Lyotard analyzed the issues of the production, control, and dissemination of knowledge. In line with this he states that we live in a knowledge driven economy. By this he means knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold and consumed. The main purpose of the exchange aims at survival, flourishing and profits. This has contributed to the shift from the previous conceptions of knowledge.

According to Malpas, Lyotard's analysis of knowledge is based on narratives. There are rules and procedures on which each narrative depends. These rules are the grounds to judge what is legitimate, true, and ethical or not. Lyotard gave the name "Meta-

narratives” for these rules and procedures. He states that modernity is based on grand narratives.

It was based on such grounds that it attempted to explain various elements of its own and other`s world. Grand narratives are totalizing narratives which try to construct an account of human society and progress.

Malpas says, Lyotard identified two grand narratives. These two grand narratives are speculation and emancipation. Basically, the speculative Meta-narratives are oriented towards a unified theory which tries to understand and show our place in the universe, while the narratives of emancipation are about the development of knowledge so as to realize human freedom in opposition to mysticism and dogmatic imposition. Synthesizing Lyotard`s view Malpas says: “By tying together all of the different narratives that make up a culture, assigning values to them and giving them a goal, modernity`s grand narratives present an idea of the development of knowledge as a progress towards universal enlightenment and freedom.” (Malpas, 2005:38)

In relation to postmodernism Lyotard says, the project of modernity which was to be realized based on grand narratives is not forgotten but destroyed. This destruction resulted in the loss of power of grand narratives. With such radical changes, he argues, the criteria for what is knowledge and what is not, what is legitimate and what is not has changed. According to Lyotard, the criteria of universalism and emancipation are replaced by the criterion of profit. The concern of grand narratives was organizing all knowledge into a single whole, but capitalism leads to the fragmentation of the whole, given that the fragments can make profit. “The postmodern condition is thus one which the demands of capitalist economics rule supreme and all developments of knowledge are determined by the paradigmatic logic of the market rather than the overarching dream of universal human good.” (Malpas, 2005: 39)

For Lyotard the issue of being powerful both as an individual and at the societal level is determined by the knowledge they possess. It is the one who owns the highest knowledge that remains powerful. I think Lyotard in saying this is reflecting the Baconian position

that knowledge is power. Lyotard in his discussion points out that the reduction of all knowledge to a system whose only criterion is efficiency is a challenge faced by a postmodern society. Every form of knowledge is judged based on its efficacy and profit making capacity

Critics like Steven Connor questioned Lyotard's notion of the postmodern condition. According to Connor, 'The Postmodern Condition' strongly emphasized the fragmentation of science's grand narratives without working for the continuity of those narratives in current scientific research. Postmodernism as Lyotard perceives it is not only a condition. Rather, according to some thinkers, postmodernism can also be identified with its own skeptical and critical attitudes. The employment of rigid technological rationality is seen by postmodernists as a contamination. According to Christopher Butler, followers of Lyotard and Jacques Derrida believe more in stories than in testable theories. Postmodernists are not impressed by traditional philosophy, history, and science; rather they gave more attention to the idiosyncratic workings of cultures.

The Promotion and celebration of multiple stories is what is central to the postmodernist thought. The effectiveness and the validity of these stories are not determined by transcendental grounds. Butler continues, postmodernism consists of highly critical epistemology, and strongly opposed to any doctrine that tries to have an overarching position. Butler characterized the postmodern generation as skeptical of many things including, the truths offered by religion or theology, capitalism and also American 'imperialism'.

This in turn has brought us to a world where there is no absolute explanation rather competing stories contending to gain acceptance. Let alone others, scientists and historians too were expected to make themselves part of this competition, for there is no special room left for their narratives to be listened without query and doubt. Postmodernists by doing so are taking side with those who are excluded as unfitting into the stories and labeled as inferior and backward in comparison to those who are the authors of the Meta-narratives.

Postmodernists argue in favor of multiple stories instead of one on a given topic. In connection to this, Edward Said stated that the imperialist comes to construct his/her own image positively and attributed the negation to the rest. Said states, “For the imperialist saw himself as the representative of a rational, ordered, peaceful, and law abiding framework, and defined the orient as the opposite of this, and had the confidence that his representation of `them` - his narrative of `Orientalism` - would prevail.” (Butler, 2002:16)

Said tells us a story in which a man named Flaubert sleeps with an Egyptian lady, having done this he wrote to Louise Colet informing him that the oriental woman cannot distinguish one man from the other. In many of his novels he portrayed such a representation of the oriental woman. However, you do not find a single line in these novels where this woman speaks something about herself.

Being from a different culture, according to Said, Flaubert and the lady (Hanem) have a number of incommensurable truths. According to Butler, this leads us to the underlying conclusion of the postmodernists that universal truth is false and we should stick to relativism.

Deconstruction, being one of the main tasks of the postmodernist movement, is against the dichotomies we develop. The argument for such a claim is that dichotomies either enable us to see what is wrong in there or things are too rigidly fixed. But, given that these dichotomies function in relativistic conceptual framework we can notice that they depend on one another for their definition (good on bad, right on wrong, justice on injustice and vice versa). According to Butler this claim, which is typically Derridean, is due to the Derridean obsession with the Freudian notion that opposites need each other. For a Derridean you can only see yourself as rational and just if you are also to see yourself as irrational and unjust. This notion that the opposites are interdependent is used to refute some of the attempts of the West to exclude irrational elements of thought from its history.

The emancipatory aspect of such deconstruction of opposites rests on the thesis that there may be something wrong in the attempts of different systems to describe the world by giving priority to some concepts and placing them in a certain hierarchy. However, the hierarchies into which these things/concepts are ordered are based in the historically established hegemonic interests and are much more interdependent than we assumed. It is the revelation of this hidden interdependence that deconstructs this order and hierarchy.

This discussion of deconstruction urges us to deal with the issue of judgment, which basically is one of the contestable sub-topics in postmodernism. According to Lyotard, critics of postmodernism argue that postmodernists refused either to use established ground of inquiry or to be judged by pre-established norms. Marie Pauline states that, contrary to this, modern science has specific tools of evaluating knowledge claims and theories. “Consistency and general coherence lend support as does productive capacity, though none of these alone is adequate. Tightly reasoned, rational, logical conclusions are given priority over contradictory, irrational and illogical statements.” (Hoover in Marie, 1992:133)

Postmodernists, especially skeptical postmodernists, as Kariel states are generally against the notion of overarching ground of judgment. They are against the modern social sciences` criteria of judgment including consistency, coherence, and data based theory. “Postmodernists seek not to dispense knowledge but rather to provide a basis for people to decide for themselves because truth outside the individual, independent of language, is impossible.” (Jacquard in Marie, 1992:134)

Marie states that, the skeptical postmodernists are against objective criteria of judgment. Though this happens to be the case they indirectly or unintentionally have used implicit grounds to criticize other views and develop their own. Marie wants us to keep in mind that affirmative postmodernists use terms like oppression, liberation, and resistance which basically imply judgment or at least a normative point of reference. According to Marie, they also prioritized the study of the local, the decentered, the marginal, and the excluded over the center.

Postmodernists are suspicious of modernists' ideas of truth and theory. In connection to this Marie states that, skeptical postmodernists rejected the modern version of theory and truth while affirmative postmodernists reconstructed it.

If truth is to be conceived as something universal and out there, the affirmative postmodernists are to take the same position as skeptical postmodernists. When it comes to linguistic relativism and the dependence of truth on it, affirmatives, unlike the skeptics, prefer to take a midway position. Their contention is that there can be a certain agreement on the meaning of some concepts and words, as is the case for professional social scientists.

According to skeptical postmodernists, any attempt to put some theories at the top of others is absurd. They instead accept the existence and possibility of multiple theories, none of whom can claim superiority. They see any effort to build a theory as an ambition to develop totalizing Meta- narratives. In this regard they are against Marxists, positivists and structuralists.

The postmodern critique of the modern notion of theory states that, the problem of the modern notion of theory is that, it assumed that it can function in a context transcendent manner. This is less realistic in a rapidly changing postmodern world. In addition to this they emphasize the inextricability of language categories and socially constructed meanings, which in turn make overarching theory impossible. "Theory, said to legitimate a monopoly of power, is thus considered little more than an "authoritarian weapon" by most skeptics." (Kellner in Marie, 1992:82)

Marie states, some affirmative postmodernists seek to substitute the modern notion of theory with an anti-theoretical focus on everyday life, the local, direct experience of individuals and on the contingent. Some scholars ask; are not we going to generalize at least in a micro level, something out of our everyday life?

Contrary to the modern, the traditional is given a significant credit by the postmodernists. “Traditional human narratives accept error, inconsistency, and relativism. These liberating narratives tell the collective story of the disempowered..., placing their lives within the context of larger social and historical forces.” (Richardson in Marie, 1992:84)

Postmodernism can also be conceived as a critique of modern science. This is not what Postmodernism is all about, but this is one of the things it does. For Butler, the picture we have of scientists (as someone who really knows and reveals how things are, as someone who knows and reveals how nature works, as someone who knows what counts as evidence) is not accepted by postmodernists. They are against the basic claims that scientists traditionally developed.

Postmodernists denied that scientists have such privileges. Scientists are just telling one story among the possible many. As is the case to philosophy and ordinary language their work, which is more of construction than discovery about the nature of reality, is open to prejudices and metaphors.

In connection to the postmodernists` attack on science two professors of physics, Alan Sokal and Jean Briemont have stated, that postmodern critique of science fails to understand the empirical claims of science and the ways in which it operates.

According to Butler, all the radical arguments of the postmodernists, despite some of its failures has contributed at least by challenging and changing the way science and scientific disciplines were perceived in Europe and America. These arguments helped the development of strongly skeptical and politically oriented positions towards the sciences.

Postmodernist skepticism backed up by its critical techniques questioned a number of taken for granted positions in ethics and social relations. However, according to Butler, despite their rejection of grand narratives postmodernists sometimes allowed or were using such stories. According to a number of scholars, postmodernists have questioned everything. Among others history is one. In doing so they have questioned whether there is any knowledge of the past, the role of reason in assisting the explanation of historians

about the past, the interpretive capacity of history in appropriating various heritages of the past, and the claim that a historian should be objective.

Skeptical postmodernists are critical of the conventional notion of history. “They contend that history is logo centric, a source of myth, ideology, and prejudice, a method assuming closure.” (Marie, 1992: 63)

For postmodernists, history in its conventional form is nothing more than the creation of the West, as a tool of oppressing others or other cultures. It is simply a means employed to direct others in the desired route.

Some postmodernists argue for the end of a known direction to history. However, they are not the first to introduce us to this idea of the end of history. Among the theorists of the end of history Fukuyama is one. Fukuyama`s notion of the end of history is different from the postmodern notion of it. By the end of history Fukuyama means an end of the idea of progress, and the evolution of human thought about the basics. It is related to “The triumph of Western ideas, liberal pluralist democracy, consumer society, the “universal, homogenous state” and the defeat of all other ideologies including communism and fascism.” (Marie, 1992: 65)

But, for the skeptical postmodernists the end of history does not mean an absolute truth has been disclosed and this truth is an all encompassing and objective one. Both skeptical postmodernists and the end of history theorists agree that Meta-narratives should not be privileged in history. This imply that they are against Fukuyama`s idea of the end of history. When it comes to rationality, the end of history theorists of the modern period are more in favor of it than postmodernists.

The affirmatives, though critical of the conventional notion of history, are not in favor of its entire abolishment. They rather wanted to redraft, reconstruct, revise, and relativize it. According to Marie, the affirmatives are influenced by “New History” movement in the overall process of coming up with an alternative to the version of history they are against. “New History uses deconstruction, subjective interpretation and symbolic construction of reality rather than qualitative, structural or functional methods.” (Marie, 1992:66)

According to Malpas, when we talk about the end of history in its postmodernist sense, we are not saying that we are no longer to confront any new event or events, or events will cease to happen, rather our need or ability to put these events in a certain framework of Meta narratives, as in modernity, has ended. There will be no more attempts to show the developmental logic of events.

Fukuyama's notion of the 'end of history' is different from Jean Baudrillard's account of it. In Fukuyama the end of history signifies the achievement of modern ambition for justice and freedom. Baudrillard on the other hand conceives the 'end of history' as the worst failure of the project of modernity to harmonize reason and nature.

