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ENLIGHTENMENT TO PERFECTION

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**Department of Philosophy
SAP (DRS-III) of UGC
University of North Bengal
(Accredited 'A' grade by NAAC)
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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL NOTE		
DEBASHIS GUHA:	TRANSMUTATION OF APPLIED ETHICS TO PRACTICAL ETHICS: DOES HERMENEUTIC- PHENOMENOLOGY HELP?	1-15
P. K. MAHAPATRA:	BODY, MIND AND YOGA	16-25
S. C. PANIGRAHI:	WITTGENSTEIN ON DENIAL OF PRIVACY	26- 30
DILIP KUMAR MOHANTA:	VALUES, POLITICS AND SOCIETY: A DISCOURSE IN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY FOR SELF-RELIANCE	31-48
MD. SIRAJUL ISLAM:	CULTURAL IDENTITY CRISIS IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION AND TECHNOLOGY: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE	49-63
GOPAL SAHU:	WITTGENSTEIN ON ETHICS	64-74
RATIKANTA PANDA:	PROOF OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD: AN ANALYSIS	75- 82
NIRMAL KUMAR ROY:	THE VISION AND MISSION OF <i>ŚRIMADBHAGABATĠĠĀ</i>	83-108
N. RAMTHING:	STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AND HUMAN PREDICAMENTS: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION	109-116
PATITAPABAN DAS:	FLOATING AGENCY AND FADED VALUE: WHY SHOULD BE ETHICAL?	117-128
MADHUMITA MITRA:	DOES MILL DEMAND TOO MUCH MORALITY FROM A MORAL AGENT?	129-138
MAYANK BORA:	INTENTIONALITY, UNDERSTANDING, AND SYMBOL GROUNDING: SEARLE'S CHINESE ROOM ARGUMENT AND THE LIMITS OF COMPUTATIONALISM	139-152
ATREYEE MUKHERJEE:	GAZZANIGA'S VIEW ON SELF: SOME OBSERVATIONS	153-168
ARPITA SINGH:	EXPLAINING QUALIA	169-179
TRISHA PAUL:	<i>AKHYĀTIVĀDA</i> : AN EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL STUDY	180-188
ANUREEMA BHATTACHARYYA:	ROSS'S VERSION OF ETHICAL INTUITIONISM: A STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF G E MOORE AND KANT	189-196
SOMA BHATTACHARYYA:	THE ARGUMENTS OF SEED-FIELD THEORY IN HINDUISM: AN EXAMINATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FEMINIST ONTOLOGY	197-204
OUR CONTRIBUTORS		205
NOTE TO THE CONTRIBUTORS		206
OUR PUBLICATIONS		209

EDITORIAL NOTE

To involve with philosophical thinking is to express one's discontent with what is; to show that what was, or what was and is in error; to seek to persuade or to prove that what does one think and believes is right and correct; and to show that if the world does not accept one's thought and belief it will perish by some form of death, physical or intellectual. All philosophers want to change the world. Marx believed that he was the first to put philosophy straight. He was not the first, and, of course, he is not the last. Philosophical interpretation is inherently a fighting stance for change. Thus, the intellectual life in its true self can be nothing but revolutionary. It is tragic to the intellectual life when 'intellectuals' forget this. Philosophy, therefore, is a revolutionary enterprise. If philosophy purports not to be, it is either apologetics or counter-revolutionary. Philosophy that is apologetics is, of course, not philosophy. Counter-revolutionary philosophy may be philosophy in that it is composed of revolutionary ingredients. Since philosophy is a critique of what was and of what is and, just as important, of what seems to be developing as future, philosophy is very much historical in its dialectic.

It is not historical in the sense of using the resources and the findings of history as implementing and justificatory arguments and as supporting proof, but in the sense of being historical in its very nature as process of reasoning. To philosophize is to historicize. No philosophy can escape history, not only in the sense that the philosopher thinks in the idioms of the time of his life, but in the sense that philosophy is an enterprise of, an undertaking of, and an operation on, history. In this sense, the philosopher in his challenge expresses history.

This journal is a yearly philosophical journal published by the Dept. of Philosophy, University of North Bengal. Philosophical Papers: Journal of the Department of Philosophy, welcomes contributions from all fields of philosophy. The editorial policy of the journal is to promote the study of philosophy, Eastern and Western in all its branches: Epistemology, Metaphysics, Logic, Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy, Analytic Philosophy, Continental Philosophy and Philosophy of Science, Mind, Religion and Language. However, it would like its contributors to focus on what they consider to be significantly new and important. The contributions should, as far as possible, avoid jargon and the author's contention should be stated in as

simple a language as possible. *Philosophical Papers: Journal of the Department of Philosophy* is thus, devoted to the publication of original papers in any other of these fields. The Department hopes that followers and seekers of philosophy will receive much light and guidance in the field of philosophical research from these discussions. It is also expected that the contributions/papers in this academic journal will spark fruitful philosophical discussion of the vital issues raised in them.

The Department is happy to present *Philosophical Papers: Journal of the Department of Philosophy* Volume-16, March-2020, before the philosophical community. We thank the esteemed members of the editorial board, all colleagues for valuable suggestion, support to take extra mile for the accomplishment of the publication of this issue. We are also grateful to our Honourable Vice-Chancellor for the encouragement and support, the Finance Officer (Officiating), the University Grants Commission and the University Press, without which the publication of the journal would not have been possible.

D. Guha in his contribution defends that transmutation of applied ethics to practical ethics is enabled by pre-pragmatic (or pre-practical) hermeneutic-phenomenological research (HPR). The paper analyses briefly that the theory-anti-theory debate or the debate between proponents of deductive and inductive models of ethical application have placed us in an indecisive state concerning the possibility of resolution of value-loaded practical problems of urgency. Both models have their own problems, though the anti-theory model leads us to the realization of transforming the basic conception of ethical application by virtue of undertaking a social-scientific vocation and mechanism of pragmatic or practical ethics anchored to collaborative value-resolution, decision-making and policy-making. However, it has been argued that, this happens if pre-pragmatic phenomenological-hermeneutic research is undertaken to interpret and understand the moral perceptions of concerned parties in society who give us important insights to further construct questions or queries for conducting and moderating broad-based moral dialogues enabling consensus.

Dilip Kumar Mohanta proposes that there are seven principles that characterize a happy society. Self-reliance is a precondition for a happy society. This can lead us to the after post-modern, evolutionary world, a world in which we would become more conscious about our need to engage in human moral and intellectual evolution. It

would eventually free us from violence and open new horizons for human development. It questions the unquestionable supremacy of Western Civilization dominated by materialistic values. It advocates India's duty-based model of good governance based on spiritualistic values to combat the evils of consumerist and profit-oriented model of development. It advocates politics based on moral and spiritual values for sustainable development for peace and prosperity.

Globalization means the internationalization and mutual dependence of problems and the foundation is the accumulation and mutual dependence of problems like selfishness, poverty, hunger, population explosion, wars, and terrorism. There are two viewpoints to solve the practical problems of life, i.e. Ideologies and religions that are applied in practice and a solution is sought on the basis of everyday realities. Sirajul Islam in his *Cultural Identity Crisis in the Age of Globalization and Technology: an Indian Perspective* attempts to explore the intricate cultural identity crisis in India associated with increasing globalization and technological advancement in the modern age.

The conspicuous silence of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* on ethics is both surprising and predictable. Surprisingly, *Philosophical Investigations* does not discuss ethical issues though it is supposed to reject and correct the "grave mistake" of indeterminacy of a normative moral theory committed in his early writings particularly in *Tractatus*. However, Gopal Sahu argues that the silence of *Philosophical Investigations* on ethic is predictable considering the fact that it is a book of philosophization rather than philosophy. It provides a set of philosophical tools and techniques to draw the "sketches of landscapes" for us "to travel over a wide field of thoughts". Sahu tries to draw a sketch of an ethical landscape based on the interpretative study of the relevant remarks of *Philosophical Investigations*. Sahu argues that *Philosophical Investigations*, by implications, maintains that ethics, as a family resemblance concept, is a language game, governed by a set of rules, whose "universality" is found in their grammars, "normativity" is entrenched in "form of life" and "objectivity" is ensured in our commitment to follow the rules.

In the *Preface* to the second edition of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* it is said "It still remains a scandal to philosophy . . . that the existence of things outside of us ... must be accepted merely on faith, and that, if anyone thinks good to doubt their existence, we are unable to counter his doubts by any satisfactory proof. In response to this statement Ratikanta Panda in his *Proof of the External World: an Analysis* tries to explicate the proof of external world from common sense experience.

It is indeed a fact that all of us have an inborn desire for peace and happiness. But there are times in life that we experience so much inner conflict that peaceful existence just does not seem possible. It is at such times that many of us turn towards the sacred scriptures of the world for guidance. Among the ancient scriptures of India the *Śrimadbhagabatgītā* holds a special place. Rich with spiritual insights and wisdom its message is universal. For centuries it has been a vast source of inspiration to all those seeking spiritual guidance. Nirmal Kumar Roy in his *The Vision and Mission of Śrimadbhagabatgītā* shows how inner wisdom enables us to maintain mental balance while dynamically acting in the world. Roy's assessment is profound, simple, and relevant in today's world. Thus he proposes how to base our choices on the vision of Oneness and Truth, so that we can revitalize and enliven every aspect of human lives.

Structural violence is understood as patterns of differences within large-scale social structures i.e. differences of power, wealth, privilege, education and health – that are unjust and unequal. This form of violence also occurs in a society if institutions and policies are designed in a way that creates barriers or inequitable access to a range of goods and services for some people but not others. Overall, as a result of structural violence, people experience extreme social oppression and, consequently, erosion of human dignity and of all associated dimensions, including confidence, overall well-being and security. N. Ramthing in his *Structural Violence and Human Predicaments: A Brief Introduction* explores structural violence in a variety of ways across different contexts and disciplines. According to him, a complex interplay of economic, political and social factors are embedded in the way society is organized. This results in inequality for, or exploitation of, certain groups of people, which creates unequal life chances. Inequality as a manifestation of unequal power dynamics is inherent in the structures of society. Structures themselves are not neutral

and can be understood as a pattern of collective social action that has achieved a degree of permanence. Thus, reinforcement and maintenance of structural violence via intergenerational acceptance of traditions and social norms is desirable so far as Ramthings's discussion is concerned.

What is the motive of being ethical? This question has been the paramount importance in the ethical deliberation. While all unethical events happen all around and while we lead a comfortable life being egoistic or selfish, is there any point to behave otherwise? In many cases, it is alleged that people suffer being ethical and prosper being otherwise. Even though people want to be ethical, they do not find any moral justification to behave in that way. Moral values being subjective, everyone does according to his own terms and there is no way to decide why one should behave in other way. Patitapaban Das in his contribution shows a humble way to discover that magic ring for which people ought to act altruistically. He also argues that acting altruistically can also be feasible and conceptually possible in a highly subjective framework. Das in his contribution explores how one can lead a meaningful life acting altruistically. Though it sounds like a question of metaethics, but, it takes a normative route to motivate us acting altruistically. He cites concrete examples from Indian tradition but those can be situated in any specific milieu.

Whether Mill was an act utilitarian, or whether he was a rule utilitarian - or whether he was some other kind of utilitarian, such as a sanction utilitarian - are aspects of the more general question of what Mill's moral standard was. This is obviously one of the most important questions to ask about Mill's moral philosophy. In 1833, Mill himself acknowledged the finding of correct moral standard as "the fundamental question of practical morals". In his *History of Moral Science*, Berkeley was able to see the difference between act and rule utilitarianism well enough to make it clear that he favoured the latter, and he was writing over a century before Mill. The question of Mill's moral standard is also one of the most extensively discussed questions in the vast body of scholarship, interpretations, analysis, and assessment of Mill's voluminous writings. This question has been so extensively discussed in moral philosophy of Mill. Madhumita Mitra in her *Does Mill Demand too much Morality from a Moral Agent* attempts to pose the question i.e. who should be beneficiary of

the good by referring to rigorous and moderate approaches in Mill's moral philosophy.

The Chinese room argument is a celebrated thought experiment due to John Searle. First formalised in 1980 in an article in *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, it was designed to show the futility of the search for 'strong' artificial intelligence. The Chinese room argument has stirred up an enormous amount of debate and controversy among artificial intelligence scientists and engineers, philosophers of mind and cognitive scientists. Some thinkers describe the literature on the Chinese room argument as "nearly infinite", described it as "Behavioral and Brain Science's most influential target article as well as something of a classic in cognitive science". It might appear strange that the debate continues since the general consensus of virtually all commentators is that the Chinese room argument is flawed. Perhaps it is just the case that the Chinese room argument raises questions that we are not yet in a position to answer, or is somehow ill-formed. Although some artificial intelligence researchers have given up on the Chinese room argument as fruitless, 'false-and silly', such dismissiveness is no replacement for rational appraisal of its scientific status. Mayank Bora in *Intentionality, Understanding, and Symbol Grounding: Searle's Chinese Room Argument and the Limits of Computationalism* attempts to argue that Searle's argument is ultimately ineffective in certain cases. However, these cases offer little hope to the computational theory for the fear of certain absurd consequences, the likes of which Searle himself takes note of.

According to Michael S. Gazzaniga, the self is a fiction invented by the brain. Our conscious learning is an observation *post factum* i.e. a recollection of something already accomplished by the brain. We don't learn to speak as speech is generated when the brain is ready to say something. False memories are more prevalent than one might think, and they aren't all that bad. For Gazzaniga, we think we're in charge of our lives, but actually we are not. On top of all this, the common belief that reading to a young child will make her/his brain more attuned to reading is simply untrue. According to him, brain activity is determined with the notion of moral responsibility, which normally depends upon the idea that we human beings possess free will. He says, Based on the modern understanding of neuroscience and on the assumptions of legal concepts, the following axioms may be made Brains are automatic, rule-

governed, determined devices, while people are personally responsible agents, free to make their own decisions. Atreyee Mukherjee in her contribution tries to start the debate generated by the two rival theories i.e. SAG and SAC of self and confined to the arguments advanced by Michael S. Gazzaniga in cognitive neuroscience.

The traditional notion of qualia is probably being said to originate with sixteenth- and seventeenth century philosophers like René Descartes and John Locke. Qualia are fascinating in their own right, being in my mind a wondrous feature of our existence as sentient beings. The characterization of qualia imputed to this tradition is that they are: ineffable, intrinsic, private and directly or immediately apprehensible in consciousness. These properties of qualia occasionally find contemporary justification, but can just as well be brought to the fore by contemplating Locke's notorious thought experiment involving spectrum inversion. The idea is the familiar speculation that different people might be experiencing different colours in response to the same stimuli, and that we could never know whether this is so. Arpita Singh in her *Explaining Qualia* attempts to say that the 'quale' in Qualia is significant because it is the properties of experience and these are the experiences which make a person an individual and separate human from other creatures and robots. Just because of qualia we can know 'what it is like to be a human'.

In our daily life, we gain knowledge of many objects around us such as chair, table, book etc. Not all of them whatever we come across in our daily life are valid cognition. When we mischaracterize one thing with another, it becomes erroneous. If we know the object as it is, it is called valid cognition which is the cause of a successful action. Invalid cognition leads us to an unsuccessful action. The fact of error may be studied from different points of view. We may approach the problem psychologically, logically or ontologically. When we look into the problem of error from the Indian philosophical points of view, we notice that these (logical, metaphysical, psychological analysis) all are fully mixed-up. The Indian philosophers find both the nature of error and the cause of error in the same context. There is a great deal of philosophical debate on the concept of error among different schools of Indian Philosophy. Trisha Paul in *Akhyātivāda: An Exegetical and Critical Study* attempts to discuss that the Nyāya critique of *Akhyātivāda* as propounded by the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas. According to them, we mischaracterize one thing with

another in our daily life due to our failure of grasping two cognitions which consist of percept and mimic elements as one unitary cognition. The Nyāya philosophers have raised serious objections to this view of the Prābhākaras. She proposes to discuss the debate between the Prābhākaras and the Naiyāyikas.

Anureema Bhattacharyya in *Ross's Version of Ethical Intuitionism: a Study In The Light of Moore and Kant* explores the justification of ethical intuitionism which grows up as a version of non-naturalism as against the naturalist expression of evaluative terms. It introduces W.D. Ross as a classical intuitionist and contrasts it with the logic of Moore's consequentialist intuitionism. It further analyses Ross as a deontological intuitionist but shows the peculiarity of such deontology as contrasted with the Kantian Absolutist view. Ross is an objectivist, though in the relativist sense and adheres to the intuitive faculties as guiding principles for our sense of morality. Hence, there is an attempt to understand Ross's ethical intuitionism in the background of Moore's Consequentialism on the one hand, and Kant's Absolutism on the other.

It is argued that marriage and procreation is ideal duty for women which are prescribed in the law book of Hindu *dharma*. The main reason of marriage is to produce progeny, especially son for keeping and protecting inheritance of family property. We found the prayer for son in the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads* and so on. In the context of the role of women in producing child is considered as passive and subordinate and compared to the field of agriculture. Soma Bhattacharya in her contribution proposes a critical examination of the claims made in the Seed-field Theory of Hinduism. A woman is called the field that acts as a nourishing agent for the growth of a seed and man is called a seed that has the power to reproduce its own kind. In this theory, all the *Śāstras* illustrated the supremacy of seed than the field. She argues that the seed as well as field are necessary and conjointly sufficient condition in producing a child. In other words, both man and woman constitute the necessary and sufficient conditions for procreation and hence they have equal role and dignity.

LAXMIKANTA PADHI
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**TRANSMUTATION OF APPLIED ETHICS TO PRACTICAL ETHICS:
DOES HERMENEUTIC-PHENOMENOLOGY HELP?**

DEBASHIS GUHA

Prelude

The rise and growth of applied ethics has been phenomenal since 1960. However, there are a number of misconceptions due to the ignorance that unlike moralism and theoretical prophecy, applied ethics as a systematic and serious inquiry under ethics is not about picking moral dilemmas and solving them by virtue of application of normative theory rather, it is concerned with *critique of models* of ethical application in cases of well identified value-loaded practical problems of urgency that trouble people having different occupations and professions. For instance, among other models, applied ethics aims at critical evaluation of the popular but unfounded model of picking cases and solving them with the help of standard normative theories.

The objectives of this research article are: (a) critical evaluation of the deductive and inductive or more popularly called, theory based and anti-theory models of ethical application to justify that despite enjoying methodological advantages, anti-theory models are fraught with the problems of *structuralism* and *limit* to application; (b) another aim is to explore the nature and significance of Hermeneutic-Phenomenological Research basic to pragmatic and empirical ethics that tries to bridge the chasm between empirical enrichment and ethical resolution; (c) furthermore, it is important to *justify* that the pre-pragmatic or pre-experimental research work namely, hermeneutic-phenomenological research (HPR), is crucial in understanding that applied ethics transmutes to practical ethics giving the needed rigor to value-resolution.

I

Critique of theory based and anti-theory models of ethical application

Theory based ethical application is traditional, involving the following steps: (a) identification of value loaded practical problems for moral resolution; (b) subsequent attempt to resolve problems on the basis of standard theory or theories of ethics such as utilitarianism and Kantianism; (c) helped by the official moral philosophers or ethics experts having complete knowledge of these theories and possibility of their

application theoretically; (d) theory based resolution of moral dilemmas are final and acceptable to the parties facing dilemmas and (e) formulating decision-making rules and policies helped by theory non-coopted exercise. A careful look at the steps reveal serious flaws: first, there is a division of labour (unwanted and unethical) assuming people facing problem on the one hand, helpless for being ignorant of ethical theories and the required skill of applying them to fitting cases, and on the other hand experts of substantive ethics and skilled technicians of ethical theory application. If this is the basic assumption of ethical application, ethical experts are both omniscient and omnipotent in resolving value crises because they know theories and solve problems much like skillful jigsaw puzzle gamers. This is the nature of what A. L. Caplan calls, “engineering model” of ethical application: “the applied ethicists on the engineering model serve as a go-between for theoreticians of normative ethics and denizens of everyday world”¹. Apart from the sweeping comments made above, Caplan argues that the model is defective (and unethical) on at least five counts: (a) The model is silent over an overreaching normative theory thus allowing picking theories and fitting them mechanically and artificially; (b) picking theories is completely wishful; (c) why should moral philosophers by virtue of knowing moral theories be the best experts, is unclear; (d) how an expert ethicist would remain neutral in value resolution is not clear and (e) applied ethics does not imagine programmed people who fit theories to cases and do nothing else (at least participate in a moral dialogue). In fact, ethical engineering is deducing moral conclusion from assumed sacrosanct moral principles artificially and thus “deductive model” is not appropriate in value-resolution.

Caplan thinks that though moral deductions from theories are possible at least theoretically, moral philosophers need to focus primarily on “the skills of discerning moral issues and classifying moral problems”². Applied ethicists (not necessarily and sufficiently the official moral philosophers), across fields need to be primarily apt at moral diagnosis to “(a) see moral issues others have missed; (b) anticipate issues before they actually occur and (c) properly classify the moral problems which arise in the ordinary ebb and flow of events in public and professional life. A knowledge of moral theories, traditions and concepts allowed the moral philosopher to see the norm more directly involved do not and sometimes will not”³. It is very important to

understand after Caplan that moral theoreticians need not unnecessarily attempt at final solutions by means of moral deductions, from theories. Rather, they should show why diagnosis of value-loaded feature of a problem is so important before we jump to solution. Yet, Caplan himself raises a difficult question: How do we identify such problems? What steps are involved in? He says that it may not be easily answered though careful consideration is needed. The first point to note is that, *value identification* precedes value – resolution by any means. Hence, method of value resolution should give way to value identification to start with.

This primary work, I would later on in this Paper argue, presuppose an entry into pre-pragmatic *hermeneutic-phenomenological research* (HPR). Caplan makes two important observations that count most on what has been said about HPR just now. He asserts that once a value-loaded issue has been identified, we should be able to see the various point of views from which an issue may be seen for cogent resolution. This focuses our thoughtfulness and sensitivity in value resolution and in doing so we understand our competence to find out the relationship that determines our rights and duties. He further observes that in social relationship we all enjoy moral authority to value-resolution and for that empirical enrichment is required because moral abstraction (about what ought to be and what things are good), are of no use and does not succeed bereft of relation with what things matter-of-factly surround us. Factual information and value perceptions work in tandem in value resolution. Hence, “a fully developed applied ethics would afford the moral philosopher an opportunity to examine the delicate interplay that occurs among facts, social roles, and prescriptive principles in reaching moral decision.”⁴

Hume might be turning in the grave because the is-ought controversy is taken to be pointless. We are *not* deriving or *logically deducing* what ought to be from what things are. Let us remember that Hume’s wonder was eloquently expressed by G. E. Moore in the famous fallacy of naturalism, though the pathetic fallacy occurs only when we are either logically defining a value term by reducing it to natural terms or we are logically justifying a value theory by reducing it to a naturalistic theory. We are *not at* both these pathetic reductionist attempts. We are making a point in ethical application that bereft of empirical enrichment; value resolution is a futile attempt because we are considering value-loaded *practical problems* of urgency for

resolution. We assert much like J. L. Gorman that evaluation and descriptive features of dilemmas are epistemologically similarly grounded even if the former is action-guiding and the latter is not. In fact, both are at epistemological risk and both are amenable to moral arguments. For instance, when we evaluate fetal abortion after gender identification, we value (judge) it to be ethically repugnant and conclude that one ‘ought not’ conduct such an abortive act. If somebody conducts it, we judge: ‘he or she ought not to have done so’. Interestingly, such value judgments are possible (or a covering argument is sensible), when an intervening *factual assertion* has been made, that is, ‘fetus is a living entity enjoying certain rights’. Gorman concludes that value perception and factual information are in tandem in value resolution and that ethicists and non-ethicists all enjoy “moral authority”⁵ to value resolution.

Let us turn to the ‘anti-theory’ models of value-resolution. It is said to be a ‘bottom down’ or inductive model of value-resolution than the ‘top to down’ or deductive model discussed above. The reason is that the proponents start with the moral perceptions of concerned people along with ethicists than picking overreaching theories to draw moral conclusions, completely overlooking participation of the concerned parties. The model is known as ‘anti-theory’ for its clear opposition to application of one or more theory or theories of ethics and thus rejects ethical chauvinism and theoretical obsession. In an excellent critique of the top-down model, the anti theorists say that the model overlooks the particularities and uniqueness of situations in which a dilemma occurs and there is no absolute moral theory available to solve a wide range of such dilemmas.⁶ In view of these features, inductive model of ethical application is *contextualist* or particularist in nature.

Anti-theorists propose their model under the influence of particularism to argue that (a) actual cases and situations of moral conflict need to be considered for resolution in view of contexts, cultures, traditions, historical and local settings; (b) moral resolution awaits coming together of ethicists and concerned parties to apply these uncoded moral knowledge; (c) moral resolution needs enrichment of moral experience in socio-historic flux by virtue of our activities and participation in ecological community; (d) moral conflicts considered in their real contexts ought to be resolved by interpersonal moral dialogue among concerned parties (ethicist being one among others), and (e) moral resolution gives us sets of moral cues for decision-

making and policy formulation, which are relatively but not absolutely useful. Virtue of this model is that it is itself ethically desirable for being non-partisan in ethical resolution. It conceives of no division of labour and moral chauvinism of peer group. There is no divide like philosophers solving problems and non-philosophers supplying problems and thankful to their ethics masters. Callahan summarizes the enterprise as (a) resolution of value-loaded problems; (b) developing the moral imagination for resolution (c) having analytical skills for scrutiny of the problem to know about the concerned parties; (d) testing moral disagreements in discourses; (e) effecting decisions and behavior, and (f) implementation, closure and process.⁷

Despite enjoying merits of a method with a human face, the model has several gaps. First, the method of *identification* of value loaded problems and parties concerned with the problems to be invited for broad based discourses, has not been well elaborated. Second, the dynamics of moral debates that goes along with theoretical discovery of normative dynamics is missing. Third and the most serious aspect is that moral disagreements and closure by virtue of moral corroboration point towards the problems of ‘structuralism’ and ‘limit to application’. Let us elaborate, on these serious problems. Let us accept that the moral entrepreneur involved in the task of value resolution is faced with the problem of proper method to frame searching questions for moral debates/dialogues that bring out moral perceptions of concerned parties; most likely the trained and conscious entrepreneurs are directed to achieve the outcome of her exercise, and for that she frames or *structures* some such fine tuned questions to churn out moral views of people and their normative leaning. To churn out normative leaning of the parties, in the name of deciphering value perceptions, is an engineering caveat. Hence, a structured question of expert is equally chauvinistic and theoretically schizophrenic. The moot issue is how can a corroborator arrange and organize social dialogues for value resolution without structuring questions for dialogue for ulterior end? Furthermore, a number of people seriously concerned about value resolution may be left out of social dialogue because they have ideological differences with the so-called mainstream entrepreneur and her esoteric coterie. How do we resolve this serious ‘limit’ put to the process at our own will? Finally, anti-theoreticism may be equally at mistake to avoid normative analysis because normative analyses are part and parcel of value-resolution though no one

advocates picking a theory and applying it. We still have to inquire carefully into the dynamic involvement of normative theories in real life moral discourses enabling corroboration. The point has been nicely presented by Musschenga, Mckeever and Ridge. Mckeever and Ridge argues that though moral valuation does not beg moral principles, their use theoretically and practically are not undesirable.⁸ Musschenga argues that “we need them (principles) in moral discussions. Without principles, it would be difficult to regulate cooperation with other. If empirical ethicists want to take their claim to prescriptively seriously, should formulate principles”⁹. Hence, reductive model of value-resolution demand chauvinism of all shades jigsawing with theories, structuring questions and avoiding limits of application all of which are undesirable. Therefore, an entry into pragmatic/ experimental/ empirical model of value-resolution that presupposes a pre-pragmatic research work laid down in HPR is necessary. HPR assumes an important role in value-resolution not merely in cases of human science but across fields filled with value-loaded problems, such as, medicine, nursing, law, education and environmentalism. (We hope to instantiate some of them in the section to follow).

II

Nature and significance of Hermeneutic-Phenomenological Research (HPR) in value-resolution

Inductive approaches to value resolution have contributed immensely in shaping, re-shaping and sharpening applied ethics, so much so that we have well accepted the importance of social-scientific vocation in value-resolution across public and professional domains. It has been successful in showing the importance of understanding the value perceptions of people who are directly and indirectly concerned with resolution of value dilemmas. Quite often than not people having occupations and professions who are responsible for decision making, policy formulation and implementation care for resolving moral crises that incessantly and unstopably emerge. However, these concerned and careful people tend to overlook a stage that precedes pragmatic/ practical/ experimental stage in value-resolution, which may be termed as the, ‘pre-pragmatic stage’. At this stage it is important to enter into what may be simply called a social-scientific vocation by the one who is an applied ethical entrepreneur to enrich her moral vocabulary, that is, strive for moral

enrichment. Interestingly, moral enrichment is supported by empirical enrichment (let us forget the hackneyed is-ought dichotomy because there is none). This is to envision a practical possibility of understanding the moral experiences, moral knowledge or moral vocabulary concerning value loaded practical problems. This is something like deciphering *meaning* of moral perceptions of parties in association, that is, *in-and-with-parties* by means of talking, questioning, debating, discussing, listening to stories and narratives- precisely, by means of understanding the *lived experiences* of parties. Hence, moral enrichment through empirical sensitivity is enabled by an art of interpreting moral perceptions, which is, hermeneutical understanding of moral perception and phenomenological understanding of the *essence* of lived experiences of people. Hermeneutic-phenomenological research (HPR) is thus primitive to value discourses in communion for decision-making, policy formulation and enactment of these policies. HPR enables us to solve the problem of structured questions to divulge the normative leaning of parties, and the limit to public participation in ethical application. But before that we need to find out a few important arguments that support HPR in value-resolution and to understand that applied ethics transmutes to pragmatic or practical ethics.

III

Justification of HPR in value-resolution

(i) Arguments from the lived experiences of people

Lindseth and Norberg take note of nursing care work and value dilemmas in particular to propose HPR or PHR as a model of value-resolution.¹⁰ Unique feature of HPR is that people facing moral dilemmas express their moral perceptions though for practical and psychological reasons, they fail to do so more often than not. Hence, value-resolution should start with enabling people to actively participate by bringing out freely their moral views on contentious matters. For the researcher it is extremely important “to analyse the material and the morals and the ethical thinking visible”¹¹. This is exactly the problem of ‘understanding’ value perceptions of people and for which “we could especially draw on the tradition of hermeneutics”¹². Equally important is “the tradition of phenomenology as it was developed by its founder Edmund Husserl and his successors”¹³. In the former case we understand “text” as it is given to us and in the latter we try to understand the “essence” of value perceptions

of people as it is lived in human experience. Notably, in this context “text” is not a body of written document but those moral vocabularies obtained from one to one, and one and many interviews, discussions, storytelling and by simply talking to people and taking note of them in various forms available to a researcher. In these ways one have entered into social- scientific vocation. Interpretation of text for meaning is then an integral part of hermeneutical research at the pre-pragmatic stage. However, hermeneutical interpretation of text (in its contextual import) does not aim at describing the morals and social facts. Yet, interpretation of text is not beyond socio-historicity and contextual sensitivity. Another important point is that hermeneutic understanding of ‘text’ is a movement from what has been said and what has been talked about, and what it talks about (the moral values), which is the essential meaning of text. Hence, for the researcher, phenomenological understanding of the essential meaning of lived experience is basic to understand what the moral opinions are of good and right of decision, actions and policies and so on. These enrichments are required before the researcher moves to the next level of pragmatics of value resolution with the aid of unstructured questions. This is basic to resolve the problem of limit to value-resolution because enrichment is *in- and- with* parties and not with theories and coterie of experts. A familiar misconception is that essential meaning is subjective construction and therefore structuralism is built in it. However, the truth is that meaning is drawn from shared familiarity with the world in which parties express their moral opinions, and therefore, essential meaning of good and right are *original experience* of the world or a foundation of all lived experiences. This is exactly what is for Husserl life-world or for Heidegger, ‘world’. The above explained research is then neither pure phenomenology nor pure hermeneutics but interpretation of ‘text’ and revealed ‘essential’ meaning of value of decisions and actions underlined in hermeneutic phenomenology (HP). It is also important to note that moral valuation occur in life-world which is not a case of bracketing the natural or factual world. In phenomenological attitude bracketing statement of facts, and through shared lived experiences, we gather essential meaning in a natural way. We do not bracket the world altogether rather, bracket pre-understanding of morals (or theories).

From this we come to know that before wide ranging public discourses and debates (more often other than not culminating in moral consensus), that happens at

the pragmatic or practical levels of decision-making and policy formulations, access to a body of expressions or *narratives* from lived experiences of concerned parties enable us to conduct, the said discourses in unstructured ways and transgress the limit to public/ participation. Improvement in understanding value of decisions and actions enable us to get access to next level broad based pragmatic mechanism of resolution and subsequent policy making. Paul Ricoeur says that in this way we enter into the ‘hermeneutical circle’ starting with naïve depiction of text, its structural analysis or theme interpretation and summarization or comprehensive understanding. The point is *pragmatic mechanism* at the *post-understanding stage* is required because text might have several interpretations. For internal consistency and shared value of experiences, phenomenological hermeneutics require *argumentation* and resolution, says Ricoeur.

(ii) Argument from Heidegger Hermeneutic-Phenomenology (HHP)

HPR is also backed by Heidegger Hermeneutic Phenomenology (HHP) and it has an impact in resolving several moral dilemmas pertaining to the case of children with physical intellectual and social disabilities, Work of Lafort, Knol and Leblanc is important to note.¹⁴ For Heidegger, a deeper understanding of the meaning of being a person and what it amounts to be in the world are of great importance because understanding the meaning of Being *as ethics* is more crucial than knowing the being as pure ontology. Knowing existence and explaining it is superseded by understanding the meaning of existence as ethics. This is made clear by Heidegger’s use of being- in and being- in- the- world. On the one hand a person exists in this objective world contextually as well as in his own subjective world, wherein he is separated from him. Being- in- the- world *cares for* person’s experience, that is, to interpret the different ways in which the person exists in the world. ‘Care-for’ is the most fundamental attitude of a person though care for self and for others may be different because the latter may be authentic and inauthentic as well. In order to have existential experiences the researcher ought to care-for the ethical perception of others. For Heidegger, being is basic for an understanding of relations or to care for what surrounds us (the relationship is ‘in the world’). It is here that person’s daily experience takes place, which is not the unique unshared experience but shared with

other persons. In this sense, understanding moral experience never happens in unique isolation and therefore never be to 'bracketed'.

