The Will to Truth and the Will to Power

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Abstract

Zubiri's philosophy is solidly based on reality and on our direct access to reality. He observes that we have a "Will to Truth". But this "Will" is nuanced: it is the "Will to Real Truth", because through it we recognize the actuality of the real in the sentient intelligence. That is, reality is present to us in primordial apprehension, and that forms the basis of all subsequent knowing. But the "Will to Truth" can be perverted into the "Will to Truth of Ideas", which occurs when we will to make ideas into reality, rather than letting reality form our ideas. This is the basic mistake of Post-Modernism, as exemplified by Derrida, Foucault, and others. They fail to recognize that we are installed in reality, and that this installation, however modest, is the foundation of all other knowledge. Instead they pursue a skeptical train of thought based on the Will to Truth of Ideas, leading them to conclude that reality does not exist—or at least is not accessible—outside of any particular context. Since it is a closed system and there is no real test allowed of it, the Will to Truth of Ideas quickly yields to the Will to Power, and that power is used to silence any opposition to Post-Modern thought, as happens frequently with totalitarian systems. Post-Modernism is indeed a logical outcome of the Will to Truth of Ideas.

Resumen

La filosofía de Zubiri se basa sólidamente en la realidad y en nuestro acceso directo a la realidad. Él observa que tenemos una "Voluntad de Verdad". Pero esta "Voluntad" se matiza: es la "Voluntad de Verdad Real", porque a través de ella reconocemos la realidad de lo real en la inteligencia sensible. Es decir, la realidad está presente para nosotros en la aprehensión primordial, y eso forma la base de todo el saber posterior. Pero la "Voluntad de Verdad" puede ser pervertida en la "Voluntad de Verdad de Ideas", que ocurre cuando queremos hacer realidad las ideas, en lugar de dejar que la realidad forme nuestras ideas. Este es el error básico del posmodernismo, como lo ejemplifican Derrida, Foucault y otros. No reconocen que estamos instalados en la realidad, y que esta instalación, por modesta que sea, es la base de todo otro saber. En su lugar, persiguen una línea de pensamiento escéptica basada en la Voluntad de la Verdad de las Ideas, que los lleva a concluir que la realidad no existe, o al menos no es accesible, fuera de un contexto particular. Como es un sistema cerrado y no se le permite ninguna prueba real, la Voluntad de la Verdad de las Ideas cede rápidamente a la Voluntad de Poder, y ese poder se usa para silenciar cualquier oposición al pensamiento Postmoderno, como sucede frecuentemente con los sistemas totalitarismos. El Postmodernismo es, en efecto, un resultado lógico de la Voluntad de Verdad de Ideas

"Their "knowing" is CREATING, their creating is a law-giving, their will to truth is—WILL TO POWER."[1]

"My idea is that every specific body strives to become master of all space, and to extend its power (its will to power), and to thrust back everything that resists it."[2]

" 'Nothing is true; everything is permitted.' Here we have real freedom, for the notion of truth has been disposed of." [3] — Frederich Nietzsche

"The reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." "What is truth?" retorted Pilate—Jn 18:37-38[4]

"...truth is intellection *qua* apprehending what is real and present as real....every truth involves reality."[5]

"...power is a transcendental moment of the real as real. It is grounded in reality, in the *de suyo*, the *in-its-own-right*."[6]

"the power of the real is grounded on an absolutely absolute reality, on God, who by reason of being ground of the power of the real is the ground of this power being an ultimate, possibilitating, and impelling power."[7]

"The essence of reason is freedom. Reality forces us to be free. This does not mean that I can intellectively know just as I please, but that the determinant response of my intellection to the imposition of the real in depth is to be necessarily free....Reality in depth is imposed upon us not in order to *leave* us in freedom, but to *force* us to be rightly free."[8]—Xavier Zubiri

I. Introduction

Xavier Zubiri was a philosopher supremely dedicated to the pursuit of truth, and as the foregoing quotations indicate, he affirms the intimate links among truth, reality, power, and freedom. He analyzed the concept of truth with a profound thoroughness and made a deep understanding of it an essential element of his philosophy. He clearly recognized the link be-

tween truth and other aspects of human reality, including liberty and intellectual honesty, as well as the impact that they have on human society. For these reasons, it is both important and rewarding to investigate what Zubiri would say about contemporary Post-Modern developments, especially in the context of higher education and science, where rigorous standards of truth should always prevail. Zubiri believed that man's true nature is that of liberty, and that liberty itself requires truth, that is, man has the Will to Truth as his primary nature. Rejection of the Will to Truth leads to the Will to Power, exemplified today by Post-Modernist attitudes and attacks on anyone who disagrees with them.

II. The Will to Truth and the Will to Real Truth

Zubiri approached the problem of truth in different ways, but for our purposes here we shall concentrate on his explanation of the Will to Truth. The desire for truth is very deep-seated in human nature. All philosophies lay claim to the truth, even skeptical philosophies. Zubiri recognized that this claim is quite insufficient even if sincere or purportedly sincere. He notes that Nietzsche himself recognized two meanings of the Will to Truth:

Although not the widest, there is still a wide sense, according to which the will to truth does not merely consist in moving within the realm of the true, but in proposing to itself something that may "truly" be....Truth consists here not in merely being known but in "truly" being as distinguished from what is only "in appearance". To wish appearances only is to wish deceit. Man can very well have the will to deceive others or to deceive himself. Thus, the will to truth consists in veracity as opposed to deceitfulness. This is, at bottom...what Nietzsche understood by will to truth (*Wille zur Wahrheit*): veracity (*Wahrhaftigkeit*)

towards others or towards oneself. This second meaning presupposes the first: clearly veracity and deceit are possible only within what we have called the realm of the true.[9]

Zubiri observes that most discussions and most claims to truth mix these two meanings (realm of the true and veracity) without clarifying them. But that is not the main problem. Rather, it is the failure to recognize that there is a *third* meaning that is the *strict* or fundamental meaning of The Will to Truth, one which undergirds the other two, namely what Zubiri terms "the Will to Real Truth":

> Here, "truth" does not mean either what is true or what is truly, but something much more modest, though much more radical: the actuality of the real in [sentient] intelligence. This is what I have repeatedly termed "real truth". What is "true" and what is "truly" are inscribed in real truth. Only because the real is actual in the [sentient] intelligence, i.e., only because apprehending the real as real is the essence of intelligence, it can and must elaborate ideas, assemble arguments, delineate projects, etc.; "the true" presupposes real truth and is only possible through it... Therefore, the will to truth is primarily and formally *will to real truth.*[10]

Zubiri further notes that the difference between "appearance" and "true" is possible only on account of real truth. This understanding of real truth will become importan when we discuss Post-Modernism:

> ...real truth is not only a *beginning* of an intellectual process, but a *principle* of every act of intelligence of that process. If it were nothing but beginning, real truth would only belong to a very remote past. But as principle, real truth is always present: every act of an intellectual process is supported by the presence of real truth. *Reality,*

> *in fact, is present to us in primordial apprehension and in the whole intellective process in a variety of ways...*[11] [italics added]

That is, we have access to reality and it is present to us; it does not require complex argumentation.