For Fukuyama, "... the realization of liberal democracy in the West, and what he sees as its gradual spread to all other parts of the world, presents the idea that history as a single, coherent, evolutionary process is rapidly coming to an end." (Malpas, 2005:90)

Derrida argues that, what we have in Fukuyama is an attempt to substitute 'ideal good news' for the empirically observable event of the end of history in a way that draws attention to the gap between reality and rationality. According to Derrida, the gap between fact and the ideal is not something peculiar to 'primitive forms' of government but also signifies all democracies ranging from the oldest to the recent and most stable.

The postmodern theorist Jean Baudrillard claims that we need a degree of slowness, distance, and liberation for us to have a sort of crystallization of events which we can state as history. However, as a result of the rapid changes we are facing the foundation of historical narratives is highly determined by competing meanings and explanations.

The rise of sources which are multiple both in type and in number created a competition among these sources. Their competition is to win public acceptance by making themselves more accessible and persuasive. This in turn has problematized the answer to the question of what really happened.

“The stuff of history has become another commodity to be bought by the spectators: packaged by media companies, one can tune virtual recreations of past ages and marvel at the computer-generated effects, experience the thrills of `walking dinosaurs....” (Malpas, 2005: 95)

This process in effect makes history something chaotic. Various rapid changes have brought an end to linearity. And the consequence is that it would be impossible to answer the question, what is the meaning of the end of history? So it is no longer possible to provide a full and immediate account of what history is. In Baudrillard`s words not only has history ended, it has ended in `illusion`.

In general, providing an all encompassing and uncontroversial definition of postmodernism is difficult. Malpas says all we can say is that, it has a multi-faceted essence. This in turn opens up the way for a debate among various scholars who claim postmodernism is the way they see it to be. Malpas points out that the meaning of postmodernism varies across different disciplines. The way the theologian conceives it is different from the way the political scientist or the philosopher does.

It evokes ideas of irony, disruption, difference, discontinuity, playfulness, parody, hyper-reality and simulation. It has been, for some, a radicalization of modern art that has pushed avant-garde experimentation to new limits, and for others a democratization of cultural studies that has allowed critics to pay much attention to, and place as much value in popular entertainment as it does the old masters. (Malpas, 2005:7)

According to Malpas, postmodernism is oriented towards openness while modernism is more rigid and closed in its alternatives. Marie states, despite their critical approach to modernism, postmodernists failed to be self-reflexive. First, says Marie, anti-theory stance of the postmodernists is itself theoretical.

Second, though they were against intellectual tools like reason, logic, and rationality, they have employed such tools in their analyses. For example, deconstruction is a highly logical, reasoned, and analytical process. The other paradox is their failure to harmonize their views of not prioritizing one over the other with their suggestion to focus on the marginalized, the oppressed, and the silenced.

Postmodernists are also criticized for adopting both linguistic determinacy and linguistic indeterminacy. Linguistic determinacy says, language explains everything which in this case language becomes the world. If language determines everything, according to some critics of postmodernism, postmodernists are wrong in placing language at the top and the social at the bottom. If language is relative, as linguistic indeterminacy says, then our knowledge claims are without foundation.

Given communication is a big issue in this context both affirmative and the skeptical postmodernists have their own particular positions. The affirmatives state the difficulty we have in communication, while the skeptics declare the imperfection of communication. This is because words never mean what we think. But, this position of the skeptics, for Marie, fails to see successes in communication. Let alone others, deconstruction in its postmodern sense is possible given that such communication is possible.

Postmodernism as an intellectual movement of the 20thc have its own contributions and shortcomings. Let me begin with some of its contributions and then I will proceed to its shortcomings. Modernity which was the point of departure for the whole movement of postmodernism to get started claimed that it is a rational and critical movement. However, as many scholars argue, modernity in its attempts to establish itself failed to be self critical and sufficiently rational.

This specifically is true in modernity driven relation of the West with the non-western world. In this regard, postmodernism, I think, is much more critical than modernity was. It tried to see all parts of the circle. Reality is perceived from different perspectives using various mechanisms.

This in turn has strongly helped the notion of diversity of views, in general beings, to flourish. The move towards more knowledge is more likely in postmodernity than in modernity, which followed a designed and unidirectional path. The notion of questioning the given which is one of the features of modernity, I think, reached its zenith in postmodernism. Postmodernism in addition to all these was also a liberating movement. It tried to liberate those who were under the shadow and the manipulation of western based narratives of modernity. This in turn has paved the way for many excluded others to see themselves as a component part of the whole.

Despite all these contributions postmodernism failed to see some topics that it should. Though it left a sufficient room for the being of the other, it failed to manage and ponder how these others should interact. Postmodernism is problematic for it assumes that culture is a self fulfilled and a complete whole. This has made critique from outside impossible.

Postmodernism in its attempt to be consistent made itself anti-foundational, unlike modernity. However, this attempt to be anti-foundational itself is foundational. This is self contradiction. Even if postmodernism is successful in being anti-foundational, it left us no direction to go to. It seems that it is a state of chaos. Can we have a world free of hierarchies and a standard that postmodernism is against? How could all things be relative?

For the main reason that it is against any imposed identity, and because of its deconstructivist orientation, postmodernism could be seen as a liberating movement. Though the liberation of the other is one of the accomplishments of postmodernism; this liberation which basically is done by negating the narratives of modernity failed to see the others` liberation from other perspectives like economics. The degree to which the liberation of the other is concrete is questionable.

Anyone who has an exposure to the overall postmodern agenda can easily detect that there is a relativist paradigm established by postmodernism and postmodern thinkers. Equating postmodernism with relativism would be oversimplification for postmodernism carried more luggage than relativism.

But, given that there is a strong spirit of relativism in postmodernism it would be good to see what relativism, especially cultural relativism is and then proceed to a discussion on their relationship.

2.1.2. Cultural Relativism

According to Caleb Rosado, cultural relativism is, “the idea that each culture or ethnic group is to be evaluated on the basis of its own values and norms of behavior and not on the basis of those of another culture or ethnic group.” (Rosado, 1994:4)

Furthermore, Melville Herskovits contends that, the values by which people judge their actions are relative to the specific cultural learning they have passed through. Beyond the questions of morals, cultural relativism, additionally deals with matters of time, space, volume and differences in the way we perceive and understand things.

To avoid the dilemma that could be faced with asserting cultural relativism as the ruling order, Rosado introduced two notions of cultural relativism. They are intra-cultural and cross-cultural relativism. In most cases, he says, it is the failure to distinguish these types of relativism that places cultural relativism in a trouble. “But the problem here is the failure to realize that the principle of cultural relativism only has relevance across cultures and not within one culture.” (Rosado, 1994:5)

According to Rosado, that is why we do not see societies being in chaos. If intra-cultural relativism would have been true and there was not any common ground of judgment the chaos that has been imagined by critics of cultural relativism would have been there. But, every society has a common ground for judging the behaviors of its members.

Every society has its own absolutes and universals, Rosado states. Absolutes are fixed values which are deemed to have invariable status, but are specific to cultures. Universals on the contrary are culture transcendent. “Absolutes are the way specific cultures implement universals in their particular way.

Take modesty for example. “Every society has the universal principle of modesty. But, what passes for modesty in one society, say for example in Arab societies in the middle east, is not what passes for modesty in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil or in Malibu beach in California” (Rosado, 1994:6)

Despite the presence of such common concepts and ideas among cultures, every culture has its own way of evaluating and sanctioning the actions and deeds of its members. Denying that such grounds to judgment are context specific would be a blind judgment, given that the comparison is cross- cultural. “Morality is universal, and so is the enjoyment of beauty, and some standard for truth. The many forms these concepts take, however, are but products of the particular historical experience of the societies that manifest them.” (Herskovits in Rosado, 1994:6)

Contending that each cultural value and practice should be seen and evaluated based on its own socio- historical context does not mean that all cultural practices are equally valid. Rosado adds, for instance, steel axe and plow are better than stone and wooden ones; Western medicine is more effective in eradicating diseases than witches. Rosado using Henry Bagish argues that this is not an ethnocentric perspective rather a pragmatic principle which tries to identify the one that works better from the one which does not. Based on this contention Rosado concludes that all cultural practices and values are not equally valid.

Rosado talks how we can combat evils that could possibly be committed in a name of absolutes. For instance he mentions the extermination of the Jews by Hitler, and Blacks in South Africa deprived of their basic human rights. His remedy for such problems appeals to those rights and responsibilities we call human (rights).

In circumstances where absolutes destroy universal values normally known as human rights, what we need to do is to move against any of such dehumanizing efforts, and work together to fasten their collapse. Any of these struggles should not aim at showing that we are better than them for there is no any culture which is free of such evils in history.

Despite its constructive contributions cultural relativism, according to some scholars, is problematic. For Rosado, cultural relativism tries to see reality from a narrow point of view. As Abraham Kaplan states it, this is the law of the instrument. The main contention we have here states that, the instrument we have determines both the problem and solution.

According to Rosado, this notion of cultural relativism reserves a special position to the idea of culture. If we are to argue as sociology and anthropology did, that all experience is culturally conditioned then this implies that culture is closed and a self-intelligible system.

For Rosado, culture is not the only but one of the perspectives to look at reality. The social sciences notion of cultural relativism is one point of view of looking at reality. The social sciences, Rosado says, did not consider the divine perspective in their attempt to understand human moral conduct. Culture, for Rosado, is not the one and only condition of human experience.

Rosado concludes, given that today`s world is multicultural and most people are socialized within an ethnocentric perspective, cultural relativism is so crucial in tackling the problems we might encounter in this regard. He states the importance of transcending our racial, ethnic, gender, cultural and socio-political reality and be with humankind across the world, at all levels of human need. This would be possible when our educational approach is multicultural.

The idea of multiculturalism assumes the notion of diversity in it. According to Bhiku Parekh, multicultural education is a critique of Euro-centrism and its grains of mono-culturalism. Euro-centrism once established itself based on various concrete factors and mere assumptions, it tried to totally negate others and their overall being. In connection to

this, most currently existing educational systems reflect the narrated greatness and uniqueness of European civilization while underestimating others` contributions. Parekh states that, such a system is problematic.

This is because such a system is unlikely to provoke students` intellectual curiosity about other cultures. Monocultural education limits students` exposure to other cultures and/or may fail to present things in complimentary way. Alternatives are blocked.

“Monocultural education also stunts the growth of the critical faculty. Students taught to look at the world from the narrow perspectives of their own cultures are bound to reject all that cannot be accommodated within categories. They are likely to judge other cultures and societies by the norms and standards of their own, and find them odd and even worthless” (Parekh, 2006:226)

Monocultural education can also be a foundation for arrogance, insensitivity and racism. Furthermore, those who are with little knowledge of the other forms of knowledge and other societies are prone to the danger of superficial generalizations and stereotypes. Any educational system can free its pupils from such evils by making itself multicultural.

A multiculturally oriented educational system motivates intellectual curiosity, moral humanity, respect for others and sensitivity to the different ways of life of others. In general, any irrational and intolerable centrism should not be allowed.

I think multiculturalism is more close to postmodernism than interculturalism. This is because multiculturalism tends to defend particularity more than intercultural philosophy did. Both multiculturalism and intercultural philosophy acknowledge the unity and diversity of human beings/ cultures. However, intercultural philosophy in its orientation favors the universal which is the result of a polylogue among the particulars. Additionally, both multiculturalism and intercultural philosophy are against any kind of centrism including Euro-centrism.

In addition to making the educational system multicultural, we also need to construct a possible conversation between the parts of this system.

“Properly understood and freed from the polemical exaggerations of its advocates and detractors, multicultural education is an education in freedom, both in the sense of freedom from ethnocentric prejudices and biases and freedom to explore and learn from other cultures and perspectives. The two freedoms are inseparable, for one cannot be free from an ethnocentric perspective unless one has access to others, and one lacks such an access if one remains trapped within the confines of one’s own perspective.” (Parekh: 2006:230)

Replying to Brian Barry’s critique which is in favor of homogenous way of life, Parekh says, “... some people might prefer to die in cause of Allah rather than stay alive in a secular society, define freedom and slavery differently to him and prefer a theocracy to freedom in a morally corrupt society, reject religious freedom as a temptation to apostasy, choose like the gypsies and indigenous people to acquire traditional skills rather than modern education....” (Parekh, 2006:347)

Parekh states that, Barry simply asserted that some human values are valid in a context transcendent manner. So that everyone needs to obey them without any hesitation. According to Barry, multiculturalism assumed that culture is the central fact of moral and political life and is committed to all that follows from this.

Parekh in connection to this says, culture as Barry states is not something of marginal importance. Most importantly human nature which Barry thought could be used to explain human behavior does not exist in its raw form and is inextricably molded and tamed by culture.

