



PROBLEMS OF EVIL AND THE QUESTION OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN NATURE

FOLORUNSO PAUL OLORUNSOLA, PhD

## Introduction

Ethnologically, we may identify some features in terms of culture, language, society and so on which are the common denominators of all known civilizations. Donald E. Brown enlists some of these cultural universals to include “myths, legends, daily routines, rules, concepts of luck and precedent, body adornment, and the use and production of tools; in the realm of language, universals include grammar, phonemes, polysemy, metonymy, antonyms”(Donald, 2004:47). He calls all these ‘absolute universals (Gotshalk quoted from Singer, 2004:188) because they are found among all peoples regardless of colour of skin. From the foregoing, one is apt to conclude that despite the obvious differences there are some conditions in which acceptable human nature are facts in human life and existence. Therefore, this is to further reinforce the notion of a common humanity by highlighting factors and condition where a universalist view of human nature is acceptable.

### The Problem of Evil as a Universal Phenomenon

The problem of evil is one big issue that has agitated the minds of philosophers and theologians for centuries and volumes of books have been written on the general title of ‘The Problem of Evil’. This problem has taking the dimension of interrogating the Supreme Being for allowing evils in the world. ‘Why did God allow evil and suffering in the world? Is there any society that is devoid of evil and evil doing? These questions seem to know no boundary. It is the same question that both black and white citizens of the world are asking. This is an indication that the notion of evil maybe cosmopolitan in outlook. Scholars have attempted to describe the idea of evil variously and for D. W. Gotshalk:

If good is value realization, evil is value destruction, and patterns such as murder wherein activity is value destructive are prime illustrations of evil. Yet, it seems, no human act is pure evil. Ordinarily the murderer ... aims at what he thinks is some good, such as revenge, wanton blood-letting, a ‘thrill’. Moreover, what

he does, indeed any evil, can be instructive of what evil is (ibid, 189).

This argument seems compelling on the face value but it approves of some form of evil to be good because it is ‘instructive of what evil is’. On Sunday of 6th August, 2017 the people of *Uzubulu* in Anambra state, Nigeria, woke up to a stunning murder of lives of innocent worshippers at early morning Mass in St. Philip’s Catholic Church. Covid-19 as it is popularly called has sent thousands of people worldwide to early grave both old and young. Going by Gotshalk, this evils are ‘constructive of what evil is’ because there were some merits in the act on the part of the doers. This argument justifies genocide and ethnic cleansing or a deliberate attempt at reducing human population through Coronavirus etc. and all other forms of evils to the extent that “even Satan, the paradigm of pure evil, is good to some extent” (ibid). Perhaps, Gotshalk seems to confuse ordinary wrong doing or bad actions, with evil, though, it may also be difficult to separate evil from bad action since the antithesis of ‘good’ is ‘evil’.

However, the term ‘evil’ is applicable to human beings in conducts and practices, “evil applies to persons, to intentions, to motives, to conduct, and to organizations, institutions, practices, arrangements, programmes, agencies, endeavours, and situations” (ibid: 189-190). These are avenues through which evil can be perpetuated and it is in this sense that we can talk of evil motives flowing from the volition to do evil. Looking at evil from this perspective it is lucid that evil is not culturally limited even though cultural factors can precipitate evil. Fundamentally, they are borne out of the features listed above and all these are universal characteristics of evil in the world peculiar to human nature. So, when we are implying that someone did what is evil, we are saying something about the person’s motives and character but this does not mean that someone that acted on an evil intention is basically an evil person the reason is for someone to be regarded as intrinsically evil will depend on series of complicated factors because evil doing can be intentional and non – intentional depending on the motives for carrying out the action. It is from this perspective that actions can be intrinsically evil. Obviously, from the foregoing, just like all *human actions* are different from *acts of man*,

