

# WHETHER SOCRATES COMMITS SOCRATIC FALLACY

Elvis Omondi Kauka

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Catholic University of Eastern Africa

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**Abstract:** The main objective of this study was to determine whether Socrates commits Socratic fallacy. This study was based on Library material. We consulted CUEA library, Consolata Institute of Philosophy Library, Tangaza College Library and Dominican Friars library (Maasai Lane-Nairobi). We also consulted (minimally) credible internet sources. We employed knowledge and skills learnt in class in general. Of special interest was a Symbolic logic, ethics, ontology and epistemology. Since Socrates does not commit Fallaciam Socraticam, we can be assured that indeed the Elenchus remains relevant today as it was during Socrates' life and that its importance is towards the individual and towards others. The most important and difficult study to undertake is the Knowledge of self. Socrates says know thyself, but since it is difficult and an odious task people avoid examining themselves. The best tool recommended is Elenchus. 'Fallaciam Socraticam' is a fallacy, but it is not Socratic.

**Keywords:** Socrates, Fallacy, Philosophy, Elenchus, Socraticam.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to seek the deeper meaning of things, he never kept quiet; He posed questions where the majority saw no need for investigation. He thus scratched beneath the surface of the thoughts of those who thought they knew. In a grueling session of a failed attempt to define holiness, he had to clarify what he wanted, to one Euthyphro: Remember I did not ask you to give me two or three examples of holiness but, to explain the essential characteristic or form which makes all holy actions holy. Do you not recollect that there was one essential characteristic or form which made the unholy unholy, and the holy holy? Most of his biographers tell us that he was untidy and ugly, pot-bellied, crooked-nosed, short of stature, physically strong and very ascetic. He ate meagerly he spent much time in market-places debating, discussing and questioning rich young men, including those in authority. He made no claim to special knowledge or expertise. He claimed to be an intellectual midwife, one who helped learners give birth to knowledge of which they were pregnant.

He married a very stubborn and nagging wife, Xanthippe. With her, he bore Sophroniscus and Menexinus. He was a man of repute, one who valued good life, philosophical life; morally upright life. His name was Socrates of Athens, the student of Anaxagoras and the teacher of Plato. This Man Socrates was the son of Sophroniscus (a stone cutter) and Phaenarete (a midwife). He was born in 469 BC in Athens and was executed in 399. He threw into the world of philosophy a new paradigm; A paradigm that shifted philosophical inquiry from the world to man. George F. Maclean and Patrick J. Spell in their 'Readings in Ancient Western Philosophy' observe that: Among men who were universally unaware of the most imperative duty of tending to their souls, the one exception was Socrates, for even though he lacked moral wisdom, he acknowledged its supreme importance and Passionately sought it. Socrates, was, at least the one eyed in a kingdom of blind, the wisest of men, as men

Socrates the philosopher had for his principal subject the 'inner spiritual existence of man'. He spiritualized humanism for thence comes values and morality which of course were his main interest. His habitual questioning wounded many Athenians who in turn condemned him to death. After his death at 70, though he wrote nothing he still won Friends and foes, critiques and criticizers within Athens and outside Athens, within his epoch and outside his epoch. Some of his sharp critiques outside his epoch are still extant to date, some of them budding, some passed away. Among the twentieth

century critiques is one Peter Thomas Geach who for the first time coined the term Socratic fallacy, whose Latin rendition is Fallaciam Socraticam. He accused Socrates of committing Fallaciam Socraticam in The Monist journal of 1966 in his article 'Plato's Euthyphro: An Analysis and commentary'. Peter Thomas Geach is an English analytic Philosopher born in 1916. Geach had special interest in logic, history of philosophy and philosophy of religion. He studied at Baliol College, in Oxford and taught philosophy at Birmingham University from 1951 to 1966 and at the University of Leeds from 1966 to 1981. He is thought to be the father of Analytical Thomism whose goal is to synthesize Thomistic and analytical approaches. He was married to Elizabeth Anscombe a Wittgenstein scholar.

In the 1950s Ross and Collingwood were already uncomfortable with the elements of Priority of definition (PD) in Socratic elenchus. In 1966, Peter Thomas Geach made it clear and ascribed the name 'Socratic Fallacy' to the PD predicament in Socratic works.