Furthermore, Heidegger mentions that by understanding moral experience of others, the researcher or interpreter is complete with interpretation, not of realities as they appear to a person but the one that happens when facts are allowed to *speak* for themselves. Hermeneutics thus explains some of our daily existence as a human being by interpreting *revealed* facts. Nevertheless, Heidegger has laid stress on the researcher's enterprise to interpret and understand morals intersubjectively in a given context because moral understanding comes from subjectively shared meanings. We are all unable to bracket the interpreter, the interpreted and context of such understanding. Interestingly, lived experienced of Being- in- the- world need never be bracketed. Kerdeman observes that following Heidegger, Gadamer holds that understanding is not an end that we deliberately strive to achieve. Rather, "In our everyday world... meaning is intersubjective, publicly available, linguistically constituted, and deeply familiar... understanding is a mode of ordinary practical experiences. We understand in and through the experience of being involved with concerned people and events."¹⁵

(iii) Argument from unstructured meaning and subsequent dialogue:

In early anti-theoretical models of value-resolution a serious problem was the one of structured questions for dialogues. HPR is further justified by the need of broad-based moral dialogues among those responsible for decision-making and policy formulation only after existential understanding in unstructured ways. The question is, if pre-pragmatic research enables understanding of value-oriented features of problems, their various aspects and parties to be cared for value-resolution, why is it followed by further social dialogue? The main reason is that though HPR is built in practical ethics, moral understanding of researcher is never absolute or final. Thus, unstructured questionnaires for moral debates, able moderation of debates and theory non-coopted value enrichment by the researchers are all needed. For unstructured questions, HPR at the pre-stage calls for caring for people's moral perception in several social scientific methods of moral enrichment not structured at intellectual whims for attaining an intellectual goal. Gadamer clarifies that our life's experience is based on understanding not the other way around. Existential hermeneutics cannot be

detached from our experience and meaning cannot be detached from experiences in our “distinctive situatedness”.¹⁶ However, meaning is never definite in such a method of interpretation available to the interpreter. Our value interpretation and understanding are not definitive; they grow and fizzle out in the climate of lived experiences. Empirical enrichment is also not absolute and so is the case with structuring questions for moral dialogues, they are essentially in a flux, so to say. Further, in social settings our understanding of value perceptions of other people is never complete because we cannot freely comprehend value perception of the other person in her situation. Hence, a position of ambiguity at the pragmatic stage can be solved by broad-based dialogues. It is here that our prejudices are brought at a place for understanding wherein “a real fusion of horizons occur which means that as the historical horizon is projected it is simultaneously superseded. To bring about this fusion in a regulated way is the task of what we call historically affected value”¹⁷.

During pre-pragmatic research therefore, researchers’, non-structured questioning, answering, interpreting and understanding has been rolled in HPR. In Gadamer’s analysis, conversation in understanding moral point of view is both questioning and answering. Where “answering’ is hermeneutical interpretation of sense-making which enables conversations to continue. This thrust has to be further carried to the pragmatic level of discourses for transversal of opinions to converge for problem solving and decision making. Value-resolution is therefore, not endless cacophony, it is an act of listening for deeper meaning in collaboration- a state of divergent life-world belonging to different human existence converge.

This takes us seamlessly to another important feature of HPR, that is, pre-pragmatic dialogue for *self-discovery* and *discovery of other-selves*. Phenomenological understanding according to Paul Francis Colaizzi and Stein Halling is enabled by *narratives* and dialogues which are again unstructured. Colaizzi underlines phenomenological understanding under descriptive phenomenological method¹⁸. That aims at unfolding the ‘essence’ of any phenomenon under investigation, such as, value of decision and actions. Essence is underlined by those characteristics that make something what it is and ‘descriptive’ amounts to unfolding adequately something such as phenomenon under consideration. Colaizzi uses this method in adequately unfolding the ‘given’ in health sciences. The method banks on

first person account of moral experiences of people through written narratives or one-to-one unstructured interviews. Colaizzi mentions seven steps in that regard. We may avoid details of these steps except the last one, which Colaizzi calls, ‘verification’. He is of the opinion that after the penultimate stage of understanding essence of the phenomenon, the researcher ought to return her findings to the participants for verification so that honest modifications in their moral perception are possible. ‘Verification’ of moral perception expressed in dialogues/ narratives may not be needed at all if essence has been understood. However, we believe that in HPR, phenomenological essence finding, as also in case of hermeneutical interpretation be put to further grinding at broad- based discourses. However, at the second stage, dialogues lead to verification of essence in *association* and this is of great value.

The value of phenomenological research in HPR has also been underlined by Stein Halling in what he calls, *dialogical phenomenology*¹⁹, which gives great importance to dialogical participation with the community people to understand their moral views on contentious issues. Halling is of the opinion that phenomenology is important with regard to value resolutions because it is a tradition which values data obtained from everyday life through descriptions and stories which become basic to an understanding of human existence. However, phenomenology does not encourage a linear relationship between lived experience and reflection, that is, it does not allow a transition from experience to abstract theory construction. Halling explains that phenomenologist engage in three levels of analysis, namely, looking at particular experiences; search for themes that are common to variety of experiences and to inquire about the nature of human beings and their relationship. It is clear that in the phenomenological and the hermeneutic parlance, HPR lay stress on subjectivity or better said *intersubjectivity* between researchers and researched in a participating manner. Halling along with Finlay (2012) and Gadamer (1975) brings out the point that in value resolution, researchers should at the first place be open to dialogue, that is, open to speaking- critiquing- understanding situation. There is an importance of using researcher’s own experience and understanding- “it involves an active evaluation of the researcher’s own experience in order to understand something of the fusion of horizons between subject and object”²⁰.

Covering the arguments in favor of HPR at the pre-pragmatic stage of value-resolution, crucial point is that ethics experts are important in so far as they undertake a socially valuable enterprise of value resolution and they have their own understanding of values. Yet, we have to remember that ethical expertise that pampers moral principles separated from their ultimate narrative frameworks become so abstract that they are aid to intellectual gimmick. Proponents of narrative ethics argue that (if are go by HPR), we need to put moral theorizing to “practices, codes, metaphor, symbols and narratives that shape the society where they feel anchored and in which they have confidence”²¹. Nevertheless, narrative tradition does not overlook rational inquiry. The problem is how this would be possible in association across traditions? Can we transverse moral views, incorporate moral traditions and their insights in association? This is the typical problem of “limit” to ethical application. We think that we *ought* to transcend our moral narrative tradition through open communication about shared values in the respective traditions in the way of finding out generality. Sharing value in narrative tradition is not to lose identity. Identity restoration in communal sharing value is writ large in HPR. Narrative tradition helps in understanding the functionality of moral principle in real life “in the light of the contexts, narrative contexts where they appear and from which listeners are summoned to apply these principles in their own narrative context”²². It is in this way that in pragmatic model of ethical application, which is precisely, *practical ethics* that pre-level research, post-research dialogue for decision-making and policy-making and post-pragmatic analysis of functionality of moral principles seated in narratives are all closely knit. Applied ethics therefore after a number of transformations, come to what is practical ethics for value-resolution.

Conclusion

Pragmatic or practical ethics envisions value-based decision-making and policy-making by careful consideration of moral perceptions of concerned parties and find ways to come out of moral impasses to enable better living. In doing so, real life value-resolution and decision-making need not avoid the most needed and important step of moral enrichment in and with the concerned parties through unstructured dialogic-narrative course of action, correlative interpretation and understanding the moral perceptions of people on contentious value loaded issues. The model is

empirical at its root, tied to policy making process that is value based and to scientific advancements. The process engages stakeholders in joint inquiry leading to cooperative solution then relishing theoretical debates over metaphysics of values. Policy-making is then enabled by experience, using knowledge to bring out change in the world and strive for moral dynamics to resolve crises and live a decent life as humans need to live. Pragmatic ethics that has moved farther from the theory-anti-theory squabble has taken cue from vastly rich traditions of hermeneutical and phenomenological research, a more politically and ethically correct dynamics of policy making and theoretical analysis. Democratic discourse, ethical punctuation and immensely valuable contributions from narrative tradition all make practical ethics a success. I would thus like to conclude that HPR is basic in enabling a movement from classical application of ethics to practical ethics, empirically seated and ethically dynamic.

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BODY, MIND AND YOGA

P. K. MAHAPATRA

There is a familiar belief about man and his mind and body that has been responsible not only for gross misunderstanding of the nature of man and his mind but also for giving rise to two conflicting cultures of spiritualism and materialism, generally characterizing the orient and the occident respectively. This Cartesian tradition of treating the mind and body in the life of man as two independent substances contingently conjoined together, leads to exclusive metaphysical concepts of pure thought and pure action which eventually breeds the virtual exclusion of the two cultures I mentioned. In fact the exclusive pictures of pure thought and pure action is a special case of the more general question of the nature and relation between the body and the mind, and the supposed polar opposition between the body and the mind has virtually split man in terms of two distinct substances contingently conjoined together, thereby leaving us with the possible options of treating man either as a pure self or as a mere body, a mere mechanical artifact as it were.

I shall expose the roots of this metaphysical picture of man based, I claim, on misunderstanding the logic of the language we use to talk about man and his mind. In this endeavor I shall draw support from the philosophy of *Yoga*, which virtually rejects the supposed opposition between the body and the mind/spirit and treats them not as independent but as interdependent in the process of attaining liberation in transcendental communion of the individual self with the Universal Self.

To this purpose I shall expose the said misunderstanding as originating from a peculiar, but very common, view of the concept of mind and propose what I think to be a correct analysis of this concept which, I hope would remove the traditional misconception of man and present the human individual in proper perspective. In course of my analysis I shall use 'man' and 'mind' in their fairly general senses in which 'man' and 'person' are interchangeable and 'mind', 'soul', 'spirit' and 'self' are almost synonymous.

I

The tradition in question is a very familiar tradition in philosophy of mind which treats man as made up of two distinct substances, a body and a mind, and identifies him with the mind - the body being considered as an unnecessary appendage, contingently giving shelter to or being associated with, the person. This

dualistic picture of man might easily have issued from an imperfect understanding of the language we use to talk of person or man. Let us see how: we say two sorts of things about persons; firstly we ascribe a set of physical features to them (when, for example, we say of a man that he is strong or weak, tall or short, and the like) and secondly we ascribe a set of mental features to them (when, for example, we say that someone is intelligent or stupid, thoughtful or unthinking, and the like). It is reasonable as it is natural in common usage to say that our body is the cause or basis of the physical features we ascribe to man. But the mental features apparently cannot be explained as thus related to body, since there are some purely mental predicates which can be ascribed to persons, particularly if that person is oneself, without having to identify a particular kind of material body or any sort of material body at all, e.g. imagining, remembering, thinking about a philosophical problem etc. One can engage in these activities without having the faintest awareness that one has a body at all, much less that the latter is in any way necessary for these functions to be possible. Yet the operations of these activities, the ascription of predicates implying states of consciousness, needs to be explained - preferably in a way similar to the way in which that of the physical activities, the ascription of physical predicates is explained - as *caused* by the body. A similar causal explanation is then proffered by supposing a mind, a second entity, not physical but analogous to the physical body, to play cause to all our mental acts and processes. In this way the two-fold description of human nature in our common usage gives rise to the customary belief about the nature and existence of *two distinct substances* - a body and a mind - and we are given to believe that each of us is composed of two different things like these. Though this type of dualism regarding the nature of man is a very ancient element of ordinary language and thinking, Descartes is noted as the founding father of this belief as a systematic philosophical theory. Either because of the indirect impact of Cartesianism or because of misleading appearance of the language we use to talk about persons (I suspect the former is largely due to the latter), man's mind has been thought of as a separate object or entity, distinct from his body - analogous to it but definable in terms of all its opposite features. Human mind is thought of as the cause or bearer of qualities, analogous to it but opposite of those that are known to belong to or be caused by the body. Thus it is said to be immaterial and unobservable, it does not occupy space, can't be seen, can't be touched. Unlike the body, it is no part of

the physical world, but *like the body* it must occupy *some* world - an inner, non-physical world. Unlike the body, it is not bound by physical laws, but *like the body* it must be governed by some analogous laws, some para-mechanical laws. Further, being the occupant of such a supposed immaterial and occult duplicate world, the mind is supposed to operate and determine all the conscious physical or bodily process and functions of man; and it is in accordance with *its* design and plan that all the affairs of man are carried on. A perfect ghost in the machine, as Ryle so charmingly put it. We are thus in the grips of a persuasive metaphysical picture of mind, away from the actual states of affairs and yet generated by the actual working of our language about men as conscious individuals – or rather from a gross misunderstanding of these workings, as I hope to so in what follows.

In this picture, the mind is not only given the pride of place in the life of man but is supposed to *be* the man. And once again certain peculiar elements in our language and thinking about man seem to strongly suggest this. For if the mind is not a material object and is not subject to physical laws and forces, then it will not be affected by any physical process, and even if body is destroyed in the course of physical and physiological process, the mind will continue in a state of pure existence and pure consciousness. On this logic, the mind or the soul has been thought to be immortal, indestructible and eternal. Being beyond and unaffected by physical laws, the soul is described as *achhedya*, *akledya* and *adahya*. And since the soul is also construed as the essence of the person, this has led to the belief in rebirth, reincarnation and disembodied existence. Even we are given to believe that after the termination of this (physical) life, we can be born again and again - not only in the human form but also with bodies of beasts and birds. This belief in metempsychosis is a pet feature of oriental thinking (made familiar in the Buddhist *Jataka* stories) and not entirely unfamiliar to western intellectual history. Medieval western culture was familiar with this dualistic spiritualistic picture of man and eastern society has been living with it from time immemorial.

II

This peculiar notion of mind and consequent non-physical picture of man is a product of bad logic and imperfect understanding of the language we used to talk about man. Before I proceed to expose this, I must try briefly to pinpoint the

distortion wrought to the image of man by the concept of mind in question. Despite a few good effects of this spiritualistic view of man (which, I suspect, are more out of accident than out of logic), it can't be denied that in certain aspects of our social and moral leaving the metaphysical model of this picture is likely to cramp the intellect and create serious misgivings about the nature of man and his culture; for in this mode of thinking the mind or the soul is treated as distinct from his body and on *this* is laid all the emphasis and importance which go with the essential nature of man, and the body is treated (often scornfully, if it is not an overstatement) as a fairly dispensable part of the person. Even we are told that this body is the mundane prison which holds the soul captive and as such acts as a great deterrent in the way of liberation. Hence to seek liberation by ignoring this body, torturing it and even by 'giving it up' has been the ideal of our culture through ages. I would rather say that under the pretext of setting up justice and order (*dharma sangsthapanarthaya*) our Lord Krishna urged upon Arjuna to kill people in war and kill even his own kinsmen, because by killing them he would destroy only their mortal bodies but their souls (*they, i.e.*) would go on eternally living as immortal and indestructible. A father offers his son to be sacrificed in a *yajna* and is consoled by the belief that his son would go to heaven and leave in the abode of gods. The ideal of the soul that is enlightened, unbound, pure and eternal thus makes us disinterested in, and even hostile to, our physical existence and worldly affairs. It naturally nurtures a matching culture of spiritualism interested in a world beyond and life divine and hostile to the here and now. Divinity and humanity are torn apart and in the interest of the former we are led, gradually but surreptitiously, away from the affairs of human life.

III

One obvious way in which the above picture of man, as issued from the described metaphysical concept of mind, can be shown to be the product bad logic, is only by demonstrating that this Cartesian conclusion regarding the nature and essence of man does not follow from the premises from which it is supposedly drawn. It is true and an undeniable aspect of our talk and knowledge of persons that each has mind and that it is essential that he should have. But to draw from this anything like the conclusion that a person *is* the (his?) mind would be as absurd and illogical as to draw from 'S's have P' the conclusion that 'S's *are* P'. Further, that the latter seems so much to follow from the former in this case might be thought to be due to another

undeniable fact that having of mind is essential to being a person. But again the conclusion does not follow that the mind *is* (even in the sense of being essential to) the person. For even though being a material object is essential to being a table, no one would wish to say that a material object *is* a table or that the table *is* (in the sense of identity) a material object. Thus from mind's being essential to person the least that could follow is that *only* mind is essential to person – much less that mind *is* the person, since something else may also be essential, and having a body might just be that¹. The concept of a person is one of those clear but indistinct concepts of which no definition can be given but which can be made known only by examples².

Now, the instances to which we apply the concept of person are those to which both a set of physical features and a set of psychological features are applied – inevitably a group of what I would like to describe as “bodied subjects of consciousness”. It is true that in this usage what distinguishes men from other bodied beings or things is consciousness, the ascribability to them of predicates implying states of consciousness. Strawson calls them P-predicates³. The ascribability of the P-predicates constitutes the differentia of persons which “we cannot dream of applying” to other bodied things. The important question is, how are these P-predicates (to be) ascribed to persons. It is the peculiarity of the logic of such predicates that, besides being self-ascribable, they are also other-ascribable. For we not only know ourselves to be persons but, in order to be able to know this, must know *others* to be persons with whom we are of a kind. The question that matters is not “Am I a person?” (nobody asks this question seriously) but “Are these other moving and acting material bodies persons?” This is because only the second question can be significantly answered in the negative whereas the first one cannot. It is fairly conceivable that a moving material body looks like a man, walks like a man and in all observable respects is like a man, *and* is not a man, but it would be self-stultifying to say that this human form (from which the speaker speaks) is not a man. “I am in severe pain” is true to the speaker who knows it to be such without his having to depend on any criterial evidence, without having to identify any material body which is his own. But when one hears someone else uttering this, the truth of what he says has to depend on criteria – on what he says, how he behaves, how is his present behavior, verbal and non-verbal, connected with his previous as well as

subsequent behavior etc. Incidentally, it is this very fact of first-person self-ascription of P-predicates being non criterial⁴ that has deluded the Cartesians to stress the so-called “privileged access” to one’s own inner states (which, for them, is all that matters) and to picture us, persons, as purely non-physical subjects of consciousness. But this is to grossly misunderstand the problem at issue, since, as I have just now shown above, it is in the case of others - in recognizing others *as* subjects of consciousness – that the problem of what it is to be a person is relevant and significant and as such the concept of a person has not been clarified as long as a satisfactory answer to this question has not been supplied. Therefore, the question of *how* are P-predicates applied⁵ to persons must address itself to the case of other-ascription of such predicates. As Strawson emphatically makes the point, “it is a necessary condition of one’s ascribing states of consciousness, experiences, to oneself, in the way one does, that one should also ascribe them, or be prepared to ascribe them, to others who are not oneself”⁶.

As is evident from the above analysis, ascription of P-predicates have to be based on criteria. But it is not the “inner” criteria of the Cartesians that is applicable, if at all, to one’s own case, of self-ascription of P-predicates. A more accurate way of saying would be that the supposed inner criterion is either unnecessary (if intended to be applied in one s’ own case, wherein the self-knowledge is non-criterial), or inapplicable (in the case of others where the very unobservability of the soul or mind and the supposed privacy thereof⁷ prevents the applicability of such criteria). So the only criteria of personhood will have to be, as indeed they are, the outward criteria of verbal and non-verbal behavior of others, and observing the behavior of others requires observing their bodies. It follows, therefore, that to know others as persons or subjects of consciousness is to know them as bodied beings, and hence that the idea of man includes the body in order for it to apply intelligibly to the instances it does apply to. The concept of mind, which is inevitably essential to the concept of a person, is shown, on the above analysis, to be dependent on the body in order for it to apply to ourselves. However, my analysis should have adequately indicated that man should not be understood entirely in terms of the mind nor in terms of the body entirely, though both, on my showing, figure centrally in the acquisition of the concept. This is implied in Strawson’s much respected theory of the primitiveness of

person to which both predicates ascribing physical features and predicates implying states of consciousness are ascribable, but which is not reducible in terms of either or both. Thus the concept of a person as that of a *bodied subject of consciousness* is indispensable. If instead we understand person as a composite being composed of a body and a mind, contingently related, we are in the danger of emphasizing only one of these aspects of man, ignoring the other. As a result, two clashing cultures of spiritualism and materialism will inevitably emerge, as indeed I have shown they have. Consequently, the distorted image of man as either a pure spirit, unconcerned with the affairs of the physical world, or a mere body with nothing but material enjoyment as the goal of life will inevitably issue. But the unitary concept of the person as a bodied subject of consciousness gives the complete picture of man as an individual – taking due note of both the aspects of man and leaving no room for the described misunderstanding and the resulting clash of cultures.

Let me take a *detour* here and discuss briefly the philosophy of Yoga which as implicit contention of an integrated concept of a human individual very like my concept of a *bodied subject of consciousness*. Patanjali's Yoga system is the sixth of the six systems of Indian philosophy. And together with Sankhya, Yoga is concerned with achieving liberation which is possible in the union of the individual self with the Universal Self. But while Sankhya is occupied with the knowledge of detachment (*kaivalya*) for the purpose of achieving this goal, Yoga sets forth the discipline in detail. While Sankhya gives us the theory, Yoga detailed the practical side of the teaching. It shows the practical path by which one can attain *viveka jnana*, which alone can lead to liberation. (Similarity with Advaita Vedanta cannot be missed here). More than union with the universal self, as pleaded in the Upanishads and pursued by Sankhya, Yoga gave stronger emphasis on control of the body and the senses. It recommends perfection of the body. For only a sound body can prepare for a sound mind that is necessary for effective practice of *yoga*. And the two together can lead to the way of liberation, hence they cannot be treated as absolutely independent entities. A fundamental blunder of Sankhya philosophy was to treat *purusa* and *prakriti* as absolutely separate and independent realities - one as pure consciousness or sentience and the other as pure matter, purely unconscious. What this theory gives us is mere abstraction from concrete experience. But as a matter of fact, experience

always unfolds them together. Yuga philosophy therefore tries to reunite them – the metal and the physical, matter and consciousness. Physical discipline prepares for mental equanimity. This is *Samadhi*, which is transcendental communion of the individual self with the Universal Self.

The Advaitins, who considered Sankhya as *pradhana malla* (their main adversary), pointed out a contradiction in it: If *prakriti* and *purusa* were absolutely independent and opposite realities (as body and mind in the Cartesian scheme), they could never come in contact with each other and there would be no evolution. Sankara therefore alleged that neither real contact (*sanyoga*) nor a semblance of contact (*sanyogabhasa*) or mere presence of *purusa* near *prakriti* (*sannidhi matra*) can explain evolution. Yoga philosophy overcomes this contradiction by treating the two (mind and body) as interdependent and not as independent. Sri Aurobindo's *integral yoga* gives special emphasis on this by saying that only a unified Spirit and Matter would be the basis of *Integral yoga*'s path to understanding reality, that the non-being and the manifested universe are not opposites (denying each other's existence) but are only *different states with opposite affirmations*.

Broadly speaking, while Sri Aurobindo considers *integral yoga* as more of a psychological practice with internal reflection and self-analysis as the main tools of development, Patanjali's philosophy considers yoga was morally based (without which mere *asana* and *pranayama* etc would be futile in achieving the goal). God and morality take the pride of place in the philosophy of Yoga (an improvement over the atheist Sankhya), and all forms of life are taken as different stages in the march towards the supermind for Sri Aurobindo. In understanding reality and realizing the Universal Self, body and mind work as a synthetic whole – not as different and isolated. And with this account of the Yoga philosophy, we are back with our concept of a person as a composite unit – a *bodied subject of consciousness*.

The social indispensability of this concept of person or man is not the result of any revision or redefinition of our normal concept; it is rather due to our normal understanding of the concept as *this* concept which, on my showing, is logically indispensable. "Philosophy leaves everything as it is", and if one tries, consciously or unconsciously, to out step the barriers of usage and says something that is neither

contained in, nor follows from, it the result is a revisionary metaphysical picture – as we saw is evident in the Cartesian picture of man. As I have made it abundantly clear, the concept of person as a bodied subject of consciousness is what we must know persons *as*, and how we learn the meaning of the concept. It is thus the primary sense of the concept of a person. Like any other concept, this concept too allows certain extensions, or extended applications of it within the limits of intelligibility. The idea of disembodied person, or of the survival, after physical death, of a supposedly pure disembodied ego, is such an extension, dependent on, and only because there is, the primary use of the concept and as such is only a secondary use thereof. I have argued elsewhere⁹ that the secondary use of a concept is permissible and intelligible only because there is the primary use of that concept, but *not vice versa*. “My doll is in pain”, when said by a playful little girl, has meaning only because “pain” has its meaning in the usual, human context (and *that* is its primary sense), and if the latter were not the case the former would have been no more than a series of senseless noises. Similarly, our talk of ‘persons’ in the imagined case of disembodied persons owes its very use and intelligibility to our talk of persons in the normal, embodied case, which is its primary use, but not conversely. Thus it follows that any theory that purports to stress the purely non-physical nature of persons is guilty of taking the secondary use of this concept much too seriously and of trying to give that use the status of primacy. These theories delude themselves into thinking that we are talking about the same thing here as we do in the normal case, presumably on the superficial ground that in the former case our familiar word “person” is used in its familiar configuration. It is because of this that what they say in such cases (i.e., of disembodied existence, survival and reincarnation etc.) would not be straightforwardly nonsense, but in being committed to an entirely non-physical concept of a person (and taking it to be the essence of personhood) and as such abandoning the primary sense of this concept, they would not be describing what is the case. Wittgenstein expressed an even stronger view in his remarks on the secondary use of concepts: “. . . the fairy tale (in which, e.g., a pot can be said to see, hear or even talk, PKM) only invents what is not the case, it does not talk nonsense¹⁰.”

Therefore, the Cartesian tradition and our spiritualistic culture, in so far as it issues from that tradition, despite its familiar appeal and intimate feel, is a thoroughly

misguided theory of persons, naturally presenting a distorted picture of man which is based on bad logic and misunderstanding of the language we use to talk of men or persons. It is a revisionary metaphysical picture that neither is contained in nor follows from our normal usage. Hence the resulting distorted view of man and his culture is not a matter of any concern. But it must be shown for what it is – illogical and delusive, which only a proper analysis of this crucial concept we have of ourselves can rectify.

Notes:

1. For this argument in detail see my *Personal Identity*, 2nd edition, Decent Books, New Delhi, 2000, pp.34-35.
2. For a detailed discussion of impossibility of a strict and non-trivial definition of 'person' see *ibid.* ch.1.
3. Strawson, P.F., *Individuals*, Methuen, London, 1965, ch.3.
4. See Shoemaker, S, *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity*, Cornell, Ithaca, USA, pp. 34-35, 38. See also my *Personal Identity*, pp.46-48 for more on this.
5. Which is the same question as 'How is the concept of person possible?' cf. Strawson, *Individuals*, p.110.
6. *Ibid*, p.99.
7. See my *Personal Identity*. pp 8-10 and 18. Also Chisholm, R.M., "On the Observability of the Soul" in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 1969-70.
8. *Individuals*, pp.112-113
9. *Personal Identity*, pp. 209-211, 229-230, and 237-140.
10. Cf. Wittgenstein, L, *Philosophical Investigations*, pt.I.

WITTGENSTEIN ON DENIAL OF PRIVACY

S. C. PANIGRAHI

Wittgenstein's later philosophy as a part of his programme of attack upon the philosophical search for foundations is directed as an onslaught against self-knowledge. The sense of a sentence, according to Wittgenstein was given by its criteria. If so, then how is it possible to think of sentences without criteria? The possibility of self-ascription of psychological predicates is the question. The question raises several issues in philosophy, for example: the relation between the sense and the possibility of cognition, the nature of indexical expressions, the distinction between 'I', 'he' and 'this', logical form of ego-centric sentences in general, self-ascription of psychological predicates, the other-ascription of psychological predicates etc. These issues are related to Wittgenstein's non-cognitive theses of self ascription of psychological predicates and to the problem of self-knowledge.

Wittgenstein says that 'I am in pain' is merely an expression of pain. It does not make an assertion that 'I have a pain' is equivalent in meaning to the actual natural expression or manifestation of pain. Wittgenstein says : "The difference between the propositions 'I have pain' and 'He has pain' is not that of 'L. W. has pain' and 'Smith has pain'. Rather it corresponds to the difference between meaning and saying that some one moans".¹ Just as emotive theory in ethics denies any truth-value to the statement like 'A is good' since such statements merely express emotions or concealed imperatives, in the same sense Wittgenstein means to say that 'I am in pain' does not have any truth-value. It is merely a cry of pain. Again Wittgenstein says:

"Roughly speaking; the expression 'I have a toothache' stands for a moan but does not mean 'I moan'. You could not call moaning a description. But this shows you how far the proposition 'I have a toothache' is from a description, and how far teaching the word "toothache' is from teaching the word 'tooth,'".²

In *Investigations* also similar arguments are seen:

Words are connected with the primitive, the natural expressions of the sensations and used in their place. A child has hurt himself and cries, and then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and later, sentences. They teach the child new pain-behaviour.³

Wittgenstein denies any knowledge-claim for such sentences as 'I am in pain' because in such cases the concept of doubt and error has no application so also the

concept of knowledge has no application here. The absurdity of doubting such things makes the knowledge of such things absurd. Wittgenstein says

It cannot be said of me at all (except perhaps as a joke) that I know that I am in pain, what is it supposed to mean-except perhaps that I am in pain.⁴
The truth is : it makes sense to say about other people that they doubt whether I am in pain; but not to say it about myself.

Again Wittgenstein points out that

It has sense to say 'it rained and I know it, but not I had a toothache and knew that I had'. 'I know that I have a toothache' means nothing or the same as 'I have a toothache'.⁵

To say that 'I know that I have a toothache', I must also know the concept 'I'. In this version of the argument it is necessary for understanding first-person psychological sentences that it be possible for me to understand the function of 'I' in language. In such sentences the use of 'I' appears puzzling to Wittgenstein. It is used as if there is a form of empirical knowledge which is non-evidential or immediate. The use of 'I' as subject involves no identification of one particular object to function as the subject of the psychological predicates. As there is no identification, nor recognition, so the question of misidentification or miss-recognition does not arise. For this reason, Wittgenstein claims that when 'I' is used as a subject it does not denote a possessor nor does it refer to a particular person. He says: "'I' for me is not a signal calling attention to a place or person. It is no more a name than 'here' is a name of a place or 'now' a name of a time".⁶

On a total review, the arguments boil down to the point that pain-behaviour is peculiarly one's own. It is not an assertion, it does not describe the pain one suffers, and rather it is a constitutive part of pain. As knowledge and ignorance, doubt and certainty are applicable to assertions, it is not possible to say 'I know that I am in pain'. The grammar of the language does not permit such a use.

There have been many criticisms advanced against the theory that such sentences express self-knowledge and indicate self-awareness. Simply stated 'it flies on the face of common sense' to borrow a fanciful expression of Moore. In the criticisms advanced against Wittgenstein's denial of knowledge-claim that is based on criterial considerations, we find a common element that absence of doubt implies certainty, which therefore must be taken as a mark of knowledge. The justificatory

criterion employed to test self-knowledge is misplaced. It may be considered for a genuine criterion to test scientific knowledge but self-knowledge and the belief in the 'I' as the subject is a necessary part constituting the very core of human knowledge.

But these considerations, I suspect, may be off the mark for the reasons which compelled Wittgenstein to consider the illegitimacy of self-knowledge. Strawson has argued against Wittgenstein's view of self-knowledge as 'internally incoherent'. Strawson's thesis of course supports, in a way, Wittgenstein's attack against Cartesian dualism. Mind and body once posed as separate and distinct entities, the gap would be unbridgeable and many complicated issues will follow from this. A better view would be, to consider person as one integrated entity. P. M. S. Hacker⁷ has superbly systematized the arguments advanced by Wittgenstein. He has advanced as many as nine points in criticism against Wittgenstein's non-cognitive thesis.

Hacker says, "these nine points suggest that 'I am in pain' said by A can be used to make assertions, bear truth-values and indeed has truth-conditions, identical with 'He is in pain' said of A"⁸. This suggestion seems to me to imply that the speaker must be sincere in his utterance. In case of any insincerity or in case of any obscurity in understanding the concept of pain, the assertion may misguide and the purpose of the suggestion would be proved false. Hence, much depends on understanding i.e. knowing the use of the word 'pain'. This was the point which Wittgenstein wanted to make in his non-cognitive thesis. If the competence of the speaker in using language is taken for granted, then only the suggestion Hacker makes may hold good.

Wittgenstein's fundamental contention in his attack on private language and the solipsistic approach to self-knowledge was to bring into focus the conditions of use of the word 'pain' used in uttering such sentences. He questions the very assumption which Hacker makes. To an unreflective thinker, self-ascriptive psychological predicates in present tense do not pose any problems. They manage sometimes well with insincere or play acting utterances. All the same, if the use of the words such as 'pain' or 'toothache' is questioned, then they rectify their mistakes and for all practical purposes do not face any problem. But the mistake pointing to a

malady is inherent in the language. Wittgenstein hoped very much to understand the sources of the malady and perhaps judged correctly that any wrong understanding of the concepts used in such ascriptions must be liable to blame.

There is no private language which is purely personal to the knower. Knowledge which is a characteristic of interpersonal communication presupposes; that experience of a phenomenon is communicable. Wherever we can use such concepts as 'doubt', 'certainty', 'belief' etc. that is a language game and there only we can correctly ascribe to a speaker that he knows such and such object. But in case of a private language, when I say, 'I know that I am in pain', the supposed most plausible candidate for private language, there such concepts as 'doubt' 'certainty', 'probability', 'belief' etc. do not arise. There is no privacy in that sense.

Wittgenstein's dissolution of the problem of solipsistic consciousness that threatened the possibility of knowledge was intended to meet the challenge of Berkeley. However, when he says that 'I' is no owner of consciousness, that in some cases 'I' can be used in different language-games. The logic of these language-games determine the sense to be given to 'I'. It does not presuppose what we are to understand by this 'I' in all cases of its use. The meaning of 'I' depends on its specific use in the specific context or language-game. We have to see the language game which gives a sense to the concept 'I'. That does not mean 'I' will stand as a summation of the sense given to it in all language-games taken jointly or separately. That would again go wrong. The proper spirit of understanding Wittgenstein's view of no-ownership would be to take a relative notion of 'I' depending on the context of the language-game. If a language game is some how different from the form of life that we have, then the notion of 'I' would be purely different. Such a notion is given in a private language. In a private language we assume private predications not communicable in an inter-personal relationship. Hence that is not a language-game which takes the common form of life that we have.

Self-knowledge in the sense of 'I' forming a subject in ascription of psychological predicates may be admissible as Hacker has very ably pointed out. But the awareness of a pure consciousness or ego as Descartes postulated to all of our

experiences may be felt still to be illusory. In this sense Wittgenstein's thesis may be viewed as still having relevance.

Notes:

1. Wittgenstein, L., *The Blue and Brown Books*.
2. Wittgenstein, L., *Notes for Lectures*, pp. 301-2 as quoted in PMS Hacker's *Insight and Illusion* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972), p. 257.
3. Wittgenstein, *P.I.*, Section 244.
4. *Ibid.*, Section 246.
5. Wittgenstein, *Notes for Lectures*, p. 309 as quoted in Hacker, *Op. Cit.*, p. 256.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 307 as quoted in Hacker, *Op. Cit.*, p. 257.
7. Hacker, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 267-8.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 268.

