EPISTEMOLOGY: A GUIDE TO PHILOSOPHY

(Essays on Descartes, Hume, Kant, Nietzsche, Dilthey, Foucault)

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COLIN LESLIE DEAN

B,Sc, BA, B.Litt(Hons), MA, B.Litt(Hons), MA,

MA (Psychoanalytic studies),

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PROLEGOMENON

What one asks has Ingres' <u>Grand Odalisque</u> and the mysterious <u>Sheilah-Na-Gig</u> have to do with epistemology? 'Nothing'! you say. 'One is beautiful' you say, the other 'odious, obscene and repugnant'. But think! Perhaps they amount to nothing, but perhaps they amount to everything? Nietzsche saw truth as a woman. The Tibetan Mahayana Buddhists see insight, or wisdom as personified by a woman. So now we may see the <u>Grand Odalisque</u> as personifying truth, wisdom, but what of the <u>Sheilah-Na-Gig.</u> Perhaps women as the fount of knowledge. The vagina as its door into truth, or perhaps the source, the mouth from which knowledge is expressed. Was not the Greek Titaness Themis the fount of truth at Delphi, the oracle, before being ousted by Apollo. The veil lifts, a deeper insight has perhaps appeared. What made no sense is now perhaps profound, sublime. Perhaps a greater knowledge has been arrived at, a greater truth?

Ah! truth that perennial claim ever sought but some say rarely found. So why listen to me?. So why should we listen to philosophers, like the ancients listened to their oracles.? Why do we listen to their espousings on ethics, ontology, on epistemology, on metaphysics, etc?. Are not their words repugnant or delightful depending upon the odoriferous prejudice of one's cognitive faculty. Why do we listen? Why do we put into action philosophers' political or ethical views? Why do we let philosophers' views take us down the path of genocide, revolution, political and ethical brutality, or some form of philosophical, social or individual therapy? The answer is that we believe that they have like, the ocracles of old, access to truth. We believe that they can justify their claims of truth. In other words we believe that they have an epistemology. Even the anti-

foundationalist rest their anti-foundationalism upon some arguments which they believe make a truth claim. Thus they imply that their arguments are based upon some foundation or justification of truth or in other words epistemology; if only in the sense that they base their arguments upon reason; and reason thus becomes their epistemic condition. If we ask Wittgenstein., Rorty, the Sceptics, the Anti-foundationalists, the Relativists etc 'how they know what they know?' they must give some epistemological answer. In other words to make a knowledge claim this claim must be based upon some foundation which gives the claim legitimacy, since without answering the question 'how do you know what you know?' the claim becomes worthless as a knowledge claim. Thus epistemology becomes important when a philosopher needs to give authority for his/her philosophy; to answer the question 'how he/she knows what he/she knows..

Epistemological presuppositions guide and limit the philosophical outcome of philosophers' philosophies. In this regard epistemology becomes a guide to a philosopher's philosophy. Philosophers' epistemology's make it possible to think only certain things. The epistemology structures thinking such that only certain inferences are possible. In this regard epistemology is ethical because it tells us what we should or should not believe. Like religions such as Christianity or Buddhism, with it's myriad of schisms, philosophy has it's own epistemological schisms. Each epistemological schism becomes a form of ethical dogmatism in that it puts its self forward as the only way to view and thus act upon the world. Descartes, Hume, Kant, Nietzsche, and the more modern philosophers such as Wittgenstein , Rorty, Derrida become Fascist in the sense that they argue dogmatically that their epistemology leads them to put forward the correct

guide to view the world. One may exclaim vehemently that Wittgenstein, Rorty and Derrida are anti-foundationalists I say that they are in the same consciousness of the enlightenment and hold as their foundation for truth   reason itself. They are rationalists and like the enlightenment and Western philosophical thought in general believe that reason is the key to truth. Thus where religion hold up a god as the fount of truth Western philosophies godhead is reason.   As an epistemologicaly reason becomes a form of tyranny, totalitarianistic, deterministic and restrictive of cognitive freedom. This is in stark contract to those Asiatic religio/ philosophic traditions such as Zen, Tibetan Madhyamika, or Taoism which are anti-rationalistic in the sense that they believe reason is not the right means to access truth. Where the West does not question reason or thinking itself the East has, in some cases like the Tibetan Madhyamika Buddhists, argued that reason leads itself into irreconcilable paradoxes and as such is not an epistemic condition for truth.

 The first essay is on thinking and truth. This essay shows how Kant's and Foucault's epistemology's bring about certain perspective's on the nature of truth and thinking. It shows how the epistemology's of the Kant and Foucault set limits to what they could infer. Kant's epistemology forbids him to argue for cognitive relativism the historical nature of truth or for a socially constructed self. Foucault's epistemology on the other hand could not lead him to infer a transcendental ego or a non-societal notion of truth This essay lays the ground for an understanding of the rest of the essays.

In the first essay two opposite views on thinking and truth are juxtaposed. Kant argues that thinking is the activity of an   autonomous subject who structures the world by projecting upon it innate *a priori* categories. These categories are according to Kant uninfluenced by anything social. Kant's subject is an epistemological subject; since it is the fount of objective truth. Truth for Kant is based upon a correspondence theory of truth. Foucault denies all of Kant's arguments and instead argues that the subject is itself constructed via *a priori* historical epistemes. The *a priori* historical epistemes create thinking itself with the consequence that truth is, archaeologically, a product of the discursive practices of a particular historical period and genealogically the result of power and political imperatives. Where Kant sees an autonomous epistemological subject discovering ahistorical and objective truth, Foucault sees a historically determined and constructed self whose thinking is historically determined where truth is what a society says it is. Where Kant puts forward a subjective foundationalism Foucault argues for a societal foundationalism.

Thus we have two alternative view upon thinking and truth. In terms of these views we either see the philosophers, in the following essays, as: one   autonomous thinkers discovering objective truth; where the truth of their arguments is determined by ahistorical non-cultural objective standards; or secondly as subjects created by their historical period where their thinking is determined by the ideas or epistemes current for their historical period and the truth of their views is the outcome of political and power agendas. Thus it is through these two views that we can understand the nature of the arguments of these essays

These essays show how the epistemology's of Descartes, Hume, Kant etc led them into certain philosophical directions and philosophies. This is not to say that the thought process worked backwards in these philosophers. In other words the philosophy was first arrived at then the epistemology created to justify the philosophy. These essay only show that assuming the epistemology first then the philosophy exfoliates out of it in a loose deterministic manner ie it sets a certain direction upon the philosophy.

Descartes' 'clear and distinct perceptions' becomes the foundation upon which he builds his 'methodology'. Descartes' epistemology allows him to justify the existence of God but conversely Descartes epistemology leads him to needs God to guarantee the 'clear and distinct perceptions'. Hume's scepticism leads Hume to put forward an empiricist philosophy. Hume's scepticism or epistemology lead Hume to outlining justify and construct his distinction between the higher sceptical level of truth and the vulgar level of truth. Kant's epistemological notions of the "I think" , or transcendental ego and *a priori* categories enables Kant to argue for criteria of objective truth and ethical behaviour ie the categorical imperative. Kant's epistemology's leads him to place the subject as the fount of truth ie subjective foundationalism and argue for an objective ahistorical notion of truth in the form of a correspondence theory. Similarly Nietzsche's epistemological notion of the 'will to power' leads him to critique morality in a certain way and propound another ethical solution to combat nihilism. Dilthey in his attempt to counter historical relativism relies upon his epistemological ideas of the transcendental categories and empathy to offer an objective account of history. On the other hand Foucault in his

epistemology of the *a priori* historical epistemes leads him to argue for an historical relativism. An historical relativism in which the subject of thinking is constructed by the society in which it lives. By combining this notion of the episteme with his notion of the 'will to truth' Foucault puts forward arguments for a coherence theory of truth in which power and political imperatives determine what is to account for as truth. In this regard Foucault's epistemology's leads to him to become a foundationalist in the sense that, unlike Kant's subjective foundationalism, Foucault argues for a societal foundationalism ie society is the foundation or authority of truth.

These essays explore some of the issues that flow from the epistemology's of these respective philosophers. In the case of Descartes the existence of the two epistemic conditions ie the 'clear and distinct perceptions and God has the consequence that Descartes' appears to argue in a circle; the famous 'Cartesian circle'; the notion of the circularity of his arguments derives from his epistemology's. The outcome of Hume's sceptical epistemology is that he undermines both his conceptions of the vulgar and higher levels of truth Kant's epistemology's leads him into problems of contradiction in formulating the definitions of analytic and synthetic propositions and as a consequence the idea of synthetic *a priori* judgements. Similarly contradictions arise in Kant's formulation of the categorical imperative particularly in regard to his formulation of the intelligible and sensible worlds. Nietzsche's attempt at undermining ethics by the use of the notion of the 'will to power' is contradicted by his own ethical espousing. The notion of the episteme becomes paradoxical as it undermines the objectivity of Foucault's own epistemological espousings regarding the episteme. Similarly Foucault's claim s that

truth is a product of power and political imperatives leads to the fact that Foucault is involved in a power game to get his own views recognised.

A CRITICAL COMPARASION OF OF KANT'S AND FOUCAULT'S THEORIES OF THINKING AND TRUTH

This essay will give a critical comparison of Kant's and Foucault's theories of thinking and truth. I will juxtapose one against the other to highlight the major contrasts between Kant and Foucault. I will demonstrate that Kant and Foucault disagree with each other in most of their views. It will be shown that, though they both seek to account for scientific knowledge, their respective theories are polar opposites. The methodology of this essay will be to use Kant as a foil against which to offer Foucault's critical comparison.

I will divide the essay into three sections. The first will deal with the subject of thinking. The second with the nature of thinking. The third with the status of truth. In the first section it will be shown that Kant's theory of thinking and truth centers around a metaphysical self. An atomistic, sovereign, autonomist epistemological subject, the "I think", constituting the world by innate *a priori* principles.. For Foucault on the other hand the thinking subject is decentred. The subject does not constitute the world as Kant would say but is itself constituted by the *a priori* historic epistemic structures of society. The second section will show that for Kant thinking is an infrastructure and for Foucault thinking is a superstructure. Thinking for Kant involves logical rules operating with innate immutable ahistorical categories of the mind. Foucault disagrees with this and argues that thinking is constructed by the *a priori* historic epistemic structures of the society the subject lives in. Thinking is a thing of the world and as such unlike Kant there can be many forms of thinking or rationality.

When it comes to the section on truth it will be shown that for Kant truth is objective, neutral, ahistorical and centres around a correspondence theory of truth. The subject becomes the foundation of truth thus a subjective foundationalism is propounded by Kant. On the other hand truth for Foucault is a thing of the world. Foucault has an archaeological and genealogical notion of truth. Genealogically truth is a product of power and political imperatives historically determined. Archaeologically truth is a product of the a priori historic epistemic structures or discursive formation of a society. The archaeologically notion of truth it will be shown leads to a coherence theory of truth. It will be shown that for Kant the epistemological self, the subject who projects upon the world that is the *a priori epistemic* structures of the categories, is the font of truth. On the other hand Foucault disagrees with Kant and argues that truth is a thing of the world not so much a creation of the subject but a constitution from society itself via its epistemic and power structures. In a other words truth for Foucault's is not determined by the subjects mental *a priori* structures but the *a priori* historic epistemic, structures, and or discursive formations of society. In this way Foucault can be seen as being a foundationalist since for him society becomes the justification or foundation of truth ie a societal foundationalism is espoused by Foucault in opposition to Kant's subjective foundationalism..

THINKING SUBJECT

In order to understand what Kant and Foucault understand thinking[1] and truth[2] to be it is important to understand how they view the nature of the subject that thinks[3]. A central point of difference that divides Kant and Foucault is in regard to the status of the thinking subject in regard to the nature of thinking and truth. For Kant the subject is an epistemological subject, the "I think",, where reason is subject-centred. This leads to a subjective foundationalism. On the other hand the subject is decentred from the Kantian epistemological privileged position by Foucault and thinking and truth is seen as being constituted by the epistemic structures of society; in this regard subjective foundationalism is denied.

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[1] There are a number of traditional theories about what thinking thinks with. There is that of Platonism; Aristotelians; conceptualism; imagism; psychological nominalism; and behaviourism. Plationists argue that thinking involves the use of the forms. Aristotelians thinking is an act which the things essence or intelligible form qualifies the intellect. For conceptualists, like Kant Desecrates, Leibniz and Locke thinking uses concepts. The imagists like Hume and Berkeley images are used. Psychological nominalists like Hobbes argue that thinking is a dialogue in the soul using verbal images, or mental words. Behaviourists thinking is thoughtful speech. Ryle puts forward a theory of thinking which rejects the idea that thinking is *done foro interno*. Ryle argues that verbal behaviour is dine in accordance with certain principles of inference, evidence and so on. For Ryle thinking is an overt process not done in silence. Finally there is the analogy theory sees thinking as analogous to speech. (Bruce Aune, 'Thinking', in P. Edwards ed <u>The Encyclopedia of Philosophy</u>, Macmillan, Vol..7 p.100-102.) In contemporary philosophy there are three main view on thinking. The first looks at the linguistically and conceptual nature of thought. The second is concerned with the intentionality of thought. The third area of concern is the intensionality or non-extensionality of thought.. (A.Flew, 'Thinking', in P. Flew ed, <u>A Dictionary of Philosophy</u>, Pan, 1979, p.353.

[2] There are a number of theories of truth. The main ones are: the correspondence theory of truth ie truth is a correspondence with reality. The coherence theory of truth which argues that truth is agreement with the system of truth statements. The pragmatic theory of truth which argues that truth is that which works.(A. Flew Truth and falsity, in A. Flew ed A Dictionary of Philosophy, Pan, 1979, p.355.

[3] Heidegger puts foward a some what metaphysical account of thinking. According to Heidegger thinking is the essental nature of man's and and is the manifestion of the presencing or destining of   Being ; thinking belongs to and is needed by Being. (W. Lovitt 'Introduction' to <u>The Question Concerning Technology and other Essays</u>, trans W. Lovitt, Garland Publications, 1977, p.x1v- xv).

Kant in the <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u> attempted as A. C. Ewing notes to "...justify science philosophically, ie to prove the *a priori* principles on which he thought it depended."[4] Kant himself states the problem when he says " Now the proper problem of pure reason is contained in the question: How are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible?"[5] Kant sort to demonstrate that the principles under which scientific knowledge of the world could be considered valid resided in the human mind. The mind, and thus the human subject, becomes the epistemic fount for valid scientific knowledge of the world. Kant puts forward as his answer to the question of how is knowledge of the world possible ie : "How are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible?"[6] his "transcendental idealism"[7]. This

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[4] A.C.Ewing, <u>A Short Commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason</u>, University of Chicargo Press, 1987, p.68.

[5] E. Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, Trans by N, Kemp-Smith <u>Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason</u>, Macmillan, 1993, B. 19, p.55.

[6] Korner maintains that there are apparent contradictions in the notion of synthetic *a priori* judgements , but these dissolve away upon careful explication of Kant's definitional and classificatory terms. (S.Korner Kant, Penguin, 1990, pp.22-25. On a more negative note Strawson investigating Kant's attempted account of synthetic *a priori* judgements via his transcendental idealism notes that this transcendental idealism is incoherent and as such "...it must be concluded that Kant really has no clear and general conception of the synthetic *a priori* at all" (P.F.Strawson, <u>Bounds Of Sense</u>, Methuen, 1973, p.43) Central to the notion of the synthetic *a priori* judgments is Kant's definitional distinctions of analytic and synthetic propositions. Korner notes that the Kantian classification has been criticised by some critics: some seeing in the classification "...a mistake which vitiates the whole critical philosophy" (Korner, ibid, p. 18)

E. Kant, 'Critique of Pure Reason', Trans by N, Kemp-Smith <u>Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason</u>, Macmillan, 1993, B. 19, p.55.

[7] According to Kant perceiving and thinking are different. In perceiving apprehension of particulars is due to the faculty of sense . This apprehension is what Kant calls intuition. To the understanding belongs the apprehension of concepts and the rule by which they are applied. The synthetic *a priori* judgements come from the understanding. Concepts are of three types: *a posteriori* ie those concepts abstracted from experience; *a priori* ie those concepts which are not abstracted from experience; and Ideas those concepts which are not abstracted from experience and never apply to experience. The faculty of employing Ideas is Reason. Kant argues that mathematics is made up of synthetic *a priori* knowledge just as science and everyday common sense knowledge is also. The concepts which Kant argues are applicable to sense perception is what he calls the categories and synthetic *a priori* judgements make use of these categories. The categories are not abstracted from reality but are imposed by the mind upon reality. In other words it is the mind which orders and structures, through the categories reality ie "transcendental idealism". Kant distinguishes between the pure self and the empirical self. It is the pure self not the empirical self which impose upon reality the categories.(S.Korner, 'Kant' in J.O.Urmson & J. Ree (ed), <u>The Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers</u>, Routledge, 1992, pp.157-160.

idealism[8] argues that it is not that the mind conforms to objects in the world but that objects conform to the nature of the mind. As Kant states "If intuition must conform to the constitution of the objects, I do not see how we could know any thing of the latter *a priori*; but if the object (as the object of the senses) must conform to the constitution of our faculty of intuition I have no difficulty in conceiving such a possibility."[9] Thus the task of Kant is to outline those mental conditions which make valid scientific knowledge of the world possible. H. Allison notes that the goal of the <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u> is to "...isolate a set of conditions of the possibility of things... that can be distinguished from conditions of possibility of things themselves."[10] Kant argues that the rules which the mind imposes upon the world are contained within the mind itself. Kant states "... the understanding has rules which I must presuppose as being in me prior to objects being given to me, and therefore as being a priori. They find expression in *a priori* concepts, to which all objects of experience necessarily conform and which they must agree... we can know *a priori* of things only what we ourselves put into them."[11] Thus Kant's "transcendental idealism" ie in its attempt to account for valid scientific knowledge of the world in terms of subjective mental conditions alone is what I call subjective foundationalism. That is Kant attempts to ground valid scientific knowledge of the world solely in the mind of the human subject thus turning the human subject into and epistemological subject, the "I think",.

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[8] As was said above Strawson feels that this transcendental idealism of Kant's is incoherent. See note. 6, On the other hand Allison argues that that there are "...serious doubts about the adequacy of this interpretation" (H. Allison, <u>Kant's Transcendental Idealism</u>, Yale University Press, 1983, p.6)

[9] Kant, op.cit, p.22

[10] H. Allison, p13

[11] Kant op.cit, B.xv111, p.23

. The "I", or the subject, that thinks is for Kant the transcendental ego or the "I think"[12]. It is only by this "I think" that knowledge of the world is possible because it is a unity of consciousness which focuses the medley of data given to the intuition[13]. On this point Kant maintains that " [t]here can be in us no modes of knowledge, no connection or unity of modes of knowledge with another , without that unity of consciousness ["I think"] which precedes all data of intuitions and by relation to which representations of objects is alone possible."[14]   The "I think contains the *a priori* categories through which the epistemological subject, the "I think", gains knowledge of the world.." [15] Thus we see that Kant's thinking subject,   the "I think"[16] ,thinks with the categories of the understanding, but in order to do the thinking the "I think" relies upon logic.

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[12] Kant is in two minds about the status of this "I think". In parts of the Critique of Pure Reason the "I think" is an ontological entity it exists as a thing, as a noumena. In other parts the "I think" is solely epistemological it is not ontological. H. Allison notes that Kant has two distinct and incompatible views regarding the "I think": the official and his alternative.   (H. Allison Kant's Transcendental Idealism, Yale University Press, 1983, pp.286-287) As Allison states "according to one, which is Kant's official position, the subject of apperception is identified simply with the noumenal or real self... According to the other, which I take to express Kant's deepest view, the subject of apperception is distinguished from the noumenal self, indeed, from and kind of intelligible object. (ibid, pp.286-287) Where the former view is regarded by Allison (ibid, p.287) "...as incoherent and in conflict with the critical thrust of the argument of the Paralogisms. [the latter} is both coherent and compatible with the critique of rational psychology.

[13] Kant op.cit, A120-123. p.143-145

[14] ibid, A.107, p.136

[15] ibid, B.422, p.377

[16] Kant distinguishes between the transcendental self or ego and the empirical self. The empirical self "... which accompanies different representations, is itself diverse and without relation identity of the subject." (Kant ibid, B.133, p.153). The empirical self is an object of knowledge it is knowable and known. (ibid, B.155-159, pp.167-169) On the other hand the "I think" though thinkable is completely unknown. As Kant states " I am conscious of my self, not as I appear to my self, nor as I am in myself but only that I am." (ibid,, B.157, P.168 Similarly "I have no knowledge of myself as I am but merely as I appear to myself." (ibid, B.158, p.169.) The "I thinks" unknowability is due to the fact that according to Kant while the "I think contains the *a priori* categories through which the epistemological subject, the "I think", gains knowledge of the world these categories are not and cannot be used to gain knowledge of the "I think". The subject, "I think", "...cannot by thinking the categories acquire a concept of itself as an object of the categories." (ibid, B.422, p.377) Now this "I think" or transcendental ego is one and the same in all human consciousness. In other words the transcendental ego is common to all human subjects. As Kant notes the " I think" (a representation which must be capable of accompanying all other representations and which in all consciousness is one and the same)..." (ibid, B.132, p.153)

Kant maintains that thinking relies upon logic[17]. Logic can be divided into the general and the logic of the special employment of the understanding [ie that of the individual sciences].[18] The former Kant argues "...contains the absolutely necessary rules of thought."[19] General logic is further divided into pure and applied[20]. Now Kant notes that "[p]ure general logic has to do, therefore, only with principles *a priori*, and is *a canon of the understanding* and reason..."[21] Now general logic is according to Kant devoid of any cultural influences. As he states " In [general logic] we abstract from all empirical conditions under which our understanding is exercised, ie from the influence of the senses, the play of imagination the laws of memory, the force of habit, inclination, etc., and so from all sources of prejudice, indeed from all causes from which this or that knowledge may arise or seem to arise."[22]

 Here we see that Kant's epistemological subject, the "I think", ie the transcendental ego is disassociated from the social world. Kant's epistemological subject, the "I think", generates objective knowledge of the world through subjective *a priori* immutable laws of nature; the subject is divorced from all social influences. Kant's epistemology assumes an unchanging relationship between the epistemological subject, the "I think", and the objects of knowledge. Kant's "transcendental idealism" or subjective foundationalism by grounding valid scientific knowledge in the mental conditions of the mind ie the categories implies that the world, apart from it's apprehension by the mind, is irrelevant

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[17] Kant op.cit, A.51, p.93
[18] ibid, A.52, p.93
[19] ibid, A.52, p.93.
[20] ibid, A.53, p.94
[21] ibid, A.53, p.94.
[22] ibid, A.53, p.94.

or plays no part in giving valid scientific knowledge of the world. In the categories Kant argues "...there is no admixture of anything empirical"[23] All societal and psychological influences are excluded from playing a part in the subject's scientific or philosophical knowledge of the world.