John Bervevluis reports of Geach that:

Ever since P. T. Geach's famous Assault on a 'style of mistaken thinking' underlying Socrates' What is F? Question specter of Socratic Fallacy has haunted literature. Unlike many less searching allegations, the charge of specifically Socratic fallacy cuts deep. According to Geach, Socratic Fallacy comes from making two assumptions:

"A. If you know you are predicating a given term 'T' you must know "what it is to be a T" in the sense of being able to give a general criterion for a thing's being T"

"B. It is no use to arrive at the meaning of T by giving examples of things that are T" and that B necessarily follows from A

According to Bervevluis the charge is based on what he calls "Misconceptions" regarding the elenchus majorly depicted in the early dialogues. "First", says Bervevluis "it presupposes a mistaken philosophical interpretation, not an uncontroversial textual exegesis, of epistemic relation between definitional knowledge of F and extensional knowledge of things that are F."

Bervevluis observes that for Geach, Socrates' view is that the Definitional knowledge comes first, it precedes the extensional knowledge and that it is a necessity for extensional knowledge. Secondly, "it misconstrues the epistemic status and elenctic role of the numerous examples he (Socrates) employs" Thirdly, "it misunderstands the peculiarly Socratic conception of knowledge...and how it differs from true belief".

Uniqueness of Geach's accusation:

As observed earlier, Geach was not the first to observe A above since even earlier there were commentators and Platonic scholars already working in systematic way on in 50s and 60s. His novel contribution is that he was the first to ascribe A to Socrates and that as long as Socrates holds on A he commits a grievous fallacy: The Fallaciam Socraticam

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Plato's early dialogues have a very unique methodology. It is a method whereby a person's statement is cross-examined by means of questioning. The aim is producing other statements which will in turn determine the meaning and truth value of the original statement. This method is called Elenchus or by extension Socratic Method, Extasis, Scrutiny, Basanismus or Assay. It is more of a Refutational method than any-thing else; as a result the truth value more often than not is a falsehood, or Aporia.

The process of Elenchus as observed by R. Robinson in the early dialogues is as follows:

1. Posing a general ethical Question – Call it Principal Question (PQ) 2. Then follows Primary Answer (PA) in response to PQ 3. More Questions – Call them Secondary Questions-(SQ) 4. Sequence of corresponding secondary answers (SA)

Note: PQ and SQ are distinct in that PQ's answer (PA) present real and genuine doubt and difficulty while SQ answers appear easy, simple and unavoidable, normally it is a yes to such an extent that saying NO appears irrational.

SQ appears irrelevant to the original question (and if possible should fall into two disconnected groups) as observed by R. Robin. At the end when all the admissions are synthesized it turns out that all the propositions that the answerer assented to amounts to Falsehood of his original assertion. Robin observes that it would seem from the elenchus that Socrates knows about the subject he refutes others about. On the contrary he doesn't know, all he does is to find a strong ground

(after examination) on which to agree or not to agree with a particular proposition. (This we could say is Socrates' way of avoiding credulity)

Therefore the primary Question (PQ) for Socrates is Information –Seeking Question .That means that at the outset therefore Socrates' intention is to seek information about a particular case and not merely Cross examination. Cross examination in other words is a means and not an End. In fact Socrates always in the early dialogues declares himself Ignorant of all the answers to general ethical questions except for a few cases in Apology, Crito, and in the Euthydemus. It is only in Meno where Socrates appears to know something significant

One of the unique features that Socrates employs in his elenchus is Socratic irony: Socrates disclaims that he refutes the answerer. That his aim is to seek the Logos "It is the Logos that I chiefly examine". On other occasions he denies that it is Socrates (him) who refutes but the Logos, a person within him, over whom he has no control, one who even refutes him as well. He asserts that he himself could not fore see where the argument would lead because the Logos leads him blindfolded. He says that sometimes there is no refutation at all instead it is the case that people are trying to get the validity of propositions.

R, Robinson notes that all the disclaimers made by Socrates amount to insincerity otherwise called Socratic irony. This is because the results could not be so consistently negative if he did not foresee the results of the argument. He says: When we examine the arguments in detail, and see just what is logical structure is, we become convinced that from the very first of the secondary questions Socrates saw and intended the refutation of primary answer. There is an elenchus in the narrower sense and it is Socrates own work. When he says of an answer 'well that is good enough' he gives away the fact that though the answerer has not admitted as much as he expected, he has admitted enough for his downfall

The Euthyphro is the first of Plato's dialogue. It is named after Euthyphro a young man with intent of prosecuting his father for murder. The Dialogue takes place at King Archon's court where the two characters Socrates, waiting his trial, and Euthyphro intending to prosecute his father for murder attempt, to get a definition for holiness. The aim of this conversation is the determination of What Holiness is. Euthyphro, in response to Socrates explains that he has come to prosecute his father, charging him of killing his servant. His relatives are against the idea, and so for him, they do not know the opinions of the gods on what is holiness and on what holiness is not. Socrates expresses doubt on whether Euthyphro is or is not doing the holy by prosecuting his father .This leads to the big question: 'Then what is Holiness and what is Unholiness? To this question several answers are given by Euthyphro, however each of them is found wanting and unsound by Socrates upon analysis.

