

THE “KARL JASPERS FORUM” UPDATE 20, Jaspers’ Unconditional Imperative, Primordial Dichotomy, David Miller, Vatican Paul, and Paul Roberts’ Evolutionism

NOTATIONS: Herbert Muller’s postings recently include his exchange with Paul Roberts upon which this UPDATE 20 focuses. D. K. Johnson’s comment leaves one in a state of expectation awaiting the retort by Ernst Glasersfeld. Herbert has asked Sid Barnett what he means by philosophical truth. I’ll touch on what Jaspers has to say about philosophical truth, and by way of a reconsideration of David Miller’s superb Articles and Responses. None of the commentators make reference to the theistic Karl Jaspers, and in the void both Herbert and Paul have propounded atheism. In a proper Popper less popish sense, let’s see the David Miller’s Hume/Ockham rubber hitting and roaming off the Rome-road. David Miller sees the Popper genius, but there’s no mention of the genius of the Jaspers’ precursory work. David’s philosophy of science as presented is comparable to Jaspers’.

For Quick Reference

1. Paul Robert’s and David Miller

12. Jaspers on Philosophical Truth

1. Paul Roberts saddled and rode into Forum on David Miller—To good effect Herbert Muller apparently sought and received permission to post David Miller’s “Being an Absolute Skeptic” (from Science, Vol. 284--and Paul Roberts followed in Vol. 285) as a Target Article, and it can now be reread with greater deliberation and appreciation regarding the historical setting that spins around the unimpeachable vatic “Proclamation” of 10-22-96. The unimpeachable proclamation inspired S. Gould to say, “...sincere Christians must now accept evolution...as a proven fact”. In reality, nothing could be more distanced from philosophical truth. And though David need not be interpreted as inferring any mindfulness of that vatic revelation, there’s no denying the fallout particulates permeated the atmosphere and biosphere of the immediate period then as now. It has left some addicted, some in withdrawals--if they did not ignore or do not mask it.

2. David quite appropriately pronounced clearly the value and function of philosophy as encompassing and penetrating science with an attitude that was constantly alert to pointing at “overlauded” scientific rationalism. He showed while pointing at the limits of all categories of science the need for scientists to “show greater readiness to admit ignorance” and no less readiness to see how skeptics faithful to the scientific method can be overbearingly skeptical. He elucidated the need for greater humility by citing the example of BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy). Interestingly, I too did similarly, referring to a 1998 reference in TA 51--but from a more forensic perspective--showing how religion can contribute to the spread of disease by interfering in health-care issues. I had not read David Miller’s article at that time. Like the elders of the Foré tribe, the nodding of approval contributed to and established religious behavior and the epidemic that followed the eating of transubstantiated diseased corpses.

3. David's piece was published in June of 99, and is comparable to Jaspers' expressions on philosophical truth to be found in *Way To Wisdom* and in a major way throughout his works. The result of David's posting on the McGill supported Forum was that it presented an opportunity for a response to a critic, Paul Roberts. Paul's lauded scientific positivism can be called "evolutionism". * *Herbert, due perhaps to providence and some degree of grace-granted reason, aired a primordial issue, the historic and beyond the historic, the controversy over humankind's creativity v. magistrated naturalism.* There was something Paul Roberts could not tolerate about David's presentation. It dared not include and even more daringly excluded the word "evolution". Evolutionism cannot tolerate the loss of any degree of magistrate-authority, a superiority complex now magnified by the intervention of a religious vatic magistrate. It is now irreverent to ignore the word even if one has simply moved beyond and above the questionable categorical status given to evolutionism to a state of philosophical objectivity. Philosophical status as a matter of course does not participate in certitudes regarding empirical origins. But Paul increases the volume lauding evolutionism, revs up (revolutions in the billions) rhetoric, races and passes the EMS vehicle loaded with justified science-products bringing aid to sufferers, squeezes in--squealing hubris verbiage--betwixt an EMS and the vehicle insecurely loaded with some precarious hope for humankind's future in preparation for "biospheric degradation".

4. David Miller's "R 0" and Paul's E-word—David Miller does a "Response 0" (rather than R 1) and includes a resounding retort to Paul's reaction. Read it. One could interpret his "Response 0" as hinting at the futility of the infinite-verbiage-game playable at the limit of knowledge. In his reply to several, including Paul, David still avoided being ensnared by the use of the word "evolution"—though it could simply have been due to the purity of philosophical truth. David proved his worth and fulfilled his "...I am a philosopher and a skeptic..." David even dared to speak of Robert's "nature displays repetitive patterns" again without mentioning the e-word. David's Responses to his critics were comparable to Karl Jaspers' quality of thinking. David not only silenced Paul momentarily, he in other Responses critiqued Herbert so effectively that Herbert needed to defend himself and attempted to do so through the very next Target Article. A safe retort for Herbert, for David had already looked at Herbert's formula with astonishment and said "unbelievable"—an obvious departing salutation. Nothing more was heard from Paul Roberts until TA63 C11 when Greg Nixon said something that gave Paul the excuse for loudly justifying the evolutionism theory by more Gregorian chanting about "15 billion time-unites" as though it was worth its weight in cupidity. But the only justification for the chant were the later versions that reduced in value--through meta-subtractions--the defense of evolutionism to "4.5 billion years". Later the version repeated the measurement factor, but reduced it to 3.5 billion when I suggested evolutionism was getting off the Jaspers' track in some "biological diverticulum" sense. He wanted to force me to use the e-word while prostrated before the profane pole of the ...primordial dichotomy.