human actions are pre-mediated and they are actions that results from human volition, the latter are involuntary. These obviously, cuts across boundaries therefore, the fundamental conception of evil seems to have unique definitive root common to humanity. That is, beneath the various disagreements that the conception of evil may offer, there are some common grounds among these conceptions of evil. For instance, Luke Rusell holds “evil is agreed to be a moral evaluative concept, and evil is widely agreed to denote only that which is extremely morally bad or wrong” (Luke, 2004: 670 ). Since conception of evil is morally bad action, then all plausible notion of evil is then a culpable one because they are connected to something harmful, malevolence, vicious and malicious. In another dimension which seems an instrumental conception of evil similar to what Gotshalk argued previously especially with regards to the desired end which evil can guarantee, Luke Rusell contends that an impure notion of evil implies that an evil person inflicts suffering on others not for its sake but as a means to securing some other desired end (Luke, 2009: 268). This seems to be the reason why evils are carried out because of the inherent good or end that it seeks to ensure for all evil doers. According to Todd Calder, he sees evil from two essential components, namely; “(1) significant harm and (2) what I call an e – motivation. By an e – motivation I mean an inexcusable intention to bring about, allow, or witness the significant harm of (1) for an unworthy goal” (Todd, 2013:188 ). But the issue here is, what are the paradigms to be used to consider an action to have constituted a significant harm which makes such action an evil one? Is there any yard-stick for this? Again for the so called revivalist of evil, they consider actions that characterized the harm of evil as “intolerable, excessive, irreparable, serious, etc” (Ibid). All these are harms that normal rational human being regardless of cultural bias and affiliation would take considerable pains to avoid and so, universally “evil acts are acts that are horrendously wrong, that causes immense suffering, and are done from an evil motive – the motive to do something horrendously wrong, causing immense suffering” (Singer, 2004:190).

Sequel to this, it seems one can deduce that from oriental ideas about evil to both western and African notions of the problem, the same fundamental narrative formed the epistemological

basis of evil cross – culturally. In the world of the orientalist “evils are those things, events, or actions that are either denounced or condemned by Lao Tzu” (Sung-penHsu, 1976:301), this concept is predicated on the conception that only evils are to be condemned or avoided. It seems to me that this is not totally true the reason for this may be that something might be condemned or denounced not because they are evil but it might seem that alternatives are opened to the extent that one has to give up one in favour of another. Denunciation or condemnation really may not be enough evidences to designate a thing as evil. The killings in the town of Uzubulu on 5th of August in Nigerian when unknown gunmen opened fire at worshippers in a church was condemned and denounced because it was evil by evil men. In Lao Tzu, evils can be classified into two categories, namely; “caused evils” and “consequent evils.” (Ibid:302) Caused evils are those evils that are the causes of other evils and consequent evils are those said to be the consequences of the causal evils (Ibid), accordingly then, evils that concern Lao Tzu are as a result of the misuse of human will. The implication here is that, for any conception of evil, the human will is vital without which we may not be talking about the problem of evil and the “will” or “volition” is a distinctive human nature that enables one to be either culpable or praiseworthy for any rational action that is taken by man, hence the reason why Augustine says that evil in the world is a privation (St. Augustine, 1961:31). However, the consequent nature of evil in Lao Tzu is the sufferings that are witnessed in the world. “Since all the causal evils are supposedly originated in the use of the human will all the sufferings that concern Lao Tzu are man-made” (Sung-penHsu, 1976:303). Practicably therefore if we search far and near we discover evil universally originates from the human will. This whole philosophy of Lao Tzu rest on the assumption that Tao creates the universe and all that he created is good. This is like all other theistic argument that accounts for created things in the world. So, if Tao created things good then, only the human will that can corrupt the created order. The question then follows, who created the human will, if all things produced by Tao is good? Does it exclude the human ‘will’? Perhaps the answer to this might be that the human will is created good but as put forward earlier, evil is as a result of the misuse of such ‘will’ and directing it towards inordinate matters that later causes sufferings to humanity. In Kierkegaard’s view suffering has no place and no

esthetic value. It is identified as simply misfortune and tribulation in daily living, and is accepted as a difficulty that will soon cease to hinder, because it is a foreign element to one's existence (Kierkegaard,1968:388). This position he maintains because of his avarice to sufferings which he considers a threat to human existence.

