

A Dialectical Reality: Disjunctive and Conjunctive Terministic Screens on the Development of Human Thought in Religion and Philosophy

KAROL NATALY ZAMBRANO

PhD Scholar, School of Foreign Languages
Shanghai University, China
PROF. MIAO FUGUANG
School of Foreign Languages
Shanghai University, China

Abstract

Burke's thoughts on reality as symbolic, determined by terministic screens created by men, the symbol-making animals, marked a new era for Linguistics. The expansion of the study of this discipline to all sort of fields and scenarios opened the door for a deeper analysis of human relations and the role of language in the construction of reality. The present paper aims to apply Burke's theory of terministic screens to certain stages of development in the line of human thought that are evinced on two areas of knowledge: Religion and Philosophy. The objective of the researcher is to highlight the dialectical nature of our reality by illustrating dialectical interactions between two kinds of terministic screens: a disjunctive one, based on division and characterized by a strong sense of categorization through the prepositions either/or; and a conjunctive one, centered on the merger rather than on the divider and described by a holistic interaction of the elements in an and/both collaboration.

Keywords: Burke, Terministic Screens, Dialectical Reality, Disjunctive, Conjunctive, Linguistics, Religion, Philosophy.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Burke's thoughts on reality as symbolic, determined by terministic screens created by men, the symbol-making animals, marked a new era for Linguistics. The expansion of the study of this discipline to all sort of fields and scenarios opened the door for a deeper analysis of human relations and the role of language in the construction of reality. Reality, according to Burke, is a clutter of symbols combined with all kind of personal perceptions that form what he calls 'terministic screens' which determine one's own reality. Although the experience of the world may vary from individual to individual, similarities in the observation of the world could be found. This is why it is possible to witness some sort of 'communion' or cooperative network in the Cosmo visions depicted by different social groups found in religion, culture, race, and so forth.

It is interesting to realize that all humans usually interpret the world and react to it in similar ways no matter their personal background. Some tent to draw life on a two-dimension canvas, categorizing elements on two opposite, irreconcilable poles, ignoring or simply putting aside the nuances and hues on the painting. Some others, manage to see a greater picture on a 3D dimension, being aware of the complexity of life and how things are present but movable, born but transform, and how every element is connected in multiple ways to multiple elements in different levels to form the dialectical reality in which we all live. However, in order to achieve this last level of thought, our way of thinking should be deepened, our categories may become more flexible and our boundaries might be enlarged. We may also need to overcome various prejudices, taboos and paradigms we all acquire in our respective growth environment.

In the present study, after a concise explanation of key concepts, this development of thought will be studied departing from the very first ontological inquiries made by humans in religion to the more experiential observations of human life in society in the modern and contemporary philosophy. Afterwards, some considerations and further applications of this analysis will be suggested.

1.2 Rationale

Since the very first time I encountered Burke's theories, I got an impression of depth and complexity in his thought that was candid to me. Burke's theories intrigued me sorely so I decided to study more

about his philosophy and the way he perceives reality. Although his ideas are quite intricate and enigmatic, surprisingly, I felt identified with many of them and had the sense of, somehow, being able to grasp their essence. I say 'surprisingly' since I am still an amateur with respect to Rhetoric and my knowledge on Burke's theories is limited.

Indeed, Burke's philosophy is not an easy reading. However, there was a concept that specially attracted my attention: The dialectical nature of reality and the terministic screens humans use to perceive it. Concerning the dialectical nature of our world, I did not have any objection since contrasting relations of elements are present everywhere, every time. . Nonetheless, after some consideration, I realized that our attitude or response towards this kind of reality might differ and, what is more, that our reaction will determine not only individual but also social success or failure in any sort of process humans may be involved.