5. Appropriate Reaction to Paul/Pauls' Magically Magnified Magistration—Herbert, by permission, posted as Comment 2, Paul Robert's reaction to David. Paul obviously did not like the philosophical wisdom, i.e., the balanced skeptical attitude David was talking

about. Paul's evolutionism primordially recoiled at the tone of the wise reminder that science has no authority in the future of humankind, a future made unpredictable when the unconditional imperative meets the historical road leaving natural patterns of martyr-blood. It's hard for an empiricist to swallow such road kill. Such philosophical wisdom had to be challenged and the time was vatic-ripened and preserved for Paul to come lauding "...billions of years". He can now, with vatic sanctification, expound outside the classrooms where mandatory students are held captive. Now, post 911, Paul can make meaningless such non-aggressive self-sacrifices by lumping them emotionally in verbiage about "jihad" (see his third "Forum" contribution TA78, C24).

6. Emblazoned Divine Intervention—Paul Roberts' bold reaction to the restraints philosophical wisdom places on scientific positivism has been emboldened by religious institutionalism's interference, i.e., that bit of divine intervention, that vatic authoritative proclamation a few months prior to 1997. It was gathering momentous audacious confidence in the catholicity (universalization of positivism) faction and voting bloc of the educational industry. It was an arranged congenial situation where one "magistrate" began kissing the toe rather than sniffing the hand of the other "magistrate". One Paul's emblazoned dogma more than doubly unfolded in a patterned impressive way into another Paul's brazen dogmatism.

7. Inordinate Institutional Forces, named and nameless—The stakes are higher now too. Paul, whether he likes it or not, sense Oct. 22, 1996 is astride the other Paul, **the magistrate** of religious primates (in early church history primate refers to prime church officials; it is not a pun nor insult). Liking it is his best alternative. He also rides the tide of historical primetime, a wave of billions of time unites, or to use Gould's other division of authority, the **magistrate of educative-science in infinitely measurable form**. The two divisions not only bump but hug publicly on the political and economical bloc, internationally and regionally, but always in an influential trickle-down way that ebbs down to the provincially substratum too. We have now no longer the separation of the church-of-education and States' mandated education system, and the bridge over the bi-functional divide is dogma and dogmatism, i.e., Evolutionism disguised in a category where the "ism" is taken for granted as truth—"evolution".

8. Paul displays credentials from the **Oregon State University**, and it is claimed that he has approved experience in **teaching** mandatory school age students (which in Oregon includes the age of 18). (Of course we know this mean federal, state, and local tax funds are involved in the education system.) So, if one challenges his dogmatism, one in effect salmon-swims upstream virtually/vertically to take on the **local, regional, State, and Federal educational departments that approved-for-funding those entities now under the momentum of compliance**. One must meet administrative forces already patterned offensively and on the defensive. These forces don't take kindly to being shown accountability administrative procedures were and are out-of-compliance with the philosophical spirit of mandatory attendance statutes, and out of sync with the federal and state separation rights and clauses.

9. Wait, though, there's more. If I am more incorrect than correct I stand willing to be corrected. Paul represents by association a **Website (Science Education Partnership) sanctioned by a local and state education system, and involves Hewlett-Packard Industries at least by association.** Paul is obligation to perform well enough to validate the screening procedures of that group. Though participation might be voluntary and as such has social approval, it is no less influential and can actually serve to absorb the risk and responsibilities of unionized teachers' need for defensive buffer zones especially relative to teaching controversial subjects.

10. Wait though, now there is more. Paul's critique of David Miller qualified him as reputable enough to be publicized in **Science**, which also was found appealing enough to be posted on a **McGill** funded website-forum bearing the notable name of the deceased **Karl Jaspers**. Paul may not have sought the latter, i.e., it appeared he was recruited, the reasons, stated or real, can be scrutinized and that extenuating circumstance could be his--and all groups represented--best defense. But none can predict with precision the forms inerrant-knowledge's failures can take in the face of the bold-faced absence of learned ignorance. These associations also lay popular claim to good intentions in the name of well-rounded empiricism and while wearing the same square hats, squared to fit natural patterns and natural social constructivism. Jaspers says in the *Way to Wisdom, "History of Man"* that "we see the irremediable injustice of all institutions" and the contextual meaning of the statement applies most amiably to the students caught up in our educational multicultural world. Reacting to these forces gets us closer to what Jaspers means by becoming-conduct, i.e., behavior beyond the call of magistrated duty thanks to the source of the...unconditional imperative. That conduct "here I stand and cannot do otherwise" is empirically perceived as misconduct and not becoming.