Thus we see that for Kant the thinking subject, the "I think" thinks with logic and the ahistorical immutable categoriesis. This subject, is for Kant, an autonomous, atomistic ' sovereign rational subject' disengaged from historical and societal influences. This view of Kant is radically challenged by Foucault. Foucault's account of the thinking subject in some degree radically inverts Kant's 'logocentric' view of the 'sovereign rational subject' or in other words subject-centred reason. The thinking subject for Foucault is decentred from its epistemological priveledged position. Where Kant sees the subject as imposing pre-given epistemic *a priori* structures upon the world. The   thinking subject and thinking itself are according to Foucault constituted by the pre-given *a priori* historic epistemic structures of the culture in which the subject lives.

Foucault in his works argues for the decentering of the subject of thought. Foucault's archaeological analysis revels as L. McNay notes "... the notion of a subject who exists prior to language and is the origin of all meaning is an illusion created by the structural rules that govern discursive formations."[24]   The privileging of the subject as an epistemological subject, the "I think",, the source of all valid knowledge is attacked by Foucault. The Kantian transcendental ego or consciousness is rejected by Foucault. As he states " [i]f there is one approach that I do reject...it is that... which gives absolute priority

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[23] ibid, B.3, p.43

to the observing subject, which attributes a constituent role to and act, which places its own point of view at the origin of all historicity - which, in short, leads to a transcendental consciousness..."[25] The subject for Foucault is not the constituting agent of the discourse but is instead a constitued product of society. Foucault argues "...that subjects are gradually, progressively constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces energies, materials, desires, thought, etc..."[26]`` The constituting of the subject involves the constituing of its thinking also. As we shall see below Foucault argues that the epistemic structures and thus discursive practices of a society create thinking itself.

THINKING

Thinking for Kant is that process which brings about a unity of the manifold or dispariate representations supplied to intuition; it is a logical function. As Kant argues " Thought [thinking], taken by itself, is merely the logical function, and therefore the pure spontaneity of the combination of the manifold of a merely possible intuition."[27] Thinking for Kant as we have seen is a faculty of the understanding and according to Kant "[t]hought is knowledge by means of concepts [categories]."[28] In other words the content of thinking or what thinking uses in its formal function is categories. These categories likewise are mere "...forms of thought..."[29] Now the process of thinking is logical as we have seen ie logic supplies the "...necessary rules of thought"[30].. What this means is that the concepts or categories are structured by means of the laws of logic: and these laws are, for Kant,

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[24] L. McNay, <u>Foucault: A Critical Introduction</u>, Polity Press, 1996, p.49.
[25] M. Foucault <u>The Order of Things</u>, Vintage Books, 1973, p.x1v
[26] M.Foucault, <u>The Archaeology of Knowledge</u>, Pantheon Books, 1972, p.209.
[27] Kant op.cit, B.428, p.381.
[28] ibid, B.94, p.106
[29] ibid, B.150, p.164.
[30] ibid, A.52, p.93.

the Aristotelian laws of logic.[31] Thinking, for Kant, works in conjunction with intuition. They are intimately tied together in the epistemological subject, the "I think",'s constitution of the world. Kant maintains that " [o]ur nature is so constituted that our intuition can never be other than sensible...The faculty on the other hand, which enables us to think the object of intuition is the understanding. To neither of theses powers may preference be given over the other. Without sensibility no object would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind."[32] Thus we see that the categories ,though used in thinking, are themselves independent of an individuals thinking. They exist in fixed immutable form and thought is ridgified into a fixed Aristotelian logical form dependent upon the objective and independent categories to give it substance. In this regard we can see that thinking is a infrastructure and the categories the superstructural content for thinking. This outline of Kant's, is again, almost completely inverted by Foucault's account of thinking.

Foucault agrees with Kant in that thinking is governed by logical laws. For Foucault the problem with thinking is, as he notes "... not to investigate whether or not they conform to principles of rationality, but to discover which kind of rationality they are using."[33] Foucault's account of the epistemes shows that different rationalities or forms of thinking appear in a particular historical period; and manifest differently in different historical periods[34]. Reason, or thinking for Foucault is the constitution of a period and

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[31] ibid, B.v111, p.17.
[32] ibid, A.51, p.93
[33] M. Foucault "Omnes et Singulatim: Towards a Criticism of 'Political Reason'" <u>In The Tanner Lectures on Human Values</u>, Vol. 2, ed, Sterling McMurrin. University of Utah Press, 1981, p.226.
[34] This point of Foucault's is demonstrated in the article by Karl-Otto Apel called 'Types of Rationality Today'. In this article Apel argues for the idea that different rationalities exist. Some of these are: ethical

as such a universally valid for of thinking or rationality is rejected as there is not just one rationality but many. Foucault states this in this way "I don't believe in a kind of founding act whereby reason, in its essence, was discovered or established...I think, in fact, that reason is self-created, which is why I have tried to analyse forms of rationality: different foundations, different creations, different modifications in which rationalities engender one anther, oppose and pursue one another."[35] Now where Kant sees the *a priori* categories as determining an ahistorical universal view of the world Foucault argues that these categories themselves are historically determined. For Foucault the *a priori* principles upon which thinking uses is not supplied to the subject by immutable fixed ahistorical structures of the mind, but are instead supplied by the epistemic structures of the historical period in which the subject finds itself. Where Kant sort to elucidate the *a priori* principles that made valid scientific knowledge possible Foucault similarly seeks to outline the *a priori* principles undergirding science. But for Foucault this involved the dissolution of the subject as an epistemological ground and a critique of the notion of autonomous reason or thinking. This analysis takes the form of an inquiry into the epistemes and discursive formations[36] of a society.

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rationality; hermeneutical rationality; transcendental-pragmatic self reflection as the philosophical type of rationality; scientific-technological rationality etc.(Karl-Otto Apel, 'Types of Rationality Today: the continuum of Reason between Science and Ethics, in T. F. Geraets ed <u>Rationality Today</u>, University of Ottawa Press, 1979, pp.307-50.). Heidegger argues according to Lovitt that "[w]e are trapped and blinded by a mode of thought that insists on grasping reality throug imposed categories" (W. Lovitt 'Introduction' to <u>The Question Concerning Technology and other Essays</u>, trans W. Lovitt, Garland Publications, 1977, p.xv1) This mode of thought is what Heidegger calls Enframing "it is the way in which the real revels itself as standing-reserve" (M.Heidegger, 'The Question Concerning Technology', in <u>The Question Concerning Technology and other Essays</u>, trans W. Lovitt, Garland Publications, 1977, p.23. Gadamer likewise argues that there are forms of rationality that are "...subordinated to an instrumental ideal of knowledge." (Hans-Georg Gadamer, Philosophy or Theory of Science, in <u>Reason in the Age of Science</u>, trans F.G.Lawrence, MIT Press, 1993, p.165

[35] M. Foucault, 'What is Enlightenment', in <u>The Foucault Reader</u>, ed, P. Rabinow, Penguin, 1984, p.45.

[36] There are some serious difficulties with Foucault analysis of the discursive formations. L. McNay notes " [b]y establishing a distinction between discourse and the non-discursive, Foucault reinscribes ... problematic dualism's in his work...Despite these difficulties, however, Foucault adheres in The

Foucault's archaeological method is both an attempt to deny the privilege position of the subject in constituting the world[37] and to uncover the 'the rules of formation' of a particular historical period. Those very rules that constitute the subject itself and its very thinking. The 'rules of formation' are those unconscious rules, which the subjects of a period are unaware of, and which are constitutive of the multiplicity of discourses of an historical period.[38] Foucault explains this by stating that "...a *positive unconscious* of knowledge [is] a level that eludes the consciousness of the scientist and yet is part of scientific discourse... [i]t is these rule of formation which are never articulated in their own right, but are to be found in widely differing theories.... that I have tried to reveal ... [at] a level somewhat arbitrary perhaps, archaeological "[39] This endeavour by Foucault is characterised by him as epistemological. As he notes that he is seeking to describe "... an epistemological space specific to a particular period. The epistemological space of this *positive unconscious* of knowledge is explained by the early term episteme and the latter term archive[40]. By episteme Foucault means those conditions which determine the

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Archaeology of Knowledge, to the claim of the primacy of discursive formations in the determination of non-discursive or socioeconomic experience. Yet a close reading reveals that, in practice, Foucault is unable to maintain this claim without a certain amount of ambiguity and, at points, contradiction." (L. McNay, Foucault: A Critical Introduction, Polity Press, 1996, p.71.

[37] M. Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, Pantheon Books, 1972, p.12, p.13

[38] ibid, p.31-39.

[39] M. Foucault, The Order of Things , Vintage books, 1973, p.x1.

[40] The term episteme is the heuristic principle of his early book The Order of Things. Whereas the term archive is used in his The Archaeology of Knowledge. In the latter book Foucault sort to overcome some theoretical problems with the term episteme. (M. Foucault The Archaeology of Knowledge, p.16) The term archive is seen as being a regulative of thinking rather than as a constituting principle. The archive like the episteme is seen as being the general condition of possibility for knowledge and thinking. It determines what can and can't be thought in a particular historical period. However the archive is made up of a multiplicity of varying discourses. The archive does not constrain or limit knowledge or thinking but instead but an enabling matrix which is open to change and is never fully complete. (M. Foucault The Archaeology of Knowledge, pp 126- 131) As Foucault states " ...it reveals the rules of a practice that enable statements both to survive and to undergo modification. It is *the general system of the formation of statements"* (ibid, p.130)

possible historical discourses and direction of the discourses[41]. The epistemes are an *a priori* set of rules which constitute thinking and determine what it is possible to think. As Foucault notes "[t]he episteme may be suspected of being like a world-view... which imposes on each one the same norms and postulates, a general stage of reason, a certain structure of thought that the men of a particular period cannot escape- a great body of legislation written once and for all by some anonymous hand. By *episteme*, we mean, in fact the total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences. The episteme ...is the totality of relations that can be discovered, for a given period, between the sciences when one analyses them at the level of discursive regularise."[42] In his archaeology of knowledge Foucault seeks to describe the *a priori* " conditions of the emergence of statements..."[43] "The *a priori* is not a condition of validity of judgements but a condition of reality for statements."[44] In his <u>Order of Things</u> Foucault states that he seeks to discover "... on what basis knowledge and theory became possible within what space of order knowledge was constituted; on the basis of what historical *a priori* .. ideas could appear..."[45] This

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[41] A number of scholars have outlined the way Kant's historical period shaped his philosophical view. These critiques give weight to Foucault's account of the role of the episteme in constituting thinking itself. Goldman states in regard to Kant's "I think" " ...could never pass from the I to the we, that in spite of Kant's genius it always remained within the framework of bourgeois individualist thought, these are the ultimate limits of Kant's thought." (L. Goldman, <u>Immanuel Kant</u> trans R. Black New Left Books, 1971, p.170) Similarly R. Schott argues that Kant's philosophy, in the <u>Critique of Pure Reason,</u>, is influenced by the burgeoning capitalistic consciousness of his time. Schott argues that " in commodity production, labor must conform to preestablished patterns of behaviour. Kant's discussion of the categories reflects the fixity of these rules of behaviour" (R. Schott, <u>Cognition and Eros</u>, Beacon Press, 1988, p.130) Also "...Kant's philosophy reflects the reified conditions of [capitalistic] existence..." (ibid, p.120) Finally " Kant's discussion of objective knowledge in the <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u> presents a description of human activity that parallels to a remarkable extent the phenomenon of fetishism later described by Marx in *Capital*." (ibid, p.116)

[42] M. Foucault op.cit, p.191

[43] ibid, p.127

[44] ibid, p.127

[45] M. Foucault , op.cit, pxx1-xx11

historical *a priori,* which structures thinking, is as we have seen the epistemes of an historical period.

Thus it can be seen that under Foucault's critique the subject is stripped of its status as an autonomous free thinking individual. The Cartesian man ie man at the centra of its world is replaced with the notion that society is at the centra of the world with the subject in some degree at its command. In other words the thinking subject through thinking does not constitute the world, the world constitutes the very thinking of the subject; due to its *a priori* epistemic structures. In Foucault's critique the subject is displaced from the epistemological centre of knowledge creation. This is because the Kantian autonomous constitutive sovereign subject of knowledge is dissolved; since it is seen to be itself a construction of the social structures in which it finds itself embedded. The epistemological grounding of knowledge is not centred in an autonomous reason-centred epistemological subject, the "I think",, as Kant would argue, but is grounded in the epistemic *a priori* structure's of society itself. The notion that the epistemological subject, the "I think",, of Kant, uses *a priori* structures of the mind to acquire valid scientific knowledge of the world and Foucault's idea that these *a priori* structures are instead supplied by the social system leads to two different viewpoints in regard to the nature of thinking itself.

Thus for Kant thinking is an infrastructure. Thinking is the elemental process of the mind which then uses the categories to give valid scientific knowledge of the world. On the other hand thinking for Foucault is a superstructure. Thinking is a process which is created by the elemental epistemic structures which are embedded in society In other words where the mind supplied the epistemic *a priori* principle so that the elemental thinking could then unify them in the Kantian

schema, in Foucault's account the *a priori* epistemic structures of society are elemental; since they create thinking itself.

TRUTH

Kant's theory of truth is a correspondeance theory. Kant askes "[w]hat is truth? [and answers] The nominal defintion of truth, that it is agreement of knowledge with it object is assumed to be granted..."[46] Now the central question concerning this coreespondance theory of truth is the issue of what will be the critria of this truth. As Kant states "... the question asked is as to what is the general and secure criterion of the truth of any and every knowledge."[47] Now Kant argues that a criterion of truth which was valid for every instance of knowledge is quite impossible since "[s]uch a criterion would by its very nature be self contradictory."[48] . Nevertheless Kant argues that in regard to "...knowledge in respect of its mere form...it is evident that logic, so far as it expounds the universal and necessary rules of the understanding, must in these rules furnish criteria of truth...The purley logical criterion of truth, namely, the agreement of knowledge with the general and formal laws of the understanding and reason, is a *conditio sine qua non* and is there for the negative condition of all truth. "[49]

Now Kant as we saw above regards the understanding to be the source of the logical rules and thus the source of truth. Kant states this once again when he says " [t]he holding of a thing to be true is an occurrence of our understanding..."[50] Though the understanding is the source of truth the Reason plays an important part in the generation of the truth. The Reason is, like the understanding, a unifier. Where the understanding unifies concepts the

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[46] Kant op.cit, A.58, p.97.
[47] ibid, A.58, p.97.
[48] ibid, A.59, pp.97-98..
[49] ibid, B.84, p.98.
[50] ibid, A.820, p.645.

Reason unifies ideas.[51] It is with this unifing nature of Reason[52] that the understanding can itself unify the concepts and thus reach truth. Kant states "[t]he laws of Reason which require us to seek unity, is a necessary law, since without it we should have no reason at all, and without reason no coherent employment of the understanding, and in the absence of this no sufficient criterion of empirical truth."[53] Kant points out that though truth rests upon objective grounds it nevertheless requires the subjective structures of the mind of the individual to make the truth judgement.[54]

Thus we see that Kant's account of truth places the subject as the fount or foundation of truth. This subjective foundationalism is strongly rejected by Foucault. The Kantian epistemological subject, the "I think", that structures reality and give truth statements about it is replaced by a subject that is under the control of *a priori* epistemic discursive formations in it's formulations of truth. Also where Kant sees the mind of the epistemological subject, the "I think", as being the sole repository of what is required to know the world Foucault sees instead the subject's mind as being constituted by political, linguistic and power contingencies. The a historical account of truth that Kant espouses is replaced by an historically and societal determined truth. Now it should be pointed out that Foucault approaches the problem of truth form two different directions: the

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[51] ibid, A.644, p.533.

[52] Kemp-Smith notes a number of contradictions in Kants understanding of the faculty Reason. According to Kemp-Smith "[f]rom one point of view, Reason is merely the understanding in its self-limiting, self-regulative employment... from the other point of view Reason is a faculty distinct from the understanding..." (N. Kemp-Smith, A Commentary To Kant's Critique Of Pure Reason, Macmillan Press, 1979, p.426.) Similarly Kant, according to Kemp-Smith, outlines two different views on the Ideas of Reason and thus of truth. As Kemp-Smith states "[o]n one view, their content is merely empirical, and sense experience is our sole criterion of truth and realty; on the other, they have to be recognised as containing a pure a priori concept, and are themselves the standards by which even empirical truth can alone be determined." (ibid, p.431)

[53] Kant, op.cit, A.651, p. 538.

archaeological and genealogical aspects.[55] In the archaeological viewpoint truth is a matter of the *a priori* historic epistemic structures; and in the geneological, truth is a product of political and power imperatives. Each of these viewpoints highlights different but complementary aspects of truth. As Foucault notes, "[i]t is thus that critical [archaelogiocal] and geneological descriptions are to alternate, support and complete each other."[56]

Archaelogically, in the The Archaeology of Knowledge, Foucault talks of discontinues or epistemological breaks in the chronology of reason. Foucault criticise those accounts of reason which outline a "...continuous progress of consciousness, or teleology of reason, or evolution of human thought."[57] Foucault on the other hand argues that there are epistemological breaks in the history of reason " ...in place of the continuous chronology of reason...there appeared scales that sometimes very brief, distinct from one another, irreducible to a single law, scales that bear a type of history peculiar to each one, and which cannot be reduced to the general model of a consciousness that acquire, progress and remembers."[58] L. McNay points out that Foucault's idea of the epistemological break means that there is no uninterrupted chronological advance or progress of reason, and that the correspondence theory of truth must be abandoned for "...a system of knowledge [that] must be studied interms of it's own internal and relatively contingent rules of

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[54] ibid, A.820, p.645.

[55] J.Habermas succinctly outlines these two approaches when he states " Foucault distinguished the archaeology of knowledge that uncovers the truth-constitutive rules of exclusion in any discourse from the genealogical investigation of the pertinent practices. Genealogical studies how discourses are formed and why they emerge and disappear again, by tracing the historical variable conditions of validity right to their institutional roots" (J.Habermas, The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity, Polity Press, 1995,. p. 248.

[56] M.Foucault , 'The Discourse on Language", in M.Foucault , The Archaelogy of Knowledge, Pantheon Books, 1972, p.234.

formation."[59] Foucault's notions of the epistemes and archive mean that what counts for truth, for the archaeologist, is determined by the conceptual or epistemic system through the discursive practices or discourses. Truth is thus a product of the epistemological or enunciative field/s[60] of a society. Foucault states this when he notes the importance of what he calls the enunciative fields According to Foucault "... there is no statement in general, no free, neutral, independent statement: but a statement always belongs to a series or a whole ... It is always part of a network of statements... Generally speaking, one can only say that a sequence of linguistic elements is a statement only if it is immersed in an enunciative field, in which it then appears as a unique element."[61] This means that in opposition to Kant, Foucault's archaeological notion of truth means that the individual does not construct truth from the *a priori* rules of the mind but instead these truths are determined for the subject by the *a priori* rules of the discursive practices. Foucault explains this with regard to botany and pathology where he states ".. for a proposition to belong to botany or pathology, it must fulfil certain conditions,, in a stricter and more complex sense than that of pure and simple truth... it must refer to a specific range of objects [which where different for different historical periods]."[62] Thus we see that archaeologically truth is not so much a product of the subject, as it is for Kant, but truth is a product of the epistemes. Now Foucault in arguing that truth is embedded in a network of other statements is really putting forward a coherence theory of truth.

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[57] M.Foucault , The Archaelogy of Knowledge, Pantheon Books, 1972, p.8
[58] ibid, p.8
[59] L.McNay, op.cit, p.54.
[60] Dreyfus and Rabinow point out that the enunciative fields are the specific truth games of a particular science. (H. L.Dreyfus & P,Rabinow, Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, University of Chicago Press, 1982, p.54.)
[61] M. Foucault op.cit, p.99
[62] ibid, p.223

Foucault's version of the coherence theory of truth enables Foucault, the archaeologist to suspends judgment on the status of scientific truth. In <u>The Archaeology of Knowledge</u> Foucault states that "[w]e are concerned with here is not to neutralise discourse , to make it a sign of something alse, and to pierce through its density in order to reach what remains silently to it, but on the contrary to maintain it in its consistency, to make it emerge in its own complexity."[63] Dreyfus and Rabinow in commenting on this passage argues that Foucault suspends judgement on the status of truth claims as well as remaining neutral as to the possibility of a transcendental justification of truth claims.[64] This claim of Dreyfus and Rabinow is supported by Foucault the genealogist when he states that instead of looking at whether scientific discourse is true or false he is concerned with "...seeing historically how effects of truth are produced within discourse which are themselves neither true nor false."[65]

 Foucault the genealogist is interested in the human urge for the 'will to truth' but a 'will to truth' that is a product of desire and power.[66] Foucault argues that in societies like ours there is a 'political economy' of truth. This political economy of truth is characterised by five traits "[t]ruth is centred on the form of scientific discourse and the institutions that produce it; it is subject to constant economic and political incitement (the demand for truth, as much for economic production as for political power); it is the object, under diverse forms, of immense diffusion and consumption (circulating through apparatuses of

[63] ibid, p.47.
[64] H. L.Dreyfus & P,Rabinow, <u>Michel Foucault: Beyound Structuralism and Hermeneutics</u>, University of Chicago Press, 1982, p.50.
[65] M. Foucault, <u>Power/Knowledge</u>, trans C.Gordon, Pantheon Books, 1980, p.118.

education and transformation whose extent is relatively broad in the social body, not with

standing certain strict limitations; it is produced and transmitted under the control,

dominant if not exclusive, of a few great political and economic apparatus ?(university,

army, writing, media,; lastly, it is the issue of a whole political debate and social

confrontation (ideological struggles)."[67] Thus there is a battle over the status of truth.[68]

This characterisation of Foucault's gives him a certain viewpoint on the nature of truth.