This is why I have tried to pursue a deeper understanding of the dialectics in the development of human thought and discovered multiple dialectic interactions in the studies of Religion and Philosophy. By examine some paramount stages in the mentioned areas, my intention was to lead readers to trace a map of the evolution of human thinking in History with respect to two types of perceptions , disjunctive and conjunctive, and search for an application for our day and age.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In his first essay of his collection *Language as Symbolic Action* (1966), Burke defined humankind as a "symbol using animal". According to Burke, what we call 'reality' is actually a "clutter of symbols about the past combined with whatever things we know mainly through maps, magazines, newspapers, and the like about the present . . . a construct of our symbol systems" (p. 5). Each human being has internalized different systems according to his beliefs. Each belief system has its own vocabulary to describe how the world works and what things mean, thus presenting its adherents with a specific reality. Burke analyses these various systems from politics to religion in works like *The Rhetoric of Hitler's "Battle"* (1939) and *The Rhetoric of Religion* (1961). He provides as well a method to analyze the drama of life denominated 'Dramatism' which developed throughout the years

in works like *A Grammar of Motives* (1945), *Language as Symbolic Action* (1966) and, more specifically, in *Dramatism and Development* (1972).

Various scholars have written about Burke's theories some in an attempt to systematize his thought (Ross, 1985), explain Burke's theories (Nebergall, 1966; Overington, 1977; Warnock, 1986,) or extend his ideas (Condit, 1992), just some to mention. Different applications have surged as well from Burke's theoretical framework in diverse fields such as philosophy, arts, literature, sociology, and so forth. In the case of the Terministic Screens concept, there are few researches that study it and its implications in depth. Some of the most remarkable are the one made by Wang (2012) about the concepts of dramatism and terministic screen in the Philosophy of Language ; professor Klumpp's application (2007) of the concept of dialectics and terministic screens and to the resolution of conflicts in communities ,and the comparison made by Slob (n/d) of Burke's terminology with William James 'philosophy.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Burke's key concepts

Kenneth Burke is definitely not a systematic thinker. Actually, trying to put Burke's formulations together could be troublesome. The best word to define Burke's thought is 'appositional', a term used by Joseph Bogen's (1975) and which defines a kind of thought that generates "simultaneous patterns rather than sequential order" (Bogen, 1975, p. 27 in Ross, 1985). However, for the sake of our study, some of the main concepts will be listed below as a guide to better understand Burke's general worldview.

Table: Hereafter a chart with the concept and its broad definition:

Attitude	The preparation for an act, a state of mind that may or may not lead to an act
The Absurd	The contradictions that dialectical operations involve us in Ex 1: The ultimate sacrifice does involve a dying. And a dying may involve a killing, by another or by the self for whereas sacrifice is the very essence of peace, it becomes instead the essence of war, with men piously persuading themselves that they are never as comfortable as when contemplating a blood-bath. Ex 2: social estrangement results from hierarchy and order, and it results in mystery. Hierarchy just is, and it creates mystery. The master motive of

Karol Nataly Zambrano, Miao Fuguang- **A Dialectical Reality: Disjunctive and Conjunctive Terministic Screens on the Development of Human Thought in Religion and Philosophy**

	rhetoric is "identification," which is anti-hierarchical. Thus, two conflicting forces-- centrifugal and centripetal--create the social structure.
	Ex 3: motivation is always dualistic, dialectical. The soldier wants to kill the enemy of his country, but hates to kill another human being, and depending on your point of view, he is a hero or a murderer
Communion	the interdependence of people through their common stake in both cooperative and symbolic networks
Definition	You tell what something is by telling what it is not. Therefore, in talking about something, you are talking about its opposite
Man	the symbol-using (symbol-making, symbol-misusing) of Man" animal inventor of the negative (or moralized by the negative), separated from his natural conditions by instruments of his own making, goaded by the spirit of hierarchy (or moved by the sense of order), and rotten with perfection."
Reality	clutter of symbols about the past combined with whatever things we know mainly through maps, magazines, newspapers and the like about the present
Hierarchy	An inevitable condition--hence, mystery and guilt. The king and peasant are mysterious to one another. King is guilty for being up, and peasant for being down. Hierarchies motivate their members to strive for perfection in order to advance or maintain upper echelons of power within the hierarchy.
Perfection	Every symbol system carries with it the principle of perfection, and we have the compulsion to carry our actions to the perfect ends implied by the system
Dissociation	All "truths" are composed of a fact and an abstraction: Business (fact) is good (abstraction).
Dramatism/drama	a theoretical concept is used to determine the motives of individuals In simpler terms, dramatism allows for the study, and subsequent critique, of terms that represents and encompasses similar items or concepts that are present within the lives of individuals.

