

WILLIAM JAMES' THEORIES OF KNOWING AND WILLING
AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO THE NEW SOCIETY

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate School
University of San Carlos

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Philosophy

by
Miss Editha A. Cañas

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D E D I C A T I O N

to my Papa and Mama--

Julio and Felisa

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T

This thesis would never have been completed without the encouragement and generous assistance of the following:

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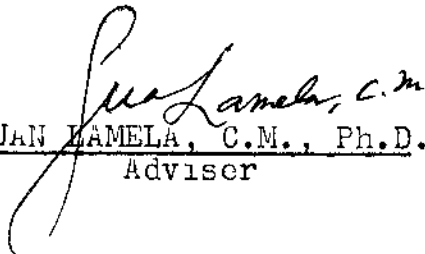
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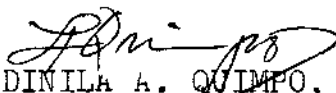
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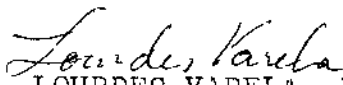
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Chapter 1

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF WILLIAM JAMES

This thesis seeks to formulate William James' theories of knowing and willing and to relate them to the present society--the New Society. Before discussing his theories, it is a necessity to know his life, as well as his main works. A knowledge of his life will give the reader an insight into his works as James would have them understood. This chapter is therefore divided into two parts: his life and his works.

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM JAMES

The life of William James, the philosopher, started on that day when Henry, Sr. brought Emerson upstairs to see and give his blessing to the newborn baby, a short time after William's birth on January 11, 1842. This incident showed how the James' family valued intellectual growth. The birthplace of William became a controvertial issue for many people claim that he is a New Englander, not a New Yorker. The fact is that he was born in New York but spent his manhood in New England. "Although he shone brilliantly in the best New England circles, in Boston and Cambridge, he remained an

Irishman among the Brahmins. His ancestors were Irish and Scottish, associated with New York and New Jersey".¹

Just as Henry, Sr. was all for religion but not for any special kind, he was also for education, but he was quite choosy as to the merits of the school. He had to transfer his children from one school to another. Their educational odysseys in 1843-44; 1855-58 and 1859-60 took them to England, France and Switzerland. The boys were enrolled in various schools and still privileged with private tutors. They had a rich "sensuous education"² and it was in one of their educational trips abroad that William James studied art with William Morris Hunt.

Henry James, Sr. had four sons and one daughter--Henry, Jr., the novelist; William James, the philosopher; Garth Wilkinson (Wilky), Robertson (Bob) and Alice. Among Henry James, Sr.'s sons, only Henry, Jr. was more noted than the rest. He enjoyed worldly fame as a novelist, short story writer and critic. He is widely known in this contemporary period as one among the greatest fiction writers. William, the philosopher, was also famous in his own field of study.

¹Bernard P. Brennan, William James (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 13.

²Ibid., p. 26.

The novelist, Henry James, Jr., and the philosopher, William James, were of different personalities. During their boyhood, William was of the extroverted type, while Henry, Jr. was a little bit of an introvert. Henry would constantly seek the company of his brother, William, but the latter sometimes got fed up and had to tell Henry, Jr. that he played "with boys who curse and swear".³ Professionally, they shared the same interest in man's conduct. William's interest was on the data concerning man in relation to psychology, ethics, and the theory of knowledge. On the other hand, Henry's interest was on the finest works of man and an understanding of the social structures and of the feelings of man--which were the main theme of his novels and stories.

Due to physical frailty, William was exempted from enlisting to fight in the Civil War.⁴ Instead he took up his scientific studies, with chemistry as his field of interest. After two years, his interest shifted to physiology. During his scientific studies in Harvard, he was influenced by the Louis Agassiz, a zoologist. James went with him to the Amazon. This scientific interest of James made him interested in study-

³Henry James, Jr., A Small Boy and Others (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), p. 234.

⁴Ralph Barton Perry, The Thought and Character of William James, Briefer Version (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1964), p. 63.

ing medicine. He finished his medical studies in Harvard Medical School and passed the examinations in 1809. However, he did not go into medical practice. "It is clear that the practice of medicine did not attract him".⁵ Instead, he continued studying and due to his failing health, had to stop for a year and a half. He had intermittent attacks of melancholia, "insomnia, digestive disorders, eye-troubles, weakness of the back and sometimes deep depression of spirits".⁶ While trying to recover his health, he travelled to Germany and studied there.

By 1872, he was well again and full of enthusiasm. He was appointed Instructor in Physiology at Harvard College. In 1875, he offered a graduate course entitled "The Relation Between Physiology and Psychology". He was moving rapidly toward specializing in psychology. In 1876, he organized a psychological laboratory; in 1887, his course on physiological psychology was transferred to the Department of Philosophy and was called "Psychology". His shifting of intent from medicine to psychology and philosophy was due to fatality, being a tenderfoot in the field of philosophy.

⁵Ibid., p. 72.

⁶Henry James, Jr. (ed.), Letters of William James, I, 1920, p. 84.

I originally studied medicine in order to be a physiologist, but I drifted into psychology and philosophy from a sort of fatality. I never had any philosophic instruction, the first lecture on psychology I ever heard being the first I ever gave.⁷

James also found "philosophy a cure for science and science a cure for philosophy".⁸ In 1878, he signed a contract to write the text on psychology which was published in 1890, as Principles of Psychology.

Another milestone in his life was his marriage to Alice H. Gibbens, in the summer of 1878. This marriage was said to be a "marriage in the rarest and fullest sense".⁹ The household of William James was a happy one. With his four boys and one girl, with his home within walking distance to his classes, with a solicitous wife, and with a country home at Chocorua, New Hampshire, William had nothing more to ask. He was truly "at home".

William James died on August 26, 1910 and philosophy and psychology lost a man of great importance. He died at Chocorua, New Hampshire, in his country home. Dead though he was, his influence remains in the thoughts, the emotions and the deeds of many individual men. It will grow as his viewpoints are verified and applied by various persons in their experience:

⁷Letter of August 16, 1902, published by A. Menard, Analysis and Critique of the Principles of Psychology, 1911, p. 5.

⁸Brennan, op. cit., p. 29. ⁹Perry, op. cit., p. 79.

WILLIAM JAMES' WORKS

To give the reader a deeper insight into the temperament of James --as a writer, lecturer and teacher; his works used by the writer in this thesis will be briefly discussed in this portion.

The first of James' major works is the Principles of Psychology,¹⁰ which appeared in 1890, when he was forty-eight years old. It is a work of highest importance, not only for James but for the history of psychology. It is a fruit of over twenty years of studying and writing.

The Principles of Psychology is successful in the sense that it is unusual for a book of science--it was widely read not only by psychologists and students, but by all sorts of people, often out of curiosity. Others acclaimed his Principles of Psychology in the sense that they could foresee some special application of psychology to their own problems. On the other hand, laboratory experimentalists and systematizers viewed it with some shade of disapproval¹¹ and contempt.

In this book, James promoted the method of introspection traditional in the British School and imported the results and technique of the experimental school from Germany.¹² Intros-

¹⁰William James, Principles of Psychology, 2 volumes (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1890).

¹¹Perry, op. cit., p. 197. ¹²Ibid.

pection, reflection, observation and experimentation were the methods used in science as well as in philosophy. The combination of these methods made James' psychology rather "new". This was quite a great innovation. The psychology James taught was nonetheless different from the philosophy of the soul, taking into account the senses and its associations, but devoting more attention to higher moral and logical processes. His teachings of physiological psychology at Harvard attracted considerable attention.

Some psychological doctrines James upheld in the Principles of Psychology are the following:

The first is his "stream of thought". This is James' most important insight. Consciousness or thought is sensibly continuous. The stream-like continuity of one's consciousness is made evident by its relational or transitive state. This view implies his rejection of "associationism" and signified a sharp break with tradition.¹³

Second among his doctrines is his "nativism". Nativism is a term which means a tendency to emphasize what is original rather than what is acquired.¹⁴ Influenced by Darwin, James credited the human mind with a liberal share of inborn traits and aptitudes. He believed in the diversity and fecundity of first experience.

¹³Ibid., p. 195.

¹⁴Ibid.

After the publication of his Principles of Psychology in 1890, two years after--in 1892--another book was published, entitled Psychology: Briefer Course.¹⁵ This is a short text-book and version of the Principles of Psychology. The brief version has only two-fifths of it being new and rewritten--the rest "scissors and paste".¹⁶ This became the most widely used English text in the subject.

James became an acting professor for half-term at Stanford University in 1906. In May 1907, he gave lectures in Lowell Institute, which were subsequently published as Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking.¹⁷ This was published in May 1907, in the same year of his retirement from teaching. With its publication, James became identified as the Champion of the new movement. His lectures on Pragmatism deals with the "value of ideas as independent of their origin, that it is a matter of their outcome as they are used in directing new observation and new experience".¹⁸ The pragmatic

¹⁵William James, Psychology: Briefer Course (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1913).

¹⁶Ibid., iii.

¹⁷William James, Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907).

¹⁸John Dewey, "An Empirical Survey of Empiricism," III, Studies in the History of Ideas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935), pp. 20-21.

doctrine defines the meaning of an idea as the sum of its practical consequences; James was drawing upon his own past when he wrote this book. This pragmatic doctrine was held by him for over thirty years.

As a sequel to Pragmatism, he wrote The Meaning of Truth.¹⁹ This book marks the definitive and final identification of "truth with the success of ideas".²⁰ This notion is applied not only to practical situations but also to theoretical ones showing that the latter are also practical.

It shows just how in such a situation the idea points to suitable terminus, how it leads to its object through intermediaries . . . and how its success may be interpreted in terms of safe arrival at its destination.²¹

In this period between July 1904 and February 1905, William James prepared and delivered lectures and wrote the "eight new philosophical articles" which were published in 1912 under the title of Essays in Radical Empiricism.²² The eight articles deal with the following themes: (1) the relation of cognition to its objects; (2) the role of concepts and percepts; (3) the general problem of relations; (4) the sense in which two minds can be said to have the same objects;

¹⁹William James, The Meaning of Truth. A Sequel to Pragmatism (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909).

²⁰Perry, op. cit., p. 299.

²¹Ibid.

²²William James, Essays in Radical Empiricism (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1943).

(5) the place of feeling in experience; (6) the relation of mind and body; (7) the question of causal activity and efficiency; and (8) the nature of truths. This book is a posthumous edition.

Chapter 2

RADICAL EMPIRICISM

To understand James, one needs more than just mere open-mindedness and mere intellectual acumen. It requires quite a degree of imagination to bring the reader into a world "where language conveys a set of values certainly other, and perhaps richer, than are implied by the ordinary use of the philosophical terms".¹

It is the purpose of this thesis to formulate William James' theories of knowing and willing and their relevance to the New Society. His theories will not be fully understood unless his philosophical doctrine, radical empiricism, will be discussed. A discussion of it will introduce the reader into James' philosophical temperament. Radical empiricism is the very foundation of his theories of knowing and willing. For him, one cannot always know and will things that cannot be actually lived through or experienced.²

¹Bernard P. Brennan, William James (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 66.

²It should be noted here that James' concept of experience implies **sensible** and mental experiences. "Object may be present to our senses or they may be present only to our thought. The more concrete objects of most men's religion . . . are known to them only in idea". (William James, The Varieties

Aside from radical empiricism, William James also formulated another doctrine--pragmatism. Pragmatism came earlier than the former, with the thought of making it a method of inquiry and a theory of truth. Radical empiricism, on the other hand, was formulated as a philosophical attitude. However, James never thought of his radical empiricism as a philosophical attitude only, but also as a particular doctrine. As a single doctrine, radical empiricism is related to pragmatism but is totally independent of it. One may even reject radical empiricism yet still be a pragmatist. James envisioned radical empiricism as a metaphysical doctrine--"a theory of the nature of reality--and proposed to make it the foundation of a system of metaphysics, but he did not live to carry out the object".³ James thought it necessary to call this doctrine radical empiricism to distinguish it from empiricism and to "emphasize its profoundly empiricist nature; its total marriage to experience in all aspects".⁴

of Religious Experience, Lecture III. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1964), p. 58. Yet the ideal object is not merely ideal for it produces real effects in this world), p. 389, VR.

³Lloyd Morris, William James, The Message of a Modern Mind (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), p. 45.

⁴Brennan, op. cit., p. 56.

By radical empiricism, James meant something more than mere empiricism. Empiricism is a school of thought which "lays stress upon the part, the element, the individual, and treats the whole as a collection and the universal as an abstraction".⁵ It is the antithesis of rationalism, which treats primarily the whole or the universal. As a philosophy, radical empiricism upholds that "the relations that connect experience must themselves be experienced relations, and any kind of relation experienced must be accounted as real as anything else in the system".⁶ For empiricism to be radical, it must not admit into its construction any element that is not experienced. It deals with the doctrine of monism as "an hypothesis, subject to verification and therefore to be asserted dogmatically".⁷ For such a doctrine to be empirical, it should take into consideration the verifiability through experience of conclusions concerning matters like hypotheses. It also attempts to penetrate into the meanings of terms like being, world, consciousness, body and truth as they are lived through originally in one's experience. The ordinary empiricism has always shown a negativistic attitude towards the connections and to place more emphasis on the disjunctions.

⁵ James, Essays in Radical Empiricism, p. 41.

⁶ Ibid., p. 42.

⁷ Brennan, op. cit., p. 45.

James' educational background gave him the right preparation for being the founder of Radical Empiricism. It prepared him for the hectic job of treating experience with complete understanding and respect. He was a consistent empiricist.

He claims that "we have to turn our face towards experience, towards facts".⁸ The "facts" include the conjunctions, as well as its disjunctions. He deals with actual experience and equates reality with experience. The following experiences are included as real: experience of the vague and incoherent as well as the clear and distinct; the so-called appearances as well as realities; the subjective as well as the objective; the emotional as well as the intellectual and the mystic.

Philosophers, in James' view, should not try to prove the reality of being beyond experience, since experience itself bears its own intelligibility found "in the data of concrete moments of consciousness and in the relationships of such data".⁹ To avoid ignorance of being, one should understand concrete moments of experience. This respect for experience and this listening to the consciousness of the present moment is the pivotal point of James' philosophy. The reality of things is not conceived in the light of old analogies but in the analogy

⁸William James, Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), p. 111.