2.2. Hermeneutics as the affirmation of the Other

2.2.1. Tradition and Historicity

Our attempts to have meaning should not only stick to history transcendent and objective elements. Historicity's concern is about concrete temporal circumstances of humans. These concrete circumstances are not things to arise in a vacuum but they are the results of the interaction of humans with nature, with other human beings and with God. It is in this regard that human history is important, in providing the context in which one perceives the values in a certain tradition and projects towards the future.

Of the points that could be stated about the relationship of modernity and tradition, one is, modernity with the aim of establishing a different tradition had rejected the previously existed tradition as out of date and unenlightened, as imposed by will and as anti-freedom in different aspects of life including: the social, economic and political. It is such degrading characterization of tradition that made Hans George Gadamer to reconstruct this notion of tradition.

Gadamer in his attempt to rediscover the notion of tradition tried to see those things which are essential to the community within which that tradition came into being. Continuing his discussion he talks about community and discovery. If man was a solitary being there was not such a thing as tradition.

In line with this, John Caputo says, our experience begins before birth in our mother's womb. As a result of birth our experience expands into a broader context. So, what is true to our life is its embeddedness in social and historical situations. We do not live alone but we live with others.

So, Gadamer says, that absolute knowledge merely and without condition, regarding oneself or others, is not possible: the knower always appeals to his unique existence in time and space. For our vision to be a vision capable of bringing the good to all ages it must reflect or include the whole of human experience. In the process of learning, trial and error what constitutes tradition is the cumulative effect of this overall process.

So, tradition is like a laboratory where various theses, beliefs and values are tested, left and held. Tradition for Gadamer then is not simply everything that ever happened: it is rather what appears significant. In general, for a tradition to speak of its different aspects it needs someone who can speak for it, it needs someone who can describe it properly.

Gadamer like Tsenay contends our ancestors are really important in our attempts to understand ourselves. It is what they have developed and communicated to us that enable us to extract something new from our heritage, to evaluate our present, and figure out our future.

The strong connection of human learning with tradition enabled the defense of tradition from this perspective. Tradition has been characterized as an impediment to freedom and objectivity. Given that we learn from each other, dependence upon others is natural. But, the dependence we have here is not a simple obedience to the will of others, rather is related with their relative excellence in a certain way.

The source of this authority is not something unknown but is based on their capabilities. This capability needs to be complemented by reasonable and free recognition of others. So, tradition`s real basis and the essence of authority in it are also part of the defense of a tradition. In connection to this argument, I think, sometimes the knowledge you have may not be recognized for it deviates from the tradition`s definition of what knowledge is. However, there are also situations in which your knowledge may force recognition.

What is of big worth here is not the content but tradition`s relation to the present. There are situations in which life becomes routine, simple repetition of the past, and this may make life challenge less, without progress and hope. So, novelty is absent.

A tradition could be perfected when there is recognition of novelty. This perfection is to be achieved not by opposition to reality rather by its temporal unfolding. In connection to this, we can say that human beings both created and are created by this dynamic physical and social environment. With regard to this notion of the good in relation to historicity, Gadamer says, any talk about the good would be better meaningful if we talk about it in terms concrete circumstances. The various general principles of ethics are required to be

neither purely theoretical nor a simple inheritance from the past. Instead, they need to be helpful in being morally conscious of concrete situations.

In general, application is not something that follows or which is the accidental part of understanding but rather co-determines this understanding from the beginning. It is not that you understand and then apply it but it is while you apply it that you understand it.

“Moral consciousness must seek to understand the good, not as an ideal to be known and then applied, but rather by and in relating this to oneself as sharing the concerns for others. In this light our sense of unity with others begins to appear as a condition for applying our tradition, that is, for enabling it to live in our day.” (McClean, 2003:11)

In an attempt to produce meaning this interplay of part and whole should be taken into account. Having this in mind Gadamer says that, look for instance, a paragraph from today’s newspaper. The way we approach this paragraph is as a whole; e.g. as being about rice farming, this is because only a unity of meaning is intelligible. We can understand number three (3) only if there are three units. But, primarily, our understanding is about three (3) than the three (3) units. So, understanding should be directed to the whole. We always work in terms of complete notions. This holds for a text, culture and tradition.

In the above stated example, before trying to understand all the individual components we try to develop a general meaning on the basis of its first words, the previous context or both. As we continue to read all the parts of the paragraph we reassess our previous understanding of the whole in terms of the parts and the parts in terms of the whole, until things appear to fit and be clear.

The way we understand the world and our existence in it is part of the way we try to understand part of a text. The relationship between part and whole is not one way. This is to mean, the interpreter may represent the more general perspective (as reflected in the pre-understanding) while the text is to be a part. Or the text (as the sound of the tradition) may be the whole while the interpreter is a part (grasping each meaning).

To sum up, tradition and historicity are very much central to the overall project of hermeneutics. Tradition which is part of history is to be interpreted via hermeneutics. Tradition is not something to be formed easily and in a short period of time. The long established customs, habits and values of a community constitute its tradition. This tradition is part of the community's history. It is this history of a tradition that is to be appropriated to our present situation. Tradition as Gadamer states it is a place where we test, leave and uphold our various values and beliefs. However, a tradition could still continue with its defects.

2.2.2. The Origin and Account of the Other

Dussel says beginning from Columbus's "discovery" of the new world it is possible to see the confrontation between western Christian self representation and the emergence of other beings at the boundary line of its definition of mankind. In line with this, it is Tzvetan Todorov's work "*The conquest of America (1984)*" that could be used as a point of reference for showing the first written western attitude towards Native American cultures.

Generally speaking there are two ways through which this relationship between cultures passes. The first one is the one that sees extreme similarity in the other culture. The other culture is regarded as one's equal and like oneself.

In this case, the other's identity is denied either at the level of existence or at that of cultural practices. The other way is the one in which unconscious forms of cultural dialogue may take place. In such cases things are more of intuitive. The analysis we have in this case comes to see the other as subject which is similar but not the same with oneself.

This notion of otherness or the other is very old or is not a recent phenomenon. When we look back to its first origin I see that it began alongside the creation of human beings and the universe. Specifically speaking, Christianity and the bible entitled man to subdue nature and its various elements. This I think could be seen as the first notion of otherness. In most cases human beings in this totality are seen as masters rather than part of the

whole. Human beings` place in this principle is at the center. They are given the authority to exploit nature as possible as they can. Apart from this together with the formation of different societies with different structures, various sections of this society are identified as the other. This notion of otherness is not limited within one`s own society or culture, but it also transcends the horizon of one`s own culture and judges other cultures as others.

Otherness emerges in a shared field where similarity and dissimilarity begin to dialogue. Among other things this notion of radical otherness cannot be the basis for the emergence of the other for it makes cultures uninterested in each other. Gadamer states that, this idea of radical alterity is impossible for our language based pre-understanding allows us to understand only those things which fit the contents of our experience and conceptual schemes. If radical otherness is true then experience of the other would by no means be knowable to us.

The other`s emergence could also be based on various social and cultural factors. First, based on axiological or valuational comparison we level the other as our equal, superior or inferior. Second, a praxeological level, we either approach or distance ourselves from the other, we either submit to the other, want the others` submission or undifferentiated neutrality. Third is an epistemic level with an endless gradation (transition) between the lower and highest states of knowledge of the other`s identity. Colonial discourse can be an example for this.

For Emmanuel Levinas and Gadamer the other is different not only from me, but from things and from others too. This account of the other enables us to understand the double condition of the other as both ego and other in relation to me. In line with this idea of the other Kogler states, modern reason is capable of establishing itself as a universal only by excluding a non-sense that radically calls into question such reason.

According to Gadamer, the highest type (stage) of experience of the other is openness to the other. This is a commitment to experience the other as truly the other in a conversational mode. Not to overlook his claim, but to listen to what s/he has to say to us. Gadamer underscores that hermeneutic understanding is always self understanding,

which implies that subjective identity is to be looked for in an intersubjective communication.

In *Madness and Civilization*, Foucault deals with the questions of the historical conditions of emergence in the course of the 17th c of a distinction between reason and unreason, reason and madness. Before the mid 17th c and the coming of the 'classical age', madness or unreason and reason itself, according to Foucault's observation were relatively integrated phenomena. Reference to madness was not made from the point of view of reason, madness was not judged to be ineluctably associated with unreason.

Foucault himself says, madness is itself the radically negative, the unthinkable, that which completely eludes our understanding. Kogler adds, given Foucault has placed madness as the extreme other of reason and that reason lies in the innermost form of our speech and thought, the non-sense of madness literally cannot be brought into speech for us.

Kogler states that, madness, in so far as it constitutes a transhistorical, transrational mode of experience, cannot be "understood" within our discourse. For us it is a meaningless language, a non-language, signs that neither belong to a subject nor refer to an object. So, madness is a pure language, without sense or reference.

It is true that this notion of otherness is related with one's identity. Talking about the conditions for the emergence of identity, Taylor says: "Our identity requires recognition by others". Therefore "to deny recognition is a form of oppression". This allows Taylor to make a nice description of authenticity as the right to creation, to invention, discovery, and originality of the opposition to the rules of society. (Dussel, 1996:142)

Taylor in his work entitled "*The politics of recognition*" raises the issue of "universal recognition of difference". By broadening the horizon of modernity Taylor talks about, a sustained conversation and struggle with the 'other'.

The other in Taylor is described as the one who is oppressed in the totality, as a functional part (object), and this oppression includes negation of the other's interests. In every communication community which is oriented to ends in its ethical approach there is always the other. The other is justified from the perspective of the good.

As the result of the ethnocentric tendency in all cultures there is always the other. For Aristotle the slave, for Thomas Aquinas the serf, for Adam Smith the workers are others. All of these others are invisible in every totality, life world or a given ethos. Despite the fact that the notion of the good is used to negate the other's being the good is not always context transcendent, the telos or good of a culture, of a totality, cannot be a foundation to judge morality of acts and behaviors in all systems. The good is not the same everywhere. It could also be civilization, reason, technology, happiness or any other.

2.2.3. Ethical and Methodological Recognition of the Other

Understanding is not only about reaching a consensus. But, if not, the implication is either an agreement is reached through understanding or the failure to reach agreement should be explained in terms of an objectifying account of the other. If the interpreter began with a different premise from the interpreted or if these two proceed from different premises then a fusion of subject matter cannot occur.

In line with this Gadamer says, the other is methodologically accepted as another subject through our recognition of his own self-understanding only as long as it fits into our ontological premises.

Gadamer calls the first way of experiencing the other "knowledge of human nature." By this Gadamer means, it is a situation in which in our interaction with fellow individuals, we analyze and have in mind in advance the behavior of these people. This specifically is the case in the empirical social sciences which are very much obsessed with the model of the natural sciences. This employment of the methods of the natural sciences smashed man's subjective color and also degraded him from an end to a means.

The second form of experience of the other is not something unchanging but something individual. Though the other is accepted as a person s/he is subject to the claim that, we can tell you who you are rather than you tell us who you are.

As compared to the way to other is experienced previously, that is, calculating and predicting the others' behavior, this one is better. However, the significance of experiencing the other in relation to one's own being has not moved a step further.

The third form of experience conceives the encounter with the other as a dialogue. Such an experience is possible when there is fundamental openness to the knowledge and claims of the other. At the level of hermeneutic understanding this dialogue takes into account a historically effected consciousness, which understands itself as limited to and dependent on the tradition's context.

To be an interpreter is not to be a judge. This again does not mean simply acknowledging the past in its otherness but, in a sense that I can extract something from it. "Opening oneself to the truth claims of the other is therefore a moral imperative that follows from the dialogic others' status as a human subject". (Kogler, 1996:146)

Real historical thinking must take into account its own historicity. It is only when this happens that historical thinking stops treating the other as a historical object and comes to see the object as the counter part of itself rather than an object at all.

For Gadamer, the common basis of hermeneutic understanding is produced through language, and finds its true form of existence in conversation. Given that it is with a person that we enter into in a certain dialogue this experience or the process of understanding the other should be a moral action or phenomenon. This moral notion which mainly focuses on reciprocal recognition is used by Gadamer as normative guide for criticizing those methodological concepts that are incapable of doing justice to this moral dimension.

According to Kogler, Gadamer's move to mediate hermeneutic understanding with the idea of moral recognition of the other is not well attuned. The substantial equality which mainly is expressed in terms of the agreement on basic assumptions is taken to be the criterion in the process of recognizing the other. The acceptance of the other is based on the possibility of reconciliation with oneself. So, the other simply is the mirror image of the self.