On the other hand, the African conception of evil is not much different from their counterparts all over the globe. The general experience is that evil is malicious, painful, mischievous and therefore capable of retarding human progress and general wellbeing. Like other views from across the globe, "the essence of evil ... consists in doing harm to others" (Babajide et.al, 2015). The Africans also contrasted evil from goodness. The morality of Africans emphasizes goodness of character which consist of virtues such as kindness, generosity, hospitality, justice, , respect for elders and obedience to legitimate authorities (Izibili, 2009:12). For Wiredu, killing , stealing, adultery, and disrespect for elders, telling lies, incest, and cruelty or doing harm in any way to other people (Wiredu, 1983:11) are vices to the Africans and as such they are evil. Africans therefore will never be at peace with whoever conducts himself as axis of evil no matter how the person or group of persons is highly placed in the society, so, all virtuous Africans detest evils in all ramifications.

The willingness of the individual to carry out a mischievous and malicious action is also crucial to the African notion of evil. African sees evil more from the perspective of morality to the extent that evil is committed by human agents and not God or Tao as said by Lao Tzu. So, all blames of evil actions are to be directed towards the evil agents. Morality is the science of good or bad action which is the birthplace of man and man as a moral agent is endowed with free will to conduct his affairs. When man conducts its affairs rightly it leads to the good and when it is the other way the result is bad and can sometimes be evil. It is clear from the foregoing, that the notions of evil have some universal underpinning features, just like goodness which is contrasted with evil. In this way, if this condition persist cross – culturally it signaled the fact that humanity regardless of circumstances of birth and location are not completely alien to themselves especially when it is obvious that the capacity and potential to assimilate the cultural categories

of another is a feature in human nature. This takes us to another level of acceptable universal human nature in the area of language as a medium of universal communication.

### **Language as a Vehicle of Universal Communication**

The importance of language in human societies cannot be over-emphasized. It is more than just an avenue through which communication is possible but also a means of cross-cultural interactions. Language greatly influences our way of life and even our thought processes. As a result, if we grant that language had a bearing on our being it means that there is a social dimension to the idea of language. This seems to be the reason A. J. Ayer posits that “the development of language ... is a social phenomenon” (Ayer, 1966:259). By this it seems Ayer is of the opinion that language is socially conditioned and therefore it is a product of the interaction between two or more people. Which means no single individual can evolve a language without extension or connection to an existing language system hence he holds “private languages are in general derived from public languages, and even if there are any which are not so derived, they will still be translatable into public languages”( Popper,1963:397) it seems this position ultimately gives an insight to reflect the functions of language across culture. Karl Buhler presents three doctrines of the functions of language in which Karl Popper added another one, for them language functions as (1) the expressive or symptomatic function; (2) the stimulation or signal function; (3) the descriptive function and (4) the argumentative function (Micheal,1993:153). All these functions as it were, have universal application to the exception of no known language that is outside the purview of these functions. This is equally an indication that it is within the human potentials to learn and adopt a universal view of language. That is why Michael Morris et al defines language as a means of communication, a system of marks or sounds which we use to convey thoughts and describe the world”(Ibid). This suggest that we find ourselves with the notion of the world that admit human beings as social animals, socially

bounded with others so as to relate with fellow man within the realities of his own world. As a result, the conception of language can be summed up to embody three distinct features; thought, language, and reality (Donald, 1984:263), the reason is language is situated to express thoughts and describe the world around us. This of course, depicts universal conception of language and this account for the obvious reason why Davidson advanced the incommensurability of language with pictures. For him, “a picture is not worth a thousand words, or any other member. Words are the wrong currency to exchange for a picture” (Micheal;1993:155), this implies that globally, language is incommensurable with picture even though pictures are also forms of communication but obviously they are not at the same level with words. M. Morris et al emphatically argue the significance of language when they posit:

One thing that’s special about language is grammatical structure: sentences are composed of words, and words have semantically significant inflections; no counterpart to this can be found in painting. And this difference seems to provide the basis of an explanation of the incommensurability between words and pictures, since what we take to be done in language is always thought of in terms of a structure of sentences. If we say that we can state facts in language, this is because we think of facts as counterparts to sentences, as consisting of objects with properties, or in relation to one another; and these objects, properties, and relations correspond to singular terms and predicate. If we think that we can express thoughts in language, this is because a thought is taken to correspond to sentence, and to consist of ideas or concepts, which are the counterparts of words...grammatical structure is

fundamental to language: where we find no such structure,  
we have no right to speak of language (Ibid).