III. The Will to Real Truth and the Will to Truth of Ideas

This leads directly to the key point: the bifurcation of the Will to Ttruth into two distinct categories, with great consequences:

> Thus, reality itself in its real truth propels us to "ideate", encompassing in this term "ideate" all the many types of intellective processes that man has to perform (conceive, judge, reason, plan, etc.), and the real truth which propels us to ideate *eo ipso* opens the realm of two possibilities. One, is *to repose upon ideas in and by themselves as if they were the canon of reality* itself*; taken to the limit, one ends by making ideas the true reality.* The other is the inverse possibility, to address reality itself, and *take ideas as organs which hinder or facilitate to make reality ever more present in the intelligence.* Guided by things and their real truth, intelligence enters deeper and deeper into the real, and achieves an increment of real truth. *Man has to opt for one of these two possibilities, i.e., he has to accomplish an act of the will...*[12] [italics added]

Here we have the key to understanding not merely Post-Modernism, but most if not all of the "isms" that have come to define our world: human beings have the innate desire for truth, the "Will to Truth", but that will can go in the direction of the making ideas into reality, or in the direction of making reality more present to us. So the will to truth is actually an act of the will— it is not something passive, natural or easy—but a will that can go astray; and based on history, often does. The two cat-

egories of the Will to Truth are named by Zubiri with appropriate terminology, which we shall use throughout this investigation to facilitate the discussion:

> ...will to truth takes two different forms depending on the possible option chosen. If it opts for the first, we have the *will to* truth *of ideas.* If it opts for the second, we have the *will to real truth.* This is precisely what we

were searching for. Truth makes the will to truth necessary and makes the will for real truth possible. Man, in fact, can very easily drift into the option of the will to ideas. More difficult and less brilliant is to hold sternly to the will to things. For this reason it is urgent we reclaim it vigorously.[13]

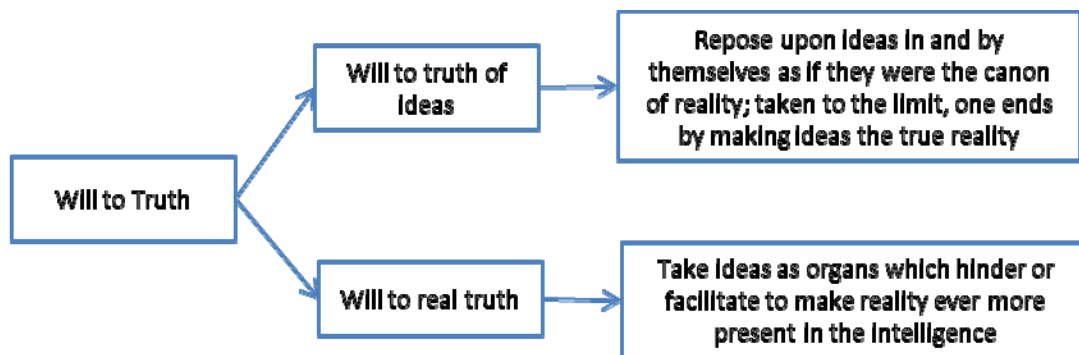To summarize we have the relationship illustrated in Figure 1:

Figure 1. The Will to Real Truth and the Will to Truth of Ideas

This distinction is absolutely critical to understanding many of the errors plaguing today's world, and we shall employ it shortly in connection with Post-Modernism.

The will to real truth, then, is about opting for making reality present to me, and using ideas to facilitate this process. It is not about me trying to make reality into what I think it should be, or claiming that it is what I think it should be. It is rather about grounding myself on reality:

> Now, *qua* terminus of the will to truth, the possession of real truth involves essentially not only the presence of the real but *eo ipso* also the realization of my possibilities. It is, in fact, an option for the possibility of real truth as different from the possibility of mere ideas. And like every volition, this option among possibilities is an appropriation on my part, i.e., in-

volves my own being. How does it do so? Not indeed because real truth consists or is founded upon my own being; rather, it is my being which is founded upon this truth.[14]

In order to get from real truth to truths about the world in the sense of rational knowledge, we require a method. Method is the passage from actualization in sentient intelligence to actualization in the world, through later stages of apprehension.

> ...knowledge starts from an actualization of the real in primordial sentient apprehension, and terminates in an actualization in a physical trial or test, i.e., a sentient trial or test of reality. The road which runs from the first to the second is just that of inquiring reason, and *qua* road, it is method. Method, I repeat, is an inquiring actualization of reality.... Method is not

the way of truth, but the way of reality. To be sure, we are dealing with actualized reality; but it is always reality. Therefore method as path is a path not in the truth of knowledge, but in reality.[15]

This intimate connection among truth, grounding, will, method and reality is key to our project. "Then the will for real truth is *will to grounding*. This is what we were searching for. My being is thus being *in truth...*" [16] So intellection and freedom of choice, far from being separate or incompatible, have a basic and intrinsic unity, which is the will to grounding.[17]

Also important is Zubiri's explanation of the progression of human knowledge in terms of the *canon* of reality. The fact that knowledge develops over time has often led to skeptical philosophies; but Zubiri points out that skepticism is not the appropriate response to this situation. A correct understanding of human knowledge development recognizes that there is a canon of reality that can undergo change—not in the sense of a wholesale rejection of one set of entities in favor of another, but in the sense of a canon that is basically continuous but that can undergo some revision:

> A canon is not a system of normative judgements but is, as the etymology of the word expresses precisely, a "metric"; it is not a judgement nor a system of judgements which regulate affirmative measurement. This "metric" is just what was previously known intellectively as real in its form and in its mode of reality. The thinking intellection *goes off in search of the real beyond what was previously intellectively known, based upon the canon of reality already known.*[18] [italics added]

Thus reason operates not in some random fashion, but by utilizing the canon to further knowledge, which in turn can expand the canon:

Reason, the *intellectus quaerens*, bears this canon in its intellection, and with it measures the reality which it seeks, at one and the same time as real thing and as mode of reality.[19]

For Zubiri, knowledge as a human enterprise is both dynamic and limited. It is limited because the canon of reality, like reality itself, can never be completely fathomed. It is limited because as human beings we are limited and must constantly search for knowledge. The phrase "exhaustive knowledge" is an oxymoron.

The canon has been expanded many times in the past; in the 20th century, quantum mechanics led us to understand that reality encompasses more than bodies in the billiard-ball sense. More recently quantum field theory has revealed to us that reality involves "virtual particles" that behave in radically different ways than even the reality envisioned by quantum mechanics. In both cases our canon of reality was expanded, but not overturned. The key is that our canon at any moment in time allows us to investigate reality further, and possibly expand the canon. This does not contradict the notion of Thomas Kuhn's "paradigm shifts",[20] because they refer to our way of understanding what we discover. The Copernican revolution, for example, was only possible because we had in our canon the notions of planets, sun, and moon. By understanding these in depth, Copernicus was able to perceive that observations fit better a model in which the sun, not the earth, was at the center. Later Newton added the notion of a field theory (gravity) to our canon. That, in turn, enabled Einstein centuries later to give us the notion of spacetime as an entity that can be warped, expanding the canon again and explaining gravitational motion.

Now all of this could simply be viewed as an abstract philosophical discussion only tangentially related to anything in reality. Unfortunately, that is not the case: when the will to truth of ideas collides with reality, it tries to make reality

conform to its own ideas, usually through political means. This typically leads to rejection of facts, oppression, and widespread suppression of freedom; in short, the Will to Power. The history of communism in the twentieth century is a perfect example. The political economy ideas of an obscure German writer and revolutionary—ideas that were rapidly becoming obsolete even as they were penned—became the foundation of a political movement that oppressed hundreds of millions and killed upwards of a hundred million,[21] created widespread ecological disasters, retarded economic development, and utterly failed to achieve any of its stated goals:

> From the Soviet Union to Cuba, Venezuela—wherever through socialism or communism has been adopted, it has delivered anguish, devastation, and failure. Those who preach the tenets of these discredited ideologies only contribute to the continued suffering of the people who live under these cruel systems.[22]

As an example, the great famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine, engineered by Stalin, killed upwards of six million; but it was scandalously and intentionally misreported by *New York Times* reporter Walter Duranty.[23],[24] The *Times* has never apologized nor repudiated the Pulitzer Prize that Duranty was awarded for his whitewash. Clearly Duranty was motivated by his belief in and desire for success of the Communist revolution in Russia—the Will to Truth of Ideas again. In more recent history is the massacre in Cambodia, 1974-79, the brainchild of Pol Pot, documented in the motion picture *The Killing Fields* (1984). The proof of Marxism's failure—were any needed—is that no one (with the possible exception of a few intelligentsia) freely chooses to live under any Communist regime; rather, everyone wants to leave these places.