⁹Brennan, op. cit., p. 58.

of moments of experience. "For an empiricism to be radical, it must admit the data of the present experience in their full completeness".¹⁰

As a radical empiricist, James arduously studies experience of various types, all needing creative and exact thinking and observation. His involvement with experience led him to dwell much on its meaning in his book, Principles of Psychology. In the last chapter of this book, he tried to verify "just how far the connections of things in the outward environment can account for our tendency to think of",¹¹ and to behave toward, things even though personally he has not encountered them at all.

To discuss experience in James' terminology is to take into account his idea of "pure experience". He claims that by discussing "pure experience" and by turning back to it, man is turning back also to life as it is actually lived through. "Pure experience" is the name he gave to the "immediate flux... of life which furnishes the material to our later reflection with its conceptual categories".¹² This is the basic stuff of which knowledge is based upon. However, only newborn babies or men in semi-coma from sleep, drugs, illnesses or blows can be said to possess such immediate flow of life. Such experience is pure in the sense that it is merely a "that, not yet a definite what".¹³ It is not yet defined, yet it is ever ready to be any

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., p. 59.

¹²James, Essays in Radical Empiricism, p. 93.

¹³Ibid., p. 13.

definite what. A that is an indefinite, ambiguous and vague "feeling" or "thought".¹⁴ In itself, it is potentially intentional or is potentially directed towards a terminating point. It is not yet defined, but is ready to be defined. Once this that is defined, directed to a specific object and is given meaning, it ceases to be a that and becomes a what. A what is already surrounded with a fringe of meanings and is related to these meanings.

In this flow of life, oneness and manyness float around, yet these oneness and manyness seem not to appear as such, they change every now and then. The phases of this flow overlap, yet can never be identified. James claims that experience is another term for "feeling" or for "sensation".¹⁵ This experience seems to be flowing with adjectives, nouns, prepositions and conjunctions. The term "pure" is only a relative term-- it is the proportional amount of unverbalyzed sensation which it still embodied".¹⁶ "The purity of pure experience means its original or pristine character--its priority to distinction; and in particular to the distinction between subject and object".¹⁷

"Pure experience" can be never be described as exclusively objective and subjective. It could, however, be spoken of as subjective and objective simultaneously. If this is so, then

¹⁴William James, The Writings of William James, Edited by John J. McDermott (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 137.

¹⁵James, Essays in Radical Empiricism, p. 94.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 278.

it could be easily inferred that "pure experience" is not just subjective or mental but also objective or physical, hence, in itself--neutral. It is "composed of units which are themselves neither the one nor the other, but neutral to the whole distinction".¹⁸ Thus, James says that the adjective "pure" prefixed to the word "experience" means to denote a form of being which is as yet neutral or ambiguous and prior still to the object-subject distinction.

This "pure experience" is the pivotal point of his doctrine of radical empiricism. James believed that despite oppositions to James' hypothesis of "pure experience", this hypothesis would be of much help in solving some important problems in philosophy. Radical empiricism serves as a bridge between the existing chasm of monism and dualism. Dualism distinguishes mind from body and also the knower from the known. Monism, on the other hand, asserts that mind is basic and matter is an unwarranted inference, or that matter is basic and mind is an unwarranted inference. Radical empiricism bridges the gap and thus seeks the truth of things in experience itself. James' claims that dualism has also that ease of expression and respect for the individuality of being. Monism also provides unity and does it in such a manner that the individuality of beings is still regarded. James links dualism

¹⁸ John Wild, The Radical Empiricism of William James (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1970), p. 355.

and monism with experience. "Experience" could be taken in the context of mental or physical experience, or both, or neither of the two--but simply as a "pure experience".

Where does the "pure experience" come from? This is just like asking where everything comes from. William James' answer states the "in-itself"-ness of "pure experience". It is "in-itself" in the sense that it is independent, "self-containing" and depends on nothing. So, even if a part of one's experience leans on or depends upon another part to make it what it is "in any one of several aspects in which it may be considered, experience as a whole is self-containing and leans on nothing".¹⁹

To summarize the whole chapter, radical empiricism was formulated by William James not just as a philosophical attitude only but also as a particular doctrine. As a philosophical attitude, it upholds that the relations that connect experiences must themselves be experienced relations, and any kind of relation experienced must be accounted as real as anything else in the system. His radical empiricism is different from the rest of the empiricism in the sense that it must not admit into its constructions any element that is not directly experienced. It takes into consideration the verifiability through experience of conclusions concerning matters like hypotheses. It also tries

¹⁹James, Essays in Radical Empiricism, p. 193.

to penetrate into the meanings of ideas like being, world, consciousness, body and truth as they are lived through originally in one's existence.

"Pure experience" is the pivotal point of his doctrine of radical empiricism. It is the immediate flux of life which furnishes the material to one's later reflection with its conceptual categories. This is the basic stuff on which knowledge is based. Only newborn babies or men in semi-coma from sleep, drugs, illnesses or blows can be said to possess such immediate flow of life. Experience is "pure" in the sense that it is not yet defined--it is still indefinite, ambiguous and vague. It is "pure" in the sense that it is simply a that. Once it is defined and realized to an object, the that becomes a what. A what is already surrounded with fringe of meanings and is related to its meanings.

James believed that despite oppositions to James' hypothesis of "pure experience", this hypothesis would be of much help in solving some important problems in philosophy. Radical empiricism serves as a bridge between the existing chasm of monism and dualism--hence, seeks things within experience itself.

According to James, to ask where pure experience originates is just like asking where everything comes from. It is independent "in-itself", is "self-containing" and leans on nothing for its existence.

Chapter 3

WILLIAM JAMES' THEORY OF KNOWING

The previous chapter discussed James' radical empiricism. For an empiricism to be radical, it must take into account only those elements that can be experienced. Conclusions, before they are admitted as true, must be verified through experience. To discuss his radical empiricism is to discuss his idea of "pure experience". Reality is constituted of one primordial stuff called "pure experience". The essential nature of "pure experience" is its rich, varied and dynamic field of "givenness"--its being there. "It is an originally chaotic manifold of non-perceptual experience".¹ "Pure experience" is embedded with conjunctive and disjunctive relations and these relations are given full justice in radical empiricism. Cognitive relations are conjunctive and disjunctive relations--subject and object, knower and known are related to each other.² They are not as traditional philosophy claims, discontinuous entities.

¹ Keith Raymond David, Ph.D., "Percept and Concept of William James," Dissertation Abstracts International, 30, No. 10-12 (April-June, 1970), p. 4488-A.

² William James, The Meaning of Truth. A Sequel to Pragmatism (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909), p. 102.

This chapter is devoted to the discussion of James' theory of knowing with his radical empiricism at its background. Knowing is a precondition for the activity of willing. James' two kinds of knowledge--knowledge of or knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about, are also discussed with the aim at finding when an idea is said to be true. His idea on truth is however, based on his other doctrine, pragmatism.

"Cognition is a function of consciousness",³ of one's experience. Cognition means knowledge. It means knowledge descriptive of a reality. Such knowledge is an idea or a thought or a "feeling"--this latter term being used by James as a synonym for any state of consciousness.⁴

In the cognitive process of one's mind, there will at least be three fundamental items: the idea, the external reality, and a relation between them. If the idea is to know anything more than itself, it must somehow transcend itself, for an idea to be cognitive, "it must be self-transcendent . . . to create a reality outside of it to correspond to its intrinsic quality".⁵ By means of relations, one could get to the reality. If, upon doing so, one finds the reality to be

³Ibid., p. 1.

⁴William James, Essays in Radical Empiricism (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1943), p. 94.

⁵Ibid., p. 6.

like himself in some way, then, such is said to be an idea about the reality--to resemble the reality.⁶ "Knowing or cognition is a way of getting into fruitful relations with reality, whether copying be one of the relations or not".⁷

James' process of knowledge branches out into two kinds: knowledge of or knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about.⁸ This distinction between the two kinds of knowledge was borrowed by James from John Grote and was used as early as 1884.⁹

KNOWLEDGE OF OR KNOWLEDGE BY ACQUAINTANCE

"Knowledge by acquaintance" or "knowledge of" is that kind of knowledge gained through direct contact with tangible or sensible objects. It may be called the first-hand experience of things around man. "It is the notion of knowledge as acquaintance or familiarity with what is known . . . , it is the kind of knowledge which we have of a thing by the presentation to the senses".¹⁰ Such kind of knowledge is had through sensation, perception, memory and imagination.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., pp. 80-81.

⁸William James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. 1 (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1890), p. 221.

⁹James, The Meaning of Truth, p. 11.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 11-12.

Sensations are the first thing that come in contact with man's consciousness.¹¹ These are the "immediate results upon consciousness of nerve currents as they enter the brain"¹² before conceptions are formed about them. They differ from perception in the extreme simplicity of its objects or content. This simple object is sensibly homogeneous and sensation's main function is the mere acquaintance with this homogeneous fact. Sensation, in general, must not be mistaken to mean pure sensation. In adult life, sensation is always accompanied by perception, memory and imagination. "Pure sensations can only be realized in the earliest days of life and they are impossible to adults with memories and stores of associations acquired".¹³

Sensations can never occur without perception. They occur in adult life only as a function related to perception. Perception in turn cannot take place apart from sensations. It is the "consciousness of particular material things present to sense".¹⁴ It is different from sensations in the sense that it is the "consciousness of farther facts associated with the objects of the sensations".¹⁵ It is about the deeper consciousness of things.

¹¹William James, Psychology: Briefer Course (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1913), p. 12

¹²Ibid.

¹³William James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1890), p. 426.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 76.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 77.

One becomes aware or conscious of things or objects around him by naming, classifying, comparing and relating them. Sensations and perceptions, combined with memory and imagination, constitute one's first kind of knowledge, "knowledge by acquaintance". It is the kind of knowledge which lies within experience. The presence of the objects before the subject while sensing and perceiving makes this different from conception or "knowledge about" a thing.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT

"Knowledge about" an object is more complex than "knowledge by acquaintance". Concepts give rise to such kind of knowledge. These are taken from or abstracted from experience or knowledge by acquaintance. They are pure conventions: these derive their meaning from their power, through associations and agreement, to suggest experience. Percepts, in turn, give rise to knowledge by acquaintance and the concepts are derived from them.

"'Knowledge about' is knowledge of its relations".¹⁶ James calls these relations formed around an object "fringe". He says, "let us call the consciousness of this halo of relations around the image by the name of psychic overtone or fringe".¹⁷ These relations around an idea or the words

¹⁶James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. I, p. 259.

¹⁷James, Psychology: Briefer Course, p. 106.

related to an idea constitute the transitive part while the idea itself James calls the substantive part. These transitive parts or relations are also felt--just as sensations and perceptions are felt. This capacity of "feeling" or of "experiencing" these relations makes James' empiricism radical.

The stream of experience is an alternation of "flights" and "perchings". The resting places or perchings are the substantive part of the mind, while the flights are the transitive part.¹⁸ The resting places or perchings are the ideas themselves while the flights are the words related to or surrounding an idea. The resting places are usually occupied by sensorial imagination of some sort, whose peculiarity is that they can be held before the mind for an indefinite time and contemplated without changing; the ~~places~~ of flights are filled with thoughts of relations, static or dynamic.

Every object in this world is surrounded by a "halo of fringes which gives it an original place and meaning".¹⁹ The "fringes" or the transitive part which surrounds an idea are the object's or idea's significance or value. These "psychic overtones" cannot be separated from the object or the idea. ~~They are what they mean.~~

¹⁸Ibid., p. 160.

¹⁹James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. I, p. 255.

These "psychic overtones" are also constantly arranging and rearranging themselves in response to constant change. When the rate of change is slow, this is a condition felt as a rest which is identifiable with a static thing.

To discuss relations between substantive part and transitive part is also to take into account two kinds of relations: relation of transition and relation of tendency.²⁰

The relation of transition is referred to by prepositions, adverbial phrases and inflections of the voice. The relations are primordially known by direct acquaintance or feeling. "So surely as relations between objects exist, and more surely, do feelings exist to which these relations are known".²¹ They are numberless and exist in different shades. Many of these feelings of meaning are taken up into one's daily parlance and some of them express its basic syntactic structure.

The patterns of meaning are basically dynamic, not static. There is the tendency to "interpret phrases like nothing but, either one or the other, a is b but, although x is true, nevertheless, as fixed logical forms under which an indefinite number of specific instances may be subsumed.²² James never denies this tendency to interpret, but he is more interested in examining these phrases while the person is

²⁰ Ibid., p. 253.

²¹ Ibid., p. 245.

²² Ibid., p. 253.

actually speaking, not after thought has been spoken. He claims that these phrases are "signs of direction" in one's living and moving thought. These phrases have their "sense of direction from which an impression is about to come".²³ They do not call up fixed images at which one may refer to as long as one likes. Neither are they changeless relational forms. These phrases are bare images of logical movement with psychic transitions, always on the flight--never glimpsed except in their flight from one perching place to another. They always "lead one set of images to another".²⁴ These relations of transition start from a definite terminus a quo and proceed to another definite terminus ad quem, just like a moving ball.

The other kind of relation is the relation of tendency. This starts from something specific, like a specific sound, or vision, of some kind. It usually begins with an intentional attitude as the terminus a quo, but has a vague terminus ad quem. Take the terms wait! hark! look!²⁵ They refer to no definite object before the mind or the senses. They seem to refer to a mere absence. Analyzing them, however, brings one to the conclusion that one's "consciousness is thrown into three quite different attitudes of expectancy".²⁶ Each word conveys a direction from which an impression is about to come

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ James, Psychology: Briefer Course, p. 163.

²⁶ James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. I, p. 251.

although no positive object is present. Nevertheless, they have their own "felt meanings". Each word conveys a positive "feeling of direction" towards a person, a time, and a place. The "relation of tendency" proves the intentional structure of consciousness.

James holds that these "relations of transition" and "relation of tendency" play important roles in one's cognitive process. These relations which surround one's ideas are constantly felt in the fringe. Every word and every specific object swims or floats in a halo of fringes that stretch out from it to the limits of its world. With regards to "knowledge by acquaintance" and "knowledge about", "our feeling for a thing, our direct acquaintance with it is limited to the bare impression it makes together with a dim awareness in the penumbral, nascent way of a fringe of unarticulated affinities about it".²⁷ These affinities must first be felt and, later on, be understood as relations to a certain idea. This articulation of relations, which is called the meaning of a thing, is proved only by the conceptual analysis which James called knowledge about. James says that knowledge about a thing is knowledge of its relations. Both knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about are required for one's cognitive process or knowing.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 259.