For Kenneth Burke, human reality is a drama embedded in a system of symbols to which man himself has contribute to establish by his creation of the negative ; creation motivated by the desire of defining the intangible, ungraspable. This resulted in the origin of hierarchy and self- slavery. Thus, men no longer owned their world but became alienated by the system they created and got far from perfection. This is the absurd, the dialectical reality full of contradictions we all live in. If men realize the presence of these dialectical operations, they would do it under the frame of the comic. However, it is impossible for a man to grasp reality thoughtfully for everyone has various archetypes, different abstractions or pieces of reality which determine the terministic screens through which one would describe reality. All truths have a fact and multiple abstractions, which sometimes are difficult to identify as subjective.

Concerning human relations, men, the symbol-using, misusing and making animals, interact through common cooperative and

symbolic networks that create interdependence among them or Communion. Although Hierarchy is always present, causing division, Communion is possible to keep when Identification takes place and even more when Consubstantiality, an all-encompassing unity of substances, is achieved.

Dialectics

Our reality is full of dichotomy and language mirrors that dialectic nature of things. Humans live in a web of connections where things strike together, as "competing voices in a jangling relation with one another". To deal with this dialectical tension, we forge instruments to cope with this vast and complex reality, full of conjunctions and disjunctions. These instruments are the symbols we use in language which construct rather than reflect reality. Symbols allow men to be self-conscious and, therefore, can be seen as a cathartic relieving of this dialectical tension.

Some examples of this tension are the contrastive relations of permanence and change, identity and identification, actus and stasis and merger and division. These pairs emphasize how words do not define through their platonic ideal, but through their relationship with other terms. This assimilation of the meaning of words rejects the referential theory—meaning is correspondence with a located reality—and points instead to meaning in use in context—a contextualist theory of meaning.

Burke's most concise definition of dialectic, the one in *A Grammar of Motives*, proclaims, "By *Dialectics* in the most general sense we mean the employment of the possibilities of linguistic transformation" (402). In order to understand his definition one may remember that symbol-using is a solely conventional, arbitrary and social process. Hence, the realities we construct discursively can be de- and reconstructed as we alter our discourse practices. Attention (reflection) is always focused on certain directions rather than others (selection), therefore, neglecting other elements (deflection) and, as a result, ending up in different observations that may depict either a conjunctive or a disjunctive relation of the elements (terministic screens). This is why meaning may be shaped by socio-cultural factors among many or inside a particular social group. As time passes and

the environment changes, social practices change, and so does language.

Terministic Screens

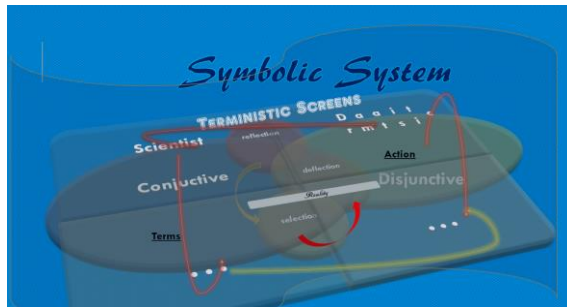


Figure: 1

The selective nature of our language and cognitions allows us to cope with the diverse pulser of experience always at hand. Nonetheless, the selection of certain features implies the deflection of some others, resulting in the creation of 'Terministic screens' or frames that determine an individual's perception and symbolic action in the world. They are a base to interpret reality and turn it into truth-systems unique not merely to individuals but more to each respective discourse community implying a social constructive pattern for the making of the meaning. Via terministic screens, the audience will be able to associate with the term or dissociate from it. In fact, "Our screens become projections of ourselves, and they shape the ways in which we see the world and act in it." (Smith 292).