It seems the significance of language from the foregoing is that what is articulated in thought should correspond to fact and all these are conveyed and expressed through language, language therefore becomes the communicative vehicle through which thoughts are articulated with facts in reality derived from language. This is the reason why Wittgenstein in his own theory of description maintains that:

Language disguises thought. So much so, that from the outward form of the clothing it is impossible to infer the form of the thought beneath it, because the outward form of the clothing is not designed to reveal the form of the body, but for entirely different purposes (Alexander,2007:91).

Thus, language has the audacity to reveal thoughts or our innermost parts in which its truth can only be confirm if it corresponds to a state of affairs. This is what Wittgenstein calls “substantive propositions or meaningful statements ... all substantive propositions (“pictures”) are at most a posteriori true” (Galtung,1999:5). It implies that this proposition can only be true if and only if it corresponds to a state of affairs. As a result, looking at this conception of language, it seems there is no known humanity that appears to be incongruous to this structure of language. They seemed to be the fundamental requirements of all language game. On the basis of this argument, one can observe the possibility of a common human nature. The reason for this is not far-fetched. If there is a unique theoretical articulation of language, then it means the project of understanding other people’s state of mind is not a difficult task and therefore one can learn the way of life that is alien to ours, even the entire world view of others and this underscore the universality in language as a communicative device of humanity. Hence Wiredu contends; “no human language is known which non-native speakers cannot, in principle, learn as a second



language. The reason underlying this fact is that language is a system of skills fundamental to being human” (Wiredu, 1995:5).

### **Human Needs as a Fundamental Quest for Survival**

Like language which is significant as a form of universal communication, so also existence of universal or common human needs indicates that acceptable understanding is a reality. It implies that if there are common needs peculiar to human race it mean we can establish some human needs that are essential for human survival across cultures. “Human need is a necessary condition for human life” (Galtung, 1999:5). The position above seems to be sacrosanct about the fundamental human needs. Any individuals or group of people within the umbrella of humanity cannot but be situated within the trajectory of a common human need. A denial of such needs may imply inhumanity to man and then “an implicit denial of human livelihood” (McCloskey; 1976:1).

The discussion of human needs circulates many literatures and their relevance to human life cannot be overemphasized. Though, in the writings of great scholars in philosophy especially in the liberal tradition, they rarely or seldom made use of the term “needs”. Most of these liberal ideologists discuss political philosophy and one would have expected a significant reference to the nature of human needs in their various scholarly works. In J. S. Mill we find similar concept, instead of referring to “needs”, he talks of human and individual goods and interests, the notion of interest being a key one in his philosophy. With other liberal philosophers, it is the individual’s good rather than his needs, that is appealed to (Naill,1974:119). The notion of ‘good’ according to Mill is further realizable within the atmosphere of freedom. The ‘good’ comprising of so many values is the highest good of man. Hence he says “every individual in all societies is free to the extent that he is able to act upon his opinion – to carry this out in his life without hindrance ... from his fellow men” (McCloskey,1976:1). However, so many idea of needs are expressed, for some, it is a way by which “is” and “ought” statements are bridged. That is, statement of fact to statements about what we or the state ought to do, where the statements of

fact are statements about needs (Ibid). Others again are of the view that needs are another way of expressing rights. In this way, questions about human rights can be settled if we investigate the nature of our needs. There are still others who subscribes to the cultural view of needs, thus, “need statements as simply socially or culturally relative statements or claims as to what are reasonable expectations or demand in particular societies, with no claim to any general or inter-society, inter-culture validity” (Fitzgerald,1985:99). I seem to differ theoretically from the view that once a need is satisfied then ones right might have also be honoured. The reason is it seems rights are more broad and larger in scope than needs. Rights may not be exhaustively square up in terms of needs because they are intrinsic fundamental values of human nature. Needs as it was, can and may not be satisfied but rights are exceptional human values bequeathed by nature. For the assessment of human needs may involve value judgment. That is, our needs can be culturally or socially influenced depending on the environment or culture that one is domicile. Conversely, we have a right to shelter, food, drink etc. all these are basic to human existence but they are also common needs of man. This brings us to the first known documented investigation into the area of human needs that was carried out by Abraham Maslow.