As James says, "direct acquaintance and conceptual knowledge are thus complementary of each other, each remedies the other's defects".²⁸ Both kinds of knowledge are indispensable. James claims that "knowledge by acquaintance is completer and more conclusive than knowledge about, the latter being a substitute or adjunct which is required in order to overcome the limited range of the former".²⁹ Knowledge by acquaintance, taken as sensing or feeling of any given subject matter, speaks the last word on knowledge.

The two kinds of knowledge are closely related to each other; they are so interdependent that one cannot be clearly understood without being related to the other.

Conceptual systems which neither began nor left off in sensations would be like bridges without piers. Systems about fact must plunge themselves into sensations as bridges plunge their piers into the rocks.³⁰

The foregoing quote stresses that without sensations as their basic roots, concepts would be just like bridges without piers or posts.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 251.

²⁹ Ralph Barton Perry, In the Spirit of William James (USA: Indiana University Press, 1958), p. 45.

³⁰ James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. I, p. 7.

If one wants to know more about the reality of a percept, he has to resort to conceptual analysis. On the other hand, if one wants to verify the reality of a concept, one simply refers to direct acquaintance or experience. In fact, conceptual meanings will be understood fairly well only when they are verified through experience.

Knowing or cognition is both "knowledge by acquaintance" and "knowledge about". If it is merely "knowledge by acquaintance", if it is only sensory images, if such images are not interpreted by a concept, then these images are meaningless. According to Edward Carter Moore, "they are like motion pictures being shown in an empty theatre".³¹ It would be tantamount to "milking a he-goat".³² Sense experience must be interpreted by a concept in order to "mean" anything. Percepts are "dumb"³³ if not interpreted by concepts.

On the other hand, to have "knowledge about" or to have purely concepts only is just like a person who is told of things which he has never experienced before. One can not know what

³¹ Edward Carter Moore, William James (New York: Washington Square Press, Inc., 1905), p. 116.

³² James, The Meaning of Truth, p. 12.

³³ Ibid., p. 39.

a toothache is if he never had one. "Somebody must have a toothache, to make human knowledge of these matters real".³⁴

PRAGMATIC THEORY OF TRUTH

James' theory of knowing is not complete unless his idea of truth is discussed. To discuss his idea of truth is to discuss his doctrine of pragmatism. Pragmatism or pragmatic method, in the first place, is "primarily a method of settling metaphysical disputes that might be interminable".³⁵ A pragmatist tries to interpret each dispute or problem "by tracing its respective practical consequences".³⁶ James' method of settling such metaphysical arguments is by showing some practical difference. If no practical difference can be traced, then such disputes are meaningless and untrue.

A thought is not meaningful if it does not produce any practical conduct. "The meaning of an idea is that imaginative reconstruction of past experience which is projected as a guide for future actions".³⁷ A pragmatist is one who upholds that "our beliefs are really rules for action".³⁸ Action arises from belief, for it is the test of the reality of belief. He

³⁴ James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. I, p. 456.

³⁵ William James, Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), p. 42.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 81.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 43.

turns his back away from "abstraction, from verbal solutions, and pretended absolutes and origins".³⁹ He gives emphasis to "concreteness and adequacy, towards facts, towards action and towards power".⁴⁰

James' pragmatism is not only a method but also a genetic theory of what is meant by truth.⁴¹ "He claims that ideas (which themselves are but part of experience) become true just in so far as they help man get into satisfactory relations with other parts of our experience".⁴²

A pragmatist asks questions such as the following: "Grant an idea or belief to be true, what concrete difference will its being true make in any one's actual life?"⁴³ How will the truth be realized? What different experiences will one get if such belief were false? What, then, is the truth's cash-value in experiential terms? He answers his questions by stating that "true ideas are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate, and verify. False ideas are those that we cannot".⁴⁴ This is what one calls the practical difference.

Ideas are true subjectively. The truth of an idea is not an inherent property of the idea. "Truth happens to an idea. It becomes true, is made true by events".⁴⁵ Hence, if

³⁹Ibid., p. 45.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 53.

⁴²Ibid., p. 49.

⁴³Ibid., p. 133.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

in these events, a certain truth is verified, used, assimilated, and validated, then such action is said to be true. The events and the person concerned in these events make something true. Truth is only one's subjective relation to realities. According to James, "whatever things have intimate and continuous connection with my life are things of whose reality I cannot doubt".⁴⁶

The truth of an idea is suitable or proper for one's way of thinking, just as the right is suitable in one's way of behaving. True ideas lead man into "useful verbal and conceptual quarters as well as directly up to useful sensible termini. They lead to consistency, stability and flowing human intercourse".⁴⁷ "Ideas are invaluable instruments of action".⁴⁸ Hence, one should always strive after true ideas, for "the pursuit of such ideas is a primary duty".⁴⁹

It is advantageous to have a general stock of extra truths, of ideas of merely possible situations. "We store such extra truths away in our memories, and with the overflow we fill our books of reference".⁵⁰ To close this discussion, it should be noted that for James, "an idea is useful because it is true and vice-versa, it is true because it is useful, true ideas get fulfilled and can be verified".⁵¹

⁴⁶ James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 298.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 141. ⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 134. ⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 135. ⁵¹ Ibid.

To summarize, James' radical empiricism influences much his theory of knowing. Cognitive relations are conjunctive relations and these relations are verified through experience. Knowing, for James, is of two kinds: knowledge of or knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about. Knowledge of or knowledge by acquaintance is gained through direct experience of things around man. Percepts or images are the result of this direct experience. These, however, are the basic source of concepts. Concepts are had through knowledge about. Knowledge about is the knowledge of its relations. There are two kinds of relations: relation of tendency and relation of transition. The difference lies in the terminus ad quem. Both of them start from a definite terminus a quo but the former terminates in a vague and indefinite terminus ad quem, unlike the latter which ends in a definite terminus ad quem.

"Knowing by acquaintance" and "knowledge about" are complementary of each other, each remedies the other's defects. Both kinds of knowledge are indispensable and closely related to each other; they are so interdependent that one cannot be clearly understood without being related to the other.

James calls these relations formed around an object "fringe". Every object in this world is surrounded by a halo of fringe which gives it an original place and meaning. The "fringe" or the transitive part which surrounds an idea is the object's significance or value. These "psychic overtones" cannot be separated from the object or the idea.

James' pragmatic idea of truth complete his theory of knowing. An idea is true if it can be validated, assimilated, corroborated and verified. True ideas must lead man to action. Ideas are true subjectively. Truth is not an inherent property of an idea. A thing is made true by events surrounding it. Man makes ideas true, by relating them to his life. To relate it to one's life is a way of verifying it. Unless an idea has any practical relationship to man, then that idea is meaningless and false.

Chapter 4

WILLIAM JAMES' THEORY OF WILLING

William James' method of accumulating concepts or ideas in the mind is radical empiricistic while his method of indicating the truth of an idea is pragmatic. His radical empiricism and his pragmatism helped him in formulating not only his theory of knowing but also his theory of willing.

James claims that true ideas can lead man to right action.¹ Hence, one needs in this life a supply of ideas in his mind. This is the precondition for the process of willing or deliberation. Man needs a "supply of ideas of the various movements that are possible, left in the memory by experience of their involuntary performance".² "Ideas are invaluable instruments of action".³ Ideas formulate anticipatory images of the consequences of a certain movement and these ideas are accumulated in one's mind through the process of knowing.

¹William James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1890), p. 141.

²Ibid., p. 488.

³Ibid., p. 134.

To clearly and deeply understand James' theory of willing, it seems necessary to discuss first his views on the kinds of will, the five types of decision, "effort of attention" and the radical dimension of belief. Hence, this chapter will be divided into the following sections: (a) kinds of will; (b) five types of decision; (c) "effort of attention"; (d) radical dimension of beliefs; and (e) William James' theory of willing.

KINDS OF WILL

Willing is an activity of the will which can be either healthy or unhealthy. However, the activity varies in each kind of will. A will is healthy if "there is a certain normal ratio in the impulsive power of different sorts of motive".⁴ By normal ratio, the impulsive idea and the inhibitory idea do not conflict in the mind so that the corresponding motor consequences will follow the impulsive ideas neither too slowly nor too rapidly. Such kind of will, whenever it makes decisions, is always accompanied by an element of "effort".⁵ The "sphere of effort" is necessary "whenever non-instinctive motives to behavior are to rule the day".⁶ A healthy will

⁴Ibid., p. 536.

⁵Ibid., p. 562. (This volitional effort must be carefully distinguished from the muscular effort with which it is usually confused. The latter consists of all those peripheral feelings to which a muscular "exertion" may give rise.)

⁶Ibid., p. 536.

entails a certain amount of complication in the process of deliberation before one pronounces the fiat or mental consent. Each idea, upon awakening its own impulse, must arouse other ideas with their respective impulses, and the action follows. There should be a sort of preliminary survey of the field and a vision of which course is best before the mental consent comes. When one's will is healthy, "the vision must be right, and the action must obey the vision's lead".⁷ The vision is the "terminus of the psychological process in volition, the point to which our will is directly applied".⁸

Whenever the normal ratio is absent, it is then said that one's will is unhealthy. There are two kinds of unhealthy will--the precipitate will and the perverted will.⁹ A will is said to be precipitate if the action follows too rapidly, giving no time for antagonistic ideas to occur. On the other hand, a will is perverted if the ratio which the impulsive and inhibitive ideas bear to each other is distorted. Such a perversity appears when the impulsive idea is strong while the inhibitive idea is too weak; or when the impulsive idea is too weak while the restraining idea is too strong. In the former case the will is called explosive and in the latter it is called obstructed will.¹⁰

⁷Ibid., pp. 536-537. ⁸Ibid., p. 537.

⁹William James, Psychology: Briefer Course (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1913), p. 436.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 437-441.

An explosive will manifests itself in temperamental and impulsive people. Such kind of people perform activities on impulse. In such case, the impulsive idea is so strong that the antagonistic idea can never out-balance its urgency. Just the mere thought of an act discharges at once the neutral activities connected to such idea, thus making an action follow. The preliminary survey of the consequences is absent. There is no time for deliberation. One cannot think anymore as to what is best for him. Inhibitions have no time to arrive to the offering. The person says and does whatever pops into his head without hesitation.

The other kind of perverted will is the obstructed will. Obstructed will manifests itself in the inability to rally the attention of the mind to an object. Persons with obstructed will are not able to will or to act. They cannot change their posture or speech or execute the simplest command. It seems as if their "minds are cramped in a fixed emotion of fear or helplessness, their ideas confined to the one thought that for them life is impossible".¹¹ The antagonistic idea is stronger than the arousal idea, causing a "temporary paralysis" of action. The person with obstructed will simply gapes or stares at an object and seems to be

¹¹William James, Talks to Teachers on Psychology and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals (New York: Holt and Co., 1899), p. 87.

dominated by the presence of the object or the idea in his mind. He does not know what to do with such a situation before him.

FIVE TYPES OF DECISION

Deliberation or decision-making starts when there are two or more objects before the mind. These objects in the mind are related to each other in antagonistic or in favorable manners. Since an idea by itself would prompt a movement while another will try to prevent its taking place, there results a feeling of inward unrest known as indecision. Having these ideas or objects before one's attention is already deliberation or decision-making.

There are five types of decision. The first four types are not the ideal ones while the fifth one is the authentic type.

The first kind is called the reasonable type. In this case, the arguments for or against a certain course gradually settle by themselves in the mind and end by leaving a clear balance in favor of one alternative, and this alternative is adapted without any effort or constraint. Before "rational balancing of the books (alternatives or choices) is reached, there is a calm feeling that the evidence is not yet in"¹² and this state keeps the action in abeyance.

¹²James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 531.

However, the day comes when one wakes up with the feeling that one sees the thing rightly, that no other new ideas will make the subject matters more correct and that the matter is settled that very moment. In this easy change from doubt to assurance, the individual is passive and the "reasons" which helped him decide appear to flow in from the nature of things, and the will has nothing to do with the decision-making. The individual feels free from coercion. The decision is reached by referring the case to a class or a set of rules or standard. This set of rules consists of conceptions with its ready-made motor consequences. "A great part of every deliberation consists in the turning over of all the possible modes of conceiving the doing or not doing of the act in point".¹³ Once a conception is reached by taking it from the set of rules, the state of doubt is thus consummated. A person who has to make many decisions a day has a set of heads of classification ready at hand and from this set he just chooses one which he knows is right. Thus, "the great thing is the quest for the right conception".¹⁴

If the decision made by a reasonable man goes wrong, then it is not his fault nor is he to be blamed but the fault lies in the inauthenticity of his set of classifications. This set of classifications is constantly applied to all occasions. A "reasonable" man, therefore, is "one who has

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

a store of stable and worthy ends, and who does not decide about an action till he has calmly ascertained"¹⁵ that such is useful or detrimental to any of the conceptions in his set of rules.

In the next two types of decision, the final "fiat" or mental consent happens even before the evidence is all in. Both seem a case of a good but there is no "umpire" who chooses which good should yield its place to the other. The individual in these two types of decision grows so tired of the long wait and hesitation that even a bad decision is better than no decision at all. In these instances, often the case is that the decision is made because of some accidental circumstances. Because of these circumstances, the indecision is solved and the individual as a result becomes committed to that decision, although another decision might have been reached had another set of accidental circumstances tipped the balance to the other side.¹⁶

In the second type of decision, the individual's feeling is that of allowing himself to drift with certain circumstances in a direction accidentally determined from without, with the belief that with the choice made, things would eventually turn out right.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 532.

¹⁶Ibid.

However, in the third type of decision, the determination seems equally accidental, but it comes from within, not from without. "It often happens, when the absence of imperative principle is perplexing and suspense distracting that we find ourselves acting automatically"¹⁷ as an spontaneous discharge of the nerves. This sense of motion after the state of indecision is so exciting to the individual that he eagerly "throws himself into it".¹⁸ This frequently happens in persons of emotional nature and "unstable or vacillating character".¹⁹ Such persons make decisions which could be catastrophic that make them repent afterwards.

The fourth type of decision often ends deliberation as spontaneously as the third form does. The decision is made as a consequence of some outer experience or some unexplicable inward charge, "we suddenly pass from the easy and careless to the sober and strenuous mood",²⁰ There is a sudden change of the whole scale of values of man's motives and impulses. The possible agents causing this sudden change are objects of grief and fear. When one of these agents affects man, all "light fantastic" ideas lose their motive power and only the serious and important ones find their place multiplied. The trivial

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 533.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

projects are suddenly abandoned and an instant practical acceptance of the more serious and earnest alternative. The individual suddenly rises to another level and deliberation comes to an end.