**VALUES, POLITICS AND SOCIETY: A DISCOURSE IN POLITICAL
PHILOSOPHY FOR SELF-RELIANCE***

DILIP KUMAR MOHANTA

The importance of values:

Wittgenstein begins his *Tractatus*, devoted primarily to logic and epistemology, with a deterministic logical framework of the world that he describes as “the totality of facts” (1.1)¹ and ends his book with an ambiguous mystical note. W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz’s *Tractatus Politico-Philosophicus* begins with the analysis of such concepts as “politics”, human nature”, “the state”, “freedom”, “solidarity” etc., and contests Wittgenstein’s ontological ideas by the statement: “The world is the totality of values, rather than the totality of facts.”² I shall discuss this with special reference to *Tractatus Politico-Philosophicus*.

It is indeed true that if we cannot disregard facts in our lives, the world that we create as humans is “the totality of values,” and since in our societies we can find different value claims, the values that we support need to be analysed and those that we believe are the right ones must be practically implemented, if we desire to live in happy societies. A political community as a social organization cannot be well governed if as an institution it is devoid of certain values and remains teared apart by a struggle for power and becomes a mere playground for different, mainly commercial interests. Here my argument is that it is the practice of virtue that teaches us right values and makes societies happy and civilized. Virtues are positive qualities of human character. If virtues, such as honesty, industry, justice, courage, sympathy, moderation, and wisdom, are missing from our society, then it gets corrupted. The people who lack virtues develop vices such as “greed, selfishness, jealousy, deceit, lust, sloth, vulgarity, cruelty, and ignorance.”³ These are characteristics of mediocre and evil people. I would only wonder how to eradicate such evils and to convince members of society to cultivate virtues. Virtue education of people through school and college, in addition to family, as the primary institution for children to be trained gradually in positive values may provide an inspiring and optimistic tool for the

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proposed happy society based on virtues. The aim of education is character-building. This is called by Swami Vivekananda as 'man-making' education.

Human beings by nature are neither good nor bad. As human beings we have "a set of dispositions or abilities."⁴ First, we have reason which is our natural ability to think. However, mere rationality without moral concerns could make people vicious and societies unhappy. Hence, we also need to remind ourselves about our ability to reflect on ethical issues. We cannot deny that we are living in a world which is characterized gender discrimination, and male-dominated and power-oriented political institutions. But how do we take this wonderful initiative of cultivating ethical attitude in the world of today, which is, for example, vitiated by the denial of justice to a larger section of people who are deprived of wealth? True, this is a part of the power game with its different successive states of demoralization. We cannot deny that wicked people are still in better position than those who are moral and virtuous in society. "Wicked people are individuals who harm others and use lies, deception, and bribery to achieve their malicious, socially harmful goals."⁵ There may be indeed many of such people around. But without others' cooperation, which begins with understanding of our nature and our abilities, no real change in society towards positive direction is possible.

Human civilization is not one-dimensional, but multi-dimensional. The development of civilizations does not progress along a single path, but it is accomplished by the development of independent cultures, sometimes in different parts of the world, that come into contact and mutually influence one another. Hence, a cultural diversity, if it is engaged in cooperation and mutual reinforcing, rather than in a destructive confrontation, is desirable. It should not be replaced by a cultural uniformity, whether of a Western or of a different origin.

Whether we shall live in good states or corrupted ones depends upon the morals of our politicians and of the moral education of the public at large. Thus, we are to seek for a bold alternative to the power-centered Western culture of modernity, stressing facts and interests rather than values. We know that because of both modernity and post-modernity, the traditional societal values like family and community are under the threat of annihilation and this ultimately can lead to the self-destruction of societies as communities and to a civilizational decline.

Here I would like to argue that we can also rationally speak about both facts and values. There is no reason to remove value claims from a rational discourse to be merely a matter of subjective preference. It is true that “positivism conceals an implicit subjectivism that is present in the cognitive process”⁶ and subjectivism is equally present in our perception of both facts and values.

Why are values, such as goodness, important in human life? Because, without values a society is sure to become a corrupt one. To me, freedom and cooperation are two essential conditions to be fulfilled for a successful democracy. There is no alternative to a successful democracy for peace and sustainable development. *Discussion, debate and dissent are the three essential features of Democracy.* Today we must give recognition to religious ‘tolerance’ and ‘acceptance’ with the logic of religious pluralism that says, “God is one, Truth is one, and one is Perfection, but there are many roads to God, Truth, and Perfection.”⁷ Every country should guarantee this for fruitful international relations as well as peaceful human existence. A hope for a just society would remain as just a utopia if the people of any particular society are not themselves righteous.

Again, for a right understanding of a society, we need to understand our time and socio-cultural context. Sometimes we need to be flexible instead of being fixed on certain rigid dogma. War cannot be the solution to our problems today. We should resolve our problems by recognizing the value of freedom and cooperation. In other words, we need to speak not ‘*about* others’, but ‘*with* others’. Dialogue is the best way for resolving conflicts. With these prerequisites let us proceed to have our vision of a happy society where politics is rooted and shaped on values.

Happy Society

In today’s Western civilization, which is dominated by a materialistic world-view, we witness a predominantly self-centered, egoistic and consumerist attitude. This leads modern individuals to *open competition* and *motivational running for power, profit and pleasure* as the *summum bonum*, the ultimate goal of life. Consequently, human lives in society appear in the end to finally decline to unending social and economic conflict, as we currently witness in many countries. In order to rise from this sore human condition and unenviable uncertainty of our future, the relevance of social values like cooperation is important. For establishing a well-governed state and a happy society we propose the followings: (1) cooperation based

on empathy, (2) being happy without harming other's happiness, (3) having a society and state leadership endowed with knowledge and values, (4) imparting education based on values, (5) enacting proper law and their implementation, (6) obtaining political awareness of the citizenry, and (7) the transfer of cultural heritage through families and generations.

It is now time to rethink the impact of the unchallenged Western supremacy and its modern materialism. Our outlook in our social and political thought process should raise its bar from unbridled competitive edge to what is centred on cooperation and empathy (*muditā*). Open penchant for competition often raises an animal instinct in us. Beasts only look after their own interests. They snatch food from the mouth of others to feed themselves. When this animal instinct arises among the mankind, the imminent danger multiplies. A weak person, whose food is snatched by a strong person, is not even spared by the later to be killed. The bottom-line is that in the prevailing social norms, the message of a judgement often “weeps silently” and “discreetly”. To get rid of this situation, the state should be led by the persons, who possess highest wisdom, morality and excellence. “In any country, political leadership should comprise of persons who represent in themselves the highest intellectual and moral qualities.”⁸The state leaders should be conscious of values. They must be accountable, proficient and full of experience on life. They should possess the prowess to assess the advice and opinions of their secretaries and advisors. If they do not have these qualities, very often they would become reliant on their Secretaries, as we see especially in South-East Asian countries including India, and as a result, a bureaucracy infused with corruption poses to be a stumbling block in the direction of development of the country as in India. The oppression on the weaker section and the economic exploitation of the poor by the powerful few becomes the order of the day (i. e. it is an open secret that in India the gap between 5% rich and 95% poor people has been increasing day by day,) with indirect political patronage. The profit earning public sectors are considered in government policies to be sold to Corporate Houses with political patronage in apparently invisible background. No investigating agencies can work independently and honestly because of political control. The Corrupt politicians in order to get them unpunished take shelter to the ruling political party in multi-party political system and change their allegiance to another party that comes to power subsequently. Gradually, the Police

and the Judiciary also would succumb to corruption. The Judges and the Advocates would become accustomed in taking bribes.

It is worthwhile to mention here that anti-corruption and vigilance in the Police and the Judiciary would always be one of the most important pillars of the state. The powers that be in the state administration should be erudite and sincere with high morale. It has been observed that none in the lower level officials finds courage to be involved in corrupt practices, if the leaders of the society are not corrupted. On the flip side, the innocent persons, who are at the receiving end on account of unjust and corrupt practices, do not find any one to depend upon, if the leaders of the state are of questionable integrity. Once a few resourceful political personalities in government are involved in corrupt practices, the citizen in general loses faith in democracy, leaving an awkward impact on the society. This is detrimental to democracy. When the persons in powers ascribe more importance to the interests of their own and the political parties they belong to, the most of the citizens do not see eradication in their poverty and reversal in their misfortune – only a privileged few, who are in power find their fortune soaring high. In South-East Asian countries the growth of wealth of people in political power, either directly or indirectly, is so high that proves the fact of looting public wealth in day-light. This trend results in upholding the interests of those in the helm and deprivation of the masses concomitantly. In terms of national uprising, the economically poor section and the masses from backward and terminal classes are subjected to carry an insignificant role. When the question of leadership of the country and its people comes into play, it cannot be served, unless an unbiased love and warmth is formed to deliver good to the countrymen.

A similar line of thought we can find in Confucius, who emphasized on the need of initiating the social reform from the highest level. When the driving force behind the men in the high level, chiefly in the royal/political strata of the country is contaminated by corruption, the countrymen are destined to be unhappy; justice in the society becomes non-existent and the country can never be a developed one. The management of politics here lies in the application of ‘divide and rule’ policy where caste and/ or religion play a dominant rule. No quality education, which is based on values, is imparted to the young people of such an unhappy society. On the contrary, a scenario of cooperation builds the foundation of a happy society. Devotion to serve

the interest of others or do well to others is only the proper yardstick of a true and good citizen. This is also the yardstick of religion in the sense of pure spirituality. *I should not commit myself to do something to others in the same way as I do not expect others to do to me and this non-committal is in itself the morality.* In the well-organized society, the dignity of every “station-designation” is dependent on the appraisal of moral responsibility of the same. The dignity of a king / ruler truly depends on his observance of Duty, *Rājadharma* in the true sense. Similarly, the dignity of democracy lies in the culture of debate which includes discussion and dissent.

It is to be kept in mind that a happy society is based on cooperation, belongingness, love, compassion and empathy etc. Because of the influence of Western modern political thinking, politics, some people wrongly believe, is a battle of winning power in the narrowest and the most negative sense. But in the true sense, politics is the art of good governance which works properly on the basis of doctrines of administration and philosophical theories of good governance. Its aim is a good life of citizens based on their social cooperation. In this perspective (*susāsanam* in Sanskrit), the role of ethics in politics is significant. The source of corruption is political rule without morality. Today, this is one of the main problems not only of the West, but also of the South-East Asian countries.

The idea of denouncing morality gives birth to egotism. It is based on the notion of continuous and unrestricted competition. Because of the progress in Western science, humanity has witnessed unparalleled progress during the last two centuries. At the same time, it has on many occasions displayed moral degradation and idealistic degradation, of which the most striking examples are cases of genocide, especially holocaust. It is obvious that in spite of scientific and technological advances, politics has not improved ethically and has lost its moral strength of freedom. The importance of the moral aspect of politics has been known in India for a long time. *Manusmṛiti* (the Law book by Manu) had spoken of *Rājadharma* (Virtues/Duties of the Ruler), enunciated what the duties of a king or politicians and rulers should be. Then, keeping in mind the objective of restraining authoritarianism in governance, Manu advised for practicing politics devoid of vices.⁹

A close reading of the history of civilization and culture reveals that if the moral foundation of society is not respected in a country – whether developed or

underdeveloped or developing – it is certain that it should consequently suffer from a political turmoil and this upheaval would weaken the country from within. As a result, the economic condition of this country would get worse, and this would also have consequences on other aspects of life. If people cannot get opportunity to choose among the different available alternatives; if they do not have freedom, their innovative prowess gradually gets obliterated. Their creativity gets stalled. This makes human beings culturally backward and selfish, and thereupon they may forget the finer social values like cooperation, and engage in egoistic pursuits, just to survive. The inevitable outcome of this syndrome is the unrestrained manifestation of greed, violence, venom etc. Hence, we may conclude that no leadership with innovative power grows without a concept of self-determination.

Today almost in the whole world, animosity among various divisive and religious groups is on the increase. Incited by the politicians and media, the increasing manifestation of violence, as it were, exceeded all limits. This is really one of the greatest dangers for today's humankind. And the most destructive outcome of such animosity is war, especially on the world scale. We want to remind here those who want to win by war that “the real power of a society, greater than its military power, is its moral power.”¹⁰ Violence cannot abolish violence.

Though post-modernism is the practical manifestation of globalization, it is burdened with its failure to drive human race to a more peaceful world. It is also a developmental failure. Rather, despite the availability of better technology at disposal, it is now reversing its direction towards primitive society. Post-modernism, by its deceptive process of “deconstruction”, has stirred the foundation of Western civilization. Thoughts of religious fundamentalism are percolating through the holes of this weakness and are making the whole world restless. As we watch, a political class of people are not only misusing some form of institutional religious faith and creating unrest in Middle East and South East Asia, and even in Europe, but they also led the whole world to a serious existential crisis for humankind. Religious fundamentalists are going stronger through the “hole” of the culture of diversity. The fundamentalists, who are using religion, do not believe in values like equality, tolerance or diversity. Their doctrinal training is blind, exclusive and violence-oriented.¹¹ They do not believe in religious pluralism which propagates “acceptance” of the different religions as different possible spiritual ways to reach the highest

Truth. On the contrary, they seek to organize the social life on the strength of their exclusive religious dogmas. They seek to establish dictatorship in the name of religion in substitution of democracy which is founded on values like freedom and open-mindedness. They forcefully disapprove different indigenous cultural histories. “In today’s situation of large-scale manipulation and escalating conflict in the world, the peace that humanity desperately needs should begin as peace among religions.”¹²

We may recall here a distinguished historian cum philosopher, Theodore Zeldin. According to him, “Hostility between the religions was generated by learned theologians, who studied the ancient books, recreating what they believed to be a purer doctrine, and urging obedience to it as a cure for all discontents.”¹³ Failure to catch the base tone of diversity leads the life in a state to unthinkable danger. In a state that we can find a diversity of religions, the government needs to be a complex situation in the midst of unending diversity. Future logic seldom remains exclusively programmed. New scenario arises before us. Wise leadership is expressed in leaders’ “dedication to a common good and an ability to reconcile the interests of different groups.”¹⁴ It requires dealing with situations based on their own character. The fundamentalists deal with them in opposite manner. They seek to view everything from a particular standpoint, ostensibly pouring in a mould, commensurate with their mind-set. They are narrow, stubborn and one-eyed. They misuse politics and institutional religion as a means of capturing power. They consider dogmatic belief to be the best. They want to win themselves a place in societies. Therefore, to deal with them we need to solve the contemporary problems with creativity in order to save this society. The passage of reasonableness handed down by Indian tradition may show us the way out in overcoming these negative effects of post-modernism. The advantages of or the rationale behind the supremacy of our innate native culture and that of tolerance of other culture can be adopted. Neither with better development nor with peace could post-modernism benefit us. Today, we are living in a world, which is gradually becoming more and more dangerous. Very little of what will happen in near future is ascertainable now. Yet we can think of a happy society, the foundation of which will be based on morality or a traditional virtue ethics.

Cooperation is one of the most important pillars of a happy society. It is associated with “a common goal, common good, and a division of labour.”¹⁵ It gathers its strength from mutual fulfillment. Its core is in its diversity, mutual respect

and generosity. In a happy society, exploitation, repression, inequality etc. must all gradually disappear. Such a society requires good leadership to stimulate cooperation. Lacking such a leadership may lead to conflict for power. Only a strong leader empowered by moral resolve and restraint can contribute to proficient leadership; create an atmosphere of cooperation in the society. By dint of cooperation, it is possible to bring about an epoch-making transformation in general security, subdual of crimes, health, environment, defense, knowledge of science and technology, law and international regulations based on ethics. Morality demands that a citizen in the true sense of the term should not be selfish and should not hurt others, because his own interest and survival is inter-connected with the interest of others. Vedanta philosophy also teaches the essential identity of all human beings. It says, “whom so ever I hurt, I hurt myself.”¹⁶

The second pillar of a happy society is to think and act for the happiness for all. In principle “everyone should be happy, but not at the expense of others.”¹⁷ But in our today’s societies to be happy at someone else’s expense is common. This makes others unhappy and does not allow us to live in a happy society. We may remember here the idea to the four pursuits of life as preached by Buddha, such as loving kindness, (*maitri*), compassion (*karuṇā*), empathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekṣā*) that train a person for his or her concern for others. The first three are called *bhāvanās*, because they put one’s thought to action, “making-become” and the last one is known as *bhāvanā-nāsa*, because it is inclined to action without *tanhā*, attachment. For example, the way in which global warming is on the rise, its root cause lies in the human greed and the propensity to exploit the natural resources as much as possible. Our knowledge of science and technology may be an irresistible condition in solving this problem, but not enough to be effective (*upāyakaśalya*). In this matter, we have to be careful enough about consumerism. If we cannot restrain it, we will have to suffer.

Another factor of hindrance to the way to a happy society is the unhindered population explosion. It is also to be checked. It would be necessary to think of interest, not only of a person, but also of the community as a whole, and the humanity at large. In this community we should ultimately include not only human beings, but also animals, and trees and plants. The perception of inseparable extension of self with the entire universe, mobile and immobile (*īṣāvāśyaṃidaṃsarvaṃ*, everything in

this changing world is pervaded by the One Universal Spirit),¹⁸ should be considered along with the perception on environment. We are in the same verse also advised to enjoy the life by giving and sharing (*tyaktenabhuñjīthāḥ*) and without coveting anybody's wealth (*mā gr̥dhaḥ kasyasviddhanam*). It may be interpreted as respect to others' right and property. Any kind of utilization of natural resources beyond one's basic needs is to be interpreted as an act of stealing. Over utilization of the natural resources leads to the deprivation of others from their legitimate use or fulfilment of basic needs. It is, therefore, a kind of restriction imposed on one's excessive possession and a kind of instruction to be duty-bound to others. Our mutual dependence thus is the principal ingredient of symbiosis. It is relevantly imperative to state that so-called developed or rich nations are responsible for consistently increasing the global warming by unjustly and excessively using the gift of nature. Regrettably, so-called summits on global warming have become a platform of politically motivated groups blaming one another (i.e. role of USA or China). The unbounded greed of human beings results only in compounding of conflict - in our family, society and state. Therefore, looking for a good example, we may look at the cultural history of India which emphasizes on our civilization centred on our 'Duties' and not on 'Rights'. For present India it is the high time to apply its philosophy of high moral ideals into practice. And for this we need 'political will' of the Government to implement this. In other words, we need a practical Idealism in politics for a bright future-India.

It is also a traditional view that is put in a new form that in order to build a happy society, citizenry should possess great virtues and the leadership of the society should have profound wisdom. "Leaders' wisdom and citizens' virtues are basic prerequisites of a happy society."¹⁹ It is its third moral pillar. The great virtues of citizens are inlaid in devotion to labour, honesty, courage, lawfulness and love for own country. Wisdom and nobility in politics should be ensured through electoral regulations. Wise and noble persons, persons respectful to holding aloft the culture and those with exemplary administrative acumen, whether or not their numbers are minimal, should be promoted to leadership. This becomes self-explanatory in the light of continuous and terrible deterioration of politicians' morals that can be attributed to unrest and economic crisis prevailing in the political climate of South-East Asian countries. A person protected by powerful persons in society enjoys

special privilege. To get rid of this inequality, the citizenry should get suitable moral education through public institutions, which can make them accountable citizens. The budget for both primary education and higher education with research facilities in India should be increased in terms of the percentage of GDP like China and the USA. However, unlike China and some countries of South-East Asia, Institutions of higher education should be free from any political interference. Universities should remain as a centre of the culture of freedom in ideas, a centre for exchange of views and as a centre of the emergence of a new India.

That is why “education for knowledge and virtue”²⁰ is the next important pillar of a happy society. Education is always be imbibed in a certain social environment. Character-building must be the central point of all education policy for imparting instructions. In a democratic state, citizens enjoy freedom of speech, including the right to criticize the government. Freedom is essential for unfolding of individual’s talent, so that he or she can choose a life path. Cultural development cannot crop up without freedom in ideas. Yet freedom does not mean the right to ‘Go as you like’. Self-regulation and self-control are to be translated into the real freedom, based on one’s choice. The foremost duty of a welfare state is to create and sustain an environment of freedom that can be utilized by its citizens. The twentieth century Indian philosopher Krishna Chandra Bhattacharya held the power of thinking freely as the mother of freedom. He called it “Swaraj in Ideas”.²¹ Freedom is always indicative of cooperation. It is the gift of the culture and *vice versa*. The state has to actively nurture its effort to rejuvenate man’s thought process and talent and, in the process, the uppermost precondition is freedom. Poverty is also a hindrance to freedom. In administration of the state, there is need for a favourable infrastructure for allowing the talent of the poverty-stricken masses to bloom. Essentially, unequal distributions of wealth, artificial organizational rules, perception of inapplicable vision etc., push the civilization to destruction. History is multi-dimensional and is marked by idealistic conflicts and destructive changes. It is not wise to paint history in the same direction. Therefore, for a happy society as well, the importance of open-mindedness and freedom in ideas in a citizen is endless.

That is why Buddha asked people to be reflective and critical before accepting any view and not to be dogmatic. What others are saying is important to listen. Buddha speaks of openness and flexibility and avoidance of all kinds of

extremism as he very often says that “truth lies in the middle.” “Oh Monks! Please don’t accept my teaching just out of sheer reverence to me but accept it after critically examining it just as the genuineness of gold is determined by burning it in fire.”²²We also read in the *Kālāma-Sutta*, “Do not believe in anything (simply) because you have heard it. Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations. Do not believe in anything because it is spoken and rumoured by many. Do not believe in anything (simply because it is written in your religious books. Do not believe in anything (simply) on the authority of your teachers and elders. But after observation and analysis, when you find anything that agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it.”²³ What Buddha said for the house-holders has a deep significance today. Exercise of morality and reasoning are two sure marks for a good life.

To reflect further on education, in any country it should be made free from narrow politics. The purpose of education is ‘to raise an educated and creative individual’, it should be free of any indoctrination or ideological component.²⁴ Political freedom is not the only solution of the problem. Schools, Colleges and Universities are the fields of different activities of young generation, so they can develop fully as human beings. The society should keep strict vigil in a way that they do not become victim of any mental and moral degradation and of political slavery. Students should be motivated through logical thoughts of education to fight backward social customs and any madness in the name of religion. They should be trained to be persons without malice, daring, opposed to compromise and impartial. Persons of such temperament would save the country from the cultural crisis and decadence in education; help the countrymen in putting in place fresh values.

The provision of placing proper law in statecraft is another pillar of a happy society. It must work for general welfare. It cannot be partial and serve special interests of a powerful lobby. The basis of good law is ethics and such law draws our attention to the highest values. Yet, it is not sufficient for a happy society to only have law to save citizens from being harmed by others. The lack of understanding of compulsion to comply with law and that of discipline do not fetch development in culture. Legal approvals should have their directions driven to the desired results, and this is a civilizational development of a nation. For this end “a positive law cannot be arbitrary, but should always be based on historical experience and tradition of a

country.”²⁵ Any law is established on ideology indicative of observance of the rules and prescriptions carrying traditional ethos. Hence, presence of justice is highly essential in democracy. By the responsible application of the laws and moral obligations, but at the same time preserving some important spiritual traditions, we may have successful democracy. In the political system of democracy, the opposition has the right to criticize the government. However, it should also give recognition to the constructive work of the government. For the successful democracy, the role of responsible opposition members is important. They are called the conscience of the people and the mirror for the government. They cooperate with the government through constructive criticism. They learn to be responsible if they recognize that in spite of our differences, we are all members of one community whose members ultimately share the same spiritual background.

The vitality of democracy largely depends on the culture of debate including discussion and dissent, but this has a positive value. “The silencing of dissent and the generating of fear in the minds of people violate the demands of personal liberty, but also make it very much harder to have a dialogue-based democratic society.”²⁶

Another important pillar of a happy society is citizens’ political knowledge. If we lack political knowledge or do not have political consciousness then we can be easily manipulated. This enables some crooked politicians to work for their interests, rather than for the public good. India is a vivid example of this. Every citizen should therefore be politically informed about what is going in the world and be aware of their rights and duties. The media, which provides information to general public, thus has also an important responsibility in building a happy society by providing “true information about current events in the country and in the world.”²⁷ It needs to present impartial and reliable political analysis of events. But unfortunately, as it stands now, the role of media in many countries, including India, is largely based on yellow journalism which finds its satisfaction as puppet of political parties.

The seventh principle of a happy society and is another essential pillar is the continuity of generations. The ultimate foundation of a happy society, where people can live fulfilling, happy lives, is their culture, which is the work of many generations and gives them a sense of unity. In case of India, in which one can indeed find cultural diversity, the native pluralistic culture is the Hindu culture. What I would like to suggest here is that a happy society cannot be based on cultural relativism, which

in the West has the postmodern form of multiculturalism. Once we make all cultures equal, we lose our identity and even worse may engage in some cultural wars because some cultures will aim at superiority. To avoid this, it is better to use the native culture as the society's foundation and be tolerant to all other cultures. Moreover, we cannot build a happy society without giving a proper place to the oldest institution of humankind, which is the traditional family. Without a family no society can survive. A happy society cannot be founded with a complete break-up of family traditions. The traditional family is the guarantee of the society's future and its native culture. It maintains its cultural unity and at the same time allows for a peaceful co-existence of different cultural tributaries.

Evils of Exclusivism vs Open-mindedness:

The principal strength of any country depends on cordial relationships among different community groups and on their ability to work together, having reliance on common languages, traditions, customs and values. An important role is played here by religious tolerance and "acceptability" of other's religions. If different customs, different food habits and different beliefs are not totally opposed to each other in a society, the diversity may be considered to be its strength. Just as truth could be known in different ways, the different mode of worshipping of God should be accepted in any country. The real religion is not opposed to reason and science. The three characteristics - life, freedom and cooperation - are highly important in the annals of Indian civilization. Through the journey along greater freedom and moral fulfillment, human life is fulfilled. Open-mindedness has been glorified in the *Rigveda* - "May open thoughts from different directions bring about our growth (*Rgveda*)."²⁸ It is interesting to remember what Will Durant remarks in his book *Pleasures of Philosophy* on that consumerist society, which develops in countries that blindly imitate the exclusive materialistic culture of the West. According to Will Durant, "The last stage of the matter is the gang-men rule. Criminals flourish happily in our large cities, because they are guaranteed the full protection and cooperation of the law. If they belong to the Organization, or have friends in it, they have every assurance that if they commit a crime they will not be arrested, that if they are arrested, they will not be convicted, that if convicted they will not be sent to jail, that if jailed they will be pardoned, that if unpardoned they will be permitted to escape."²⁹ It seemed that Will Durant, who wrote his book a long time ago, was

completely right in visualizing what in the name of Western democracy is happening today in many countries including India. Plato, who in the eighth book of the *Republic* makes a critique of democracy, visualized the real welfare of the society, which cannot be separated from virtue. A combination of virtuous philosophers and visionary rulers in a political entity can lead us the real welfare of the state, to a good state that is a protector of a happy society. This is the ultimate Platonic vision of the philosopher King.

In this context, it should be kept in mind that there is no way to ignore the role of religion in human society.³⁰ The idea that religion and logic have enmity with one another is incongruous and faulty marked by transgression. Unadulterated or pure reason or logical thoughts find harmony amidst conflicts. In the root of pure spiritualism lies unconditional love for the universe. Spiritualism also demands, “The way and the yardstick in which you judge others, you will also be judged in the same manner with the same yardstick.”³¹ Therefore, in the notion of modern state-craft we have to overcome the boundaries of the religious knowledge at personal level. While speaking on values, we cannot, pause awkwardly only with the aspect of so-called morality associated with any institutional religion. A philosopher, whose mind is flourishing with open-mindedness, cannot accept any institutional religion unhesitatingly and blindly.

3.2 It is interesting to recall here M. K. Gandhi’s vision of ideal society which he calls ‘Rāmarājya’. The broad outlines of Gandhi’s vision of ideal society can be found in ‘Hind Swarāj’ and the collection of his Speeches. The happy society for Gandhi is grounded on the ‘moral evolution of the individuals. ... As long as the people are not morally grown, genuinely non-violent, self-regulated, and learn to cooperate voluntarily among themselves, there is no possibility of Rāmarājya.’³² Gandhi wants to have integral link of politics to morality. He dreams of a society “where all persons are equally treated irrespective of their caste, colour, religion, sex and so on.”³³ In Gandhi’s thought, ‘Rāma’ stands for fearlessness. This is the kingdom of justice and love. Gandhi also does not admit all unworthy competition and advocates the principle of cooperation. Unfortunately even in India, though just after independence the Central Government policies were little bit influenced by Gandhi’s ideal, the subsequent Governments’ policies are far from this Gandhian ideal. As a result we see politics without any place of morality, and politics

has become now the art of achieving power by any means and not as a means of good governance in India today.

We must stop the blind imitation of the West and begin the practice of politics as the art of good governance based on moral and spiritual values as articulated in India's Cultural heritage which propounded a 'Duty-based' instead of 'Right-based' model of civilization. This would bring sustainable development on the one hand, and peace and prosperity on the other. This would be, I believe, the first step towards Self-reliant India (*ātma-nirbharabhārata*). But Self-reliance cannot come into existence unless we rely on innovation instead of imitation, co-operation instead of immoral competition, duties instead of rights, freedom instead of slavery in thought, critical reflection and scientific attitude instead of blind faith in dogmas and over all on moral and spiritual values like love and empathy.

Concluding Remarks:

From what has been said thus far, in no way, we do consider returning to our past; rather, we are considering moving ahead like a flowing river, by connecting the freshness of the present with our traditional, ancient moral and spiritual values imbedded in contemporary culture. Understanding of the past by only orthodox way is deadly for the human race. Of course, we inherit traditions, but the gradual uprising of our civilization and culture lies in adding to such traditions and going ahead. This in itself is animated tradition. This can also be called "Traditional Modernity." Relevance of place and time makes values befitting to the age. Those, who are against reforming or adding to the old practices and thoughts, as we see some people with mediaeval mind-set following certain religious doctrines, are orthodox and ritualistic in the name of "puritanism." They are opposed to progress, and are conservative. We should oppose their acts of obstructing the current of deliberation embedded with open-mindedness from being submerged in the "sand-bed of puritanism." Today we should also get a proper mix of fresh knowledge and gift of science with values. The relevance and the significance of these logical thoughts do not only lie in persons or society or state life, but also in the logic, which corresponds to the harmony between the nature and us. Here in lies the importance of a political philosophy which advocates values as essential feature of politics as the art of good governance. We do not want to settle for conventional answers to the contemporary problems that bother us in the socio-political sphere of human existence. In political

philosophy we have to reach the heart of our concern and opened up contemporary discourse to an exciting possibility.

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CULTURAL IDENTITY CRISIS IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION AND TECHNOLOGY: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

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The world of this 21st century is basically an ultra modern in character and it can be considered as a turning point in the annals of mankind. Due to globalization it has made a tremendous change in economic, social, cultural and political spheres that has broken down the barricade of multi-dimensional identity. Broadly, Globalization is often exclusively associated with worldwide economic integration and the emergence of a borderless global market as well as cultural exchange. Today almost every society/nation is influenced by the twin process of globalization from without and localization from within. Global culture which has been emerging today consists of a number of different non-integrated traits - a series of mixed cultural traits and elements and items or habits derived from different and divergent individual cultures. The global culture is not an extended version of the local cultures; rather it is the cultural interaction of the global and the local level. A local culture is the product of face-to-face interaction of members of a distinct society, whereas the global culture is a product of interaction among people of diverse societies living far from each other. As regards the local-global cultural interaction, it is necessary to see how the global cultural flows become locally appropriated, incorporated, syncretized and hybridized. Beside this, globalization also involves sweeping changes on the social, cultural and political terrains of the world. Thus, Globalization entails apparently contradictory processes of, among others, homogenization and universalization on the one hand and localization and differentiation on the other. This article is an attempt to explore the intricate cultural identity crisis in India associated with increasing globalization and technological advancement in the modern age.

What is Globalization?

In general, the term 'globalization' refers to the transformation of temporal and spatial limitations, that is the shrinking of distance due to the dramatic reduction in the time needed to bridge spatial differences in making the world smaller that has resulted in the gradual integration of political, economic and social space a crossing national borders.¹ It is an international platform for maintaining evenness in the living mode of the people all over the world. Globalization is the resultant of the interchange of worldly views, opinions and the various aspects of the culture

everywhere around the world. This is the means for providing the international arena for intermingling of people from different sectors, culture and dialects and learns to move and approach socially without hurting and affecting each others' prestige. In today's era the various means of telecommunication, social media, and most importantly the Internet has a big role to play in the spread of globalization. Globalization has both positive and negative impacts throughout the globe. Right from the positive aspect environmental challenges from the climatic influence, the air, water soil pollution etc. are benefitted to solve these problems, but the negative are basically related to the cyber crime; cultural crisis etc. globalization has a huge contribution to all the ill-effects of scientific advancements.² However, globalization has business, trade, and work exposure or the economic and financial status of the country and no field is left behind the reach of globalization Thus Robert J Schreiter says about Globalization- "it is about the increasingly interconnectedness character of the political, economic and social life of the people of this planet".³ According to some other people that globalization increasing competitiveness among the companies in nationally and internationally to gain maximum profit. ⁴ In short we can say that globalization is an easy process of international integration of economies and cultures by means of restructuring the mode of production, distribution and consumption of goods and also extended services on global levels in breaking the borders/boundaries. Thus, I think, it is an open invitation to all countries/nations to take part freely in national and international trade as well as cultural exchange. Hence, globalization is not only an economic integration but at the same time it is a process of universalization and comodification of knowledge , technology, communication, culture, health care and a collective initiative for the solution of environmental problems.

Although globalization is often exclusively associated with the economic sphere, however, economic globalization is intractably interwoven with changes within the social, cultural and political spheres. Globalization is furthermore an extremely complex and multifaceted phenomenon. On the one hand there is the tendency towards homogeneity, synchronization, integration, unity and universalism. We have maintained that there is no doubt it has many positive aspects because it has opened the avenue for the development of economy and quality of life too. It provides

more comfort towards the people of the globe and also scientific distribution of foods, goods and promoted cultural exchange. ⁵ On the other hand, it increases depression to the local industrialist particularly in the minds of the developing countries. The companies of the developed countries are largely benefitted for their good and ultra modern technological mechanism and it becomes an indirect threat to the industries of the developing countries. In this aspect some scholars say that globalization is a process of economic exploitation and capitalist oppression because globalization has tremendous effect on market economy and international biggest companies are largely benefitted by it and the companies of the developing countries are basically dependent upon the powerful companies/ industries for their solvency in losing their respective identities. It is obvious that there is the propensity for localization, heterogeneity, differentiation, and tough competition for the rural industries. These processes are intricately interwoven and represent - in reality - two faces of the same coin. Thus the term “globalizations” is sometimes used to indicate that globalization is not an ubiquitous or uniform process, but involves various terrains, manifests differently in various contexts and has different effects for people in different contexts. ⁶ It has economic, political, social, cultural and environmental aspects that resulted local and international crisis in these aspects also. Within this fast globalizing world with all its contradictions, crisis for cultural identity have emerged as one of the most striking characteristics of the social, cultural and political scene.