Maslow, in his 1943 article, *A Theory of Human Motivation* attempted to determine whether there are particular factors that propel humans to behave in accordance with particular rules. Following this research work he developed a theory by citing five motivations that constitute “basic human needs”. These needs are hierarchically determined in a related manner and are satisfied one after another such that it is impossible to jump the hierarchy of the needs. That is, the principles had a system of gradualism because it is a universal human need in the order of their assumed priority. We must further emphasized that Maslow does not imply that human needs are just five single needs but he is of the opinion that these hierarchical needs are “based on five need areas” (Maslow,1943:37). Therefore, the categories of the needs are as follows:

(a) Physiological needs: The first level of satisfaction is instinctual. It is the desire of humans to satisfy basic biological needs for their survival, for instance food, shelter and clothes.

- (b) The need for safety: The satisfaction of the needs for safety and security is at the second level, where humans act to acquire a satisfactory feeling of safety and security against natural dangers. Issues concerning the satisfaction of their natural needs are also found here, as is the need for security in financial issues such as permanent employment and adequate savings.
- (c) The need for love: At the third level, and provided that the two previous categories have been satisfied to an adequate degree, humans start to strongly feel the lack of friendship, love and family. As a result, they will seek to satisfy their need to establish personal relationships of any kind, for example with friends, partners or family.
- (d) The need for esteem: At the fourth level and as an extension of the previous category is the satisfaction of the need for affiliation. Individuals aim at being esteemed and appreciated by other individuals through their successful affiliation in various social groups.
- (e) The need for self – actualization: Even if all the previous needs have been adequately satisfied, an individual may still experience dissatisfaction or anxiety. Such feelings constitute the need for self – actualization and this will only be satisfied when an individual is able to engage in activities that make them feel fulfilled, in which they are probably more efficient (Ibid).

For Maslow, people all over the world have an innate predisposition to seek these fundamental needs in order to actualize them. This for him is a gospel that is universally applicable to all human beings regardless of geographical backgrounds. The question that comes to my mind is this: If the hierarchy of needs is the same world over, does it then imply that man is the same universally? Then what is the place of contingencies of peculiarities of environment and of culture? Can there be a unilateral approach to solving human needs? These are germane theoretical interrogation of Maslow's accounts of needs which he did not answer. But Max – Neef the economist gives an insight into these dilemmatic questions arising from a logical implication of Maslow's work. For him, he re-echoes the argument of Maslow by upholding that human needs are universally the same for all people globally. The difference is observable in the way in which an individual articulate or acts to satisfy them. As a result Max–Neef created a

matrix which he calls “Matrix of Needs and Satisfiers”. In his own analysis he put forward that the categories of needs are the same for all societies. However, each society had a unique way of satisfying the needs employing various methodologies that is in harmony with their society (Max-Neaf,1991). Ross also argues further that there are universal human needs, despite differing ways of satisfying them, and there is a universal hierarchy in the sense that basic physical needs precede community or social belongingness needs, which have priority over subjectivity needs (Fitzgerald,1985:103). Following this position then, individual needs can vary considerably even according to age, sex, activity, climate and socio-cultural values and situation. Needs and their satisfactions are socially and culturally conditioned and take different postures in different societies, cultures, and regions.

Therefore, the notion of common human needs is a further testimony of human beings world over. This is obvious in the preceding arguments articulated by scholars within the human needs orientation. There is therefore no gain-saying the fact that human needs are things which ought to be available or supplied. That is, “needs involves reference to a natural good existence and development as human beings from potentiality to actuality.” (McCloskey,1976:103). Lack of these needs also may lead to non-existent and underdevelopment of the human person and therefore lead to a collapse of the society.