First of all, Euthyphro says that holiness is prosecuting any one guilty of murder, sacrilege among other crimes. He qualifies this by appeal to Zeus (Chief Greek God who killed his father Cronos) .A difference, and thereof refutation of Euthyphro's first definition arises due to Socrates' skepticism about the god stories. Along the way Socrates waters down Euthyphro's definition and considers it as an act of holiness, an example (and not definition of holiness) , This he does by wittingly making Euthyphro to agree that what he is doing is a holy act, and a holy act is an example of holiness and not a definition of holiness.

The second answer given by Euthyphro is that holiness is what gods love and ungodliness is what gods hate. Gradually Socrates brings to naught this definition. He brings to table the possibility of some gods loving the same things and others hating it, just like, there is a possibility that prosecuting his father may be loved by some gods and hated by others .Therefore the holy cannot be what the gods love. One may as well ask; which of the gods? As is always with Socrates, he offers a relatively better definition What all the gods love is holy, and what some gods love and others hate is both holy and unholy or neither. To this, Euthyphro assents: and the next question (and answer) is born.

The Third answer that Euthyphro attempts to put across is based Socrates' question on whether the holy is loved by gods because it is holy or it is holy because it is loved by God. This question requires that Euthyphro be aware of the relationship between Cause and effect: A cause is a cause because it engenders an effect, and an effect is an effect because it is engendered by a cause, and therefore it is of necessity that a cause precedes an effect and not vice versa. Euthyphro's defence is evoked by his affirmation of the opposite of what is normal between cause and effect. And so? failure of his defense.

Holiness as part of moral rightness which attends to gods .Socrates leads Euthyphro through to the acceptance that holiness is attending to gods .He(Socrates) tries to make distinction between attention given to creatures and attention given to gods on the basis of how the attended benefits. That the one to whom attention is given becomes better.

Euthyphro fails completely to say how in accuracy the gods are made better by our service, by our attention to them and therefore the argument fails.

Holiness as Some kind of science of praying and sacrificing. This is yet another postulation that Socrates proposes to Euthyphro. He accepts it, attempts to defend it Soc-rates trounces it on the grounds that Sacrifice means giving and praying is asking, and neither asking nor giving to the gods makes them better, for they are the givers of all that benefits man. They can only be pleasing to gods but not dear to them.

Ergo; By the time, the conversation ends no definition of Holiness or ungodli-ness is found. What appeared too obvious for Euthyphro turns out to be not so obvi-ous after all. This is because The IS-NESS of 'holy' cannot just be reached at by Euthyphro (not even by Socrates himself) because it involves its form. And this is what Socrates asked for. Perhaps Euthyphro could have been better of if he knew at first what kind of question Socrates was looking at (Metaphysical question-by means of logical reasoning. It is also worth noting that Socratic Method (Elenchus) is evidently displayed by Plato in Euthyphro.

### 3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The predicament that this paper looks forward to deal with is whether or not Socrates is guilty of Socratic fallacy, otherwise stated in question form, 'Is Socratic fallacy Socratic?' Several questions of course will arise along the way. And it will be necessary that they arise. The questions will help us clarify emerging issues at the end of which we shall give a verdict. One of the questions that we expect to come up is whether there ever existed a historical figure called Socrates. This amounts to what is always called. The Socratic problem. There are varied views on this. We do not expect to give an absolute answer but a reasonable one.

Another big question is Whether Fallaciam Socraticam is a fallacy. And to answer this we shall set up a ground for determining what a fallacy is, and what makes a fallacy a fallacy and using this ground we shall determine whether Socratic fallacy is a fallacy. If we establish that Fallaciam Socraticam is indeed a fallacy, then we shall proceed to the next question, Does Socrates commit it?

If however, we fail to establish that it is a fallacy then, by default our principle ques-tion Is Fallaciam Socraticam Socratic? would have been answered .Why? It's condi-tional that Socrates is guilty of Fallaciam Socraticam if Fallaciam Socraticam is a fal-lacy. So it would be False that 'Socrates is guilty of Fallaciam Socraticam if Fallaciam Socraticam is not a fallacy at all.' This would be illogical. Its illogicality lies in its in-validity which can be presented and worked out symbolically as follows: Scheme of Abbreviation: P: Socrates is guilty of Fallaciam Socraticam Q: Fallaciam Socraticam is a fallacy Argument: Socrates is guilty of Fallaciam Socraticam if Fallaciam Socraticam is a Fallacy; Fallaciam Socraticam is not a Fallacy. Therefore Socrates is guilty of Fallaciam Socraticam. Symbolization: 1.  $P \supset Q$  2.  $\neg Q$  P Proof of Validity (Truth Table Method)