Truth for Foucault is a "..thing of the world.."[69]. It is part of a societies 'regime of truth'

"...its 'general politics' of truth: that is the types of discourse which it accepts and makes

function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from

false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures

accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying

what counts as true."[70]

Thus we see that Foucault the archaeologist and genealogist suspends judgement on the

status of truth. Foucault the archaelogist argues only that truth is a product of *a priori*

historic epistemic structures. And Foucault the geneologist argues that truth is a product

of contingent political and power imperatives. Those scholars like Todd May[71] who

argue that Foucault is an anti-foundationalist, to my mind missess the point of Foucault's

genealogical and archaeological enterprise. Foucault is not discussing the status of truth

only outlining how truth arises through societies epistemological fields. This is not to

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[66]M. Foucault, The Archaelogy of Knowledge, Pantheoan Books, 1972, p.220.
[67] M.Foucault op.cit, pp. 131-132.
[68] ibid, p.132.
[69] ibid, p.131.,
[70] ibid, p.231.
[71] T.May, Between Genealogy and Epistemology, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993.

deny that Foucault's work contains contradictions and ambivalence's[72] which can generate alternative readings, but my argument is that Foucault's central point is not ant-foundationalistic. Foucault is foundationalist in the sense that without worrying about the status of truth he argues that society becomes the foundation of truth. Society via its epistemes and political power structures determines or is the justification and foundation of 'it's' truths. In this regard it could be argued that where Kant puts forward a subjective foundationalism Foucault espouses a societal foundationalism.

. Thus in conclusion we have seen that Kant's and Foucault's theories of thinking leads to a particular theory of truth. Thinking for Kant involves a sovereign, autonomist, epistemological subject, the "I think", projecting upon the world *a priori* mental structures. The thinking sovereign subject uses innate law of logic to think with and structure the equally innate a priori categories. According to Kant these law of thought and categories of thought are universal, ahistorical, immutable and not influenced by any empirical content. Truth and thinking for Kant are independent of all social and historical influences. Kant puts forward a correspondence theory of truth in which the subject's subjective mental structures enable it to discover objective truth about the world. Foucault strongly rejects Kant's subjective foundationalism and sovereign thinking subject. Foucault argues that the thinking subject does not use *a priori* mental structures to structure the world but instead uses the *a priori* epistemic structure of its historical period to think with. In this regard where Kant sees ahistorical immutable categories Foucault argues that these categories are themselves historically determined. These

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[72] See McNay op.cit, p. 64, 71, 82. T.May, op.cit, p.83.

epistemic structures are not constituted by the subject but in fact constitute the subject itself. Though Foucault acknowledges that there are laws of rationality, unlike Kant, he argues that there are different rationalities operative in society. Where Kant puts forwards a correspondence theory of truth Foucault elucidates a coherence theory of truth. Foucault does not comment upon the status of truth but instead argues that a societies truths are archaelogicaly a product of its a priori epistemic historic structures and geneologically truth is a product   of political and power contingences and imperatives. In this way Foucault is arguing that society is the foundation of truth. Thus he is a foundationalist.

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HOW DOES KANT ATTEMPT TO PROVE THAT SYNTHETIC *A PRIORI* KNOWLEDGE IS POSSIBLE? DOES HE SUCCEED?

In the introduction to the <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u> Kant notes that the theoretical sciences contain synthetic *a priori* judgments[1]. Kant notes that in these judgements "..certain modes of knowledge leave the field of all possible experience and have the appearance of extending the scope of our judgements beyond all limits of experience, and this by means of concepts to which no corresponding object can ever be given in experience."[2] In this regard Kant points out that a certain mystery lies concealed in the fact of how "...I seek to go beyond the concept A and to know that another concept B is connected with it? Through what is the synthesis made possible?" Thus Kant asks his classic epistemological question "[h]ow are *a priori* synthetic judgements possible?"[3] Kant sets as the principle task of the <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u> the answering of this question[4] which is "...the ground of the possibility of *a priori* synthetic judgements, to obtain insight into the conditions which make each kind of such judgements possible..."[5] This essay will argue: firstly that by using the synthetic method[6] Kant argues that space and

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[1] E. Kant, 'Critique of Pure Reason', in N. Kemp-Smith (translation) <u>Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason</u>, 1993,, B.15-18, pp. 52-55.
[2] ibid, A.3, p.45.
[3] ibid, B.19, p.55
[4] ibid, p.51, 59, 61
[5] ibid, A.8, pp. 51-52.
[6] Kant thought that there were two method which could be used to account for synthetic *a priori* knowledge these are the synthetic and analytic methods (Norman Kemp-Smith, <u>A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason</u>, Macmillan Press, 1979, pp. 44-45. Kemp-Smith notes that "[t]he synthetic method would start from given, ordinary experience (in it's simplest form as consciousness of time), to discover it's conditions, and from them prove the validity of knowledge *a priori*. The analytic method would start "from the sought as if it were given" that, is from the existence of *a priori* synthetic judgements, and assuming them valid, would determine the conditions under which alone such validity can be possible." (ibid, p.45) Ewing points out that the synthetic method is used by Kant in the: <u>Transcendental Deduction</u>; the proofs of

the categories make synthetic *a priori* judgements possible[7]; because space and the categories are the epistemic conditions which make experience and thought possible; secondly I will argue that, via Kant's transcendental idealism, the subject becomes the epistemic condition, the epistemological foundation for the possibility of *a priori* synthetic judgements. Also because of Kant's transcendental idealism and the idea that we can have knowledge only of appearances I will argue that Kant did not succeed in proving the possibility of synthetic *a priori* knowledge, because he undermines his right to genuine knowledge.

. A. Allison succinctly captures the problem faced by Kant when he notes " [s]ince they are synthetic, they cannot have a purely conceptual or logical grounding; since they are a priori they cannot be grounded in experience. The problem of the synthetic a priori is... that of explaining how a non-empirical, yet extraconceptual and extralogical grounding of a judgement is possible."[8] Kant attempts to solve this problem by arguing that "...if there is to be synthetic knowledge *a priori*, there must also be *a priori* intuitions as well as concepts."[9] On this point of *a priori* intuitions Allison makes the point that "... Eberhard and so many others dismiss [this notion] as a contradiction in terms [and that also] the notion of a pure intuition is a murky one, perhaps the murkiest in the entire

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the categories and in the Metaphysical Exposition. (A. C. Ewing, A Short Commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, University of Chicago Press, 1987, p.40)

[7] *A priori* synthetic judgements are, as S. Korner notes, those "...judgements whose predicates are not contained in their subject and yet are logically independent of all judgements describing sense-experience," In other words they are judgements which while being independent of experience nevertheless say something about experience (Korner Kant, Penguin, 1990, p.20)

[8] H. Allison, Kant's Transcendental Idealism, Yale University Press, 1983, p.78..

[9] ibid, p.78

Critique.[10] Similarly R.Grigg notes this contradiction and consequently states "...there seems to be no way that a judgement can be both synthetic and a priori."[11]

Now it is in the section of the <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u> called the <u>Transcendental Aesthetic</u> that Kant seeks to demonstrate via the synthetic method the possibility of these pure intuitions in the form of space and time. Like wise it is in the section the <u>Transcendental Deduction of the Categories</u> that he attempts to demonstrate the possibility of some of the categories. These proofs, it will be shown, Kant felt gave a direct proof of his 'transcendental idealism'. A psychological theory espousing a subjective foundationalism in which the subject becomes the epistemological fount or epistemic condition for the possibility of synthetic *a priori* judgements.

In the <u>Metaphysical Exposition</u>[12] Kant gives four synthetic proofs[13]. Two to prove that space is *a priori*, and two to prove that space is an intuition. These proofs seek to establish that the pure intuitions are epistemic condition of experiencing reality. In the first proof Kant starts from the notion of space and argues that "[s]pace is not an empirical concept which has been derived from outer experiences."[14] To prove this point Kant maintains that in order that things or representations can be considered to be refered to something outside the subject, and also that the subject can represent them as outside if it space must be supposed.[15] In the second proof Kant argues that "[s]pace is a

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[10] ibid, p.80

[11] R. Grigg, 'Kant's Theory of Judgement and the Transcendental Aesthetic', in <u>Reason and Experience: Theories of Knowledge B</u> Study Guide, Deakin University, 1992, p.36

[12] For criticisms of these arguments, see Ewing (op.cit, pp. 33-39) and Allison (op.cit pp. 82-94.)

[13] Kant, op.cit B.38-40, pp. 68-70.

[14] ibid, B.38, p.68.

[15] ibid, B.38, p.68.

necessary *a priori* representation, which underlines all outer intuitions."[16] Kant supports

this claim by arguing that it is true because though we can think of space as being empty

of objects we cannot "...represent to ourselves the absence of space..."[17] The third proof

Kant argues that "[s]pace is not a discursive or, as we say, general concept of relations of

things, but a pure intuition."[18] Kant argues that this is so because though we can speak of

different spaces we are nevertheless speaking of a single space divided up into diverse

spaces. This is because space is a single manifold.[19] From these arguments Kant thus

concludes that "..it follows that an *a priori*, and not an empirical, intuition underlies all

concepts of space."[20] The fourth proof Kant argues that "[s]pace is represented as an

infinite given magnitude."[21] Kant maintains that though a concept can be thought as a

representation which can be contained in an infinite number of other representations no

concept can nevertheless be thought of as containing an infinite number of

representations within itself.[22] From this point Kant concludes "...the original

representation of space is an *a priori* intuition, not a concept."[23] Now though these final

two proofs are meant to prove that space is an *a priori* intuition it is in the Transcendental

Exposition of the Concept of Space that Kant, according to Korner, gives his most

important proof for this.[24]

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[16] ibid, A.24, p.68.
[17] ibid, A.24, p.68
[18] ibid, A.25, p.69
[19] ibid, A.25, p.69.
[20] ibid, A.25, p.69.
[21] ibid, B.30, p.69
[22] ibid, B.30, pp. 69-70.
[23] ibid, B.30, p.70.
[24] Korner op.ct, p.39.

It is in the <u>Transcendental Exposition of the Concept of Space</u> that Kant uses the analytic method. Kant assumes that "[g]eometry is a science which determines the properties of space synthetically and yet *a priori*[25] . From this axiom Kant asks the question "[w]hat, then, must be our representation of space, in order that such knowledge of it may be possible."[26] Kant argues   that space to be an *a priori* intuition because "... geometrical propositions are one and all apodeictic, that is bound up with the consciousness of their necessity... such propositions cannot be empirical or, in other words, judgements of experience, nor can they be derived from any such judgement"[27] After outlining this argument Kant asks how it is that there can exist in the mind an outer intuition that precedes the object and how is it that the concept of theses objects can be determined *a priori*[28]. Kant's answers is that it is possible because these intuitions reside in the mind of the subject.[29] Thus the epistemic conditions of human knowledge are seen in a psychological sense. In this regard Kant is advocating a transcendental idealism. Kant feels that because of this and his other expositions his explanations are the only ones that make "...intelligible the *possibility* of geometry, as a body of *a priori* synthetic knowledge."[30].

In the <u>Metaphysical Exposition of this Concept</u> Kant points out four possible solutions to the   ontological status of space and time.[31] In the fourth alternative Kant argues that space and time are due to the subjective constitution of the subjects mind. As he states "

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[25]   Kant , op.cit, B.40, P.70
[26]   ibid, B.40, P.70
[27]   ibid, B.41, p.70
[28] ibid, B.41, p.70
[29] ibid, B.41, p.70.
[30] ibid, B.41, p.71.
[31] ibid, A.23, pp. 67-68.

...space and time [are] such that they belong to the subjective constitution of our mind, apart from which they cannot be ascribed to anything whatsoever."[32] Now it this alternative that Kant adopts for his solution of the nature of the *a priori* intuition of space and time,. Kant ineffect argues that for there to every thing spatial and temporal must be only appearance and our mind imposes structure upon reality through the medium of the *a priori* intuition of space and time Kant state this when he says " [s]pace is nothing but the form of all appearances of outer sense. It is the subjective condition of sensibility under which alone intuition is possible for us... the form of all appearances can be given prior to all actual perceptions and so exist in the mind *a priori* and how, as a pure intuition, in which all objects must be determined, it can contain prior to all experience principles which determine the relations of these objects."[33] Kant asserts the transcendental ideality of space and time in which the *a priori* intuitions of space and time can give us only *a priori* knowledge of appearances and not of the thing in itself.[34] Thus the subject's mind becomes the epistemological foundation for the constitution and understanding of reality. The *a priori* intuitions of space and time are thus the epistemic conditions for this constitution. of reality and the subjects mind the epistemological foundation for this constitution.

Thus Kant attempts in the Transcendental Aesthetic to demonstrate the possibility of the pure intuitions of space and time. Kant argues that by making this demonstration he has shown how *a priori* synthetic knowledge can be derived and thus possible.. As he states "[t]ime and space are, therefore, two sources of knowledge from which bodies of *a priori*

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[32] ibid, B.38, p.68
[33] ibid, A.26, p.71
[34] ibid, A.28. p.72, A.39, p.80.

synthetic knowledge can be derived."[35]   Consequently we see that Kant is giving an epistemological theory which can account for *a priori* synthetic knowledge ie that space and time are *a priori* intuitions. Now where Kant justifies *a priori* synthetic judgement via the proof of the pure intuitions of space and time in the <u>Transcendental Aesthetic</u> it is in the <u>Transcendental Deduction</u> that he does the same thing except here it is via the proof of the pure concepts ie the categories.

Ewing notes that the <u>Transcendental Deduction</u> is considered to be the most important section in the whole of the <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u>.[36] Now as we saw in answering the question 'how are synthetic a priori judgements possible?' Kant states that they are possible because of pure intuitions and pure concepts. Now it is the task of the <u>Transcendental Deduction</u> to prove the reality or existence of these concepts[37]. Kant divides this proof into two parts: firstly that shown in the '<u>Clue to the Discovery of all the Pure Concepts of the Understanding</u>" ,or as he called it in the second edition of <u>the Critique of Pure Reason</u>, the <u>Metaphysical Deduction</u>; and secondly the <u>Transcendental Deduction.</u> In the <u>Metaphysical Deduction</u> Kant argues that the *a priori* origin of the categories has been proved through their complete agreement with the general logical functions of thought."[38] In the <u>Transcendental Deduction</u> Kant like wise states that "...in the *transcendental deduction* we have shown their [pure concepts] possibility as *a priori* modes of knowledge of objects of an intuition in general."[39]

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[35] ibid, B.55, p.80
[36] Ewing, op.cit, p.67.
[37] Kant, op.cit, B.117-B.120, pp. 120-122..
[38] ibid, B.159, p.170
[39] ibid, B.159, p.170

In the <u>Metaphysical Deduction</u> Kant notes that he will attempt the "*...dissection of the faculty of the understanding* itself, in order to investigate the possibility of concepts *a priori* by looking for them in the understanding alone."[40] In this section we can see that Kant assumes that there are certain concepts are *a priori* rather than empirical and that they are in the understanding. Kant argues that since we cannot have an intuition without sensibility then the understanding cannot be a faculty of intuition and therefor the knowledge given by the understanding must be by concepts.[41] Now Kant attempts his proof of the pure concepts by the synthetic method.

Kant derives the possibility of pure concepts by deducing them from the faculty of Judgement. As Kant notes that in "[t]his division [the pure concepts] is developed systematically from a common principle, namely, the faculty of judgement (which is the same as the faculty of thought)."[42] By this method Kant outlines a table of categories [pure concepts] which he considers as being exhaustive as "...no others, have their seat in the pure understanding."[43] Now it must be pointed out that, as Allison notes, in the <u>Metaphysical Deduction</u> all that Kant is doing is to show the possibility of the pure concepts and to outline them.[44] It is left to the <u>Transcendental Deduction</u> from then on to prove their existence. Kant attempts this by arguing that the pure concepts are the epistemic conditions of experience and the subject is the epistemological fount or source for the *a priori* synthetic judgements to be possible.

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[40] ibid, A.66, p.103
[41] ibid, A.68, p.105
[42] ibid, A.81, p.114
[43] ibid, A.81, p.114.
[44] Allison, op.cit, p.115

Rather than outline the deductions demonstrating the proof of the pure concepts I will rather focus upon the premise upon which the deductions are built. This premise is Kant's transcendental idealism. It is by focussing upon this that we see that the proof of synthetic *a priori* judgements stems from the epistemic nature of the subject itself .

Kant maintains that the "objective validity of the categories as *a priori* concepts rest, therefore [on the fact that it is through]them alone does experience become possible"[45]. As such Kant argues that the transcendental deduction must start from the fact that the pure concepts "...must be recognised as conditions of the possibility of experience."[46] In other words the epistemic conditions. Thus Kant's proof of the categories is transcendental. Now the epistemic conditions for the possibility of experience resides solely in the subject's mind. Kant argues that it is not that the mind conforms to objects in the world but that objects conform to the nature of the mind. As Kant states "If intuition must conform to the constitution of the objects, I do not see how we could know any thing of the latter *a priori*; but if the object (as the object of the senses) must conform to the constitution of our faculty of intuition I have no difficulty in conceiving such a possibility."[47]. Kant argues that reality presents a disparate jumble of representations[48] and that it is "...the understanding alone, which is itself the faculty of combining *a priori*

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[45] Kant, op.cit B.126, p.126.
[46] ibid, A.94, p.126.
[47] ibid,, p.22
[48] ibid,, A120-123. p.143-145

[brings] the manifold of given representations under the unity of apperception."[49] This unity of apperception is able to take place because of the understanding uses categories to bring about the unity.[50] In this regard the subject becomes the epistemic condition for understanding reality; since the laws of reality ie those to do with appearances must agree with the understanding. As Kant states "... the understanding has rules which I must presuppose as being in me prior to objects being given to me, and therefore as being a priori. They find expression in *a priori* concepts, to which all objects of experience necessarily conform and which they must agree... we can know *a priori* of things only what we ourselves put into them.[51]

Thus with this outline did Kant succeed in proving that synthetic *a priori* knowledge is possible? My answer is no. The reason being that Kant's transcendental idealism reduces to *a reductio ad absurdum*[52]. Kant's transcendental idealism means that it is because it is the subject that makes what it knows via the pure concepts and pure intuition that synthetic *a priori* knowledge becomes possible. Now the *reductio ad absurdum* of Kant's transcendental idealism is that the subject cannot know anything ie that synthetic *a priori* judgements are   possible. As we saw above Kant argues that we can only have knowledge of appearances[53] not of the thing in itself. Consequently reality only appears to be what it is ie spatio-temporal and determined by the categories hence experience

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[49] ibid, B.134, p.154.

[50] ibid,

[51] ibid, B.xv111, p.23

[52] This argument thus follows the 'standard picture' of criticism of Kant's transcendental idealism. For full summary of this view see Allison (op.cit, pp. 3-13).

[53] Allison argues that Kant's transcendental idealism is not reduced to *a reductio ad absurdum* for a number of reasons. One reason being that he argues that Kant made a distinction between an empirical and transcendental conception of 'ideality' as well as between a transcendental conception of appearances and a transcendental conception of the thing in itself (ibid, pp. 6-7) Nevertheless Allison notes that there is textual support for the standard picture. (ibid, p.6)

must be somehow illusory. In this regard Kant undermines the possibility of any genuine knowledge. The pure intuitions of space and time, as proved in the <u>Transcendental Aesthetic</u> ,only apply to appearance, as such that things appear to be spatial and temporal must itself be illusory. Thus we can have no genuine knowledge of how objects are placed in reality. Similarly because the categories are proven transcendentally and experience is only appearance, and thus an illusion, the categories must themselves be non-genuine knowledge. Consequently with the pure intuitions and pure concepts being non-genuine, true knowledge is undermined thus one cannot know if or whether synthetic *a priori* knowledge is possible. That the pure intuitions Euclidean space and the categories are not genuine knowledge is supported by the fact of non-Euclidean geometry and the violation of causality in Quantum Mechanics. Consequently if   the pure intuitions and categories are not genuine knowledge then synthetic *a priori* knowledge is not possible.

Thus we see that Kant attempts to prove that synthetic *a priori* knowledge is possible by constructing a transcendental idealism via the synthetic and transcendental methods. Transcendental idealism means that because the subject makes what it knows, via the epistemic conditions of the pure intuitions and the pure concepts then synthetic *a priori* judgements are possible. In this regard the subject becomes the epistemic condition or epistemological foundation for the possibility of synthetic *a priori* knowledge. In other words synthetic *a priori* knowledge is possible because they are guaranteed because of the epistemic conditions of the pure intuitions and pure concepts. and these epistemic conditions are themselves guaranteed because the subject is the epistemological fount or epistemic condition as guaranteed by transcendental idealism. Now as we have shown

Kant does not succeed in proving that synthetic *a priori* knowledge is possible because transcendental idealism undermines the possibility of genuine knowledge.

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IS SYNTHETIC *A PRIORI* JUDGEMENTS POSSIBLE

The central question Kant tries to answer in the 'Critique of Pure Reason' is "How are synthetic *a priori* judgements possible?" Nowell-Smith argues that the question is "...one of the most important and difficult in philosophy"[1] With the work of W.V.O.Quine namely his "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" the distinction between synthetic as analytic knowledge has been thrown into doubt[2]. This doubt, as Nowell-Smith notes, has led to recent discussion on the possibility of synthetic *a priori* knowledge[3]. Norman Kemp-Smith argues that Kant assumed as a presupposition that synthetic *a priori* knowledge was possible and he sought to show how as a consequence synthetic *a priori* judgements

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[1] P. H. Nowell-Smith, 'Apriori' , in J.O.Urmson & J. Ree (ed), The Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers, Routledge, 1992, p.20. The possibility of synthetic *a priori* knowledge cannot be unstated Ewing points out that " [i]f there are no synthetic *a priori* judgements thought can never give us new truth...all deductive inferences and self evident propositions will be a matter of arbitrary convention; there will be no philosophy beyond ordering and clarification of propositions known, if known at all, in some other way; mathematics will be merely a game with symbols; there will be no relation of entailment or necessary connection in the objective world but merely set of brute facts any of which might perfectly well exist without the others existing also." (A.C.Ewing, A Short commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, University of Chicargo Press, 1987, pp.20-21). Norman Kemp-Smith notes that Kant felt that if Hume's scepticism was not answered then "...deductive inference must be eliminated from among the possible instruments at the disposal of the mind." (Norman Kemp-Smith, , A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, Macmillan Press, 1979 p.xxv11) Kant felt that the whole of mathematics consisted of synthetic *a priori* judgements and that they are the pressupositions of the sciences and morality (S. Korner Kant, Penguin, 1990, p.20). Kant thought that there were two method which could be used to account for synthetic *a priori* knowledge these are the synthetic and analytic methods. (Norman Kemp-Smith op.cit,, pp.44-45) Kemp-Smith notes that " The synthetic method would start from given, ordinary experience (in it's simplest form as consciousness of time), to discover it's conditions, and from them prove the validity of knowledge *a priori* The analytic method would start "from the sought as if it were given" that, is from the existence of *a priori* synthetic judgements, and assuming them valid, would determine the conditions under which alone such validity can be possible." (ibid, p.45) Norman Kemp-Smith notices a third method ie the transcendental which he considers the most important of the three (ibid, p.45). By adopting this transcendental method Kant arrives at his solution to the question how are synthetic *a priori* judgment possible via what is called his transcendental idealism. Transcendental idealism argues that for there to be synthetic *a priori* judgements every thing spatial and temporal must be only appearance and our mind imposes structure upon reality through the medium of the categories. Strawson argues that this transcendental idealism is incoherent and as a consequence "...it must be concluded that Kant really has no clear and general conception of the synthetic *a priori* at all."(P.F.Strawson, The Bounds of Sense, Methuen, 1973, p.43)

[2] A O' Hear, What is philosophy, Penguin, 1991, p.174-175.