Identity vs. Cultural Identity:

Before discussing on cultural identity crisis it is pertinent to tell something- what is identity? The term "*identity*" first gained importance through the work of the psychologist Erikson in 1968. While Erikson associates *identity* as a definition of *personhood* with sameness or continuity of the self across time and space, while other authors also emphasizes uniqueness that is those characteristics which differentiate a person from other people or the whole of mankind. Thus, we can define *identity* as the distinctive characteristic belonging to any given individual, or shared by all members of a particular social category or group that exhibits their continuity and distinctive uniqueness as a whole. One thing we will have to keep in mind that the term *identity* is different from the term *identification*. However, the formation of one's identity occurs through one's identifications with significant others like- parents and

other individuals during one's biographical experiences, and also with "groups" as they are perceived in their lives and deeds.

It is quite evident that in our society there are various types of identities, such as social, psychological, gender basis, cultural etc. and we have already stated about it. This paper is not particularly on *identity* rather, more specifically, it is on the basis of *cultural identity crisis*. Hence, we will lay emphasis upon *Indian cultural identity crisis* in the age of globalization and technology. The description or representation of individual and group identity is a central task for psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists and those of other disciplines where "identity" needs to be mapped and defined. How should one describe the identity of another, in ways which encompass both their idiosyncratic qualities and their group memberships or identifications, both of which can shift according to circumstance? Following on from the work of Kelly, Erikson, Tajfel and others Weinreich's *Identity Structure Analysis* (ISA), is

"a structural representation of the individual's existential experience, in which the relationships between self and other agents are organized in relatively stable structures over time ... with the emphasis on the socio-cultural milieu in which self relates to other agents and institutions"⁸

We know that the cultural study focuses on the origin, history and culture of groups or communities and self identity and cultural identity are not same. *Cultural identity* is basically related to culture of a particular group/ community or nation/state. Its basic nature is a share culture which is effective reciprocally. The term "*cultural identity*" has a twofold interpretation. It is firstly associated with a shared culture, a collective "true self" that is shared among people with a common history and ancestry. Thus *cultural identity* reflects common historical experiences and shared cultural codes that serve to unify and to provide stable, continuous and unchanging frames of reference of meaning amidst social and political changes. Hence, it is well accepted that the *Cultural identity is a collective identity* which reveals the distinctive characteristics of a particular group/community/ nation and which is quite unique in nature also. It is furthermore associated with the exploration of history in order to reveal "*hidden continuities*" and "*hidden roots*". The second view not only emphasizes similarity, but also recognizes points of difference in the course of history in "*what we are*" and "*what we have become*".⁹ Thus the second conceptualization

emphasizes cultural identity as an interactive process that involves "becoming" as well as "being" and belongs to the future as well as the past. Although rooted in history, cultural identity undergoes *constant transformation* and is rooted in the present where it provides a framework for the different ways in which people are positioned by and position themselves in relation to present realities and narratives of the past who defines identity in terms of boundaries. Boundaries can be psychologically, culturally, socially or politically defined and include some people as members of a group, while others are simultaneously excluded. According to this perspective, social or cultural identity cannot be understood in terms of fixed categories or unchanging phenotypical or other characteristics and/or cultural practices. Barth perceives identity as a dynamic process in which the characteristics, cultural practices, symbols and traditions of a group might change due to interaction with the physical, social, cultural, economic and political environment. What is important is not the content of a particular identity (characteristics and practices), but rather the existence of boundaries between the own group and other groups. However, as we have already mentioned, the discourse on identity is not restricted to academia. From academic circles it has spread to the centre of social and political events where it is increasingly associated with the social struggles of various dominated or repressed groups such as people of color, racial, ethnic and religious minorities and/or feminist groups¹⁰ These pursuits often labeled as "identity politics" are collective, not merely individual; and public, not only private. They are struggles, not merely groupings. The outcomes are partially determined by power, but power relationships are also changed by these struggles. The struggles involve not only the pursuit of expression and recognition, but also of legitimacy and also power. They furthermore call for a response from other people, groups and organizations (including states).¹¹ Thus, cultural identity is an interaction between the individual and a group as well.

Cultural Globalization

The effect of globalization largely affected to culture and it can be considered as an initiative to form a one universal culture. Hence, cultural globalization has attracted much attention of philosophers, anthropologists and sociologists. Cultural globalization is a process which can help to create a global culture. Theoretically it is based on the values of multiculturalism and democracy, but practically it is

hegemonic in nature. We have stated earlier that Globalization seeks to promote a world view towards intercultural exchange and promotion of multicultural society with due respect to local and regional cultures. But in practice we have perceived that this cultural aspect of globalization creates tremendous pressure to promote the Western (Euro-American) cultures and to project them as a global culture through the manipulation of mass Medias and other means. The cross-border linkages and peoples' continuous movement across the world strengthen the global ties in the form of ideas, values, fashions and other elements of culture. The idea behind globalization of culture is the creation of a common value, taste and life style. The most basic issue of cultural globalization is whose culture acquires a global spread and whose does not. Within such a context, it is difficult to ignore the issue of cultural imposition and penetration of the developed West. Cultural globalization is actually a more complex process, its strength lies in its apparent invisibility and much of it is hidden. It does not provoke public reaction unless it is politicized – that is politicization of culture and culturalization of politics.¹² Cultural globalization may also be considered as an agent of keeping cultural traditions alive, because increasing access and exposure to media helps in bringing more awareness about cultural diversities and promotion of local cultures. There is an ambiguity in the context of cultural globalization. On the one hand, it advocates for global cultural integration, while on the other hand, the global political scenario is determined and dominated by the notion of cultural and civilizational clashes. Now the most crucial question before us, whether the different cultures and civilizations are integrating together and forming a new global civilization or they are confronting each other for destroying the already existing cultural and civilizational diversities of the globe. Today people all over the world realize the major cultural crisis, whereas the ideas of global peace and inter-cultural and inter-civilizational dialogues are getting far more popularity than the notion of cultural and civilizational clashes. All these issues should be also considered soon. As regards the examination of the process of cultural globalization, the most relevant concepts in anthropology are: acculturation, diffusion and integration. Evolutionistic and relativistic approaches are regarded as the most appropriate anthropological perspectives in examining the process of current cultural globalization.¹³

In the era of cultural globalization the basic concept of culture as particularistic, localized and society specific phenomenon is fast becoming outdated due to the

increasing penetration of external elements of non-integrated traits accumulated through the process of multiple global interactions. The boundaries of culture proved to be quite flexible today. With the increasing process of globalization the concept of culture remains no longer the same as before. Today a culture is neither a closed system nor an integrated whole, nor the internally uniform among the members of a specific society. The very basic notion of culture as its rootedness into a particular geographical territory is being untenable nowadays. In the past people used to be creators and carriers of culture, but today the corporate bodies and mass media have emerged as the powerful creators and carriers of culture. In this connection the study of the relationship between globalization and culture has a great relevance .¹⁴

Globalization and Cultural Identity Crisis:

It is evident that the cultural identity crisis started since the last phase of the 20th century and that reflected upon the human experience due to the effect of globalization. In this era of globalization something has gone wrong with the formation of identity in the postmodern age. Whereas past generations seemingly handled cultural identity formation and related problems as well as issues in a matter-of-fact way, new dimensions have been added to old problems. Circumstances in the current world have not only changed the processes of identity of cultural formation, but have also added new dimensions to both personal and collective identity spheres. As we know that the term "identity" implies continuity, and it is a solid basis in which people anchor themselves, the rapid changes that characterizes the age of globalization and technological advancement and eroded most of the bases on which people used to anchor their cultural identity. The age old "problem of identity" has thus changed its shape and content in this era of globalization.¹⁵

The new centrality of the identity discourse is a reflection of the fact that identity issues are not as simple and straightforward as they used to be. Indeed, the acquiring of identity has become problematic: a task, a struggle, a quest. These struggles are waged on various levels - from the individual to the local to the global. However, the crisis on various levels are closely interconnected and often represents different facets of the various homogenizing and diversifying processes associated with globalization and technological development.

Another factor that plays a role in ethnic identification and the revitalization of ethnicity in the modern world is the globe wide migration associated with

globalization. Appadurai (1993) speaks in this regard of "ethnos capes", that is the worldwide spread of mobile human groups such as tourists, government officials, guest workers, exiles, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The consequence is that the "local space" of many ethnic or cultural groups is becoming more and more heterogeneous, while more people than ever before have contact with a culture or cultures different from their own. According to Featherstone (1990) the term "*multicultural*" should consequently be used instead of "*intercultural*" when referring to the new cultural sphere. One of the consequences of multicultural interaction within local spaces is that the enhanced need for sustaining boundaries between the own group and other groups furthermore fosters ethnic identification and ethnic mobilization.¹⁶

A further consequence is that many cultures are not restricted to the borders of a single state anymore. The Ethnic Diasporas of globalization have to deal with identity struggles of their own. They have to incorporate the transnational experience of displacement, dis-embeddedness, adaptation to and hybridization with the culture of their host societies in their identities. For many migrants this process of identity formation and reformation is aided to some degree by the availability of the electronic media and information and communication technologies that provide a link to their "home" communities. However, their communities of origin can offer little help in the lived experience of hybridity - the migrant's so-called "double vision" - that often leads to feelings of not belonging to any community or culture and the longing for the recovering of the cultural purity that has been lost.¹⁷

Cultural Identity Crisis and Indian society:

Geographically India is a vast and diverse country and various groups of peoples with different racial, ethnic, linguistic, regional, religious, and cultural backgrounds inhabit it. India is known throughout the world for its human and cultural diversity. In the course of its annals India has witnessed a unique cultural synthesis in spite of its incredible diversities. As a result, the structure of Indian society is very complex in nature. The contemporary Indian society and its socio-cultural organization is the outcome of interaction between multiple traditions, customs and habits of India which is unique in character. The mutual coexistence and integration actually helped in generating a unique civilization of this country that has no parallel in the world.¹⁸

India has never been free from external linkages, hence the forces of globalization has always been operating here. Immigration and migration played a very crucial role in shaping the Indian population as well as its society, culture and civilization. Despite the immense cultural diversities there has been a growing convergence of cultures because of people's adaptive necessities to cope with new forces. Socio-cultural dynamics is a highly complex phenomenon in the Indian context. The changes in the Indian society and culture have been occurring through both the exogenous and endogenous processes. In India the socio-cultural changes under the modern West's impact have significantly started since the last phase of 19th century and this have been the most important aspect of the country's socio-cultural dynamics. India has always been a traditional society, however, it is open minded too and it has close contact with the modern Western and American cultures and in this way the process of modernization both technical and cultural have been introduced into the Indian society. Since the last quarter of the 20th century India has also witnessed the powerful forces of current globalization related to science technology and market economy which have made a massive change in its soico-cultural milieu.¹⁹

From the very beginning of the present era the Shakas, the Huns, the Arabs, the Central Asians, the Portuguese, the French, and other external groups had close contacts with India as regards trade, commerce and other relations. But it is the British and later the Euro-American influence that has made a profound impact on the Indian society. In anthropological and sociological terminology, this change of Indian society is designated as a heterogeneous process of change and which has initiated the contemporary globalization process in the country. In order to examine the socio-cultural dynamics with particular reference to Western and global cultural impacts we must know the very nature and character of Indian culture as well as Western culture. Indian cultural values are highly traditional and spiritual based while the Western cultural values are strongly modern in terms of rationalism, utilitarianism and idealism. It also contains the elements of egalitarianism and universalism, unlike the Indian system which is very much rooted in the values of hierarchy and holism. In the context of change the Western culture follows the idea of historicity, while the Indian culture has the values of both change and continuity. There has been a distinction between 'individualistic' Western cultures versus 'collectivistic' Indian culture,

though it is gradually slackening. In India there has always been a synthesis and accommodation between the two or more distinct cultural traditions instead of contradictions and conflicts between them. Indian traditional institutions like marriage, family, kinship, caste, caste like social groups and above all religions have played a very crucial role in the process of accommodation and adjustment between the traditional local systems and the new global forces. Though they are diversified in nature however, there is a distinctive cultural affinity among them.²⁰

When we look at the impacts of cultural globalization on various segments of the Indian society, particularly since the late 20th century we observe a very complex picture. Actually, globalization has produced both positive and negative impacts on Indian society. Certainly a part of people is a gainer but the other section is a loser. The Indian elite and middle class have been able to use the opportunities and benefits of globalization, while the country's marginal social groups, for example, tribes, minorities, Dalits, Santals and other tribes are suffer from exclusion, oppression and marginalization. Today the process of globalization makes some Indian peoples more materialistic, pragmatic and money-minded. All this has far reaching consequences in Indian society and culture.²¹

Within the Indian context, the process of cultural globalization demonstrates some unique features. On the one hand, global cultural elements have already made a significant impact among the Indian masses and at the same time several elements and aspects of Indian culture have shown a wider global spread. Traditionally India is not a consumer society rather agricultural based, but in the era of globalization, a powerful consumer class is growing very fast in the country. Its Ayurvedic, Herbal and Handicrafts products are highly popular in world market economy. In India, there has been a great demand of consumer goods among the industrialists, businessmen, rich farmers and growing middle class which together constitutes one third of India's total population. The media, both print and electronic, play a crucial role in spreading a consumer culture among the masses. The younger generation of India today is highly fashion-conscious, and it is the multinational companies and business houses who by means of media for propagating fashion consciousness among them in the form of modelling and fashion shows.²²

Indian cities and towns are nowadays characterized by the growing number of shopping malls and to visit them for shopping is very common among the affluent

Indians. There has been a significant change in leisure time entertainment. Instead of traditional gossiping, chatting and visiting relatives and friends, people now watch television programs at home or attend clubs and restaurants outside. There has been a strong presence of popular and mass culture in television images and the latter have a profound impact on the day-to-day cultural life of many Indians.

The television programs, particularly the associated advertisements promoted both by national and international channels; actually shape the mindset as well as the behavior pattern of the younger generation. Most of the television images hardly maintain the real quality of Indian traditional cultures, rather they promote sex, violence, pleasure and thrills for the sake of business interest and all these ultimately affect the Indian society, culture and traditions.

Due to the modern technological advancement there is a rapidly growing IT sectors and computer network systems also in India that have given to a sizable part of Indian population the opportunity to make use of internet communication for their needs and aspirations. In fact, the use of internet and cell phones increases day by day. Telephonic conversation, email communication and sending SMS messages, Facebook, WhatsApp interaction gradually have replaced the habit of letter writings of the country's educated/literate people. However, the negative impacts of internet, Facebook and cell phone facilities are also very conspicuous. Cyber crime, relentless pornography business is increasing cultural degradation and social problems of developing India.²³

There has been a significant change in the sphere of education and knowledge system. The contemporary global epoch is also known as the era of knowledge. But the entire education system is being gradually turned to professionalism and business. Many traditional and classical subjects and humanities courses are now unattractive and outdated. Majority of the students, particularly male students are running after professional education for the sake of job/ employment, money and glamour. Technology and management courses are very popular among the praiseworthy students. Gender and class distinction is quite conspicuous in the educational sphere. One can observe the increasing number of female students in humanities and social science subjects and the boys in technology and management courses. The same way, the professional courses are almost monopolized by the rich and affluent sections. On the other hand, in the field of research the basic and

fundamental works are relegated to the background. While applied and action research get top priorities in educational planning and curricula to cope with the ongoing demands of industrialization and commercialization. Moreover, the privatization of education (like- establishment of numerous private Colleges and universities or educational institutions) system gradually spreads in India and that leads to the emergence of educational business and thereby increasing class distinction in education system in a complex manner. In Health treatments/ facilities, numerous private nursing homes and hospitals are emerged in the society and they are basically business minded rather than the service to the humanity.²⁴

In the field of games and sports there has been a significant change. Today due to the forces of global market economy, traditional and local games quickly vanish in India and they are replaced by the most popular money fetching games and sports. Due to various reasons the cricket is considered to be the most popular game among the youths in both rural and urban India. The ongoing growth of tourist industry in India is considered to be the result of globalization. It has both positive as well as negative consequences for the country. As a result Indian traditional games and sports are neglected too. Cultural tourism in one way helps to sustain and propagate traditional culture, but at the same time, the developing tourist industry leads to environmental degradation, sex tourism, trafficking of antiquities and hybridization of local cultures. Those people who live in and around Indian tourist spots are very much influenced by the global tourists' cultures.

The Western style of greetings and exchanging gifts and presents of branded companies with friends, colleagues and relatives is nowadays the most common practice among the upper and middle class Indians. Celebrations of birthday and marriage anniversary and other social events in the western manner are now the most important social functions and gatherings among the rich and affluent strata of India. Some Indian youths, especially the college and University students of urban areas now observe Valentine's Days where exchange of gifts and cards are considered very important to them. The celebration of teachers' day, mothers' day, fathers' day are now very popular, at those occasions presenting gifts is more important rather than emotional feelings and responsibilities. There has been a gradual change in kinship

terminology, particularly among the educated section of India. To use western terms to address the close kin members is now very common in urban India.²⁵

India is known for its food diversities, but today fast and junk food is very popular in Indian markets. Noodles, burgers, pizza, chips and other ready-to-eat food are now available very easily. Soft drinks, ice cream and branded chocolates are quite popular among the young generation and all these dominate their food choice. Unhealthy eating habit of junk foods is growing day by day. Actually, globalization has significantly affected the food habits as well as life style of a large number of Indian people. Globalization has increased both spatial and social mobility of the Indians. Consequently, there has been a significant restructuring in Indian joint family system. Traditional marriage practices are also modernized. But all these do not alter the basic character of these important social institutions of the country. Kinship still plays the most vital role in maintaining 'collectivism' of the Indian social life in spite of strong global forces of 'individualism'.²⁶

No doubt, globalization also encourages the flow and spread of some Indian cultural elements. The new means of communication empower local communities to cultivate their respective cultural practices for enhancing cultural interaction with the global world. In addition, there grows a number of cultural entrepreneurs in India who undertake marketing and spreading of cultural resources and goods to the external world. As a result, Indian food, herbal products, handicrafts and art objects are available in all corners of the globe. Indian traditional medicine, health care system (yoga), classical songs and music as well as dances are getting a tremendous popularity at the global level. In the contemporary restless world, the Indian philosophy of 'non-violence' and 'peace' is gradually propagating throughout the world. Indian film industries, especially the Bollywood films, have made a significant contribution at the global market of entertainment. Nowadays Indian film actors and actresses as well as the experts in performing arts and other artists are internationally worldwide.²⁷

Conclusion:

There is no doubt that globalization has many beneficial aspects that are wholesome to develop our country in scientific, technological sectors but we cannot generalized knowledge of the culture throughout the world and the happening and incidences globally, still the major negative impacts are quite alarming for our

country because our numerous minor cultures became under threat for their survival. Already many minor / tribal cultures and values are vanished from our society and these are irreparable gap in our cultural heritage. Hence, we need to more very cautiously implement its effect so that our cultural identity crisis may be discarded. It is quite evident that our family tie, our age old traditions, habits, ethical values are different from the western/American cultures and due to their pressure in the name of globalization our diversified identities are in danger and that are decreasing day by day. Younger generations are desperate in attitude, lacking in extending service to the aged people, parents are sending to age old homes, society is running towards more mechanical ways and above all our cultural bonds and identities and slackening gradually that is the most dangerous threat in our society. Beside this, many minor cultures are vanished from our society that is irreparable loss of our nation and heritage. Thus, we will have to cautious and alert to make poise with the effect and pressure of globalization and technological development.

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WITTGENSTEIN ON ETHICS

GOPAL SAHU

Introduction

Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (henceforth *PI*)¹, often considered to be a book of later or mature or new Wittgensteinian philosophy, aims at rejecting and correcting "grave mistakes"² committed in his so-called early or old theories and ideas expressed in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (henceforth *TLP*)³ and its collaborative manuscripts. In fact, *PI* has rejected some of the central theories of *TLP* such as picture theory of meaning, logical atomism, solipsism etc. and has replaced it with the use theory of meaning, private language arguments etc.

Early Wittgenstein has also discussed extensively the concept of value in general and ethical value in particular. It argues that our natural impulse to seek meaning of life and our experience of moral values compel us to look for some objective moral standards. However, the attempt to describe the ethical value through propositions will fail as statements of ethics are non-truthfunctional and therefore, nonsensical. Ethical values are not *sayable*, yet they are *showable*. That makes ethical values and standards nonsensical, transcendental and mysterious. Moreover, the early Wittgensteinian philosophy has inspired many anti-normative ethical movements and has shaped some subjective and relativistic ethical theories such as emotivism and prescriptivism. No amount of factual description will help us to determine the objectivity and universality of moral value and standard. The explanation of moral values and standards in terms of factual statements will result in moral skepticism and paradox. This is what is called the problem of moral indeterminacy of *TLP*.

Considering the objectives of *PI*, one would naturally expect some drastic and new interpretation of ethics in it. However, to one's surprise, *PI* is completely silent on this matter. It has no remarks on ethics and neither contains the word "ethics" or "morality", though Wittgenstein has discussed ethical issues in other later works and his personal life was obsessed with ethical perfection. Moreover, *PI* has not shaped, inspired or influenced any school or theory of ethics similar to *TLP*.

¹ Wittgenstein, L., *Philosophical Investigations* (henceforth *PI*), 1958 (2nd edition), G. E. M. Anscombe, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

² *PI*, Preface, p. x.

³ Wittgenstein, L., *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (henceforth *TLP*), 1921, Routledge and Kegan Paul, New York.

There has not been any substantial attempt to see or extract ethics from *PI*. His very personal and often aphoristic way of writing cannot simply be restated or interpreted. However, his philosophy is in need of interpretation, and interpretations are - as we all know - often controversial. The paper intends to interpret Wittgenstein's writings and insights to develop and further his views on ethics. In this short article, our main objective is to see what could be the implications of the various conceptual schemes of *PI* for a theory of ethics. In other words, how these conceptual tools can fulfill the requirement of ethics and can answer the problem of moral indeterminacy.

In section -2, we will discuss the nature of the ethical value and rules in *TLP* and the problem of moral indeterminacy in *TLP*. Section-3 draws the ethical landscape with the help of the sketch provided in the form of different tools in *PI* and their implications for ethical rules. Section-4 concludes that *PI*, by implications, maintains that ethics, as a family resemblance concept, is a language game, governed by a set of rules, whose "universality" is found in their grammars, "normativity" is entrenched in "form of life" and "objectivity" is ensured in our commitment to follow the rule.

1. Ethics in *TLP*

Ethics as an academic subject is concerned with the philosophical study of meaning of ethical concepts and to establish and justify norms for ethical action. The meaning and norms are directed at answering ethical questions of good and right, resolution of moral conflicts and problems of inter-subjective behaviour. The theory of ethics can be seen as a normative science of the justification of ethical decisions. Ethical issue constitutes an important part of early Wittgenstein's philosophy, in fact he acknowledges that his entire philosophy was an ethical undertaking. Early Wittgenstein has discussed ethical issues in *TLP*, in *A Lecture on Ethics*⁴ and in *Culture and Value*.⁵ Early Wittgenstein's ethics is rooted in "wonder about existence", in

⁴Wittgenstein, L., *A Lecture on Ethics* (henceforth *LE*), 1929. Subsequently published as, "Wittgenstein's Lecture on Ethics", in: *The Philosophical Review*, lxxiv, 1965, 3-12. . *LE* was Wittgenstein's only lecture to a non-philosophical audience, his only book dealing exclusively with ethics, as well as the only lecture of his of which drafts – indeed several drafts – exist.

⁵Wittgenstein, L., *Culture and Value* (henceforth *CV*), ed. by Georg Henrik von Wright in collaboration with Heikki Nyman, transl. by Peter Winch. Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1980.

the fascination “*that something exists at all.*” An ethical feeling results out of the wonder of being-in-the-world. The natural desire to describe and say something about the ultimate meaning of the world gives rise to some metaethical issues. Ethics for early Wittgenstein is an enquiry into the meaning of life, or into what makes life worth living, or into the right way of living.⁶ Naturally, he has taken ethics as an individual and personal pursuit and has not discussed academic moral issues directly. He has not elaborated the definition, nature, scope and problems of ethics neatly, however, he has delved on the issue of the status of values in the world and the justification of our ethical commitment. He has felt the requirement of a theory of ethics to be able to make sense of ethical feeling. His pursuit of ethics is closely similar to Socratic pursuit of worthy living through rigorous examination. Socratic has undertaken the Method to look for principles and actions which can be used to make decision to lead a worthy living. He has undertaken a semantic exercise to define the virtuous action and the epistemological exercise of providing a universal and objective rule to differentiate good from bad action.

Though Wittgenstein has not employed the semantic and epistemological exercise very systematically to have a philosophical theory to understand the nature and extent of these ethical feeling, in the course of understanding the meaning and purpose of living, Wittgenstein has also discussed some of the metaethical problems such what is value, some normative ethical topics as what is the nature of ethical standard, and how do we apply them. Thus, Wittgensteinian quest for meaning of life can be boiled down to the issue of designing or discovery of such ethical rules or principles that can be used to evaluate, grade and thus to regulate and explain human voluntary behaviors as good or bad, desirable or undesirable, responsible or non-responsible.

According to Wittgenstein, an ethical standard acts like “*the absolutely right road*”, which *everybody* on seeing it would, *with logical necessity*, have to go, or be ashamed for not going. Therefore, ethical rules are universal because we all strongly feel for them. Similarly, these ethical values as the *absolute good*, because, they are followed by everyone, independent of his tastes and inclinations, would *necessarily*

⁶.LE, 5.

bring about or feel guilty for not bringing about.⁷ Hence, ethical rules are absolute. Ethical rules are also normative in nature, because, they act as constraint over an indefinite number of cases. This characterization of ethical rule makes it a normative issue. The normativity of rule puts certain constraints on usage over an indefinite variety of cases and determines the meaning independently of any particular use. Hence, an ethical rule is a “normative-regularity” or “normative-constraint”⁸, which regulates our actions and behaviors by providing *necessary* and *sufficient* conditions to fit a particular action as the extension of the given rule. Ethical rule is *prescriptive* and *prohibitive* in nature; it prescribes to act positively in accordance with the given rule and prohibits the unwarranted extension of the given rule. This is the “normative condition” of the ethical rule. Therefore, the main problem of ethics is to establish such rule which is normative, universal and absolute.

In *TLP*, Wittgenstein has tried to solve all philosophical problems, including the ethical problem, by providing an account of the logic underlying the relationship between propositions and the world. For Wittgenstein, there is a human ‘drive’ to devise ‘picture of the world’ that helps explain the world and gives meaning to life. He has tried to understand the ethical feeling and thought through language. *TLP* claims that language can “picture” the world through propositions either truly or falsely, because the logical forms of propositions and reality are same. To understand what is the case is to say that that is *sayable* in a proposition. However, ethical feeling and experience are non-linguistic experience. Wittgenstein claims, “There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words.”⁹ According to Wittgenstein, language cannot reach to ethical feeling as they are not *sayable*. If something is not *sayable*, then it is nonsense. For Wittgenstein, an ethical theory or doctrine can only be nonsensical. According to Wittgenstein, ethics does not delve into the empirical world. Wittgenstein claims that what gives meaning to life or what makes life happy or unhappy, does not lie within the world. Values – the ethical, aesthetic, and religious, are non-factual, unconditional and are devoid of empirical content.

Therefore, Wittgenstein expresses the inexpressibility of ethics by saying that, “the tendency of all men who ever tried to write or talk ethics ...was to run against

⁷.*LE*, 7.

⁸.Pettit, P., “The Reality of Rule-Following”, *Mind*, Vol. 99, 1990, p. 4.

⁹.*TLP*, 6.522.

the boundaries of language,” i.e. to talk or write nonsense.¹⁰ One of the typescripts of *TLP* even contains the statement that “there are no propositions of ethics”¹¹ and thus, “it is clear that ethics cannot be put into words.”¹²

Ethical propositions may be nonsensical and thus belong to the world of silence, but they are *showable*, because ethical feeling are revealed (shown) only once we realised that they are nonsense. Therefore, the nonsensicality of ethics is not really nonsense, because they prompt us to go beyond or to run against the boundary of language and fact. The impossibility of the formative doctrine of normative ethics means the ethical feeling and experiences are to be treated as transcendental. Here, we do not require the justification for ethical feeling and impulse.

Values such as ‘good’ and ‘evil’ are not the properties of the world; they are placed outside the world. The world is bereft of the ethical values as it contains nothing more than the facts. The world is nothing more than a series of the happenings of facts. Hence, no value exists in the world, and “if it did exist, it would have no value.”¹³ Ethical values and standards are transcendental.¹⁴ In the world everything is as it is, and everything happens as it does happen. And the entire happening in the world is completely causal and logical in nature. Ethics being beyond the world is viewed as supernatural which cannot be captured within the network of natural world and natural language.

Wittgenstein further argues that, if we try to explain value in terms of fact, it will lead to a paradox. According to him, value experiences seem to express absolute (or supernatural) value, yet experiences occur in the world, and nothing in the world can have absolute value. For a state of affairs to have absolute value would mean that no one could abstain from pursuing it (or, as Wittgenstein puts it at one point, no one could abstain without feeling ashamed); however, no such state of affairs could exist. Wittgenstein’s solution to the paradox was to declare that the attempt to articulate the experiences in question (or to attribute value to them) is nonsensical.

¹⁰.Quoted in Richter, Duncan J., “Ludwig Wittgenstein”, *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <<http://www/utm.edu/research/iep/wittgens.htm>> Accessed on January, 2019.

¹¹.McGuinness, Brian, “The Other Side of Silence”, *Times Literary Supplements*, June 14, 2002, p. 3.

¹².*TLP*, 6.421.

¹³. *TLP* 6.41.

¹⁴.*TLP* 6.42, 6.421.

Moreover, the ethical dimension is extracted from the field of facets that are described in words. That leads to the paradox that acting in the world cannot contain any statements on the ethical quality of action, although the ethical dimension is meant to be linked to the sense of action and the actor's status. This paradoxical situation can be sated by the fact that the same action can be performed by any number of different "selves", that is to say, the same action can be described at one time as "evil" and at another as "good". "What is good is also divine. Queer as it sounds, that sums up my ethics. Only something supernatural can express the Supernatural".¹⁵

TLP has inspired the Logical Positivists to develop a relative and subjective moral standard. For example, A. J. Ayer argues that ethical statements are nothing but expression of our emotions of approval or disapproval. Suppose one says to a cannibal, "you acted wrongly in eating your prisoner." Ayer thought one is not stating anything more than if one had simply said, "You ate your prisoner". Rather, one is evincing moral disapproval of it. It is as if one had said, "You ate your prisoner" in a peculiar tone of horror, or written it with the addition of some special exclamation marks.¹⁶ Emotivism has been further developed into prescriptivism. For example, Stevenson has argued that normative judgments express attitudes and invite others to share these attitudes, but they are not strictly speaking true or false.¹⁷

TLP argues against the possibility of a normative standard which is universal, objective and normative. The problem about ethics raised in *TLP* may be termed as "moral indeterminacy": the thesis that any given moral rule can be extrapolated in an infinite ways and equivalently, any set of behaviors can be held to fit the same ethical rule. The offshoots of *TLP* like emotivism and prescriptivism, by denying uniformity, regularity and objectivity in ethics, further strengthen the moral indeterminacy.

2. Ethics in *PI*

PI is a collection of remarks on different subjects/topics set out unsystematically. Neither it propounds a single philosophy, let alone an ethics, nor has the attempt to find out the unity among its remarks in *PI* succeeded. Michael

¹⁵.*CV*, 3.

¹⁶.Ayer, A. J., 1936, *Language, Truth and Logic*, Penguin, 107–8.

¹⁷.Stevenson, Charles, 1944, *Ethics and Language*, Yale University Press, Ch. 5.

Dummett's observation that "we have yet to come terms with Wittgenstein"¹⁸ still stands true. However, *PI* provides a set of tools for drawing the "sketches of landscapes" for us "to travel over a wide field of thoughts"¹⁹. The sketches can be helpful to travel over other unraveled areas. However, we should keep in our mind the fact that his aphoristic way of writing cannot simply be interpreted in a coherent manner and will lead to controversies and disagreement.

The central philosophical tools *PI* provides are: language games, private language argument, family resemblance, rule and rule-following, grammar, forms of life. The tools used are not to build a philosophy but how to philosophize. *PI* should be taken more as a book on how to do philosophy than a book of philosophy. It provides a set of philosophical tools and skills to resolve different philosophical issues and problems. It is not surprising to note that the landscape of ethics can be drawn on the basis of the remarks on the central issues of the *PI*, though it does not directly deal with ethical issues.

Later Wittgenstein has rejected the general explanation of issues and definition of concept based on sufficient and necessary conditions. According to him, there is no reason to look, as we have done traditionally - and dogmatically - for one, essential core in which the meaning of a word is located and which is, therefore, common to all uses of that word. Instead of philosopher's 'craving for generality', he points to 'family resemblance' as the more suitable analogy for connecting particular uses of the same word. We should, instead, travel with the word's uses through "a complicated network of similarities, overlapping and criss-crossing"²⁰ Family resemblance also serves to exhibit the lack of boundaries and the distance from exactness that characterize different uses of the same concept. Such an approach has been adopted in the *Tractatus*, but Wittgenstein has discarded in favor of appeal to similarity of a kind with family resemblance in *PI*. Applying the concept of 'family resemblance', we can argue that ethical concepts cannot be defined in terms of some necessary and sufficient conditions as they do not refer to some essential objects or some underlying commonalities. Rather ethical concepts are just family resemblance concepts.

¹⁸.Quoted in McGuinness, Brian, *op. cit.* p. 3

¹⁹.*PI*, Preface, p. ix.

²⁰.*PI*, § 66.

In giving the meaning of a word, any explanatory generalization should be replaced by a description of use. In *PI*, Wittgenstein proposes the “use theory of meaning” as, “the meaning of a word is its use in the language”,²¹ because, if we had to name anything which is the life of the sign, we should have to say that it was its *use*. Rather, when investigating meaning, the philosopher must “look and see” the variety of uses to which the word is put. So different is this new perspective that Wittgenstein repeats: “Don’t think but look!”²²; and such looking is done *vis-a-vis* particular cases, not thoughtful generalizations. Therefore, based on the use theory of meaning, one can say that the meaning of ethical concepts is known through their use in the language. In order to know their meaning, we have to look for their multiplicity of uses in different “part of an activity.” Therefore, one can say that meaning of ethical concepts is to be mapped out by looking their uses in the context of activity they are part of.