	Premise 1	Premise 2	Conclusion
	P	Q	$P \supset Q$
1	T	T	$\neg Q$
2	T	F	P
3	F	T	T
4	F	F	F

From the truth Table above, it is evident that it can not be the case that Socrates is guilty of Fallaciam Socraticam if Fallaciam Socraticam is not a fallacy. This is because line 4 has a case whereby all premises are true and the conclusion is False. It is impossible that a valid argument should have all premises True and the conclusion False. The implication of this, as stipulated earlier is that if we prove that Fallaciam Socraticam is a fallacy then we can go ahead with our argument. If we come to the conclusion that it is not a fallacy, then it would be pointless to continue with an argument that leads nowhere.

### 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was based on Library material. We consulted CUEA library, Consolata Institute of Philosophy Library, Tangaza College Library and Dominican Friars library (Maasai Lane-Nairobi). We also consulted (minimally) credible internet sources. We employed knowledge and skills learnt in class in general. Of special interest was a Symbolic logic, ethics, ontology and epistemology.

**Whether Indeed Fallaciam Socraticam is A Fallacy (An Elaboration)** Etymologically speaking the term ‘Fallacy’ comes from Latin word ‘Fallere’ which means ‘to deceive’ or ‘fallax’ which means ‘deceitful’. It is observed by Wambari that a fallacy is a counterfeit argument, a bad argument that masquerades as a good one. Fallacies are deceitful to the extent that they appeal to emotions, prejudice, self interest, blind faith, stereotypes. These and other Baconian idols are the causes of de-ceitful reasoning; they essentially violate rules of inference.

For instance if someone says “Are you saying that women are faithful, on the contrary all women are not only unfaithful but they are also stupid ,if you think I am joking; you better get this, if I hadn’t caught my wife in the very act, do you think I would be saying women are unfaithful?” This is an argument that is full of emotions, prejudice and what we would call psy-chological projection. Someone listening to it or examining it will not fail to hear emotional tones and a transfer of ones problems to a general case.

Fallacy can also be said to be a defective (false, incorrect, erroneous, mistaken) argument in which the conclusion is not justified by the premises supporting it. In any argument, the conclusion is supposed to be supported by the premises. In any valid deductive argument for instance the conclusion necessarily and conclusively fol-lows from the premises. In inductive Logic, the conclusion must be supported by the premises for it to be strong or plausible.

It is to be understood very well that at this juncture, the intention is not to prove whether or not Fallaciam Socraticam is Socratic. This is a different issue. In treating this subtopic we limit ourselves to what Geach claims to be Fallaciam Socraticam. It is an examination of Geach’s view on Fallaciam Socraticam and not what Socrates says and not whether Socrates commits Fallaciam Socraticam.

The most important thing to be noted here is the epistemological relationship between what is known and the expression of that which is known. The question to be posed then, is: Is it possible to know something and yet fail to express it 'definitionally' or even extensively? The answer can be as varied as there are respondents to this ques-tion. However, we claim here that Yes, it is possible to know and fail to express that which you know. Such situations arise due to the following factors:

There are things that are known to human beings yet human beings may not be able to express them. Geach himself says that “We know heaps of things with-out being able to define the terms in which we express our knowledge” For in-stance ‘BEING’

Who can formally define being. It is impossible. Simply impossible. It is something that is beyond the rules of definition. How would one define ‘ES-SENCE’ or ‘GOD’ or “LOVE”? These are too lofty ideas that human mind cannot define, if definition is to be taken seriously. On the other hand, one may know that he/she has love, is in love, or is being loved. It is possible know love, to know essence, to know being, and even God if he reveals himself. But it is another story to define Love. It is possible for John to tell Jane “I love you” meaning “I have love for you” which means “I know that I have love in me directed to you”, But if Jane were to ask John What is Love, What makes love to be love...In other words if Jane were to ask John to express ‘definitionally’ what love is ,John would be dumbfounded. He would probably say, Love is that which I don’t know, or simply kiss, or embrace Jane.

Furthermore most mystics even in some of the holy books normally speak in images, in examples and analogies because they cannot define, or say precisely what they know. These few examples may not categorically imply that we cannot define that which we know, but they tell us that there are cases whereby that which is known may not be defined formally.