Burke mainly describes two kinds of terministic screens: scientist and dramatic. The scientist screen (empiricist, naming) embraces the matter of naming or defining, conceiving definition itself as a symbolic act. This type of screen builds the edifice of language by stressing 'it is' or 'it is not'. On the contrary, dramatic screens are based on or concerned with the interpretation of the terms, thus, stressing phrases like 'thou shalt' or 'thou shalt not'.

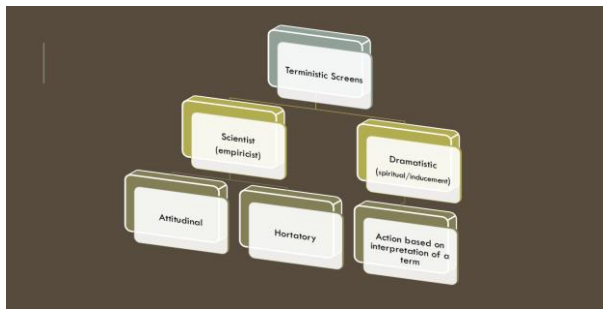


Figure: 2

What is interesting is that, in both screens, the contrast is present by means of the negative; another proof for the dialectical nature of our symbolic actions and reality. Men are the inventors of the negative since we have the ability to articulate something by saying what it is not. This is an action that does not exist in nature.

Two Habits of Mind: Attitude

Not only Burke perceived this tension of the opposites, between differences and similarities, points of reality that convey in various ways. We humans meet thousands of moments when either pieces of reality are presented to us, divided or joined at the pleasure of nature or other people; or when we are 'required' to make choices, engaging it as an experience and forming in us a mind pattern for selection. And, although circumstances and elements surrounding might be the same, our voluntary/involuntary, aware/unaware choice is what constructs the reality in our lives. In so speaking, the way we embrace the dialectical nature of things will work for or against us.

Hereafter, two habits of mind or terministic screens may be used in order to describe the main ways in which this dichotomy of life is adopted.

Disjunctive: Either/ Or

As professor *Klumpp (2007) defines*, either/or is “the binary of mechanistic, referential habits of mind. The binary performs categorization and leads toward essences, platonic ideals, and emphasis on the categories”. This habit of mind appeals to a ‘black and white’ reality where contraries are on the poles and never encounter, or ‘should not encounter’. It is a dramatist way of life in which disjunctivity is emphasized through a rigorous process of categorization by selection and deflection, based on assumptions regularly approved by a majority or by ‘the powerful voice’; assumptions that are represented as principles or values that will become the parameters for the classification of ‘the other’, those things which lie out of the common thinking ground.

Conjunctive: Both/And

Both/and turns the other way, “emphasizing that division in the merger/division dialectic always draws back toward merger” (*Klumpp, 2007*). Tension lies in their field of contestation—their striking together.

Although the tension is still experienced, it manages to find the energy generated by the striking together and accommodate both/and. *Both* represents the total dissolution of one concept into another, a seemingly perfect union of two different motions, happening together, communion. *And* shows the way two diverse elements are connected. It teases difference into the drive toward merger that inheres in every distinction.

Historical development of thought: from either/or to both/and

In the line of human thought it is possible to somehow trace the development of human thinking from a conception of the duality of the world seen through binary lens-where opposites *never* encounter and everything lies on a specific category- to a more complex and open view of the dialectical reality through the embracement of the tension and the awareness of the relationship among all elements. Let us briefly examine this progression in the process of development of two spheres of knowledge, Religion and Philosophy.

The Role of Religion

The first attempts of humans to understand their world around them were through the development of Religion. Religion gave uncontested answers to the ontological human need of knowing the *Why* of his existence and the existence of his living environment. The word itself is derived from the Latin *religiō* which ultimate origins are obscure. One of the interpretation, probably the most accurate, was suggested by Lactantius and made prominent by St Agustin. According to this definition *religiō* would come from the prefix *re* (again) and the root *ligare* (bind, connect) which would lead to the idea of “reconnecting”. In this respect, religion might be understood as the “tool” or the “means” to reconnect to a superior being(s) or state.