It is no accident that the propaganda organ of the Soviets was called "Pravda", "Truth", all the while spouting lies. For too many of these movements based on the Will to Truth of Ideas, there is a "facts are irrelevant" mentality because of their abandonment of the Will to Real Truth and the enshrining of the Will to Truth of Ideas, a mentality they share with one of their progenitors, Hegel, who when told of a conflict of this theories with reality, famously said, "So much the worse for the facts". Needless to say, Zubiri understood the importance of correct philosophical notions about truth and reality, and the necessity to get them right:

> From the concept that we have of what is reality and its modes will follow our manner of being a person, our way of being among things and among people, our social organization and its history. Whence the gravity of the investigation of what it is to be real.[25]

With this solid grounding we can now turn to Post-Modernism and analyze its errors from the standpoint of Zubiri's philosophy of sentient intelligence and reality. Whether Zubiri ever encountered radicalized Post-Modern thinking is unclear; it does not seem to appear in any of his writings. Rather, he concerned himself with thinkers who were at some level serious about fact-based theories, even if he believed they were quite misguided. Likely he would have had nothing but disdain for anyone who refused to consider different views, or who simply denounced any opposition and any evidence against his own theories.

IV. Post-Modernism

We shall begin by examining the principal doctrines of Post-Modernism, and how they have come to define a new surrogate religion through the Will to Power. Post-Modernism began as literary criticism movement based loosely a on some obscure quasi-philosophical notions. It is defined by two principal ideas: the *Deconstructionism* of Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) and the *Historicism* of Michael Foucault (1926-1984). Deconstructionism is a

critique of various assumptions of the Western philosophical tradition, as understood by Derrida, and perhaps more importantly, a belief that with words, text, or speech, there is nothing outside of context, *il n'y a pas de hors-texte.*[26] So any attempt to attribute meaning in a fundamental, non-subject-oriented sense is thus futile. Deconstructionism's project is to show that all supposed knowledge falls into this category and thus has little value outside of the reader's belief. Reality itself becomes a construct with no significance outside of the immediate context:

> ...reality is knowable only through the discourses which mediate it, and...there is a constant, if subterranean, struggle over whose constructions of the real will gain dominance.[27]

Of course at this point Zubiri would immediately blow the whistle and point out that this fundamental assumption about reality is completely wrong, since reality is in fact knowable through primordial apprehension, without need for any discourses, which in any case can only come at the *third* stage of the knowing process. So the assumption about reality's knowability only through discourses effectively vitiates the entire Post-Modern program. Moreover, as the foregoing quotation suggests, the Will to Power overtakes the Will to Truth, something also conceded by the Post-Modernists:

> Ideology can never be "disinterested" because it functions to render "obvious" and "natural" constructions of reality which, often in oblique and highly mediated ways, serve the interests of particular races, genders and classes within the social formation.[28]

This and the foregoing quote perfectly illustrate the transition from Will to Truth of Ideas to the Will to Power. Once one accepts that reality is "constructed by discourses"—that is, built upon the Will to Truth of Ideas—it will immediately follow that there will be a battle to determine whose "construction" will win, since political relationships in a society, and thus power, are based on what is perceived to be reality. The proponents of this view are indeed perfect disciples of Nietzsche:

> ...truths are illusions about which one has forgotten that this is what they are.[29]

Obviously this cannot happen if reality is directly perceived rather than arbitrarily constructed based upon "discourses". Our direct contact with reality, even though at the level of primordial apprehension, will limit what can be claimed to be reality.

Derrida and other proponents of Post-Modernism have taken the Will to Truth of Ideas to rather bizarre extremes. As literary scholar Robert Young has noted:

> Derrida...seems to have gone a step beyond nominalism, which maintains that universals or concepts are mere 'names', that only particular, individual entities have real substantial existence. He seems to suggest that even particular things lack real existence, that substance occurs only in a matrix of accidents. Derrida calls this condition *différance.*[30]

At times Derrida claimed that deconstructionism is a radicalization of the spirit of Marxism,[31,32] though it is unlikely that Marx would have agreed that class struggle and the proletariat are not real and have no real existence. In fact, the message of deconstruction is that all conceptions are self-contradictory—definitely not a Marxian sentiment. But this leads to the inconvenient problem that it is a self-referential statement—the bane of skeptical philosophies—and so deconstructionism is itself contradictory, a fact simply ignored by its proponents.[33] As Young has noted, "The contribution of Jacques Derrida was to make Nietzsche's call for intellectual anarchy into a viable academic research project."[34] There it gained currency by being perceived as truth—the will to truth of ideas—and quickly assumed

the mantle of a religion.

Foucault's viewpoint is that reality is determined by "knowledge" rather than the other way around, things constructed by words.[35] This, clearly, comes straight from the Will to Truth of Ideas rather than the Will to Real Truth, which puts reality first. For Foucault and other proponents of the "New Historicism", history takes on a positivist meaning; it is not seeking to "discover the order, purpose, and meaning underlying the chronicle of human events,"[36] nor to be any sort of revelation of human nature or character as revealed by the actions of men in history. It is, rather, something much different:

> ...the disclosure of how human ideas of order, purpose, and meaning are all products of evolving conditions in the material environment. Works of literature, then, are merely documents, not essentially different from any other printed material, products of the economic and cultural hegemonies of their society....The task of the interpreter is to...show how they support repressive regimes and social practices (racism, sexism, imperialism, capitalism, and so on)...[37]

In Foucault's own words, he seeks to show that knowledge is not something achieved by the human mind, but the product of the "discursive practice" from a particular era.

Foucault used the term "archeology of knowledge" to describe his method, and claimed that his subject matter was "truth", though for him, "truth" was the *product* instead of the *source* of "discourse", and therefore took its form and content not from reality but from the language used to convey it.[38] Never mind that this dictum would apply to Foucault's own theory and thus render it just as disposable as the rest. Once again the failure to recognize the Will to Real Truth as the foundation of knowledge reveals the kinds of bizarre deviations that follow. The logical inconsistency so blatant in Foucault's understanding of truth should have

caused any level-headed thinker to dismiss him out of hand. The fact that so few did is testimony to the draw of the Will to Truth of Ideas.

The recognition and accolades that Foucault received allowed him to venture more deeply into philosophy, leading to more absurd conclusions:

> What I am attempting to bring to light is the epistemological field, the *episteme* in which knowledge, envisaged apart from all criteria having reference to rational value or to its objective forms, grounds its positivity and thereby manifests a history which is not that of its growing perfection, but rather that of its conditions of possibility; what should appear are those configurations within the *space* of knowledge which have given rise to the diverse forms of empirical science.[39]

Now the Greek word ἐπιστήμη means "knowledge," according to Liddell and Scott,[40] as well as "skill, as in archery," "professional skill," and "scientific knowledge", not any sort of "epistemological field"—if that term has any meaning at all. It appears that Foucault is trying to make the point that all knowledge is analogous to professional skill or knowledge specific to a particular field, hence "subjective" in the sense that one must be familiar with the terminology and protocols of the discipline in order to use the knowledge. This in turn means that no one can escape from the circle of his peculiar knowledge perspective. Thus a medical doctor knows that a CPU is a Cardio-Pulmonary Unit whereas a computer engineer recognizes a CPU as a Central Processing Unit. Unquestionably such specialized knowledge exists; it is indeed the principal reason that we have universities. But such knowledge is not a closed system; it forms part of humanity's overall knowledge, which has only very vague boundaries. For example, the computer engineer can easily learn some of what the medical doctor knows and become a bio-

medical engineer designing equipment to assist the medical doctor treating heart patients, thus integrating the one CPU with the other. The field of bio-medical engineering illustrates how much all fields of knowledge overlap to form a large tapestry, one which in fact *is* growing and *is* becoming more perfect—directly contradicting Foucault's claim. In addition, specialized knowledge is not created from whole cloth; it is built on top of more general knowledge such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology; and these in turn are based on concepts and words learned in elementary school. Without such general knowledge, no one could grasp any type of particular knowledge. In Zubiri's terminology, all rational knowledge is built upon two lower layers—the logos (which links words and basic concepts to primordial apprehension), and primordial apprehension, the lowest layer, which puts us into direct contact with reality.