It is possible to know something that is not lofty and yet fail to define it due to inadequacy and/or lack of exposure or instruction on how to define. Not everyone knows how to define, and not everyone is a logician. Individuals may have a point of that which is definable formally but fail to ex-press that which they know. For instance if a primary School Pupil is asked “What is a book?” It won’t be a surprise if the child says Mathematics exercise book. The child has no idea of Formal definition, has no idea of what entails a genus and a specific difference ...has no idea of logic. The child’s failure in defining Book does not however mean that he /she does not know what a book is. Only that she cannot formally define what makes a book a book, It is beyond his scope. In fact if you bring a text book to the child ,she will tell you that it is a book, She knows(but cannot define) the book. As observed ,it wouldn’t be erroneous to infer that that which is known is not identi-cal with that its expression. It is mistake to hold that ever is expressible to second party among contingent rational beings. This renders Assumption A(That if you know you predicating a given term ‘T’ you must know what it is to be ‘T’ in the sense of being able to give a general criterion for a thing’s being ‘T’:) fallacious.

Most (if not all) Philosophers (and Logicians) in particular agree that definition “Definire” goes beyond delimitation. The meaning of definition is not limited to cutting boundaries. Consequently there are many kinds of definitions are presented to the world of philosophy and academia in general. Therefore to limit oneself to only and only Formal Definition is not only to be petty but also rigid for nothing. It is a sign of inflexibility which is a hindrance to acquisition of knowledge. Peter Angeles in his “Dictionary of Philosophy” presents twenty different ways of defining. The best of which can be determined by an individual or by the issue at hand.

Among the examples given by Angeles are Connotative definition, Contextual definition, Denotative definition/Also ostensive(Giving a list of examples to which the definiendum in question can be applied),Essential definition(giving the essence of a thing, that characteristic of a thing the is hierarchically superior, that without which that ting cannot be what it is, single objective existing essence),Functional definition, Genus et Differentia definition, Historical definition, Lexical Definition, Nominal definition, Syntactical definition,Stipulative,Recursive.....

What this implies is that, with the richness of the different types of definitions it would be unfair to reject a definition just because it is not Formal (Essential defini-tion). Hence B\*(That it is no use to try and arrive at the meaning of T by giving examples of things that are T) amounts to a grave error for to brush off examples is to reject Os-tensive, (denotative) definition as definition, yet they are, rational, licit and legal ways of defining.

Up to this point it is logical to infer that Fallaciam Socraticam is a Fallacy. In view of the above elucidations one realizes that the assumptions made in Fallaciam Socraticam are a wrong and deceptive way of thinking. It stresses on priority of definition for the sake of it and rejects the wider scope of definition. If asked what kind of fallacy Fallaciam Socraticam is, the immediate answer that a keen observer will come up with is The Black and White Informal Fallacy. From the name, this fallacy implies that there is either white, and if there isn't white then it is black. There is nothing in between. We could reformulate its name to The Fallacy of either -it is -or -it is not. It is either Formal/Essential definition or It is not, Nothing in the middle. Ex-amples are nothing, are useless, they are nothing. It excludes anything in the middle. Another way in which Fallaciam Socraticam is a White a and Black fallacy is that you either know F or you cannot predicate F.

## 5. THE BASIS OF DEFENSE

The charge against Socrates is based on Mistaken Philosophical Hermeneutics and not on the epistemological relationship between definitional knowledge of a thing and the ostensive knowledge of things that are that thing. Geach clearly shows that he thinks Socrates thinks that definitional knowledge is prior to ostensive knowledge. It is indeed reported by Geach, as we have seen earlier, that according to Socrates: A. If you know you are correctly predicating a given term T you must know what it is to be a T in the sense of being able to give a general criterion of thing's being T, and B. It is no use to try and arrive at the meaning of T by giving examples of things that are T. That B follows from A. The second ground for accusing Socrates is that Socrates has a belittling attitude towards particular cases of arguments or towards individual's in arguments. Bervesluis observes that this is misconstruing the elenctic status and the epistemic roles of examples used by Socrates himself. The third case is that of Geach's misunderstanding of Socratic conception of knowledge and confusing it with that of Plato.

Bervesluis juxtaposes two corresponding reformulations against those of Geach's A and B to help us answer this question, as follows: A1.If you do not know the definition of F you can not know that anything is an F, And A2.If you do not know the definition of F, you cannot know anything about F. B\*It is impossible to search for the definition of F by means of examples of things that are F.

Geach's first fallacy: The fallacy of converse accident.(a dicto secundum quid ad dictum simpliciter) Geach's attempt to fix Socrates runs him into a problem that he may not have realized. The fallacy of hasty generalization in which a particular exceptional case is applied to all cases. The accusation that Geach labels against Socrates is based only on Euthyphro yet he claims that the Fallaciam Socraticam is so called because its locus classicus are the early dialogues. He also implies that Euthyphro's case is typical of all other dialogues. Two important questions emerge: What do the other early dialogues say? Several dia-logues make up what we call early dialogues. Besides Euthyphro we have Laches, Ion, Lysis, Crito, Charmides, Apology, Ion. Are there cases where Socrates uses examples in these dialogues?