[3] Nowell-Smith, op.cit, p.20

where possible?[4] As R Walker points out Kant's solution was two fold [even though Kant didn't see that each solution was a separate attempted proof], namely his transcendental idealism and his transcendental arguments[5]. Now as the presupposition for these proofs is the accepted validity of synthetic *a priori* knowledge then if this knowledge is proven to be non-existent then these proofs of Kant become redundant. Thus this essay will not investigate the arguments of transcendental idealism or the transcendental arguments but will investigate the logical possibility of synthetic *a priori* judgements. By relying upon Kant's classificatory and definitional criteria this essay will argue that synthetic *a priori* knowledge or in other words judgments are logically impossible. In this essay I will maintain that Kant's definitions of *a priori,* synthetic and analytic lead to, in the 'synthetic *a priori*', a violation of the law of contradiction[6]. These contradictions manifest themselves in the fact that synthetic *a priori* judgements are: simultaneously logically necessary and not logically necessary; simultaneously dependent upon experience and independent of experience; an simultaneouly both synthetic and analytic [a situation Kant as we shall see denies can happen]. Since S. Korner argues that Kant's account of the synthetic *a priori* is not a contradiction interms, this demonstration, to the contrary, will involve investigating the arguments of Korner.

Korner in his book <u>Kant</u> argues that synthetic *a priori* knowledge is possible. Korner maintains that there are apparent contradictions in the notion of synthetic *a priori* judgements , but these dissolve away upon careful explication of Kant's definitional and classificatory terms. A less positive view in regard to synthetic *a priori* judgements is put

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[4] Norman Kemp-Smith, <u>A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason</u>, Macmillan Press, 1979, p.44

[5] R.C.S.Walker, <u>Kant</u>, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978, p.11

[6] I maintain that a recurring method of Kant is to create paradoxicaldefinitions such as synthetic *a priori. mixed a priori etc in* the <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u> which he hopes will then enable him to steer a middle path between such things as empiricism/rationalism. Kant does this same thing in his '<u>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Moral</u>*s'* where he incorporates into a single individual the contradictory elements of the intelligible world and the sensible world to steer a middle path between freedom and determinism.. In this case Kant admits with candour that he "...must get rid of this seeming contradiction in a convincing manner..." (H.J.Paton <u>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Moral</u>, Harper and Row, 1964, p.124<u>)</u> Nevertheless Kant goes on to say "... both characteristics not merely can get on perfectly well together but must be conceived as necessarily combined in the same subject for other wise we could not explain why we should trouble reason with such an idea... does yet involve us in the business which puts reason to sore straits in its theoretical use." (Paton ibid, p.124)

forward by Strawson. Strawson investigating Kant's attempted account of synthetic *a priori* judgements via his transcendental idealism notes that this transcendental idealism is incoherent and as such "...it must be concluded that Kant really has no clear and general conception of the synthetic *a priori* at all."[7] This is because Strawson claims that Kant transcendental idealism undermines Kant's claims that he can have knowledge of reality because transcendental idealism means, according to Strawson, that " reality is supersensible and that we can have no knowledge of it."[8]

Kant's classification involves the ideas of : *a priori*; *a posteriori;* analytic and synthetic judgments. By *a priori and a posteriori* Kant's means "...any knowledge that is thus independent of experience and even all impressions of the senses. Such knowledge is called *a priori*, and is distinguished from the empirical, which has its sources *a posteriori*, that is, in experience."[9] Coupled with this independence of experience Kant also states that "[n]ecessity and strict universality are thus safe criteria of a priori knowledge and inseparable from one another ...it is advisable to use the two criteria separately, each by itself being infallible.."[10] Similarly Kant means by analytic and synthetic "...all judgements in which the relation of subject to predicate is thought (I take into consideration affirmative judgements only, the subsequent application to negative judgements being easily made), this relation is possible in to different ways. Either the predicate B belongs to the subject A, as something which is (covertly) contained in this concept A; or B lies outside the concept A, although it does indeed stand in connection with it. In the one case I entitle the judgement analytic, in the other synthetic."[11]

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[7] P.F.Strawson, <u>The Bounds of Sense</u>, Methuen, 1973, p.43

[8] ibid, p.38

[9] E.Kant, 'Critique of Pure Reason', in N.Kemp-Smith (translation) <u>Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason</u>, 1993, p.42, B 2

[10] ibis, p.44, B 4

[11] ibid, p.48, B 11

Kemp-Smith notes that for Kant while necessity is a criterion of the *a priori* "...the empirical [is] synonymous with the contingent [non-necessary]."[12] Similarly Kemp-Smith points out that where the analytic judgements are *a priori* and based upon the law of contradiction[13] for their validity synthetic judgements are dependent upon experience for the truth of their judgements[14]. Thus from Kant's definitions we have the definition of synthetic *a priori* judgements[15] as being ' contingent, non-necessary and experience dependent judgements which are necessary, non-contingent and independent of all experience'

If we at first focus upon Kant's classification of propositions without looking at the individual definitions we will see that this classification leads itself to the fact that synthetic *a priori* propositions are a contradiction in terms. On this point it should be pointed out as Korner notes that the Kantian classification has been criticised by some critics: some seeing in the classification "...a mistake which vitiates the whole critical philosophy.[16]"According to Kant all judgements are either analytic or synthetic and no judgement can be both; this is because these judgement are infact contradictories[17].

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[12] N.Kemp-Smith op.cit, p.56

[13] ibid, p.59

[14] ibid, p.39

[15] According to Kant perceiving and thinking are different. In perceiving apprehension of particulars is due to the faculty of sense . This apprehension is what Kant calls intuition. To the understanding belongs the apprehension of concepts and the rule by which they are applied. The synthetic a priori judgements come from the understanding. Concepts are of three types: *a posteriori* ie those concepts abstracted from experience; *apriori* ie those concepts which are not abstracted from experience; and Ideas those concepts which are not abstracted from experience and never apply to experience. The faculty of employing Ideas is Reason. Kant argues that mathematics is made up of synthetic *a priori* knowledge just as science and everyday common sense knowledge is also. The concepts which Kant argues are applicable to sense perception is what he calls the categories and synthetic *a priori* judgements make use of these categories. The categories are not abstracted from reality but are imposed by the mind upon reality. In other words it is the mind which orders and structures, through the categories reality ie transcendental idealism. Kant distinguishes between the pure self and the empirical self. It is the pure self not the empirical self which impose upon reality the categories.(S.Korner, 'Kant' in J.O.Urmson & J. Ree (ed), The Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers, Routledge, 1992, pp.157-160.

[16] S. Korner, Kant, Penguin, 1990, p.18

[17] Ewing, op.cit, p.18.

Korner makes the point   that all analytic judgments are *a priori*[18] . Now the question is are all *a priori* judgements analytic. If they are then in terms of Kant's own definitions a judgment cannot be synthetic *a priori* as this would mean that it is both synthetic and analytic simultaneously; a situation Kant   denies can happen. Now based upon Kant's explication of these terms the answer must be that all *a prioris* are anaylitic.. According to Kant judgements which are not *a priori* are   *a posteriori* and thus synthetic (non-analytic). Korner likewise notes "...all [judgements] that are *a posteriori* (non *a priori*) are necessarily synthetic (non analytic)."[19] Thus because *a posteriori* judgements are synthetic then *a priori* judgements must be analytic because as Kant notes a judgement can only be one or the other. Consequently a synthetic *a priori* judgement is really a synthetic analytic judgement a situation as we have said Kant denies can happen.

At the level of the definition of these term we can see the contradictory nature of synthetic *a priori* judgements clearly. As we saw the truth of analytic judgements is due to the meaning of its terms and as such cannot be self-contradictory. Synthetic judgements on the other hand require experience for their truth and to deny a synthetic judgement, unlike an analytic one, is not a contradiction in terms. In this regard it could be said that analytic judgements are necessary and synthetic ones contingent. *A priori* judgements are logically independent of all experience and are necessary and universal. Thus we can expand the meaning of the phrase 'synthetic *a priori* judgement' to be ' contingent, non-necessary and experience dependent judgements which are universal, necessary, non-contingent and independent of all experience'. This is obviously a contradiction in terms. R.Grigg notes this contradiction and consequently states "...there seems to be no way that a judgement can be both synthetic and a priori."[20] Kemp-Smith

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[18] ibid, p. 20

[19] Korner op.cit, p.20

[20] R. Grigg, 'Kant's Theory of Judgement and the Transcendental Aesthetic', in <u>Reason and Experience: Theories of Knowledge B </u> Study Guide, Deakin University, 1992, p.36

on the other hand implies that Kant acknowledged the contradiction and through the analytic method sought "...to discover the conditions under which such knowledge[synthetic *a priori*], if granted to exist, can possess validity, and in the light of which it's paradoxical and apparently contradictory features can be viewed as complementary to one another."[21] Korner on the other hand argues that there is no contradiction and attempts to dissolve this 'apparent' contradiction by arguing that the "...necessity which is in all *a priori* judgements according to Kant is not the logical necessity of analytic ones."[22] Norman Kemp-Smith likewise points out that "the necessity and universality which differentiate the *a priori* distinguish it only from the humanly accidental. The *a priori* has no absolute validity. From a metaphysical standpoint it is itself contingent... The necessary is not that which cannot be conceived to be otherwise, nor is it the unconditioned."[23] Korner argues that if Kant did not make this differentiation then " [h]e would have been found defining synthetic *a priori* propositions as logically necessary and as not logically necessary."[24] If we grant Korner's solution to this contradiction, we are still left with the fact that Korner ignores the other aspect to the defintion of synthetic *a priori* judgements namely that part which deals with experience. If we add in Korner's correction we still have the fact that a synthetic *a priori* judgement are a contradiction in terms because they still are both independent of experience and dependent upon experience. This because with Korner's correction the defintion of synthetic *a priori* will then read as being ' contingent non-necessary and experience <u>dependent</u> judgements which are non-logically necessary, non-contingent and <u>independent</u> of all experience'. And as we can see there is still a contradiction in terms for now it is seen that synthetic *a priori* judgements are now independent and not independent of experience simultaneously.

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[21] Norman Kemp-Smith, op.cit, p. 44.
[22] Korner op.cit, p.24
[23] Norman Kemp-Smith, op.cit, 1979, p.57
[24] Korner, op.cit pp.24-25

If we return to Korner's argument, that necessity in the definition of synthetic *a priori* judgements is not logical necessity, we will see that this in turn creates a problem for the term *a priori* in the phrase 'synthetic *a priori* judgements'. The substance of this problem is that the a priori must have different meanings. As was noted above Korner points out that all analytic judgements are *a priori.* Therefore there must be some *a priori* judgements which are analytic and as a consequence the *a priori* in the phrase 'synthetic *a priori* judgements must also refer to these judgement which are analytic. Consequently some of the *a prioris* in the phrase 'synthetic *a priori'* must be analytic and thus logically necessary [as Korner argues anaylitic judgements are]. Now from above we saw that a judgement cannot be simultaneously a synthetic and analytic judgement. Therefore the fact that some *a prioris* are analytic thus must make the notion synthetic *a priori* judgements impossible; because as Kant says no judgement can be both analytic and synthetic. Also we can not avoid the contradiction, which Korner denies, that there must be some synthetic *a priori* propositions which are logically necessary and not logically necessary. Now those *a prioris* in the phrase 'synthetic *a priori* judgement' which are not logically necessary must be different to those *a prioris* which are analytic and thus logically necessary. But as we have said above, because of the Kantian classification, all the *a priories* must be analytic thus the notion of *a priories* which are not logically necessary does not arise. Consequently it is impossible for Korner to avoid the contradiction he says Kant would be guilty of namely a synthetic *a priori* judgements is both not logically necessarry [due to the synthetic part of the phrase] and logically necessay [due to the fact that all *a prioris* are anaylitic] Nevertheless Kant does distinguish different forms of the *a priori*; the pure and the mixed. Now if we consider these forms the result is that the synthetic *a priori* becomes the synthetic *a posteriori.*

Norman Kemp-Smith notes that there is confusion in the way Kant uses the term *a priori*[25]. Kant distinguishes two forms of the absolutely *a priori*: the pure [no empirical content] and the mixed [containing empirical content]; and in some cases uses them interchangeably[26]. Thus Kant creates an hybrid concept which by it's definitional nature is a contradiction in terms ie a concept which empirical and dependent upon experience [the mixed] and independent of experience [the *a priori*]. By allowing one form of the *a priori* [the mixed] to contain empirical elements, and thus not independent of experience, this *a priori* then must be contingent and non-necessary; since Kant [as we showed above Kemp-Smith argued] regards all empirical knowledge to be contingent. Kant in talking about a mixed *a priori* does what it is claimed he is doing with synthetic *a priori* judgments, namely he is violating the law of contradiction by combing contradictory elements into one definition. As we saw Kant defines *a priori* to be "independent of all experience and even of all impressions of the senses". Thus the term 'mixed *a priori'* expands to mean 'dependent upon experience [because it contains empirical content] and independent of all experience'. Thus the term 'mixed *a priori'* is a contradiction interms and is thus meaningless. Thus we are faced with a dilemma. On the one hand if we accept that the *a priori* in the phrase 'synthetic *a priori* judgement' could be a mixed *a priori* the idea of a 'mixed *a priori'* collapse the phrase into meaninglessness. On the other hand if we ignore the contradiction and say the mixed *a priori* is dependent upon experience then this completely destroys the defining features of the phrase and changes it into a synthetic *a posteriori* judgement. The phrase now changes from a synthetic *a priori* judgement being 'contingent, non-necessary and experience dependent judgements which are necessary, non-contingent and independent of all experience' to one which is 'contingent non-necessary and dependent upon experience'.

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[25] Norman Kemp-Smith, op.cit, p.54
[26] ibid, p.54

H. E. Allison also points out Kant's use of the 'mixed' or 'impure *a priori'* in accounting for the possibility of synthetic *a priori* judgements. Allision notes the contradiction problem with synthetic *a priori* judgements when he states "[s]ince they are synthetic they cannot have a purely conceptual or logical grounding; since they are known a priori, they cannot be grounded in experience. The problem of the synthetic a priori is, therefore, that of explaining how a nonempirical, yet extraconceptual and extralogical grounding of a judgement is possible."[27]In answering the problem of the possibility of synthetic *a priori* knowledge Allison notes that Kant had stated that "...if there is to be synthetic knowledge *a priori*, there must also be *a priori* intuitions as well as concepts."[28] Allison asks the question "[w]hy is it necessary to introduce the hybrid notion of a pure, yet sensible intuition..."[29] Allision's answer is because of "...the insufficiency of empirical intuition to ground synthetic a priori judgement."[30] Allison makes the point that "... Eberhard and so many others dismiss [this notion] as a contradiction in terms [and that also] the notion of a pure intuition is a murky one, perhaps the murkiest in the entire *Critique*.[31] Nevertheless Allison demonstrates the need for *a priori* and *impure a prioris* as well as the need for intuitions and once again a hybrid concept of pure intuitions. If we grant Allision's arguments for the need to introduce the hybrid notions of 'impure' *a priori* and pure intuition to make synthetic *a priori* knowledge possible this then says that the initial definitional terms of the phrase 'synthetic *a priori'* are inadequate to make it possible. Allision notes this inadequacy

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[27] H. E. Allison, <u>Kant's Transcendental Idealism,</u> Yale University Press, 1983, p.78
[28] ibid, p.78
[29] ibid, pp.79-80
[30] ibid, p.80
[31] ibid, p.80

when he states "...if synthetic a priori judgements are to be possible, pure concepts as predicates must be related in these judgements to pure intuitions as the representations of their subjects."[32] Now as I have argued above this hybrid mixed *a priori* is itself a contradiction in terms so Kant's attempt to use it to avoid the contradictions of his original definition of synthetic *a priori* fail because he ends up in other contradictions; thus we see that because of the occurrence of contradictions in his definitional terms synthetic *a priori* judgements are logically impossible.

Thus we see that in terms of the initial definitions of *a priori, a posteriori*, synthetic and analytic we see that the phrase 'synthetic *a priori'* is a contradiction in terms We saw how because Kant divided all judgements into analytic and synthetic and as we saw this has the consequence that all the *a prioris* must be analytic. Consequently synthetic *a priori* judgements then read synthetic analytic judgements a situation Kant argues cannot happen because no judgement can be simultaneously both synthetic and analytic. Also we saw that because of the definitions of the terms *a priori* and synthetic we have a double contradiction generated in the notion of synthetic *a priori* judgements. The first being that these judgements are simultaneously dependent upon experience and not dependent upon experience. Secondly these judgements are simultaneously logically necessary and not logically necessary. Thus we saw that upon the inital definitions of the terms in the notion synthetic a priori judgements this notion becomes a contradiction in terms and thus this knowledge isnot possible. In order to make synthetic *a priori* knowledge possible Allison' arguments show the need for the creation of once again the self contradictory hybrid notions of 'impure' *a priori* and pure intuition. Apart from the self contradictory nature of 'impure' *a priori* the 'impure' a *priori* leads to the collapsing of the phrase synthetic *a priori'* to be *a posteriori* judgement. The creation of hybrid self

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[32] ibid, p.80

contradictory notions and their use to make the self contradictory notion of synthetic *a priori* knowledge possible is curious from a man who was so certain of what contradiction meant. R.C.Walker quotes Kant as saying "[i]f I now reflect for a moment as to why that which contradicts itself should be altogether nothing and impossible, I notice that through it the Principle of Contradiction, the last logical ground of everything, is destroyed, and that therefore all possibility vanishes, and nothing remains over to be thought."[33] Thus a no more damming argument for the non possibility of synthetic *a priori* knowledge.

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[33] R.C.Walker op.cit, p.23

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EXPLICATE KANT'S UTTERANCE

"I OUGHT NEVER TO ACT EXCEPT IN SUCH A WAY *THAT I CAN ALSO WILL THAT MY MAXIM SHOULD BECOME A UNIVERSAL LAW"*

This essay will explicate Kant's proposition "I ought never to act except in such a way that I also will that my maxim should become a universal law". This proposition is commonly called the categorical imperative[1]. The explication of Kant's categorical imperative will focus in the main on his work 'Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals' , but will also draw upon his 'A Critique of Practical Reason' to add detail to the explication. Kant points out, in the 'Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals", that the categorical imperative "...cannot be proved by mere analysis of the concepts contained in it, since it is a synthetic proposition."[2] Thus the view of this essay is that it is by first explicating Kants metaphysics, and not the concepts of the categorical imperative, that we gain a clearer understanding of the categorical imperative. Consequently this explication will be centred around two main issues. The first is the metaphysical structure which informs and is generated by the categorical imperative. The second will explicate the individual terms, or concepts of the categorical imperative. In explicating the metaphysical structure of the categorical imperative I will discuss Kant's notions of freedom, the intelligible world (noumena), heteronomy, and reason. When it comes to the concepts of the categorical imperative I will look at the terms , imperative, maxim, and universal law. The overall project of this explication will be to show that it is only by understanding Kant's metaphysics that a full understanding of the categorical imperative is attained. This essay will show that as a consequence of Kant's metaphysics

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[1] E.Kant (1965) H.J.Paton (ed) Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, Harper Torchbooks Kant in at least one place speaks of categorical impoeratives (p.122) .

[2] ibid., p.108

the categorical imperative is an unachievable act, a mere ideal, for beings of the phenomenal or sensual world.

Paton makes the important point that "... Kant's metaphysics rests on his ethics rather than *vice versa.*"[3]. What this means is that it is from his ethics that Kant derives his metaphysics Nevertheless it is by working back wards, by outlining Kant's metaphysics, that we can gain a clear view of the nature of the categorical imperative. The categorical imperative is a synthetic *a priori* proposition[4] or law; as a synthetic *a priori* proposition the categorical imperative is part of the innate human make up like the categories of Kant. [5]. It is a universal law which makes an action moral.[6] It is an unconditioned absolute necessary law of action[7]. The categorical imperative is the law through which and by which the subject performs its duty- the doing of an act solely for the act itself completely divorced of self-interest and goal interestedness[8] . Though we don't comprehend this unconditional necessity we do paradoxically comprehend its incomprehensibility[9]. The categorical imperative functions like the categories of the understanding[10]. Where the categories provide the form for the matter of our perceptions

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[3] H.J.Paton (1965)   (ed) <u>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</u>, Harper Torchbooks, p.50

[4] Kant op.cit p.122

[5] Kant (ibid., p.128) notes that there is no explanation as to how we take an interest in the moral law. Kant in outlining how pure reason by its Idea of the moral law must be the cause of a moral feeling- the interest we take in a moral action- argues that the law [categorical imperative] interest us because it comes from our will as intelligence and thus from our proper self. To my mind Kant is saying that the categorical imperative is innate to our mental makeup in the same ways the categories of the understanding are see note 9. On this point Kant (ibid., p.122) notes that a scoundrel clearly knows rightness and longs for. I Murdock on this point similarly agrees when she notes that according to Kant "...each man clearly and distinctly knows in his own soul, the difference between right and wrong. It is something intimate, deep in consciousness, inseparable from ones sense of oneself, like the Cartesian sense of one's own existence and is distinctly grasped. Kant is confident that we all recognise it; and the man in the street, if untainted by theory, would probably assent at once to both ideas, to *cogito ergo sum* and the ability to discern right from wrong (I. Murdock <u>Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals</u>, Penguin, 1993, p.439))

[6] Kant op.cit , pp. 69-70

[7] ibid., p.131

[8] ibid, p.68

[9] ibid., p.131

[10] ibid., p.122 see note 5

the categorical imperative provides the form for the matter of our experiences, or desires. Thus where nature provides the raw material which the categories then order; so the categorical imperative provides the form within which our desires are structured.