So, taking this contention into account, Kogler declares, Gadamer's "hermeneutic morality" is only partially successful in its attempt to establish the reciprocal recognition of the parties in a dialogue. The rationality of the other is approved based on one's own account of rationality.

The equality of the other should entail its acceptance as a historical-cultural and unique part than limiting its recognition to a substantial commonality of shared truth. So, an important option to this Gadamerian failure is the hermeneutically and dialogically possible recognition of plurality of views.

In this regard Habermas's moral universalism enables the dialogical recognition of the other. Habermas says:

What, then, does universalism mean? It suggests that we relativize our own form of existence to legitimate claims of other forms of life, that we grant the same rights to others with all their, idiosyncrasies and incomprehensible behavior, that we do not obstinately insist up on universalization of our own identity, that we do not exclude that which is deviant, that the domains of tolerance should become infinitely larger than they are today-all of this is involved in moral universalism (Habermas in Kogler, 1996:148-49).

This notion of moral recognition of the other has opened up the dimension of acceptance. But, according to Kogler, this moral recognition should not be directly related to the substantial identity of shared truth conceptions. What is required instead is a hermeneutic

competence that allows us to see things with the eyes of the other and to admit such perceptions as “situationally valid” despite their inconsistency with our views.

Submission to envisioned realities of both sides is not the intention here. Rather by bridging the hermeneutic horizons of meaning using common conceptions tries to encounter the others’ world as a possible possibility.

Rather than continuing with his previous biased position the philosopher of the center now says, there are other cultures which have developed their own conception of the good, the holy, and the beautiful and this implies that they deserve our respect and recognition. Denial of this would be an extreme arrogance. At the same time we need to affirm we are far and have a different horizon than the others.

For Habermas, Gadamer’s most central insight is that we may establish the impossibility of objectifying the others’ meaning contexts by analyzing the intrinsic connection between linguistic meaning and the knowledge one takes to be true.

There is this debate whether it possible to have a system in which everyone can participate. According to Apel, talking in context of what we call the principium excisions this notion of “all the possibly affected” becomes ethically problematic. This is due to the reason that there will always be excluded affected. Every affected may not become a real participant.

Dussell says, so we are facing a contradiction for we have said, though all the affected always have the right to take part in the real communication there are still excluded affected. It seems exclusion is inevitable and there is someone always to be taken as the other. So, every agreement from this point of view is not only falsifiable and temporal but also defective for it still has left someone out.

Every genuine participant in a real communication community should ask: whom could we have excluded? It is this recognition and respect of the other that enables him to participate in the community that it emerged as the other. Giving respect and recognition

to the other is the ethical act or the practical reason that enables the other to take part in the argumentation, with rights and duties.

Though there are different types of others in different systems, liberation philosophy transcending this relativism comes with an imperative that transcends such limitation. The idea is to liberate the oppressed or the dehumanized other. This notion of liberation is absolute in a sense that it works in and for every existential situation, and it also is practical or concrete. In philosophy of liberation we have the logic of totality which is described as totalization and the logic of alterity, which is about how this other as the oppressed is discovered.

Though discourse ethics believes that we as participants in practical discourse could agree on the validity of norms by a moral argumentation this is not always the case for there are still excluded affected, and practically speaking the practicality of discourse ethics is in question. So, right at this moment, the moment at which discourse ethics realizes its limitations, liberation philosophy transcending this comes and deals with all the 'others'.

So, what we need is an ethics of action rather than a mere moral consciousness. So, as compared to discourse ethics liberation philosophy I think is revolutionary.

2.2.4. Pre-understanding, Understanding and Interpretation

Despite the historical-temporal distance which really is perceived as a productive source of understanding and meaning, the historicist wants to methodically overcome or remove this distance so as to enable the "true" meaning.

In our attempt to understand a written tradition what we simply assume in the meaning we discover may not be the same with the author's intension. Likewise, events of history do not in general manifest any agreement with the subjective ideas of the person who stands and acts with in history. Meaning or the sense of a text is not always bound by the author's intention. This again has to do with the multiple possibilities to interpret and understand a text.

Given the background of historical situatedness of meaning one may contend, a genuine hermeneutic task should dwell on opening up and emptying this situatedness in the process of reconstructing the original meaning, as it makes sense to the contemporary reader and actor. Furthermore, it would be a paradox for any hermeneutic process when it fails to admit its own historical situatedness because, hermeneutically produced knowledge is characterized by an ineliminable perspectivity that emerges from the positionality of the interpreter. It is this perspectivity that enables historical knowledge as such.

A hermeneutically oriented production of meaning is strongly related with the possibilities or significances of appropriating the meaning to be produced. So, meaning is produced in relation to the context within which that it could possibly function. Thus, specific perspectives of significance are the result of further historical development and ever new interpretations.

This meaning which is developed in a way that it can make sense to our present presence is itself shaped in some sort of history specific pre-understanding. So, what could be inferred from this is that every attempt at interpretation is grounded in a historical situation. This notion is totally out of the scope of the original textual meaning approach. This later approach tries to pull the interpreter out of his situatedness.

Understanding is an event which is embedded in historical events, though these events are not under the control of the interpreter; but this alone is not enough to consider understanding as an event. It is certain that understanding depends on a historically produced pre-understanding.

However, it may work to free itself from such type of dependence. Understanding is possible when historical events are taken into account. Given that the interpreter cannot control these historical events understanding still continues to be a trans-subjective event.

Gadamer adds this is also due to the reason that this meaning is always jointly determined by the historical situation of the interpreter and by the totality of the objective course of history. The historical experiences of ancestors are part of the interpreter's attempt to reappropriate a textual or historically documented meaning.

Taking the interpreter as a free consciousness over against the tradition or as someone capable of objectively comparing his worldview with some earlier worldview is not correct. Rather the interpreter's attempt to understand himself and his present is always inseparable from symbolically constructed and historically shaped meanings.

So, thinking of an interpreter who is freely anti-tradition would be unpractical. Rather the interpreter is compelled to encounter tradition given his current horizon or situationally pre-structured perspectives. So, the true structure of the hermeneutic circle is not the one that looks objective meaning of earlier texts but the one that is grounded in pre-understanding, the contents of which are shaped through tradition.

Though we live with our own pre-understandings, knowing that we live with such and such pre-understandings by our own is impossible. Any such realization of one's own pre-understanding is possible through the confrontations with other's meaning. So, it is the experience of difference that enables the unconscious to be conscious. This notion that prejudgments should have to be free from certain unconsciousness does not imply that conscious judgments are labeled as false rather the unconscious background should be liberated from such darkness and illusion.

Of the first and most important things that uncover the silent aspects of the interpreter's pre-understandings, the voice of the other is one. It is impossible for the interpreter to sort out his productive prejudices. Rather s/he simply moves to understand a certain tradition based on his prejudices that hinder her/him and lead to misunderstandings. This separation of productive prejudices from unproductive prejudices must take place in the process of understanding. The unproductive prejudices are those that lead to misunderstanding.

Gadamer's claim that we need pre-understanding aims at adjusting interpretive consciousness to the alterity of the other. It is in relation to the interpreter's own conception of truth that the text's truth could be brought.

That is why a hermeneutically trained consciousness must be, from the start sensitive to the text's alterity. But this kind of sensitivity involves neither neutrality with respect to content nor extinction of one's own fore-meanings and prejudices. The important thing is to be aware of one's own bias, so the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one's own fore-meanings. (Kogler, 1996:142)

The question here is how can we accomplish both of these tasks? At the first place we are required to disclose our own orientations. Second, we also need to corroborate the other's expressions as true statement and realize their validity for us too. Kogler asks how we can, however, take up such an external position with regard to our own thought. And, in which symbolic space, if any, can such an understanding take root, which as it were turns against itself and which tries from within its own thought to experience the exteriority of itself?

The overall hermeneutic process may not end up with a unified, single and shared account of truth. But, the possibilities in the other's world could be challenges to our taken for granted views and practices.

Kogler says, Habermas interprets Gadamerian fore-conception in pragmatist and Wittgenstein influenced way and that is why he states, in connection to this idea of virtual participation in the corresponding meaning and action contexts, although the interpreter understands and accepts most of the statements in his own life worldly context without clear justification, in case of disturbed communication (or where there is gap) relating to the unseen (unexperienced) features of distant times, forms of life and cultures, he must employ a special effort to understand the possible reasons for the corresponding assertions.

Kogler forwards, an attempt to hermeneutically bridge various meaning contexts would take us to the incommensurability and incompatibility of various norms. In line with this, Kogler says, having a common world or subject matter is important in the conversation we make for it serves us as a point of reference. But, this identification of a common subject matter is not a guarantee for the commonality of evaluative standards.

Kogler suggests, it is important to underline, however that critical interpretation, after it has enabled us to radically distance ourselves from the taken for granted assumptions and practices, allows a positive reconstruction and reaffirmation of our ideas and actions. It is obvious that during such reaffirmation there is a sort of acceptance or rejection of views and assumptions. However, Kogler says, immediate evaluation in terms of truth or moral rightness should not at the outset be part of hermeneutic encounters. This is because such immediate judgments are the results of immediate appeals to our assumed conceptions and practices.

Understanding meaning and passing judgments do not have to be undertaken simultaneously but follow each other in a methodology that is sensitive to other evaluative standards and symbolic orders. Kogler continues if we want to comprehend another symbolic order in its internal coherence, we should not adopt as our guiding interpretive principle that which counts as “reality” in our own world.

Historical and intercultural understanding possesses a methodological potential for uncovering power relations on the part of ourselves and others. As a result of the one sided shift in hermeneutic reflection on history and culture, power is seen as an important topic only within the dialogic dimension of interpretation and is ignored as insignificant in the way symbolic relations work. So, the notion of power is left undeveloped. Therefore, a dialogically framed and at the same time power-critical hermeneutics, Kogler says, has the task of clarifying how, with an adequate appreciation for the self-understanding of other epochs and cultures, an analysis of power in spite of that remains possible.

Gadamer argues that, the consciousness of the interpreter is grounded in his pre-understanding, which in turn is grounded in language. So, interpretive understanding is possible within a linguistic-ontological framework. The insights understanding gains, beyond any subjective control make it a trans-subjective event. The interpreting subject does not determine by himself what goes on.

2.2.5. Hermeneutics, Discourse Analysis and Grounding

Kogler says, “A symbolic order involves a system of conceptions that, through fundamental assumptions about the nature of the related concepts, have a common form.” (Kogler, 1996:180)

It is this form that provides the framework to the way we experience different things including things, persons, events and immaterial entities. As Geertz states understanding of symbolic orders (I think are worldviews) has to do with cultures. This idea of symbolic order is seen as the one that represents historically transmitted patterns of meaning which are embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions which are expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life.

Given that discourse represents “the totality of statements that through regulative function, that is, through a common ontological premise that functions as engendering rule, are joined together and linked to a coherent meaning context.” (Kogler, 1996:181)

So, any analysis of symbolic orders is possible with the analysis of this discourse. This is due to the reason that, meanings are the results of the union of concepts and conceptions in a given cultural context and these cultural contexts in turn are the results of symbolic presuppositions at a level of discourse, as a system of statements.

Symbolic orders based on what they assume, suggest and project are deemed to be subjects of critique. Given that historical critique of symbolic orders always stands within a context of discourses related to reality and experience, such critique should start first by explaining the rule structure of one’s own thought, action and experience.

Methodological historicism taking this into account tries to identify the contingencies and specificities of discourses, which claim to speak nothing other than truth and to grasp nothing other than reality.

In line with this, methodological historicism opens the way for bringing the validity claims of an order into question. This notion in general is described as methodological skepticism. The focus of methodological skepticism is not the skeptical arguments of the philosophical tradition rather the practical ethical recognition that our conceptual schemes may be determined by power structures.

Rather than focusing on how the order and the various concepts and conceptions we live by and in came about, we in most cases find ourselves or our consciousness dwelling on the intentional and content related notions of these ideas/terms. In line with this Kogler using Foucault says:

“Illness, madness and sex are just what we think about. And through this intentional, object and content-related orientation, our consciousness gets lost in the content of thought and experience: we are unable to comprehend the rules of disclosure that underlie and ontologically make possible this conception order in fact, we remain entirely unaware of this dimension of our experience” (Kogler, 1996: 183)

The intension of the above quotation is to show that we are unconscious of those invisible forces which brought us to where we are in connection to our conceptions of these concepts. We simply remain in the content of thought and our experience. So, what we need is not an experience and awareness of the structuration (or the way our thought, experience and action is structured).