Finally, the fifth type of decision is the most authentic form in the sense that there is a "feeling that the evidence is all in and that reason has balanced the books, may be either present or absent".²¹ In this form of decision, there is the feeling that man himself, through his own wilful will, made the decision and it is really his decision. "Subjectively and phenomenally, the feeling of effort, absent from the former decisions, accompanies this form of decision-making".²²

Just like the other types, all the positive ways of conceiving the doing or not doing are deliberated in the mind. Through man's reason, he balances the alternatives. However, something more is necessary. He has to believe in the evidence. This is what James meant by "the slow dead heave of the will".²³ This is accompanied by a feeling of effort of attention.

There are moments when both possibilities are of equal significance. The persons, in the other types of decisions, would only wait for something to happen. This "something" may be an external force flowing from the object itself or flowing

²¹Ibid., p. 534.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

from the person himself--a change of mood, for instance. However, in this last type, the person does not wait for that something to happen. He makes it happen by deciding for himself. What makes the balance tip to one side is the presence of the element of belief. Belief in the alternative is aided by the attention focussed on the object.

To believe in an idea entails risks of failure. Man takes the risks of being wrong. As Morris puts it, "James taught that a man must take his part, believing something, acting in behalf of his belief, incurring the risk of being wrong".²⁴ The test of belief is one's willingness to act, despite the risk of failure. At any rate, "we have the right to believe at our risk any hypothesis that is live enough to tempt our will".²⁵

The element of belief moves one's consciousness to one direction rather than another. "Our beliefs are really rules for action".²⁶ This element is concerned with this rather than that. Belief is commitment and implied devotion to that which was chosen. "It is only by recognizing the partiality

²⁴Lloy Morris, William James, The Message of a Modern Mind (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), p. 91.

²⁵William James, The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1899), p. 29.

²⁶James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 134.

of belief, that we find a place for pluralism and freedom in the world".²⁷

Aside from the element of belief, there is another point which makes this type of decision different from the rest. While focussing his attention on the choice just made, he does not totally discard the other antagonistic ideas. He is aware of what he has chosen and what he has just left out are held also in the fringe of his consciousness.

The choice comes out after the deliberation. It is always subjective or relative--based more on personal feelings. As James puts it:

Our passional nature not only lawfully may, but must decide on option between propositions, whenever it is a genuine option that cannot by its nature be decided on intellectual grounds.²⁸

However, this does not mean that man has to denounce totally his cognitive powers. Reason aids man in weighing the evidence, but in making the decision--reason works with passion. "This union of reason with passion is what James means by 'heart', reason of the heart, and moral conviction".²⁹

²⁷ John Wild, The Radical Empiricism of William James (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1970), p. 47.

²⁸ James, *The Will to Believe* . . . , p. 11.

²⁹ Wild, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

EFFORT OF ATTENTION

After choosing an idea, that is, deciding among the many possibilities, one has arrived at the point of saying that the issue of willing is in the manner of attending to a difficult object and of holding it fast before the mind. This manner of attending or consenting to the presence of an idea in the mind is the "fiat" or the mental consent. The attention bestowed on the object in the mind may ensure its immediate motor consequences. To let the ideas prevail stably in the mind, one needs "effort of attention". This is an essential phenomenon of willing. "Will is the relation between the mind and its ideas".³⁰ Ideas are fleeting and elusive, hence, they have to be held on fast. As was previously stated, the effort meant here is not a muscular one, rather, it is something mental.³¹ Aside from this effort, attention is focussed by interest, imagination, association and belief.

Things which are interesting in themselves need less "effort of attention". However, with regard to things which give man a feeling of repugnance, more effort of attention is needed. The attention should be controlled by "effort" and this effort "should be disciplined to enable the mind to

³⁰James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 599.

³¹Supra, p. 40, footnote 5.

pay attention to unattractive objects still on the fringes of consciousness, and therefore, still vague and confused".³²

One also has to associate this unattractive thing to something which is more alluring and one does this by imagination and association.

How is it that an unattractive object, being associated with an attractive object, becomes so attractive, too? It is through the process of association. The interesting portion of the attractive object penetrates into the unattractive part of the repulsive one, thus making the latter interesting and attractive.

Any object not interesting in itself may become interesting through becoming associated with an object in which an interest already exists. The two associated objects grow, as it were, together: the interesting portion sheds its quality over the whole: and thus things not interesting in their own right borrow an interest which, becomes real and as strong as that of any natively interesting thing.³³

Hence, there is the so-called derived interest. This makes the process of willing voluntary, and the real importance of the process of making an unattractive object interesting through association is in such situations. "The essential

³²Wild, op. cit., p. 305.

³³James, Talks to Teachers . . . , p. 47.

achievement of the will when it is most voluntary is to attend to a difficult object and hold it fast before the mind".³⁴

Attention does not produce any concept. The concept must already be there in the mind before attention is focussed. It merely fixes and retains the ideas before the intellect. Such ideas are also brought into the fringe of consciousness with the help of the ordinary laws of association.

Attention creates no idea, an idea must already be there before we can attend to it. Attention only fixes and retains what the ordinary laws of association bring "before the footlights" of consciousness. The associates which bring them also fixes them by the intellect which they lead.³⁵

This phenomenon of "effort" has ethical importance. This effort, being a mental one, comes from man himself, being aware of his action, as well as his activities. This becomes the gauge for the worth of man. If with his effort, he can change some of his vices, then one can say, "He is a worthy man". He does not have to suppress his desires, but may acknowledge them, while focussing his attention on the chosen alternative. Willing, being deliberate, depends on man's effort. Day in and day out, man makes decisions and consents to them. If he makes the right decisions, then he performs

³⁴James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 561.

³⁵William James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. I (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1890), p. 450.

the right action. Hence, man's moral life depends on his effort. "He who can make none is a shadow, he who can make much is a hero".³⁶ This effort "by which he succeeds in keeping the right name (or concept) unwaveringly present to his mind proves to be his saving moral act".³⁷

RADICAL DIMENSION OF BELIEF

In the process of willing, an authentic form of decision does not only entail "effort of attention" but also the presence of "belief". One has to believe in the alternative he has just chosen.

"Belief is the willingness to act". James claims that the deadness and liveness of an hypothesis are not intrinsic properties. A hypothesis is alive if in the mind it is possible. This maximum liveness in an hypothesis is willingness to act irrevocably.

Belief comes from man's passional nature. "It is a sort of feeling more allied to the emotions than to anything else".³⁹ It is a "kind of creative contribution of something instead of a reason which does a reason's work".⁴⁰ This subjectivity of belief makes the decision really belong to the one making the decisions.

³⁶James, Psychology: Briefer Course, p. 458.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 453-454. ³⁸Morris, op. cit., p. 23.

³⁹James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 283.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 534.

One should not believe in any alternative if the evidence is still incomplete. To believe in anything upon insufficient evidence is always wrong. To believe in a questionable statement just for private pleasure is irreligious. Such kind of pleasure is a stolen one. It is stolen in the sense that it is done "in defiance of our duty to mankind--the duty to guard ourselves from insufficient evidence".⁴¹

For James, belief, judgment, choice and will are closely related to each other. One can hardly tell where they really differ. Belief seems to be the foundation of all intentional relations.

Belief resembles what is known in volition as consent. Consent is recognized to be a manifestation of man's active nature. It could be described as "willingness or the turning of our disposition"⁴² towards something. Consent and belief are characteristically similar in the sense that there is a "cessation of theoretic agitation"⁴³ in both cases, through the prevalence of an idea which is inwardly stable, and fills the mind solidly to the exclusion of contradictory ideas. Consent is another term for choice and it is in turn related to belief.

⁴¹ James, The Will to Believe . . . , p. 8.

⁴² James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 283.

⁴³ Ibid.

Belief is also closely related with judgment. The common meaning of judgment is that it "consists in the combination of ideas by a copula into a proposition, which may be of various sorts, as affirmative, negative, hypothetical, etc. . ."⁴⁴ Judgment lies in the answer of questions such as "Is it a real object?" and "Is this a true proposition or not?" The pronouncement of the judgment is in the "Yes" or "No". James calls the "psychic act of answering "Yes" to a question of truth and reality, belief".⁴⁵ He rejected Brentano's calling it a judgment. Belief is the criterion for the reality of objects. "Any object which remains uncontradicted is believed and posited as absolute reality".⁴⁶

"Beliefs are convertible into judgments".⁴⁷ To believe in something is to be committed to it and to judge also involves being committed to the object judged as true and good for an individual. Just as belief is a criterion for the reality, judgment is the act whereby the individual professes his belief in something. He judges something by committing himself to it and therefore, believing in it. James states that "the warrant for calling (judging) anything real is the faith (belief) of the present critic or inquirer".⁴⁸

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 286. ⁴⁵Ibid., p. 287. ⁴⁶Ibid., p. 288.

⁴⁷Perry, op. cit., pp. 175-176.

⁴⁸James, Pragmatism . . . , p. 207.

Belief and will, on the other hand, are related also to each other. The former is characterized by the prevalence of an idea which fills the mind solidly to the exclusion of contradictory ideas; while the latter "consists in nothing but a manner of attending to certain objects, or consenting to their stable presence before the mind".⁴⁹ They are two words expressing similar phenomena. The only point where they differ is in their objects. The objects of the will are those whose existence depends on one's thought while the objects of belief are those which do not change according to how one thinks regarding them. However, this difference is immaterial. What is more important is that in both cases, the mind looks at the object and consents to its existence. Both cases consent to the presence of an idea and may satisfy the problem of reality. "Will and belief, in short, meaning a certain relation between objects and the self, are two names for one and the same psychological phenomenon".⁵⁰

Lastly, just as the will needs "effort of attention" to keep the idea stable in the mind, many beliefs also entail "effort of attention" to keep the idea from being dislodged by contradictory ideas.

⁴⁹James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 320.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 321.

Attention is closely associated to will, and will is related to belief. Through the "Principle of Reciprocal Identity",⁵¹ one can say then that "belief and attention are the same fact".⁵² One attends to objects which appeal to him, at the same time, believing in their reality. "Attention is a motor reaction, and we are so made that sensations force attention from us".⁵³ "Our own activity of attention will thus determine what we are to know and what we are to believe".⁵⁴

Can one's belief move man to action? The answer is in the affirmative. Belief gives a sense of importance and weight to an idea. It also influences one's passions and thus, makes him perform actions. It serves as the governing principle for action.

The will, on the other hand, can also lead man to some results or acts in connection with the object. Belief can help man form active connections with the objects. What one needs is simply to act as if the questionable idea were real and keep on performing it were real and it will just grow into such a connection with one's life that it will become real.⁵⁵

⁵¹This states that two things, identical to one common thing, are identical to each other.

⁵²James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 322.

⁵³Ibid. ⁵⁴Ibid., p. 316.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 321.

JAMES' THEORY OF WILLING

"The will's work is in most cases practically ended when the bare presence to our thought of the naturally unwelcome object has been secured".⁵⁶ Once the idea is there securely held in his mind, man can say he has willed. "Willing terminate with the prevalence of the idea, and whether the act then follows or not is a matter quite immaterial"⁵⁷ so far as one's willing process is concerned. The immediate motor consequences that may follow are only mere physiological phenomena.

Willing is the choosing of an idea or alternative and the focussing of the attention on it. Primarily, an alternative is presented to an individual for choice. Then there is hesitation and deliberation. "Deliberation consists in trying to apperceive the case successively by a number of different ideas, which seem to fit it more or less, until you hit on one which seems to fit it exactly".⁵⁸ If such an idea had been in one's mind before and had been activated and entered into man's pattern of behavior, hesitation stops and action follows. If on the other hand, the idea carries inaction as a habitual reaction, then the action fails to follow.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 564.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 560.

⁵⁸ James, Talks to Teachers . . . , pp. 184-185.

If man wants to perform an unfamiliar task, what he has to do is simply to focus his consciousness on it. With the object held before his consciousness, action may follow. The will does not involve a special faculty which gives mental consent or fiat that make all deliberate actions. The mechanism involved in this activity of action after willing is the fact that all forms of consciousness--sensations, feelings and ideas themselves--tend to discharge into some motor effects. Most often, the motor effect is not always an outward alteration of behavior. It may be only an alteration of the heartbeats or breathing or a change in the distribution of blood causing blushing or turning pale or simply a secretion of tears. But in any case, "it is there in some shape when any consciousness is there, and that conscious processes . . . must pass over into motion, open or concealed".⁵⁹

The role of the voluntary attention in making an action follow is to drag an idea into the "focus of the field of consciousness and to keep it there long enough for its associative and motor effects to be exerted".⁶⁰ The moment an idea is stably held in the mind by this "effort of attention", the other ideas related to the original idea will be connected and

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 170-171.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 185-186.

the moment there is a connection established between the idea and the nervous system, action takes place. This is due to the "mysterious tie between the thought and the motor centres . . . which cannot be guessed at".⁶¹ What is needed is an appropriate idea. "In action, as in reasoning, the great thing is the quest of the right conception".⁶²

Aside from "effort of attention", belief in an idea can also move a man to perform the corresponding activity. To act on behalf of one's belief is a way of verifying the truth of an idea. It is man himself who verifies the truth of an idea, not the things around him. Before any theory be accepted by other people, it has to be verified by himself, for himself. He must live it through up to his last ounce of power and judge afterwards. After this, one must really believe it with the greatest possible intensity, for belief, unlike theory, is the beginning of action, and weakness of belief will lead to weakness of action.⁶³

An example one can have here is about a lone mountaineer who was lost on a glacial valley in the midst of a storm. This incident is often quoted by James in his books.⁶⁴ This man is said to be facing a crevice of uncertain width. He surveyed

⁶¹ James, Psychology: Briefer Course, p. 452.

⁶² James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 531.

⁶³ William James, Essays on Faith and Morals (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1962), p. 34. Edited by R.B. Perry.

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 28-29.

the situation around him and saw that the side facing him was covered with snow and reaches out towards him over the abyss but he was uncertain of its solidity. Should he believe that he can make it? Or should he avoid taking the risk of jumping over the abyss towards the snowy portion before him and wait for his end? These two alternatives he weighed in his mind. How will his belief be verified if he will not do something? If he will think that he cannot jump over the abyss across but simply stay put to his place, then his belief can never be verified. However, if he cannot make it, then he also proved something if not to himself, to others that he was not in the capacity to jump across. Probably he might have made it if he had only tried.