The last part of Foucault's run-on and rather sophomoric sentence is quite meaningless because there is no "space of knowledge"—as if chunks of knowledge were something like discrete mathematical functions that are elements in a space of functions such as a Hilbert space. Knowledge isn't comprised of discrete chunks or functions that can be arbitrarily arranged and combined; there is only knowledge, and that knowledge forms a continuum, as discussed above, woven throughout with links to reality. The empirical sciences are part of that knowledge. Had Foucault bothered to learn more about how science actually works, and how it relates to reality, he would not have made such an elementary mistake. Nor will it do to claim that this is a meta-theory and therefore not subject to its own critique of knowledge, because it represents a claim to objective knowledge quite on the same level as that of the empirical sciences, about which it speaks. The Post-Modernists, in fact, seem blithely unaware that mathematics in the 20th century dealt with the whole issue of self-referential

statements and learned a great deal about the nature of logical and formal systems in the process, and about their ability to be complete. This is a very difficult and rather tricky subject, with lots of pitfalls for the unwary. The conclusions (which deal with *truth* and *provability*) are totally at variance with any notion that meaning is related to context or that there is no progression in knowledge.

Foucault's principal focus was naturally on power, since as we have seen, this is the logical outcome of the Will to Truth of Ideas:

> The unifying thread in Foucault's...most influential work is the search for the secret structures of power. Behind every practice, every institution and behind language itself lies power, and Foucault's goal is to unmask that power and thereby liberate its victims.[41]

Unquestionably there are power structures in the world now, as always; and there have been abuses of power. But the truly important aspect of power completely escapes Foucault: *there are no value-neutral systems.* Any society, no matter how primitive, has values, and these values will lead to structures—laws, institutions, and cultural norms—which entail power in the hands of certain groups of people. In other words, values and power are intimately linked. "Liberating" people from power—if it means anything—means changing society's values; but they don't change into *nothing,* they change into *different* values. Different values mean different power structures, different people wielding power, and thus different people being "oppressed." What is needed, therefore, is not the kind of trivial and counterfeit liberation that Foucault advocates, but a *quest for the best values*—a quest that Foucault was ill-equipped to undertake.

This leads to three questions of interest not raised by Foucault. First is whether power structures are the result of merit, industry and superior ideology (e.g., democracy) triumphing over indolence, evil

intentions, or failed ideologies. Foucault also avoided a second question, namely whether, given the state of knowledge, the physical resources, and the level of education of the population in any given situation, it was (or is) possible to have a "better" societal organization. And third, he failed to address the question of whether inequality is necessary to propel a society forward, because any society needs to reward its most gifted and competent people and give them opportunities that are not available to others. It is they who will solve problems and make the society better for all. But to answer these questions would have required an investigation into reality that went far beyond Foucault's understanding of it, of society, and of power.

Moreover, because of the connection between values and power, it obviously makes no sense to talk of "liberating" people from the only societal organization and power structure that is capable of allowing them to fulfill their goals and potential. Curiously, Foucault apparently did come to recognize this at some level: he supported the Solidarity movement in Poland and tried to get the Mitterand government in France to do so as well.[42] Whether he perceived or acknowledged that this contradicted his life's major work, and is an implicit recognition of truth and reality in a sense quite far removed from discourse and language, is not clear. In the end, reality—the true reality, not the discursive kind—caught up with Foucault. He was a practicing homosexual who died of AIDS.[43] Perhaps he, like the other Post-Modernists, should have heeded the dictum "We can evade reality, but we cannot evade the consequences of evading reality."[44]

Turning to another side of Post-Modernism, Tirado has situated the modern Anglo-Saxon philosophy of language tradition in the Post-Modern camp. He notes that it along with other hermeneutic ideas:

> ...has once again ventured into ideal-

ism, as did the philosophies of the subject in days of old, because both in their own way ended up substantivizing the logos; and what the logos says must be, is. As Wittgenstein says in the *Tractatus* 5.6, "The frontiers of my language mean the frontiers of my world."[45]

This, more or less, is the Post-Modern position of Derrida and Foucault, even though the *Tractatus* dates from 1921, long before their writings. But much of the skeptical spirit of their works can be traced to the English empirical tradition, which later evolved into the philosophy of language schools. It is likely that these schools at least indirectly influenced the Post-Modernists, and that their acceptance in the Anglo-Saxon world was due in part to its long empiricist tradition, culminating in David Hume, which always questioned our ability to know reality.

To keep the discussion concrete, we shall examine the primary tenets of the postmodern movement, according to Kuznar,[46] which comprise the following:

(1) Elevation of text and language as the fundamental phenomena of existence
(2) Application of literary analysis to all phenomena
(3) Questioning of reality and representation
(4) Critique of metanarratives
(5) Argument against method and evaluation
(6) Advocacy of polyvocality
(7) Focus upon power relations and hegemony
(8) General critique of Western institutions and knowledge

Zubiri would criticize all of these tenets as hopelessly misguided because of the utter failure of their proponents to recognize the nature of truth, and our basic knowing process, which begins with primordial apprehension. Specifically, they have failed to perceive that we are, in fact, installed in reality, through primordial ap-

prehension, and that other forms of knowledge—the only ones discussed but not distinguished by the Post-Modernists—are built upon this foundation. Without a clear view of the three components of knowledge (primordial apprehension, logos, and reason), it is impossible to come to grips with any of the issues that Post-Modernists claim to be discussing.

Zubiri's critique of Post-modernism would therefore be along these lines:

1. *Elevation of text and language as the fundamental phenomena of existence.* Fails because the fundamental phenomenon of existence is primordial apprehension of reality, and so the fundamental meaning of truth is *real truth*. Insofar as this "elevation" purports to be true, it is an example of the "Will to truth of ideas".

2. *Application of literary analysis to all phenomena.* Literary analysis is not applicable to all phenomena. Phenomena are subject to the three levels of knowing: primordial apprehension, logos, and reason. This is the only type of analysis that applies to all phenomena.

3. *Questioning of reality and representation.* Reality can be questioned but only if one recognizes that we are installed in reality through primordial apprehension. Logos and reason are not infallible but neither are they arbitrary constructs; they are based on our grounding in reality. So there are hard limits to any questioning of reality and its representations.

4. *Critique of metanarratives.* Metanarratives are discussions that seek to account for or explain various historical events and experiences, including social and cultural phenomena, based upon some type of appeal to universal truths or universal values. Examples abound: Marxism is an obvious case, and many religions do so as well. Post-Modernism disputes the validity of any metanarrative. But Zubiri would argue that it is the task of the philosopher to create such metanarratives, owing to his responsibility to deal with reality as grounding. Metanarratives are possible and indeed necessary on the assumption that there is reality and it is accessible in some fashion.

5. *Argument against method and evaluation.* Another failure to recognize the nature of human knowledge and its basis in the real truth given by primordial apprehension. As noted earlier, knowledge begins in an actualization of the real in primordial apprehension, and ends in an actualization that is a test of reality. Method is the road or path from the first to the second; it is therefore well-defined and a key part of our knowledge acquisition process.

6. *Advocacy of polyvocality.* Literally "polyvocality" means "many voices", and presumeably is intended to imply that there should be multiple views on any subject, and no one of them is the "best" or the only acceptable view. Now, understanding of certain historical events and cultural products clearly can benefit from different views. But there are hard limits to this approach because of our direct contact with reality through primordial apprehension, and our need to build knowledge upon it, such as science. Scientific theories perforce exclude many ideas and views.

7. *Focus upon power relations and hegemony.* It is not possible to have society without complexity, without organization and relationships, and these will of necessity involve pow-

er relations and hierarchies. As such, some groups of people will undoubtedly benefit. These should be people who are contributing to society and are not just "rent seeking," as the economists say. In our society, that is the case, by and large. There have been times when hierarchies did take undue advantage of their position. But even in those cases, they created institutions, culture, and customs that moved society forward: think music, literature, universities, and institutions of government that we in the West have and that the rest of the world emulates. The Post-Modern attacks simply represent a desire, seemingly based on envy, to "change the guard" and put them (Post-Modernists) in the positions of power, unearned—essentially intellectual "rent seeking". Again we see clearly the Will to Power in action.