Natural understanding of things is not the one and only site that we need to visit. Rather we need to get out of this natural understanding and be on an “exteriority”. This exteriority should be more about a distantiated reconstruction of the structures implicitly guiding our interpretations than a renewed relation to lived experience. This exteriority is

necessary for unveiling the relations between concepts and the conceptions that govern these concepts as basic symbolic rules.

The way we perceive various notions like sexuality, life, madness and crime is like constructions of well-grounded or deep seated “predications” which remain undeveloped within our understanding and interaction with things. The symbolic authority of the physician, the biologist, or the psychologist can show itself as the product of specific rule systems, which determines the limit of the space of what can be stated or accepted seriously over against irrelevant assertions.

Kogler underlines, hermeneutics is primarily the term for a consciousness that recognizes that interpretive understanding must proceed from one’s own pre-understanding. Foucault basically is against the hermeneutic project. Foucault understands hermeneutics as an interpretive attempt which aims at restoring actual meaning contexts from distant historical contexts.

The importance of these meaning contexts is to be reconstructed by interpretively reading and productively understanding their semantic content. Furthermore, Foucault sees the interpretive attempt of hermeneutics as a doubling of meaning through interpretation.

Foucault adds hermeneutics gives its task to itself from within because, it gives expression to that which it has previously determined as the unsaid. This has to do, he continues, with the subjectivist theory of language and meaning, which in turn is related to religious revelations. Foucault declaring the possibility of meaning and subject free analysis of discourse, according to Kogler, commits a category mistake.

The question of coming up with a certain kind of meaning basically is methodological. What Foucault did in this regard is that he introduced subject free theories about language and statements. Meaning is left behind in or structure of statements is given priority over the meaning of a whole /meaning.

Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is specifically related to this problem of grounding discourse analysis, because, rather than focusing much on a subject related methodology it dwells more on an analysis of the universal and methodologically relevant pre-understanding.

Kogler says a distancing discourse aims not at a truth oriented fusion with other's meaning but at an awareness of the rules of disclosure that govern the other and us. He states that, the important question is whether understanding necessarily requires an affirmative attitude toward our own meaning, in as much as we cannot reject using our pre-understanding, that is, the knowledge we take to be true. Though we need to always depend on our own substantial pre-understanding this does not imply that we should think or understand the rationality and intelligence of the other in the same way as to ours.

According to Kogler, Gadamer and Habermas contend that, because we inescapably use our content related pre-understanding; we must openly evaluate the validity of the others' meaning. However, while Gadamer is about the effectuality of tradition, Habermas refers to the performative attitude essential in our life praxis itself, which directs our social being as communicative rationality.

In conclusion, despite the controversies on the way hermeneutics tried to establish the other, discourse and meaning, it is not possible to entirely reject such an orientation for it at least brought into question the objectivity and the objectifying move of European modernity and other different movements of similar spirit. Though there are still so many objectified others and their liberation is not yet realized, hermeneutics has at least created the awareness that there are people with their own history, tradition and horizon. It has created a space for the value of others. It enabled, at least theoretically, that the other's world and horizon could be faced as one possibility and a way to challenge many of the things which we think and take for granted about ourselves and others.

2.3. Inculturation via Hermeneutics

Antonio Gallo in his discussion of Hermeneutics and inculturation states that, “inculturation acts to achieve true communication with neighbors beyond one’s own culture, through dialogue and personal interchange.” (Gallo in Mclean, et al, 2003:69)

According to Gallo, engaging in an interchange among cultures requires overstepping one’s own boundaries or horizon and those of others so as to be in the region of mutual understanding. He adds, every culture has its own world, its own meaning of things and various events, so every move we make to someone’s culture is a move towards a world constructed by the communication of members of the group. In conclusion, the exposure and understanding of such truth/world is possible via hermeneutics.

Though hermeneutics is understood to be the interpretation of signs, symbols, words and body language such an understanding alone would not be enough for it disables our quest for truth beyond the signs and the symbols, which is one of its main tasks.

Hermeneutics` guidance should not only be seen from the point of view of things sensible to our senses, this is because it might work in some cases; especially when the concern is understanding the other culture. More emphasis should be given to truth claims which are internal to a given culture. The focus should be on the possession and identification of the truth of others.

An interpreter`s attempt to interpret a given culture is an activity which is directed towards the interpreter herself/himself. This is because the interpreter is moving towards a region which s/he is not familiar with.

In inculturation the individual or members of the group try to come up with an idea which can maintain and sustain the group`s survival or existence. These ideas, Gallo says, could be the idea of democracy, freedom, development and human rights.

One of the reasons for us to boldly assert the importance of hermeneutics in the process of reciprocal understanding among cultures is because there are a number of things which do not work for all cultures. In other words, things may not have absolute worth/value.

That is why hermeneutics is placed at the front of the main gate to this process of inculturation, which possibly is to follow the hermeneutic process.

“Hermeneutics in the broadest sense is an analysis of a text, a written thing.” (Gallo in Mclean, et al, 2003:71). This is not where hermeneutics finishes its task rather it also gives a careful look into the notion of culture, and the historical situation within which the words of a culture came into being. Gallo contends that, our experience of a text in hermeneutics is not only about the text but also about the truth of the text. Such an experience of the truth of the text is less immediate as compared to the words, the structure and the flow of the discourse which constitute the text.

Gallo in connection to interpretation talks about his notion of appropriation. Appropriation, he states, “is to create an “image” of /for ourselves with the truth of the text” (Gallo in Mclaen, et al, 2003:84). Throughout this process of appropriation any attempt to assume the truth of the text would make the mind of the text and the interpreter unfree or not independent. This notion of appropriation would lead us to what he calls the hermeneutic circle. This is a circle which implies that there is not only one truth. As we go higher and higher using the previously discovered truth we always come to a portion of truth that we are not familiar with.

Furthermore, this journey to the higher is getting more difficult and complicated. Despite the complications we have the passage to truth is not all in all blocked. The long journey through hermeneutics would result in inculturation which is its continuation.

This notion of inculturation in Gallo assumes that there is an ever increasing diversification or pluralism today than ever before. So, given that there is such diversification among cultures of the world, inculturation would be the way out, it is about harmonizing cultural relations, and maintaining the status quo.

The more there is diversification inculturation would be the task of the future. Lack of understanding is a favorable ground for mutual hostility than for tolerance and harmony. According to Gallo, building a real unity without dissolving differences needs the development of shared meanings. This is the real task of inculturation, Gallo says.

But, given social structures and arrangements vary across societies, meanings, even in hermeneutics, are historical and social constructs. How is it possible to produce such co-produced meanings? Would not the particularity of history, culture, social structure hinder the process of producing such shared meanings which are to serve as a foundation to unity?

Language is one of the grounds in which inculturation occurs. Shang Zhiyang in his discussion about the important connection between language and inculturation states the impossibility of the world without the presence of language. Living in the world is living in language which this imply the ontological worth of language. On the other side language also has a communicative function. “Man as social being needs communication, and communication needs language, human beings reach mutual understanding; with the aid of mutual understanding, human beings have creative power.” (Zhiyang in Mclean, et al, 2003:184)

According to Zhiyang, linguistic differences are one of the manifestations of cultural differences. The history, culture, games and the ways of entertainment of an ethnic group could be represented by the language and in the language of that group. Therefore, change of language entails change of elements of a culture either partially or all in all.

The continuity, transmission and integration of cultures needs language as its basis, this makes language the ground for interpreting one`s own or others` cultures. “The transmission of cultures is based on the pluralism of cultures. The transmission of cultures always takes place in the diverse cultures. This transmission causes the “inculturation” ” (Zhiyang in Mclean, et al, 2003:184)

Zhiyang gives more credit to an inculturation of ideas than the material one. Rather than an inculturation which happens in the material realm, it is the integration of ideas and different systems that creates successful inculturation.

According to Zhiyang, contemporary Western philosophy of language has two main divisions: the British-American philosophy of language advocated by Gottlob Frege, George Edward Moore and Bertrand Russell, the other division is led by Martin

Heidgger, Hans George Gadamer, and Paul Ricoeur. The first group believes that language has instrumental value, which is expressing things/ideas in a logical way. Meanwhile, the latter argue that language has ontological worth. Ludwig Wittgenstein shared the view of the second group, believing the cultural implications and the life meaning of language.

To demonstrate how communication and inculturation work Zhiyang brought into discussion Wittgenstein's reflections on what he called private language. Private language is a language that can be understood only by the speaker himself/herself. Wittgenstein identified two features of private language. The first is the words in such a language signify something only to the user of the language. Second, private language cannot be used for the purpose of communication.

But, if a user of private language assumes that s/he is using a language at all s/he has committed some mistakes. Primarily, belief in private sensations, Wittgenstein contends, a person's inner feelings cannot be private given that s/he can communicate his feelings to others.

The other mistake is a belief in private ostensive definitions. Wittgenstein says it is impossible to produce ostensive definitions through private language. The third one is a belief in obeying a rule privately. He says obeying a rule is always a public rule and practice. Thinking one is obeying a rule is different from obeying it. Therefore, the idea of private language is an illusion. Given all the above evidences the conclusion would be, inculturation and communication are not possible via private language.

For Wittgenstein, it is when you know the language games that you could possibly know how to use a certain language. Language games are not only ways of describing a language, but they are also part of our everyday usage of language.

The coming into being of new language games is not something new, which in turn implies that language games change. The overall implication we have here is that language is social, and language is shaped by customs and cultural life. Therefore, Zhiyang says, language is a cultural event.

So, any attempt to understand the other and oneself contains language as one of its main tools. Inculturation which is an attempt to understand one's own and the other's world using a hermeneutic approach could be effective given that we have shared ideas, concepts or categories. But, in the overall interaction of cultures we could notice some problems. For instance in an attempt to appropriate some ideas from other traditions we may abuse the central assumptions of the terms we tried to appropriate. An attempt to appropriate may result in loss of the underlying assumptions of the idea/term appropriated.

In the coming few pages I would like to forward some of my ideas concerning the topics I have tried to discuss in the previous sections of this chapter. Having discussed most of what has been said about postmodernism, hermeneutics and cultural relativism the next task would be showing how, at least theoretically, these philosophies arranged a room/place for the excluded, the oppressed, or in general the other. Modernity using its weapons, the Meta-narratives, tried to come up with a single model of everything which is functional everywhere. In doing so it denied the social, historical, political, economical and other specific contexts of the other (the excluded). Modernity and some of its scholars defined history in the way they want it to be and excluded others who have their own unique account of history as unfitting. However, postmodernism reacting against this modern conventional notion of history reduced history to the notion of everyday life of the individual.

Modern Western science beyond its contributions to humanity has also been used as a means of jeopardizing the existence of the other. By challenging the exclusive authenticity and legitimacy given to modern European science postmodernism states that, science is not free from prejudices and bias. Therefore, it is just one of the stories among the many and that it should not enjoy such a position.

Postmodernism's defense of the other is not all in all direct. But, all those things said by postmodernism opened a wide path to reestablish the other on its own specific grounds. Deconstruction, decentring, opposition to grand narratives as central to the postmodern

thesis provided a fertile ground for the other not to be governed by the questionable truth, that there is only one truth and model.

I think, if an authentic freedom is the goal of modernity any such goal can be achieved not by imposing what you think is correct rather by listening to the `corrects` of the other. The search for the better need not necessarily override the good of the others. Even if you have reached on the better, I do not think that it right to declare it as universal and transcendent of contexts. This implies that you should let others have their own truth, morals, beliefs and goods. I think if you are a genuine guardian of freedom this is the right way to guard it.

I argue that postmodernism, beyond arranging a room for the other seems uninterested in how these many others are to engage in any meaningful and inevitable interaction to bring the desired end (which I think should be hybridization). It seems that postmodernism is emphasizing separatist approach than the tentative one. So, despite its enormous contributions for the reestablishment of the other, postmodernism failed to sort out the way cultures should interact.

As Lyotard states it, those with better knowledge have more power than those with little knowledge. In the postmodern condition we have economically driven knowledge production. My point here is that, given the differences in knowledge producing capacity of nations/cultures what would the destiny of culture or cultural relations be?

Would not the epistemological and other consecutive supremacies of some nations hinder the goal we want to achieve? In other words can we have intercultural relations which are free of any employment of one`s own triumphs to assert one`s own supremacy and override others? Can intercultural relations only be about understanding each other? Is that where we stop? Do we not compare and move to the one we labeled the better?