If other ideas or images intrude, there is the so-called conflict of will. Conflict is interference with spontaneity, as clearly shown by James' following illustration:

We know what it is to get out of bed in a freezing morning in a room without a fire, and how the very vital principle within us protests against the ordeal. Probably most persons have laid on certain mornings for an hour at a time unable to brace themselves to the resolve. We think how late we shall be, how the duties of the day will suffer: we say, "I must get up, this is ignominious", etc., but still the warm couch feels too delicious, the cold outside too cruel, and the resolution faints away and postpones itself again and again just as it seems on the verge of bursting and passing over into a decisive act. Now do we ever get up under such circumstances? If I may generalize from my own experience, we more often than not get up without any struggle or decision at all. We find that we have got up. A fortunate lapse of consciousness occurs, we forget both the warmth and the cold; we

fall into some reverie connected with the day's life, into the course of which the idea flashes across us, "Hello! I must lie here no longer"--an idea which at that lucky instance awakens no contradictory or paralyzing suggestions, and consequently produces immediately its appropriate motor effects. It was our acute consciousness of both the warmth and the cold during the period of struggle, which paralyzed our activity then and kept our idea of rising in the condition of wish and not of will. The moment these inhibitory ideas ceased, the original idea exerted its effects.⁶⁵

James says that the getting out of bed was a voluntary act. It might have happened in two ways:

(a) I may forget for the moment the thermometric conditions and then the idea of getting up will immediately discharge into act, or . . . (b) Still mindful of the freezing temperature, the thought of the duty rising may become so pungent that it determines action in spite of inhibition. In the latter case, I have a sense of energetic moral effect, and consider that I have done a virtuous act.⁶⁶

The latter case is what one would call an act of will or a voluntary act. A voluntary act is "at all times a resultant of the compounding of impulsion with our inhibition".⁶⁷ Willing is focussing one's attention on a difficult task which one would like to perform. As long as an idea is held stable in the mind, one can say that there is the act of willing. It terminates with the prevalence of an idea in the mind.

⁶⁵James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 534. (This is rather a long text to quote, but since it is important, it is quoted in full.)

⁶⁶James, Talks to Teachers . . . , p. 85.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 178.

For an authentic life, one's willing must lead to action, since willing is deciding or choosing an alternative for a certain course of action. With one's effort and belief, man can "keep his heart unshaken and hold himself erect in the game of human life".⁶⁸ One's knowing also has a great influence on one's willing and doing. What one needs is the right conception or right vision.⁶⁹ One must cultivate proper volitional habits by providing in the mind a desirable stock of ideas and by habitually coupling the ideas with action. Ideas, indeed, are instruments of man's action.⁷⁰

To summarize, willing is an activity of the will. This activity occurs in man's healthy or unhealthy will. A will is healthy if there is a certain normal ratio in the impulsive power of different sorts of motives. By "normal ratio", it is meant that the impulsive idea and the inhibitory idea do not have any conflict in the mind so that the corresponding motor consequence will follow the impulsive ideas neither too slowly nor too rapidly. On the other hand, a will is unhealthy whenever the normal ratio is absent. There are two kinds of unhealthy will--the precipitate will and the perverted will. A will is precipitate if the action follows too rapidly, giving

⁶⁸James, Psychology: Briefer Course, p. 459.

⁶⁹James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 569.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 134.

no time for antagonistic ideas to occur. A will is perverted if the ratio which the impulsive and the inhibitive ideas bear to each other is distorted. The perversity appears in two states: the explosive will and the obstructed will. In the explosive will, the impulsive idea is strong while the inhibitive is too weak and in the obstructed will, the impulsive idea is too weak while the restraining idea is too strong.

There are five types of decision--the first four types are not the ideal ones while the fifth one is the authentic one. It is authentic in the sense that there is a feeling that the evidence is all in and that reason has balanced the alternatives or choices. There is that feeling that man himself made the decision. He makes the decision with "effort of attention" and belief. This "feeling of effort" is absent in the first four types of decision. Aside from the "effort" being present in the fifth type of decision, there is also the presence of belief. Man has to believe in the alternative he has just chosen.

The term "effort" in the phrase "effort of attention" does not refer to muscular effort, it is something mental. It consists of peripheral feelings to which a muscular "exertion" may give rise. "Effort of attention" is needed most whenever the subject matter to be attended to is repugnant or unattractive. This unattractive object could be made interesting or attractive by associating it with something attractive or alluring in itself.

In such a case, the unattractive object is said to have a derived interest. This phenomenon of "effort" has ethical importance because this becomes the gauge for the worth of man and with this effort man can change some of his vices into virtues.

Belief is also necessary in making decisions. It is the willingness to act, it leads man to action. It is subjective and is more allied to emotion. Belief and will are related also to each other. The former is characterized by the prevalence of an idea which fills the mind solidly to the exclusion of contradictory ideas, while the latter consists in nothing but a manner of attending to certain objects, or consenting to their stable presence before the mind. In both cases, the mind looks at the object and consents to its existence.

Finally, James' theory of willing states that willing is choosing of an idea or alternative and the focussing of the attention and belief on it. It terminates with the prevalence of the idea in the mind. However, for man's authentic life, his willing must lead to action. Man has to believe in an idea and in his capacity of performing it before he can expect any reaction from that idea or concept. Knowing influences very greatly one's willing, and this willing in turn influences his doing or acting.

Chapter 5

THE GOALS OF THE NEW SOCIETY

In the previous chapters, William James' theories of knowing and willing were discussed; it was explained that one's knowing influences much one's willing. Willing means choosing and before one can choose, there must be several ideas or alternatives in his mind and these alternatives are accumulated there through the process of knowing. Effort of attention and belief are also important elements in the willing activity of the individual.

Since the main purpose of this thesis is not simply to know James' theories of knowing and willing but to see whether these theories are relevant to the New Society, it is, therefore, necessary to know the goals of this Society. This chapter presents the goals of the New Society and is divided into the following parts: 1) The Goals of the New Society; and 2) Individual Discipline as a Key to Moral Development or Regeneration.

THE GOALS OF THE NEW SOCIETY

The demand for change in the Philippines was great. In fact, it was inevitable. It had to occur if the Philippines and the Filipinos wanted to see the dawning of progress in their society. "All those concerned about the future of the

Philippines were engaged in researches to dig into the root causes of the ills which sapped the nation's vitality".¹ They had come to the conclusion that some of its causes were graft and corruption in the government service, nepotism, bribery, smuggling, compartmentalized justice, political warlords, private armies and uneven distribution of wealth. Drug-trafficking, gun-running, tong-collection, jay-walking and "palakasan" or "kumpadre" or "might is right" system were also very rampant. The rule of men prevailed over the rule of law, so that law protected only the powerful few but not the majority who were weak. Thus, "the main problem in the Philippines was the unwillingness or inability of corrupt officials to enforce the law equally to all".²

Being concerned with the condition of the Philippines, President Ferdinand E. Marcos made the great decision. He decided to place the Philippines under Martial Law by Proclamation No. 1081. The Martial Law was proclaimed because of the "wanton destruction of lives and property, widespread lawlessness and anarchy and disorder prevailing throughout the country",³ such conditions have been brought about by groups

¹Dr. Marcelina del Rosario-Gonzaga, "The Emerging Philippine New Society and the Educator," Forward, An Official Publication of Colegio de San Jose-Recoletos, Vol. XXX, No. 2 (July-December, 1973), p. 8.

²Vitaliano R. Gorospe, S.J., The New Christian Morality and the Filipino (Manila: Jesuit Educational Ass., 1973), p. 63.

³Atty. Efren V. Ramirez and Atty. German G. Lee, Jr.,

of men who were desirous to take into their hands the political and state power in the Philippines. These men wanted to take over the government by force or violence. The main objectives, therefore, of the Proclamation No. 1081 are: "to save the Republic" and "to form a New Society".

The "creation of the New Society" is the second objective of the Proclamation No. 1081. With this proclamation, it is hoped that the Philippines would be reformed, the government would be cleared of corrupt and undesirable men, syndicates would be liquidated, and the Philippine economy would be developed. However, the main thrust of this New Society is the so-called "Operation Plan PLEDGES, code-named 'Oplan PLEDGES'". This is aimed at "uprooting the centuries--old evils that have plagued the Filipinos and replace them with the dynamos of development and progress".⁴

The PLEDGES stands for the following goals: "P" means PEACE AND ORDER, "L" signifies LAND REFORM, "E" denotes ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, "D" indicates DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES, "G" stands for GOVERNMENTAL REORGANIZATION, "E" calls for EDUCATIONAL REFORM and "S" suggests SOCIAL SERVICES.

The New Philippine Constitution (With Brief Commentaries) First Edition (Cebu City: E.Q. Cornejo and Sons, 1973), p. 81.

⁴Ibid., p. 83.

It is the purpose of this thesis to relate James' theories of knowing and willing to the goals of the New Society, especially to the fourth part of the PLEDGES--the DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES of the Filipinos. To uplift the moral values of the Filipinos and to inculcate "discipline" among them which is vital in nation-building, the President passed some measures like (a) launching an extensive drive against drug-trafficking, tong-collecting, jaywalking and "palakasan" or "might is right" system, (b) holding under military custody the violators of the crimes against public morals, especially those engaged in gambling, betting in sports like horse racing and illegal cockfighting, (c) placing under close surveillance people who went against the norms of decency and good custom, such as: those who were involved in grave scandals; those who espoused immoral doctrines, fostered obscene publications and exhibitions; the vagrants, the prostitutes, etc., (d) approving the Code of Conduct for public officials and for members of the Armed Forces, and (e) seeing to it that mass media (i.e., newspapers, radio and television stations, magazines and etc.) go under licensing by the Mass Media Council.⁵

⁵ Ibid., p. 86.

INDIVIDUAL DISCIPLINE AS A KEY TO MORAL
DEVELOPMENT OR REGENERATION

Through the Proclamation of Martial Law and the creation of the New Society, measures were passed with the intention of eradicating Philippine society's ills and practices, or at least minimize them. All these measures were designed to help Filipinos develop discipline, which is a way of developing a high standard of morality.⁶

The development of Filipinos is a moral responsibility for each Filipino because "the Philippine situation is a moral situation of social, economic and political injustice which demands reforms".⁷ One can start advocating these reforms by diminishing the ignorance, superstition, traditional Filipino attitude and values like fatalism, "bahala na" and the crisis of confidence in Filipinos. The lust for money, greed and selfishness, the abuse of power and human exploitation should be diminished. With all the ills and violence surrounding the Filipino people, "it is immoral for the Filipino Christian to remain indifferent or passive, or to take the "bahala na" or "just-wait-and-see" attitude toward social justice and development".⁸

⁶Gonzaga, loc. cit.

⁷Gorospe, op. cit., p. 45.

⁸Ibid., p. 46.

President Ferdinand E. Marcos himself is also concerned with the moral development of the Philippines in the New Society. He has some spiritual and ethical ideals, especially those concerned with the expansion of the horizons of human freedom. Upon the Proclamation of Martial Law and embarking upon the journey of creating a New Society, he did not really envision an ideal state, a "Utopia". He stated that being "aware of the limits of the people, we aim to radicalize the social order in a manner that will promote the fulfillment of the individual. There can never be a perfect society".⁹

He upholds the idea of man being a free individual. Freedom is an inevitable element in a Society, especially in a democratic one. Without freedom, the whole concept of democracy falls apart.¹⁰ To be free connotes responsibility. A citizen should be responsible as a person. The future depends on how the Filipinos behave. "We become what we do. This is the burden of freedom: that is all our fault, our credit, and that we can never blame fate".¹¹ In a democratic society the responsibility resides in the people.

The President is trying to instil into the consciousness of every individual the theory of moral regeneration not only

⁹ President Ferdinand E. Marcos, Today's Revolution: Democracy (Philippines: n.p., 1971), p. 137.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 34.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 35.

for material gains "but also to improve the citizen's character, attitude and habits".¹² He believes that a disciplined and morally conscious person would be more receptive to reforms as well as a more effective instrument for development.

The individual should develop this moral consciousness in himself, being a part of the society. There should be no backsliding or going back to the bad practices in the Old Society. As an integral part of a society, the change must start from him, as a responsible individual. If all the individuals change their old and bad practices to good ones, the plans for a new society will be materialized. President Marcos states that "nothing less than this high moral consciousness must necessarily guide the Democratic Revolution as it reaches out for a New Society".¹³

Why is there a need for a "moral regeneration"? There is a great necessity to stress moral regeneration or moral renewal because of the present high rate of "backsliding" in most of the Filipino people. "Backsliding is the creeping return of old society habits in segments of the populace".¹⁴ Backsliders are people who adhere to the malpractices of the

¹²Philippines Daily Express (September 26, 1973), p. 6.

¹³Marcos, op. cit., p. 90.

¹⁴"PM Views: Call the PC and Have Him Arrested," Philippines Daily Express (March 6, 1974), p. 3.

Old Society. They are forgetting that the Philippines is still under martial law control. Some people have not lived up to the expectations of the New Society. They cling to the belief that they can still exercise the same unequal privileges they used to have in the Old Society.

The success of the drive against backsliding or for the enforcement of the measures promulgated by the President depends very much on the resoluteness of law-enforcers, but the courage and civic consciousness of the citizens is the key factor. Filipinos should cooperate. This is a part of the moral transformation of the people.¹⁵ This is the worthiest achievement of the New Society.

There is a move in the New Society to encourage each and every Filipino to depend on one another for the achievement of social goals. There is a resurgence of the "bayanihan" spirit. This human solidarity and cooperation, this sense of community, is a moral precept and also a necessity of this time. Each individual has this sense of solidarity. Apparently, the Filipino people cannot permanently depend on the coercive powers of the State, even if they coincide with their desires as a people: they must give to the new political bond the force of their own individual discipline.¹⁶

¹⁵Editorial, Philippines Daily Express (September 27, 1973), p. 4.

¹⁶"The September 21 Movement," Bulletin Today (October 5, 1973), p. 5.

However, the term "discipline" here does not mean that kind which suggests marching in line and instant obedience to command. This discipline governs a "command society" under martial law conditions, but this type of society cannot last long, cannot be a permanent institution. "The great majority of mankind need not be disciplined in this manner in order to live peacefully".¹⁷ They can be responsible enough to be left to themselves without the concept of fear or violence.