Wittgenstein introduces the concept ‘language-game’ to map out the different uses of a concept. He never explicitly defines it but some properties of language-games can be noticed in Wittgenstein’s several examples and comments. Wittgenstein concept of language game is based on the over-all analogy between language and game. Still, just as we cannot give a final, essential definition of ‘game’, so we cannot find “what is common to all these activities and what makes them into language or parts of language.”²³ The concept of language-games points at the rule-governed character of language and points to the conventional nature of human activity. Therefore, extending the tool of language game, we can say that to be ethical is to play some kind of language game.

One of the issues most associated with the language-game is the concept of rule and its following. Playing a game require certain rules. However, rules are mostly conventional and man-made. Therefore, the following a rule is subjective and arbitrary and anything based on rule is not necessary and universal. According to Wittgenstein, the grammar of rule helps us to provide the necessity to the act of rule-following. He believes that the investigation into what is expressed by a rule and following of it is an investigation into the grammar of the word “rule” and mastering

²¹.*PI*, § 43.

²².*PI*, § 66.

²³.*PI*, § 65.

the technique of how to follow a rule. The grammar of rule is an investigation to clarify the grammar of the expressions of rule, i.e. what is to act in accord with a rule? Wittgenstein has used a number of analogies and examples as a part of philosophical grammar to make clear the use of the expression of rule and what it is to be calling an action as a consequence of the rule.

The grammar of rule points there cannot be hidden, mysterious and transcendental rule; nothing would be counted as a rule independently of being used as a rule. There is nothing as our following a rule without our being able to explain or justify our actions by reference to them, for the calculus of rule is nothing but the uses of the rule. Wittgenstein comments, “Every sign by itself seems dead. What gives it life? - In use it is alive. Is life breathed into it there? - Or is the use its life.”²⁴ Further he says, “One cannot guess how a word functions, one has to look at its use and learn from that.”²⁵ For example, “the signpost is an order - if, under normal circumstances, it fulfills its purpose”²⁶ The grammar of the expression involving rule will render a rule senseless which we cannot use or in principle it is impossible to violate, for “what is hidden to us is of no interest to us.”²⁷ Thus Wittgenstein says, “‘obeying a rule’ is a practice. And to think one is obeying a rule is not obeying a rule. Hence it is not possible to obey a rule ‘privately’: otherwise thinking one is obeying a rule would be the same as obeying it.”²⁸

The practice and custom are essential for the understanding a rule and how to follow it. Wittgenstein validly argues that “a person goes by the sign-post only in so far as there exists a regular use of sign-post, a custom”²⁹ The mastering of the technique is possible because we have a common language and some uniform practices. The other frameworks within which the successful following of the rule is dependent are that, the world is substantially an unchanging and uniform in nature, there is harmony between language and reality and human beings have their own limitations. This commonality or framework is what Wittgenstein says the “forms of life”. However, the forms of life don’t define or constitute rule-following, it provides

²⁴ *.PI*, § 432.

²⁵ *.PI*, § 340.

²⁶ *.PI*, § 87.

²⁷ *.PI*, § 126.

²⁸ *.PI*, § 202.

²⁹ *.PI*, § 198.

the minimum requirement to conduct our rule-governed activity smoothly. The forms of life provide the frame work thorough which we operate our grammar and achieve the necessary agreement. However, this is “not an agreement in opinions but in the forms of life.”³⁰

How does the rule which is so much depended on the form of life can provide the necessity to its following, since forms of life is conventional and relativistic in nature? A rule heavily dependent on the conventional practice of the members of the community is whimsical, subjective and is subject to change at will, therefore, it is natural to wonder how such relativistic framework can provide the ground for the justification for meaning and communication. However, rules formulated within this framework provide the necessity for two reasons: First, rules are stipulated for certain purposes, approved and followed in the community by its members after deliberation. Therefore, rules are very much objective and collective in nature and there should be no problem of inter-subjective communication. Though the community view of justification is arbitrary and fallible, does not force us to embrace relativism, a very common charge leveled against any theory based on convention. This is because, once we invoke a rule, we are committed to follow it; are supposed to be faithful to it. Thus, Wittgenstein would say though rules are arbitrary, their applications are not.³¹ The application of a rule becomes a social necessity. The community view of rule, and faith to honor it acts as a *normative constraint*. Systematic and consistent use of rule along with commitment to rule gives us the required parameters to judge the epistemic behavior of other members in the community. Rule, thus is predictable, it tells us in advance which behavior would fit which rule. In this sense, a rule determines its extension. On the strength of the knowledge of the rule used in the communities, one member understands the behavior of the others in the society. The commitment to rule is essential part of our very institution of language is best exemplified by the fact that one has no freedom to question the truth of a statement expressing a definition. Therefore, one can argue that *Philosophical Investigations*, by implications, maintains that ethics, as a family resemblance concept, is a language game, governed by a set of rules, whose “universality” is found in their grammars,

³⁰.*PI*, § 241.

³¹.*PI*, § 241.

“normativity” is entrenched in “form of life” and “objectivity” is ensured in our commitment to follow the rules.

Conclusion

What we can conclude is that ethics is a set of rules designed to regulate the human behaviours. However, these rules are not based on some inner and private reality of the followers. These rules are not even found in the nature. Wittgenstein’s later writings help us see that if there is any value that are essentially linguistic and social phenomenon and ethical concern can only arise in the social practices people engage in the form of a language game. In order to understand the various language games, including talk of right and wrong, we must understand the practices and forms of life in which these are embedded. To understand these ethical issues or in some cases to even understand them as ethical issues may require considerable background and filling out of the context.

There is no single quality that characterizes the all that we call ethical. To be ethical is to follow or not to follow a rule that we have given ourselves. What does it mean to conceive of ethics as a practice? First of all, it means that it is a constellation of learned activities, dispositions, and skills. We learn to engage in complex practices through observing and emulating others who are more skilled than we; through our own practice, trial, and error; through making mistakes, and learning from them; through deliberation and reflection on what we are doing and why; through creatively responding to new and unexpected situations; and so on. From the framework we are sketching here, ethics is no different: we *learn* to be good and to do well; we are initiated into a form of life that values these activities and that supports us in enacting them. This background of conditions is true even when we seem to be deliberating and acting entirely on our own; for however autonomous and self-directed our efforts might appear at that moment, we could not have been capable of such deliberation and action without a substantial set of interactions with others from the earliest stages of our lives. In this sense ethics always exists against the background of a form of life. Thus, Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* will not place value outside the world or “passing over it in silence”. However, Wittgenstein will not change his earlier view on the radical distinction between “fact” and “value” and that an ethical conclusion cannot be derived from any factual argument.

PROOF OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD: AN ANALYSIS

RATIKANTA PANDA

This world is not only the ground, but the very survival-condition of a man's life. Not only that a man lives and passes his entire life here, but that, no living and surviving is possible outside the frontiers of this world, although what this frontier can be, is debatable. The third planet from the sun in the solar system, which we call Earth. The manned probing satellite, i.e. spaceship with human beings for exploration, enhances the chances of our survival outside the earthly boundaries, and thus helps us in extending our living frontiers.

From time immemorial certain metaphysical and related questions have bothered human mind about the existence of external world. Many questions are posed to provoke philosophical discussion on this topic. "Is the world only an appearance or a true reality?" If it is a reality, is it an outcome of collation of gross atoms or both gross and subtle atoms? Why did I come to this world and did I have a choice to refuse? Is it the law of *Karma* of the earlier births in the past made us to come? What made Shakespeare to ask "The Tempest" that the world is a dream? Why did Buddha find this world as full of miseries and sufferings? Why did Schopenhauer talk in whispers to plants, flowers and shrubs and then bent his ears to get reply to his metaphysical question from these plants? His questions to plants related to "who he was?" and other similar inquiries. After all why these search to know "thy self", not only by Schopenhauer but also earlier by Socrates and still earlier by the ancient Vedic seers, sages and metaphysicists?

A philosopher may wonder whether there is an external world or not. He might ask whether these frontiers really exist. Or, to be more specific, does this World really exist? What if this World is not existing, and we are living in a perpetual illusion? While in dream, we feel that dream world is real, but when we wake up dream is sublated by the dawn of reality. The dream is no more! What if the world too like dream gets eventually sublated? Sankara would have said '*Brahma satya, jagat mithya*' i.e. the only reality is the *Brahma*, and the World is an Illusion!

We perceive the external world through our senses, and our senses often deceive us. It is natural to ask if the senses give us correct picture of the world at all. We often hallucinate, mirage. Because of such experiences, we tend to ask ourselves,

if our senses do not deceive us all the time. What if the whole world is a product of our senses' malfunctioning? What all of this is a dream?

Not only that the world has troubled Indian minds, but this was no exception to Western mind as well. The external world, with all its sensuousness and enigma, has baffled the philosophical mind in every era. The doubt regarding existence of the world has kept on assailing the philosophers, although they were literally living in it. Philosophy is an endeavor to discover the relationship that man holds with his cosmos. And a philosopher's task does not get exhausted with just querying. He has to answer that query as well! If the world is an illusion, then how so? And, if it is real, then how can we prove it? This is the crux of the matter of problem of proof of external world.

Different philosophers have looked at this problem differently. Heraclitus (535-475 BC), the ancient Greek philosopher, saw this world as a flux. A reality which is ever changing, "*ta onta ienai te panta kai menein ouden - All beings going and remaining not at all.*"¹ The world is like a continually flowing river, and you cannot step into the same river twice. "*We both step and do not step in the same river. We are and are not.*" He did not see, however, any necessity to prove this momentariness of the world around. There is no much point in finding a proof of something which is but only momentarily. Buddha too felt that the world is a continuity of successive moments, and beyond which there is no reality.

Although, the world may be existing momentarily, still we live in it for years. That means, there is enough scope for continuity. Before us, hundred thousand of men and woman lived in this world. The world with all its momentariness was still there, as it is now. Even if one steps out of the metaphysician's stream, and looks at our immediate tools of apprehending the world, using own our senses, we find that world is something, which does not exist in its own right, but depends on our perception.

It was Descartes, however, and not ancient Greeks, who raised the question of the existence of external world. That is, whether the world, independent of our mind, exists or not? Descartes (1596-1650) considered only two sorts of substances: the mind, and the body. The mind is un-extended and body is being extended in

¹Heraclitus, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heraclitus#Panta_rhei.2C_.22all_things_flow.22

space. If body exists, surely the existence of the totality of bodies can be called world. It was the God from whom the two substances, mind and body emerged. Our senses cannot give the proof of the external world, for senses often delude us. It is God only who can ensure the existence of the world. The concept of God itself is the proof of its existence.³² There are only three different perspectives possible:

- 1) There is no external world at all
- 2) There is external world, but we cannot prove its existence
- 3) There is external world, and we can prove its existence.

The most radical position, that is, the first one, was taken up by David Hume. Hume denied the existence of world altogether. No transcendental object can be the cause of what is non-transcendent. The fleeting impressions which is the only reality admitted by Hume cannot be, however, the cause of permanent, and independently existing world out there. Our constancy and coherence of experiences make us think of the existence of some objective world out there, but whether it really is, we cannot know. As Hume says:

This propensity to bestow an identity to our resembling perceptions, produces the fiction of a continued existence; since that fiction, as well as the identity, is really false....²

Thus, however, our perception shows us that there is a world with which we interact. Its just a coherence in our perceptions every time that we deduce the existence of the world. Nothing besides the sense experience is real, and all that we call the world is existing because we perceive it. In fact, we cannot know if *anything* exists at all independent of our perception. We can be sure of *our* experiences, but how can we know, if other people have same experience? At best our senses can prove to us, but do not as a provide proof for others. Hume takes us too far till the logical limit of his empiricism. If we cannot prove that world exists with which our senses interact every time, how could we be sure that it is the *same* world that our senses come in contact every time? This hypothesis of Hume engenders the continued existence of world. Howsoever constructed by imagination it may be, the continued existence of the same objects which he experiences at various times, based on

² A Critical History of Western Philosophy by Y. Masih, Motilal Banarasisdass Publishers, New Delhi, p-206-9

coherence and constancy in his experiences he would not be in a position to prove the external world. He remarks, the mountain, the house, the table, the bed,

...have always appeared to me in the same order; and when I lose sight of them by shutting my eyes or turning my head, I soon after find them return upon me without the least alteration...³

Further, Hume accounts for only his own experiences, and not experience of other. That means if there is no one to perceive the world, surely there is no world at all! There remains no world with which anyone's senses may come in contact, and then subsequently the question of the proof of its existence may not arise. The skeptic's position stems from the fact that the two personal experiences and physical objects are different. One can be sure of the personal experiences. From this, it cannot be validly concluded that there is an external world. Further, there are others like Berkeley and Kant who maintain that there is surely a world existing outside of our minds, but it is something that we cannot prove. Berkeley considers world to be the ideas in the mind of God. Thus, there is external world, verily, outside the confines of individual mind, but it exists in a Higher Mind as its Idea, which is God. But existing as idea does not mean that it does not exist objectively. Y. Masih, notes in this regard,

'In the mind' need not mean that things have their locus within the ego. It really means that a thing has entered into the knowledge-relationship with the subject. When we say that nothing can be outside the mind, it means that the subject-object relationship is so universal and pervading that nothing can escape it... So, Berkeley instead of subjectifying things tries of objectifying ideas.⁴ Note what Berkeley says himself, "I am not for changing things into ideas but rather ideas into things."⁵

Kant, as compared to Berkeley, takes a more straightforward approach to the issue of the existence of the external world. He first examines the conditions which can make the knowledge of external world possible. The world outside corresponds to the conditions of space and time, and when we perceive the world our experience proves that such a world exists. But, certain features of it still delude us like space-as-such, or even world-as-such. For this, Kant concludes that this things-as-such cannot

³ Ibid, p. 194-95

⁴ Y. Masih, Ibid, p-306

⁵ George Berkeley, Dialogues i:463

be proved, because these go out of the general framework of space-time categories only within which the existence of anything can be established. Within spatio-temporal framework, things come to us as phenomena, and outside of it they are called *noumena*. Phenomena can be proved through our direct experience. *Noumenal* cannot be proved through experience. They are transcendental. But, we can deduce the existence of them using transcendental argument, although, we cannot *prove* them. Thus, Kant proves the external world, both empirically and transcendently

In fact, the two positions regarding non-evidence and self-evidence of external world have given birth to a much larger debate and divide the western philosophy into between empiricism and rationalism. While rationalists like Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz held the view that we are intuitively aware of the outside world, but cannot prove it; empiricists like Locke, Berkeley etc. held that we can verily prove the world, as our senses directly confront it. Hume is the only one among the empiricists who reduces senses to the extreme position that one cannot step out of sense experience to reach out to the world. That is, one cannot be sure, whether any knowledge about the world-as-such can be had by anyone using sense experience. Rationalists are mainly criticized on the ground that their intuitive awareness of the world can be give tautological truths like that of mathematics and logic. For example, $a = a$, but tautology cannot give contingent truths about the world, such as it is raining outside. Such truths can be known only by experiencing directly those events.

There is yet another philosophical view point namely, common sense which maintains that there is world verily, and it is proved by our own simple experiences. And this is the position, which I too want to argue for. We need not juggle with high sounding philosophical arguments to prove our world. The simple fact that we live in it, proves that it exists. It is Moore, however, who first of all took this position, which a layman believes all the time, Moore proves it rationally. Moore and layman differ on the ground that, for Moore it comes as something proved rationally while for layman belief in the world comes as something taken for granted all along his life.

Moore takes up the challenge, proves the externality of world from common sense only. He raises his one hand in the air, and says; 'Here is one hand!' puts it down, raises other hand, and say, 'Here is another!' and puts it down. While now no

hand is in the view of audience who had just seen two hands before, Moore concludes that the two hands must have existed to give audience those views. At present, no one is seeing those hands, but everyone had seen them just moments ago, which prove that *two human hands existed just moments ago*. And if the existence of two human hands can be proved, surely the existence of external world gets proved *ipso facto*. And, “There is no need to multiply examples”.⁶ This is one of the simplest proofs ever given for the externality of external world, although, philosophers all over the world have not been very happy with that owing to their dogmatic philosophical commitments. It is argued by many that Moore’s proof depends upon his seeing his hand, when he raises his hand, and what if, Moore is not seeing, but dreaming actually? What if Moore is just dreaming that he is seeing his hand which although is not there? In that case, the proof of Moore will tumble down. As Annalisa Coliva notes as follows:

... Moore’s proof can be reconstructed as follows:

1. Here’s one hand;
2. If there is one hand here, then the external world exists;
3. The external world exists.

.....the warrant Moore has for 1) is his visual experience. Now, that visual experience would be the same in case Moore were just dreaming of having a hand....⁷

In the light of such counter-arguments, Moore’s simple proof has been criticized bitterly in the philosophical quarters everywhere. But, this seems to be an exaggerated criticism, for I maintain that any proof of external world would be still wanting if we would just go on tearing it apart piecemeal. The criticism is an extreme one without paying due attention to what Moore attempts to say.

If we start doubting the very existence of our body, then the doubt of our existence would not make much sense. We can doubt certain elements of our belief system, but not system as a whole. As Wittgenstein says, “We could doubt every single one of these facts, but we could not doubt them all.” Wouldn’t it be more correct to say: “we do not doubt them all”....⁸

⁶ George Berkeley, *Dialogues* i:463

⁷ Annalisa Coliva, *Moore’s Proof of an External world. Just begging the question*

⁸ L. Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, p. 30e Blackwell, 1975

Truth and falsity according to Wittgenstein is not a metaphysical exercise, but the concept of truth and falsity are admissible only in the context of language use. We do not verify and falsify all the components of our belief systems, but we refer to our world by the use of our language in such a way that our language represents them truly, and thus, make them true or false, existent or non-existent. The claim “here is a hand” is about the fact of the world and hence it may be subjected to doubt. But similar propositions can make sense when they have functions in language. That is, “Here is a hand” is an ostensive definition, which has a meaning in the context of its use and indicates how the word has been used in this particular context. Wittgenstein admits that this proposition can be doubted if it is taken as an empirical proposition, but one cannot thereby conclude that all propositions of this type can be doubted. And if we doubt all propositions of this sort then communication, action, life etc. are not possible at all. Thus, Wittgenstein does not give the status of first proposition to any one particular proposition, but to some set of propositions which can form the basis of the belief in other propositions. This view is quite close to what Moore tried to prove using the notion of common sense.

The best proof of external world is from common sense experience of it, and if that is held under doubt, it seems difficult to see, how further proves is possible. Dreaming is one thing which one neither can prove, nor disprove. You cannot say at any point of your dream that you are dreaming, or even that you are not dreaming! Dreaming is beyond the pale of doubt, or certainty in this sense. The question of truth and falsity therefore does not apply to dream, and consequently, the proof regarding it. Certainty and doubt is the matter of epistemology and language dynamics, it has nothing to do with dreams. World is to be taken for granted. It does not make any sense to ask proofs for it. It would be quite absurd to call our decades of life spent here a big philosophical dream. If taken as dream would imply our whole knowledge, accumulated over the millennia, just a figment of imagination. The question, then, by consequence, would also lose its relevance. Any question is relevant when asked outside dream. We never bother about what we question or answer while we dream. If the debate of proof of the external world has been going on since ages, it is because all this debate has not been going on in dreams. The very debate is the proof of external world.

External world is beyond the domain of skeptic's doubt. We can ask at best how this world functions, but not whether it functions at all. External world is the basic condition for all the further proofs. Without taking world in this sense, not one step we can take regarding anything. Even a proof regarding world, we can ask only while living in the world. The question itself gives us the guarantee that it exists, and it can be proved, if proof still is required. It can be done with having approaching it with common sense without all the dust of philosophical doubts gathered over the centuries.

THE VISION AND MISSION OF ŚRIMADBHAGABATĪTĀ

DR. NIRMAL KUMAR ROY

Śrimadbhagabatġitā is considered as *Sāstra* having immense importance for each and every individual all over the globe. Listening to this one may immediately react and say that *Gītā* takes its birth, develops and come to an end centering the problems of a particular individual, Arjuna. It is a well known fact that each and every individual is unique. So it is quite illogical to maintain that *Gītā* is equally important to each and every person of society. In reply to this reaction it can be said that in fact here Arjuna is not a particular unique individual, he is a representative of all of us. Our Prime Minister is not an individual; he is the representative of all Indians. Likewise Arjuna is a representative of all individuals living in society. We all are Arjuna, so whatever is true to Arjuna is equally true to us. The problem of Arjuna is not unique, it is common problem, and it is the problem of you and me. So the solution to the problem i.e. the teaching of the *Gītā* is also common. If we suffer from same type of disease then same type of doctor, same type of prescription and medicine are effective for all of us. In reality the disease we all, without exception, suffers from is technically called *bhavarāga*. *This disease* is of the same nature, i.e. selfishness, envy, fear, anger and so on. Thus it is seen that the teaching of the *Gītā* is equally important to each and every individual of our society.

Here again one can find problem and say that Arjuna is a warrior and *Gītā* is a teaching all about why Arjuna should face the war. But we are not warrior; we do not face any war. So what is the reason for claiming that the problem of Arjuna is common to all of us? But if we carefully analyze the whole *Gītā* then we can understand that here the term 'war' is not used in the literal sense, rather it is used in a technical sense. It is important to note that all commentators of the *Gītā* accept this view. Here 'war' stands for the war of life. No one can deny the fact that each of us, all most in each and every moment has to face war of our life. Here the enemy lies within our mental world. Our selfishness, anger, jealousy, ego etc. stand for enemy of our life. They are called *Śadaripū*. We are constantly engaged in fighting with them. We the ordinary people most of the time fail to win over our enemy. The *Gītā* strongly advises us to make Śrīkriṣṇa, the God, as the driver of our life- chariot if we are to win over our enemy as it was done by Arjuna. The instance we come across in

our day to day life teaches us a lot. Instance shows that Arjuna wins the war due to God and, Duryadhana, on the other, gets defeated and ultimately ruined because he does not care for God.

Netaji declared “Give me blood I shall give you freedom”. In the same way Krishna in the *Gītā* declares that if one makes Him the driver of one’s life then He promises to provide him a number of important things. If we ponder over the *Gītā* then it shows that it assures to offer the following directions:

- a) It assures to cure us from our mental problems through proper counseling and thereby it leads us to regain our original states.
- b) It assures to transform us into *sura* from *asura*.
- c) It offers to transform our society from hell to heaven.
- d) It claims to make the whole world into temple or mosque or church.
- e) It assures to transform all our activities into worship.
- f) It assures to provide us the *mokṣa*, the highest *purasārtha* of human life.

Let us explain the first claim made by the *Gītā* is that it is all along a comprehensive counseling. It makes us mentally fit and sound through proper counseling. At the end of the teaching of the *Gītā* Arjuna himself admits that now he is free from his *moha*. The modern psychologists are of the opinion that in fact we all are psychological patients. None of us is mentally hundred percent balanced and fit. The differences among different persons are of difference of degree but not of kind. At present the psychologists claim that all criminals are mentally perverted. No person who is mentally balanced and sound can commit any crime. From this it follows that, thief, robber, cheater, murderer all are psychological patient. Keeping this in view today the jails are called the centers for reformation. As all criminals are patients they need treatment. But punishment that is usually given to them is not treatment. The proper treatment suggested by the psychologists is counseling. Here one may not agree with the psychologists. He may claim that, in fact, it is not the mental perversion, but the external adverse situational compulsion that leads one to commit crime. For example, poverty compels one to resort to the path of stealing. But this view cannot be accepted. Our close observation shows that most of the thieves are not poor at all. In some cases they are the owners of corers of rupees. For

example, a great number of political leaders and many others belong to this category. So far as our discussion goes it shows that all thieves are not financially sound. At least some of them are forced to stealing owing to their poverty. But this view cannot falsify the above claim of the psychologists. Because we have come across instances of some persons who died out of starvation but did not resort to stealing. Besides this argument I think that it is more logical to accept the observation of the psychologists, who are the experts in this field. We may be educated but it is true that we are naive in this field. So far as the problems of hearts are concerned the experts, where we all are laymen. If we do not agree with the observations of them then it seems ridiculous. The same is equally true in the case of the problems of our mind.

Kriṣṇa claims that all men are perverted and we like to be cured under the treatment of Srikrīṣṇa. Here one may say that if I am a patient of mental problems then it is more practical and logical to go to a psychiatrist of our mundane world. Thus, it is important to note that all diseases we suffer from are of two types i.e. mundane and spiritual. So far as the first type of disease is concerned we have to go to the doctor of our mundane world, but as far as the second type of disease is concerned we have to go to the doctor of the spiritual world. The psychological disease referred to by the *Gītā* is a spiritual disease. So we have to go to the doctor of the spiritual world if we like to be cured from this disease. Let us explain the nature of the disease concerned. We all know that psychological patients are otherwise called abnormal. But what does the term 'abnormal' exactly mean? The person who is not normal is called abnormal. One may ask: what does it really mean when we say that a man is normal? I think the implication of this statement so far as the spiritual world is concerned is deep rooted and far reaching. I think the Bengali meaning of the term 'normal' will help us to understand the implication in question. The Bengali meaning of the same is *svābhābika*. It means that when a thing belongs to its own or real state then it is called *svābhābika* or normal but if it is otherwise then it is called *asvābhābika* or abnormal. If we are to understand the same with more clarity then we have to proceed further. All the things of this world possess two kinds of properties or attributes, one is essential and the other is accidental. The former one is real and permanent but the latter one is unreal and impermanent. The former one is the own property of the thing concerned but the latter one is imposed from outside and in that

sense it is a borrowed property. Since the accidental property is borrowed it, in the true sense of the term, is not the own property of the thing concerned. We know that when we boil an egg it becomes hot. But this hotness of this egg is not the real property of eggs; it is an accidental property of the egg. Here egg borrows the property of hotness from hot water. But the hotness of the water is also not the own property of the water itself. It is borrowed from the hot- pot concerned. Again the pot itself is not hot. So here hotness is an accidental property. Pot here borrows the property of hotness from fire. But what is about the hotness possessed by fire? Hotness is the real property of fire. Because fire does not borrow hotness from anything else, fire itself is hot. As long as fire continues to exist it remains hot. Likewise water by its nature is cold. Coldness is the real property and therefore is the essence of water. The real property of a thing may be covered by the unreal or accidental property. The sun, for example, is self-illuminating by nature. More clearly to say self- illumination is the real or original property of the sun. As long as the sun remains it continues to be self- illuminating. But the self- illuminating real nature of the sun may be covered by cloud, the accidental property which is otherwise called imposed or borrowed or unreal property. So the natural condition of the sun, i.e. the illuminating state is the normal condition of it, since it is its own condition, *svābhābika*. As long as the sun remains in its self- illuminating state the sun is said to be in its normal state.

Srikrīṣṇa claims that no man is normal in the sense already mentioned. All men have deviated from their original or normal condition. We become deviated from our original or real state, *svabhāba*. But it is already discussed that one thing or being becomes deviated from its own nature, *svabhāba* only when it comes in association with some accidental or imposed properties. So it clearly implies that we have already become associated with some accidental or imposed properties. If we are to regain our normal property or normal state then first of all we have to throw away our imposed or accidental properties. So here the most pertinent question is: what is our real property and what are our imposed or accidental properties? In reply to this *Gītā* says that man by the very nature is soul who is beyond birth and death. It can neither be slain nor be burnt, nor be wet nor even be dried out. *Nainam chindanti śāstrāni*

*nainam dahati pāvakaḥ /Na cainam kledayāntyāpo na śosayati marutaḥ //*¹ It further maintains that soul is ever pure, ever free and blissful. Soul cannot be the subject of sufferings and bondage. Body, sense organs, mind, intellect, selfishness, anger, fear, envy, greed, sense of attachment, violence etc. on the other, are the accidental properties of us. All these are accidental properties simply because they are not permanent, they come and go. Kṛiṣṇa says that the body of one, for example, is as temporary as one's dress. One puts on a new dress in the place of old one. Likewise one assumes a new body by leaving the old one. "*Vāsāmsi jīrnāni yathā vihāya navāni gṛhnati naro' parāṇi /Tathā sārīrāṇi vihāya jīrnānyanyāni samyāti navāni dehī //*"²

It is said that our body is of two types, one is gross and another is subtle. Generally it is said that subtle body consists of sense organs, mind and intellect. At death our gross body is destroyed. But our subtle body does not destroy; it transmigrates with soul to another new body. This subtle body is destroyed and becomes dissociated from soul only in the state of liberation. As our body, gross as well as subtle, is accidental all the properties of them are also accidental. Our mind is subtle body; consequently, all the mental properties like selfishness, greed, jealousy, etc. are accidental properties. We all are the subject of these mental properties. So it is established that we are not normal. Keeping this in view Kṛiṣṇa says that if we like to be normal and cured then we have to follow the prescription made by Him in the *Gītā*. But here the question comes how through the teaching of the *Gītā* mentioned above our problems are solved? In fact our problems are the problems of suffering. But how does the knowledge about the fact that we are different from our body and mind help us to remove our sufferings? The answer is very simple and clear. Why am I not affected by your problem? Because I know that I am different from you. Likewise the moment I come to know that I am different from my body and mind I cease to be affected by the problems of my body and mind. If we ponder over the same then we can understand that all the problems we actually suffer from are either

¹Nainam chindanti śastrāni nainam dahati pāvakaḥ /Na cainam kledayāntyāpo na śosayati marutaḥ //³³ 2/23, Śrīmadbhagabatgīta

²Vāsāmsi jīrnāni yathā vihāya navāni gṛhnati naro' parāṇi /Tathā sārīrāṇi vihāya jīrnānyanyāni samyāti navāni dehī // 2/11, Śrīmadbhagabatgīta.

the problems of our body or the problems of our mind. So if we are not affected by the problems of our body and mind then we become completely free from sufferings. This is how the teaching of the *Gītā* mentioned above cures us from all the problems we suffer from. Here one may raise question: How can I come to know that I am really different from my body and mind? The fact that I am different from my dress is established by the fact that my dress can be separated from me. But neither my body nor my mind can be separated from me. Then how can I claim that I am different from my body and mind? In response to this it can be said that inseparability does not imply identity. My nose is inseparable from my head but it does not mean that my nose is identical with my head. We all know that head is one thing but nose is another thing. Besides this, at death body becomes separated from me and in the state of liberation mind gets destroyed and thereby it becomes separated from me. But the problem is yet to be resolved. One may argue that the fact that we are affected by the problems of our body and mind substantiates the fact that we are not different from our body and mind. If A is really different from B then A cannot be affected by the problems of B. Ram is not affected by the problems of Shyam simply because Ram is different from Shyam. Likewise had we been different from our body and mind then we would not have been affected by the problems of them. But a little reflection shows that this objection is not as sound as it appears to be.

We all know that a mother is different from her child but in spite of this she is affected by the problems of her child. The hunger of a child turns to be the hunger of a mother. The sufferings and the pleasures of a child become the sufferings and pleasures of a mother. In fact a mother gets affected by the problems of her child because she identifies herself with her child. I think this view can be substantiated by another good example. A lover is affected by the problems of his beloved because he identifies with his beloved. But the same person was not affected by the problems of the same lady before their relation was made. The same is true in the case of our body and mind. In reality we are different from our body and mind but due to ignorance we identify ourselves with our body and mind and thereby the problems of our body and mind turn to be the problems of our own. So when we realize the truth taught by the *Gītā* that we are actually soul and therefore we are different from our body and mind then we will cease to be affected by the problems of them. It is something like the

same lover is not affected any more by the problems of the same beloved if their relationship is broken. The *Gītā* in fact breaks our relationship with our beloved called body and mind through proper counseling.

The view that we are different from our body and mind has been challenged by the materialists like the *Cārvākas*. I think a great number of scientists also agree with them. According to the *Cārvāka* School, perception is the only *pramāṇa*. The other *pramāṇas* like inference, testimony, etc. have been refuted by them. The *Cārvākas* argue that the existence of a thing can be admitted if it is perceived, but soul cannot be perceived, therefore, it cannot be admitted. The proof for the existence of the soul is dependent on inference and testimony. But the validity of inference and testimony both has been denied by them. But I think this view of *Cārvāka* School can strongly be countered. If they deny what is not perceived then they cannot admit even what is perceived. If one cannot admit the existence of his father of his father of his father simply because he could not see him, then he cannot establish the existence of his own which is very much the object of our perception. The refutation of the existence of the father of the father of his own hither leads to the refutation of the father of his own father, again the refutation of the father of his own father, in turn, implies the refutation of his own father and the negation of his own father ultimately leads to the refutation of his own existence though his own existence can be perceived. In fact the denial of our past leads to the denial of our present, since our present takes its birth in the womb of the past. To deny the past amounts to deny the cause; and to deny the cause is to deny the effect.

Thus the position of the *Cārvāka* School is proved to be self- suicidal. If the *Cārvākas* are asked why they do not recognize the validity of inference? In reply they say that because sometimes inference gives us wrong knowledge. If so then on the same ground the validity of perception can also be refuted, since perception like inference also sometimes gives us erroneous cognition. It is our common experience that sometimes we perceive snake in the place of rope, we see Ram as Shyam and so on. I think the objection that can be raised against the validity of perception, in this regard, is stronger. The erroneous cognition rendered by inference is not universal and permanent. The inference of one on a thing may be wrong but the inference of another on one and the same thing may be right. Today the inference of one thing

may give us wrong knowledge but tomorrow the inference of the same thing may give us right knowledge. But sometimes the perceptual erroneous cognition becomes universal and permanent. For example, we know that the sun is thirteen million times bigger than the earth. But our perceptual cognition without exception shows just opposite to it. Again we know that the earth is moving, but our perceptual cognition of all of us always says that the earth is static. It is worthy to note that these erroneous perceptual cognitions are rectified by our reason or otherwise called inference or argument. In the same way the validity of testimony also can be established. If the authority of testimony is denied then our practical life will be at stake. Our life runs smoothly on the basis of our testimonial knower. The existence of soul is established by inference and testimony so it cannot be denied.