### **Biological Universals as a Semblance of Human Similarities**

Having delved into the fundamentals of human needs as a reflection of human universality, one other important factor in this arena that many generations of philosophers have argued is that all human beings are essentially biologically the same. They share the same nature, and that this essential similarity is extremely important. The biological similarity is a further confirmation of the condition under which cross – fertilization, can be achieved. However, biological disposition or similarities can also be referred to as product of human nature as this may be used interchangeably.

A good way to commence discussion here is to ask the question; what are biological universals or human nature? They are traits that are shared by all members of the human species *homo sapiens*. These traits can be genetically explained since all human beings have many of the same genes, shares anatomical characteristics and physiologically built in the same manner (Maestripeiari, internet source). The problem of biological universals seems to be more intense when we ask the question; do all human beings share some basic similarities in the way we think, experience emotions, and behave?

The essentialist hypothesizes that there exists some characteristic unique to and shared by all members of *homo sapiens* which explains why they are the way they are. Sober argues succinctly;

If something is unique, i.e. specific to members of a kind, this characteristic is sufficient for species membership, but it is not necessary. You can be human without it, but since only humans will have it, if you do have it, you are 'in'. If something is, however, shared by all members of a kind this characteristic necessary for an individual to be a member of that kind, otherwise, not all humans would have it. If you don't exhibit it, you're not 'in' ( Elliot, 2014:643).

Here, Sober wants us to know that 'essence' are intrinsic properties contain in a thing and it is therefore a necessary and sufficient condition for membership of a specie and so characteristics or features that do not qualify within it cannot be said to be part it. This argument lays credence to human nature for it to be somewhat universal. However, there are those who may also argue that human nature even though may have universal character but can also get altered by particular environments and culture and this is what account for variations in human beings. Nigel differs and contend that it is absolutely wrong to predicate evolutionary psychology or any science at all on universals because universals dated back to Plato and therefore such attempt can

largely be referred to as mysticism rather than science (Nigel, internet source). This however, seems to me to be misplaced by Nigel since the history of man is both of science and of mysticism, humans through all ages continues to chart a course on understanding himself and the world. Coming back to the issue, Nigel believes that in the world of biology, all creatures are in continual flux as they adapt themselves to perpetually changing environment (Ibid), this is contrary to the essentialist position. Does the essence of biological organism remain in the mist of flux? The implication here is that nothing is static and everything is in perpetual state of flux, even the human genetic constitution is continually mutating. David L. Hull is opposed to the conventional view of biological nature. He says biological species cannot possibly have characteristics that biologists claim that they do because of lack of “explicitly formulated biological foundations.” (Hull,1986:4). He contends:

Given the character of the evolutionary process, it is extremely unlikely that all human beings are essentially the same, but even if we are, I fail to see why it matters. I fail to see, for example, why we must all be essentially the same to have rights (Ibid).

So, he denies the plausibility of a universal human nature or that humans are essentially the same. This, he observes through his “genetic variability”. For him, “if genetic variability characterizes species even though everyone is absolutely certain that it does not, then possibly a similar variability characterizes culture” (Ibid). This means that it is genetic variability that accounts for cultural variability. Maybe there is genuine sense in this proposal. The history of palmistry and thumbing identifies individual with a unique palm and thumb such that no two persons had the same palm and thumb in the whole world. However, this attempts maybe an inductive search into human nature. Hull further corroborated by positing that:

Genetics is sufficiently well developed that geneticists have been forced to acknowledge how variable both genes and traits are, both within species and between them (Ibid).

It then means that within human species there are varieties of genes which are not the same. The human genes are variously distributed and in a way the geneticists are skeptical about the affirmation of human nature. On this John Dupre opines that “the reason for concluding that biology does not determine culture is simply to observe that here are many different cultures” (Dupre,2004:893). It seems from the above, both Hull and John drives to the same destination but in a different way. While Hull maintain that variability in genetic constitution of human accounts for the obvious reasons why the talk on human nature might be a mirage because fundamentally genes are not the same. Dupre sees variability in culture not being determined by biological universals, since cultures are not the same too all over the world.