President Marcos, however, admits it to himself that "the present discipline is not exactly the most ideal. There is an element of fear in it, fear of swift, albeit just, punishment".¹⁸ This is a crude discipline or basic discipline, the kind that men have been subjected to as children. There are elements in society, on the other hand, notably the anti-social and criminal elements, which need such kind of discipline. But this should transcend its being a basic discipline, and acquire the stronger and more matured-kind of discipline, that of fear for the harmony of society should men deliberately go against its laws and its norms. Filipinos should be afraid of wrongdoing not because of the personal consequences "but because it might destroy the balance of our society or community and thus adversely affect not only our personal lives but the lives of others".¹⁹

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

The private citizens should be aware of the discipline which fears for the "balance" of society. "His indifference to his civic responsibility, under martial law conditions, will lead to the alternative that martial law intends to prevent; will protect the Republic and inaugurate a new era of freedom".²⁰ Beyond that limit is the citizen's concern for his whole society, his individual commitment with the rest of mankind.

President Marcos proposed to the people a vision of peace-loving and responsible citizenry. For the final thrust of his plans, the people; each and every Filipino is responsible and "that depends on the inner discipline that is not a response to coercion but to a clear understanding of the people's needs and the necessity of the time which require their satisfaction".²¹ This sense of discipline is inculcated among the citizen by the Proclamation of the Martial Law and the creation of the New Society, and as President Ferdinand E. Marcos stated in his last "Report to the Nation", "the people today obey the law not because they fear punishment, but rather because they know that by supporting order and government, they are building with their own hands the future that they want".²²

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Editorial, Philippines Daily Express (September 26, 1973), p. 4.

To summarize, the New Society has for its main thrust, the Operation Plan PLEDGES, or Oplan PLEDGES. This thesis is related to the fourth plan, the "D", which stands for the DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES in the Filipinos.

To uplift the moral values of the Filipinos and to inculcate "discipline" among them which is vital in nation-building, the President passed some measures like launching drives against drug-trafficking, tong-collecting, jay walking and "palakasan" system; holding under military custody the violators of the crimes against public morals, placing under close surveillance people who went against the norms of decency and good custom; approving the Code of Conduct for public officials and members of the Armed Forces and lastly, seeing to it that Mass Media people go under licensing by the Mass Media Council. These measures could help the Filipinos develop discipline, which is a way of developing a high standard of morality. The development of the Filipinos is a moral responsibility for every Filipino because the Philippine situation is a moral situation of social, economic and political injustice which demands reforms.

President Ferdinand E. Marcos himself is also concerned with moral responsibility of the Filipinos in the New Society. He did not however envision an ideal state. He is

aware of the limits of the possible and the impossibility of a perfect society. He aims at improving the moral life of the individual. He also tries to instil into the consciousness of every one the theory of moral regeneration to enhance the citizen's character, attitudes and habits. A disciplined and morally conscious person would be more receptive to reforms as well as a more effective instrument for development.

Chapter 6

THE RELEVANCE OF WILLIAM JAMES' THEORIES OF KNOWING AND WILLING TO THE NEW SOCIETY

In the previous chapters, William James' radical empiricism, his theories of knowing and willing and the goals of the New Society were discussed. It has been explained that radical empiricism is the basic foundation of his philosophy.¹ Radical empiricism, coupled with pragmatism, constitutes the essence of William James' theory of knowing. This theory of knowing, in turn, influences much his theory of willing. The former supplies the concepts necessary in the activity of willing.

In this chapter, the writer will attempt at showing the relevance of William James' theories of knowing and willing to the goals of the New Society. James' theory of knowing will first of all, be related to the goals of the New Society, especially to the DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUE in Filipinos. This chapter is, therefore, divided into the following parts: 1) The Relevance of William James' Theory of Knowing to the Goals of the New Society and 2) The Relevance of William James' theory of Willing to the Goals of the New Society.

¹William James, Essays in Radical Empiricism (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1943).

THE RELEVANCE OF WILLIAM JAMES' THEORY OF KNOWING
TO THE GOALS OF THE NEW SOCIETY

The Philippines was placed under Martial Law control on September 21, 1972 by the declaration of Presidential Proclamation No. 1081. This proclamation came into existence because of the "wanton destruction of lives and property, widespread lawlessness and anarchy and disorder prevailing throughout the country".² One of the main objectives of this proclamation was the formation or the creation of a New Society.

Because of this objective, the Philippines would be reformed, the government would be cleared of corrupt and undesirable men, syndicates would be liquidated, and the Philippine economy would be developed.³ The main goals of the New Society are the so-called "Operation Plan PLEDGES". They aim at "uprooting the centuries-old evils that have plagued the Filipinos and replace them with the dynamos of development and progress".⁴

The PLEDGES stand for the following goals: "P" means PEACE AND ORDER, "L" signifies LAND REFORM, "E" denotes ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, "D" indicates DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES, "G" stands for GOVERNMENTAL REORGANIZATION, "E" calls for EDUCATIONAL REFORM, and "S" suggests SOCIAL SERVICES.

²Atty. Efren V. Ramirez and Atty. German G. Lee, Jr., The New Philippine Constitution (With Brief Commentaries) First Edition (Cebu City: E.Q. Cornejo and Sons, 1973), p. 81.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 83.

The main concern of this thesis is to show that William James' theories of knowing and willing are relevant to the goals of the New Society, particularly the plan for the Filipinos' DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES. To uplift the moral values of the Filipinos and to inculcate "discipline" among them, President Ferdinand E. Marcos passed some measures like: (a) launching an extensive drive against drug-trafficking, tong-collecting, jaywalking and "palakasan" system, (b) holding under military custody the violators of the crimes against public morals especially those engaged in gambling, betting in sports like horse racing and illegal cockfighting, (c) placing under close surveillance people who went against the norms of decency and good custom, such as: those who were involved in grave scandals; those who espoused immoral doctrines, fostered obscene publications and exhibitions; the vagrants and the prostitutes, etc. (d) approving the Code of Conduct for public officials and of members of the Armed Forces, and (e) seeing to it that mass media go under licensing by the Mass Media Council.⁵

All these measures were passed to change the ills and bad practice or to diminish them. These will help Filipinos develop "discipline", which is a way of developing a high

⁵ Ibid., p. 86.

standard of morality.⁶ William James' theories of knowing and willing are relevant to all the goals of the New Society, most especially to the development of moral values.

EXPERIENCE IS THE BEST TEACHER. This shows a radical empiricistic-pragmatic attitude. Experience is the essence of William James' radical empiricism, which in turn is the basic foundation of his theory of knowing. A person cannot always know and will things that cannot be lived through or experienced.⁷

William James' radical empiricism is relevant to the goals of the New Society in the sense that radical empiricism upholds experience as a test for the authenticity of things and the goals of the New Society have to be subjected to experience as a test for their authenticity. Filipinos should first of all experience these measures. They should not indulge in drug-trafficking, tong-collecting, jaywalking and "palakasan" or "might is right" system; should not engage in activities banned by the President, like gambling, betting in sports like horse racing and illegal cockfighting; should not go against the norms of decency by giving occasions for grave scandal, by keeping immoral doctrines and obscene publications and exhi-

⁶Dr. Marcelina del Rosario-Gonzaga, "The Emerging Philippine New Society and the Educator," Forward, An Official Publication of Colegio de San Jose-Recoletos, Vol. XXX, No. 2 (July-December, 1973), p. 8.

⁷Supra, p. 11, footnote 2.

bitions and by tolerating the practice of prostitution; should follow the Code of Conduct approved by the President for public officials and for members of the Armed Forces; and Mass Media people should be censored and licensed by the Mass Media Council. An experience of all of these measures will acquaint them with the good and bad points of these proposals. Filipinos must not admit outrightly any element that cannot be experienced, or lived through in one's experience.⁸ They should take into account only those measures that could be verified through experience. The Filipino consciousness should try to penetrate into the meanings as they will be lived through originally in their own existence.⁹

Radical empiricism and its concept of experience is the foundation of William James' theory of knowing. After having experienced the proposals of the President, the Filipinos will have known how is it to be obedient to the measures of the President. This knowledge in the mind of the Filipinos is a precondition for the activity of willing.¹⁰ Knowledge is one's way of being related with reality and this is done through the individual's experience.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Supra, p. 22.

Filipinos could also profit by adhering to William James' theory of knowing, for such a theory is very instrumental to the achievement of the goals of the New Society, especially to the Filipinos' moral development.

There are two kinds of knowledge: knowledge by acquaintance or knowledge of and knowledge about. Knowledge by acquaintance is that kind of knowledge gained through direct contact with tangible or sensible objects. It is the first-hand experience of the things around him, that kind which one has of a thing by its presentation to the senses.¹¹ Filipinos' knowledge by acquaintance is that which they gain through experience or encounter with the things around them. In this era of the New Society, it is had through their personal contact with the proposed measures of the President. Through their senses, they are in close contact with the objects included in the measures--like gambling and betting in sport races. They have come in contact with those bad practices. They know how and what they felt; the thrill they got when they won and the feeling of annoyance and regret when they lost.

Such sensations are coupled with perception and these occur in adult life. They are interdependent to each other and when they are combined with memory and imagination, they constitute one's knowledge by acquaintance.

¹¹William James, The Meaning of Truth. A Sequel to Pragmatism (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911), pp. 11-12.

Knowledge about is derived from knowledge by acquaintance. Concepts are derived from sensations and perceptions. This is the knowledge of the relations between sensations and perceptions. These concepts are not gained from the experience or the encounter with the objects but through the relations formed of the sensations derived from one's experience.¹²

Filipinos' knowledge about is had through vicarious experience-- that experience gained through reading. They might not have been in contact with these objects directly, but they relate these to things to which they had been immediately exposed before. Take a Filipino who has not experienced yet drug-trafficking and tong-collecting, but has already indulged in gun-running and in "palakasan" or "might is right" system for quite a time. Since the thrills and risks he experienced are similar to that of drug-trafficking and tong-collecting, he will be able to conceive the feelings he would have if he experienced them directly. He forms his conception of drug-trafficking and tong-collecting through the sensations and perceptions derived from gun-running and in the practice of palakasan or "might is right" system.

"Knowledge about is knowledge of its relations"¹³ and these relations formed around an object constitute the "fringe" of man's knowledge. The fringe has two main parts:

¹²Supra, p. 25.

¹³William James, The Principles of Psychology, Vol. I (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1890), p. 259.

the substantive part and the transitive part. The relations around an idea or the words related to an idea constitute the transitive part while the idea itself James calls the substantive part.¹⁴ In the fringe of the Filipinos' consciousness, the concept of drug-trafficking and tong-collecting is the substantive part while the relations they form around the concept constitute the transitive part. These transitive parts are the immediate-experienced-sensations and perceptions of these activities of gun-running and "palakasan" or "might is right" system. This portion of the fringe is immediately felt by the Filipino individual. This capacity of "feeling" or of "experiencing" these relations makes one's empiricism radical.¹⁵ These relations cannot be separated from the concept for they give meaning to that concept.

Knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about are complementary to each other; each remedies the other's defects.¹⁶ Both kinds of knowledge are indispensable--one cannot be clearly understood without being related to the other. If a Filipino wants to verify the reality of an image of a percept, he has to resort to conceptual analysis. On the other hand, if he wants to know more about the reality of a concept, he has only to refer back to the direct acquaintance or immediate experience

¹⁴Supra, p. 26.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. I, p. 251.

of such objects. Conceptual knowledge will be clearly understood only when it is verified through experience.

Filipino's knowledge is both knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about. If their knowledge is "purely knowledge by acquaintance", then their percepts are "dumb"--they do not mean anything. They are like motion pictures being shown in an empty theatre.¹⁷ On the other hand, to have purely conceptual knowledge is, just like telling a person something he has not yet experienced before. One cannot know how risky smuggling is if he has not been directly in contact with smuggling or any other activity to which one could relate the idea--"smuggling is risking one's neck and it gives one a feeling of one thousand one thrills". As James stated, somebody must have a toothache, to make human knowledge of these matters real".¹⁸

James' contention that a thought or a concept is not meaningful if it does not produce any practical conduct and that "beliefs are really rules for action"¹⁹ is relevant to the New Society. The actions of the Filipinos can be influenced by their beliefs, for these actions are the test for the reality of beliefs. Filipinos have to be men of deeds, not merely of words. Men of deeds are those who put into action what they

¹⁷Edward Carter Moore, William James (New York: Washington Square Press, Inc., 1965), p. 116.

¹⁸James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. I, p. 456.

¹⁹William James, Pragmatism. A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), p. 43.

firmly know and believe is right while men of words are those who have the right conceptions of things or reality but do not put these conceptions into practice. The latter type of men adhere to the saying, "Do what I say but do not follow what I do". They have the right conceptions in their minds but they stick to the idea that they are weak and that they cannot avoid the occasion of sin. For them, "to err is really human". There seems to be a gap between the theories they uphold and the practical application of such theories. Such kind of Filipinos have the so-called "double-standard" morality--they believe in something and preach to all mankind that they should do this and that but they themselves do the opposite of what they are preaching. As a doer, every Filipino should perform his activities according to what he thinks and believes is right. Knowers must be doers.

According to James, true ideas can be assimilated, validated, corroborated and verified, and false ideas are those that cannot be subjected to any of the previous test.²⁰ Any Filipino, therefore, who wants to verify whether it is true that the measures proposed by the President will help Filipinos achieve the New Society goals has simply to assimilate, validate and corroborate them through experience. He has to relate all his actions to the proposed measures and to assimilate these to his very existence.

²⁰James, Pragmatism . . . , p. 133.

President Ferdinand E. Marcos cannot outrightly say that all his proposed measures are true and good. He presented them to the people as "plans", depending on the people for the judgment of the measures' authenticity after having assimilated, validated, corroborated and verified them. If such measures after having been tested come out as true, then they are useful and beneficial to the people. "An idea is useful because it is true, and vice-versa, it is true because it is useful. True ideas get fulfilled and can be verified".²¹ The Filipino people's experience is then the final gauge of the goodness of the proposed measures. Filipinos should not have a negativistic attitude and "frown" on these measures and think of such proposals as just mere "words". They can give a "try" to the goals of the New Society and find out for themselves what the President has envisioned for them. Some people are influenced by "rumor-mongerers", paying attention to prejudices, especially comments from the President's antagonistic party. According to James, this should not be the case. Before judging these ideas or plans as merely words or not, they have to actualize them by performing the corresponding activity themselves.