Any rigid argument that we should not accept what is from the West, I think, is not plausible. Rejection of the West should not only be about that things we are encountering are from the West. I think the better should not always be the exclusive product of any single culture for that pulls us back to the previous situation; which is the supremacy of

the few over the many. Rather the better which is what human beings always looked for should be the product of the collaborative effort of at least some cultures, if not all.

According to most postmodern scholars, the modern notion of history is nothing more than the invention of the West, and is seen as incapable of saying something about the past to the present. Furthermore, history in its conventional sense simply worked to establish a myth of hierarchy, which is highly open to prejudices and biases. So, when it comes to the way history has been used by both hermeneutics and postmodernism in the process of reestablishing the excluded (the other), we can see a huge difference.

Hermeneutics, in its overall attempt to make sense of the past makes use of the conventional notion of history. In this regard hermeneutics` notion of history deviates from the notion of history in postmodernism.

Hermeneutics as the interpretation of the past has to make use of postmodernism`s deconstruction. Any failure to employ strict deconstruction may result in the interpretation of wrong or distorted information. Given that hermeneutics is not very much concerned with the content of history, an attempt to clarify one`s own horizon, discourse and project might end up in failure. This in turn could make the reestablishment of the other impossible.

I argue that, there are and have been a number of instances under which history could be falsely depicted or written. Our interpretation of such falsely written history would give more confusion than meaning. That is why we need the deconstruction of such deceptive arrangements.

Extreme relativism which is noticed among skeptical postmodernists and some radical relativists rather than reestablishing the other ends up in self-refutation. If the reestablishment of the other is the goal such a position is the worse to be advocated. Postmodernism, cultural relativism and hermeneutics using various mechanisms stood against the totalizing grand narratives of modernity.

Despite such strong efforts to reestablish the other (the excluded), the uniqueness and the identity of the other is not moving in the desired track. As compared to the modern period the other today is enjoying, at least theoretically, a favorable environment to reestablish itself and engage in further interaction.

However, the destiny of the other and factors affecting the interaction of the other with other many others has not been yet settled by all these philosophies. Basically, it could be argued that it is up to the culture to design the mechanisms that could help to go beyond assimilation and being a simple receiver. But, it seems to me that those countries that are in a nearly similar economic status, political situation and level of societal consciousness could use somewhat similar ways to challenge the present wave of Western hegemony.

It seems that it is a question of liberation. Liberating one`s own culture and oneself from simply being a receiver, and be producer and also exporter of one`s own culture. This basically has to do with a number of interconnected factors in the realm of politics, economy, power, and media.

Uniqueness and particularity are well celebrated by postmodernism, cultural relativism and hermeneutics but when it comes to practically grounding the excluded there is still a problem. The current pattern of intercultural relations has still continued holding up some at the top and the rest at the bottom.

We are not witnessing that cultures are equally participating in the formation of cultures which are to be the culture of the majority. This practical defect, I think, would give the ground to discuss the challenges and prospects of intercultural relations and philosophy. Furthermore, liberation philosophy would be one of my main topics in the next chapter. So that I can once again have a discussion about the excluded and some problems related to it.

Chapter Three

Beyond the Dichotomy

The discussion made in the previous chapters can be taken as an argument between two sides making different claims. Almost all the topics discussed in the first chapter in one way or the other try to establish a single and homogenous portrait of humanity using a particular model or way of being. In general an attempt to homogenize is so strong. Modernity, stories of the West about itself and others, cultural globalization and capitalism are all historical forces that pushed humanity to sameness which is not critical. By critical I mean: the sameness we are heading to is not a result of a rational dialogue among us. Rather it is an imitation or a forced choice of a culture disseminated from few producers of such cultures.

In opposition to this homogenizing tendency, the second chapter, attempted to show the attempts of some philosophies and discourses which valued diversity. Among others postmodernism, cultural relativism and hermeneutics were the major ones.

My point however is not only to show the arguments of these two sides but also discuss some other way out beyond the controversy. This way out is about how cultures could maintain their identity while contributing for the formation of a genuine universal culture of humanity. The very clear conclusion that we can reach by looking at the nature, content and relationship of cultures is totally different from the position established by both sides. Trying to establish a single model or homogenous culture is something difficult for there are incommensurable aspects of cultures. Thinking of cultures within the framework of radical incommensurability is also absurd for cultures share a number of things.

So, despite their contributions the arguments of those advocating homogeneity and heterogeneity are problematic for the main reason that cultures work the other way. That is they interact given that they are similar and also different. This is one of the grounds for the necessity of another alternative.

3.1. The Challenges and Prospects of Intercultural Philosophy

Franz Martin Wimmer who is one of the prominent scholars of intercultural philosophy asks whether intercultural philosophy is a new branch of philosophy or a new orientation in philosophy. According to Wimmer, philosophy should go beyond its western constructed cage, if it is to answer the questions of humanity. It is such capacity to transcend particularity that enables philosophy to realize authentic globalization.

Wimmer contends that, the overall representation and characterization of philosophy by the West ignored other voices. Non-westerners were excluded from the history of philosophy. Speaking of what necessitated intercultural dialogue and philosophy Adhar Ram Mall states that, though unanticipated the meeting of different cultures, philosophies and religions motivated an intensive and reciprocal dialogue which is inclusive of all. Philosophy which is of a general essence in what it connotes gives us the authority to speak about interculturality.

Corroborating Mall's argument Wimmer states that, philosophy has to reconstruct its own ideology so as to enable a genuine intercultural communication. It is such reconstruction that serves as a basis of polylogue. A polylogue as compared to a dialogue is a different activity. It is different for it is capable of entertaining multiple voices and participants. The term `poly` itself imply the diversity and the quantity of the participants. It also shows that there is a seat for anyone capable of entering into the conversation. Wimmer underlines that, doing a polylogue is much more complex than stating or suggesting it. Despite such difficulty, it is polylogue that enables us to experience, understand and use the thoughts of the other.

Mall in his argument about the relationship among cultures is against a separatist approach. In this regard, he contends that, speaking of any pure form of philosophy or culture is naive. Despite the fact that philosophies and cultures maintain their unique aspects influence among them is obvious. "If two things- for example, two cultures or philosophies-are just different, then they are two different instances of the general concept. If we take them to be radically different, then we are not entitled to use the same

general concept for both of them, for they are different as cultures and philosophies.”
(Mall, 2000:1)

I think any attempt to show that universal principles hold should not be done in a way that it erases irreducible particular truths. Wimmer in this regard states that, the philosophers` attempt to understand and articulate their understanding of the world is strongly related to their specific situation. However, their claims tend to be universal. This basically is a paradox, Wimmer says, given that they have developed their thoughts and philosophies in a certain language, history and culture specific contexts.

One of the main consequences of the increased meeting or contact of cultures today is the impossibility of asserting one`s own values as the one and only or as the universal. Wimmer suggested two possible ways out of such a paradox. The first one is to search for a single method of philosophizing that is free of specificities. The other way is the one that calls for the cultivation of ethnic particularities, and name that “philosophy”.

In opposition to the standards developed by the center, various cultures and traditions attempted to develop their own standards with the aim of cultural emancipation. It is against the universality claim of the West and western philosophers that ethnophilosophy tried to establish itself. Wimmer adds particularity and separateness in a sense that all cultures could have their own philosophies will erase the boundary line between the convincing and the manipulating, and between logic and rhetoric.

Though ethnophilosophy aimed at emancipating the excluded, it at the same time tried to realize this emancipation based on various concepts and methods of analysis of the West. Ethnophilosophy, Wimmer says, is a phenomenon which is not restricted to a certain region. It also opposes any transcultural authority that tries to impose itself on others.

According to Wimmer, some attempts to defend the periphery and attack the center resulted in the formation of other centers. In this regard he mentions Anta Diop and Mubabinge Bilolo`s attempts to show that Egypt is the origin of Greek (European) philosophy. Both Diop and Bilolo in a certain way advocated a similar idea with Hegel who spoke of Europe as the only center.

For Wimmer, any deliberate attempt to exclude even a single party from a communication is an extension of Hegel's Eurocentrism or any other centrism. Contrary to the assumption that there is only one center the ethnophilosopher tells us that there are many centers or in Wimmer's words 'Greeces'. Despite the controversy between those supporting the project of ethnophilosophers and the project of Hegel, the standards and the judge has not yet been selected. Wimmer asks who the judge could be concerning matters of validity.

Wimmer argues that we should continue to use our minds. As philosophers it is only by using words that we can show what we mean. It is true that these words are rooted in a particular cultural milieu and experiences. Despite the prevalence of such contexts intercultural philosophy in its orientation tries to move beyond such particularities without negating them. Wimmer states: "To philosophize in an intercultural orientation means to be aware of the multitude and diversity of the many cultures of humankind. At the same time one does not have to recede in relativism. Such ways probably will turn out not to be shown only by occidental thinkers of the past: they will be found in co-operation rather than in separation" (Wimmer, 2002:24)

Furthermore, Wimmer states that, the valuable elements of different traditions should have to be built in an all encompassing way so as to realize their importance to the present and the future. For him, the intercultural project is a continuation of European enlightenment with a different means. The standard is not already set by some and the judge is not a self-nominated one rather rational polylogue among traditions is to guide the direction into which we should go.

According to Wimmer, a realm of cultural interaction where "ideal" monologue and polylogue prevail is untrue in the real world. There is no such a thing as influence from one side, and there is no such mutual dialogue free of inequalities. So these two models are unreal in real life situations. In an "ideal" polylogue we do not have the notion of absolute rightness. This is because of the presence of various views. This notion of different views somewhat resembles the idea of competing stories in postmodernism, though postmodernism did not suggest how these stories should interact.

What we can learn from reading the stories of philosophy, Wimmer says, is the relativity of the view points. For instance Kant has been interpreted in different ways by various scholars. Furthermore, given that the history of western philosophy is full of dichotomies, a historian of philosophy is not the judge here. Rather s/he should explain and describe various philosophically significant traditions.

Contrary to the previously prevailing two ways (extremes), the universal and the particular, intercultural philosophy as a new orientation brought a third alternative where none of the previous two completely dominate. Answers from a given tradition are no longer to serve as an absolute answer to the same question everywhere. The approach we have in intercultural philosophy is not merely about comparison but it is a situation where answers are to be decided via as inclusive a polylogue as possible.

Leveling any prior metaphysical judgment of the other as an impediment to understanding, Mall states that, understanding the other or mutual understanding should take the first place before any kind of judgment. This is the typical spirit of interculturalism.

In Mall, any attempt to understand the other should be backed up by a genuine hermeneutics. A genuine hermeneutics is the one that does not reduce and absorb the other. Any hermeneutically oriented understanding which tries to understand the other by placing the other in one's own framework is against an intercultural understanding. The type of hermeneutics that Mall favors is analogous hermeneutics. Analogous hermeneutics tries to understand the other without requiring the other to be identical with oneself. It tries to understand the other using shared categories or patterns. "The concept of "analogous hermeneutics", which does justice to the present de facto hermeneutic situation, is neither the hermeneutics of total identity, which reduces the other to an echo of itself and repeats self-understanding in the name of understanding the other, nor that of radical difference, which makes understanding the other impossible" (Mall,2000:16)

Given that reciprocal understanding is the goal of interculturality, any fundamentalist orientation with different masks is an obstacle to it. Mall tells us that we need to be

cautious about not confusing intercultural philosophy with an aesthetic category. Intercultural philosophy is not an orientation that is merely obsessed with the non-western as some critics say.

According to Mall, interculturality is an event with different aspects. Going beyond language it works as a construct. In connection to this, we can ask which language is to be employed here. Given that we have a concert of philosophers and philosophies from all over the world, what language are we going to use? Or are all the participants supposed to know each other's language? If these philosophers are from a certain background, how are they going to transcend their particularities? One may reply using rationally convincing arguments.

Do we have only one rationalization for all events? Could not things be rationalized from different perspectives? If understanding all possibilities alone is the goal, would not this reduce the practical effects of such mutual dialogues? Should we not move a step further? What is the guarantee that the interculturally agreed on universals will not overcome the subjective colors of cultures, if having universals without destructing the particulars is the goal?

Intercultural philosophy, Mall says, is an attitude, conviction and insight. "No philosophy is the philosophy, and no culture is the culture. Such an insight accompanies all of the different philosophies and cultures and prevents them from absolutizing themselves" (Mall, 2000:5)

In intercultural philosophy, like in postmodernism, there is no special room left for some selected groups. An attempt to form hierarchies among philosophies and cultures is also rejected. In the process of understanding the other the approach we follow should be open, creative and tolerant, and this is what intercultural hermeneutics is.