However, it must be noted from the foregoing that we do not dispute ‘genetic variability’ which is a fact in particular species but the essentialist are of the opinion that there are properties which are universal entities in a particular group and different from the properties of the entities in another group. It is true, just as Nigel argues, all creatures are in continual flux as they adapt themselves to a perpetually changing environment but this continual flux and adaptation do not result in rocks turning into plants, plants turning into animals, and baboons turning into people, or vice versa. As long as humans remain a single species, *homo sapiens*, which can be clearly separated from other species on the basis of genetic, anatomical, or other criteria, it is perfectly legitimate and scientific to speak of human universal. The fact that we can categorize living and non-living entities into different groups on the basis of their shared characteristics does not imply in any way that there is no variation within categories: indeed, no two rocks or two animals of the same species are perfectly identical to one another; in all animals species, there is a great deal of inter – individual variation in relation to age or gender or other factors, and genes and environment make important contributions to this variation (Maestripeieri, internet).

Following this, therefore, when we observe the obvious fact of cultural variability, it does not at the same time suggest that we cannot have common properties that are universal in

nature among the species call human beings. It is in this condition that we can talk of universal human nature. No doubt we find exceptions to universal human nature either in behaviour, physiological, anatomical or emotional differences. A good example is in the occasions when babies are born without arms or the cases of conjoined twins. Physiologically and anatomically these sets of people are misfit and their condition could be the result of genetic defect. However, because they do not conform to general physiological and anatomical composition does not diminish their 'humaness'. The truth here is that all humans are biologically predisposed to be born complying with physiological or anatomic rules and few exceptions do not constitute evidences against human universal nature.

### **Conclusion**

The work affords us immensely to explore some occasions that we can veritably talk about human universal nature. That is to say, even when there are variables different from ours at least, man has the potential features of sameness. The work is not much about argument for the most celebrated views in cultural polemics but attempt to show some universal properties in human life and existence. This is to help significantly in bringing out areas of human lives that are unique to human nature and we are implying here common nature regardless of colour of skin and sociological environment.

From the foregoing, we see evil as a universal problem domesticated in the society, though, different actions and events may engender evil from across culture and how each attends to this problem may vary but it is equally a fact in human existence that evil causes



suffering in the world. Evil is not just a metaphysical abstraction from nothingness but a product of human will, when the human will is corrupted then evil is conceived. The reason is *ab initio* the will is free to exercise and realize itself but only in the assertive use of the will that is in harmony with the creator of the will. This is the obvious reason Marcus G. Singer delineates the entirety of evil as applies “to persons, to intentions, to motives, to conduct, and to organizations, institutions, practices, arrangements, programmes, agencies, endeavours, and situations. Thus it is evil to torture someone for pleasure (Singer,2004:189-190). All the aforementioned is not geographically limited hence evil, no matter where it occurs, how it occurs is a privation that is universally condemned.

On the other hand language is a veritable instrument of communication in the world of humans. Although there are many languages spoken all over the World they however, perform specific function of articulation of thought with facts in the world. Michael and Stephen argues “the articulation of thoughts and the articulation of facts are both derivative from the articulation of language” (Micheal etal, 1993:155). This is a fact about language and other fact that are universal about language is the grammatical structure which is also fundamental about language “where we find no such structure, we have no right to speak of language” (Ibid). All known languages observes these structural rules hence the reason why people of other culture can potentially learn the language structure of another.

Furthermore, it is not new to say that discussion about human needs as an intellectual inquiry is as old as man even it dated back to the time of Plato and Aristotle. We have argued that these needs must be sufficiently satisfied in order for man to survive and they are the same for all people worldwide even though there might be different approach to satisfying them. These needs are therefore exemplified in Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of need.

Finally, we posited that biological similarities are a further confirmation of human universal nature. Even though philosophers like David L. Hull and John Dupre contended that it is impossible for human species to have universal nature. This they did through their genetic

variability which they also maintain accounts for variability in human culture. However, the position highlighted above does not exclude the obvious facts of universal human nature. While it is true that genes are variously distributed, there are also unique facts about human beings, that is, there are features that are only common to man and shared only by the species call man.