A critical observation of Geach's treatment of Euthyphro as locus classicus for Fal-laciam Socraticam tells us that the accusation against Socrates is trivial and engenders doubt as to whether Fallaciam Socraticam is really a fallacy. A

separatist view of this issue does warrant invalidity in Geach's Arguments. Something is always related to other things, one early dialogue is related to another early dialogue. The problem of priority of definition (PD problem) is based on Euthyphro 6D9-E6 from which Geach believes to be an outright commission of Socratic fallacy. But nothing more comes after.

...tell me what is the essential form of Holiness which makes all actions holy...so that wit my eye on it , and using it as a standard, I can say that any action done by you or by anyone else is holy if it resembles this ideal, or , if it does not can deny that it is holy

Relying on this, Geach accuses Socrates of the assumption that if you do not know the definition of a thing then ipso facto you cannot know that another thing is that thing or simply put in Berveluis' terms in A1: If you do not know the definition of F you can not know that anything is an F. Therefore basing on the fact that both Euthyphro and Socrates seem to have no idea of what holiness is then they cannot know that a thing is holy hence elimination of ostensive knowledge and that B\*, that even after failure to know the definition of F there is totally no hope of arriving at any knowledge of F since It is impossible to search for a definition of F by means of examples. This of course practically aborts arguments that would have otherwise progressed without obstacles. This according to Geach amounts to a fallacy, a fallacy that he out rightly lays on Socrates.

**Exoneration from B\*** On the contrary Socrates cannot not be accused of such a fallacy, otherwise it would be a contradiction of him, and so a contradiction in Geach himself if we widen our analysis to other early dialogues. Why so? Socrates appears to encourage in a lot of places the use of examples. We have cases where Socrates accepts examples as means of deriving essential definition...these examples downplays Geach's Assumption that B necessarily follows from A, Meaning that A can as well follow from B. In Laches, Socrates asks Laches what courage is and he responds by giving even more examples than did Laches himself. " ...Tell me, if you can, what is courage?" asks Socrates. "Indeed, Socrates, I see no difficulty in answering. He is a man of courage who does not run away, but remains at his post and fights against the enemy..." says Laches.

One would expect that if indeed Socrates holds that it is impossible to search for a definition of F by giving examples of things that are F then he would, without delay reject the example of Laches and charge him of "The fallacy of Having Recourse to examples" but on the contrary he not only accepts Laches example but also adds an-other example, and thereof violates B\*, the dialogue continues thus.

Socrates: Very good, Laches, yet I fear that I did not express myself clearly, and therefore you have answered not the question which I intended to ask, but another.

Laches: What do you mean Socrates?

Socrates: I will endeavor to explain.You would call a man courageous who remains at his post, and fights with the enemy?

Laches : Certainly I should.

Socrtaes: And so should I, but what would you say of another man, who fights flying, instead of remaining?"

Laches: How flying?

Socrates:...as the Scythians are said to fight, flying as well as pursuing, and as Homer says in praise of the Horses Of Aeneas, that they knew 'how to pursue and fly quickly hither and thither....."

In Charmides (Ch 159C3 -160B5)

In Charmides, in the attempt to derive meaning of temperance, Socrates reorganizes Carbide's definition of Temperance as quietness by giving examples of cases which temperance does not necessarily need quietness but activeness...He does not stop there, Socrates seems to be exhorting Charmides to examine a wider range of exam-ples.

Soc: And first tell me whether you would not acknowledge temperance to be of the class of the noble and the good?

Yes.

But which is better when you are writing the Masters, to write the same letter's quickly or slowly?

Quickly again.

And in playing the lyre, or wrestling, quickness and sharpness are far better than quietness and slowness?

Yes

And the same holds in boxing and in the pancratium?

Certainly.

And in leaping and running and in bodily exercises generally, actions done quickly and with agility are good and noble; those done slowly and quietly are bad and un-sightly?

It seems so.

.....

**Exonerated from A1** The first of Geach's accusation goes thus; That A. If you know you are correctly predicating a given term T you must know what it is to be a T in the sense of being able to give a general criterion of thing's being T, Baveluis counters this accusation by putting forward two propositions, the first of which is A1. If you do not know the definition of F you cannot know that anything is an F, Two distinctions need to be made here. That of Necessity and that of Sufficiency. Knowing the definition of Holiness is not necessary condition for knowing that any action is holy rather it is a sufficient condition for knowing what actions are holy. and that definitional knowledge is sufficient criteria for determining a situation at hand.