But, in a society where everyone is not critical and rational enough, how can we let alone agree, even talk about some topics which people call non-negotiable. Can we always have the openness and tolerance we need so that mutual understanding and dialogue

would be possible? There are a number of contexts in which cultures/people fail to be open and tolerant.

According to Mall, almost all cultural encounters show signs of tension and violence. He argues that truth claims of absolute nature are violent. An intercultural society which is driven by the idea of shared values (unity) without complete sameness is preferable than merely multicultural society. This is because a multicultural society dreams of static identity where cultures remain in their purity.

In the overall process of deconstructing Euro-centric attitudes towards many things what matters most is not the presence of a huge amount of information rather a deep-seated conviction that either philosophy or culture are nobody's exclusive possession . An attempt to deconstruct Euro-centrism without having such an attitude would be less effective.

Representing a different spirit of emancipation than the one in the enlightenment period, intercultural philosophy aims at reconstructing the distorted picture of philosophy. It needs for the history of philosophy to be rewritten in a non Euro-centric way or with an intercultural orientation. Mall wants us to strictly distinguish having a center from being centristic. Mall contends that:

Whoever thinks a universal logos, reason, culture, philosophy, and religion are to be fully and exclusively realized in one particular tradition-whether European or non-European- does not accept the independent reality of the other and jeopardizes a cross-cultural understanding. Truth is nobody's possession alone, and it does not favor one particular Weltanschauung exclusively. The availability and non availability of one ultimate Truth, if there is one, go hand in hand and teach us to be diffident in our claim of possessing the Truth alone.
(Mall, 2000:23)

I think, assuming philosophy to be the exclusive property of some traditions minimizes the possibility of new envelopments and developments in the area and this by itself hinders the progress of philosophy by making it unidirectional and less representative of the human race. So, contrary to the Eurocentric claim that philosophy is European, Mall's claim that philosophy is universal in a practical sense is the right way to philosophize and widen philosophy's horizon.

In his discussion about the relationship of postmodernity and interculturality, Mall contends that, postmodernity apart from its celebration of diversity failed to give a room for the overlappings of cultures. Having mentioned that, Mall suggests, to be genuinely intercultural any postmodern discourse should carefully deal with the encounters, contacts and communications of cultures. "Intercultural philosophy as understood here does not arise from, but strongly supported by, the spirit of postmodernity...intercultural philosophical and postmodern orientations join together in their common protest against the prefix mono-and question not unity or diversity but unity in face of diversity." (Mall, 2000:41)

As compared to the skeptical version of postmodernity, which is the one that magnifies differences and is skeptical of peaceful agreements, the affirmative postmodernists are more close to the spirit of interculturality. The affirmatives acknowledge differences while working on overlappings. However, Mall's suggestion is given without considering such classification of postmodernists by some scholars.

Intercultural philosophy, though important for the contributions it made, it is not free of shortcomings. In its commitment to a just communication atmosphere, intercultural philosophy tried to be as inclusive as possible. In connection to this, it seems that it assumed that everyone has got something to say. But, in reality, this is not the case. Cultures vary; some cultures are more advanced on some topics or issues than others. To explain more, take students in the same classroom. Despite their differences in background all of them might not say something on a given topic, even if they are given equal opportunity. Even if they say something, the importance of what they say is still in

question. However, it should not be forgotten that expressing oneself, if meaningful, is an asset.

The other point that intercultural philosophy failed to thoroughly deal with is, the question of standard. By this I mean, for instance, we have said polylogue is to take place among the participants or the world traditions, and this polylogue is to be led to its goal by the rational conversation of the participants. But, are not we going to face the question, whose rationality? Given that there is not only one reasoning order, how are we going to transcend such relativism? I say this because an agreement on the instruments to be employed in our discussions is crucial, so that we can go where we commonly want. If there is such a desire among the majority!

The direction suggested by intercultural philosophy seems hypothetical for some reasons. First, there are extra-philosophical factors strongly affecting intercultural orientation or attitude. As many scholars say, asymmetrical power relations among cultures are one of the major factors.

I think, given that individuals are the most crucial agents in intercultural interaction and that we currently have and see careless/irresponsible or future unconcerned, unconscious, and less rational individuals, it is difficult to bring the desired change and adjustment of both the current pattern of cultural interactions and a system change as a whole.

So, things are taking care of themselves rather than us consciously taking care of them. This is an era when individuals began to think that they cannot change things they wanted to. This is a period where both the love of one's own life and the hatred towards it reached their climax. People are in a dilemma to choose what they want.

Furthermore, the realization of an intercultural orientation needs individuals and then societies very much conscious of the necessity and the importance of such an orientation. Additionally, responsibility both for one's own culture which basically is a huge asset is a crucial thing to worry about. We also need individuals and societies sensitive to their relationship with others and ponder how they can contribute for the better world for

which we aspire. Though understanding which basically is mutual is so vital in interculturality, I doubt whether understanding could be where the journey ends.

Though intercultural relation has been and still is here, intercultural philosophical attitude or orientation has not yet been the working order in the existing relation of world cultures.

3.2. Liberation Philosophy

The significance of the discussion on liberation philosophy in this context (in context of intercultural relations) is related with assessing and reflecting on the possibility of intercultural relations; which is free of exclusions and injustices. But, before proceeding into further discussion of liberation philosophy it is better to see how it began and what it is all about.

According to Dussel, the critique of conquest of the mid 16thc can be considered as the first implicit liberation philosophy. The philosophical justification of the first emancipation was the second phase of liberation philosophy. Dussel states that the third phase is the one which prevails now.

Furthermore, the first explicit phase took place from 1969-73, the second phase lasted from 1973-76, the third phase took place until 1983, and the fourth stage is the one which exists now and is committed to giving response to new problems.

By looking at the past colonial situation of the periphery Dussel asks, whether there is a possibility for the geographical domination of the center to come to an end. Can we see a process of liberation that sets out from the peoples of the periphery?

The philosophy that knows how to ponder this reality, the de facto world reality, not from the perspective of the centre of the political, economic or military power but from beyond the frontiers of that world, from the periphery-this philosophy will not be ideological. Its reality is the whole earth, for it: for it the “wretched of the earth” (who are not nonbeing) are also real. (Dussel, 1985:10)

After breaking down the first wave of colonialism Latin American countries and some colonies of Britain enjoyed a considerable amount of independence. However, this freedom lasted only until the crisis of the industrial revolution has been overcome by colonialist states. Dussel states that, around the mid 19thc the presence of sufficient capital allowed the imperialists to carry on a second colonial age. The second half of the 19thc was the period in which many other nations were made part of the imperialists' colonial project.

This process of colonizing was accompanied by various trainings of colonial elites in the universities of the center. This for Dussel is a 'reeducation' which resulted in denial of one's own values, achievements and so on. Dussel adds these colonized philosophers had forgotten their past. Colonial philosophers of the periphery rather than trying to understand themselves from their past and present situatedness, they wonder about something that is foreign to them. They began to see the center as a point of departure.

According to Bartolome De Las Casas, Europeans used two ways to remove others from the face of the earth. The first way was by using aggressive ways including unjust wars. They killed a number of inhabitants of the periphery. After having eliminated those sections of the society who can march for freedom, they oppressed women sexually and children pedagogically by indoctrinating them with western education.

Dussel states that liberation philosophy's pattern of movement is strongly characterized by its move beyond any given system and it attempts to project a new emancipatory system. Liberation philosophy, for Dussel, always inquires who is situated outside the system, and as alienated and marginalized. Within governments advocating formal democracy and also within the late capitalism of the center the rights of the minorities are big areas of debate and questions have been asked about them and their rights. The problem, according to Dussel, is lack of economic consciousness. The failure of solely formal democracies lies in their weak economic consciousness. This makes their politics a fantasy. So, any quest for concreteness and acquaintance to real problems of the people in the system needs the combination of economic consciousness with formal democracy.

...the reality out of which such a philosophy emerged is today more pressing than ever before in its continuous and maddening spiral of underdevelopment: the misery, the poverty, the exploitation of the oppressed of the global periphery (in Latin America, Africa, Asia), of the dominated classes, of the marginalized, of the “poor” in the “center”, and the African-Americans... (Dussel, 1996:2)

The point of departure of liberation philosophy is the periphery. Dussel says, though the periphery is the point of departure of liberation philosophy the language of liberation philosophy is the language of the center. In connection to this he adds, the slave in revolt uses the master`s language.

Despite the fact that many African countries and other colonized countries won their political independence around the mid 20thc, their genuine liberation is still in question. Dussel states that, the question of liberation has continued. “Heroes of neocolonial emancipation worked in an ambiguous political sphere. Mahatma Gandhi in India, Abdel Nasser in Egypt, Patrice Lumumba in Congo dream of emancipation but are not aware that their nations will pass from the hands of England, France, or Belgium into the hands of the United States of America.” (Dussel, 1985:13)

This new imperialism, according to Dussel, works without occupying others` territories, without sending armies to someone`s land. Rather the imperialist owns, directly or indirectly, key enterprises of the periphery. The global capitalist system is always comfortable for the better off. The periphery of capitalism, Dussel says, is suffering under the imperialism and unjust system created by the market, the more developed, and the militarized. Addressing the unjust situation or the suffering and exploitation of the periphery is one of the central concerns of liberation philosophy.

Liberation philosophy is also concerned about the place of women within the machist(male constructed and dominated) Totality. According to a number of feminists and liberation philosophers, women within this totality are represented as an object and passive while men are subjects and active. Likewise, liberation philosophy is also

concerned about the issue of homosexuality. Rather than imposing ethical norms with an objective spirit on homosexuals, letting them decide using their own conscience is preferred by liberation philosophy. Any coherent liberation philosophy which is against the domination of women within a male constructed totality should not refrain from going against such an attempt to impose absolute criterion of ethics on the other.

The otherness of the other in Dussel is established not only in relation to the cosmic or the physico-living situation but also in relation to history. “The other is the alterity of all possible systems, beyond “the same” which totality always is.” (Dussel 1985:43)

What is common to all attempts to totalize is that they do not respect the history, culture and exteriority of the other. It tries to place the other in a totally strange whole.

To totalize exteriority, to systematize alterity, to deny the other as the other is alienation. To alienate is to sell someone or something, to pass it to another proprietor. The alienation of people or a single individual makes its victims lose their being by incorporating them as a moment, an aspect, an instrument of another's beingthe being of others is alienated when they are displaced from their own center and made to revolve around the center of a totality alien to them. (Dussel, 1985:53)

In connection to the above quotation we can contend that those cultures which are dominated by or are imitating western cultures are displaced from their own center and are revolving around a center which is strange to them. This shows the prevalent cultural alienation of these cultures.

Liberation philosophy, according to Dussel, needs to prioritize the personhood of the other as the absolute criterion of both ethics and liberation. Rather than looking to the situation of the “poor”, the one who are suffering, the hungry, and the one in unjust system most discourses try to project ideal models portraying the being of humans in various ways. As compared to many different attempts to understand human life, especially the life of the oppressed, the poor, the marginalized, in general the other,

liberation philosophy attributed much credit for economics or such an attempt heavily grounds itself on economics.

... In this “circuitous route” philosophy describes (at ethical, anthropological, ontological and transcendental levels) the “reality” of the misery in which the Latin American peoples find themselves. “Economics” has a non-substitutable pertinence, because in it the practical (politics, erotics, pedagogy, anti-fetishism) and the productive relations (ecological or of design, aesthetic or of art) are made concrete” (Dussel, 1996:13)

According to liberation philosophy capitalism is contributing many evils both to humanity and nature. A capitalist baptized system always works to make profit overriding all those goods beyond it and crushing lines which hinder such a profit. Productivist Stalinism whose criterion was the growth rate of production followed the same route and it was anti-ecological and anti-human. According to Dussel, the ecological movements of the center failed to see the link between ecology and capitalism or productive Stalinism.

Liberation philosophy, in its overall attempt to liberate the other goes beyond the horizon of economic, political hegemonic setup of the Euro-centric aura. It is against an order that objectifies women and a subject that merely uses nature as an exploitable source of accumulation.