Here again one may ask that if one realizes that he is different from his body and mind then will he cease to take food and water in order to preserve his body? The answer is that he must continue to take food and water till his death. But his outlook will be completely different. Vivekananda, Ramkriṣṇa, Aurobinda and Buddha, all of them used to take food and water till their ultimate departure from this world. The outlook of them towards their body and mind and the outlook of us towards our body and mind are completely different. We think that we are for our body and mind, our body and mind are not for us. But the seers of the truth think that they are not for their body and mind, but their body and mind are for them. More clearly to say the body and mind is the end for us and we are nothing but the means to them. But the seers, on the other hand, consider their body and mind to be the means for them, the souls. I think this view has been expressed very beautifully in the 13th chapter of the *Gītā*. In this chapter our body and mind have been described as *kṣetra* and our soul has been described as *kṣetrajña*. *Idang sarirang kounteya kṣretramityabhidhīyate/ etad yo betti taṁ prahū kṣetrajña iti tadbidda*³. This outlook has a great implication. We know that our ethical ideology is determined by our metaphysical concept. For example, the ethical or moral theory of hedonism of *Cārvāka* School necessarily comes from its metaphysical theory of materialism. And the moral theory or ideology plays a vital

³*Idang sarirang kounteya kṣretramityabhidhīyate/ etad yo betti taṁ prahū kṣetrajña iti tadbidda//, 13/1, Śrīmadbhagabatgīta*

role in restoring discipline and peace in our society. If people living in a society believe that they are identical with their body and mind then it is quite natural that they will give prime importance on satisfaction of their physical as well as mental needs. Such people also will hold that there cannot be any soul other than their body and mind, there cannot be any God, heaven or hell, merit and demerit. In this circumstance people will be greedy, selfish and after all immoral. They will be inclined to satisfy their personal interest at any cost. In this society there will be no room for sacrifice and helping tendency. From this we can easily conclude that this type of society can never be peaceful and healthy. But if people of one society believe in just the opposite metaphysical theory that they are souls and therefore different from their body and mind then positively their moral ideology will be completely of a different type which leads to establish a society full of happiness and peace. We, the ordinary people, are controlled and guided by our body and mind. But the truth-seers, on the other hand, are not controlled by their body and mind, rather their body and mind themselves are controlled and guided by them. The body and mind of them turn to be instrumental for ensuring the wellbeing of our society.

The above view can be substantiated following the Sāṃkhya philosophy. The *Gītā* also takes the help of the Sāṃkhya metaphysics particularly in the 13th and the 14th chapter. The Sāṃkhya system admits two ultimate realities, *pūrūṣa* and *prakṛti*. According to this school *pūrūṣa* is conscious but inactive, *Prakṛti*, on the other hand, is active but unconscious. For purposeful creation both action and consciousness are required. Therefore the Sāṃkhya School holds that both the *pūrūṣa* and *prakṛti* taken together give birth to the world. *Prakṛti* is the material and *pūrūṣa* is the efficient cause of this world. The process through which the world is created is called evolution. *Prakṛti* consists of three *guṇas*, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tāmas*. *Prakṛti* is ever changing. This change is of two types- homogenous (*sajātiya*) and heterogenous (*vijātiya*). Evolution is taken place due to the heterogenous change. This heterogenous change is taken place when *pūrūṣa* comes in contact with *Prakṛti*. Through evolution the world is produced in the following sequence: *mahat*, *ahaṅkāra* or ego, five organs of sensation, five organs of action, mind, five subtle elements (*tanamātras*) and five gross elements (*mahābhutas*). It is worthy to note that here *pūrūṣa* stands for soul. So as far as the theory of creation propounded by Sāṃkhya

philosophy is concerned the whole world is created out of *Prakṛiti*. This clearly implies that our body and mind are also created from *Prakṛiti* and as they are created they are also destroyed. But we are *pūrūṣa* or soul which is eternal. This soul is neither created nor destroyed. In our discussion mentioned above it is already stated that according to the *Gītā* soul is eternal which can neither be slain nor be burnt and so on. Thus it is seen that we are different from our body and mind. Sāṃkhya philosophy holds that as body and mind are produced out of *Prakṛiti* they assume all their properties from *Prakṛiti*, more specifically to say from the *guṇas* called *sattva*, *rajas* and *tāmas* of *Prakṛiti*. The Sāṃkhya philosophy observes that the three *guṇas* of *Prakṛiti* give birth to properties like avarice, dissatisfaction, desire, selfishness, ignorance and so on.

So far as our discussion goes, it is seen once again that all the properties like, greed, selfishness, fear, attachment etc. are the properties of body and mind and we have already seen that we are neither body nor mind. This implies that these properties are nothing but the accidental properties of us by which our real properties are covered as the real property of the sun i.e. the self-illuminating nature is covered by the deep cloud. If the sun is to regain its real nature then the accidental property, i.e., the cloud must be kept aside. Similarly due to the imposition of the accidental properties our real nature is covered. If we are to regain our real nature then our accidental properties must be removed. Exactly this is what is taught by the *Gītā*.

The fact that we are different from our body and mind can also be established by one of the important texts of the Vedānta philosophy called *Drik Drisya Viveka*. It is important to note that there is a controversy among the scholars regarding the author of this book. Some think that the author of this book is Sankarāchārya. Some, on the other hand, hold that the author of this book is Vidyaranya Swami, the author of another important text of Vedānta school, namely, *Pancadāsi*. However, there is no doubt about the profoundness of this book. This book attempts to prove through various arguments that we are different from our body and mind. But here we do not have the scope to deal with all the arguments. We shall here deal with only the first argument embodied in the first aphorism. This first argument states that the seer and the seen must be different. Suppose I see the sun, it implies that the sun is different from me. I see you it shows that you are different from me. From this we can surely

conclude that there must be a difference between the seer and the seen. Now let us go to our body and mind. No one can deny the fact that as I see the pen so I see my body. So here my body is seen and I am the seer or witness. As the seer and the seen must be different so I must be different from my body. The same is equally true in the case of my mind. Like body my mind also can be known. Question is how can my mind be known? In response to this it is said that our mind can be known not in the same way in which our body and the pen are known. Both the pen and my body are external things, more clearly to say they are in the external world. But my mind is not external at all; it is in my internal world. The process through which the mind is known is called introspection. It is worthy to note that to know mind amounts to know the different mental states like pleasure, pain, desire, anger, greed and so on. No one can deny the fact that we can know all our mental states. Thus it is seen that our mind can also be known. Following the same logic it can be concluded that our mind is also different from us.

The *Naiyāyikas* offer one strong argument to substantiate the view that we are different from our body and mind. Suppose a striking event was taken place in my life twenty years back and I remember the same even today. Now, this phenomenon of memory cannot be accounted for if we think that we are nothing other than our body and mind. We all know that our mind is always in flux. Almost in every moment one thinking is replaced by another, one desire replaces another, experience of enjoyment turns into the experience of bitterness. But we think that our body is permanent. Our close observation shows that this is not true. Like mind, our body is also ever changing. Our body is composed of cells and neurons. But all most in every moment some old cells are replaced by some new. In this circumstance, our memory cannot logically be accounted for if we agree with the view that we are nothing but our body and mind. The possibility of my memory in question presupposes that there must be an unchanging permanent agent in me. The agent who witnessed the event twenty years back and the agent who remembers the same today must be one and the same. But neither our mind nor our body can stand for this agent. My body and the mind of twenty years back and my body and mind of today are completely different. During the long period of twenty years mental states have been replaced by new mental states. Likewise all the cells of my body of twenty years back have been

replaced by new ones. In this circumstance, neither my present body nor my present mind is in a position to remember the event occurred twenty years back. My body and mind of twenty years back are no more remembered today as same. Thus it can easily be concluded that if we agree with the view that we are nothing other than our body and mind then the phenomenon of memory and recollection cannot be accounted for. In this situation the only remaining option is to accept the view that I am soul which is beyond cage, birth and death. It is purely unchanging and eternal as it is stated by the *Gītā*. So my memory is taken place due to my soul. Being unchanging and eternal my soul of twenty years back who witnessed the event and my soul of today who remembers the same is absolutely one and the same.

The knowledge called *pratyābhijñā* (recognition) also cannot be accounted for if we do not agree with the view of the *Gītā* that we are soul. Suppose I see Devadutta today in a marriage-party and say that this is that Devadutta whom I saw in Baranasi ten years back. This knowledge consists of two pieces of knowledge one is perceptual and the other is memory. So far as the memory part is concerned we must depend upon the permanent and unchanging soul recognized by the *Gītā*. I think if we do not agree with the view of the *Gītā* then the possibility of our fundamental kinds of knowledge like perceptual knowledge, inferential knowledge and so on cannot properly be accounted for. Each and every kind of determinate cognition necessarily includes some elements of memory. At first let us deal with the case of perception. Suppose we perceive a table. At the initial stage we know the table simply as something without its name, genus etc. This cognition is described as indeterminate. But in the immediate next stage we identify the object seen as a table and thereby the cognition which was indeterminate in the earlier stage turns as determinate one. Here comes the question of the necessity of a permanent soul. It is already stated that no memory is possible without permanent and unchanging soul. More or less the same is true in the case of inference. We all know that the inferential knowledge necessarily presupposes the knowledge of the probans (*linga*) and the knowledge of invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*). The former one is derived through perception but the latter one is remembered. In the case of inferential cognition of fire in the hill, for example, one first sees smoke coming from the hill and subsequently remembers the invariable concomitance between smoke and fire. Thus it is seen that inferential cognition like

the perceptual one also depends upon memory. The knowledge called *upamiti* is also depended upon memory. In the case of this cognition the two different knowledge, the knowledge of similarity and the knowledge of *atidesvākya* (as the cow so the *gavaya*) are presupposed. The first one is derived through perception and the second one is remembered. Thus we see that all sorts of cognition necessarily depend upon memory, and memory, in turn, necessarily depends upon the unchanging and permanent soul. This clearly implies that unless and until the view of the *Gītā* that we are not impermanent body and mind, rather we are permanent and eternal soul, is accepted, the possibility of no cognition can be accounted for.

I think this above view of the *Gītā* that we are soul, not body and mind, has to be accepted due to another reason. If we disagree with the view of the *Gītā* and hold that we are only body and mind then the concept of moral as well as legal responsibility and punishment cannot be accounted for. In our day to day experience we see that one commits a crime of raping and murdering today but the court-verdict of his punishment of death sentence comes fifteen years later. If we hold that we are body and mind then following the same logic stated above it can be said that the person who commits the crime today and the person who will be punished fifteen years latter are completely two different persons. It implies that one person commits crime and another person is punished. It is like something that Ram commits crime and for that Shyam is punished which is completely ridiculous, illogical and unjustified. All these things can be logically and properly accounted for if we accept the view proposed by the *Gītā* that we are soul.

Let us discuss the second promise made by the *Gītā* mentioned above. In the second promise *Gītā* says that if we make Kriṣṇa the driver of our life as it was done by Arjuna then He will transform us as *sūra*, *rishi*, *muni*, a true *yogi* from *asūra*, beast and sinner. Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore also say the same. Swamiji says religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man. Tagore says that religion transforms us into an infinite I (*bado āmi*) which is variously called by Tagore as a universal I, a *jivan-devata*, *moner-manus* and so on from a finite I (*chhoto āmi*) which is self- oriented. Swamiji believes that man by the nature is divine. *But* our divine nature remains hidden due to our ignorance. True religion leads to manifest our hidden divine nature by the way of removing our ignorance.

According to all the *sāstras*, in essence man is divine. *Upanishad* describes man as *Amṛitasya putra*. Advaita Vedanta says “*Jivo Brahmaiva Nā Aparah*”. Caitanya Caritāmṛita says the same in different places in different ways. It says “*Iswar Swarup Bhakta Tār Adhithān / Bhakter Hridaye Kriṣṇer Satata Bistrām*”⁴. Caritamṛita further says “*Brahma Ātma Bhagabān kriṣṇer Bihār/ A Artha Nā Jāni Murkha Artha Kore Ār*”⁵. It again says “*Advay Jñan Tattvabastu kriṣṇer swarūp/Bramha Ātmā Bhagaban-Tin Tār Rūp*”⁶. The Bible says “The Kingdom of God Is Within You”. The Sufi Islam says “*Anal Haq*”. Tagore says “*Āmar Hiyar Mājhe Lukiye Chhile Dekhte Āmi Pāini Tomāy Dekhte Āmi Pāini*”. He further says “*Simār Mājhe Asim Tumi Bājāo Āpan Sur/ Āmār Madhye Tomār Prokāsh Tāi Ato Madhur*”. Swamiji clearly says “*Yatra Jiva Tatra Shiva*”, “*Nara Rūpe Nārāyana*”.

Apparently this view cannot be accepted. In our day to day life we come across so many heinous activities done by man. If man is taken as God then these activities cannot properly be accounted for. In response to this objection it is said that it is also equally true that we come across so many godly activities in our society performed by man. The living example of this type of activities is the activities of Vivekananda, Buddha, Mother Teresa and many others. In fact man possesses two types of properties. One divine and another is devil. The *Gītā* says the same particularly in the sixteenth chapter entitled ‘*Daivasur Sampad Yoga*’. The *Gītā* says that man possess altogether twenty six godly properties. “*Abhayam sattvasamśuddirjñāna yogavyavasthitih / Dānam damaśca yajñāśca svādhyāstapa ārjavam* //”⁷. “*Tejah kṣamā dhṛtiḥ sancamadroḥ nātimānitā / Bhavanti sampadam daivimabhijātāsya bhārata* //”⁸. *Gītā* also says of some devilish properties. “*Dambho darpo’bhimānaśca krodhaḥ pārūṣyameva ca/Ajñānam cābhijātāsya pārtha sampadamāsurīm*”⁹. Here one may argue that if we possess devilish and Godly

⁴ *Ādililā, Prathama parichheda*

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ *Ibid*

⁷ “*Abhayam sattvasamśuddirjñāna yogavyavasthitih / Dānam damaśca yajñāśca svādhyāstapa ārjavam* //, *Śrimadbhagabatgīta*

⁸ “*Tejah kṣamā dhṛtiḥ sancamadroḥ nātimānitā / Bhavanti sampadam daivimabhijātāsya bhārata* //, *Ibid*

⁹ “*Dambho darpo’bhimānaśca krodhaḥ pārūṣyameva ca/Ajñānam cābhijātāsya pārtha sampadamāsurīm* //, *Ibid*

properties both then it is logical to say that we are partially devil (*asūra*) and partially divine (*sūra*). Then the above views mentioned that we are divine or god cannot be accepted. In order to counter this argument it is said that though we possess both the devilish and godly properties yet both of them are not our own properties. Only the latter one is our own property (*svabhāva*). But the former one is our accidental or imposed property which is otherwise called borrowed property. But whatever is borrowed cannot be our own. So it is clear then that our devilish property being borrowed cannot be our own property. And we cannot be known by any property which is not our own. Only the divine property is our own since it is not borrowed. This is the reason why we are called divine.

I think the fact that we are divine can be proved from our day to day experience. What does it actually mean when we say that we are god? It means that we possess godly properties. John Hick in *The Philosophy of Religion* says of some property of God. He says that God is Omnipotent, Omniscient, Infinite and Loving. If these properties are seen to be possessed by man then we should agree with the above view that man is divine or god. But if it is otherwise then the above view cannot be accepted. The first three properties, I think are closely inter-connected. So let us examine these three properties taking together. Apparently we may think that man is completely devoid of these properties. But our close observation shows that man does possess these properties to a great extent. Man has discovered and invented so many unbelievable things. Computer, television, mobile, airplane, all these are the epoch making inventions. If we go to the medical science then we can see that at least some of the inventions are as good as that of God. The creation of body and organs is the activity of God. But today different fundamental organs are seen to be produced and replaced in human body by men themselves. The robotic man performs so many important activities more efficiently than man himself. The most striking invention by man in this regard is the invention of cloning. Today medical science is in a position to give birth to thousands of Sachin Tendulkar out of his cells. This invention shows that the capacity of man is not less than that of God. Now let us go to the fourth property mentioned above. So far as the fourth property is concerned God is described as Kind and Loving. In Hinduism also God is called *Dinabandhu*, *Karunasindhu*, *Patitapaban* and so on. It is worthy to note that the love of God is

described as unconditional. To designate the unconditional love of God a special term 'agape' has been used. Here one may argue that the love of God cannot be unconditional since He does not show His kindness to any person. He shows His kindness and love only to His true *bhaktas*. This implies that He wants *bhakti* in return for whatever He does for his *bhaktas*. In response to this we can say that God does a lot for all of us. He gives, for example, food, water, fire, air and so on to all persons without judging whether he is a sinner or virtuous. But it is also true that some special kindness is reserved only for His special *bhaktas*. We have to keep in our mind that this is done by God not because He wants something from us in return but He does so for our own upliftment and perfection. When a teacher evaluates the answer scripts of the students then he may give same marks to all students if he likes. But he does not do so because he knows that if he does so then it will be injustice to the students who are more laborious and meritorious. When a student comes to know that marks will be rendered on the basis of performance then automatically he will be more careful of his study which leads him to be enriched and perfect. Due to the same reason God does not show undue kindness to all of us. One may say, whether man possess this property of loving.

Apparently one may think that this property of unconditional love cannot be possessed by man because man by the very nature is selfish. Whatever he does for others he necessarily wants something in return. He does not go forward even a single step without thinking of his own profit. I think this view again cannot be accepted. We come across so many people in our society who had been engaged in selfless social work throughout his life. Swami Vivekananda, Gautama Buddha, Mother Teresa and many others are the living example of the same. All of them had served the society throughout their life hoping nothing in return. Thus it is seen that man possesses all most all the godly properties. So it is not unreasonable to say that man is god or divine. Here one may say that with it the matter is not disposed of. He may continue to argue that what is said above is true only for a few persons. It is not true for most of the persons. Only a few persons are great scientists who have discovered or invented the unbelievable inventions mentioned above. But a great number of people are either most ordinary in their intellect or idiot. Likewise, most of the people we come across in our society are highly self oriented and selfish. So majority of the

people do not possess any godly properties. It implies that only a few persons are god but the rest ones are not god. But the above views claim that all men are god. How can these views be accepted? This objection appears really to be very sound. But I think this objection can also be countered like the earlier ones. This problem will be easily solved if we try to understand the very sense in which we are said to be god by the different religious texts and the truth-seers. *Svetasvatara Upanishad* says “*Sarbavyapinam atmanam khire sarpiribarpitam. Atmavidya tapamulam tad Brahmapanisodparam, tadbrahmapasisod iti*”¹⁰. The same Upanisad further says “*Anaraniyān mahata mahiyān ātma guhayam nihitasya jantah*”¹¹.

Swamiji in his *Complete Works* says that religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man. The careful analysis of the above concept implies that we are potentially divine. This means that we are divine in un-manifested form. More clearly to say the divinity is there within us in the hidden form. I think some examples will help us to make this idea clear. We know that the fire is there in the matches-stick in the hidden form. The potentiality of fire is there in the matches-stick. No one can deny this fact. But if one says that there is no fire in the matches-stick since it does not burn then it seems ridiculous. Obviously it will burn when it gets collided with matches’ box and its potentiality will turn into actuality. The same is true in the case of man. Divinity is already there in all of us in the potential form. But unless and until that potential divinity turns into actuality it cannot serve the function of god. The potential divinity underlying Buddha and Vivekananda were turned into actuality, and this is the reason why they could serve the society selflessly as good as God. Like God they loved the whole world unconditionally. This is why Vivekananda could say from the very core of his heart “*The whole world is my family*” and “*My sisters and brothers of America.*” But we are yet to be turned into god, more clearly to say the potential divinity within us is yet to be turned into actuality. This is the reason why like Vivekananda and Buddha we do not serve our society without thinking of our self interest. The moment our potential divinity will turn into actuality each one of us

¹⁰*Sarbavyapinam atmanam khire sarpiribarpitam. Atmavidya tapamulam tad Brahmapanisodparam, tadbrahmapasisod iti*, 1/16 *Svetasvatara Upanishod*.

¹¹*Anaraniyān mahata mahiyān ātma guhayam nihitasya jantah*” 3/20, Ibid

will become a Vivekananda or a Buddha and we also can love and serve the society without thinking of the interest of our own.

One may say that how can our potential divinities are turned into actuality? The answer is very clear. For this we have to be collided with the matches' box called Kriṣṇa. In fact God is a touch-stone. Whatever comes in contact with a touch-stone it turns into gold? Likewise whoever comes into the contact of God he will turn into God himself. Keeping this in view Swamiji beautifully says that religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man. *Gīta* says “*Abhyasena tu Kounteya vairagyena ca griyate*”. *Gītā* actually attempts to convert us from *asura* to *sura* following the path of *yoga*. The *yoga* that is generally believed to be prescribed by the *Gītā* is called *Karma yoga* or more accurately *niskāma karma yoga*. But this is not the whole truth. The *Gītā*, in fact, prescribes for the integral *yoga*. By ‘integral *yoga*’ I mean the combined whole of all *yogas*. *Gītā* believes that *yoga* is complementary to the other *yogas*. No *yoga* is possible in isolation from all other *yogas*. There is a controversy among the scholars regarding which *yoga* has principally been prescribed by the *Gītā*. But the popular notion is that *Gītā* actually recommends for the *karma yoga*, since it starts and ends with the same advice to Arjuna, i.e. the advice to face the war in disinterested manner. However this fact cannot be denied that *Gītā* has rendered stress upon the assimilation of all *yogas*. The *Gītā* primarily teaches Arjuna to follow *niskāma karma* (disinterested action) particularly in the 2nd and the 3rd chapter. But in the immediate subsequent 4th chapter Kriṣṇa advises Arjuna to resort to the path of *jñāna*. Again in the 12th chapter Arjuna has been advised to be a true *bhakta* (devotee). Besides this the same advice of following all *yogas* simultaneously has been reflected in almost in all chapters of the *Gītā*.

In the 47th aphorism of the 2nd chapter Kriṣṇa says, “*Karmaṇaiva hi samsiddhimasthitā janakādayaḥ / lokasaṁgrahamevāpi saṁpaśyan kartumarhasi* //¹². It further says, “*Duḥkheṣvanud vijñamanāḥ sukheṣu vigatasprahaḥ / Vītarāgbhayakrodhaḥ stithadhīrmunirueyate* //¹³. Here it is said that a *karma yogi*

¹²“*Karmaṇaiva hi samsiddhimasthitā janakādayaḥ/lokasaṁgrahamevāpi saṁpaśyan kartumarhasi* // 2/47, *Śrīmadbhagabatgīta*

¹³“*Duḥkheṣvanud vijñamanāḥ sukheṣu vigatasprahaḥ/Vītarāgbhayakrodhaḥ stithadhīrmunirueyate* // 2/56, *Ibid*

necessarily will be a *sthitaprajna*, a *muni*. *Gītā* again says, “*Anāśritaḥ karmaphalaṃ kāryaṃ karma karoti yaḥ / Sa sannyāsī ca yogī ca na niragnirna cākriyaḥ //*”¹⁴. This aphorism also clearly endorses that a follower of a *niskāma karma* is a true *sanyāsī*. A true *muni* or *sanyāsī* is nothing but a real *sura*. Thus *Gītā* proposes to make us *sura* if we properly follow *niskāma karma*. But in this process obviously we are in the need of the *path* of *jñāna* and the *path* of *bhakti*. Proper performance of *niskāma karma* necessarily presupposes the fulfillment of some conditions. A true *niskāma karmi*, first of all, must give up his sense of ego, the sense of his agent ship. Secondly he must offer the fruit of his action to God. As far as the first condition is concerned he has to be a real *jñāni*. He must know that he is not a true agent. No action can be done by him. All actions those are thought to be done by him are actually not done by him, they are done by his body, senses and mind, in a word by *prakriti*. *Gītā* in this context says, “*Prakrteḥ kriyamānāni guṇaiḥ karmaṇi sarvaśaḥ / Ahaṃkāravimūḍhātmā kartāhamiti manyate//*”¹⁵.

So only a real *jnani* knows the truth and thereby surrenders the sense of ego or agent ship. In this context *Gītā* says, “*Tattvavittu mahāvāho guṇakarmā vibhāgayoḥ / Guṇa guṇeṣu vartantā iti matvā na pajjate //*”¹⁶. True knowledge, I think, gives birth to two children at the same time- one is *niskāmakarma* and another is *bhakti*. The knowledge about the fact that the ultimate real agent is God and we are nothing but the instruments at the hands of Him leads to the destruction of our ego and thereby makes us a real *karmayogi* or *niskāma akarmi*. If we come to know that we are not real doer then how can we expect the fruit of our action? And if we do our actions barring the hope of fruit then our actions will turn into *niskāma* and thereby we become a real *karmayogi*. Again we also come to know that the real doer is God Himself and this knowledge leads to the surrendering of the fruits of our action to the feet of God. This is why Kṛiṣṇa advises us to surrender all things to Him. He says, “*Yat karosi yadaśnāpi yajjuhosi dadāsi yat/Yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣva*

¹⁴ “*Anāśritaḥ karmaphalaṃ kāryaṃ karma karoti yaḥ / Sa sannyāsī ca yogī ca na niragnirna cākriyaḥ //* 6/1, Ibid

¹⁵ “*Prakrteḥ kriyamānāni guṇaiḥ karmaṇi sarvaśaḥ / Ahaṃkāravimūḍhātmā kartāhamiti manyate //* 3/27, Ibid

¹⁶ “*Tattvavittu mahāvāho guṇakarmā vibhāgayoḥ / Guṇa guṇeṣu vartantā iti matvā na pajjate //* 3/28, Ibid

madarpanam //¹⁷. This whole thing makes us a true *bhakta*. So the project of the *Gītā* is to make us a true *karma yogi*, a real *jnāni* and an ideal *bhakta*. This type of person is a perfect *sura*.

Now let us deal with the 3rd promise made by the *Gītā*. In this promise *Gītā* says that if we make Him the driver of the chariot of our life then He will turn our whole society into heaven from hell. Society is nothing but a group of people living together in a particular state or country. Whether a society will be a hell or a heaven it purely depends upon the activity of the individuals living in that society. If the individuals are good then it is quite natural that the society also will be good but if they are otherwise then it is also true that the society will be a bad one. At present our society turns into a hell because most of the people living in our society are of devilish nature. What are the devilish properties and what are the divine properties have already been mentioned following *Gītā*. In fact a sharp gap is made by us between our religious life and secular life. This sense of gap creates all the problems. We make a distinction between a *sanyāsin* and a *grihi*, a householder. We hold that all the activities of a *sanyāsin* should be religious. But this is not true in the case of us. We think that as long as we are in a temple we should be religious; all actions performed in a temple should be religious actions.

The moment we come out of temple we become secular persons and all our activities also become secular. So long as we remain in a temple we do nothing wrong, we do not have any ill thinking, we do not lie, do not cheat others, we only think of God, we pray to Him. But when we, the same persons, come outside of the temple or mosque we become ill persons having all sorts of ill thinking and ill feeling. Herein lies the problem. The *Gītā* removes this gap by transforming all persons into *sanyāsin*, by making the whole world a temple and transforming all actions of all persons into worship. We see that *Gītā* is taught to Arjuna the representative of all of us, neither in a jungle nor even in a temple, rather it is taught in the battlefield. From this anyone can easily conclude that the teaching of the *Gītā* is not meant for a *sanyāsin* living in a jungle or a worshiper staying in the temple or

¹⁷ “*Yat karosi yadaśnāpi yajjuhosi dadāsi yat/Yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣva madarpanam* //9/27, Ibid

mosque or church, but it is meant for a householder. It is worthy to note that *Gītā* does not suggest for *karmasanyāsa* (sacrifices of *karma*) as it is generally advised by *Advaita Vedānta*, it suggests for *phalasangyāsi* (sacrifices of fruit). *Gītā* states that sacrifices of *karma* is impossible. We cannot remain without work even for a single moment. We cannot live without respiration; we are ever engaged in the process of the same till our death. Our heart-beat and our blood circulation are going on without any break. Even our effort for not doing any action is also one type of action. So in no way *karmasanyāsa*, i.e. the sacrifice of action is possible. Kant says “ought to imply can.” Since *karmasanyāsa* is impossible it cannot be moral. And as it is not moral it is meaningless to say ‘you should follow the path of *karmasanyāsa*’. *Gītā* says, “*Na hi kaścit kṣaṇamāpi jātu tiṣṭhyakarmakṛt /Kāryate hyavaśaḥ karma sarvaḥ prakṛtijaguṇaiḥ //*¹⁸. *Gītā* categorically says that our action is not the cause of our bondage, the cause of our bondage is the fruit of our action. So we should not sacrifice our action, we should sacrifice only the fruit of our action. If any action is done without the desire of fruit then that action turns into a *yoga* which leads to the attainment of *Moksa*. *Gītā* says, “*Karmaṇaiva hi saṃsiddhimāsthītā janakāyaḥ / lokasaṅgrahamevāpi saṃpāśyan kartumarhasi //*¹⁹”.

And the persons who are interested in sacrificing the action are not true *yogi* according to the *Gītā*. A true *yogi* according to it is one who sacrifices only the fruit of his action. In this context *Gītā* says, “*Anāśritaḥ karmaphalam kāryam karma karoti yaḥ /Sa sannyāsi ca yogī ca na niragnirna cākriyaḥ //*²⁰. The *Gītā* teaches that the whole world is a temple. The place where God lives is called temple. But in fact God lives in the whole world, so it implies that the whole world is a temple. Isonisod says, “*Isabasyam...*”) *Vedānta* says “*Sarbhām khal...*” *Caitanyachiritmṛita* says

¹⁸“*Na hi kaścit kṣaṇamāpi jātu tiṣṭhyakarmakṛt /Kāryate hyavaśaḥ karma sarvaḥ prakṛtijaguṇaiḥ // 3/5, Śrīmadbhagabatgīta*

¹⁹ “*Karmaṇaiva hi saṃsiddhimāsthītā janakāyaḥ / lokasaṅgrahamevāpi saṃpāśyan kartumarhasi // 3/20, Ibid*

²⁰ “*Anāśritaḥ karmaphalam kāryam karma karoti yaḥ /Sa sannyāsi ca yogī ca na niragnirna cākriyaḥ // 6/1, Ibid*

“*Kriṣṇa ak sarvāsrāy Kriṣṇa sarvabham/ Kriṣṇer śarīre sarvva biswer bisrām/*”²¹. It further says “*Kriṣṇamayī Kriṣṇa yar*”²².

The implication of this is far-reaching. It has been already mentioned that the temple is considered by us a holy place since God lives here. Keeping this in mind we turn to be a good man as long as we stay there in a temple. Here we do nothing wrong, we say nothing wrong, even we think nothing wrong. Now if the whole world is a temple then it implies that we are always in a temple. Since we are always in a temple, we have no scope even for a single moment to do anything ill, to say anything foul, and to think anything evil. All this necessarily leads us to be a good person. We cannot but be a good person. *Gītā* also teaches us to consider all persons as gods. We ill behave with others because we see them as means. Again we do so because we undermined them. But if we know the truth that all men are god then we cannot ill behave with them. On the contrary we shall respect them; we shall love them as we do with God Himself. Now if we ponder over the whole thing then it can be understood that in such situation our society cannot but be a heaven. In this society the whole world stands for temple, all people are turned into *sura*, all of them are considered as god; one loves and shows respect towards others, no one can even think of committing any crime. This type of society, no doubt, is as good as heaven.

Another important issue to note in this regard is that the most fundamental difference underlying between the two kinds of man- *sura* and *asura* is the difference of unselfishness and selfishness. The latter is highly selfish. He has no room for others. He knows none other than himself. He can do anything for the satisfaction of his own personal interest. He does not hesitate to fulfill his own interest sometimes even at the cost of death of others. He can hardly be distinguished from the ferocious beasts. The heinous activities have done by the men of this nature make our society a hell. But the man of *sura* nature, on the other, is purely unselfish. He has room for the whole world other than himself. He knows no interest for himself. He is concerned with the interest only for others. His only aim is to do the work for the wellbeing of

²¹“*Kriṣṇa ak sarvasray Kriṣṇa sarvabham/ Kriṣṇer śarīre sarvva biswer bisrām/*, Caitanyachiritmrita, *Adi Lila*. 1st parichhed

²² “*Kriṣṇamayī Kriṣṇa yar...*” Ibid, p, 53

the whole society (*vahuyāna hitāya vahuyana sukhāya*). We know that a mother becomes happy through scarifies for her children. The pleasure and happiness of the children, in fact, become the pleasure and happiness of mother. The sufferings and pains of the children turn to be the sufferings and pains of the mother herself.

Likewise, the man of *sura* nature enjoys through scarifies for others. He does not, in reality, have any pleasure or suffering of his own. The pleasure and suffering of others become the pleasure and suffering of himself. Keeping this in view the *Ishopanishad* beautifully says, “*Tena tyaktena bhunjitha*”. Someone says that the exact difference between the man of *asura* and *sura* nature is that when the former closes his eyes he sees only the sufferings and pains in his mind and when he opens his eyes he only wants and wants from the world, but when the latter closes his eyes he sees only full of pleasure within and when he opens his eyes he thinks what can he give to the world. Thus it is seen that how and why the activity of the man of *sura* nature makes our world a heaven. Thinking of the importance of the work of social wellbeing the *Gītā* says, “*“Karmaṇaiva hi saṁsiddhimāsthītā janakāyaḥ / lokasaṁgrahamevāpi saṁpaśyan kartumarhasi//”*²³. If we hold the hand of God then *Gītā* promises to turn all our day to day activities into *pujā*.

So far as our discussion goes it is seen that the whole world is a temple since God lives in the whole world. Now in these circumstances all our activities quite naturally become worship or *pujā*. First go to the case of a woman. The very first activity that is done by a woman in the beginning of the day is the sweeping of the house. Now if she knows that the whole world is a temple then it necessarily implies that the house she sweeps is also a temple. In a broader sense, all activities meant for God are nothing but *pujā*. As this act of sweeping is meant for cleaning the temple of God it must be a *pujā*. The next activity of a woman is cooking. She cooks for her children, husband and for herself. It is also seen in our foregoing discussion that all men are god.

²³ “*Karmanāiva hi saṁsiddhimāsthītā janakāyaḥ / lokasaṁgrahamevāpi saṁpaśyan kartumarhasi //, 3/20, Śrīmadbhagabatgīta*

This shows that her children, her husband and even she herself are god and goddess. She can consider her children as Gopala, she can look upon her husband as Kriṣṇa, and she can think herself as Radha. If so then the cooking for themselves turn to be the cooking for God, and the cooking for God is nothing but *pujā*. In this way whatever she does she does for God. In the same way a teacher will think that he or she teaches Gopalas. A person working in an office will think that he or she serves the customers in the form of god. Thus all our activities become *pujā*. It is worthy to note that if any action becomes *pujā* then it must be perfect and also gets the touch of our love and affection. This type of action is otherwise called service or *sevā* which gives rise to peace in our society. Thus all Narens of the world transform into Vivekananda, all Siddharthas become Buddha and all Ratnakaras will ultimately convert into *Risi* Valmiki.