10. Micro-Macro-Millionth Timing—The timing of the establishment of the Herbert Muller/McGill Website ("Karl Jaspers Forum") corresponds as closely as practically possible with Oct. 22, 1996. I mean from then till the first Target Article is only a matter of months. Look at also the timing of the creation of SEP, the first question and answer I believe is assigned the date of Aug. 1996 with the category of Botany and Engineering, and moved quickly then to Chemistry and Physics, and Geology in Jan of 97, and the category of "Evolution" in April of 98, 18 months after the vatic proclamation establishing "evolution" as vatic truth which makes it now evolutionism. Now if the meta-million years of inferred "evolution" means a second in cosmic eternal time, it looks trivial in comparison with 18 months. My point, my time-point here is that it amounts to play at the limits of thinking, and a philosopher can inconspicuously play soccer as well as a clerically attired preacher of dogma and as well if not better than a scientist propounding absolute certainty in any category. I am not suggesting that herein referred individuals conspired and timely designed everything, but the critical scientific attitude urges a step back to review what dogma and influences may have led one and another to think and behave in a certain way and establish a forum.

11. Paul's provincial environment and what's at risk—If the portrayal in this paragraph is incorrect I apologize. And anyone is welcomed to e-mail me and make corrections. Based on what "Paul Roberts" has posted, or what has been posted about

him, he has long taught “evolution” to mandatory school age children. He then has an image to defend if his answers are disputed. This picture is based on a Website record containing dates, questions, and answers, the answers to questions supposedly posed by children some of whom are seemingly cultured with values that could and should be responsibly analyzed and addressed. If these are not real questions and real students then what we have here is a premeditated designed vectored Website in the name of science-education and as such it is deserving of close scrutiny by insider and outsider denizens. I have looked briefly and randomly at this record of questions and expert answers. A few answers, some especially in the category called “evolution”, are lacking in understanding and seemed set on ridicule, and not much empathy in view of the fact they are supposedly children asking adult questions.

12 (a baker’s dozen). JASPERS ON PHILOSOPHICAL TRUTH— Herbert has asked Sid Barnett what he meant by philosophical truth. In answering from Jaspers’ view, the above presentation can serve as a partial occidental-orientation. Quite in contrast to the atheism of Herbert Muller and Paul Roberts stands the theistic Jaspers. Without grasping Jaspers theistic stance there’s no way he cannot be misunderstood. Without the idea of God there is no authentic idea of the individual. In Jaspers *Way to Wisdom*, for the atheist, Chapter IV “*The Idea of God*” is required reading and appropriating. It is essential to understand Chapter V “*The Unconditional Imperative*”, then the Chapters on “*Man*”, “*History of Man*”, “*The Independent Philosopher*” and “*philosophy of Science.*” The titles speak for themselves.

12.1 Other than saying here that for Jaspers the Western idea of God has its predications influenced by “two historical roots: the Bible and Greek philosophy” but “long before and outside the world of biblical revelation there was certainty as to the reality of the godhead”. But “if I do not experience the miracle of selfhood, I need no relation to God, I am content with the empirical existence of nature, many gods, demons.” “God is reality, absolute, and cannot be encompassed by any of the historical manifestations through which *He speaks to men*. If He is, Man as an individual must be able to apprehend Him directly [emphasis mine].”

12.2. From this ultimate source that encompasses and penetrates the objective-subjective dichotomy, Jaspers begins talking about the unconditional imperative by talking about martyrs, and they serve as examples of that unconditional behavior that defies normal empirical thinking. They stood on principle to be chained to flames. They stood and could not do otherwise and that is the imperative, and the source was within themselves but out of individual selfhood made possible by and from beyond the limits of knowledge, whether knowledge of self or others.

12.3. Though Jaspers does not emphasize it almost as though it goes without saying, for me the crucifixion of Jesus has served as the example of the manifestation of the unconditional imperative. It is so phenomenal it is subject to phenomenal exploitation. On one end of the spectrum of truth the example is the most difficult to follow, and on the other end of the spectrum, it is used as an excuse for not having to do anything uncomfortable. I’m unfortunately found more to the right than the left on that spectrum.

*With a meaningful and perhaps inspirational stretch of the imagination, David's response to Paul was like the Old Testament David's response to Saul, and Paul's reaction to David creates a reversal of New-Testament's Saul whose name was changed to Paul by revelation, and the now "magistrate Paul", up for sainthood, is a reminder that the biblical Paul while imprisoned in Rome was the semi-author of the principle of common sainthood which could be taken as a premonition of and reaction to institutional Sainthood.