So far we realize that for Socrates definitional Knowledge of Holiness in Euthyphro is a very crucial vehicle of determining whether or not Euthyphro action is `a holy action or not. Any Philosopher of ethics of course will always have a moral ground by which he determines whether such and such an act is moral or not moral. He will be next to irrational who just wakes up from slumber and determines that action X is immoral without basing his judgment on a particular scale. A moral theologian/ philosopher will say that Abortion is immoral after measuring abortion against some rational ,religious or even natural criteria. So is the case with Socrates/.That the scale for measuring Holiness is the knowledge of Holiness...and not just the knowledge of holiness but more so definitional knowledge of holiness, and by definitional knowledge , is to say Formal definition.

Again one wonders why it is that it is only in Euthyphro that Geach bases his accusation. Two reasons that this is the only place that there is apparent rejection of examples but why? That it is an exceptional case, a special context of what is F? Question and that it is a case where a matter of life and death has to be handled. And that means that at most certainty is required since the prosecution of Euthyphro Father could eventually lead to death and so, conflict between Euthyphro and his relatives. It must also be because Socrates is a highly moral character who does not approve of death of anyone be he a criminal or not. In fact according to Socrates epistemological realities is based on morality. That true knowledge is knowledge of virtue and whoever has no virtue however learned he appears to be is not in reality learned. And so such a person should not be prosecuted but should be instructed. Should not be executed but should be given opportunity to go back to school and learn virtues. The same would apply to Euthyphro's Father, if incase he knew or he didn't know that killing? A servant is unholy he needed not be prosecuted but to be taught what holiness is just like he attempted educating Euthyphro on what holiness is.

Baveluis asserts that according to Socrates, Definitional knowledge of F is a sufficient condition for knowing what actions is F in general BUT not a necessary condition for knowing that any action is an F and therefore a person could know that something is an F without knowing the definition of F. 1.If one does not know the nature of a virtue, he cannot be in a competent position of advising or leading others into the how of achieving such virtue. For instance if one does not know the nature of chastity, what it is what it entails then he cannot be a spiritual director of someone having problems with chastity. 2. Exclusively the definition of F is sufficient but not necessary condition of for knowing what things are F. And so? We can never affirm that textual evidences given by Geach are sufficient enough to incriminate Socrates, and so rendering his attribution of Fallaciam Socraticam to Socrates as weak and redundant.

Peter Angeles' Dictionary of Philosophy has The Fallacy of Slanting as "...omitting, deemphasizing or overemphasizing certain points to the exclusion of others in order to hide evidence that is important and relevant to the conclusion of an



argument...". Pg 98. This kind of fallacy can be said to emanate from prejudice or fear of being de-clared irrelevant, unsound or invalid. It is only natural to human beings since security be it academic, reputational, emotional is said to be basic of need of mankind. One would wonder why Fallaciam Socraticam omits many other sources of Socrates' work. And more importantly decontextualization of Socrates is highly questionable. Accusing Socrates of Fallaciam Socraticam is like giving a verdict in a court. In a court of law, one who gives verdict of course is the judge's judge is always expected to be objective and to have a wide range of knowledge. He is supposed to consider not just one factor but as many factors as possible so as to give verdict. Geach Falls short of this, not only because he limits himself to Euthyphro alone but also that he seems to have ignored of is ignorant of Socrates' claim of being a midwife and ethical philosopher. To the extent that Socrates is a midwife, Socrates work was to help his students to give birth to knowledge which they are pregnant with. He was not a teacher of dogma who speaks and the only thing that the learner can do is to listen, if not to shape out...So his arguments are not bound to give answer but to provoke the interlocutor into thinking into giving birth to answers.

The concern of Socrates was moral arguments, in such arguments one would expect all types of disagreements. So the idea that Socrates should have made clear right at the beginning of argument the meaning of terms to be used is to reduce Socrates into a Spoon-Feeder kind of teacher, who is no teacher at all. After all Socrates debates was not among those who knew nothing...but among those who knew very little and yet masqueraded as those who knew. Euthyphro, for instance portrays all sorts of confidence of a believer who knows what holiness is as do many a religious chiefs, political leaders, teachers ...So it would follow that the interlocutor be the one to seek clarification of terms and not the teacher to present all things the learned. As noted earlier one it is highly suspicious that either Geach omitted some of these facts about Socrates or that he had very little idea about Socrates.

## **6. DOES IT MATTER TO US THAT SOCRATES DID NOT COMMIT FALLACIAM SOCRATICAM**

Any existential philosopher or any one with existential inkling would ask, does it matter that Socrates did not commit Fallaciam Socraticam? Does it in any way im-prove man's life? If he is an African pragmatist, he would ask; Will this chattering bring bread to the poor of Africa? It would seem indeed that this is a useless chatter. Engaging in defense of Socrates is likely to appear to many today as a vain activity: For one after all this is someone who died long time ago: and to make it worse there are disputes as to whether there ever existed a historical figure called Socrates. It s chasing wind...is it not? On the contrary, it is to be understood that the exoneration of Socrates from Fallaciam Socraticam is very important today, whether or not there ever existed a historical figure Socrates or not, though on our part we believe with reasons that there existed the man Socrates.