²¹James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 135,

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A study of James' theory of knowing will lead one into a deeper understanding of his theory of willing and its relevance to the New Society. Willing is influenced much by one's knowing. In fact, this is the precondition for the process of willing. Knowing "supplies ideas of the various movements that are possible"²² and these are stored in the individual's memory. These ideas formulate anticipatory images of the consequences of a certain movement and are accumulated in the mind through the process of knowing".²³

James stresses the importance of a healthy will in the selection of an idea or alternative during the activity of willing. A healthy will produces sound choice that would be useful to the individual's development. A will is healthy when the ratio between the impulsive and the inhibitory ideas is normal. In such kind of will, there is no conflict in the mind of the individual and the corresponding action follows. The presence of any conflict in the mind hinders the corresponding action to follow since such a conflict would cause the dislodgment of the good idea from its place.

²²Ibid., p. 488.

²³Ibid.,

James' stress on the need for a healthy will is relevant to the present Society in the sense that some Filipinos are impulsive and temperamental. These people are known to have unhealthy will and they belong to the explosive type. The impulsive idea is so strong that the inhibitory ideas can never out-balance its urgency.²⁴ Just the mere thought of an act discharges at once the neutral activity connected to such ideas, making the action follow. A common instance of explosiveness of unhealthy will occurs in people with "narrow minds". Upon hearing unpleasant remarks, especially regarding their honor and dignity, such people would instantly get angry and put justice into their hands, letting their emotions get the better of them and not able to think of the consequences that would arise. Another common situation is the habit of some Filipinos of spending their "half-month-salary" just in a one-day-occasion or on unimportant things, not thinking of the days to come.

These people are known in this society as the "one-day-millionaires". They spend their money without having any second thought of the importance of the object to be bought. The moment they see something that attracts their eyes or their appetites, they immediately buy it. Gamblers, too, have

²⁴Supra, p. 38.

explosive act of going to gambling dens and bet follows right after, leaving no time for any antagonistic idea--"This is bad and should not be done, this is against the proposed measures of the President".

Another instance where James' concept of a healthy will is very much needed is the following: some Filipinos have obstructed wills, whereby the impulsive idea is out-balanced by the inhibitory idea, leaving a cramped and mixed emotion of fear and helplessness. One cannot do anything else but simply gape and stare, not deciding anything at all. There seems to be a "temporary paralysis of action".²⁵ This is evidently shown in the case wherein a Filipino physician is called to treat a person whom he had been thinking of taking revenge because this person had been involved in a land grabbing case that included the physician's property. The physician remembers his oath to save the life of a person but the inhibitory idea--"This is the proper time to make revenge so why treat him!"--out-balances the impulsive idea. The physician could not do anything for a moment--he is somewhat paralyzed and thus, he gapes and stares at the man--not doing anything at all.

A healthy will is most ideal for every Filipino because it produces a healthy decision. According to James, there should be ample time for deliberation. Deliberation starts when

²⁵Supra, p. 39.

there are two ideas presented to the mind. A Filipino is faced with the option of "Either to follow the proposed measures of the President or not". He deliberates on these alternatives and his reason and passion cooperate with his will. There is a feeling of inward unrest known as indecision.

In a healthy will, deliberation takes not too long nor too short a time--just enough to weigh the alternatives. For an authentic decision, there should be a feeling that the evidence is all in and that reason has balanced the alternatives. There is a feeling that the person himself is the one who is making the decision.²⁶ In making the decision, the person must not think only of his vested interest in anything that calls for a decision. An authentic alternative should be one which is devoid of personal interest that would often times endanger another or encroach into another person's right.

One's beliefs are rules for action.²⁷ A person has to believe in his capacity for doing an act and in the truth of his conviction, in order to let the action follow. Just like James' illustration about the mountain climber who was lost in a snow storm and was faced by a dilemma either to jump across the abyss to the other side and save himself or just

²⁶ James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 534.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 134.

stay put to his place and be frozen to death.²⁸ If he believed in his capacity of being able to jump across, he could have jumped and saved himself, proving something--his belief could make him perform an act that could save him. Applying this to the Philippine situation, Filipinos should also have belief in their capacity of performing what they think is right for them to do. Filipinos are by nature pessimistic, they are easily discouraged. They are afraid to take the risk. Some Filipinos are afraid to take the risk in going into business of their own. They are simply contented being with their friends as business partners. Being with a partner does not promise much profit, whereas if he goes into business of his own and takes the risk, he could have all the chances to progress or to lose. If this Filipino businessman could have belief in himself that he could go into business of his own, then he could be able to prove to himself whether he could be progressive if he does it alone or not. His belief could lead him to action and thus verify the very truth of his plans.

Another person who should have faith or belief in himself is a "bar-flunker". He had already taken the bar examination but flunked. Now he wants to take the bar examination but is hesitant and afraid he might flunk again. Most Filipino "bar-flunker" never try again. They become resigned to the

²⁸William James, Essays on Faith and Morals (Cleveland: Meridian Books, World Publishing Co., 1962), pp. 28-29.

fact that they flunked and do not want to take the risk of either passing or not. If they will not take the risk, they will certainly never make it; however, if they take the examination, then they either pass it or not. Filipinos should have faith in themselves; they should have the courage to venture into situations that entail risks.

Together with belief, James holds that there should be "effort of attention". This is an essential element in the activity of willing. This "mental effort"²⁹ is necessary to keep the idea or the chosen alternative stable in the mind. Will is the prevalence of the idea in one's mind. Willing is the choosing of an idea and the focussing of the attention on it. This is something Filipinos in the New Society need very badly. A Filipino, the moment he has chosen to follow the New Society measures, must keep his attention focussed on them and this entails "mental effort". Once this idea is kept stable in his mind, with the absence of any antagonistic thought to dislodge the original idea from its place, then the corresponding action will follow.

The mechanism involved in this instance of making an action follow an idea is the fact that all forms of consciousness--sensation, feeling and ideas themselves--tend to dis-

²⁹This volitional effort must be carefully distinguished from the muscular effort with which it is usually confused. The latter consists of all those peripheral feelings to which a muscular "exertion" may give rise.

change into some motor effect. Most often, the motor effect is not always an outward alteration of behavior. It may be only a slight change in the heart beat or in the breathing process.³⁰ The statement "An individual should shun from gambling for it is an inauthentic activity" may have a motor effect which is not visible but could be felt within the person's consciousness. It could develop an attitude more or less related to the emotions rather than outward manifestation. Such a feeling, once it is accompanied by belief and effort of attention, could lead to the action of not going to gambling dens anymore. The activity follows an idea due to the "mysterious connection between the thought and the motor centres which cannot be guessed at".³¹ Hence, what a Filipino needs is an appropriate idea. "In action, as in reasoning, the great thing is the quest of the right conception".³² The measures proposed by the President for a New Society are the right conceptions.

With these right conceptions in his mind, a Filipino should focus his attention on them and believe in his capacity of performing the corresponding activities. This should be

³⁰William James, Talks to Teachers on Psychology and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1962), pp. 170-171.

³¹William James, Psychology: Briefer Course (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1913), p. 452.

³²James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 531.

the thing to be done whenever the activities do not suit to the person's pleasurable appetite, or when another idea causes a conflict in the mind. Take a man who saw a murder case happen right before his very eyes. He saw the murderer and could pin-point him to the authorities as a witness. The thought of being a witness does not suit a Filipino for he is afraid of what the murderer's gang would do if they know that he is going to testify in court. But he feels guilty if he will not cooperate with the police. He has a fear for the steps that would be taken by the murderer's gang but he keeps on thinking of the good that he could do if he acts as a witness, he will be promoting justice, and so, his fear will not dislodge the good intentions he has. He simply has to believe in his capacity of performing the act and keeping his attention on the good intention, then the corresponding **activity will follow, and his fear will be minimized.**

In regard to the goals of the New Society, the President frowns on bribery, smuggling and betting in sport contests like horse-racing and illegal cockfighting, or in general--"back-sliding". He is proposing to the Filipino people to refrain from these activities in order to build a New Society. Filipinos, taking these proposals as the right conception, should focus their attention on them and believe in their capacity of refraining from performing such inauthentic deeds. Unless this right conception is dislodged by another antagonistic idea--"How pleasurable it would be to go to gambling

dens", then the corresponding activity will follow. However, if they will not even try to refrain from doing these deeds but simply rationalize that they are weak by nature, then no good action will ensue.

James' concept of "effort of attention" and belief are also applicable to the situation wherein a drunkard is trying to resolve never to drink wine anymore. He cannot keep away from wine and every time he takes a gulp of it, he keeps on telling himself, "This is the last gulp". He keeps on thinking that he is quite weak to avoid the temptation of taking another drink. If such a man does not wish to remain a drunkard forever and resolve to change his being one, then he should keep in his mind this resolution and never taste even a drop of wine. "The effort by which he succeeds in keeping the right name (or concept) unwaveringly present to his mind proves to be his saving moral act".³³

Following James' theories, Filipinos should will in themselves to stick to the proposed measures--focus their attention on them and believe in their ability of performing the corresponding actions. They should refrain from "back-sliding" not by negativistic ideas towards inauthentic activities like gambling and betting, but by positive thinking,

³³James, Psychology: Briefer Course, pp. 453-454.

that is, by keeping in mind the good they will achieve thus helping the President realize his vision of a New Society. This positive thought should be kept before their minds and wills.

James' doctrine on willing can be very helpful in bringing about the "moral regeneration" of Filipinos. The Filipino's consciousness should be altered by a change in ideas, attitudes and values, especially among the youth. Concepts of freedom, social awareness, involvement and commitment to national ideals of progress should assume a higher and more urgent moral significance. However, total dependency among them should be lessened, for this hinders the total development of the Filipino race.

A Filipino has to make some particular choices and fundamental options through decision. His fundamental choice is closely related to his particular decisions, which in turn influence his actions. One could sometimes be faced by a dilemma in deciding either to go to the illegal cockfight and bet his month's salary there or to go directly home and give the salary to his wife; or to go out with one's "barkada" (gang) and have a drinking spree or treat his family to a movie. Many choices are yet to be made--foremost among them is the individual's acceptance or rejection of himself, the others and God. All the choices of a man should follow a direct line towards authenticity. The individual's moral

development is a commitment made from the core of the human person. This takes quite a long period. A person cannot totally commit himself in any personal act. It takes quite a time to fully express the ultimate and innermost self of a man. Hence, the change or the development of a nation takes a long time, giving time for each individual of the nation to change his own life before national discipline is attained. Self-discipline is the main root of the progress of a whole nation.

Personal decision-making has a great room in the individual's morality. One's morality depends very much on the decisions he makes. If the alternatives he chooses are good, then his morality is good; however, if his choices are not good, then his morality is also not good. The morality of a person depends on the goodness and the badness of his choices. Making bad choices would lead to wrong deeds and making good choices would lead to good actions.

There is also a place for personal judgment and for personal responsibility. It is most often the self that matters. Competent moral guidance can help but should never take over the function of personal decision. Filipinos must have a mature and educated conscience and they themselves must make the decisions--not any priest, pastor or guidance counselor.

James' "effort of attention" and "belief" resorted to in the activity of willing will be of great help in the formation of self-discipline--for the development of moral values. One can discipline himself simply by following the measures launched by the President. With "effort of attention" and "belief", Filipinos can avoid the practice of "backsliding" or going back to the bad practices of the Old Society. If they can virtuously act, then they can become authentic people. However, if they do not do anything to make their lives better but simply let their good ideas be dislodged by the conflicting ones, they will be just "nobody", simple shadows or inauthentic beings. Authenticity is a result of doing what one knows is good and leads to a virtuous life. To be authentic is to be a well-disciplined man.

An authentic man is one who can face the world bravely, without being afraid of the difficulties he meets and will encounter. With his effort and belief, he can "keep his heart unshaken and hold himself erect in the game of human life".³⁴ He has the willingness to face everything coming his way. He is the master of his own self and he forms a part of his own destiny. Effort is the measure of his worth--whether he is a good man or not.

³⁴James, Psychology: Brierley Course, p. 459.

It is man who shapes freely the world in which he lives; his drives and preferences are not just passive products of the universe--they take part actively in humanizing the indifferent data of experience. Among such drives, the strongest is the desire for a world with moral percepts, which offers man the opportunity of becoming free, of making decisions as to the morality of an act, whether it is morally good or evil, and also by translating those decisions into effective actions. Through this desire of building the world in terms of good and evil, man creates also the morally good person--with this feeling of responsibility and the consciousness of the existence of moral goods and evils.

It is the responsibility of every Filipino to develop moral values for the future of the Philippines depends on him. President Ferdinand E. Marcos exclaimed that "we become what we do. This is the burden of freedom: that is all our fault, our credit, and that we can never blame fate".³⁵ In a democratic society, responsibility resides in the people.

William James' theories of knowing and willing could help the President's drive against "backsliding". This is the greatest threat to the achievement of a New Society.

³⁵ President Ferdinand E. Marcos, Today's Revolution: Democracy (Philippines: n.p., 1971), p. 35.

Every Filipino should discipline himself and avoid "back-sliding" not only for material gains but also "to improve the citizen's character, attitudes and habits".³⁶ A disciplined and morally conscious person would be more receptive to reform as well as a more effective instrument for development.³⁷ As an integral part of the Philippine society, the change must start from every Filipino individual. If all the people would change their old and bad practices to good ones, the plans for a New Society would be materialized. President Marcos said that "nothing less than this moral consciousness must necessarily guide the Democratic Revolution as it reaches out for a New Society".³⁸

To summarize, William James' theories of knowing and willing are relevant to the New Society. They could be of help to the individual's moral development, in particular, and to all the goals of the New Society, in general.

James' theory of knowing supplies the ideas which are the precondition for the Filipinos' activity of willing. No Filipino should admit into his life any New Society element or measure that cannot be experienced. He cannot know and will things that cannot be actually lived through or experienced in his life.

³⁶Philippines Daily Express (September 26, 1973), p. 3.

³⁷Supra, p. 69.

³⁸Marcos, op. cit., p. 90.

His theory of knowing is radical empiristic in the sense that it always refers back to experience. This theory of knowing is relevant to all the goals of the New Society, especially to the plan for the development of moral values, by the fact that these goals have to be experienced. Any measure that cannot be undergone or experienced by the person is not taken into consideration. To take his theory of knowing is tantamount to accepting his pragmatic theory of truth. A measure is true if it can be verified, corroborated, assimilated and validated. If it cannot be subjected to such tests for authenticity, then it is false.