In this sense, it is interesting to see how, even though religion stems from a disjunction between man and a deity/spiritual level, it intends to provide a solution that brings opposite elements together and ‘reconciliate’ them. It can also be seen as a way of comprehending or responding to ‘the absurd’ encountered by every human when dealing with the contradictions and dialectical operations of this life. Hence, religion, as a cultural system of beliefs, is characterized by a specific set of practices, behaviors, rules, rituals and traditions which attain to relate humanity to what Geertz (1993) called “an order of existence” whether this comes from a supernatural being or beings or “some sort of transcendence” (*James, Paul & Mandaville, Peter, 2010, in Wikipedia, 2017*).

Influence of Religion

Belief systems have influenced every aspect of the forming and organizing of human communities from ancient times. For instance, there is clear evidence attesting the existence of prehistoric religions in the Indian subcontinent derived from scattered Mesolithic rock paintings by the Harappan people of the Indus Valley Civilization in 3300 BCE. What is more, religion is an inherited part of humankind. The belief in a superior entity or state is an essential part of being a human since, as a recent major three-year international study proved, we are “all naturally predisposed to believe in gods and life after death” (See *the Telegraph, 2011*).

Thus, religion grew out of our human ontological need of knowing the purpose behind existence. While science looks for giving an answer to the *How* of natural phenomena, religion provides,

somehow, a sort of responses to highly ontological questions related to the *Why* of things and beings such as why are we here? *Why should I lead a good life?* Or what is the meaning of life? Indeed, religion is as complex as humans as it entails the very nature of every man's inner essence. However, although the origin of religious practice might commonly derive from these previous statements, the various approaches, doctrines, rituals and traditions in the different religions of the world is overwhelmingly diverse. Unfortunately, most of the times, these differences among the systems have caused not only disunion, but also confrontation and even conflict. There are innumerable examples of how deeply fanatical and prejudicial attitudes towards other belief groups have affected entire communities throughout History. This kind of situations somehow depict some of the cons of an *either/or* approach towards reality. Since some beliefs highlight the divider rather than the merger, the division rather than the unification, cooperation *or*, in Burke's words, communion, cannot be attained- identification does not take place, therefore, hierarchy and separation is reinforced.

Nonetheless, if these religious systems are examined with wide lenses, several parallels in their origin and content might be traced. Some scholars have achieved to classify most of them into three main schools, namely, the Abrahamic religions (ex. Christianity, Islam, and Judaism), the Taoism religions (ex. Confucianism, Caodaism, Chondogyo, Shinto, and Taoism) and the Dharmic religions which all originated in the Indian subcontinent (ex. Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism); each of them possessing a wide range of resemblances and variations.

A binder: Morality

One of the common points of almost all religions is Morality. The standards of what is considered 'good' or 'bad' behavior do not significantly vary in several social groups. In fact, many shared principles are embraced by seemingly disjunctive belief systems. In order to explain this phenomenon, one may consider the importance of Morality in society. According to C.S. Lewis words, morality, first, ensures fair play and harmony between individuals; second, helps make us good people in order to have a good society; and, third, keeps us in a good relationship with the power that created us.

Based on this definition, it's clear that our beliefs are critical to our moral behavior. A recent report in the journal *Psychology Today* concluded: "The most significant predictor of a person's moral behavior may be religious commitment. People who consider themselves very religious were least likely to report deceiving their friends, having extramarital affairs, cheating on their expenses accounts, or even parking illegally." In accordance to this finding, what we believe in has a decided effect on our moral thinking and our behavior. Without belief in a God, the only option that seems to be left is to adhere to moral standards we shape by ourselves. What is interesting is that, even in the case of non-believers, the construction of a moral derives from a basis, foundation given by religion, as religion enhances categorization, binary models of good vs bad, appropriate vs inappropriate, pure vs sinful.