Exoneration of Socrates as it were is more of a defense of the elenchus than the per-son Socrates. At the same time it is not to be taken fore granted that the defense of Elenchus is plausibly identical with Socrates the man. Otherwise we would be talking about two separate people, one called Socrates and another one called Elenchus. It is said philosophically that in as far as a rational individual and his relationship with others is concerned, there are three groups of people. The pre-conventionalists, the conventionalists and the post-conventionalists.

The pre-conventionalists are individuals who can do almost nothing unless they are told to. The society, the parents ,teachers among others have to push them. Their life is necessarily depended on the decisions of other people. The conventionalist is those who conform readily with all credulity. They do what they do because the group does it. They are more active but always careful not to offend group, even when they know there is a problem. Majority of the human race falls under this category.

The post conventionalists are individuals who are beyond conventions and rules. They look at the truth and do ,decide, whatever they do or decide because they are convinced within themselves that whatever they do is right or wrong. They do not have a necessary appeal to what majority say. Post conventionalists are very few and normally they have to endure the wrath of the conventionalists, sometimes they have to sacrifice their life. Socrates, Jesus, the prophets, and a good number of other people who are informed, transformed and convinced of the necessity and urgency of a philosophical life. These are people whose life style is a philosophical, whose culture is philosophy...lovers of truth and wisdom. Be they scientists, farmers, teachers of philosophy, professors, or even that village man.

Socrates was a man who rarely followed the whims of the crowd unless he saw the light of truth and reason in it. He was a postconventionlist living among the conventi-otanalists. Our liberation of Socrates from the Geach's Fallaciam

Socraticam and the consequent defence of Elenchus imply that popular (conventional) opinion is not always right. There are many cases where an individual has been right and the rest wrong.

In Africa for instance, there is claim of democracy, people elect their leaders, and most of these leaders turn out to be wolves, feeding on the sheep instead of feeding the sheep. It is a sorry state of affairs but it is the influence of the so called democracy, which if examined closely is not democracy at all. In fact what is called democracy in contemporary world is a counter-feit of original and it requires a mind that is deeply critical to realise this.

In education, Elenchus, which Geach sees as fallacious in part, is very important in teaching learning process. Socrates had it that education is not like filling an empty container. Socratic view of education is that of activating that which is there. It is helping playing the role of a midwife, whereby the learner is helped to give birth to the knowledge within him. It would be a surprise to see a case where by a learner is indoctrinated, no question is asked, no contribution is made. What the teacher says in final. At the end of the day, the products of education became useless to the society...No wonder there are many graduates outside there who cannot think creatively,. Cannot create employment...but wait to be employed. When they cannot be employed they end up in crime, robbery, prostitution because they cannot think creatively...that is to say in other words they cannot think beyond the conventions of the society. a kind of thinking that is portrayed in Socratic elenchus and other extraordinary ways of thinking that the society may consider as fallacious.

Lastly,. Socrates and religion. This is a very important factor. Religions is one of the most volatile part of human life. In a very general sense religion's survival is normally based on conventionalism. Little reason, and especially reason that tends to dispute moiré often than not leads the individual into conflict with others of the same religion, Divergence of opinion in most cases is shunned upon. One has just to believe and be a good man/ woman of religion. Deep rational challenges. Socrates expressed this especially in Euthyphro .He expresses the doubt of whatever is said about the gods and even doubts the gods which Euthyphro believes in if they are really gods or God, for that matter. Time has it that they were not gods or God long after the religious had executed Socrates. This means that whoever seeks truth just expect ask, and to offend deeply religious attitudes and insinuations ,especially those that seem con-trary to reason common reason, some of which are human projections into the society. This of course does not imply that faith is null. Not at all. Faith is null if rejects reason because its nature is also rational .Even when one submits to faith that which reason cannot understand, that is reason on its right. It is through reason that one realizes that up to this far, reason cannot permeate.

## 7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Since Socrates does not commit Fallaciam Socraticam, we can be assured that indeed the Elenchus remains relevant today as it was during Socrates' life and that its importance is towards the individual and towards others. The most important and difficult study to undertake is The Knowledge of self. Socrates says know thyself, but since it is difficult and an odious task people avoid examining themselves. The best tool recommended is Elenchus. 'Fallaciam Socraticam' is a fallacy, but it is not Socratic.

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