8. *General critique of Western institutions and knowledge.* Again an essentially self-contradictory position because it attacks the very institutions that make Post-modern "thought" and writings possible. Attacks on knowledge, of course, always run the risk of undercutting themselves, and this is no exception. The Post-modern critiques are in fact self-referential and thus self-refuting. Only with a more solid understanding of the nature of truth and knowledge can we begin to critique these institutions and knowledge, and even then, only with great care and recognition of how essential they are to civilization and the advancement of knowledge. Error—the skeptics' food—is real, of course; but as Zubiri has noted, it makes sense to speak of error only because we can and do achieve truth.[47]

With regard to this last point, Zubiri has described the knowledge acquisition problem at length, and clarified the nature of knowledge as searching:

> Only because rational intellection is formally inquiring, only because of this must one always seek more and, finding what was sought, have it become the principle of the next search. Knowledge is limited by being knowledge. *An exhaustive knowledge of the real would not be knowledge; it would be intellection of the real without necessity of knowledge.* Knowledge is only intellection in search. Not having recognized the intrinsic and formal character of rational intellection as inquiry is what led to...subsuming all truth under the truth of affirmation.[48] [Italics added]

To summarize the effects of will to power, as interpreted by post-modernism, we have the following:

- Denial or rejection of truth
- Identity politics and suppression of individual
- Rejection of individual freedom, or else move toward Rousseau's "forced to be free"
- Rejection of idea of objective inquiry and science
- Rejection of individual responsibility for actions

These quickly lead to absurd positions such as that of Stanley Fish, who "...relegates men and women to the status of prisoners in an infinite regress of interpretations—arbitrary and mutable, but ineluctably imposed by the reigning culture. We are thus reduced to witting or unwitting players in a furious political game with ruthlessly enforced but uncertain rules, which are constantly subject to change without notice."[49] This makes clear the Post-Modern thought progression and its inevitable outcome, viz. that abandonment of the "Will to Truth" leads to Nietzsche's "Will to Power". But of course power cannot change reality, and that is what seems to anger and frustrate Post-

Modernists. Failure to realize that we are installed in reality through primordial apprehension produces lines of thought such as the nihilism of deconstructionism. That is, the Will to Power emerges because the Will to Truth of Ideas is insufficient to satisfy man's quest for grounding. Nietzsche understood it well:

> To speak of just or unjust in itself is quite senseless; in itself, of course, no injury, assault, exploitation, destruction can be "unjust," since life operates essentially, that is in its basic functions, through injury, assault, exploitation, destruction and simply cannot be thought of at all without this character. One must indeed grant something even more unpalatable: that, from the highest biological standpoint, legal conditions can never be other than exceptional conditions, since they constitute a partial restriction of the will of life, which is bent upon power, and are subordinate to its total goal as a single means: namely, as a means of creating greater units of power. A legal order thought of as sovereign and universal, not as a means in the struggle between power complexes but as a means of preventing all struggle in general perhaps after the communistic cliché of Dühring, that every will must consider every other will its equal—would be a principle hostile to life, an agent of the dissolution and destruction of man, an attempt to assassinate the future of man, a sign of weariness, a secret path to nothingness.[50]

The cover on the enormous intellectual fraud of Post-Modernism was blown off by a rather unlikely person, physicist Alan Sokal of New York University and University College London, who revealed the Post-Modernists' disdain for truth through publication of an article submitted to one of their journals. The article was purposely written to be utter nonsense, but with a suitable title, it was accepted for publica-

tion. According to Sokal, the purpose of the article was to see if a post-Modernist journal would "publish an article liberally salted with nonsense if (a) it sounded good and (b) it flattered the editors' ideological preconceptions".[51] The article, entitled, "Transgressing the Boundaries: Towards a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity", was published in the journal *Social Text* in 1996.[52] The article claimed that quantum gravity is a social and linguistic construct, in line with postmodernist ideas about the impossibility of objective truth. Sokal believed that due to the predelictions of the editorial staff of such journals, the absurd and nonsense content of the article would have no bearing on the editors' decision to publish it. Only ideological obsequiousness, lots of appropriate deconstructionist jargon, and numerous fawning references to major Post-Modern writers would matter in the end. In Sokal's own words:

> The editors of *Social Text* liked my article because they liked its conclusion: that 'the content and methodology of postmodern science provide powerful intellectual support for the progressive political project' [sec. 6]. They apparently felt no need to analyze the quality of the evidence, the cogency of the arguments, or even the relevance of the arguments to the purported conclusion.[53]

What Sokal's article criticized is the inevitable result of having "proliferated self-referential journals, citation circles, non-replicable research, and the curtailing of nuanced debate through activism and marches"[54] instead of objective, reality-based investigation. In short, what happens when the Will to Truth of Ideas replaces the Will to Real Truth and becomes the Will to Power.

The situation has deteriorated significantly in the 20 plus years since Sokal's article was published, though in many ways the downward spiral was completely predictable. The move has been toward political violence and Nazi Brownshirt be-

havior to silence critics. In many ways, in fact, the Post-Modernist atmosphere on college campuses does resemble Germany of the mid to late 30s. The main difference, ironically, is that the post-Modernist crowd seems to have no real backbone and hence the demand for "safe spaces" and freedom from hearing ideas that they find "offensive". The Nazi Brownshirts definitely did not look for "safe spaces"! However the Post-Modernists and their acolytes and disciples do not hesitate to wield power where they can do so more or less undisturbed, and that is on college campuses and similar venues. We shall discuss that in Section VI.

V. Post-Modernism as a Religion

The Will to Power in the case of Post-Modernism follows the trajectory of many movements that mistake the Will to Truth of Ideas for the Will to Truth in the profound sense. Today we have the situation where large numbers of people, especially those involved in intellectual pursuits, including university faculty and students, have opted for the first, with increasingly disastrous consequences. But an academic trend and academic discourse such as Derrida's writings would not, by themselves, have been sufficient to start a movement and transform society. For that, it is necessary to start a religion, which is exactly what major movements such as Nazism and Communism did, and what Post-Modernism has done. This is easy, because values and religion are intimately linked; if a set of values emerges from some philosophy, so naturally does a religion, where by "religion" we mean the fundamental organizing principle of experience. There is no religion without values, and conversely, there are no value systems that do not implicitly define a religion—a fact that escapes not only the Post-Modernists but many other thinkers in today's world.

For the Nazis, of course, it was the religion of the state and the Aryan race, where the *summum bonum* was advance-

ment of the race, seen as a type of sociobiological imperative. For the Marxists, it was the religion of the "workers" and the "class struggle"; and the *summum bonum* was attainment of the "workers' paradise", where all earthly needs would be met, seen as a type of logical conclusion of societal evolution—a "heaven on earth." For the Post-modernists, it is the religion of self-fulfillment, especially in regard to sexual matters, also seen as the end result of an evolution in social development. In all cases there are books that function as "Holy Writ", saints, heretics, and punishments to be meted out to non-believers. In the case of the Nazis it was the Brownshirts, and later the Gestapo, with the Concentration Camps, who dealt directly with the public and those who resisted. The communists had the Gulags, well-documented by Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Nowadays we have college students and the media, especially social media, that fulfill many of these same roles, and who are already trying to restrict free exercise of any religion that does not agree with them. It only remains to reopen the camps.

A recent article appearing in *Scientific American* has succinctly described the problem and the consequences of the Will to Truth of Ideas:

> The intellectual battlefields today are on college campuses, where students' deep convictions about race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation and their social justice antipathy toward capitalism, imperialism, racism, white privilege, misogyny and "cissexist heteropatriarchy" have bumped up against the reality of contradictory facts and opposing views, leading to campus chaos and even violence.[55]

Violence on many campuses has indeed flared, for example at Berkeley and Middlebury College. The riots and destruction in Berkeley in response to a visit by a conservative activist came just shy of 80 years after the infamous *Kristallnacht* in Germany,[56] and bear many similarities, especial-

ly in the behavior of the students, who resembled Nazi Brownshirts (SA) in their smashing of windows and shouting down of disfavored speakers. More recently, at the University of Oregon, even the president of the university was shouted down. At the College of William and Mary, a planned celebration of free speech was disrupted when protesters from Black Lives Matter swarmed onto the stage, forcing organizers to prematurely end the event. The protesters shouted various slogans such as "Liberalism is white supremacy!" and "ACLU, you protect Hitler too!", "The oppressed are not impressed!," "Blood on your hands!," and "The revolution will not uphold the Constitution!" which is ironic since the speech to be given was by Claire Guthrie Gastañaga, executive director of the ACLU of Virginia. Zubiri would no doubt have been appalled by students (and others) demanding that those with whom they disagree be silenced because they don't want to hear their message. And even more so by the attacks on science and empirical facts as tools of oppression by the "white patriarchy", which will be discussed below.