### References

- Donald E. B. (2004) “Human Universals, Human and Human Culture” in *Daedalus* **Vol. 33 No. 4** On human Nature MIT Press.
- Vide: Marcus G. S. (2004) “The Concept of Evil” in *Philosophy*, **Vol. 79 No.308** Cambridge University Press.
- Russell L. (2004) “Is Evil Action Qualitatively Distinct from Ordinary Wrongdoing?” in *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, **Vol. 85**.
- Russell L. (2009) “He Did It Because He Was Evil” in *American Philosophical Quarterly*, **Vol. 46, No. 3**, University of Illinois Press.
- Todd C. (2013) “Is Evil Just Very Wrong?” in *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition*, **Vol. 163, no. 1**.
- Sung – peng Hsu (1976) “Lao Tzu’s Conception of Evil” in *Philosophy East and West*, **Vol. 26, No. 3**. University of Hawaii Press.
- St. Augustine (1961) *Confessions* Middle Sex: Penguin Book LTD, book one, chapter one
- Kierkegaard S.(1968) *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* trans. D. F. Swenson and W. Lowrie. Princeton: Princeton University Press
- Vide: Babajide D. et al(2015) “The Concept of Evil in Yoruba and Igbo Thoughts: Some Comparisons in *PHILOSOPHIA E – Journal for Philosophy and Culture*.  
<https://philosophia.bg.com>
- M. A. Izibili (2009) “African Traditional Approach to the Problems of Evil in the World” in *Kamla-Raj stud Tribes Tribals*, 7 (1). *Citeseerx.psu.edu*

- Wiredu K. (1983) “Morality and Religion in Akan Thought” in H.O. Odera D.A. Wasok (eds.) *Philosophy and Cultures*, Kenya: Bookwise Ltd.
- Ayer .A.J. (1966) “Can there be a Private Language” in *Modern Studies in Philosophy: Wittgenstein the Philosophical Investigations*. George Pitcher (ed.).
- Popper K. (1963) *Conjectures and Refutations*, New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Michael Morris et al (1993) “The Place of Language” in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volumes, **Vol. 67**,
- Donald D.(1984) *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Vide: Alexander M. (2007) *Philosophy of Language*, Second Edition New York: Routledge.
- Galtung J. (1999) “Towards Year 2000: on the basis of the Humanist World-View” in *Humanist Newsletter*
- Wiredu K. (1995) “Are There Cultural Universals?” in *The Monist* **Vol. 78 No.1**.
- McCloskey .J. (1976) “Human Needs, Rights and Political Values” in *American Philosophical Quarterly* **Vol. 13 No. 1**,
- Mill J.S. (1974) *On Liberty*. London: Penguin Books
- Fitzgerald R. (1985) “Human Needs and Politics: The Idea of Christian Bay and Herbert Marcus” in *Political Psychology*. **Vol. 6 No. 1**.
- See Abraham H. Maslow, “A Theory of Human Motivation” in *Psychology Review* 50 (4), (1943).
- Max –Neef (1991) “Human Scale Development–Conception, Application and Further Reflections” New York and London: The Apex Press, cited in *Human Needs and Cultural Background* <http://www.springer.com/cda/content/document/cda-downloadaddocument>.
- Dario Maestripeieri, “Are there Universals in Human Behaviour? Yes” <http://www.psychologytoday.com/experts/dario-maestripeieri-phd>.
- See Elliot Sober in Maria Kronfeldner et al “Recent Work on Human Nature: Beyond Traditional Essences” in *Philosophy Compass* 9/9 John Wiley & Son Ltd (2014).

Nigel <http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/philosophy>.

David L. H. (1986) “On Human Nature” in *Philosophy of Science Association: Proceedings of the Biennial Meeting of the Philosophy of Science Association* **Vol. II**.

Dupre J. (2004) “Human Kinds and Biological Kinds: Some Similarities and Differences” in *Philosophy of Science*. **Vol. 71 No. 5**.

Dario M. op.cit. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/gender>.

Marcus G.S.(2004) “The Concept of Evil” in *Philosophy*, **Vol. 79 No.308**.