From whence does the categorical imperative come. Kant's answer is it comes from reason. According to Kant the speculative use of reason, in regard to the notion of freedom, leads to the deduction of the categorical imperative.[11] The understanding, according to Kant, "...cannot produce by its own activity any concepts other than those whose sole service *is to bring sensuous ideas under rules* so as to unite them in one consciousness: without this employment of sensibility it would think nothing at all."[12] In this regard the understanding is bound up with sense. Reason on the other hand is spontaneous it can go beyond any thing sensibility can offer and produce ideas of the unconditioned because its spontaneity is independent of sense.[13] By moving beyond the world of sense ie phenomena and going into the intelligible world, or noumena practical reason is able to conceive of freedom[14]. It is by conceiving of freedom that the categorical imperative is deduced.[15] In an obscure passage Kant maintains that "...the intelligible world [noumena] contains the ground of the sensible world [phenomena] and therefore also its laws... I shall have to recognise that, *qua* intelligence, I am subject to the law of the intelligible world - that is to the reason which contains this law in the Idea of freedom and so to the autonomy of the will - and therefore I must look on the laws of the intelligible world as imperatives for me and on the actions which conform to this principle as duties."[16] From another passage it would appear that these laws of the intelligible world (noumena) are generated by reason. As Kant argues "...so far as he

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[11] ibid., p.131
[12] ibid. p.120
[13] ibid.,. 120
[14] ibid., p.126
[15] ibid., p.120
[16] ibid., p.121

belongs to the intelligible world - to be under laws which, being independent of nature, are not empirical but have their ground in reason alone."[17]

Thus we can see that reason thinking itself into the intelligible world (noumena) conceives of freedom and from this Idea of reason deduces the categorical imperative. We see that freedom and thus the categorical imperative are *a priori* concepts, because they are generated without recourse to the empirical or phenomenal world. As Kant notes, in the Critique of Practical Reason, "For the *a priori* thought of a possible universal legislation [categorical imperative] which is therefore merely problematical, is unconditionally commanded as a law without borrowing anything from experience or from any external will."[18] Thus we see the deduction of the categorical imperative centres around the concepts of freedom. To fully understand the categorical imperative we must explicate this idea.

Kant notes, in the Critique of Practical Reason, That "...freedom ...is the condition of the moral law..."[19] Similarly in the 'Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals' Kant argues we must presuppose freedom in order to have a morality.[20] There appears to be a vicious circle in Kant's argument which he comments upon. Kant highlights this fact that in his book Critique of Practical Reason when he says that freedom is the condition of morality but goes on to say that morality is the condition of freedom.[21] Also in the 'Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals Kant highlights the circle.[22] For Kant Freedom is an *a priori concept*[23], a concept to which we cannot offer an explanation of[24] because we

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[17] ibid., p.120

[18] E. Kant (1952)   The Critique of Pure Reason The Critique of Practical Reason, and other Ethical Treaties, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc, p.303

[19] ibid., p.291   (ibid., p.291,348)

[20] Kant op.cit, p.115

[21] Hant op.cit p.291, 348

[22] Kant op.cit pp. 116-118

[23] Kant op.cit p.291

conceive of freedom by thinking into to the intelligible world (noumena) a world; a world we like wise can have no knowledge of.[25] Kant argues that in the world of phenomena we are determined by necessary laws[26]. So in order to have a free will we must conceive of freedom, and thus to have morality, we must *qua* intelligence belong to the intelligible world [noumena].[27] What this means is that as rational beings, using our intelligence, we must conceive of our selves as belonging to the intelligible world (noumena), such that our will is free from the determinations of the phenomenal world; and our will is only obedient to laws which have as their ground reason.[28] According to Kant   to be rational is to think into the intelligible world (noumena).[29] Thus a rational being because it belongs to the intelligible world (noumena) cannot but think of the causality of its will except through the Idea of freedom.[30] Reason according to Kant always attributes to itself freedom because it thinks itself free of the determinations, or laws of nature heteronomy[31]- which are part of the phenomenal world[32]- for to be free is to be free of these determinations (heteronomy).

Now Kant points out a contradiction in the notion of freedom and the idea that at the phenomenal level man's actions are completely determined (heteronomy). As Kant notes "...freedom attributed to the will seems incompatible with the necessity of nature" [33] Kant goes on to note that   "reason must ...suppose that no genuine contradiction is to be found between the freedom and the natural necessity ascribed to the very same human actions; for it can abandon the concept of nature as little as it can abandon that of freedom."[34]

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[24] Kant op.cit, p.127
[25] ibid., p.126
[26] ibid., pp.119-120
[27] ibid., p.118-123
[28] ibid., p.120
[29] ibid., p.120
[30] ibid., p.120
[31] ibid., p.120
[32] ibid., p.120
[33] ibid., p.123
[34] ibid., p.124

Kant admits that he must get rid of this seeming contradiction[35] "... although we shall never be able to comprehend how freedom is possible."[36] Kant argues that if freedom is incompatible with nature then it will have to be abandoned in favour of natural necessity[37]. Kant seems to resolve this contradiction by distinguishing between the sensible world and the intelligable world noumena. While man is determined at the phenomenal level (heteronomy) man has freedom when he is rational and as such thinks into the intelligable. As Kant notes " he can consider himself first - so far as he belongs to the sensible world - to be under laws of nature (heteronomy); and secondly - so far as he belongs to the intelligible world - to be under laws which, being independent of nature, are not empirical but have their ground in reason alone."[38]   In other words Kant is arguing that the subject combines, without contradiction, both a determinism and a freedom.[39] The subject is determined when it conceives of itself as a member of the phenomenal world and free when it conceives of itself as a member of the intelligible world[40]. This distinction in fact as will be seen below makes the categorical imperative an unachievable act at the phenomenal level because the will of the categorical imperative must always be under the laws of nature (heteronomy). Now Kant points out that to the Idea of freedom is attached the concept of autonomy and in its turn the categorical imperative.[41]

 Kant argues that " [w]hat else then can freedom of the will be but autonomy - that is, the property which will has of being a law to itself."[42] Kant defines autonomy of the will as "[a]utonomy of the will is the property the will has of being a law to itself (independent

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[35] ibid, p.124
[36] ibid., p.124
[37] ibid, p.124
[38] ibid., p.120
[39] ibid, p.124
[40] ibid, p.125
[41] ibid., p.120
[42] ibid., p.114

of every property belonging to the objects of volition."[43] As a corollary to this is the principle of autonomy, the categorical imperative, which is an apodeictic synthetic *a priori* proposition.[44] The principle states "Never to choose except in such a way that in the same volition the maxims of your choice are also present as universal law."[45] Autonomy is thus the individual self legislation of the will. A self legislation independent of any thing external to the being ie social laws, God's commandment, etc. In other words, as J.B.Schneewind notes, "...no external authority to ourselves is needed to constitute or inform us of morality. We can each know without being told what we ought to do because moral requirements are requirements we impose on ourselves... in self-government we can effectively control ourselves."[46] It is interesting that Kant argues that the concept of God is derived from the Idea of moral perfection via the notion of the autonomy of the will.[47] To highlight what Kant means by autonomy of the will he compares and juxtaposes it with what he calls heteronomy of the will. Consequently to understand the categorical imperative we must understand this idea.

Kant maintains that if the will goes out side itself to seek a law which is to determine its actions the result is heteronomy.[48] In this case according to Kant the object rather than the will gives the will the law.[49] The notion of heteronomy Kant argues can give no categorical imperative and thus can lead to no morality since actions generated by heteronomy always have a result in mind[50]. Heteronomy places man within nature, with its determinism, and thus not under the law of freedom[51]. According to Kant heteronomy

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[43] ibid., p.108
[44] ibid., p.108
[45] ibid., p.108
[46] J.B.Scneewind(1994) 'Autonomy, Obligation, and Virtue: An overview of Kant's moral philosophy', in, P.Guyer (ed) The Cambridge Companion to Kant, Cambridge University Press, p.309.
[47] Kant op.cit, p.76
[48] ibid , p.108
[49] ibid p.108
[50] ibid., p.111-112
[51] ibid., p.111

of the will places man under the control of his own human nature[52] and thus imbeds him in the phenomenal world. Consequently so long as man is under the control of his own nature ie from the self interest of his drives, desires, or impulsions he is not free; thus any action which comes of this action is not a moral action.

For Kant an action which is morally good is one that is done "...not from inclination, but from duty."[53] According to Kant a moral action the is one divorced of any self- interest. This is seen in the way Kant defines inclination. An inclination according to Kant is " the dependence of the power of appetition on sensations is called inclination and thus an inclination always indicates need."[54] Kant disparages love from compassion as being pathological as he states "..love out of inclination cannot be commanded; but kindness done from duty - although no inclination impels us and even though natural and unconquerable disinclinations stand in our way - is practical and not pathological love...[55] Consequently a moral agent has to detach from feelings and inclinations for these cannot generate moral behaviour. They in fact corrupt the purity of the laws of duty.. For Kant one does duty because it is right in itself irrespective of the results of that action.[56] For an interest in the results of ones action makes the action consequently not a moral action. Kant maintains that rather than act out of self interests one should act out of duty where " duty is the necessity to act out of reverence for the law"[57] where the law is the categorical imperative[58] and duty is an act done without any self -interest[59]

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52 ibid., p.111
53 ibid., p.66
54 ibid., p.81, note
55 ibid., p.67
56 ibid., p.68
57 ibid., p.68
58 ibid., pp-69-70.
59 Kant notes (ibid., p.8-13)

As was said above there is autonomy of will and heteronomy of will. This distinction brings about an important requirement of the categorical imperative. The categorical imperative being an Idea of reason, and thus derived from reason thinking into the intelligible world (noumena), has no empirical content because it is not derived by thinking into nature or the phenomena.[60] As Kant states it is therefore clear that no experience can give us occasion to infer even the possibility of such apodeictic laws."[61] Kant compares the categorical imperative to the categories of the understanding. Where the categories are the mere form of experience so to is the categorical imperative the mere form of moral action.[62] In the A Critique of Practical Reason' Kant notes that what makes the categorical imperative a universal legislation, or moral code is that it determines the will, not by any matter, but by its form.[63] Kant notes that "...when we abstract from a law all matter ie every object of the will (as a determining principle) nothing is left but the mere form of a universal legislation. ...[this] mere form, by which they are fitted for universal legislation, is alone what makes them practical laws."[64] For Kant the will is independent of all empirical conditions and as such is determined by the mere form of the categorical imperative.[65] It is this detaching from everything empirical that Kant says grounds moral philosophy on metaphysics[66] and makes the categorical imperative a law of universal legislation. This categorical imperative is a universal law for all rational being.[67] By this it must be implied means any rational animal, or alien being as well.

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[60] ibid., p.120
[61] ibid., p.76
[62] ibid., p.122
[63] Kant op.cit, p.301
[64] ibid., p.301
[65] ibid., p.302
[66] Kant op.cit, p.77
[67] ibid., p.76

It now is time to explicate the elements of the categorical imperative. In doing this I will concentrate upon the terms maxim and the notion of universal law. In this explication we shall see what makes the categorical imperative a 'categorical imperative'.

Kant draws a sharp distinction between imperatives and maxims. Imperatives express the idea of ought[68] where maxims don't.[69] According to Kant if we where entirely part of the intelligible world (noumena) our actions *would* accord with the categorical imperative, but because we are part of the phenomenal world our action *ought* to accord with it.[70] Imperatives arise from reason[71] where maxims arise from inclinations.[72] Imperatives are objective they are the commands of objective principles necessitating the will to action.[73] Maxims "...[are] a subjective principle of action..."[74] Imperatives are either hypothetical ie where action is none with an end result in mind[75] or categorical where an action is done only for itself without a further end in mind.[76] Thus by embedding maxims in what Kant calls a categorical imperative, the categorical imperative strips the maxim of its result driven component and leaves it with a form of action that could be made into a universal law. In other words the subjective inclinations of self interest are filtered in such a way that those maxims which don't convert to a universal law are excluded from consideration as a moral act. What Kant means by universal law is a law, or form of action which is applicable to all rational beings.[77] Thus we can translate the categorical imperative as I ought to never act except in such a way that I can will that my maxim [my subjective inclinations of self- interest] should be done by all rational beings solely

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[68] ibid., p.81
[69] ibid., p.88, note.
[70] ibid., p.122
[71] ibid., p.80
[72] ibid., p.88
[73] ibid., p.81
[74] ibid., p.88. note
[75] ibid., p.82
[76] ibid., p.82
[77] ibid., p.88. note

for the sake of the rightness of the action itself and not for any result or interest in the outcome. Now Kant's distinction between the *would* of the intelligible world and the *ought* of the phenomenal creates the situation that the categorical imperative is an unachievable act in the phenomenal, or sensuous world.

According to Kant a good will is achieved by acting solely for the sake of duty[78] - the doing of an action without self-interest, or interest in the consequences of the act in other words solely for the act itself. Human goodness is always struggling against impulses or inclinations[79]. A perfectly good will has no obstacles to struggle against and therefore the concept of duty does not apply to such a will[80]. Thus it is seen that the concept of duty, the *ought*, applies to the phenomenal world were the will is not perfect good (free of inclinations). In contrast in the noumena there is perfect good and thus the will *would* of its own accord, unprompted by any law, perform the categorical imperative. On this point Kant notes in the <u>A Critique of Practical Reason</u> that the highest good the *summum bonum* is something unachievable in a finite phenomenal existence[81]. Consequently the immortality of the soul must be inferred if perfect goodness is to be achieved[82] and thus by implication the categorical imperative fulfilled. Also we have seen that in the phenomenal world perfect goodness is not achieved because the *will* cannot be free of inclinations. Thus because the *will* in the categorical imperative is this phenomenal *will* [not free of inclinations because it is generating maxims which are by definition subjective volition's of the impulses] it cannot act solely for duty ie without self interest; therefore the categorical imperative is an unachievable act for such a *will* ,because the categorical imperative demand of this *will* to act without self interest, or in other words solely for

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[78] ibid., pp. 64-65
[79] ibid. pp. 64-65
[80] ibid., pp. 64-65
[81] Kant op.cit, p.344
[82] ibid., p.344

duty. Though it can be conceived, like freedom, it cannot be acted out as the *will* is always, according to Kant part of the sensual world of inclinations, self interest and goal directed action (heteronomy). Kant makes the point even clearer when he points out that goal directedness is a *law* of nature. Kant agues (. *I ought to do something because I will something else* ...must be yet a further law in me as subject...the will does not give itself the law, but an alien impulsion does so through the medium of the subjects own nature as tuned for its reception."[83] By the very presence of the word *ought* in the categorical imperative Kant is situating the action outlined by the categorical imperative in the phenomenal world; which by his own admission is one of self-interest, impulses, inclinations, determinism and non-freedom. Consequently the demand of the categorical imperative to detach from ones self-interest -via the notion of duty - becomes logically unachievable by Kants admission, through the use of *ought,* that the action demanded of the categorical imperative is to take place in the phenomenal world - which by definition is one of self-interest and hence non-duty.   Kant notes that the "... 'I ought' [comes about] only in so far as he considers himself at the same time to be a member of the sensible world."[84] Thus by conceiving itself as a member of the sensible world the subject destroys its hope of achieving the 'I ought' ie the action outlined by the categorical imperative. Similarly Kant argues that "[t]he moral 'I ought' is thus an 'I will' for a man as a member of the intelligible world;..."[85] This action of the *'I will'* is likewise unachievable due to a logical flaw in Kants argument. Kant maintains that the *will* of the intelligible world is free of impulses and desires.[86] If this is so then the categorical imperative cannot even be applied to let alone acted on by such a will because the categorical imperative involves generating maxims - self-interested inclination driven

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[83] ibid., p.112
[84] ibid, p.123
[85] ibid, p.123
[86] ibid, p.125

ideas - which cannot be possible for such a *will* since by definition the will of the intelligible world is free of desires and inclinations.

Thus we see in conclusion that, based upon Kant's metaphysics, the categorical imperative is a number of things. It is that which makes an action moral. It is a synthetic a priori proposition. Of universal applicability to all rational beings. It does not determine the nature of a moral action but only its form. The form of the action taken has to be detached from all human inclination and all notions of the end result of the action. The categorical imperative allow the subject to self legislate independent of any external authority and independent of his own inclinations. This self legislation thus give the subject him freedom a freedom he dose not posses at the phenomenal level. Because the subject is part of the sensible or phenomenal world its will is affected by desires and inclinations ie it is determined. This determination makes its actions as driven by self interest. Now these actions or inclinations can be formulated into maxims. What makes these action moral is the subject placing itself into the intelligible world (noumena) and becoming free of the determinations of its inclinations and thus doing the action solely for the action itself [without any interest in the result of the action] with the proviso that the action undertaken should become a universal law such that all rational beings should do it. The categorical imperative is an action which can not be achieved by finite beings existing in the phenomenal world; it is an unachievable ideal - it can be conceived but not acted out.

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"WAS HUME RIGHT TO THINK THAT SENSE EXPERIENCE PROVIDES A FIRM FOUNDATION FOR OUR KNOWLEDGE"

"Was Hume right to think that sense experience provides a firm foundation for our knowledge?" This essay will demonstrate that Hume suspends judgment either way on whether experience provides a firm foundation for knowledge. In demonstrating this point I will rely solely upon investigating Hume's <u>A Treatise of Human Nature</u>[1]. I will show that in <u>A Treatise of Human Nature</u> Hume advocates two levels of truth namely the higher or sceptical level and the lower or vulgar level. This essay will argue that Hume's philosophical position throughout <u>A Treatise of Human Nature </u>is that of the higher or sceptical level. Consequently I will show that the question completely misrepresents Hume's philosophical position which will be demonstrated to be radical, unmitigated and unreserved scepticism;[2] a point R Fogelin agrees with under certain

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[1] I focus upon this text because I feel it represents Hume's original intentions. With it's publication Hume suffered the opprobrium of his peers and consequently suffered vocationally. As T. M. Olsheweky (1991) The Classical roots of Hume's Skepticism, <u>Journal of The History of Ideas,</u> vol. 52 points out Hume tried to distance himself from his scepticism in his latter works. Similarly D. Norton (1993), 'An Introduction To Hume's Thought', <u>The Cambridge Companion to Hume,</u> Cambridge University Press pp.17-18 notes that Hume even goes far as to claim the Treatise was a work of youth prone to error and not representing or containing his philosophical sentiments and principles.

[2] The scepticism Hume advocates in the Treatise is Pyrrhonism. This is clearly stated in his <u>"Letter from a Gentleman to His Friend in Edinburgh"</u>. As he states "as to the scepticism with which the Author is charged, I must observe, that the *Doctrine* of the *Pyrrhonians* or *sceptics"* (Hume (1977) E. Srinberg (ed) <u>An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding and A Letter from a Gentleman to His Friend</u> Hackett Publishing Company, p. 116. An his <u>An Abstract of A Treatise of Human Nature</u>, Cambridge, 1938, p.24 Hume notes that "Philosophy wou'd render us entirely Pyrrhonian, were not nature too strong for it." Now D. Norton <u>David Hume: Common -Sense Moralist Sceptical Metaphysician</u>, Princton University Press pp. 266-267 notes that Hume had a distorted view of Pyrrhonism. . Nevertheless in <u>An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding</u> Hume distinguishes between Academical and Pyrrhonism on the one hand and antecedent and consequent scepticism on the other.. Now the great subverter of Pyrrhonism is according to Hume "...action and the occupations of common-life" (Hume 1977, p.109). The approach is the very approach Hume sees the Academical sceptics as propounding (Hume ibid, pp 26-27. According to Hume they suspended Judgment, but nevertheless take part in common-life and practice (Hume ibid, pp. 26-27) From these points it can be seen that Pyrrhonism for Hume must have meant the reverse of the Academical sceptics ie abstains from common-life and practice. In <u>"Letter from a Gentleman to His Friend in Edinburgh"</u>. Hume declares that "a philosopher who affects to doubt of the maxims of common Reason and even the senses, declares sufficiently that he is not in earnest." (Hume, ibid, p.116) Now my point is that

conditions[3].   Consequently this essay will argue that the standard view which sees Hume's naturalism as a positive outlook of his philosophy ie an extended pragmatic mitigation of scepticism[4] is wrong. I will argue that Hume's naturalism operates at his lower, or vulgar level.   In the standard view it is claimed that the vulgar, or common-sense view regards   reality as being characterised by real attributes; whereas the philosophical system sees these characteristics as mere illusory projection from the imagination. This essay will show that both the vulgar and the philosophical systems are undermined and overshadowed by Hume's scepticism.   Thus this essay will argue that Hume regards his empiricist phenomenalism and psychologistic naturalism as invalidated by his understanding of scepticism. Thus this essay, by showing that Hume's scepticism is completely negative[5] with no positive consequence[6],   will run counter to those scholars, such as G. Strawson[7], N. Kemp-Smith[8], T Penelhum[9]   B. Stroud[10] and D. Norton[11], who argue that Hume puts forward a positive philosophy. It is implied in this

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Hume's scepticism in the Treatise does doubt the senses and invalidates common reason, because as from above the scepticism of the Treatise is his idea of Pyrrhonism, thus he espouses an extreme scepticism with no positive philosophical consequences

[3] R. Fogelin (1993) 'Hume's Scepticism', The Cambridge Companion To Hume, Cambridge University Press p.112

[4] D. Norton   'An Introduction To Hume's Thought', The Cambridge Companion to Hume, Cambridge University Press , p.8 argues that "...Hume's greater goal is to show how, dispite the success of scepticism, we are rescued from scepticism" This mitigated scepticism I argue goes completely against Hume's epistemological position and misrepresents Hume's totally negative program.

[5] D. Norton (1982), David Hume: Common -Sense Moralist Sceptical Metaphysician, Princton University Press, p.310 argues "...that Hume was neither a purely negating sceptic, nor a complete naturalist"

[6] Some see the positive side of Hume as being his naturalism. This naturalism is seen as explaining and activating action and belief in the face of philosophical scepticism. This tends to be the standard reading of Hume , as notes T. Penelhum (1992) David Hume: An Introduction to his Philosophical System, Purdue University Press, p.17 Nevertheless my argument is that Hume's scepticism both overrides his naturalism and makes him completely non-committal philosophically to any epistemological and ontological questions..

[7] G. Strawson (1989) The Secret Connection, Clarendon Press, p.13 argues" [Hume] has very little regard for such "extravagant " scepticism [total negation]. This objection [to Hume believing in casual powers and natural necessity] simply fails to take account of the importance of Hume's doctrine of 'natural belief."

[8] N. Kemp-Smith (1941), The Philosophy of David Hume, Macmillan and Co has a whole chapter on Hume's positive doctrine of belief.

[9] See note 3

[10] B. Stroud (1994) Hume, Routledge like N. Kemp-Smith, has a chapter outlining the positive phase of Hume's ideas.;

[11] See note 10

essay that these scholars have acquired their opinions by not seeing the two levels of truth in Hume's A Treatise of Human Nature and consequently have thought that Hume's position was that of the vulgar level and not that of the sceptical level of truth. Thus it will be shown, in this essay, that Hume advocates un-mitigated epistemological and ontological scepticism and, due to his notion of the epoche, puts forward an unreserved agnosticism in regards to questions of ontology and epistemology. This suspension of judgment comes directly from Hume's scepticism[12]. This is not to deny that Hume does propose a transcendental argument in the form of his naturalism, but that this naturalism is valid only at the vulgar level of truth and that Hume philosophically denies the validity of the naturalism; since he sees it as being invalidated by his scepticism.   This essay will demonstrate the above points by: one outlining the standard view and juxtaposing with it Hume's own account of scepticism, and two by going to the heart of Hume's epistemology and showing that Hume's epistemology is not empiricism, that being his ontology, but the belief in the validity of reason. This infact makes Hume a rationalist, not in the vein of Descartes and Leibniz but, in the modern sense of believing that reason is a valid means to truth.