However, humans may reply differently to this moral dichotomy. Some may succumb in a pre-conventional or self-interest orientation that search for avoiding punishment or receiving a reward. This kind of people work on the basis of obedience vs punishment: 'I do/do not something to obey' or 'I do/do not do something to not be punished'. On the other hand, certain individuals may be more concerned about their responsibility or duty in society itself. For this kind the contrasting pairs are represented by the modal verbs that depict obligation or advice such as must/ must not, have/do not have, should/ should not. Finally, there are few who may dig in to find out the essence of the act or of the motives behind. They intend to analyze their nature and the nature of things so as to find a consensus and form a sort of universal ethics in an attempt to answer questions such as 'what if everybody did that?', ' what is the limit of my freedom and so on.

Philosophers are usually considered to be part of this last group as they go to the core of life matters and draw conclusions that serve as principles or prerogatives to analyze all kind of situations. Let us now have a brief look over the development of western philosophy and the way the two perspectives or terministic screens interact.

The role of Philosophy

Along with Religion, Philosophy was developed, in some cases from as a less drammatistic point, in the sense that it searched for conceptualizing rather than departing from the interpretation of the concept itself or the moralizing of a principle. Nonetheless, one may realize most of the philosophical findings before modernity are, in fact, 'statements of truth' which argue somehow a 'fix' view of reality that stands alone and its almost exclusive, rejecting models that look at reality from different angles. Hereafter, a general description of some relevant stages of the development of philosophical thinking will be presented in order to highlight the various ways in which the conjunctive and disjunctive screens are present.

4. GENERAL OVERVIEW ON THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

Greek philosophy- Ethics

As we may observe in History, Philosophy “has been around since the dawn of western civilization”; it makes vital part of the development of western culture. The Golden age of Greek Philosophy was in 5 d.c when philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle left their footprint in History with their thoughts, ideas that still have influence in our times. They sought the principle of things, departing from the particular to the universal, linking Philosophy to Physics and other branches of Science and trying to stablish a Human Ethic. Socrates and Aristotle are the main founders of what is dominated as *Virtue Ethics* that is the study that focuses on the role of character and virtue of an individual in a particular society. Aristotle declared that a virtuous person is someone who has ideal character traits. But these traits are not artificially created; they derive from natural internal tendencies that need to be cultivated. These virtues, once established, will become stable.

In essence, virtue ethics deal with questions like ‘How should I live?’ and ‘What is the good life?’ and ‘What are proper family and social values?’ In this sense, this branch categorizes attitudes, manners and behavior using disjunctive concepts of bad/good, proper/improper, virtuous/vicious.

This kind of ethical thinking has had a revival in our twentieth century in three main directions: Eudemonism, agent-based

theories, and the ethics of care. Eudemonism centers the relevance of virtues in human flourishing, where flourishing is equated with performing one's distinctive role well. In the case of humans, Aristotle declared that our distinctive role is reasoning, and so the life "worth living" is one which we reason well. An agent-based theory accentuates that virtues are determined by common-sense intuitions that we as observers judge to be venerable traits in others. The third branch, the ethics of care, was proposed predominately by feminist thinkers. It questions the idea that ethics should focus only on justice and autonomy; it argues that more feminine traits, such as caring and nurturing, should also be considered.

Patristic philosophers- Faith & Reasoning

Starting at the Roman republic, Christian thought was central in Philosophy, at least until the Enlightenment. San Agustin, Thomas de Aquino and many others approached the ontological questions of God and human existence from a more rational way and looked for reconciliation between faith and reasoning. Before this epoch, religion and philosophy functioned almost independently. However, thanks to the officialization of Christianity in the Roman Empire, its spread and integration with the politics of the regime, these two spheres mingled consolidating a strong partnership throughout the medieval age. Hence, aspects such as the existence of God, God's character and the creation were approached from a more rational perspective, by logical arguments and reasoning. As an example, Aquinas (1225-1274) proposed the theories such as the causer-non caused and God as the unmovable motor of all creation in order to prove the existence of God.

Later, in the 14th century Humanism took place, making emphasis on the role of men and the good life he should lead, turning philosophy into a more moral study. Then, some of the Platonic and Neoplatonic texts were recovered and mixed with Humanism to provide a new framework through which philosophy led one closer to God.