With the ideas stored in his mind through the process of knowing, a Filipino is ready to perform the activity of willing. These ideas are necessary for the deliberation of the alternatives. With reason, passion and will, a decision is then reached and this chosen idea should be kept stable in the mind with "effort of attention" and belief. "Effort of attention" keeps the idea steady in the mind, keeping it in its place, not to be dislodged by another antagonistic idea, while "belief" in one's capacity of performing the activity corresponding an idea, makes the action follow the idea.

James' theory of willing, on the other hand, is relevant to the goals of the New Society for it could help the Filipinos develop moral values and discipline themselves.

It could also diminish the rate of the "backsliding" cases. Backsliding is the creeping return of the old habits that have no place in the New Society.

His theory of willing could help the Filipinos develop faith and confidence in themselves. Belief is one of the important elements in James' theory of willing. As long as one has belief in himself, then most often than not, his life would be morally authentic. Filipinos should adhere to the fact that "belief are rules for action". Whatever be their belief should be the one to rule their actions. They should not have a double-standard morality--believing in something yet performing the opposite of what they believe. They should be men of deeds and not of words only. Knowers must be doers. What one thinks and knows is good for him should be carried out or put into practice. However, the judgment of the things' goodness and badness should not be based on the individual's vested interest. He must also take into account the interest of other people.

Willing plays a great role in the "moral regeneration" of every Filipino. The Filipino's consciousness should be altered by a change in the ideas, attitudes and values, especially among the youth. William James' theory of willing could lead a Filipino into self-discipline and morally authentic life. With "effort of attention" and belief, a

Filipino can keep his heart unshaken and hold himself erect in the game of human life. A discipline and morally conscious person would be more receptive to reforms as well as a more effective instrument for development.

Chapter 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of this thesis is to know William James' theories of knowing and willing and their relevance to the New Society. An analysis of both theories showed that an understanding of his theory of knowing gives a deeper insight into his theory of willing. These theories are then related to the goals of the New Society, especially to the Development of Moral Values in Filipinos.

It is a known fact that radical empiricism is the basic foundation of William James' philosophy. Coupled with pragmatism, it constitutes the essence of James' theory of knowing. Radical empiricism upholds experience as a test for the authenticity of things. A person cannot always know and will things that cannot be actually lived through or experienced in this life. This school of thought is also relevant to the achievement of the goals of the New Society. These goals of the New Society have to be subjected to experience as a test for their authenticity. Filipinos should not admit into their lives any New Society measure that cannot be experienced. Only those measures that could be verified through experience should be taken into consideration. The Filipino consciousness should try to penetrate

into the meanings as they will be lived through originally in their own existence. As radical empiricists, they should acquaint the reality of the measures with experience.

William James' theory of knowing is a combination of knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about. Knowledge by acquaintance is that kind of knowledge gained through direct contact with tangible or sensible objects. It is the first-hand experience of the things around him, that kind which one has of a thing by its presentation to the senses. On the other hand, knowledge about is derived from knowledge by acquaintance. This is the knowledge of the relations between sensations and perceptions. Concepts, which represent knowledge about, are not gained from the experience or the encounter with the objects directly but through the relations formed of the sensations derived from one's experience. One might not have been in contact with these objects directly, but they relate these to things to which they had been immediately exposed before. The knowledge about or knowledge of relations can be felt or experienced and this is what makes James' empiricism radical.

These two kinds of knowledge, knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about are complementary to each other. Both kinds of knowledge are indispensable--one cannot be clearly understood without being related to the other. If one wants to verify the reality of an image or a percept, he has only to resort to conceptual analysis. On the other hand, if he

wants to know about the reality of a concept, he has only to refer back to the direct acquaintance or immediate experience of such objects. Conceptual knowledge will be clearly understood only when it is verified through experience.

James' theory of willing is influenced much by his theory of knowing. In fact, this is the precondition for the process of willing. Knowing supplies ideas of the various movements that are possible and these are stored in the individual's memory. These ideas formulate anticipatory images of the consequences of a certain movement and are accumulated in the mind through the process of knowing. In the activity of willing, a healthy will is most ideal. A will is healthy when the ratio between the impulsive and the inhibitory ideas is normal. A healthy will produces a healthy decision.

James' theory of willing entails more than just mere deliberation of alternatives and the choosing of one but there is also the presence of "effort of attention" and "belief". His concept of "belief" and "effort of attention" makes his theory of willing different. For him, "beliefs are rules for action". A person has to believe in his capacity for doing an act and in the truth of his conviction, to make the corresponding action follow. With his beliefs, he can perform some activities that would have been impossible had there been no belief. One's belief gives him courage and self-confidence. Together with belief, James holds that

there is also "effort of attention". This "mental effort" is necessary to keep the idea or the chosen alternative stable in the mind. Willing is the prevalence of the idea in one's mind. Willing is the choosing of an idea and the focussing of the attention on it. Once this idea is kept stable in the mind, with the absence of any antagonistic thought to dislodge the original idea from its place, then the corresponding action will follow. The action follows the idea due to the "mysterious connection between the thought and the motor centres which cannot be guessed at".

The main concern of this thesis is to show the relevance of William James' theories of knowing and willing to the New Society. The goals of the New Society are incorporated in the "Operation Plan PLEDGES". For the achievement of such goals, James' theories of knowing and willing are necessary. These goals had to be known before they had to be willed. To know them is to experience and relate them to one's experience. Just like James' theory of knowing, the Filipino has his knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about. His knowledge by acquaintance is his personal contact with the proposed measures of the President. Through his senses, the Filipino is in contact with objects included in the measures. On the other hand, knowledge about is derived from his knowledge by acquaintance. His knowledge about is had through vicarious experience--that experience gained through reading. He might not have been in contact

with these objects directly, but relates these to things to which he had been immediately exposed before. Both knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about constitute the whole knowing aspect of the Filipinos.

Through his knowing process, a Filipino has accumulated a supply of ideas for his activity of willing. This is the precondition for deliberation and for decision-making. In this period of the New Society, the Filipino has to decide whether to follow the proposed measures of the President or not. Upon selecting either of the two options, a Filipino has to believe in his choices and in his capacity of following such measures and has to keep his attention focussed on it and this is done with "mental effort". With belief and effort of attention, most often than not, the corresponding action will follow. Hence, if a Filipino chooses to follow the proposed measures, then he has only to believe in them and to focus his attention on them, and this is done with "mental effort". If such ideas remain stable in his mind, not being dislodged by any antagonistic idea, the corresponding action will follow.

William James' theories of knowing and willing are very much relevant to all the goals of the New Society, especially to the development of moral values in the Filipinos and to make their lives more authentic. To be self-disciplined is to avoid the practice of "backsliding"

or the creeping return of the bad habits in the Old Society. A disciplined and morally conscious person is more receptive to reforms as well as a more effective instrument for development.

This thesis is in itself a recommendation. It is the aim of the writer to make William James' philosophical thoughts, most of all his theories of knowing and willing, known to all Filipino people. James' ideas could influence the lives of the Filipinos. These philosophical thoughts could make their lives worth living and could also develop an awareness of their consciousness and be able to "listen" to their bodily activities "keenly".

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B I B L I O G R A P H Y

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A P P E N D I X

APPENDIX

INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL

The inspiration to write this thesis came from the writer's readings of William James' works. One cannot help but be impressed by James' ability to resolve any indecision that confronted him. In the words of Rollo May in his book Love and Will, "James was plagued by vacillation and the inability to make up his mind,"¹ and only by emerging successfully from that state of indecision and depression did he learn much about the human will.

Decision-making is not a new activity for man. In fact, it is so common that people tend to presume its presence and its usefulness in their lives. In the case of James, he had to be attentive to his experience of willing before he was able to formulate any theory. He found out that willing is not simply a mere act of choosing but it entails something else.

James had the knack for describing imaginatively and richly his experiences. He could observe keenly those activities which most men would take for granted. Ralph

¹Rollo May, Love and Will (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1969), p. 218.

Barton Perry, a former student of James, commented in his book In the Spirit of William James that James had an artistic gift for describing one's consciousness and an extraordinary sensuous and introspective acuity. "He could capture feelings and fleeting impressions which slipped through the coarser nets of other observers."²

THE PROBLEM

In life, men are always confronted by circumstances wherein they have to make a choice or a decision. In fact, human existence itself is a bundle of choices. It cannot be doubted that the problem of making decisions or to pick a choice is a problem commonly confronting man. This very activity brackets man from the brutes--only an intelligent or a rational being can make decisions. Only man has a will and decision-making is an activity of the will.

Man alone can make choices and he has to stand responsible for them. The choices he makes shape his everyday life, in particular, and his way of life, in general. In regard to the Filipino people, three obstacles stand in their way to having the opportunity and right to choose and really become responsible. These obstacles are "the

²Ralph Barton Perry, In the Spirit of William James (U.S.A.: Indiana University Press, 1958), p. 80.

conditions of life that are less human due to ignorance, superstitions, traditional Filipino attitudes and values, poverty, malnutrition and diseases",³ secondly, "the unjust and oppressive structures; and lastly, the existence of sin".⁴ These factors cause the most common problem in the present New Society--"backsliding". This is "the creeping return of old society habits in segments of the populace".⁵ Due to "backsliding", measures passed by President Ferdinand E. Marcos for a better New Society might not be implemented and put to practice. Instead of following the measures proposed by the President, many Filipinos are "backsliding" to the practice of the Old Society that have no place in the New Society. President Marcos therefore encourages in every Filipino "moral regeneration" or "moral transformation". A knowledge of James' theory of willing is of great help in this present era, hence, this thesis. The problem here is twofold and may be stated as follows: What are William James' theories of knowing and willing? Are these theories of knowing and willing relevant to the New Society?

³Vitaliano R. Gorospe, S.J., The New Christian Morality and the Filipino (Manila: Jesuit Educational Ass., 1973), pp. 42-43.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Primitivo Mijares, "PM Views: Call the PC and Have Him Arrested," Philippines Daily Express, March 6, 1974.

THE PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this work to formulate William James' theories of knowing and willing and their relevance to the goals of the New Society. An exact knowledge of knowing and willing is relevant to practical life, for if man knows what knowing and willing are, then it would be less difficult to decide and to carry out his plans or decisions. James' theories of knowing and willing, it is hoped, will be of help to Filipinos in their transcendental process towards being authentic members of the New Society.

The main objectives of the whole work are:

1. To study carefully James' theory of knowing before analyzing thoroughly his theory of willing, for an analysis of the former would lead to a better understanding of the latter.
2. To formulate James' theories of knowing and willing.
3. To state the relevance of James' theories of knowing and willing to the goals of the New Society, especially to the DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES in Filipinos.

THE METHOD USED

The predominating method in this thesis is descriptive analysis. The main writings read and analyzed by the writer are the following: Principles of Psychology, 2 volumes; Psychology: Briefer Course; Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking; The Meaning of Truth, A Sequel to Pragmatism; and Essays in Radical Empiricism. To avoid misinterpretations of his "language" and his thoughts, the writer quoted William James' ideas "verbatim" or "word-for-word", whenever possible.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

For clarity's sake, the writer describes the terms used very often in this thesis.

Experience

This refers to a condition or a state of awareness. The usage of this term is not uniform since its definition involves a theoretical point of view. William James does not limit the meaning of "experience" to sensible experience only but also to mental experience or as he himself used in his writings, "religious experience", or objects that could not be verified sensibly. Experience could also mean one's relationship with something real, by including

it in one's existence. To verify "mental experience" is to see whether it could be "lived through in one's existence".

Knowledge Of or Knowledge by Acquaintance

This knowledge is gained through direct contact with sensible or tangible objects. Such kind of knowing is gained through sensations, perceptions, memory and imagination.

Knowledge About

This kind of knowledge is more complex than the knowledge by acquaintance. Concepts give rise to such kind of knowledge. These are taken from or abstracted from experience or knowledge by acquaintance and they are pure conventions; these concepts derived their meaning from their power, through associations and agreement, to suggest experience. Images or percepts give rise to knowledge by acquaintance and the concepts or ideas are derived from them.

Effort of Attention

This is an essential phenomenon of willing. The effort meant here is not a physical one but it is rather a mental effort. Effort of Attention is not the effort exerted when performing an action. Rather, it is a volitional effort.

Interest and Attention

These two terms are inseparable--one cannot be understood without the other. James himself claims that whoever discusses interest should also discuss attention, for to claim that an object is interesting is only another way of claiming that it also begets attention. Hence, it can be said that interest is that which draws the attention of a person to a particular thing and that attention is that kind which is given to an object of interest.

Pragmatism

This is primarily a method of settling metaphysical disputes that otherwise might be interminable. Whenever a dispute is serious, one ought to be able to show some practical difference that must follow from one side or the other's being right. It tries to interpret notions by tracing its respective practical consequences.

Backsliding

This is the creeping return of Old Society habits which have no place in the New Society.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

To the writer's knowledge, there is no work yet written on the topic being pursued by the writer despite the many philosophical periodicals dealing with the life and writings of William James. However, there are books

with chapters discussing William James' concepts on knowledge and will. On the former topic, some of them are Bernard P. Brennan's William James; Edward Carter Moore's William James; Ralph Barton Perry's In the Spirit of William James and the dissertation of Keith David, Ph.D. entitled "Percept and Concept of William James." On the latter, some are Will in Western Thought written by Vernon J. Bourke; William James: The Message of a Modern Mind authored by Lloyd Morris; and John Wild's The Radical Empiricism of William James. The chapters in the said books are closely related to the theories of knowing and willing of William James but they do not mention any relevance to the New Society, or to any society, for that matter. Hence, this thesis.

PLAN AND ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The whole thesis is organized in the following manner:

Chapter 1, The Life and Works of William James, is divided into two parts. The first part deals with his life as a physician, psychologist, lecturer, teacher and philosopher. The second part treats his most important works or writings often used by the writer.

Chapter 2, discusses James' Radical Empiricism. His philosophy of radical empiricism, together with his doctrine of pragmatism, is the springboard to his Theory of Knowing.

Chapter 3, James' Theory of Knowing, deals with the two kinds of knowledge: Knowledge Of or Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge About, and with his pragmatic theory of truth.

Chapter 4, James' Theory of Willing, is subdivided into the following topics: the kinds of will, the five types of decision, radical dimensions of belief, his effort of attention and his theory of willing.

Chapter 5 states the goals of the New Society and the concept of individual discipline as a key to moral development.

Chapter 6 is the discussion of the relevance of James' theory of willing to the New Society. His theory is applicable to the formation of individual discipline for the development of moral values to counteract the practice of "backsliding."

Chapter 7 is the Conclusions and Recommendation of the thesis.

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