But the real problem is not the violence, bad though that is. The real problem is the dereliction of duty of the students and many professors, who have opted for the truth of ideas—their own ideas—over any verifiable connection to reality. Disagreement is met not with reasoned discourse, but shouting and disruption. This is the fruit of failure to understand what Zubiri says, that opting for will to truth of ideas over will to real truth puts us on track for a collision with reality; and that collision leads directly to the Will to Power.

What can we learn from this behavior? What does it convey about underlying beliefs? It is not possible to have an ethical theory without metaphysics, that is, without a theory of what is real and what is not. No religion, surrogate religion, or movement escapes this condition. In fact it is possible to deduce the metaphysics of a person, movement, or organization just

by knowing what moral positions they take. So these incidents and others where similar behavior and attitudes have been displayed clearly reveal the morals of the student protestors and thus their metaphysical beliefs, which are that no God exists and man (in the abstract) is the creator of meaning and truth in the world. This, in fact, is the core of the new religion.

> Deconstruction may be regarded as the distilled essence of the totalitarian ideologies of the modern world—the full disclosure of their nihilistic essence beneath the veneer of factitious economics or racial politics: there is no God, no real distinction between good and evil, no meaning or purpose to human life.[57]

Or rather the nihilism masks the fact that God—god—has become just a creation of man, and of a very specific part of mankind, namely the post-modernists, who decide what, at the moment, is good or evil, what, at the moment, has meaning, and what should pass for truth. As C.S. Lewis remarked, "When all that says 'it is good' has been debunked, what says 'I want' remains."[58] And what remains, in most cases, is "the violent exercise of raw power..."[59] Thus,

> It would be comforting to assume that the New Historicism, cultural materialism, and other forms of "political criticism" were literally of merely "academic" interest; however, thoughtful men and women will quickly acknowledge the crucial influence of higher education on the cultural and political health of a nation. The scholarly community plays a major role in defining the terms in which debate is conducted and in shaping the imaginative horizons not only of students, but even the general public. The lucubrations of professors, no matter how improbable or obscure, have a way of infiltrating the decision-making process of various public in-

stitutions and even businesses as well as the several branches of government.[60]

When viewed in terms of behavior (the Post-Modernists would never admit that they have promulgated a new religion), the religious nature of their quest becomes apparent:

> Like yesterday's Puritans, today's neo-puritans fight similarly to defend an orthodoxy—a new and powerful secularist orthodoxy, according to which dissent from progressive dogma about the sexual revolution menaces society, and deserves punishment. Under this new dispensation, "bigot" and "hater" are the new "wizard" and "witch"; moreover, thanks to their talismanic power, some believers are just beginning to enter the stocks, both literally and figuratively.[61]

And of course they believe fervently in the new religion. Otherwise it would just be an arid academic exercise:

> They believe they are in possession of a higher truth, and they fight to universalize it—to proselytize just as anyone else who believes himself charged with guardianship of the Truth seeks to do.[62]

War must be waged against Christianity because its views of mankind and human nature cannot be reconciled with Post-Modernism:

> Any notion of rational authority or wisdom is simply discounted; reason is understood to be the servant of desire's restless energy. Deconstruction is...the effort of reason to devour itself and hence the limits or constraints that rationality necessarily discovers in the finite human condition. For this reason, deconstruction is a crucial factor in postmodern theory in all its various guises. Despite the rancorous altercations among Marxists, feminists, new historicists, neo-Freudians, and every position across

the ideological spectrum, all are united in a virulent antihumanism that despises the concept of human nature precisely as the image and likeness of God; that is, as man's rationality is the sign of his participation in the divine order—in the logos.[63]

Researcher Sumantra Maitra of the U of Nottingham has observed:

> Postmodernists have tried to hijack biology, have taken over large parts of political science, almost all of anthropology, history and English and have...[instigated] a bunch of gullible students to intimidate any opposing ideas.[64]

In this they are following many earlier totalitarian movements based on the will to truth of ideas. This is how such ideas are transformed into a religion. And it is a religion; indeed, the "culture wars" are primarily a religious contest, not one that pits "libertarian" views against restrictive moralistic theological views:

> The fundamental impulse leading to the penalizing of Christian believers today is not libertarian. It is instead neo-puritanical—that is, it is aimed at safeguarding its own body of revealed and developed truths, and at marginalizing, silencing, and punishing its traditional competitors....the so-called culture war...has not been conducted by people of religious faith on one side, and people of no faith on the other. It is instead a contest of *competing* faiths: one in the Good Book, and the other in the more newly written figurative book of secularist orthodoxy about the sexual revolution.[65]

This is another illustration of the remark attributed to George Orwell, "The further a society drifts from truth, the more it will hate those who speak it." So just what are the students being taught? As Shermer notes:

> Students are being taught by these postmodern professors that there is

no truth, that science and empirical facts are tools of oppression by the white patriarchy, and that nearly everyone in America is racist and bigoted, including their own professors, most of whom are liberals or progressives devoted to fighting these social ills...If you teach students to be warriors against all power asymmetries, don't be surprised when they turn on their professors and administrators. This is what happens when you separate facts from values, empiricism from morality, science from the humanities.[66]

By supreme irony, the progressive movement's obsession with the truth of its own untested ideas has led it to disparage the only behavior that could help the oppressed people it claims to want to serve.[67] Of course, there is the minor problem that, by constantly complaining about the oppressive political structures of today's world, they conveniently overlook the fact that without those "structures" and the institutions they founded, there would be no opportunity for the progressives to even state their case:

> The trouble isn't only that cyber-mobs are in control. Treating opinions other than one's own not as differences to be tolerated, but rather as treason to be punished: this is not a legacy of thecivil rights movement. At best, it is a descent into rule of the strong, enshrinement of the notion that might makes right.[68]

As discussed, the fundamental error of Post-Modernism is its failure to recognize the nature of truth and the nature of human intelligence together with its grounding in reality through primordial apprehension. It substituted the Will to Truth of Ideas for the Will to Real Truth, and this was, as Zubiri notes, an act of the will. It is the Will to Real Truth that possesses us, which they should have known:

> The philosopher knows that he is possessed...Possessed by what? By something that is distinct from and superior to him, and which imposes itself upon him energetically. This "something" is truth. It is not the case that *we possess* truth, but that *it possess us*....The life of the philosopher is a life in truth or it is nothing.[69] [italics added]

In Derrida's and Foucault's case, we would have to assume that it is, indeed, nothing. Their will to truth of ideas led to a fraud of colossal proportions, as it did with Marxism and Nazism—two ideologies that share much in common with Post-Modernism. We have the trajectory shown in Figure 2 for Post-Modernism and similar ideologies based on the will to truth of ideas.