Modern philosophers- Skepticism

Later, in the 18th century, questions of how we come to know what we believe we know (Epistemology) and new ethical schools started to appear. As an example, a response to Scholasticism was Skepticism

seen as a clear disjunction between knowledge/truth. According to the Empirists, theories of knowledge should be grounded in experience and physical evidence. Sensory perception is involved in the formation of ideas rather than innate notions. Nonetheless, some years after, with the emergence of the German Idealism, represented by philosophers like Kant, Hegel and Bradley, even physical reality was put into question by asserting that reality is but a construct of the mind, and probably immaterial. At the same time, Existentialists even challenged the validity of moral and scientific thinking claiming that they are not enough in themselves and a further set of categories based on authenticity is necessary in order to validate their findings, and asserting that the experiences of the individual are central. This could be understood as conjunctive efforts that were made in order to integrate knowledge with human experience. Nevertheless, this line of thought brought about incertitude of what reality is, resulting in a separation between human experience, knowledge and reality. This would lead later to the idea that humans are incapable of knowing anything with certitude and that truth is relative.

Post-modern and contemporary philosophers- A relative reality

From the 19th century until 2007, the Pragmatic movement developed and saw the function of thought as a tool for prediction, action and problem solving rather than a description or mirror of reality. From then on, language has taken a very important role in defining the world, truth and reality. Analytic philosophers like Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein put an emphasis on clarity, logic and the analysis of language. Besides that, Ordinary Language philosophers such as J.L Austin, Gilbert Ryle and Wittgenstein pushed to eschew traditional philosophical theories based on the belief that these are rooted in linguistic mistakes committed by philosophers and seeing the study of the way words are used in everyday life as a remedy for that problem.

For instance, Wittgenstein (1958) claimed that scientific investigations or philosophical inquiries can remain on the grammatical level. He argued that concepts are based on linguistic conventions truth and falsity are grounded on human agreement in language. However, according to him, knowledge may not violate

ordinary human experience for there are regularities in men's experience among themselves and with the physical world. Thus, rules should have practical application to men's activities in the world as 'there are very general facts of nature' (Wittgenstein in Anscombe, 1958) possible to relate to all humans.

The Influence of Philosophy

Nowadays, Philosophy has been applied in every realm of knowledge originating branches like Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Religion, and Political Philosophy and so on. Nonetheless, Post-structuralists such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida stand on the theme of the instability of human sciences since humans are exceedingly complex and it is impossible to escape human structures so as to study them. Supporting this view, closely related to American Pragmatics, Post-analytic philosophers advocate a detachment from objective truth with an emphasis on utility, convention, and social progress.

In this sense, objectivity and human experience are separated, making impossible for any men to assert anything about reality except from what he experiences in and out of community. In this sense, the world is described as a container of multiple realities in which each individual's thoughts are validated by their own experiences, bringing about a variety of categorizations and interpretation of the relationship among elements. As it is presented above, philosophy has got to a point where the complexity and depth of human experience has become the focus of the study. Hence, a more hermeneutic and holistic way of thinking has started to take place in many spheres of society and influence the way we assimilate knowledge and , even, approach life.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Starting from the ontological questions about existence in religion to the more philosophical considerations about reality, human thinking has developed from a simplistic and narrowed way of interpretation to a more intricate and complex understanding of life, Religion indeed grew out of our human ontological need of knowing the purpose behind existence. While science looks for giving an answer to the *How*

of natural phenomena, religion intends to provide answers to the reason of existence and the meaning of life. However, the answers to these questions are multiple. Throughout History, various religious groups with different traditions, rituals and doctrine have emerged. What is interesting is that, in spite of the variety of beliefs, several parallels in their origin and content might be traced if they are examined with wide lenses. In fact, some scholars have achieved to classify most of them into three main groups: the Abrahamic religions, the Taoism religions and the Dharmic religions unfortunately, due to a mistaken stance on the differences, division has characterized most of these movements resulting in the reinforcement of hierarchy, oppression, intolerance and even war. For decades, many people have clung to a certain truth system in such a way that it often generates a pejorative and exclusive attitude towards the outsiders of the system. Although this still occurs in our day and age, contemporaneity has brought to the world a more conscious and inclusive perspective about each individual's dissimilarities and has promoted a more tolerant, peaceful and cooperative attitude towards diversity.