 Hume argues that " all the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which [he] calls IMPRESSIONS and IDEAS."[13] And as a corrolary to this "impressions may be divided into two kinds, those of SENSATION and those of REFLEXION."[14]   At this point Hume generates a contradiction. On the one hand his notion of impression involves solipsism; since in accounting for the source of the

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[12] T. Penelhum (ibid, pp 17-18) that some contemporary scholars are now claiming the Hume was not a sceptic because of his so called positive naturalism this view in my opinion is to misunderstand Hume. see no. 2 above. .

[13] D. Hume (1987), A Treatise of Human Nature, Penguin, p.49

[14] ibid, p.55

impression he locates it in the soul . As he states "the first kind [sensation] arises in the soul originally from unknown causes."[15] But as S. Everson points out Hume does talk about the material world, or reality "throughout his discussion of the theory of ideas he lapses into talk about the senses -talk to which he is not entitled [because of his solipsism]"[16]. Similarly Everson notes that "Hume..[brings] into his reasonings about 'perceptions' talk of 'reality' and the senses, since these thoughts -like all others- presuppose the existence of the material world."[17] Thus on the one hand Hume puts forward a solipsism and on the other talks of material objects for the impressions. Hume's empiricism and phenomenalism comes about by his claim "that all ideas are copy'd from impressions,"[18] and that "as long as we confine our speculations to appearances of objects to our senses, without entering into disquisitions concerning their real nature and operations, we are safe from all difficulties."[19] Similarly, like Kant, Hume rejects metaphysics , as he states "if we carry our enquires beyond the appearances of objects to the senses, I am afraid that most of our conclusions will be full of scepticism and uncertainty."[20]

On the issue of scepticism Hume believes, like Kant[21], that reasoning ends in its own destruction[22] with the result that all the products of reason and sense experience lead to the consequence that all is uncertain.[23]   In the conclusion to <u>Book One</u>, Hume

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[15] ibid, p.55

[16] S.Everson (1988) 'The Difference between Feeling and Thinking' <u>Mind</u>, 97, p.412.

[17] ibid, p.413

[18] D. Hume op.cit, p.213

[19] , ibid, p.112

[20] ibid, p.113

[21] O, O'Neill (1994) in 'Vindication of Reason' in P. Guyer (ed) <u>The Cambridge Companion to Kant</u>, Cambridge University Press, ,p.188 notes that "...Kants initial diagnosis is that human reason leads to catastrophe [because it ends in darkness and contradiction]." O'Neill goes onto state (ibid, p.303 "...Kant [might] just as well have conceded quite explicitly that he was undertaking neither critique nor vindication of reason and recognised that he is a skeptic."

[22] D. Hume op.cit, pp. 327-328

[23] ibid, pp. 231-268

acknowledges that he is a sceptic.[24] A sceptic according to Hume is one "who hold all is uncertain and that our judgement is not in any thing possest of *any* measures of truth and falsehood."[25] Hume in acknowledging the truth of scepticism makes the observation that regardless of the inevitable extinguishing of belief in anything human beings still continue to believe. In other words even though scepticism refutes all characterisations of realty this does not carry psychological force such that humans cease to act and believe. As Hume states, " as long as our attention is bent upon the subject the philosophical and study'd principle may prevail;   but the moment we relax our thoughts nature will display herself and draw as back to our former opinion[uncritical]"[26] Now the reason Hume sets out the sceptic's consequences is to draw attention to the fact that because of scepticism our beliefs comes not from cognition but from the emotions. As he notes " my intention then in displaying so carefully the arguments of the fantastic sect [sceptics], is only to make the reader sensible of the truth of my hypothesis, *that all our reasoning's concerning causes and effects are deriv'd from nothing but custom; and that belief is more properly an act of the sensitive, than of the cogitative part of our natures.*"[27]   Now since our beliefs in reality are made uncertain by scepticism, Hume's book <u>A Treatise of Human Nature</u> , like Kant's <u>Critique of Pure Reason,</u> is transcendental in scope, as it seeks to explain, by naturalistic, or psychologistic means, human beliefs. In other words it seeks to discover what is required to make reality the way we think it is.   As Hume states "t'is therefore demanded how it happened, that even after all we retain a degree of belief, which is sufficient for our purpose, either in philosophy or common life."[28] Now it is Hume's psychologistic answer to this question which scholars argue is his mitigation of scepticism, or in other words his positive answer to scepticism.

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[24] see note 2
[25] D. Hume op.cit, p. 234
[26] ibid, p.264
[27] ibid, p.234
[28] ibid, pp. 235-236

Hume argues that the ideas of causal necessity, personal identity and the continued existence of objects are not derived from reason or sense experience. In other words philosophically and empirically it is argued by Hume that there is nothing in the object itself which necessitated us drawing conclusions beyond it[29]. Consequently Hume makes the point that "we therefor conclude with certainty, that the opinion of a continued and of a distinct existence never arises from the senses."[30] Similarly, " our reason neither does... give us an assurance of the continued and distinct existence of body."[31] Hume accounts for these common-sense, or vulgar ideas by putting forward his naturalism, or psychologisim. Hume argues the above ideas come from the imagination.[32] And he goes on to explain their generation psychologistically. Hume argues that these ideas are generated by three operations in the imagination: resemblance, contiguity and causation. According to Hume "these are the uniting principles in the ideal world..."[33] Stroud notes that with these principles Hume "...suggests that all the various and complicated operations of the mind can be completely accounted for...[34] In other word these operations tell Hume how and by what we think. Thus we see that according to Hume's empiricism sense experience cannot give us any information about the nature of reality. Reality is a projection from the imagination; a projection which we shall see scepticism invalidates. Stroud, in his book 'Hume', cogently makes the point when he notes that according to Hume sense experience cannot give us a firm foundation to knowledge because our projection onto that reality are "..another 'fictions' or 'illusions', produced primarily by various happenings in our mind and lacking instances or counter parts in the

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[29] ibid, p.189
[30] ibid, p.242
[31] ibid, p.244
[32] ibid, p.244
[33] ibid, p.307
[34] B. Stroud (1994), Hume, Routledge, p.36

objective world of experience..."[35]   Now it is argued that both the philosophical system which undermines the common-sense characterisation of reality and Hume's naturalistic account of the common-sense view are refuted by Hume's scepticism; a refutation Hume himself acknowledges.

We saw that though sense experience can give us a characterisation of objective reality it is not a firm foundation for knowledge. In this regard Hume's empiricism is not an epistemology but instead an ontology. Hume's epistemology is rationality, but, it is paradoxically a rationality which undermines rationality and leads to scepticism. It is with regard to this scepticism that Hume himself acknowledges that his ontology itself cannot be justified and also Hume's naturalism cannot be justified. What Hume does is suspend judgment either way on the question of empiricism and he regard his naturalism in the same light because it is susceptible to scepticism. In this regard Hume expresses a sceptical approach to knowledge and admits the scepticism of his own philosophical and naturalistic approaches.

In the conclusion, to Book One, Hume outlines his own views and reasons for writing A Treatise of Human Nature. Hume asks himself that with all the problems that scepticism throws up why should he waste his time philosophising. He answers that" if I must be a fool, as all those who reason or believe anything *certainly* are, my follies shall be at least natural and agreeable."[36] Hume with un-scholarly candour states that it is because of ambition and the acquiring of a name that he wrote his book.[37] Hume explains this disposition to philosophise as being due to the unavoidable urge nature instils in us to think,[38] a point Kant[39] likewise notes. Hume at the end of Book One, a book where he

[35]   ibid, p.246
[36] D. Hume op.cit, p.317
[37] ibid, p.318
[38] ibid, p.318

sets out a naturalistic system, undermines this system because he claims that system cannot hope to be a true account philosophically. As he states "[b]ut where these hypotheses once remov'd, we might hope to establish a system or set of opinions, which if not true (for that, perhaps, is too much to be hoped for) might at last be satisfactory to the human mind and might stand the test of most critical examination."[40] All that Hume hopes to do is "...contribute a little to the advancement of knowledge."[41]   Now according to Hume ".. all knowledge degenerates into probability"[42] such that there is a "...continual diminution, and at least a total extinction of belief and evidence."[43] In this regard we can see that Hume, in fact, places his own system open to scepticism. Hume, in fact, states that he "... yelid to the current of nature, in submitting to my senses and understanding; and this blind submission I shew most perfectly my sceptical disposition and principles."[44] Hume finishes the conclusion by noting that though he has used words like *'tis evident, 'tis certain, 'tis undeniable'* these are due to a looseness of expression and should not be taken seriously because Hume is a sceptic.[45] As he states "[o]n such an occasion we are apt not only to forget our scepticism, but even our modesty; and make use of such terms as these, 'tis evident, 'tis certain, 'tis undeniable; which with a due deference to the public ought after the example of others. I have fallen into this fault after the example of others; but I here enter a caveat against any objections, which may be offer'd on that head; and declare that such expressions were extorted from me by the present view of the object, and imply no dogmatical spirit, nor conceited idea of my own judgement, which are sentiments that I am sensible can become no body, and a sceptic

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[39] O. O'Neill op.cit p.191 notes that "Kant speaks of a critique of reason as a task because we are unavoidably committed to think and acting"

[40] D. Hume op.cit, p.319-320

[41] ibid, p.320

[42] ibid, p.231

[43] ibid, p.234

[44] ibid, p.317

[45] ibid, p.320

still less than any other."[46]   For Hume the inevitable consequence of reason infallibly

destroying itself is the adoption of the *epoche*, or suspending judgement[47] According to

Hume belief "...in every case terminate[s] in a total suspense of judgment."[48] In this

regard Hume must philosophically [but not necessarily psychologically] suspend

judgement on whether sense experience does or does not give a firm foundation to

knowledge and whether his naturalism does or does not characterise human nature.

Hume's suspension of judgement on issues regarding ontology and epistemology is a

direct result of his scepticism of doubt and uncertainty. Where Descartes tries to find

certainty and alleviate doubt Hume embraces uncertainty. Hume does not affirm or deny

anything. As was pointed out above, though Hume notes he makes use of certain

absolute terms these term are used loosely and must viewed in the context of his

scepticism.

The epistemology[49] Hume accepts as giving access to truth is not empiricism but

rationality. Throughout Hume's account of scepticism is the presupposition that reason

can be a firm foundation for knowledge. Hume argues that "in all demonstrative sciences

the rules are a certain and infallible...our reason must be consider'd as a kind of cause of

which truth is the natural effect."[50] To accept this conclusion Hume must believe that

reason is a valid epistemology. Nevertheless Hume acknowledges that this epistemology

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[46] ibid, p.321

[47] R. Fogelin (1993) 'Hume's Scepticism', <u>The Cambridge Companion To Hume</u>, Cambridge University
Press p.112 argues that "Hume did not recommend a wholesome suspension of belief, for he held that it
would be disastrous to human life ." This point I agree with , but nevertheless when it comes to philosophy
Hume adopts the epoche.

[48] D. Hume op.cit, p.235

[49]It could be maintained that Hume's naturalism anchors epistemology in human nature In the naturalistic
fact that, as will be shown, the mind projects upon material realty it's characteristics Now Hume's
scepticism does not enable him to be certain about anything. This uncertainty comes from him believing in
the ability of reason to demonstrate truth. In this regard reason becomes the foundational epistemology.
Though Hume's naturalism accounts for this belief Hume's scepticism makes this claim it self uncertain
due to reason. As can be seen Hume's argument become circular in that naturalism accounts for scepticism
which undermines naturalism which accounts for this undermining *ad in finitum*.

[50] ibid, p. 231

leads to paradox. As he notes reason leads to the conclusion that as a general maxim "...no refin'd or elaborate reasoning is ever to be received By this means you cut off entirely all science and philosophy...[but] you expressly contradict yourself; since this maxim must be built on the preceding reasoning, which will be allow'd to be sufficiently refin'd and metaphysical."[51] Even accepting this paradox Hume still believes that reason is an epistemology and the only way to avoid the truths of this epistemology is by "carelessness and in-attention [to reason]."[52] Also Hume's epistemological scepticism demonstrates Hume's commitment to a foundational epistemology. To reach epistemological scepticism Hume must be using a standard of truth and it is argued this is reason itself. But as Hume notes himself that places him within the paradox that reason negates reason; or his epistemology undermines his epistemology.

In conclusion we can see that because of his philosophical position being that of the higher level of truth ie scepticism Hume philosophically is non-committal when it comes to whether sense experience is a firm foundation for knowledge. This is because, as R. Fogelin has likewise noted[53], Hume is philosophically an unmitigated, radical and unreserved sceptic[54]. The phenomenalism and psychologism put forward by Hume is only valid at the vulgar level of truth and is according to Hume overshadowed and submerged within his invalidating extreme form of scepticism. We have seen that the claim that Hume puts forward a negative scepticism in order to clear the ground for his

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[51] ibid, p.315

[52]52 ibid, p.268

[53] R. Fogelin op.cit, p.112.

[54] R. Fogelin (ibid, p.111-112) argues that Hume's own philosophical position precludes any simple characterisation of being a sceptic. Fogelin argues that Hume's account of belief formation accounts for Hume's scepticism. Consequently according to Fogelin this turns Hume into a radical perspectivist. This point of Fogelin misses Hume's meta approach to his naturalism via his underling epistemology of scepticism. Nevertheless Fogelin points is interesting as it places Hume in a circular argument similar to the Cartesian Circle of Descartes. On this point Stroud notes that Hume's naturalism puts him in a paradoxical position, since from Hume's account even Hume's views are illusory projections with no truth status (B. Stroud (1994), Hume, Routledge, p.247) Now as I have said this circularity is overshadowed by Hume's scepticism which is itself circular or paradoxical ; as Hume notes himself.

positive mitigation of scepticism, namely his naturalism, or psychologism, misrepresents and misunderstands Hume's project. Drawing upon his epistemology of scepticism Hume's project is entirely negative as his scepticism also undermines his naturalism. Though the stated intention of the Treatise is transcendental in scope this is only valid at the vulgar level. Consequently, philosophically Hume adopts the *epoche* such that he neither denies nor affirms any claim about whether sense experience is a firm foundation for knowledge or not. Pulled along by the psychological urge to think, because "nature...has determined us to judge as well as breathe...",[55] and the desire to achieve fame and to have pleasure are the reasons Hume wrote A Treatise of Human Nature . It is argued that Hume, unlike other scholars, does not take his philosophy and naturalism seriously. It is a mere amusement without any claim to certainty. As we have shown Hume claims that he would be a fool to claim anything as certain. Thus when Hume puts forward his empiricist or phenomenalistic ontology, and claims that the characteristics of reality are to be explained naturalistically, or psychologistically as mere illusory projection from the imagination, these claims have to be submerged within Hume's sceptical epistemology. Consequently rather than saying that sense experience is or is not a firm foundation for knowledge Hume's scepticism in fact makes him suspend judgment. Hume is a hedonist and as such Hume's philosophy is an excursion into pleasure rather than and attempt at dogma. As Hume in no uncertain term states that the philosophising dispositions "..spring up naturally in my present disposition; and shou'd I endeavour to banish them, I feel I shou'd be the loser in point of pleasure; and this is the origin of my philosophy."[56] Which according to Hume "..imply no dogmatical spirit."[57]

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[55] D. Hume, op.cit, p.234

[56] ibid, p.318

[57] ibid, p.320

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'OUTLINE NIETZSCHE'S CRITIQUE OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN BEYOUND GOOD AND EVIL'

In this essay Nietzsche's critique of moral philosophy will focus upon his attacks upon the: unconditionality or universality of moralities; utilitarianism; the Apollonian or rationalistic moralities and the lack of awareness by moral philosophers of the non-exclusivity of the categories 'Good' and 'Evil'. In outlining Nietzsche's critique of moral philosophy it is important to note that if Nietzsche is consistent in his arguments [some say that in some instances he is not] then his own critique, like the moralities of the moral philosophers, is only a perspective. For Nietzsche all accounts of existence are interpretations, and thus falsification of existence, since they narrow down the totality of phenomena to a focus which is viewed through the prejudices and emotions of the viewer - in other words a perspective. According to Niezsche the ontological metaphysical and epistemological attitudes one has about life determines the moral perpsective one adopts. Thus if Nietzsche is consistent then this must also be applicable to him.

Initially it must be understood that for Nietzsche moral philosophy is the codification and justification of a system of morality. Though Nietzsche believes it is impossible to live without values, morality is nevertheless viewed by Nietzsche to be both a form of domination and a form of immorality [because morality denies life by denying or repressing the will to power]. Moral philosophy, as the ideas of moral philosophers, reflects, according to Nietzsche, the morality of their class, church, or the spirit of their times. In other words the prejudices and thus perspective of the moral philosopher. Moral philosophy is according to Nietzsche both boring and soporific. And its advocates

are likewise boring according to Nietzsche. The English moral philosophers ie the utilitarians only want to propagate English morality, a morality seeking after happiness and comfort two quality which are an anathema to Nietzsche..

To understand Nietzsche critique of moral philosophy is to appreciate the centrality of the notion of 'the will to power. In 'Beyond Good and Evil' Nietzsche castigates the Germans, the English, Jews, Women Scientists , Judeo-Christians and Moral Philosophers for their life denying moral values. For Nietzsche the categories of Good and Evil are masks for the actualities of existence; they hide the true nature of existence which is the will to power. The will to power is the motivational stratum that undergirds and motivates existence. In this way Nietzsche seeks to demolish moralities by going beyond good and evil to the fount of these very categories themselves - the will to power. In 'Beyond Good and Evil' Nietzsche maintains that the above people falsify reality, through their perspective, by concealing the fact that existence is the will to power. According to Nietzsche these people teach the repression of the will to power and thus are life denying with the consequence that culture becomes degenerate. Beyond Good and Evil' is Nietzsche attempt at a transvaluation of all moral values. Though Nietzsche in this transvaluation seeks the destruction of the unconditional or universalisic animal or herd morality, democracy, socialism and the religion of pity and utility this transvaluation is not for the herding majority but the few 'free spirit' who are intellectually fit for it.

Nietzsche attacks those moral philosophers, like Kant and the British utilitarians, who would like to instigate a morality that was applicable to all humanity. According to Nietzsche this universality is detrimental to the higher man or free spirits. This detrimentally is the levelling of the exceptional spirits to that of the lowest memeber of the general herd or slave morality. Nietzsche argues that what is right for one person is not generally right for everyone. The higher man, the free spirits or philosophers of the

future   are stunted by the universalistic moralities of the herd. The unconditional moralities of the herd stifle the will to power of the free spirits and hinder them in achieving their full potential. The ethics of univerality and equality distort the will to power. The leveling effect of universalistic moralities dose not allow the free spirits to exploit thoses qualities which are expressions of the will to power, and as such possibly dangerous to the herd and frustrates them from accomplishing great deeds. Nietzsche characterises the morality of the free spirits as the master - morality or aristocratic morality and the morality of the herd as the slave morality. According to Nietzsche the unconditional moralities of the slave are life denying and conceal the nature of existence which is the will to power. According to Niezsche existence is one of explotation , injury, overpowering and appropriation.Those slave moral qualities as pity, ultraism and sympathy in other words good qualities are motivated by what Nietzsche calls *resentment* - revenge, envy, jealousy- and lead to a degeneration in humanity because it weakens, soften and denies the survival of the fittest and the will to power. On the other hand with the master or aristocratic-morality the free spirits embrace life. In this morality the consequences of an act are more important than the intention and the moral values or in other words the transvalued slave moral values strengthen life. Now even though Nietzsche castigate the life denying unconditional values of the moral philosophers he does not advocate that the transvalued morals of the master or free spirits are for all. It is only a select few who are suitable to be free spirits. The majority need to be bound by universalistic values. In this way Nietzsche is not advocating a radical change in the lives of most people but only those philosophers of the future; those very people to whom the subtitle of 'Beyond Good and Evil' is addressed.

Nietzsche's critique of the moral philosophy of utilitarianism is similar to that of the universalistic moralities of said philosophers. Nietzsche seems to argue that utilitarianism ie seeking happiness or well being of the majority is satisfactory for the herd, but is

inappropriate to the free spirits. As was said above the quest for happiness or comfort conceals the true nature of existence which is that of hardship. According to Nietzsche suffering ennobles as it creates in the individual qualities that enhance and elevate humanity. Nietzsche looks upon utilitarianism with derision because it becomes a religion of pity and happiness which weakens and thus diminishes man and makes man contemptible. Another point Nietzsche makes is that utilitarianism elevates the consequences of an act whereas for Nietzsche the value of an act drives from the character of the individual that does the act.

The valuation of the consequences of an act Nietzsche maintains derives from the elevation of reason or the Apollonian over the Dionysian or instinctive. According to Nietzsche this trend started with Socrates moved through Plato and culminated with Christianity. Nietzsche maintains that reason is not the driving force of action but instead the instincts are. It is our emotions and instincts driven by the will to power that activates as into actions. Reason elevates actions interms of consequences whereas what this does is according to Nietzsche conceal the fact that it is our instincts or drives which give value to the action. All morality is according to Nietzsche a phenomena of the emotion. It is this fact that Nietzsche castigates the moral philosophers for not acknowledging. Nietzsche criticises the moral philosopher for focusing upon the content of an action rather than upon the true source of the actions namely the drives for the will to power.

In 'Beyond Good and Evil' Nietzsche argues that the values of the noble or aristocrat have been transvalued or reversed by the slave or herd morality. What is good according to the noble is evil for the slave and vice versa. Now in 'Beyond Good and Evil' Nietzsche appears to hold two views regarding good and evil. In the first case he seems to argue that good and evil are false dichotomies derived from again false metaphysics. In this interpretation Nietzsche argues that the good and evil of moral philosophy don't exist. In

other word he seems to deny the existence of both good and evil.   It can be drawn from Nietzsche's arguments that what appears as good from one perspective is actually evil from another; as in the slaves transvaluation of the morality of the noble. Nietzsche like wise maintains that in the total economy of life the so called evil qualities of envy, hatred etc are an essential part. From another direction Nietzsche can be seen to be arguing the interdependence or mutual unity of the categories good and evil. In other words good can only exist along side evil; this is seen in Nietzsche account of the saint who in order to become good must have initially been evil. Nietzsche argues that the dichotomies of good and evil are infact related and tied together and that the good is in fact derived from the evil. Nietzsche argues that instead of the exclusive categories of good and evil there are instead degrees of graduation where good and evil fade and blend into each other. From Nietzsche's perspective of the will to power the moral philosophy of the herd in fact denies life. What they call evil Nietzsche seeks as enhancing life. The evils of the moral philosopher are for Nietzsche the very things that affirm life. Thus we get Nietzsche's transvaluation of the moral philosophers evil into Nietzschean good and the transvaluation of the moral philosophers good into Nietzschean evil.