The Will to Truth of Ideas is a very powerful force, and at some level the lure of really reaching truth motivates much action. Unfortunately, it is often destructive because it is not grounded in real truth—the only thing that can make success possible.
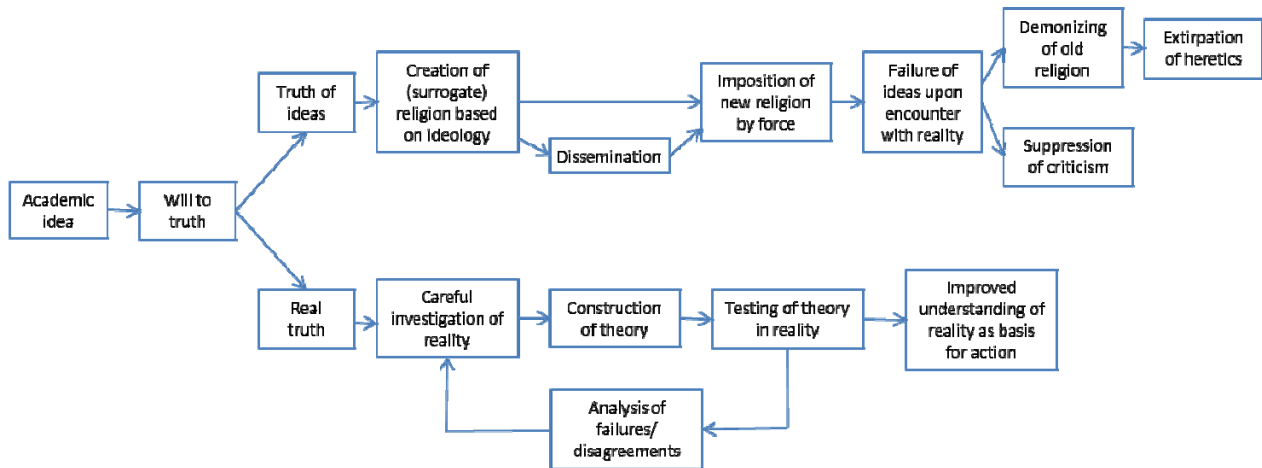
Figure 2. Intellectual trajectory of Post-Modernism and other ideologies based on the Will to the Truth of Ideas.

VI. Post-Modernism and Science

When applied to science and technology, where reality constantly provides direct feedback, Post-Modernism collides most spectacularly with the real world, manifesting in dramatic fashion the shortcomings of the Will to Truth of Ideas. This, of course, was Alan Sokal's point. And because the success of science and technology cannot be seriously questioned, it becomes necessary to put them in their place, i.e., keep them from menacing the Post-Modernist idealism. The Post-Modernists base their critique of science upon two interrelated arguments, one epistemological and the other ideological. Both of these arguments require assent to the notion of subjectivity:

First, because of the subjectivity of the human object, anthropology, according to the epistemological argument cannot be a science; and in any event the subjectivity of the human subject precludes the possibility of science discovering objective truth. Second, since objectivity is an illusion, science according to the ideological argument, subverts oppressed groups, females, ethnics, third-world peoples.[70]

The first argument is a twist on the fallacy of composition, basically arguing that because subjectivity is part of individual human knowing, every knowledge construction such as science must also be subjective. In addition to this logical error, the truth of the first premise is surely debatable, that subjectivity precludes objectivity, especially since that premise itself undercuts Post-Modernism, presented as it is as an objective truth about the world. As for the second argument, science is witness to the fact that objectivity is not an illusion—our computers work, our bridges stay up, our GPS systems are accurate, and we communicate with cell phones. The groups mentioned, and many others, all benefit from these inventions; otherwise it is difficult to see why they would so willingly use them. So the second argument can only be described as a *non-sequitur*. But for those committed to the Will to Truth of (their own) Ideas, nothing stands in the way, certainly not something as stubborn as reality:

I argue that those of us who have left the Sciences proper and moved to feminist studies spaces have continued to do science through our teaching. In a moment when the impulse

to do real science is palpitating in our feminist hearts, I suggest that we critically examine the political stakes of our affective attachments and detachments from s/Science(s). I consider what it means to be attached to a Science that earned its epistemic authority through its co-constitution with colonization and slavery...I offer critical science literacy as a practice that can directly challenge the epistemic authority of Science and be read as "doing science" or more broadly as "rewriting knowledge.[71]

Rather obvious is the fact that the truth of Maxwell's Equations—developed during the heyday of the British Empire—has nothing to do with any particular political system, since Maxwell's theory has been and continues to be employed in all of them. And it would certainly be news to Galileo, Newton, Harvey, Lavoisier, Maxwell or Einstein that their work had anything to do with colonization and slavery. But if the facts are irrelevant, any theory can be maintained indefinitely. It would be instructive to have a bridge-building contest with proponents of Post-Modern "science" versus traditional engineering, with each side compelled to walk over the resulting structure. But of course the Post-Modern crowd will never agree to any sort of objective test such as this—too much is at stake.

As an example of Post-Modernism's wanton obfuscation in order to promote its agenda based on the Will to Truth of Ideas, consider Foucault's comments about the (rather obvious) advances in the state of medicine:

> Over all these endeavors on the part of clinical thought to define its methods and scientific norms hovers the great myth of a pure Gaze that would be pure Language: a speaking eye. It would scan the entire hospital field, taking in and gathering together each of the singular events that occurred within it; and as it saw, it saw ever more clearly, it would turn into

speech that states and teaches; the truth, which events, in their repetitions and convergences, would outline under its gaze, would, by this same gaze and in the same order, be reserved, in the form of teaching, to those who do not know and have not yet seen. This speaking eye would be the servant of things and the master of truth.[72]

Well no, that is not how medicine works at all. It works on the basis of careful testing and experimentation, combined with theoretical analyses of observations and postulations of new mechanisms for disease and biological systems. Newcomers to the profession are trained in an existing body of knowledge, but also—and more importantly—to think in certain ways, in order to create new solutions to problems. The "myth of a pure Gaze" is pure nonsense that might be nice as a poetic metaphor but that has nothing to do with medical research or clinical practice. Indeed, one of the problems with respect to science is that Post-Modernists are willing to maintain theories and ideas that even they know are untrue, for the sake of the Will to Truth of Ideas. As Shermer has observed:

> In a 1946 essay in the London Tribune entitled "In Front of Your Nose," George Orwell noted that "we are all capable of believing things which we know to be untrue, and then, when we are finally proved wrong, impudently twisting the facts so as to show that we were right. Intellectually, it is possible to carry on this process for an indefinite time: the only check on it is that sooner or later a false belief bumps up against solid reality, usually on a battlefield."[73]

Science, of course, operates on the principle of reproducibility and conformance with observable facts, all of which is inimical to Postmodernism. This situation stems from radically different worldviews:

> One of many trends was identified by

Weinstein in a *Wall Street Journal* essay: "The button-down empirical and deductive fields, including all the hard sciences, have lived side by side with 'critical theory,' postmodernism and its perception-based relatives. Since the creation in 1960s and '70s of novel, justice-oriented fields, these incompatible worldviews have repelled one another.

The likelihood of reconciliation is extremely small because the conceptual gap is so great, based as it is on the chasm between Will to Truth of Ideas and Will to Real Truth, as reflected in the procedures of science. Only when science leaves its empirical roots, and the corresponding feedback loop, do the problems and issues of Post-Modernism arise. Some might argue that in the area of String Theory this is the situation, where the Will to Truth of Ideas seems to be or to be becoming dominant because no direct empirical tests are possible. This subject, however, is beyond the scope of the present study.

VII. Identity Politics

One of the more poisonous forms of the Will to Power seen in today's world is found in what is today termed "identity politics." Identity politics treats individuals not as individuals, but as members of some "group", almost any group selected by the speaker. These groups can be based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, or other criterion. The power gambit takes the form of a claim that the selected group is being "oppressed" by one or more other groups, and therefore has need to affirm its "rights". Now, rights are important, but this is not really about rights but about power, namely, the power of those claiming that the identified group is in fact "oppressed". "Rights", such as LGBT rights, are only a stalking horse for the real goals, namely forced imposition of the speaker's values and goals—his new religion—on the public.

The "Rights" argument is invariably combined with claims of "hate speech" of the "oppressing" group, which must be forcibly suppressed. "Hate speech" is defined as any speech the particular person or group does not like, and usually is speech that they cannot really refute, so must silence by epithet. There is, in fact, a whole litany of such all-purpose epithets, all rather shop-worn now: "racist", "homophobe", "capitalist". Even defenders of free speech at times seem to get derailed. Logan Beirne notes that "There is no "hate speech" exception to the First Amendment. Hateful ideas, no matter how odious, are protected under the Constitution"[74] This is true but gives too much ground to opponents of free speech because it admits that there is such a thing as "hate speech" that can be defined and is easily recognizable.