Besides that, as mentioned above, morality has become the binder for most of religions since many shared, common principles, values can be found. What is more, morality has got to a point where it is no longer linked to any specific religious system directly so as to contribute to its implementation in society in a wider and more neutral manner. As a matter of fact, philosophy is one of the greatest contributors to the enhancement of morality and ethics. Greek philosophers like Socrates and Aristotle's developed what is called *virtue ethics* whose focus was on the role of character and virtue of an individual in a particular society. Nowadays new branches have developed from this primitive study in a search for a smoother interaction of individuals in community and clarity on their responsibilities in society.

A similar evolution is seen in the assimilation of the relationship between faith and reasoning. In medieval times, this was indeed a sensationalist topic. Despite the efforts of various religious philosophers such as Agustin and Thomas of Aquinas to evince the common ground and close relationship between the two, conflicts of empire magnitude took place because of this misinterpretation. Fortunately, later in the 14th century, with Humanism , a new

framework through which philosophy led one closer to God was proposed, emphasizing more the aims philosophy and religion share, the identification of the role of men and the good life he should lead, turning philosophy into a more moral study.

On the other hand, from modernity, a disassociation between what men proclaim as 'truth' and reality commenced... This would lead to say that man creates what he calls 'reality' by means of Language or, in other words, that reality is constructed by Language.

In Burke words, all 'truths' were considered to be composed of a fact and an abstraction, as an example, 'business' is the fact, 'is good' is the abstraction. As a result, an ambiguous, doubtful attitude towards any absolute knowledge was spawned. At first, this understanding seemingly led to a disjunctive view on humans and reality, letting men unable of knowing anything with certitude. However, later in the 19th century until now, movements namely the Pragmatic and Post-analytic movements developed and saw the function of thought as a tool for prediction, action and problem solving rather than a description or mirror of reality and linked reality more specifically to human experience, individual and social, which would be the means of validation of any knowledge.

Nowadays, human experience, in its complexity and diversity, has been embraced as the main source of knowledge and the center of study. A broader understanding of the deep and cumbersome way in which the elements in our world has arisen, bringing about a more holistic and integrative approach to life. Nonetheless, there are still many areas and places in the world where this progress in thought is delayed. We all humans have still a lot to learn in order to enhance cooperation, identification and communion among us. The promotion of a more conjunctive screen would indeed help us in multiple ways to solve all kinds of conflicts, expand team work and improve social adaptation.

Certainly, the first step towards change is awareness and encouragement for developing a renewed way of thinking where the opposites do not collapse but merge and complement each other, where the dialectical nature of our reality is seen as a gift, as an opportunity for both individual and social growth in all aspects of life.

REFERENCES

- [1] Carly S, Woods. (n/d). *“Everything is Medicine”: Burke’s Master Metaphor?* University of Pittsburgh: Online journal.
- [2] Condit, Michelle, C. (1992). *Post-Burke: Transcending the Sub-stance of Dramatism*. Quarterly Journal of Speech. 78.
- [3] Geertz, C. (1993) *Religion as a cultural system*. In: The interpretation of cultures: selected essays, Geertz, Clifford, pp.87-125. Fontana Press
- [4] James F. Klumpp. (2017). *Conflict and Communities: The Dialectic at the Heart of the Burkean Habit of Mind [Keynote Address]*. KB Journal: The Journal of the Kenneth Burke Society. University of Maryland
- [5] Religion. (n.d). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved in February 28, 2017 from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion>
- [6] Slob, Paul (n/d). *“Terministic Screens,” Social Constructionism, and the Language of Experience: Kenneth Burke’s Utilization of William James*. Jstor: Online journal.
- [7] The Telegraph: UK newspaper. *The importance of Religion*. Retrieved in February 28, 2017 from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/>
- [8] Wang, Zhi-wei. (2012). *Burke’s View on the Philosophy of Language in Dramatism and Terministic Screens*. Foreign Language and Literature. Vol 28 No. 4.