Thus we see in conclusion that the central reason Nietzsche castigates moral philosophy is because they are life denying. Through the perspective of the will to power Nietzsche argues that by denying the reality of the will to power and through the mechanisms of its repression in moral systems moral philosophy stunts the growth of man and frustrate him in reaching his full potential. The main areas of attack for Nietzsche are the moral philosophers insistence on: unconditional or universalistic morality for all which bring the free spirits down to te level of the lowest member of the slave or herd; the religion of pity sympathy and happiness as expressed through their theories of utilitarianism which hold up the consequences of an act rather than the character of the person who acts and deny the ennobling qualities of suffering;   the elevation of reason as the thing that

undergirds moral action rather than what actually is the substratum for action namely the drives or instincts as expressed through the will to power; the creation of exclusive categories of good and evil where in fact there are only degrees of a subtle graduation which connects the two into a dyad of dependence, unity and mutual existence; where one cannot exist without the other and one is derived from the other.

"Can Dilthey's historical approach avoid relativism?"

To the question "Can Dilthey's historical approach avoid relativism?" there are a number of differing answers given by respective scholars. H. A. Hodges argues that Dilthey's historicism leads him to a "...radical relativism of which Dilthey is not afraid..."[1] J.Owensby points out "...that Dilthey grounds knowledge in the historical life-process and concentrates on the historical genesis of our fundamental categories, so he has been open to charges of historical relativism."[2] T. Plantinga on the other hand argues that Dilthey "...cannot be classed as a historicist in the strict sense...[and] Dilthey didnot intend to preach relativism, nor did he ever declare that relativism is the logical outcome of his thought."[3] I.N.Bulhof argues that Dilthey tried to overcome and argue against relativism and historicism.[4] M.Ermarth notes that " it has become almost habitual to portray the theory of world-views as the ultimate signal of Dilthey's grudging but somehow inevitable capitulation to relativism and skepticism. the matter is not quite so simple however."[5] Ermarth goes on to state that "the common portrait of Dilthey "the Relativist" or Resigned Skeptic" emerges only by arbitrarily severing the portion of the theory of world-views which concerns their multiplicity from the equally crucial sections which treat of the inner dialectic of world-views."[6] This essay will argue that in terms of Dilthey's arguments Dilthey's historical approach does avoid relativism. This avoidance

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[1] H.A.Hodges, Wilhelm Dilthey, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner &Co.,LTD, 1944. p.1x.
[2] J. Owensby, Dilthey and Husserl on the Role of the Sunject in History, Philosophy Today, Fall, 1988, p.221
[3] T.Plantinga, Historical Understanding in the Thought of Wilhelm Dilthey, University of Toronto Press, 1980, p.134
, I. Bulhof, Wilhelm Dithey, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1980,pp.7,14,21, 30, 92,93,95, 146.
[5] M.Ermarth, Wilhelm Dilthey, Uiversity of Chicago Press, 1978, p.334.

of relativism is achieved via Dilthey's use of three approaches. The first via his notions of Leben [=Erleben] or life. The second is his assertion of a common trans-historical ahistorical human nature or in Kantian terms Transcendental subject or Ego. The third by the use of the historical method. Thus it will be shown that Dilthey avoids relativism and historisim by useing historical methodology combined with the powers of understanding mediated through psychological empathy. Now though there is some differing view about the continuity of Dilthey's earlier and later works[7] I will demonstrate the above by be heavily reliant upon Dilthey's 1860 work "The Development of Hermeneutics" and his 1906/10 work "The Construction of the Historical World in the Human Sciences". As to the question "Should Dilthey's historical approach avoids relativism?" the answer is that relativism is a self contradictory idea and that if Dilthey does not want to be self-contradictory then he must avoid relativism.

In 1910 Husserl accused Dilthey of being a historicist and as a consequence a relativist as well.[8] Though admitting that Dilthey rejected historical relativism Husserl claimed that he could see no grounds in Dilthey's thought for this rejection.[9] To Husserl's claim Dilthey replied that "I am neither a philosopher of intuition nor a historicist nor skeptic."[10] The claim that Dilthey is a historicist and relativist to my mind comes from to much focusing upon his accounts of the social and historical construction of the individual.

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[6] ibid, p.336
[7] I.Veit Brause, , 'Wilhelm Dilthey', Reason and Experience Study Guide B, Deakin University, 1992, p.94
[8] T.Plantinga, op.cit, p.134
[9] ibid, p.134

According to Dilthey the world is a mind-constructed world; a world of objectifications.[11] These objectification's are the inner world of the individual projected out into the outer world.[12] Through the process of the understanding of the objectification the mind-constructed world is disclosed.[13] Dilthey outlines the principles of the 'Human Studies' when he states "[t]he human studies rests on the relationship between experience[Ereleben], expression and understanding [Verstehen]. So their development depends as much on depth of experience as on the increasing revelation of its content; it is also conditioned by the spread of understanding over all objective manifestations of mind and by the increasing complete and methodical extraction of mental content from different expressions."[14] The individual is according to Dilthey is an historical being; he is a product of his time and place. As Dilthey notes "[t]he individual in his independent existence is a historical being. He is determined by his position in time and space and in the interaction of cultural systems and communities."[15] The individual is a point of intersection of 'webs of relationships'. These relationships exist within and go through the individual "but also reach beyond their life's and possess an independent existence and development of their own through the content, value and purpose which they realise."[16] Dilthey sees the objective world as a world of 'lived experience' [Erleben] a

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[10] ibid, p.135
[11] W. Dilthey, "The Construction of the Historical World in the Human Sciences"., in W.Dilthey Selected Writings, (trans) H.P.Rickman,Cambridge Universtiy Press, 19 p.194-195
[12] ibid, p.195-196
[13] ibid, p.194
[14] ibid, p.177
[15] ibid, p.181
[16] ibid, p.180-181

lived experience of the psychic life of the individual. Lived experience being an experience of the world where the world   both resists and puts pressure upon the discharge of the individuals will.. It is "[f]rom this basis of life, objective cognition, valuation and the setting of purposes emerge as types of conduct with countless nuances in a state of flux."[17] The objectification of the mind-constructed world are the meanings of the individuals psychic life. For Dilthey the individual is an historical being an intersection of different social systems.[18] The social system is fundamentally historical that is changing through time and different in places.[19] In this regard it can be seen that knowledge of the historical world is relative to the background and experience of the observer. On this point Dilthey is seen as espousing a notion of relativity not relativism. Plantinga notes that Dilthey "...speaks of the relativity of human thought and theories, but also speaks of the relativity of historical forms of life, of all worldviews, of every kind of faith, of historical forms of life, of all existence(Dasein), of historical convictions, of answers to the riddle of the world, of metaphysical systems, of religious doctrines, and of human conceptions of coherence of things."[20] Now why these views are not relativism but relativity is seen in the way Dilthey espouses his notion of Leben= Erleben[21].

The epistemological foundation to Dilthey's studies of the Human studies is his notion of Erleben or lived experience.[22] Erlben is the basic unit of experience[23] . Erlben is the self

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[17] ibid, p.178

[18] ibid, p.179-182

[19] ibid, p.181

[20] T.Plantinga, op.cit p.136

[21]I.Veit Brause, , 'Wilhelm Dilthey', <u>Reason and Experience Study Guide B</u>, Deakin University, 1992, P.129

[22] H.N.Tuttle <u>Wilhelm Dithey's Philosophy of Historical Understanding</u>, Leiden,1969, p.16

[23] ibid, p.16

perception of an individuals inner life. It is the basic unit of historical understanding and it is through the reliving of Erlbenis that the historian constructs and understands another individuals existence[24]. Dilthey considered that Erlbenis was made up of three components. The first being the fact that there is a meaningful aspect to experience. Secondly all experience is made up of emotional constituents. Thirdly experience has a teleological structure[25]. Thus Erlben is lived experience a teleological structure and is composed of emotional and meaningful components. Life [leben= Erleben] for Dilthey is the whole inner experience of an individual.[26] Leben is a subjective phenomena in the sense that it is lived as ones internal state. Leben is the subject intending his own subjective states as an object. Leben is the totality of the inner experience of an individual as it is actually lived.[27] It is this which is the subject matter of history. Viet-Brause notes that lebenseinheit is a term used by Dithey to convey the idea that the human "...mind [is] an active or 'alive' structuring capacity in which the mental processes of willing, feeling and apprehending conect and interact and thus consitute a unit of life."[28] Viet-Brause notes that 'life' is defined interms of having lived experiences, experiences composed of conduct, effects and attitudes.[29] Also 'life' is the act of feeling willing and thinking[30]. According to Dilthey history and the Human Studies are built upon leben. The objective judgement of history are possible only because of leben.[31] It is because of leben that life or leben can be understood by another

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[24] ibid, p.16
[25] ibid, p.18
[26] ibid, p.10.
[27] ibid, p.11
[28] I.Veit Brause, op.cit , p.91
[29] ibid, p.119
[30] ibid, p.90
[31] H.N.Tuttle, op.cit, p.11

life.[32] Life is the whole inner experience of man and as such is common to the historian and his subjects. In other words the historian can understand another because he is of the same stuff as the other.[33] This same 'stuff' is the reason why there can be objective valid historical knowledge. Dithey makes the point "...understanding is a rediscovery of the I in the Thou[34]; the spirit rediscovers itself at ever higher levels of coherence."[35] Plantinga notes that 'life' is an *a priori* of existence and that "...it is simply that which gives meaning and sense to our knowledge and comprehension of others and the world of the spirit."[36]

The way in which the historian gains his objective knowledge of the other and avoids historism and reativism is via the notion of 'life [Leben =Erleben] and the the process of understanding [Verstehen]. Understanding being the method by which we infer the inner experience or Erlben of another individual. In Dilthey's 1860 work "The Development of Hermeneutics" Dilthey notes that it is "[b]y transposing his own being experimentally as it were into a historical setting the interpreter can momentarily emphasize and strengthen some mental processes and allow others to fade into the background and thus reproduce an alien life in himself."[37] Again in his 1906/10 work Dilthey states that this understanding of an alien life is through empathy.[38] As he states "[t]the basis of the

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[32] ibid, p.11

[33] ibid, p.11

[34] On this point the historist Gadamer argues simmilarly that there is a commonality connecting the 'I' with the 'Thou' see footnote no 49

[35] T.Plantinga, op.cit,p.73

[36] ibid,p.72.

[37] W.Dilthey, 'The Develpoment of Hermeneutics', in W.Dilthey Selected Writings, (trans) H.P.Rickman,Cambridge Universtiy Press, 1976, p.258

[37] ibid, p.195-196

[38] This acknowledgement of the use of empathy in this 1906/10 work undermines R.A.M claim in the Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers, Routledge, 1991, p.83 when he states "the

human studies is not conceptualisation but total awareness of the mental state and its reconstruction based upon empathy."[39] Similarly "[t]he approach of higher understanding to it its object is determined by the task of discovering a vital connection in what is given... this state of mind involved in the task of understanding we call empathy, be it with a man or a work... [i]f therefore understanding requires the presence of ones own mental experience this can be described as a projection of the self into some given expression... [o]n the basis of this empathy or transposition there arises the highest form of understanding in which the totality of mental life is active - recreating or reliving."[40] By reliving Dilthey means two factors envisaging and imagination. As he states "'''envisaging and environment or situation vividly always stimulates re-experiencing; imagination can strengthen or deminish the emphasis on attitudes, powers, feelings aspirations and ideas contained in our lives and this enables us to re-produce the mental life of another person.."[41] L. Veit-Brause disputes the centrality of empathy for Dilthey. I. Veit-Brause notes that "[t]he major point of these discussions is that understanding, especially what he calls the 'higher forms of the understanding', is not dependent on some intuitive empathy, but demands a methodical reconstruction in systematic hermeneutic interpretation of the 'objectivications' at the disposal of the historian in her or his sources."[42] To my mind this misrepresents Dilthey's argument. Dilthey is clear that empathy is the foundation to understanding and reliving. As he states "...we shall not discuss the relation of this concept [re-living] to those of sympathy and empathy, though

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understanding of others is attained through theses common objectivications and not as is widley thought, through empathy."

[39] Dilthey op.cit, p.181
[40] ibid, p.226
[41] ibid, p.227
[42] I. Veit-Brause, op.cit, p.136

their relevance is clear from the fact that sympathy strengthens the energy for grasping the world of mind."[43]

Nevertheless Dilthey, in the 1860 work, points out a limitation to the interpretive endeavour. Dilthey notes what he calls the hermeneutical circle[44] "...limits all interpretation; it can only fulfil its task to a degree; so all understanding always remains relative and can never be completed. *Individuum ineffabile*."[45] Now even though interpretation is alway limited it is neverlthelsss possible to arrive at an objectively valid interpretation because   "...common human nature makes common speech and understanding possible."[46] Now a more philosophical account of the way objectivity is achieved and the avoidance of historicism and relativism is avoided is in Dilthey's historical or social version of the Transcendental Ego.[47]

Dilthey makes the point that though the individual has "...a slant that colours the personal knowledge of life is corrected and enlarged by the common experience. By this I mean the shared beliefs emerging in any coherent circle of people."[48] To make understanding

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[43] Dilthey op.cit, p.227

[44] You can only understand the whole by understanding the parts, but you can only understand the parts by understanding the whole.

[45] Dithey op.cit, p.259

[46] ibid, p.258

[47] Differing points of view by scholars is once again seen on the issue of the transcendental Ego. Owensby agues that Dilthey rejected the notion of a transcendental Ego. As he states "it is central for the Diltheyan conception of the constitution of meaning that subjectivity be viewed as a function of the historical world, not as the latter's [Husserl] transcendental condition [transcendental ego]"(Owensby op.cit, p.222-223) I.Veit-Brause on the other hand argues that Dilthey resorts to espousing the idea that there is basic ahistorical base structure of the knowing mind with the result that "it is as if Descartes's *res cogitans* and Kant's transcendental subject return in a different guise." ([47] I.Veit-Brause, 'Wilhelm Dilthey', <u>Reason and Experience Study Guide B</u>, Deakin University, 1992, p.137)

[48] W.Dilthey, op.cit, p.179

possible Dilthey argues we must have things in common [on this point the historist Hans-Georg Gadamer agrees].[49]   Dilthey argues the common things which transcend time and place. This Dilthey states is the presupposition of understanding . As he states [a] basic experience of what men have in common permeates the whole conception of the min-constucted world; through it consciousness of a unitary self and simmilarity with others, indentity of human nature and individuality are linked. This is the presupposition for understanding.[50] Through the processs of empathy and reliving (Nacherleben) the historian can understand historical individuals.[51] This understanding can be such, as Bulholf has noted Dilthey claiming, that "...the interpreter of a text can understand an author better than he understood himself, because the inerpreter is aware of the mental or 'psychological', that is ,cultural influences of which the author himself had not been conscious."[52] Thus it is by this transcendental Ego that Dilthey is able to connect with differnt historical periods and people. Thus if he is correct he is able to give interpretation of things which are historically valid for all periods and all people. This commonality of human nature alows Dithey, through understanding ,to enter into the minds of women or any other group of people such that gender, class, or race is no hinderance to the generation of objective ahistorically valid interpretations. As Veit-Bruse notes "[e]very human beings experience is therefore, in principle, accessible to

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[49] Gadamer in his essay 'Universality of the Problem' states ' I am trying to call attention here to a common experience... There is nothing like an"I and thou" at all - there is neither the I nor the thou as isolated, substantial realities. I may say "thou" and I may refer to myself over against a thou, but a common understading [verstandigung] always precedes these situations. We all know that to say "thou" to someone presupposes a deep common accord." (Hans-Georg Gadamer, Philosophical Hermeneutics trans by D .E Linge, University of California Press, 1977, p.7) Likewise he states "[o]nly the support of familar and common understanding makes possible the venture into the alien lifting up of something out of the alien and thus broading and enrichment of our own experience of the world. (ibid, p.15)

[50] ibid, p.186

[51] ibid, p.181

[52] I.Bulhof, op.cit, p.62-63.

every other human being though the task of understanding may demand a greater or lesser effort depending on the temporal-historical or cultural distance to be bridged.[53]

Dilthey's insistence on the common features of human nature is an epistemological answer to the question he poses in 'Drafts for a Critique of Historical Reason' when he states "[o]n the one hand, the knowing subject creates his mind-constructed world and, on the other, strives to know it objectively. How, then, does the mental construction of the mind-constructed world make knowledge of mind-constructed reality possible?"[54] Dilthey is thus posing a transcendental question since he is seeking to know what makes understanding possible. Dilthey's answers are the Human studies version of the Kantian categories. Dilthey in the 'Construction of the Historical World' oultlines at least five categories ie Life;meaning; value; essence; experience.[55]Rickman list five of Dilthey's categories. These being: the category of means and ends; the category of power; the category of inner and outer; the category of value.[56] According to Dilthey there are additional categories but nevertheless by these categories Dilthey felt we were thus enabled to grasp the meaning of human life.[57] As Dilthey states "[l]ife is to be understood in its peculiar essence through [real] categories which are foriegn to the cognition of nature. What is crucial here is that these categories are not applied from life in a priori fashion from outside but they lie implicit in the nature of life itself."[58] For Dithey the categories of Kant he called formal and the categories of the human studies he

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[53] I.Veit-Brause op.cit, p.136.

[54] W.Dilthey, in Construction of the Historical World,' in W Dilthey Selected Writings trans H.P.Rickman, Cambridge Universtiy Press, p.207

[55]ibid, pp.231-245.

[56] H.P.Rickman W Dilthey Selected Writings trans H.P.Rickman, Cambridge Universtiy Press, pp. 16-17

[57] ibid, p.17

called real.[59] Ermarth notes that for Dithey the real categories are those that render into conceptual form aspect of given experience[60] . According to Ermarth the real categories "...are logical modes of graspimg empirical content and hence must represent the fullness of and diversity of experience. As the most general representation of human experience, they are essential to understanding life."[61]

. Thus the categories allow for the possibility of ahistorical objective and valid understandings to be arrived at. These understandings thus undermine relativism and historicism but maintain the fact that there is cultural and historical relativity. Nevertheless Dilthey stresses that understanding must be supplemented by historical method in order to arrive at valid objective knowledge. In his The Develpoment of Hermeneutics Dilthey states that the "[e]xisting methodology which is indespensible for acieving validity nust be supplemented by the description of creative methods of inspired interpretaters in many spheres."[62] The historical method Dilthey speaks of are induction, analysis, construction and comparision.[63] Plantinga notes that for Dilthey the objectivity of the interpretation can be checked against the historians objective undestanding and the historians sources.[64] According to Plantinga Dithey considered that there where two canons or criteria against which the historians can measure or access an interpretation for it objectivity and valdity. These canon being firstly that of immanence or outonomy and

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[58] M.Ermarth op.cit , p.165

[59] ibid, p.165

[60] ibid, p.165

[61] ibid, p.165

[62] W.Dilthey, 'The Develpoment of Hermeneutics', in W.Dilthey Selected Writings, (trans) H.P.Rickman,Cambridge Universtiy Press, 1976, p.263.

[63] ibid, pp.262-263

[64] Plantinga op.cit, p.116

secondly that of totality or coherence.[65] In this regard the method of the historian delimits the range of interpretation such that not all interpretations are possible or valid. The historian's method, by putting boundaries or limits upon possible interpretations gives a measure of objectivity to an interpretation and thus undermines those interpretations which are subjective and not guided by the historical data.

That Dilthey's historical approach should avoid relativism is indicated by the epistemological problems historical relativism is riddled with. One of these problems is that historical relativism leads to an epistemological dilemma. Relativism proclaims that 'there is no historically objective knowledge'. But this leads to two questions: is this claim meant to be an objective knowledge claim?, and how does the relativist 'know' that there is no historically objective knowledge? Dealing with the first question. If the relativist's claim is objective then this must undermine his claim that 'there is no historically objective knowledge' If the relativists claim is not objective then why should we pay any attention to the claim. This last problem could be answered by saying that the relativist 'knows' the claim to the be true. But how does he 'know' it to be true. To 'know' something is to have an epistemology; to have a foundation upon which knowledge is based. To claim that 'there is no historically objective knowledge' the relativist must apply his epistemology to the historical data. Thus by implication he believes this epistemology allows him to arrive at some conclusion; but to do this the relativist is implying that his epistemology is valid through historical time. Thus by default there must be some historical objective knowledge ie the relativists epistemology

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[65] ibid, p.116

which allows him to make knowledge claims. If he says that this claim itself is historical the question still remains how do you 'know' this with out applying some epistemology to the historical data which he must assume is valid for the historical periods he investigates. If he still insists on saying that even this epistemology is historical to arrive at this conclusion he must have done some historical comparison, but to do a comparison implies areas of shared understanding and this must mean that there has to be historically objective knowledge. To say that there are no areas of shared understanding the relativist is saying that the historical data must then be incommensurable and in which case history to the relativist would be completely absolutely unknowable they could not even know that Plato existed or wrote. But by the very fact that the relativist uses historical data says that history is knowable that there is valid objectively true knowledge which all historical periods would agree upon ie Plato and his works. Thus there can not be no historically objective knowledge.

Thus we have seen that Dilthey's historical approach is not relativism but relativity. We saw that Dilthey's ideas of 'Life' [leben] or 'lived experience'[erleben] is based upon Dilthey's idea of a common human nature. This common human nature allows the 'I' to be discovered in the 'Thou'. The common human nature allows for the historian by understanding via empathy and reliving to access an alien individual's consciousness no matter what historical period he/she belongs to. Even though the individual is a product of his historical period the common human nature connects all individual to a common core which allows for objective and valid knowledge of them and their period to be arrived at. Dilthey elaborates on this common nature in his version of the

Transcendental Ego. This Ego is made up of categories which are shared by all individuals and thus allows for objective knowledge to be arrived at. In conjunction with the common nature or Transcendental Ego. Dilthey regards the methods of the historian as placing limits upon the possible interpretations and allowing for objective checks of the historians historical interpretations. Thus Dilthey avoid relativism by combining the powers of understanding, as meditated through empathy and re-living [made possible by the commonality of human nature], with the controllable procedures or methods of historical methodology which delimits the range of possible interpretations and and allows for objectivity and validity verification.