Identity politics is a tool used very effectively by the Nazis, for whom of course the favored group was the Aryan race, and other groups, supposedly standing in the way of progress of the Aryans, were to be liquidated. Of course, members of the preferred identity group were not free to do as they saw fit, but had to do the work of the state, leading to advancement of the "race". Likewise Communists used the idea as well. In their case it was the "workers" who were oppressed and who had to rise against the "capitalists" and any other group standing in the way of "workers' rights." In the end that did not turn out so well for the workers.

An interesting case of identity politics and the absurdities to which it can lead arose through an article written by University of Pennsylvania law professor Amy Wax and University of San Diego law professor Larry Alexander.[75] Wax and Alexander made the case that certain social values work better than others for living in society, and for societal advancement. At almost any other time, this rather obvious statement would not be controversial. But not in the days of identity politics and political correctness:

Were you planning to instruct your child about the value of hard work

and civility? Not so fast! According to a current uproar at the University of Pennsylvania, advocacy of such bourgeois virtues is "hate speech." The controversy, sparked by an op-ed written by two law professors, illustrates the rapidly shrinking boundaries of acceptable thought on college campuses and the use of racial victimology to police those boundaries..."Everyone wants to go to countries ruled by white Europeans." Western governments have undoubtedly committed crimes, she said, but it would be a mistake to reject what is good in those countries because of their historical flaws. The fuse was lit. The rules of the game were the following: Ignore what Wax and Alexander had actually said; avoid providing any counterevidence; and play the race card to the hilt as a substitute for engaging with their arguments.[76]

This brings us back to the "facts are irrelevant" mentality, and the associated "purge the heretics" action call. First step: the epithets, and then the demands:

> ...demands for a "formal policy for censuring hate speech and a schedule of community-based consequences for discriminatory acts against marginalized groups." Typical of the associational chain used by campus leftists, the IDEAL Open Letter equates rational argumentation with "hate speech," and "hate speech" with "discriminatory acts." Without consequences for these "discriminatory acts," U. Penn.'s "vulnerable students" will continue to be "harmed," "dehumanized," and "compromised" in their ability to get an education.[77]

Why is this attitude tolerated in modern universities, which are supposed to be the bulwark of free expression and unbiased investigation? John Ellis, Professor Emeritus of the University of California, Santa Cruz, offers the answer, which is, not surprisingly, that we are dealing with

the Will to Power:

> Shutting down all but one viewpoint is done to...pre-empt analysis and understanding. Only in the absence of competing ideas can the radical sect that now controls so much of the campuses hope to thrive and increase its numbers, because it can't survive open debate and analysis, and its adherents know it.[78]

Ellis also notes that this situation, where no real debate is permitted, ultimately destroys even the seemingly victorious side:

> ...intellectual dominance promotes stupidity. As one side becomes numerically stronger, its discipline weakens. The greater the imbalance between the two sides, the more incoherent and irrational the majority will become...What we are seeing on the campuses now illustrates this general principle perfectly. The nearly complete exclusion of one side has led to complete irrationality on the other. With almost no intellectual opposition remaining, campus radicals have lost the ability to engage with arguments and resort instead to the lazy alternative of name-calling: Opponents are all "fascists," "racists,", or "white supremists".[79]

Again, this is the logical result of the Will to Truth of Ideas stumbling over reality and doubling down on its failed vision, hoping that by shouting down and shutting down the opposition, its proponents can retain that to which they have no shadow of a right. There are calls for change:

> Ultimately, the public has granted the academy certain rights and privileges — special financial and policy protections (especially tenure) — on the understanding that institutions of higher education will pursue truth under conditions of free inquiry and fairness

to all points of view. There is a kind of implicit bargain or social contract here, and the academy has so consistently and persistently violated its side of the bargain that public action is now necessary. In particular, the tenure system, designed to ensure freedom of speech and secure the marketplace of ideas, has been abused to create an illiberal intellectual monopoly. And precisely because of this monopolistic abuse of the unique privilege of academic tenure, along with the unresolved, decades-long crisis of campus free speech, the traditional policy presumption in favor of local control can no longer be sustained in this sector. [80]

Any such reform of universities would be a colossal challenge, and discussion of it is beyond the scope of this paper; but clearly the situation has reached the point where some are willing to entertain it.

Curiously, surveys have shown that most Americans, at least, do not support the more radical agenda of the demonstrators, and do not have much faith in government to fix the problems of the country.[81] Most of the demonstrators as well as the proponents of Post-Modernism look to government and the courts to impose their vision. But by a rather large majority, Americans do not believe that this is a good approach:

> A purely legal solution to a moral problem may make good politics or good television, but it does not make good people—on Wall Street or anywhere else. The greedy can always find another loophole, making legal fixes seem like a constant, reactive game of catch-up.[82]

Based on surveys, people want moral leadership from those in power, whether in business, government, or elsewhere, and that the government should promote traditional values as a solution to current problems.[83] This, however, is at variance with those on the "inside" of government.[84]

Resolution of this question, unfortunately, is beyond the scope of the present study.

VIII. Conclusion

The Will to Real Truth compels humility and does lead to a grounding in reality. For those who fall into the trap of the Will to Truth of Ideas, and are convinced of the truth of their own ideas, such as the Post-Modernists, this is anathema. We have to be willing to recognize and acknowledge truth about ourselves and the world:

> The will to truth...is not only a series of acts, the acts to choose for one terminus or another, but primarily a principle of attitude. For us, the choice we shall freely carry out is grounded upon this attitude. And this attitude has two moments. One consists, of course, in wishing to discover the ground towards which we are hurled. But in addition it is an attitude of self-surrender, to make our *I* accept what we have discovered to be our ground.[85]

There are no value-neutral or value-free systems, nor any religion-free or religion-neutral systems, where "religion" is understood as the fundamental organizing principle of experience. Post-Modernism, through its acolytes and disciples, definitely functions as a religion. But because it is not based on the Will to Real Truth, it has false gods—self, power, and others, well-known from Nietzsche, and earlier, Hegel. Zubiri comments:

> ...the function of God in history is not, as Hegel maintains, to be the presence of reason in history. No. It is to be the presence of real truth in history.... Really and effectively, God gives Himself as real truth in the three dimensions of real truth, but above all in that one to which humans are most sensitive, i.e., as fidelity.[86]

Failure to recognize the Will to Real Truth as the principal meaning of the Will to Truth leads inexorably to the Will to Truth

of Ideas, which smoothly and quickly becomes the Will to Power. Zubiri's philosophy is a powerful antidote to this intellectual malady.

Notes

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2 Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §636, tr. Anthony M. Ludovici, Project Gutenberg, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/52915/52915-h/52915-h.htm.

3 *The Genealogy of Morals XXIV,* in *The Birth of Tragedy and the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Francis Golffing, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1966, p. 287.

4 Jn 18:37-38, NIV.

5 Xavier Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, trans. Thomas Fowler, Washington, DC: Xavier Zubiri Foundation of North America, 1999, p. 83 (hereafter, SI); Spanish original, *Inteligencia y realidad*, Madrid: Socieded de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1980, p. 229 (hereafter IRE).

6 SI*,* p. 72 (Sp. 199)

7 Xavier Zubiri, *Man and God*, trans. Joaquin Redondo, Thomas Fowler, Nelson Orringer, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005, p. 192 (hereafter, MG). Spanish original, *El hombre y Dios*, Madrid: Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1985, p.262.

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9 MG, p. 181-182, Sp. p 246.

10 MG, p. 182, Sp. p. 246-247.

11 MG, p. 182-183, Sp. p. 247-248.

12 MG, p. 183, Sp. p. 248.

13 MG, p. 183-184, Sp. p. 248-249.

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28 *Ibid.*

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34 Young, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

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36 Young, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

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[43] Scruton, *op. cit.*, p. 111,

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[48] SI, pp. 261-262.

[49] Young, *op. cit.*, p 128.

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