This is a painful problematic that produces a wound by the daily anguish of the premature death of the majority of the people in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the excluded so called minorities in the metropolitan centers of the “North”. This is the philosophical subject of the peripheral world, the South: this is the subject of the philosophy of liberation...reason of the other, a philosophy which has the right to give its reasons. There is no liberation without accepting rationality: but there is no critical rationality without accepting the interpellation

of the excluded, or this would inadvertently be only the rationality of domination. (Dussel, 1996:36)

Negating the other is excluding the other. This in other words is excluding the majority of humanity. Liberation philosophy being a philosophy with a different point of departure cannot be a philosophy which imitates the philosophies of the West; rather it tries to be creative in its attempt to forward a path to liberation.

The deconstructivist orientation of liberation philosophy puts it along the same line with postmodernism. The approach followed by liberation philosophy shows its commitment to deconstruct western imposed hierarchies.

The idea of liberation entails that there is someone to be liberated from something. This something as we commonly agree is domination. “Domination is the act by which others are forced to participate in the system that alienates them. They are compelled to perform actions contrary to their historical essence. Domination is an act of pressure, of force. The servant obeys out of fear, out of habit.” (Dussel, 1985:55)

An attempt to liberate oneself from such domination, according to Dussel, could result in the transformation of domination into repression which could possibly be individual or psychological. The moment, at which the oppressed realizes that s/he does not need to be under the state of domination, the dominator tries to employ various strategies to suppress her/him. Resistance to peaceful domination results in war, which is, according to Dussel, the ultimate fulfillment of the praxis of domination.

In his discussion of the notion of the other Dussel talks about two kinds of consciences. The first one is a moral conscience. Such a conscience is the one which is committed to the principles of a given system. For example, he says, someone who sells products at most profitable price to make more profit for the company s/he works in and takes nothing from the profit has a moral conscience.

When it comes to the second type of conscience which is ethical conscience the situation is different. Ethical conscience in the first place is one's ability to listen to the other's voice. Such ability requires one to be atheistic in Dussel's words. This is to mean that we should not be stubborn or have such a view of the given. We should not try to absolutize our metaphysical assumptions and beliefs. Additionally, it is necessary to respect the other in its otherness. We need to give the other the honor that s/he deserves.

Respect is the attitude of metaphysical passivity with which honor is rendered to the exteriority of the other: it lets others be in their distinctness. ...it is not respect for the law (which is universal or abstract)... it is respect for someone, for the freedom of the other. Respect is silence, not the silence of someone who has nothing to say (Wittgenstein), but of those who want to listen to everything because they know nothing about the other as other. (Dussel, 1985:59)

Dussel's argument on the possibility of liberation gives a crucial place for the idea of responsibility. His ideas on responsibility are very much related with real life situations of both the past and the present. Those who take responsibility for the poor, for the other, for the exterior are always to face punishment in return from those in power. Those who argue for a new order are always under pressure. Dussel says, "responsibility is obsession for the other; it is like linkage with the other's exteriority; it entails exposing oneself to traumatization, prison, even death." (Dussel, 1985:60)

Liberation for Dussel is to put oneself out of the prison. Denying the denied and affirming the history of the person before thrown to jail is important. Liberation as praxis is a quest for a new order, new structure with new beings and their functions.

The ethos of liberation which is one of the concerns of Dussel, in its Dusselian sense is an aptitude for innovation. Such an aptitude for innovation emanates from one's responsibility for the other. The other is not an object rather it is a concrete person in a different situation. The ethos of liberation is not all about compassion or sympathy rather

it is all about placing oneself in the pain of the other. This is what Dussel calls commiseration.

Liberation philosophy as a philosophy aspires to create new order. As a theory challenging the given, it sees that marginalization is inevitable in real life contexts. This is to mean, even if the poor is liberated from the oppression of the global capitalist system this is not a guarantee that there are no and will be no oppressions by other causes.

Historically speaking, many liberation movements while liberating some could keep others under the same situation they were in and even may be worse. Liberation of the whole of humanity or all the excluded is not achievable. Theoretically we could have plans of liberating everyone but the problem is when it comes to reality, to practice. This could be seen, I think, both in national and international cases. In general, the aspiration for an oppressionless system is difficult to realize. It sometimes even looks like ideal.

Dussel states that commiseration is a crucial notion in the ethos of liberation. However, I doubt the possibility of such a thing in the economic order we live in. How could someone living in a system that s/he is told to take care of herself/himself be committed to commiseration?

Economics based analysis of the marginalization, exclusion and objectification of the other in liberation philosophy necessitated a system change. I am not contending that this is wrong in itself. But, such an ambition for a system change is difficult to realize given the current consciousness of individuals, societies and states. The 21st c is more capitalist than earlier centuries for we have many factors consolidating the capital based interactions and the system as a whole. Dussel himself has stated how this praxis of liberation could work. In other words, he has stated the various conditions under which liberation could occur. My point here is that many of the conditions which he mentioned and which I have discussed in the previous pages are seen too rarely these days. What I can say based on Dussel's analysis is that these conditions are not the effects of something supernatural, they rather need a certain human consciousness and are the

effects of it. It is such consciousness that could make someone stand for his/her own liberation.

Apart from all that has been said, liberation philosophy`s analysis of the exclusion, marginalization and objectification of the other is closer to real life than most analyses on the same topic. Rather than relying on formal abstract notions or speculations, it tried to deal with real problems in terms of their real causes. The relationship among individuals, groups and states is seen in terms of realistic and more concrete terms. This is one of the immense achievements of liberation philosophy.

Intercultural philosophy which is a new orientation or a new attitude, according to some scholars, failed to see some concrete or extra-philosophical factors in the relationship of traditions and cultures; it tried to portray how their relationship should be. In connection to this, liberation philosophy, though different in its aims and orientations, can be seen as an input to a genuine intercultural philosophy. This is because it brought into light the part unseen by intercultural philosophy. It tries to see the conditions under which exclusion occurs.

CONCLUSION

Modernity, cultural globalization, capitalism and the constructs of the West (stories) are all factors that pushed humanity to sameness. In other words they are inclined to be forces of homogenization rather than heterogenization or hybridization. On the contrary, postmodernism, cultural relativism, multiculturalism and hermeneutics are in favor diversity rather than sameness. However, both of these two sides are problematic for two main reasons. First, humanity cannot be expressed in a single model for there are some factors that hinder such an attempt. Among others we can mention history, culture and language.

Second, differences which are magnified to the degree that they are radically different also create inconsistency for we share a number of things. We have things in common. More importantly cultures have been and are interacting. This makes the purity and the radical difference of cultures impossible. So, the search for a point which is inclusive of both sides while having its own unique aspect was necessary. This task is taken by intercultural philosophy. Though intercultural philosophy developed its own new direction it still is problematic for some reasons I have mentioned earlier on.

Unless there is a just and fair global system of intercultural relations, intercultural relations would always continue to be under the domination by some. How are we going to create such a global system? This is all about changing the system that is currently functioning, which I think is something difficult to do.

Until the moment that economically inferior nations build up their economy and make their cultural elements and values part of their economic development they continue to be subject to the irresistible forces of other economically giant nations. I am not saying that culture is all about economics, but the current capitalist system has hugely affected the material cultures of other economically less capable nations. The capitalist West is capable of disseminating its values using its economic power. Entering into just intercultural relations needs two things. First, we should start to strongly believe in ourselves and our cultures. Then, we should show that we have such cultures to the rest.

Furthermore, unless we create a link between our way of being (the cultural one) and our mode of production we remain culturally alienated. This opens the way for the assimilation of our cultures by others capable of doing so.

A mode of production, beyond embracing existing cultures, also creates new cultures. For instance some of the cultures of the West itself are cultures that the mode of production created. Mode of production helps not only the flourishing of cultures but also the creation of cultures. I think, this could be seen into ways. First, the creation of these new cultures could result in the gradual change of the previous values and cultures. Additionally, it might result in the immediate replacement of the old by the new. This specifically is true in moments of revolutions.

So, the link we create between our cultural values and our way of production could in a certain way enable us to maintain and develop our cultures, and save them from dominations coming from such directions. Additionally, it is when we actualize such a link that we can engage in intercultural relations whose rules and conditions could be fair to all. Unless there is an overall change of global economic order this is the better option that cultures have to save themselves from the domination of others.

I would like to say a couple of points on this notion of intercultural relations. My first reflection is about the role of science and technology. Most of the scientific narratives we live by and the technological products we use are from the economically developed nations. Their economic power has helped them to be dominant in many other areas of life. In addition to this, I thought that, even though the economically less capable nations continue to be receivers of the products of the economic giants, they still could have the type of society and culture they need. But, this is impossible for these products of the economically developed nations hugely affect our society and culture. Furthermore, people, in addition to their contact with other people also make contacts with products which could affect their lives. So, this makes the need for the type of society you want less realizable. All these arguments are meant to show the extent to which cultures of the world are threatened by the mode of production and how homogenization is moving fast and unnoticed.

Not to be centristic is good. Such a position keeps us from arrogance, unnecessary conflict and also helps us to develop a culture of tolerance. When we realize that we are not the only possessors of truth, then we will leave a room for the truth claims of others. Though one cannot certainly say there is no one to be excluded, theoretically speaking, non centristic positions are liberated and liberating positions. First, you go beyond your own box, and second you see others not as objects but as part of the whole.

Though you are not centristic and acknowledge that there are multiple centers, in reality, you may see some excluding and dominating others. The important point is, understanding the structures under which such domination occurs. I suggest that strong belief in what we call `ours` is vital. A deep understanding of one`s own culture and history is crucial. If not the possibility to easily give up is high.

Basically, the exclusion of some by others is not always external. Those in power, domestically, for some purposes, could marginalize, exclude and oppress others. So, under such conditions, let alone intercultural relation of such cultures with others, even their very being is in question. They need liberation more than being in a certain relationship with others. They may not even have the courage to talk with others for they are dehumanized.

One of the main points that I would like to raise in relation to intercultural relations is that, a number of cultures today are threatened by the homogenizing tendency of the western cultures, and some have lost their original cultures. Given that this is the case the intercultural relations we could have simply will be between members of the same family with insignificant differences. This by itself minimizes the possibility of fruitful intercultural relations. The broadening of the horizon of philosophy and culture is least likely in this case.

Philosophical thinking is an enlightened thinking; intercultural philosophy too. Given that intercultural philosophy as a new orientation in philosophy provides us with a number of technical tools that enable us to think critically about ourselves and others; it is something that everyone should be aware of. Guiding one`s relation with others cannot totally be a

matter of natural thinking (discourse unmediated). This is to mean, familiarity with the various discourses of intercultural philosophy is crucial.

However, such topics in most cases do not reach the majority. They remain around certain intellectual circles. The philosopher and some others could be familiar with such thoughts, but not the majority. I am not saying everybody puts into action what s/he knows. However, we cannot deny the contributions of such discourses. For the reason that knowledge has done a lot to us, we cannot say interculturally oriented attitude could be brought by natural thinking alone. Therefore, having a world whose majority of inhabitants are committed to interculturality could in a certain way be hindered by this factor.

Intercultural philosophy beyond imposed homogenization and radical heterogeneity is close to hybridization. The various centers work together to understand each other and learn from each others` experience. I think what is undetermined in such cases is that which culture is to outweigh others, and to which of the values and cultures people are more attracted. Hybridization might not always equally contain the elements of the participant cultures. But, it is still hybridization. Hybridization, if not done properly, could result in some negative changes in one`s identity. In other words, we will get closer to the other than ourselves, if we take much from the other and vice versa.

I do not think that homogenization is a good option for it in certain sense would be the technical colonization of the majority by the few. Though our choice to conform to a given model is a factor for our assimilation, some of our choices are limited choices. In one way or the other the homogenizing tendency is destructive for it eliminates many of the rainbows of humanity. The countless references we make for a given topic from the catalogue of human diversity will vanish, if homogenization is realized in its full scale.

On the other side, limiting oneself in one`s own horizon is also impossible and unwise. Thinking of oneself as radically different is inconsistent for there are things common to us.

The presence of a rational, critical, and culturally, historically and economically conscious society determines the possibility of a genuine intercultural relation. A society which is not conscious of its own culture, history and economic situation cannot successfully make up itself and be in a certain relation with others.

The attempt to have genuine intercultural relations is possible among societies having such consciousness. I think this is a vital point by which someone could win over the homogenizing tendency and also move a step away from the notion of radical incommensurability. Forces of homogenization are so strong as compared to the hybridizing tendencies. However, the way to effective hybridization is not completely blocked. So, as I have discussed it earlier on, commitment and responsibility to one`s own values is one of the foundations to be in a just communication with other equivalents. In connection to this, I strongly believe that cultural education at different levels in schools could create a certain consciousness. Cultural education which is non-centric but sensitive to one`s own history and identity is crucial.

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