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"IS THERE UNAVOIDABLE CIRCULARITY IN THE MEDITATIONS

The answer to the question, "Is there unavoidable circularity in the 'Meditations'?", centres around discovering Descartes' epistemologies. Some argue that Descartes is guilty of the 'Cartesian circle' in the 'Meditations', namely that God guarantees the clear and distinct perception which in its turn guarantees God's existence. This essay will examine Arnauld's claim of circular reasoning, in the 'Meditations" and Descartes' reply to this claim. In examining Descartes' reply to the claim of his circularity, this essay will show that there is no 'Cartesian circle'[1]. Nevertheless this essay will show that his reply does indicate two unavoidable circularities: the 'circularity of intuition' [intuition guarantees intuition] and the 'circularity of reason' [reason guarantees God and God guarantees reason]. These circularities, it is argued, come from Descartes' use of two separate epistemologies: one psychological (a necessary and sufficient condition for truth) and the other metaphysical. It will be pointed out that though the metaphysical flows out of the psychological, as a deduction, it does not guarantee, or validate the psychological; whereas the psychological does guarantee, or validate the metaphysical. In this regard there are two independent circularities: the 'circularity of intuition' and the 'circularity of reason'.   The methodology of the essay will be to draw upon the corpus of Descartes' works; since one cannot understand the 'Meditations'without understanding the totality of Descartes' thoughts'.   It will be shown that in the 'Meditations' reason is used to

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[1] A. Gewirth after outlining the relevant sections of the Meditations indicates a dilemma in Descartes thought, namely " it seems therefore, that if the perceptions which are employed to demonstrate God's existence do not require God's guarantee, so that Descartes argument is not circular, then he contradicts himself in asserting that all perceptions require guarantee; while if he does not contradict himself in making that assertion, then his arguments is circular" Nevertheless Gewirth sets out to show that the circularity and contradiction can be removed. (A. Gewirth (1941) ,'The Cartesian Circle', The Philosophical Review, no.4, p.368)

demonstrate the truths of God's existence; but these truths are derived, not from reason, but from the self-validating extrasensory source - intuition. This intuitive source is quite other than discursive reasoning, and is the psychological foundation or axiom from which all the philosophical arguments follow. In other words reason is the handmaid of religion; the 'Meditations' is a tract, as Leibniz noted,[2] in natural theology[3].

W. Doney noted that from 1960 up to 1987, there were forty-nine articles in English attempting to dissolve the 'Cartesian Circle'[4]. Doney goes on to note that there are two positions which can be distinguished in the attempt to defend Descartes against the charge of circularity: the Limitation Theses, and the Relaxation Theses[5]. L. Loeb on the other hand points out that there is "..a bewildering variety of solutions to [the] problem [of acquitting Descartes of question begging ie circular reasoning]"[6]. Loeb notes that there are two main streams of solution: the epistemic, and the psychological.[7] Though Loeb's characterisation[8] is used by some scholars[9] this essay will adopt a metaphysical

[2] N. Jolley (1992), 'The Reception of Descartes Philosophy', in J. Cottingham's (ed) The Cambridge Companion to Descartes, Cambridge University Press, p.415

[3] N. Jolly ibid, pp. 394-403. Points out the Church reacted badly to Descartes philosophy as it thought it was irreligious.

[4] W.Doney (1987), (ed), Eternal Truths and the Cartesian Circle, Garland Publishing, p.1

[5] ibid, p.2 Doney notes that the Limitation Theses argues that Descartes can avoid circularity by building upon truths that are not subject to metaphysical doubt. While the Relaxation Theses argues that while Descartes argues that all clear and distinct perception can be doubted without exception one is entitled to relax this stance.

[6] L. Loeb (1992), 'The Cartesian Circle', in J. Cottingham's (ed) The Cambridge Companion to Desecrates, Cambridge University Press, p. 201

[7] ibid, p.201 Loeb notes that the epistemic argues that because Descartes maintains that it is a general rule that clear and distinct perceptions are true then this "... rule removes the reason for doubt in that it provides a good reason not to doubt beliefs based upon clear and distinct perception..." Also Loeb points out the psychological argues that it is "psychologically impossible to doubt beliefs based on clear and distinct perception" Loeb notes that Curly, Doney, Frankfurt and Gewirth subscribe to the former, while Larmore and Rubin the later.

[8] ibid , p.226, note 4 Loeb notes that "the interpretation and classification of positions in the literature is itself a difficult matter"

[9] A. Kenny (1968), Descartes, Random House, p.194 takes the same approach

and psychological characterisation after A. Gewirth.[10] By adopting this characterisation I will show that Arnauld's accusation of the 'Cartesian circle' is a misrepresentation of the arguments of Descartes and a non-understanding of the epistemological foundations of Descartes ideas which are psychological and metaphysical.

Descartes' quest in the 'Meditations' is to reach certainty. Descartes' method, in the 'Meditations', to achieve this lies in creating a sceptical doubt "..about all things... "[11] and suspending his judgement about truth.[12] This will result in "... freeing the mind of preconceived opinions, and providing the easiest route by which the mind may be led away from the senses.[13] Now by relying on the fundamental innate ideas [truths][14] "... which God has placed in me[15]" and "...the reliability of the human intellect and the certainty of it's clear and distinct perceptions[16] ["a reliable mind was God's gift to me "[17] Descartes states] we can through the 'natural light of reason[18] or 'nature'[19] [the intuition[20] of truth][21] then reach the "...conclu[sion] that God necessarily exists."[22] From this conclusion, and epistemological foundations, Descartes is confident that he can "...arrive

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[10] A.Gewirth op.cit, pp.368-395

[11] R. Descartes (1987), in J. Cottingham's ed Meditations on First Philosophy, Cambridge University Press, p.9

[12] ibid, p.15

[13] ibid, p.9

[14] ibid, pp 24-36

[15] J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff and D. Murdock (1985), The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Cambridge University Press, Vol 1, p.131.

[16] R. Descartes, op.cit, p.24

[17] J. Cotting ham (1976), Descartes, Conversation with Burman, Oxford, p.5

[18] R. Descartes uses the Latin phrase *lux rationis* (light of reason) in his work Rules For the Direction of the Understanding; but *lumen natural* and *lumen nature* in the Meditations and Principles. See J. Cottingham's (ed) Meditations on First Philosophy, Cambridge University Press, no.10, p.43

[19] R. Descartes, op.cit, p.27

[20] A. Kenny op.cit, p.175 Kenny agrees that " clear and distinct perception... cannot be regarded as a synonym for "intuition" since the conclusions or deductions may be clearly and distinctly perceived no less than self-evident truths.", I disagree with this argument because it will be shown that the proofs of deductions are only perceived to be true not by the poof itself but by the mind attending to the proof and perceiving truth intuitively.

[21] J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff and D. Murdock, op.cit, pp, 14, 20.

[22] R. Descartes, op.cit, p.31

at a certain evident knowledge of truth..."[23] thus laying the foundations for the sciences. In this outline of Descartes' method we can see along with the notion of God[24] a number of epistemological presuppositions such as the psychological certainty of the clear and distinct perception and the epistemic validity of the human intellect [reason] and God's existence.

A. Arnauld outlines the 'Cartesian Circle' when he states, "I have one further worry, namely, how the author avoids reasoning in a circle when he says that we are sure that what we clearly and distinctly perceive is true only because God exists...[b]ut we can only be sure that God exists because we clearly and distinctly perceive this."[25] Now in examining Descartes' reply I claim that this is not what Descartes is claiming, and that Arnauld is misrepresenting Descartes argument, because there is no 'Cartesian circle' in Descartes argument as Arnauld describes it.

Descartes' reply to Arnauld is made up of two parts. These two parts correspond to the two epistemological aspects of Descartes metaphysics. In the first part of the reply Descartes highlights the psychological component; as he states "... I have already given an adequate explanation of this point [Arnauld's accusation] in my reply to the 'Second Objection', where I made a distinction between *what we perceive in fact clearly [intuit]*

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[23] ibid, p.8

[24] J. Cottingham (J.Cottingham (1987) ed Meditations on First Philosophy, Cambridge University Press, p.2), notes that for "...Descartes, there is an insistence on the absolutely central role of God in any sound philosophic system." Similarly M. Charlesworth, (M. Charlesworh (1972) Philosophy of Religion, Macmillan, p.29), points out that "...Descartes's God is not really a *deus ex machina...* God is a necessary and indispensable element." On this point A. Baillet, Descartes biographer, notes that Descartes had profound respect for God and approached his study of physics as a religious man.(see J.Cottingham (1989), Descartes, Basil Blakwell , p.95) Now though Descartes notes that he " ...never become involved in theological studies except for his own private instruction" (ibid, p.96) he nevertheless did on some occasions, as in a case with A. Arnauld, get involved (ibid, p.96) In the 'Dedicatory letter to the Sorbonne' Descartes set out his natural theological endeavour in the Meditations namely to offer proofs of the existence of God such that there will be no "...possibility that the human mind will ever discover better ones" (R. Descartes op.cit, p.4), and all for " [t]he vital importance of the cause and glory of God"(ibid, p.4) In these accounts we can thus see the epistemological importance of God for Descartes.

[25] R. Descartes op.cit. p.106

and what we remember having perceived clearly on a previous occasion."[26] Descartes now goes on to give the second component of his epistemology, the metaphysical, when he states "[t]o begin with, we are sure that God exists because we *attend* to the arguments which prove this; but subsequently it is enough for us to remember that we *perceived* something clearly in order for us to be certain that it is true. This would not be sufficient if we did not know that God exists and is not a deceiver."[27] This act of 'attending' as we will see below generates the intuition; thus to 'attend to the arguments' is to generate an intuitive, or clear and distinct perception [intuition]"[28] of the truth of the proof. As Descartes notes, " a clear perception is defined as one which is present and open to the attentive mind".[29] Thus to fully understand Descartes' reply we need to fully understand Descartes psychological notions of intuition, as well as his metaphysical notions of God..

The psychological aspects of Descartes' 'intuition' can be seen from his following arguments. At the beginning of the 'Third Meditation' Descartes argues that he is psychologically "certain that I am a thinking thing [the *Cogito]"*[30] because "...in this first item of knowledge there is simply a clear and distinct perception."[31] In other words the clear and distinct perception guarantees the 'C*ogito*'. Now Descartes notes that " ...this would not be enough to make me certain of the truth of the matter if it could ever turn out that something which I perceived with such clarity and distinctiveness was false."[32] To alleviate this doubt Descartes formulates, without proof, the general rule, namely "...I now seem to be able to lay down as a general rule that whatever I perceive clearly and distinctly is true."[33] Thus it could be assumed that the clear and distinct

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[26] ibid, p.106
[27] ibid, p.106
[28] J. Cottingham (1989). Descartes, Basil Blackwell, op.cit, p.40
[29] ibid, p.67
[30] R. Descartes, op.cit, p.24
[31] ibid, p.24
[32] ibid, p.24
[33] ibid, p.24

perception guarantees the *'Cogito'* while the truth of the clear and distinct perception is guaranteed by the general rule which itself is not guaranteed by the clear and distinct perception. If this is Descartes' intention then there is no 'circularity of intuition'; but this is not Descartes intention. Descartes' intention is clearly seen in the 'Fifth Meditation' where we see that in formulating the general rule Descartes left out a step. In the 'Fifth Meditation' Descartes states that "...I have amply demonstrated that everything of which I am clearly aware is true. And even if I had not demonstrated this, *the nature of my mind is such that I cannot but assent to these things, at least so long as I clearly perceive them.*"[34] Thus we can see the step left out, namely the italicised above, gives support for the general rule because it is psychologically impossible not to realise the truth of a clear and distinct perception. Consequently we can see that the clear and distinct perception is self-validating because its truths are guaranteed only by itself, because of the nature of the mind. H. Frankfurt is also aware of the 'circularity of intuition' and also maintains Descartes view of it. As he notes[35] "...[Descartes] himself acknowledges [that the clear and distinct perceptions] are justified by nothing other than clear and distinct perception itself."

In the second reply on ' Second Meditation' Descartes claims that this intuition is not syllogistic thinking as he states, "[w]hen some says 'I am thinking, therefore I am, or I exist, he does not deduce existence from thought by means of a syllogism, but recognises it as something self-evident by a simple intuition of the mind."[36] In the sixth reply Descartes notes that this intuition "...[is an] internal awareness which precedes reflective thinking."[37] In 'The Rules for The Direction of the Mind', Descartes outlines his ideas

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[34] ibid, p.45

[35] H. Frankfurt (1978), 'Descartes on the Consistency of Reason'. in M. Hooker (ed) Descartes: Critical and Interpretative Essays, John Hopkins University Press, p.26

[36] ibid, p.68

[37] ibid, p.69

about intuition. He notes that "...intuition ...[is] the conception of a clear and *attentive* mind, which is so easy and distinct that there can be no room for doubt about what we are understanding."[38] In this regard it is seen that it is a psychological impossibility to doubt the truths of intuition; it is a necessary truth. As has been noted above Descartes refers to the 'natural light', in a reply to Hobbes, and states what he means by 'light'. As Descartes states, "... [a]s every one knows, a "light" in the intellect means transparent clarity of cognition."[39] Cottingham is wrong when he argues that the term 'intuit' is not "...some mysterious non-rational faculty..."[40] True it relies on thought[41], as Descartes argues[42]; but as Descartes points out above there is no rational syllogistic thinking in the intuition since it is not reflective. In the sixth reply Descartes notes that this intuition "...[is an] internal awareness which precedes reflective thinking".[43] Thus we can see that the intuition is not a reasoning faculty but wholly and only pre-reasoning psychological awareness.

 The bridge which connects the psychological and metaphysical aspects of Descartes' epistemology is the general rule. Descartes, in the <u>Third Meditation,</u> claims as a general rule that, "...I now seem to be able to lay down as a general rule that whatever I perceive clearly and distinctly is true".[44] This claim makes it epistemologically impossible to doubt the truths of intuition, as the rule is a necessary and sufficient condition to alleviate doubt in the necessary truths of intuition. As Loeb notes, "... [the] rule removes the reason for doubt in that it provides a good reason not to doubt beliefs

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[38] J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff and D. Murdock, op.cit Vol 1, p.14

[39] ibid, Vol 11, p.135

[40] J. Cottingham, (1989), <u>Descartes</u>, Basil Blackwell, p.25

[41]   J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff and D. Murdock, op.cit Vol.11 p.415. R Descartes notes that "by the term thought, I understand everything which we are aware of as happening within us... hence thinking is to be identified here with not merely with understanding, willing and imagining but with sensory awareness"

[42] R. Descartes op.cit, p. 70

[43] ibid, p. 39

[44] R. Descartes op.cit, p.24

based upon clear and distinct perception..."[45] The claim of the general rule, by Descartes, leads us on to Descartes' metaphysical notions and the 'circularity of reason'. The general rule guarantees the psychological truths of the self-evident clear and distinct perception, and consequently the metaphysical claims of God's existence and the certainty of reason.

The sequence of Descartes thought in the <u>Third Meditation'</u> shows this epistemic notion and the 'circularity of reason'. From the psychological certainty of the '*Cogito'* Descartes deduces the general rule. After this rule, he deduces the existence of God and the idea that God is both perfect and a non-deceiver.[46] Descartes, in the '<u>Third Meditation',</u> after doubting the truths of mathematics argues that "but in order to remove even this slight doubt... I must examine whether there is a God, and, if ... he can be a deceiver.[47]" After further questions and deductions Descartes concludes that, "...God necessarily exists."[48] Consequently God is no deceiver and the truths of mathematics are contingently true.[49] Thus we see that reason proved God's existence and God's existence, through validating the truths of mathematics, guarantees reason. In the '<u>Fifth 'Meditation</u>" Descartes makes the same point when he argues that "...I have perceived [intuition] that God exists, and at the same time I have understood that every thing else depends on him."[50] When we examine what Descartes goes on to say we see that this 'everything' refers not to reason

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[45] L. Loeb op.cit p.201

[46] R. Descartes op.cit, pp 32-36

[47] ibid, p.25

[48] ibid, p.31

[49] In the sixth reply Descartes argues (ibid, p.93) that all truth including those of logic could have been otherwise. In this regard what we take to be necessary truths may only have been made to be contingent by God Also if God could have made the truth otherwise then necessary truths are not necessary but only contingent. Like wise Descartes notes that "even is God has willed that some truths should be necessary, this does not mean that he willed them necessarily, for it is one thing to will that they be necessary, and quite another to will them necessarily" (Hacking. I (1980) p.54 'Proof and eternal truths: Descartes and Leibniz', in S. Gaukroger (ed) <u>Descartes: Philosophy, Mathematics, Physics</u>, Harvester, Sussex.

[50] ibid, p.48

and the intuition but only to the products of reason. After noting "...that the certainty and truth of all knowledge depends on my awareness of the true God"[51] Descartes makes the point that this knowledge is intellectual, or reason. As he states "...it is now possible for me to achieve full and certain knowledge of countless matter, both concerning God himself and other things whose nature is intellectual."[52] Once we remember that intuition is pre-reflective and non-syllogistic then the 'everything' cannot refer to intuition. Thus reason guarantees God and God only guarantees reason not intuition. Thus we can see the 'circularity of reason'. A circularity Frankfurt likewise notes: "...reason leads to the conclusion that reason is reliable because a veracious God exists."[53]

Thus we are now in a position to understand Descartes reply to Arnauld. The dissolving of the 'Cartesian Circle' takes the following form. Intuition is prior to the deduction of God's existence, it is epistemologically more fundamental. What these psychological intuitive truths do is guarantee us that the general rule is certain, and the general rule provides us with a guarantee that the proofs of God are valid. The general rule is a truth based upon the psychological intuitive truth. Kenny similarly argues that deduction [reason]is vindicated by intuition.[54] God's existence is certain because we intuit this by clearly and distinctly perceiving it, by attending to or concentrating upon the arguments, or rational proofs;[55]; and Descartes claims that it is enough that we remember[56] that we had this perception to know that the proofs are valid.[57] Thus it is true that God's existence is certain because we clearly and distinctly perceive it, as Arnauld notes. But Arnauld's claim that this perception is true because God exists, is false - the perception is

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[51] ibid, p.49

[52] ibid, p.49

[53] H. Frankfurt (1970), <u>Demons, Dreamers and Madmen</u>, Garland Publishing, p.177

[54] A. Kenny op.cit. p.194

[55] R. Descartes, op.cit, p.48

[56] ibid, p.48 Kenny (op.cit,, pp-156-157), notes that some critics have tried to avoid the Cartesian Circle by arguing for the reliability of memory, Frankfurt argues that position is untenable.

[57] ibid, p.48

valid, not by God's existence, or reason, but by the intuition itself, both psychologically and logically; on this point A. Kenny likewise agrees.[58] Consequently I can partly agree with Gewirth when he states, "Descartes's argument is not circular, for, while it is by the psychological certainty of clear and distinct perceptions that God's existence is proved, what God guarantees is the metaphysical certainty of such perceptions."[59] Where I disagree is in the claim that God guarantees the metaphysical certainty of the clear and distinct perceptions, for as I said above namely the perception is valid, not by God's existence, or reason, but by the intuition itself. Thus intuition is the necessary and sufficient condition for the generation of necessary truth. Intuition is the absolute epistemological foundation for Descartes, not God, or reason. Once Descartes establishes , through the 'natural light', that God is not a deceiver he thus has the foundations upon which to build certain knowledge. It is because of the certainty of God's existence, and not the powers of rationality, that we can be certain of the truths which we discover after the certainty of God is arrived at. This certainty is not arrived at by reason but by intuition. The proofs of God's existence come after the intuition of truth, by the clear and distinct perception. God's existence is certain because we intuit this by clearly and distinctly perceiving it, by attending to or concentrating upon the arguments, or rational proofs; and Descartes claims that it is enough that we remember that we had this perception to know that the proofs are valid.[60] Thus Descartes' epistemologies of the psychological aspects of intuition and the metaphysical status of God and reason dissolves the "Cartesian circle, as Kenny similarly argues[61] and B. Williams points out as

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[58] A. Kenny, op.cit, p.194 states "...Descartes does not offer the veracity of God as ground for accepting the truth of intuition. It is because even the veracity of God will not suffice to show that the intuition may not be, absolutely speaking, false, but because the simple intuition by itself provides both psychologically and logically the best grounds for accepting its truth".

[59] A. Gewirth op.cit, p. 386

[60] J. Cottingham, op.cit, p.72, argues along this line when he himself declares that Descartes "...does succeed in avoiding circularity"

[61] A. Kenny op.cit, p.196 states " Descartes epistemology, then can be defended from circularity... if every other certainty is to be built upon the certainty afforded by clear and distinct perception..."

a possibility.[62] But by doing so Descartes creates two unavoidable circularities: the 'circularity of intuition' and the 'circularity of reason'.

Thus we have shown that by understanding Descartes epistemologies: the psychological and the metaphysical the 'Cartesian circle' is dissolved, but two unavoidable circularities are generated. This essay argued that   while the self-evident psychological certainty of 'clear and distinct perception' guarantees the certainty of the *Cogito,* reason and God's existence, the metaphysical certainty of God 's existence does not guarantees   the certainty of intuition.   The truth of the clear and distinct perception was guaranteed by itself, thus the circularity of intuition. On the other hand God guarantees reason, but reason in turn guarantees God, the 'circularity of reason'. God and reason are profound epistemologies.   But the truth of God and reason come from an even more profound epistemology namely intuition.   (see fig 1). Thus we saw that there where two epistemological foundations in the Meditations. First the psychological certainty of the clear and distinct perception [intuition]" - a necessary and sufficient condition for truth. Secondly the metaphysical certainty of God's existence and the truths of reason. With this in mind Descartes' reply to Arnauld dissolves the 'Cartesian circle' but creates the unavoidable 'circularity of intuition' and 'circularity of reason'.

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[62] B. Williams (1978), Descartes: The Project of Pure Inquiry, Harvester, p.203
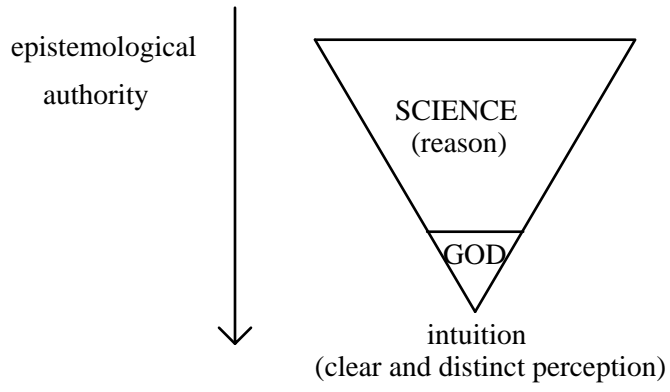
fig 1

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