Now let us deal with the last promise of the *Gītā*. In the last promise *Gītā* says that if we catch the hands of God then He will render us *Moksa*, the ultimate *Pūrūṣārtha* of us. We know that we have four *Pūrūṣarths* in our life. These are *Dharma, Artha, Kama and Mokṣa*. *Moksa* is considered as the highest *Pūrūṣārtha*, the *sumum bonum* of human life. There is a controversy among the scholars regarding the exact nature of the state of *Moksa*. But all of them unanimously accept that *Moksa* is a state of permanent devoid of suffering. It implies the absence of the cycle of birth and death. At the state of *Moksa* we go back to our original state of immortality. By the very nature we are immortal since we are *Amritasya Putra* as it is stated by the *Upanishad*. Unlike Nyāya-Vaisesika School *Gītā* and Vedānta hold that *Moksa* is a state of permanent bliss. Brahman, as it is stated by Vedanta, is *Cit- Sat- Ananda*. We are either Brahman or the part and parcel of Brahman. So we are also *Sat- Cit- Ānanda*. This is the exact reason why we look for *ānanda*. Whatever we look for we look for *ānanda*. We cannot look for anything which does not give us *ānanda*. So *ānanda* is the ultimate goal of our life. But no worldly thing can provide us *ānanda* in the true sense of the term. Actually the world is full of suffering. Gautama Buddha rightly says *Sarvaṃ dukṣaṃ*.

Here one may does not agree with Buddha. He may say one enjoys a lot out of his drinking. Those who are fond of sweets get enormous pleasure when they eat sweets. So is the case of meat and so on. But if we ponder over the case then we can

understand that the observation of Buddha is perfectly right. The drinking necessarily damages our lung. The eating of sweet gives birth to the most dangerous disease called sugar which is otherwise called the mother of all other disease. Likewise eating of meat gives rise to the disease of heart. In this way all worldly things ultimately become the cause of our suffering. As long as we cling to the worldly things we continue to be affected by the pain and suffering. That is why the attachment (*triṣṇā*) towards the worldly things is considered to be cause of our pain and suffering. In fact there is no bliss in the world, world is the locus of suffering. So no wise person seeks for *ānanda* in the world. To look for *ānanda* in the world is as unwise as to look for coldness in the fire. If we are to get coldness then we have to go the proper locus of the same, i.e. ice or water. Similarly, if we are to avoid suffering and attain *ānanda* then we have to go to the abode of *ānanda* leaving the worldly things. And this permanent abode of *ānanda* is Brahman or God. This is why God is considered as the ultimate destination of us. Only God can provide us real *ānānanda*, i.e. *Mokṣa* removing all sufferings and pains. In this context *Gītā* says, “*Sarvadharmān parityajya mamekaṁ saranam brajā /Ahaṁ tvā sarvapāpēbhya mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ* //”²⁴.

***Gītā* as a Possible Solution to the Crisis:**

We are running through different types of crisis but among them the most acute and burning crisis today is the crisis of the pandemic called Covid-19. But I like to disguise the pandemic into two kinds-natural and social. Covid-19 belongs to the first category and almost each and every human being belongs to the second category. Here the question which immediately arises is why man is considered as a pandemic? I think man is considered as pandemic for the reasons that most of the properties belonging to covid-19 also belong to human being. If X, for example, is an animal having similarities with a cow then obviously X is said as a cow. Likewise human being has similarities with Covid-19. This is the reason why man is considered as a pandemic like Covid-19. The similarities found between Covid-19 and human being are the following :(1) The most striking feature of Covid-19 is that it kills numberless persons. Man is also seen to kill millions of people. It is a common phenomenon that

²⁴ *Śrīmadbhagabatgītā*, 18/66

one political group kills the man of another political group, one religious group very often is seen to kill the people of another religious group. Even one individual kills another individual. War is taken place due to man. Each and every war takes the lives of enumerable persons. The first and the Second World War are the living witness to it. I think man is some steps ahead than Covid-19 in this regard. Covid-19 kills only the human being but the war created by human being kills all beings. Covid-19 does not destroy any house or building but the war destroys all. The former does not increase the natural pollution rather it decreases the same. But the later increases the natural pollution to a great extend. (2)The second feature of Covid-19 is that it creates panic among human beings. This feature also belongs to human being. One man is panic to another man, one political group is panic to another political group, even very often one religious group becomes a panic to another political group. One country is a panic to another country. China, for example, is panic to India and India is panic to China. Pakistan is panic to India and the vice versa.

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**STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AND HUMAN PREDICAMENTS:
A BRIEF INTRODUCTION**
N. RAMTHING

The world is engulfed with violence and is in perpetual violence and threats of violence. Scholars and thinkers from different fields have spilled considerable ink over the topic of violence. We have seen violence of different types occurring in and around us. Violence exists and will be aspects of reality. However, when we use the term violence, we often narrow it down the term or rather merely associate it with physical violence or direct violence is not a comprehensive concept of what violence is all about because violence is more than just physical or direct. There are definitions given by different thinkers from different areas of expertise. Merriam Webster defines violence as the use of physical force so as to injure, abuse, damage, or destroy¹. According to the World Health Organization, violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation.²

The definitions as given, however, do not comprehensively address various dimensions of violence. Johan Galtung, a prominent founder of peace thinking has taken to a higher level of understanding violence by recognizing different faces of violence that can exist in many subtle and notoriously evil ways, such as cultural and structural violence. But before going into details it is worthwhile to discuss the meaning of violence. Johan Galtung defines violence as the avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs or, to put it in more general terms, the impairment of human life, which lowers the actual degree to which someone is able to meet their needs below that which would otherwise be possible. Violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations.³ Thus, violence is the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and

¹ "Violence", *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, Retrieved 2019-01-31.

² Krug et al., (2002) "World report on violence and health", Archived 2015-08-22, *World Health Organization*

³ Johan Galtung (1969) "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.6, No.3, pp.168

what is. It increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance.

In order to comprehend violence it is important to understand the opposite of it, that is, peace and what is peace all about. Peace is conceived as a situation where there is absence of violence. There are different conceptions of peace. Peace can be seen as a synonym for stability or equilibrium. It also refers to internal states of a human being, a person who is at peace with himself and peace as absence of organised collective violence between human groups; nations, classes, racial and ethnic groups and moreover, peace can be seen as a synonym for all other good things in the world community. In the 1964 founding edition of the *Journal of Peace Research*, Johan Galtung came up with two types of peace, namely, negative and positive peace. Negative peace is conceived as the absence of violence, absence of war and positive peace as the integration of human society. In relation to this Johan Galtung introduced typologies of violence, namely, direct, structural and cultural violence and made a clear distinction of the three. As for him, negative peace is the absence of organized direct violence whereas positive peace is the absence of structural and cultural violence and prevalence of justice, harmony and equality.

The question remains: what is direct or physical violence? It is an overt form of violence caused by an individual or group of people directly upon those with whom they are in conflict or at war. It is the used of physical force like torture, rape, killing etc. The 11/9/2001 US terrorists attack, the terrorists attack at the Taj Hotel, Mumbai on 26th of November 2008 are some of the obvious and vivid examples of direct violence. Johan Galtung states that direct violence though avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs or life makes it impossible or difficult for people to meet their needs or achieve their full potential. It is the presence of violence that hinders human relation in the world community. Violence pervasively penetrates and permeates every sphere of our human society.

Johan Galtung categorized violence into various dimensions such as physical and psychological violence, positive and negative violence, whether or not there is an object that is hurt, whether or not there is a subject (person) who acts, whether the violence intended or unintended and manifest or latent violence. Violence is

permeated in the social structures of society and works to exploit, marginalize, fragmentize, etc. the structurally oppressed. Violence can also be in the form of culture by which it means any aspect of a culture that can be used to legitimize violence in its direct or structural form. Symbolic violence built into a culture does not kill or maim like direct violence or the violence built into the structure. However, it is used to legitimize either or both.⁴ The massacre or holocaust about 6 million Jews by Hitler, Apartheid where the blacks are segregated and discriminated as inferior beings, are some of the examples of culture violence. According to Johan Galtung, cultural violence makes direct and structural violence look, even feel, right- or at least not wrong. He offers a useful scheme to help differentiate among the three terms in his analytic: Direct violence is an event; structural violence is a process with ups and downs; cultural violence is an invariant, a 'permanence'. Johan Galtung notes, though, that generally, a causal flow from cultural via structural to direct violence can be identified. The culture preaches, teaches, admonishes, and dulls us into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural, or into not seeing them (particularly not exploitation) at all. One way that cultural violence works, Galtung contends, is by making reality opaque, so that we do not see the violent act or fact, or at least not as violent. Obviously this is more easily done with some forms of violence than others.

Johan Galtung in his article "Violence, Peace and Peace Research" says the notion of violence as "when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations"⁵. Gilligan, in his book *Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic*, defines structural violence as "the increased rates of death and disability suffered by those who occupy the bottom rungs of society, as contrasted with the relatively lower death rates experienced by those who are above them". Gilligan describes "excess deaths" as "non-natural" and ascribes them to the stress, shame, discrimination, and denigration that results from lower status.⁶ For Johan Galtung, structural violence is a systematic ways in which

⁴ Johan Galtung (Aug. 1990) "Cultural Violence", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.27, No.3, p.291

⁵ Johan Galtung (1969) 'Violence, Peace, Peace Research', *Journal of Peace Research*, p. 168

⁶ James Gilligan (1996) *Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic* (second ed.). New York: First Vintage Books, ISBN 0-679-77912-4.

social structures harm or otherwise disadvantage a group of individuals or communities. It is subtle, often invisible and often has no one specific person who can be held responsible. Structural violence is injustice and exploitation built into a social system that generates wealth for the few and poverty for many, stunting everyone's ability to develop their full humanity. Daniel Christie, Michael Wessells say structural violence as ubiquitous and manifest in the enormous gap between people who have influence and material resources and those who are relatively powerless⁷. According to Kathleen Structural violence is differentiated from personal violence and refers to preventable harm or damage to persons where there is no actor committing the violence or where it is not practical to search for the actor(s); such violence emerges from the unequal distribution of power and resources or, in other words, is said to be built into the structure(s)⁸. Farmer defines structural violence as a way of describing social arrangements that put individuals and populations in harm's way...the arrangements are structural because they are embedded in the political and economic organization of our social world; they are violent because they cause injury to people...neither culture nor pure individual will is at fault: rather, historically given (and often economical driven) processes and forces to conspire to constrain individual agency⁹. Structural violence is visited upon all those whose social status denied them access to the fruits of scientific and social progress. Structural violence is a sinful social structure characterized by poverty. Wealth and power distribution is uneven and thus making huge distance between the have and have not. And in the situation like this the human predicament is getting bad to worse. According to his violence triangle, cultural and structural violence cause direct violence and direct violence re-enforces structural and cultural violence.

Now it is pertinent to ask the question as to how does structural violence lead to human predicament and how can the predicament be addressed. Structural violence is a violence which is invisible in most cases. It is rightly called indirect violence or

⁷ Daniel Christie, Michael Wessells (2008) in "Social Psychology of Violence" in *Encyclopaedia of Violence, Peace, & Conflict*

⁸ Kathleen M. Weigert (2008), "Structural Violence" in *Encyclopaedia of Violence, Peace, & Conflict*

⁹ Fernando De Maio,(2015) "Paul Farmer: Structural Violence and the Embodiment of Inequality", From the *Selected Works of Fernando De Maio*, DePaul University

sometimes institutionalized violence where the violence caused or meted out to persons are preventable even though there is no actor committing the violence or where it is not practical to search for the actors. And such violence could only emerge from the inequitable distribution of resources internally and globally and systematic oppression which is said to be built into the structures. The unequal distribution of power and resources inflicts much suffering on marginalized sectors and this leads to their predicaments. It is not an exaggeration to say that structural violence is ubiquitous and manifest in the enormous gap between people who have influence and material resources and those who are relatively powerless. While physical and structural violence against women, children, and minorities has existed for centuries and such is a global fact of everyday life. The pressing questions are can we stop violence and thus reduce human predicaments? How do we elevate the status of humans by combating both violence and predicaments? According to James Warnock, morality has a content is to help human predicament by expanding our sympathies, which has a tendency to get worse. The tendency to get worse is mainly because of the limitations of resources, such as intelligence, knowledge, rationality and sympathy and because of which the social condition tend to fall apart, producing state of nature in which chaos reigns; as classically outlined by Thomas Hobbes. He argues that the fundamental moral concern is with what he sums up as the 'amelioration of the human predicament', a predicament which is made even more pressing by the natural limitations of our human sympathies. As it is stated the object of morality is to countervail the natural limitations by working not only against systematic constraint on human potential but also positively for the human flourishing by targeting the symptom rather than the disease. And this countervailing the human predicament is for all rational agents as James Warnock rightly opines that moral reasons apply to all rational agents, though, moral reasons are always outweighed by other reason.

A question may be raised that why are we evaluating violence of different types? What is the object of evaluation for? James Warnock¹⁰ posed a question asking as to what is moral evaluation for. For him the general object of moral evaluation

¹⁰ James Warnock (1971) *The Object of Morality*, Methuen., ISBN 0-416-13780-6.

must be to contribute in some respects, by way of the actions of rational beings to the amelioration of the human predicaments, that is, of the conditions in which these rational beings, humans, actually find themselves. James Warnock does think that morality has a content, which, he claims, is to help human predicament by expanding our sympathies, which has a tendency to get worse. The tendency to get worse is mainly because of the limitations of resources, such as intelligence, knowledge, rationality and sympathy and because of which the social condition tend to fall apart, producing state of nature in which chaos reigns; as classically outlined by Thomas Hobbes. And thus he considers that it is the role of ethics to offer an anti-entropic response, to offer order and structure within society which people may flourish as human being. He argues that the fundamental moral concern is with what he sums up as the 'amelioration of the human predicament', a predicament which is made even more pressing by the natural limitations of our human sympathies. As for James Warnock the object of morality is to countervail these natural limitations. Countervailing the human predicament is for all rational agents because he maintains that moral reasons apply to all rational agents though a rational agent can rationally hold that moral reasons are always outweighed by other reason.

Here some important questions arise as to what is it in the human predicament that calls for amelioration? What might reasonably be suggested as the specific contribution of morality to such amelioration? According to James Warnock, human beings in general are not just naturally disposed always to do what would be best that they should do, even if they see, or are perfectly in a position to do. We are naturally somewhat prone to be moved by momentary goals rather than long-run considerations. We tend to ignore what one should do to others when we are perfectly in a position to do, even worse, we not only remain indifferent to others whose lives are getting worse but become active malevolence towards others. Our sympathy is so limited that we cannot go beyond near and dear ones. Desperate poverty abounds everywhere in our country in the midst of rich multitudes. There is inequality of distribution of wealth and justice. Structural violence is violence that not hurt or kill through fists or guns or weapons of mass destruction, but through social structures that produce poverty, starving children, death and enormous suffering. Hence, if a person died from tuberculosis in the eight century it would not be hard to conceive of

this as calamity since there had been no remedy to fight against the disease but on the contrary if a person dies from it today, in spite of all the medical resources, then violence is present because potential to cure is higher than the actual and thus avoidable. As James Galtung rightly defines violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual and that which impedes the decrease of this distance.

James Warnock in his book, *The Object of Morality*¹¹ emphasizes on how moral reasons which are found present in all rational agents is always outweighed by other reasons. A moral reason according to James Warnock is a consideration about some person, or some persons' character, or some specimen of actual or possible conduct, which tends to establish in the subject concerned conformity or conflict with a moral principle. He offers four salient virtues of fundamental moral standards or principles: non-maleficence (no harm), beneficence (a promotion of human well-being so that all are encouraged to fulfill their potential, impartiality (thus avoiding preferential treatment) and truthfulness, which although not absolute can be beneficial toward human relations. Johan Galtung too rightly enumerated values such as presence of cooperation, freedom from fear, freedom from want economic growth and development, absence of exploitation, equality, justice, freedom of action, pluralism and dynamism which I consider worth adopting.

In order to take forward the indispensable presence of positive peace to the world community, persistent and consistent approach needs to be innovatively implemented to combat violence. However, what would possibly be a pragmatic and consistent approach to it is a matter of debates. It is not an exaggeration to make an attempt to bring in the need of ethical approach as one indispensable approach because the essence of morality is about virtues which help uplift the momentum of moral status to the practitioners. Violence that debar people from meeting their basic needs and requirements needs to be addressed by inculcating the virtues that would be beneficial for the entire moral community. I am not hesitant to use the world as "Moral Community" because every individual irrespective of differences in terms of

¹¹ Theodore Benditt, Warnock's Reasons, *Australian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol.51, No.3; December 1973

religion, caste, tribe, gender, nationality belongs to a community of rational being. Moral reason applies to all rational agents even though moral reasons are often outweighed by other reasons and hence bringing out the so-called moral reason possibly might ameliorate human predicaments.

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FLOATING AGENCY AND FADED VALUE: WHY SHOULD BE ETHICAL?

PATITAPABAN DAS

Do not be surprised at encountering another long queue in front of a *Reliance Jio*¹ outlet, nor be annoyed at a deadly Delhi² traffic jam and do not pass a comment that people have become too selfish, that they have abandoned ethics. No wonder, an elderly doctor couple were murdered cold blood without the notice in a crowded nine storied flat in the pos area of Bhubaneswar³ or a three year old innocent girl is harassed at a renowned English medium school in Bangaluru,⁴ equally unnoticed and unalarmed. In a country where elections are accused of being won on the basis of freebies like television sets or laptops, where the book “The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari” is being named as the best seller spare the *Gītā* or its magnificent philosophical heritage, where the age old notion of *moksa* has become a commodity earned through unchecked drugs effect and sexual activity in the name of modernised spiritual order at a high-tech ashram, a country where the magnanimous yogic system has turned into merely a cardiac exercise to make you a model like outfit, these unusual and unethical behaviour are obvious and spontaneous expressions. So natural is the question “why the hell be ethical?” in the age of self interest when the recent election in the most affluent and effective democracy in the world backed the idea “America First.”⁵

A preliminary clarification about the nature of the question “why be ethical?” is needed. For example Peter Singer in his much talked about essay “Why should I act morally?”⁶ states that this question is a metaethical question seeking a justification about our ethical behaviour whether it is ethically laudable or condemnable. Many people hold that this question is as improper to ask as a question like why should I act

¹ Reliance is an Indian private enterprise doing business in many areas. Recently it lunches free mobile data pack which created lots of enthusiasm among Indian costumers.

² Delhi is the capital city of India and suffers from bad traffic jam due to non-adherence to traffic rules.

³ Bhubaneswar is the capital city of the state of Odisha, India, where an elderly couple were killed cold blood in a crowded apartment.

⁴ Bangaluru is a popular city in India where this heinous crime happened in a reputed school.

⁵ The slogan was the tagline for the American Presidential election.

⁶ Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011, p- 6.

rationally? For, asking this question already presupposes the efficacy of rationality. After all seeking an answer whatsoever it may be is a presupposition of rationality in operation. Similarly asking the question ‘why should I act morally?’, one already presupposes the efficacy of ethicality. However, the type of question asked here is not a metaethical question, a question about ethics but a question in ethics i. e., acting ethically means acting in a certain way- morally good way. This is a question about the choice between two types of actions and inviting a normative justification behind such a choice. More candidly, this is a question to shun actions motivated by self-interest and appreciate action directed towards others, moulded by altruistic reason. So here being ethical means being motivated or guided by altruistic reasons and unethical otherwise. More candidly, if someone acts on purely self interest we would term him acting unethically. Similarly, if one acts out of altruistic reasons we would term him as ethical. The depth of the question lies in the fact that most of the people in present time act out of self interest and justify this stance as ethical and do not see sufficient reason to act altruistically. This work is a sincere attempt to delineate adequate reasons for acting altruistically.

Last three or four decades is the age of systematic wealth accumulation, the age of Ivan Boesky, corporate raiders like Carl Icahn, T. Boone Pickens, or Henry Kravis, developers such as Donald Trump, the junk bond financier Michael Milken or Wall Street chiefs like Salomon Brothers’ John Gutfreund. This is also age of Malavyas when greed and self-interested development have been lauded never before. Eighties in the America was known as the decade of greed when Boesky himself delivered a commencement address at the school of business administration at the University of California, Berkeley, in which he told his audience: greed is alright ... greed is healthy. You can be greedy and still feel good about yourself.⁷ Today in India major junk of people train their off springs this attitude of self-service and universal and eternal greed in the name of self-existence and development. No wonder, the popular cinemas translate the attitude by defining life as a race and morning walk will not work.

⁷ Robert Slater, *The Titans of Takeover*, p. 132; Adam Smith, *The Roaring '80s*, Penguin Books, New York, 1988, p. 209.

While life is a race, obviously Arjuna⁸ cannot but see only the eyes of the fish deliberately ignoring the serene and sagacious splendour of the tree. No wonder, this eternal race has produced a peculiar folk who longed to earn money, lots of it and made a culture of unending earning and extravagant spending. What was happening was, as Michael Lewis put it in his popular *Liar's Poker*, 'a rare and amazing glitch in the fairly predictable history of getting and spending.' Smart bond traders like Lewis were earning a million dollars a year in salary and bonuses before they turned twenty five. Never before, Lewis could truthfully assert, have so many unskilled 25 year olds made so much in so little time as we did this decade in new York and London.'⁹ It should not be understood that this is an act of envy by the oldies towards young people and their success. There is nothing wrong in making money. However, envisaging money-making as the only goal of life invites many problems. Sometimes, it triggers social violence, systematic corruption, social and economic exclusion and many a time the ruin of personal life.

Faded Values: Mine to None

Justification of this self-interested stance towards life took two philosophical foundations. A) A detached and disconnected self and agency endorsed by the age old individualistic philosophy. And B) The alternative to this stance seemed vague and vicious. To explain the second stance peter singer records:

The problem is that most people have only the vaguest idea of what it might be to lead an ethical life. They understand ethics as a system of rules forbidding us to do things. They do not grasp it as a basis for thinking about how we are to live. They live largely self-interested lives, not because they are born selfish, but because the alternatives seem awkward, embarrassing, or just plain pointless. They cannot see any way of making an impact on the world, and if they could, why should they bother? Short of undergoing a religious conversion, they see nothing to live for except the pursuit of their own material self-interest.¹⁰

Not only that the alternative sounds vague, it often invites bizarre results. People think that the immediate alternative to self interested stance to life is an absolute and

⁸ Arjuna is a character in the great epic the Mahabharata in India. It is noted that Arjuna, in order to marry Draupadi, the princess had to win an archery competition where he had to aim at the eyes of the small bird sitting on a tree.

⁹ Michael Lewis, *Liar's Poker*, Penguin Books, New York, 1990, pp. 9, 81.

¹⁰ Peter Singer, *How are we to live? Ethics in an age of self-interest*, Random House, Australia, 1993, p-280.

universal view of the world which imposes abstract categories on human existence and sabotage our freedom. For them ethics has necessarily a religious favour and therefore people who do not subscribe to religious world view cannot see any meaning in life outside mere merry-making. Nor ethics coloured with political ideology is of much help. More candidly, the way socialism was turned into Leninism or Stalinism left many faces pale about the efficacy of political ideology. Furthermore, the collapse of communist societies in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union has revealed the utopian nature of Marxist thought. Only a brave few cling to the socialist ideal, rejecting the distortion Lenin and Stalin brought and claiming that it has never had a proper trial. It seems to many that the individualist view of self-interest is the only one that is still viable. So obvious was the fading of ideology and assertion of self-interested view that, Daniel Bell predicted ‘the end of ideology’¹¹ In the sixties Francis Fukuyama, a former deputy director of policy planning at the US state department has argued – in the line of Hegel- in the “End of History and the Last Man” that this end is precisely the universal acceptance of the liberal democratic free enterprise form of society.¹² So people are justified pursuing self-interested goals because there is no absolute and universal value which can move them.

The redundancy of absolute or objective values took two roots. Firstly, no value seems more important than self preservation and therefore becomes a prey of power equation. Values are necessary to preserve or protect people from possible threats. What if there is no such possible self- thwarting? Values seem irrelevant, redundant. And secondly, values are understood from relativist and subjective point of view. The first root dates back to the Greek tradition which is recorded in one of the dialogues of Plato i.e., *Republic*.

According to Plato, Glaucon, a well-to-do young Athenian in order to challenge Socrates, begins by retelling the story of a shepherd who served the reigning king of Lydia. The shepherd was out with his flock one day when there was

¹¹ See Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology*, 2nd edn, with a new Afterword, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1988.

¹² See Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992.

a storm and a chasm opened up in the ground. He went down into the chasm and there found a golden ring, which he put on his finger. A few days later, when sitting with some other shepherds, he happened to fiddle with the ring, and to his amazement discovered that when he turned the ring a certain way, he became invisible to his companions. Once he had made this discovery, he arranged to be one of the messengers sent by the shepherds to the king to report on the state of the flocks. Arriving at the palace, he promptly used the ring to seduce the queen, plotted with her against the king, killed him, and so obtained the crown.

Glaucon takes this story to reaffirm a commonsense view of ethics that values are only for the poor and the weak. Anyone who has enough power to protect himself and affirm his superiority, anyone who had such a ring would abandon all ethical standards. For him there is no value than exercising power. Values are his wish, whims and he is quite rational to forsake values whatsoever. Plato in his dialogue records:

. . . no one, it is thought, would be of such adamant nature as to abide in justice and have the strength to abstain from theft, and to keep his hands from the goods of others, when it would be in his power to steal anything he wished from the very marketplace with impunity, to enter men's houses and have intercourse with whom he would, to kill or to set free whomsoever he pleased; in short, to walk among men as a god . . . if any man who possessed this power we have described should nevertheless refuse to do anything unjust or to rob his fellows, all who knew of his conduct would think him the most miserable and foolish of men, though they would praise him to each other's faces, their fear of suffering injustice extorting that deceit from them.¹³

Glaucon challenges Socrates to find any other reason other than this to act morally. What is the point to act right when there is no possibility of being caught or being accused of guilty? Glaucon asks Socrates to show a wise person who found the ring would, unlike the shepherd, continue to do what is right. People act right when they cannot do otherwise. There is nothing right or wrong, power makes it so. Socrates convinced Glaucon that doing right brings real happiness, whatever profit injustice may seem to bring. Socrates had to provide a long list of arguments to show the connections between being right and being happy. Modern readers will find it hard to get the connection. When power exhibits, values fade away.

¹³Plato, *The Republic*, Book II, 360, 2nd edn, trans. Desmond Lee, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1984.

The second root has a recent history. These are popularly known as ethical relativism and ethical subjectivism. Ethical relativism banks on the oft asserted idea that ethics is relative to the society one happens to live in and became quite popular in the nineteenth century. Peter Singer records this attitude by the following words, “the knowledge that there were places where sexual relations between unmarried people were regarded as perfectly wholesome brought the seeds of a revolution in sexual attitudes to the strict reign of Victorian prudery. It is not surprising that to some the new knowledge suggested, not merely that the moral code of nineteenth century Europe was not objectively valid, but that no moral judgement (is objectively valid- *my addition*) can do more than reflect the customs of the society in which it is made.”¹⁴

The other type of relativism is expressed in the form of ethical subjectivism. According to subjectivism, values are dependent on subjective taste or opinion. This form of subjectivism manifested in nineteenth century analytic philosophy. Ethical judgements are neither true nor false because they do not describe anything – neither objective moral facts nor one’s own subjective state of mind. This theory holds that ethical judgements merely exhibit emotional attitudes rather than describe them, and we disagree about ethics because we try, by expressing our own attitude, to bring our listeners to a similar attitude. Values do not refer to any objective reality or phenomena and depend on subjective attitude to certain happenings. This view, first developed by C. L. Stevenson, is known as emotivism.

What remains then is my attitude towards ethical talk. Values become my value. I create them by my liking or disliking. What else is more attractive than enjoying my life to its fullest who knows tomorrow I will die? This is a plausible view. Many people hold it. They live and die unreflectively, without ever having asked themselves what their goals are, and why they are doing what they do. Today, after two decades of the age of greed, this unreflective stance towards life has hunted us sharply. All those people once termed as heroes, much talked in the media started smelling the same redundancy in the self interested attitude towards life. Donald Trump confessed:

¹⁴ Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011, p- 6.

It's a rare person who can achieve a major goal in life and not almost immediately start feeling sad, empty, and a little lost. If you look at the record - which in this case means newspapers, magazines, and TV news — you'll see that an awful lot of people who achieve success, from Elvis Presley to Ivan Boesky, lose their direction or their ethics.

Actually, I don't have to look at anyone else's life to know that's true. I'm as susceptible to that pitfall as anyone else . . .”

To reaffirm this change of attitude towards self-interested stance, Peter Singer records the view of Peter Lynch who realises the emptiness of the attitude towards life. During the eighties Peter Lynch worked fourteen-hour days and built the Fidelity Magellan mutual fund into a \$ 13 billion giant among funds. But at the age of forty-six, when most executives are still aiming higher, Lynch startled his colleagues by quitting. Why? Because he had asked himself: ‘What in the hell are we doing this for?’ And in answering that question, he was moved by the thought that ‘I don't know anyone who wished on his deathbed that he had spent more time at the office’.¹⁵ People started realising that value made subjective is of no value and value nihilism is painful. If objective value is of no importance, what about subjective value either?

Floating Agency: Look thyself

The other justification of self interested view of the world is to view each individual of a unique existence independent of and disconnected from the community. The nuclei of this view is the belief of a self which is detached and different from the rest of the other but is associated with each other in the form of a society out of a contract or like. In 1887, Ferdinand Tonnies, a German sociologist published a work called *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, in which he distinguished between two conceptions of society. A *Gemeinschaft* - a term usually rendered in English as ‘community’- is a traditional group bound by a strong communal sense. It is an organic community, in the sense that the members identify with the larger whole, and can scarcely conceive of themselves as having a meaningful life apart from it. A *Gesellschaft*, on the other hand is an association of individuals. They see themselves as independent beings who could live easily enough outside the association. Society is therefore, regarded as a human creation, perhaps the result of some kind of social contract, and individuals may opt to join or leave as they see fit.

¹⁵ *Time*, April 8, 1991, p. 62.

Hence, the self that is otherwise independent, self-existent of the community, the question ‘without the bonds of custom and community, what reason does the individual have for acting ethically?’ seems plausible. The first and striking answer is provided by Thomas Hobbes in his work *Leviathan*. Reflecting the breakdown of traditional authority, Hobbes began from the assumption that all mankind has one basic desire: ‘a perpetual and restless desire of power after power that ceaseth only in death.’¹⁶ For this reason, ‘in the natural condition of mankind all human beings would live in a state of war: where everyman is enemy to every man ... and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.’¹⁷ To the question, ‘how can a society ever arise, or once it arises, survive from such uncompromisingly self directed beings, living in such as appalling situation?’, Hobbes’ answer is equally blunt as his view of human nature: society arises only by the application of superior force. Society exists because it is in the interests of us all to have peace, and peace can prevail only if we set up a sovereign with unlimited authority and sufficient power to punish those who breach the peace.

An estimate shows that perhaps 70 percent of the world’s population significantly in Asia, Africa the Middle East and Latin America live in societies in which loyalty to the family or tribe overrides personal goals.¹⁸ In contrast, western society has been tending, at least since the protestant reformation, away from the community and towards a looser association of individuals. And surprisingly this life style is fast intruding to the other parts of the globe especially societies which are prospering rapidly like China and India.

Individualism per se as envisioned in the modern world was not conceived in a derogatory outlook. However, individualism today, mixed with consumerism and capitalism has become very one sided and therefore precarious. Tocqueville while admiring American individualism and its philosophy of self reliance and independence of its citizens, feared where this might lead: “each man is forever thrown back on himself alone, and there is danger that he may be shut up in the

¹⁶ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, J. M. Dent, London, 1973, ch. 11, p. 49.

¹⁷ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. 13, pp. 64-5.

¹⁸ *New York Times*, Dec. 25, 1990, p. 41.

solitude of his own heart.”¹⁹ In late twentieth century, individualism has been pushed to a new extreme. It is a society in which everyone does their own thing’ or ‘goes for it’ where ‘it’ means ‘whatever I want’. In many large American cities there simply is no community.

Robert Bellah, a Berkeley sociologist and principal author of *Habits of the Heart*, observes American society in the following words:

In early days the individualism in America was one that also honoured community values. Today, we have an ideology of individualism that simply encourages people to minimise personal advantage. This leads to a consumer politics in which ‘what’ in it for me? is all that matters, while considerations of the common good are increasingly irrelevant.”²⁰

Unlike this consumerist self, the idea of a disconnected and disenchanted self is philosophically celebrated in existentialist writers especially that of Jean Paul Sartre, the French existentialist. Writings of German existentialist Frederick Nietzsche is also significant in fostering this idea. For Nietzsche, the modern man has murdered the idea of God and belief in him. Therefore, unlike Kierkegaard, he does not surrender unto the god but declare man as superman: courageous, brave, hard and healthy. Individuality was celebrated never before. Later on Sartre argues of human existence prior to the essence. Man is condemned to be free, Sartre argues, for he is thrown alone into this eternal solitude of absurd world. There is no value to follow, no standard to maintain, no goals to pursue. In this not ending nothingness, man has to create his own value, own ethics, construct his own essence.

Living ethically: living a meaning

So painful is value-nihilism that life lost its meaning. A meaningless life is nothing, empty to that extent that soon we lose life itself. If there is no value in other than my life, there is no value in my life too. This is beautifully expressed in an ancient Greek myth of Sisyphus.

According to an ancient Greek myth, Sisyphus betrayed the secrets of the gods to mortal men. For this the gods condemned him to push a huge stone to the top of a hill; as he neared the peak the effort became too much for him, and the stone

¹⁹ *Democracy in America*, J. Mayer, ed., p. 508; quoted by Robert N. Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart*, p. 37.

²⁰ Robert N. Bellah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler and Steven M. Tipton, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1985, p. 16.

rolled all the way down to the bottom. Sisyphus then had to begin his task again . . . but the same thing would happen, and Sisyphus must labour with his stone for eternity. The myth of Sisyphus serves as a bleak metaphor for the meaninglessness of human existence. Each day we work to feed ourselves and our family, and as soon as the task is done, it must begin all over again. We reproduce, and our children must take over the same task. Nothing is ever achieved, and it will never end, until our species is extinct.

Albert Camus, the French Existentialist wrote an essay on this myth that begins with a famous line: ‘there is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide.’²¹ If life has nothing, if we are destined to do the same things for eternity, life become so boring that, it is not worth living. So the same nothingness, emptiness, absurdity hunts again and there is no rescue to it but committing suicide. Betty Friedan describes this emerging attitude to life in 1950s America in her famous book *The Feminist Mystique*. She interviewed many young, well- to- do American ladies and discovers a problem they were facing which did not have name. Friedan names it ‘the problem that has no name.’ Here is a 23-year-old mother:

I ask myself why I am so dissatisfied. I've got my health, fine children, a lovely new home, enough money . . . It's as if ever since you were a little girl, there's always been somebody or something that will take care of your life: your parents, or college, or falling in love, or having a child, or moving to a new house. Then you wake up one morning and there's nothing to look forward to.²²

This lady searched for a meaning outside of her cosy cocoon. For complacency becomes unbearable, seems absurd, and turns into utter nothingness. This lady like many others can see this; they started searching for a meaning for life; started evaluating the worth of living. Many of them however, become upset, breathless, anguished and end up in deep depression or committing suicide. It happens- if we judge life not to be worth living – and act accordingly – we will not be in a position to ask any further philosophical question because we cannot be alive to ask such questions. But as Peter Singer adds to Camus question that it is not so much

²¹ Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*, trans. Justin O'Brien, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1969, p. 3.

²² Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1965, p. 19.

a matter of passively judging whether life is or is not worth living, but of consciously choosing a way of living that is worth living.

The first move towards this direction would be stepping out of your self-interested, self-motivated life. Come out of your closed windows, out of your antidepressants; a whole new world is waiting for you. You will not enter to abstract world of values; you will not be swayed away by conflicting political ideologies or will be sabotaged by communal heresies. You can add to the beautiful fabric of this world by your own choice and find meaning to your life thereby. Your act will add worth to the world as well as meaning to your life.

One way of doing this is to shape your goal by communal cord. Many people have done this in Japan, in South East countries and found meaning for life and made those countries better place to live. One reason for your outward movement is necessity. The world is facing so much pressing demands that it is utter necessity to work. The climate change and its impact on our overall prosperity is one of these pressing necessities. World poverty, health hazards etc. also demand our collective effort and therefore we must come out. By the way, in the process you also find a purpose to live. Marra James asserts:

I sometimes describe myself as a rubber ball. I've been pushed down sometimes to where I've almost been pressed flat, but I've always been able to bounce back . . . I feel very much a part of the whole - of history. I live in a spectrum that includes the whole world. I'm a part of all of it. For what I do impacts the whole.²³

The list continues. The list will showcase the testimony that people having identified with a larger cause than their self have lived a purposeful life. This confirms the need for commitment to a cause larger than the self, if we are to find genuine self-esteem, and to be all we can be. No doubt we might face challenges, disturbing moments, and hard time to face the world. But, if we are committed to making a better world, these hard times would pale as Nietzsche states 'He who has a *why* to live for can bear almost any *how*.'²⁴

²³ Robert N. Bellah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, AnnSwidler and Steven M. Tipton, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1985, p. 158.

²⁴ V. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning: an introduction to logotherapy*, trans. Use Lasch, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1964, pp. 103-4.

As said earlier you can contribute to very small things in the world according to your capability. Henry Spira replies about the reason behind his life time activism in the field of diverse causes: ‘where can I do the most to reduce the universe of pain and suffering?’ This is the simple motivation that pushed Spira worked for different causes throughout his life. For him there are so much pain and suffering in the world that reason for action. Carol Gilligan wrote in *In a Different Voice* these inspiring lines:

I have a very strong sense of being responsible to the world, that I can't just live for my enjoyment, but just the fact of being in the world gives me an obligation to do what I can to make the world a better place to live in, no matter how small a scale that may be on.²⁵

What would you get out of it? Your life would not be same as usual. It may not mean that life will lose all fun, enjoying food and wine or having your favourite dress. But it will definitely change our priorities. After all, In comparison with the needs of people starving in Somalia, the desire to sample the wines of the leading French vineyards pales into insignificance. Judged against the sufferings of immobilized rabbits having shampoos dripped into their eyes, a better shampoo becomes an unworthy goal. The preservation of old-growth forests should override our desire to use disposable paper towels. There are so many issues in the world to be addressed now. There is no time to focus our thoughts on the possibility of a distant Utopian future. It is time to act now.

About the utility of this new approach to life Peter Singer provides a vivid possibility. ‘You will take up new causes, and find your goals shifting. If you get involved in your work, money and status will become less important. From your new perspective, the world will look different. One thing is certain: you will find plenty of worthwhile things to do. You will not be bored, or lack fulfilment in your life. Most important of all, you will know that you have not lived and died for nothing, because you will have become part of the great tradition of those who have responded to the amount of pain and suffering in the universe by trying to make the world a better place.’ What else can be a better reason for being ethical?

²⁵ Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1982.

DOES MILL DEMAND TOO MUCH MORALITY FROM A MORAL AGENT?

MADHUMITA MITRA

One of the most common criticisms raised against the utilitarian moral philosophy is that utilitarianism demands too much morality from a moral agent. The objection has been advanced by the critics arguing that the theory ignores the “separateness of persons”. John Rawls has been considered a precursor of this criticism. In *A Theory of Justice*, he has criticized utilitarianism for not taking into serious consideration the distinctness of persons and thereby acting as an impartial spectator.¹ David Gauthier, Thomas Nagel, Robert Nozick have also raised similar objection arguing that in the utilitarian process of aggregation not only the interest of the distinct individuals are sacrificed and mingled into one but there remains also the possibility that well-being of one or few have been represented as the well-being of the rest of the concerned group. The “separateness of persons”, as follows from critics’ claims, is ignored in two ways: by undermining the individualities of an individual and by ignoring an individual’s special commitments and relations.

Critics think that utilitarian philosophers in their eagerness to promote the greatest possible amount of good have always neglected the special obligations of an individual that are incumbent upon him on account of his special relationships, commitments and attachment as a social being. The criticism raised here, therefore, has a direct bearing upon the question who should be beneficiary of the good? In response to the question, we come across two different approaches: rigorous and moderate. Those who have adopted a rigorous approach think that the beneficiary can be “everyone else” irrespective of having an intimate or distant relationship with the agent. In their opinion, no one should accord priority to one’s own interest over the interest of others. Thinkers who adopt such an approach expect an individual moral agent to behave like a moral saint. On the other hand, the thinkers who adopt a moderate approach urge that the agent need not sacrifice his own interest for maximizing utility. In this paper, an attempt has been made to examine Mill’s utilitarian stance against this objection.

¹ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 27.

The contribution has been divided into three sections. In the first section, we have briefly reflected upon the objective of Mill's utilitarian morality. In the second section, we have reflected upon the importance that Mill has assigned to an individual agent him or herself as the beneficiary of the good. In the third section, we have reflected upon the sphere of beneficence that Mill has focused upon to examine whether Mill's stance can be defended against the above objection remaining within the scheme of his utilitarian morality.

I

As a utilitarian philosopher, Mill's chief objective has been to secure the greatest social well-being of the human community at large. To fulfil this objective, Mill has tried to establish his "Greatest happiness principle" based on the principle of justice and equality. At the end of chapter V of *Utilitarianism*, accepting "perfect impartiality between persons" as part of the very meaning of the "Greatest Happiness Principle", Mill writes, "That principle is a mere form of words without rational signification unless one person's happiness supposed equal in degree... is counted for exactly as much as another's."² The standard of utilitarian morality, as Mill has distinctly asserted "is not the agent's own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether."³ But Mill's attempt to establish the principle of utility based on the spirit of justice and equality cannot be successful unless the individual members of society have acquired nobility of character through the cultivation of the feeling of sympathy and imagination. That may be the reason Mill has explicitly asserted that the greatest amount of happiness can be obtained by the general cultivation of the nobleness of character. In chapter II of *Utilitarianism*, Mill has stated that a perfect explanation of the utilitarian morality can be seen in the life and teachings of the Jesus of Nazareth. As he writes,

In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality.⁴

Mill's noble individual cannot realise his own happiness in abstraction from the happiness of others. He makes not only other people happier, but "the world in

² Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p. 257.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

⁴ *Ibid.*

general is immensely a gainer by it [his nobility].”⁵ In *Utilitarianism*, while making a distinction between pleasures of higher and lower faculties, Mill has asserted that pleasures “of the feelings and imaginations” have “greater permanency, safety, uncostliness” than the pleasures of the senses because the exercise of the faculties of intellect, imagination and moral sentiments would be more conducive to the greater good of the human community by developing the social aspect of human nature. Mill has noted that psychological proof the Utilitarian goal of morality consists in our social psychology i.e. social feeling. Such feeling though considered as a natural feeling of mankind, is not innate. Rather it is acquired through education of our moral sentiments and favourable surroundings in which we are brought up with our fellow members. Mill writes,

The good of others becomes to him [each individual] a thing naturally and necessarily to be attended to, like any of the physical conditions of our existence. . . . Consequently, the smallest germs of the feeling are laid hold of and nourished by the contagion of sympathy and the influences of education; and a complete web of corroborative association is woven round it, by the powerful agency of the external sanctions. This mode of conceiving ourselves and human life, as civilization goes on, is felt to be more and more natural. . . . In an improving state of the human mind, the influences are constantly on the increase, which tend to generate in each individual a feeling of unity with all the rest; which feeling, if perfect, would make him never think of, or desire, any beneficial condition for himself, in the benefits of which they are not included.⁶

However, though Mill has acknowledged that the goal of utilitarian morality is to obtain the general happiness and the goal can be obtained through the cultivation of the nobility of character, unlike Altruism Mill has not considered the self-less pursuit of general happiness as the general rule, but merely as admirable. While altruism supports the sacrifice of an agent’s own benefit at the cost of other’s benefit, Mill refrains from recommending so. In this context, Mill’s criticism of Comte’s ideal of sainthood is worth noting. Mill notes that Comte’s ideal of sainthood prohibits an individual from pursuing his own special projects, interests and relationships and thus destroying all opportunities to shape and direct one’s life in his own way, obstructs him to grow up as a distinctive personality. In calling for “altruism” he has not only asked an individual to repress the satisfaction of all his personal desires in favour of the general good but has also considered following personal inclinations as inherently

⁵ Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p. 262

⁶ Mill, *Utilitarianism*, pp.285-6.

wicked. Like extreme Calvinists, Comte has condemned all who are not saints.⁷ In his “Later Speculations of M. Comte”, Mill has criticized Comte for his moral extremism and has described him as “a morally intoxicated man.” Mill though acknowledges that individual members of the society are required to cultivate a feeling of sympathy to promote general well being, he is not ready to accept Comte’s wish i.e. “to deaden the personal passion and propensities”, and to condemn and mortify all personal wishes.⁸

But Critics would argue: if obtaining the goal of utilitarian morality necessarily requires the cultivation of noble character and sympathy then the value of individual liberty must be considered as subordinate to the utility. That means the value of individual liberty must be accepted as conditional upon its contribution to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. But in *On Liberty*, Mill has tried to harmonize his thesis of individual liberty with the utilitarian goal of greater social good on the basis of his conception of “man as a progressive being.” He has firmly asserted that the progressive development of society would not be possible unless its individual members are given opportunities to acquire a progressive outlook through the exercise of their individuality. This indicates that Mill’s scheme of utilitarian morality necessarily takes into account the good of the individual. In *On Liberty*, while considering “utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions”, Mill has clarified his notion of utility immediately stating that “it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of a man as a progressive being.”⁹ In the next section, we shall reflect upon the value that Mill has assigned to individual members of a society as the beneficiary of the good.

II

In chapter-III of *On Liberty*, Mill has acknowledged cultivation and development of individuality as an essential element of social well-being. By the exercise of individuality Mill has meant employing distinctive human endowments in whatever we do i.e. using “observation to see, reasoning and judgment to foresee,

⁷ Mill, “August Comte and Positivism,” *CWX*, p.337.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.335-336.

⁹ Mill, *On Liberty*, p.136.

activity to gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and...firmness and self-control to hold to his deliberate decision.”⁹ He has also meant by individuality, acting with spontaneity according to one’s own character. Mill firmly believes that good for an individual consists in enabling him to take the decision and perform the action by exercising individuality in the above-mentioned senses. Mill’s emphasis upon protection and preservation of individuality has found expression through both his positive and negative concept of liberty. According to the positive concept, freedom consists in self-development or self-determination and hence, “It is desirable, in short, that in things which do not primarily concern others, individuality should assert itself” shunning any oppression. According to the negative concept of freedom, individual autonomy demands non-interference with the legitimate interest of an individual. Mill has condemned crushing individuality in any form whether “by enforcing the will of God or the Injunctions men” as a form of oppression in the name of despotism.¹⁰ There are several passages in Mill’s *On Liberty*, where he has strongly emphasized upon the importance of protecting the diversity of character, creating “variety of situations” arguing that preserving and nourishing diversity of individual character can protect society from harmful influences of uniformity, authoritarianism, the tyranny of the majority and blind adherence to customs and traditions. Individual well-being, according to Mill, is so intimately connected with social well-being that the latter can be obtained only when each individual is allowed to develop their own inner well-being. As Mill writes,

It is not by wearing down into uniformity all that is individual in themselves, but by cultivating it and calling it forth, within the limits imposed by the rights and interests of others, that human beings become a noble and beautiful object of contemplation...In proportion to the development of individuality, each person becomes more valuable to himself, and is therefore capable of being more valuable to others. There is a greater fullness of life about his own existence, and when there is more life in the units there is more in the mass which is composed of them.¹¹

According to Mill, since different individuals have been brought up in different circumstances, they may not be able to take pleasure in the same thing. Therefore, keeping in view differences in their capacities as well as sources of

⁹ Mill, *On Liberty*., p.187.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.193.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.192

pleasures, “variety of situations” must be created for the growth and improvement of each individual.¹² Growth of civilization, according to Mill, is not possible unless diversity of individual character and cultivation of individuality is encouraged. In this context, referring to Europe’s “progressive and many-sided development” Mill has argued that Europe’s “remarkable diversity of character and culture” and “plurality of path” have been responsible for this, whereas China could not progress because of its authoritarian and conformist approach which resulted into lack of technological progress as well as cultural stagnation. Mill feared that English society would also move towards a similar direction if they fail to encourage diversity. Mill has valued diversity as a means to the self-development and self-development of each individual as an essential ingredient of society’s development. According to him, since people vary greatly in respect of their potentialities, interests, needs and skills caused by different circumstantial antecedent conditions, improvement in any sphere – politics, morals and education- would be impossible if all people are persuaded to be alike. Mill’s assertion of individuality against the criticism of ignoring “the separateness of persons” can be distinctly noted when he writes to Thomas Carlyle that “the good of the species” as “the ultimate end” can be achieved only when “each taking for his exclusive aim the development of what is best in himself.”¹³

In response to the question concerning “Beneficiary” of the good, Mill has, therefore, adopted a moderate line of approach. According to him, the beneficiary must include the agent himself along with others. In this respect, he has been influenced by his radical mentor Bentham. Adopting the Benthamite dictum that “everybody to count for one, nobody for more than one,”¹⁴ Mill has asserted that in calculating the rightness or wrongness of an action which affects others including the agent himself, happiness of the agent should neither be valued more nor less than that of others.

¹² Mill, *On Liberty*., p.197

¹³ Mill, *The Earlier Letters of John Stuart Mill, 1812-1848*, pp 207-8.

¹⁴ Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p.319.

III

Besides emphasizing upon self-development of an individual as an essential component within the scheme of utilitarian morality, Mill has drawn our attention to the fact that to secure the goal of utilitarian morality, we are required to focus more on limited beneficence instead of extended beneficence. This becomes evident through his attempt to strike a balance between our duties as a public benefactor and a private benefactor. In *Utilitarianism*, distinguishing between public and private utility, Mill has stated that the number of the “beneficiary” of the good, will vary depending on the scale of utility intended for. As he writes,

The multiplication of happiness is, according to the utilitarian ethics, the object of virtue: the occasions on which any person (except one in a thousand) has it in his power to do this on an extended scale, in other words, to be a public benefactor, are but exceptional; and on these occasions alone he is called on to consider public utility; in every other case, private utility, the interest or happiness of some few persons, is all he has to attend to. Those alone, the influence of whose actions extends to society in general, need concern themselves habitually about so large an object.¹⁵

Mill’s statements imply that the direct beneficiary of all our actions should not be always “unknown all”. It is only when one aims at a public utility then the scope of the action must extend “to the society in general. In all other cases, we are required to act keeping in view private utility which takes into account the benefits of the few concerned persons. However, the latter kind of action must also take into consideration the legitimate interest of everyone else who might be affected by the action and ensure that such interests have not been violated. Arguing against those moralists who prefer to adopt public utility as the rule of life, Mill writes,

Why is it necessary that all human life should point but to one object, and be cultivated into a system of means to a single end? May it not be the fact that mankind; who after all are made up of who after all are made up of single human beings, obtain a greater sum of happiness when each pursues his own [ends], under the rules and conditions required by the good of *the rest* then when each makes the good of the rest his only subject, and allows himself no personal pleasure not indispensable to the preservation of his faculties.¹⁶

¹⁵ Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p.270

¹⁶ Mill, “August Comte and Positivism,” *CW X*, p.337.

Mill further adds, “The regimen of a blockaded town should be cheerfully submitted to when high purposes require it. But is it the ideal perfection of human existence?”¹⁷ This is the question that has been raised by Mill against Comte. Having raised this question, as Skorupski has argued, Mill has drawn our attention to certain basic truths about human nature, i.e., human being experience happiness at least as much in their personal sphere of self, family and friends as in the impersonal sphere of ethical and political activism.¹⁸

Standing against the criticism that Utilitarian morality is demanding, Mill has clearly stated in *Utilitarianism* that morality does not require an agent to act always on the motive of “universal benevolence”. To act on such a motive implies that a concerned moral agent must be impartial and objective disregarding his special commitments to family, friends and loved ones. But Mill insists that to act rightly we are not under a moral obligation to maximize happiness in general. As he writes,

“[I]t is a misapprehension of the utilitarian mode of thought, to conceive it as implying that people should fix their mind upon so wide a generality as the world, or society at large. The great majority of good actions are intended not for the benefit of the world, but for that of individuals, of which the good of the world is made up; the thoughts of most virtuous man need not on these occasions travel beyond the particular persons concerned, except so far as is necessary to assure himself that in benefiting them he is not violating the rights, that is, the legitimate and authorized expectations, of anyone else.”¹⁹

Mill strongly asserts that people generally produce more happiness when they are motivated by the welfare of relatively few people with whom their lives are intertwined instead of focusing on happiness in general. The justification that he provides is that we have a better knowledge of people with whom we are well connected. As Mill writes, “the good of all can only be pursued with any success by each person’s taking as his particular department the good of the only individual whose requirements he can thoroughly know.”²⁰

Therefore, there are enough textual pieces of evidence that Mill has neither ignored individuality of a moral agent nor has ignored his special relations, commitments and duties. As a utilitarian moral philosopher, his chief objective has

¹⁷ Mill, “August Comte and Positivism,” *CW X*, p.337

¹⁸ Skorupski, *Why Read Mill Today?* P.16.

¹⁹ Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p.270.

²⁰ Mill, *The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill 1849-1873*, p.762.

been not only to pursue individual good but also to strike the balance between individual and social good through the formation of individual character and ensuring a favourable external circumstance. That may be the reason that unlike Bentham, Mill has proposed internal as well as external sanctions of morality. Internal sanction demands developed the conscience of an individual whereas external sanction demands favourable social, political and legal arrangements. It is expected that the conscience of an individual will develop if he receives appropriate education of intellect, imagination and moral sentiments. In chapter-IV of *Utilitarianism*, Mill's argument to arrive at "general happiness" based on an aggregate of individual happiness assumes the presence of developed conscience as well as favourable external circumstances. Mill expects that in this "aggregate", each individual will obtain their "fair share of happiness" without sacrificing their individuality while, at the same time, taking care of the legitimate interests of others as a social being

Conclusion:

In light of the above analysis, therefore, it can be argued that the allegation of upholding a standard too high for humanity cannot be labelled against Mill. However, critics may still express doubt regarding Mill's less demanding approach arguing that Mill has upheld high optimism regarding human nature which is evident in his assertion that in the notion of "general good", the good of each individual would be in harmony with each other. However, in Mill's defence, it can be argued that the ideal of every morality is to evolve from "what is" to "what ought to be". Hence, just as Mill's empiricist orientation led him to acknowledge that such evolution is possible only through the improvement of status quo i.e. improvement of given individual character and a given external circumstance, such orientation also led him to recognize that evolution is not possible disregarding one's factual capacity. Mill has noted that due to limited capacity, an individual moral agent, can maximize utility only remaining minimalist in approach i.e. cultivating and developing his own individuality, taking care of the interests of those individuals who are directly affected by his action and ensuring minimal conditions of other's well-being by at least not harming their legitimate interests.

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**INTENTIONALITY, UNDERSTANDING, AND SYMBOL GROUNDING:
SEARLE'S *CHINESE ROOM ARGUMENT* AND
THE LIMITS OF COMPUTATIONALISM**

MAYANK BORA

The computational theory of mind for a few decades has been the ruling paradigm in the Analytic Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Sciences, and probably one of the most significant facets of the “cognitive revolution”. While it is believed that this is for a great part for good reasons, there are certain aspects, perhaps the most significant ones, of Mind and Cognition that may be far from being well understood within this paradigm. Searle’s Chinese Room Argument (henceforth CRA) may be seen as providing reasons why this might be the case when it comes to Intentionality and Consciousness.

The Chinese Room Argument:

Searle presented ‘the Chinese Room argument’, which he considered to have thoroughly refuted the ‘strong claim’ of artificial intelligence. The strong claim of artificial intelligence or ‘Strong AI’ as defined by Searle is that “the computer is not merely a tool in the study of the mind; rather, the appropriately programmed computer really is a mind, in the sense that computers given the right programs can be literally said to understand and have other cognitive states” (Searle 1980), as against ‘Weak AI’ which according to Searle stands for the view that “the principal value of the computer in the study of the mind is that it gives us a very powerful tool. For example, it enables us to formulate and test hypotheses in a more rigorous and precise fashion.” (*Ibid*)

The thought experiment (as presented in Searle 1990) calls one to imagine a monolingual English speaker (one who has no knowledge of what Chinese symbols mean) in a closed room, given some batches of Chinese symbols. The room is to have a slit from where certain symbols of Chinese writing can be passed in by Chinese speakers outside and passed out by the person inside. A rulebook in English language containing instructions on how to match Chinese symbols with one another is also supplied to the person in the room. The idea is that the rulebook is designed such that if the people outside pass in question in Chinese the person inside can ‘answer’ them appropriately by forming strings of Chinese symbols on the basis of the instructions

available to him and passing them out. The Chinese speakers outside would naturally ascribe understanding of Chinese to the person inside. To them they would be having a meaningful conversation in Chinese with a Chinese speaker (i.e. someone who understands Chinese). Yet, the monolingual English speaker has no idea of what has been going on. He understands not a bit of Chinese and is hopelessly ignorant of what he has been asked and what he has ‘answered’.¹

Searle directed the CRA against Strong AI. The Strong AI contention, as Searle introduces us to it, is that if a computer can be programmed in such a manner that its behavior in the limited sense under observation is indistinguishable from that of a being to which understanding is ascribed, in other words that it passes the Turing Test (Turing 1950), then it also understands. The Chinese room argument very neatly shows that the man in the Chinese room would pass the Turing test but does not, in fact, understand Chinese; thus, the Strong AI claim is false. However, the CRA has ramifications for more than just its intended target. The computational theory of mind or computationalism may be summarized as: Mental states are just implementations of (the right) computer program(s). (Otherwise put: Mental states are just computational states). (Harnad 2001)

Understood this way computationalism is also under attack by the CRA. If a mental state is just an implementation of the right computer program, then the Chinese room, presumably, running the right program for the understanding of Chinese, must result in the appropriate understanding. But, that it does not seem to. Thus, implementing the right sort of computer program is, evidently, not enough to have the relevant mental states; computation is not enough for cognition.

Content, Cognition and Symbol Grounding

While, in (Searle 1990) the CRA was used to argue that computation is not enough for cognition, in (Searle 1980) the argument was centered around the notion of intentionality. Just as it can be said on the basis of the CRA that implementing the

¹ The original presentations of the argument do differ in details with the one provided here, but to the best of my knowledge the above account is true to the spirit of the argument. See (Searle 1980, 1990).

relevant program does not seem to give rise to the understanding of Chinese, it can also be said, given that the Chinese conversation was occasionally about (or, intentional towards) some objects or states of affairs in the world, that implementing the program also did not give rise to any intentional states directed towards these objects or states of affairs that an actual Chinese speaker would have had. For example, if part of the Chinese conversation included the people outside telling the person inside that there has been an earthquake in China, a fact otherwise unknown to the person inside, then an actual Chinese speaker would be expected to now have the belief regarding such an earthquake, but the man running the program in the CRA would still be oblivious of it.

Intentionality, the property of mental states of being directed towards objects or states of affairs in the world, is a significant property of cognition, but not co-extensional with cognition or consciousness. As Searle (1983) points out, conscious cognitive states like feeling pain etc are not intentional towards an object, or state of affairs in the world. Searle (ibid) also points out that some intentional states like beliefs are not always conscious. It is no coincidence that the CRA apparatus can be used to argue with respect to both intentionality (as in Searle 1980) and cognition in general (as in Searle 1990).

When it comes to cognition, there are two significant aspects of concern, which loosely track the consciousness/intentionality distinction. There is the matter of the raw feel of the experience/conscious mental state; what is it for the experiencing being to have that experience/conscious mental state.² We may term this the *qualitative* aspect of cognition. On the other hand, as we have already discussed, intentional states have intentional content. This we may term the *content-related* aspect of cognition. In the CRA the man inside is obviously capable of having cognitive/intentional states. In fact that is what allows us to get this 'look inside of a computer', not otherwise possible, and see what states do or do not obtain. It is also not that the man inside lacks any cognitive states that correspond to the Chinese symbols. While he might not be aware that the symbols are Chinese, he has to be able

² Note that not all mental states need be conscious. As such this does not apply to cognition in general, but many if not most cognitive states do have this experiential/conscious aspect.

to perceive the distinct shapes of the symbols to manipulate them according to the program, and thus must have some cognitive states pertaining to the symbols (states where the intentional objects are the symbols themselves). It is not, thus, a lack of the qualitative aspects of cognition that we witness in the CRA. Instead, it is that none of the cognitive states of the man inside have much of the sort of content that a Chinese speaker in the same position would. The Chinese speaker would not only have states intentional towards the symbols but also states that are intentional towards what the symbols symbolize, or 'stand for'.² In cases of linguistic cognition such as in the CRA, the relevant mental states get the 'stand for' (semantic) content via the knowledge of the meaning of the symbols. A Chinese speaker other than having the perceptual states regarding the shapes of the symbols also have states with the content that the Chinese symbols being used 'stand for'.³ Precisely because the man inside does not know what these symbols stand for, he has no cognitive or intentional states that correspond with their meanings.

In short, Searle's argument is based on the Chinese symbols, which the man inside or more generally, a computer, operates on not being meaningful for the computer. In technical terms there is a symbol string that is put as input into the computer which after certain formal operations outputs another symbol string. Searle's argument is centered on that these inputs and outputs, including any mediate arrangement of these or equivalent symbols, are not in any sense interpreted by the computer but only by those outside who attach some interpretation to the symbols. According to Searle,

The fact that the programmer and the interpreter of the computer output use the symbols to stand for objects in the world is totally beyond the scope of the computer. ... if you type into the computer '2 plus 2 equals?' it will type out '-4.' But it has no idea that '-4' means 4 or that it means anything at all." (Searle 1980)

² Thus, we can see that the design of the CRA is such that it cannot show us that by purely manipulating symbols according to a program whether consciousness can arise or not, since the man inside is already (capable of) having conscious states. (Not that we are trying to show or even believe that that can happen, but just for proper exegesis). What it does show is that whatever conscious states the man may have lack the relevant content.

³ We disregard for now the possible limitations of vocabulary. We suppose that all the conversation uses basic vocabulary an average Chinese speaker would know.

Thus, Searle seems to be pointing out that the symbols that a computer operates on do not have any grounding internal to the computer system but, that the semantics of the symbols for the computer are actually derived from the semantics of these symbols for the programmers and the interpreters. As such, what we see here is the notorious problem in computer science called the symbol-grounding problem. According to Searle,

(T)he point is not that it lacks some second-order information about the interpretation of its first-order symbols, but rather that its first-order symbols don't have any interpretations as far as the computer is concerned. All the computer has is more symbols. (Searle 1980)

While here Searle is trying to show what goes wrong for the Strong AI/Computationalism claim in the Chinese room, this quote is a very good statement of the symbol grounding problem too. The problem is precisely about making the interpretation of the symbols available internally to the system. In the Chinese room the Chinese symbols would have been considered grounded if the English speaker could interpret them. One way of doing it would have been to provide the English speaker with a Chinese to English dictionary. The person could have used the dictionary to translate the Chinese symbols into their English equivalents thereby understanding what they mean. However, such a scenario is not achievable in an actual computer.

For a computer all symbols, whatever they may mean to an interpreter, are like what the Chinese symbols are to the monolingual English speaker; meaningless. As there is no language natural for the computer, to a computer there is no symbol or system of symbols intrinsically meaningful, in terms of which other symbols can be defined and thence made internally interpretable for it. The meta-language/object-language approach that may work fine for a constructed formal logical system has no hope of working for a computer as the meta-language symbols themselves would not have any interpretation for the computer. Searle's Chinese room argument makes use of this fact about computers to conclude that computers, even if they have the right sort of program and the right sorts of inputs and outputs, do not have mental states of understanding, or in Searle's terms they do not have intentional states. Intentionality is not achieved by symbol-manipulation, or to once again use Searle's terminology, "Syntax by itself is neither constitutive of nor sufficient for semantics." (Searle 1990)

Syntax and Semantics

The crux of the story is that symbol manipulation cannot establish (linguistic) understanding, since the lack of symbol grounding means the meanings of the symbols and therefore understanding of the conversation is not available. However, there are two ways in which symbols can be meaningful/significant and thus grounded. One way is to know what the symbols mean/stand for. Such knowledge of symbols is what tells us what objects the symbols, and what states of affairs the sentences built out of those symbols, stand for and thereby results in the relevant intentional states. The other way symbols can be significant/meaningful is their structural or 'grammatical significance'. And grammatical significance arises out of merely symbol manipulations and the properties of the symbols that are required for the symbol manipulations and must therefore be given as part of the 'shape'⁴ of the symbols. As such syntax is enough for grounding symbols in the latter way and thereby the corresponding understanding can be made available by merely symbol manipulations.

Only certain combinations of symbols, or symbol strings, are interpretable. That is only a select few combinations of symbols are acceptable and then interpreted as to the 'stand for' meanings of the symbols. In common parlance we know this as the grammar of a language and the grammaticality of sentence. The grammaticality of a sentence is itself a matter of linguistic significance.⁵

Alec Marantz, as quoted in (Mukherji 2010: 78), shows that one can start with English words, put them in a form true to Japanese word order and the resulting "word salad" (*Man the book a women those to given has) would not be interpreted as an English sentence. Whereas, a skeletal sentence with a recognizable verb form of an unknown verb (X bobbed Y) is readily interpreted as an English sentence. 'X' and 'Y' being unknown symbols do not impign any grammatically significant properties on the string, and those of the symbol recognized as a verb due to is morphological

⁴ The shape of a symbol must be understood as the totality of the properties of the symbol that the relevant symbol manipulations are sensitive too. In other words, (the totality of) the properties of the symbol that the symbol manipulations require to manipulate on them.

⁵ In fact, the grammar of a language may be the only theoretically salient conception of what counts as a particular natural language.

suffix take over, forcing Noun Phrase interpretations on 'X' and 'Y'. Chomsky's example highlighting the grammatical significance of sentences, as the grammaticality of sentences may be called; (Colorless green ideas sleep furiously) is legendary. It shows how a sentence, that is obviously not meaningful in the way a sentence like 'Good faithful dogs guard incessantly' is meaningful, is yet not mere noise but comes across as significant or meaningful in a way, which is relevant to linguistic/syntactic theory.

One may also think of grammatical significance in terms of an analogy with music. In music only certain combinations of the various notes are musical. The others are discordant and come across as noise rather than pieces of music. As such, the musical pieces have a sense of significance about them that is lacking in the discordant strings. Similarly, grammatical sentences are grammatically significant even though at times the stand for meanings of the symbols do not result in any stand for interpretation for the sentence as in Chomsky's example.

While in communication there is high measure of looseness in terms of grammaticality of sentences, it cannot be completely disregarded as the word salad example above bears witness to.⁶ Thus, in the Chinese room if the programmers have to make the responses of the man inside indistinguishable from those of a natural Chinese speaker one thing they would have to do is make the responses of the man grammatically correct for the most part. For this they will have to program a grammatical subroutine and include that in the rulebook. The grammatical subroutine will tell the man inside in which order to place the symbols selected for the response. The grammatical subroutine will also first receive the inputs and according to the grammatical structure discern what state of affairs is being referred to. (Did the man give the book to those women, or did the book give the man to those women, etc.) As the grammar of a language is sensitive to certain categorical and semantic properties of the lexical items which the symbols represent, some way would have to be found so as to attach some representations of such lexical properties to the symbols. One

⁶ For now, for the sake of argument let us just consider that a string is grammatical if and only if it is interpretable. This does not make a difference since, we may just argue taking the notion of interpretability as central instead of grammaticality.

way to do it would be to classify symbols according to their categorical properties by putting symbols representing the same grammatical categories in the same boxes. The man inside would not have any knowledge of the basis of these classifications. He would just have instructions to the effect, “pick a certain symbol from Box A”, “pick a certain symbol from Box B”, “place the symbol from Box B before the symbol from Box A”, etc. The input-output strings to be grammatical would need to agree to specific patterns, as determined by Chinese grammar, so that out of the many possible arrangements of a set of symbols, only a few would ever be selected.

Now, while the program is programmed to not produce ungrammatical strings and therefore barring a failure on the part of the man inside to carry some step of the computation properly, given that the program itself has no faults, there would be no output strings which would be ungrammatical, it might be the case that a person outside makes a mistake and sends in a string that happens to be ungrammatical. Since the program would be required to compute on the inputs in order to determine the right outputs, and will have to mimic the inability of a Chinese Speaker of not being able to understand Chinese word salads like the English word salad above, the program would have to be such that for such a string un-interpretable to a Chinese speaker is also un-interpretable for the program. While it could be that in such cases the program just asks the man inside to output something to the effect “Sorry! I didn't get that” directly, the program could also be designed so that it simply crashes and outputs nothing. Then the rulebook might tell the man that whenever the program crashes and selects no output then to send a particular string as output, a string to the same effect of expressing the failure to understand as the one above. Then again it might not and the lack of output would to the people outside be similar to the puzzled silence which is a common response in such situations in real life. Now, consider the scenario where the input to the Chinese room is mixed with respect to grammatical and ungrammatical strings. Whenever the input is ungrammatical the computation for the grammatical subroutine will crash, and the person will be able to note that and send the output expressing failure to understand. Whenever the input is grammatical the computation for the grammatical subroutine will sail through, which again the man will be again be able to note. As such the person will be able to tell whether the input string is grammatical or not. In effect, some states of understanding pertaining

to the Chinese symbols would be available to the man inside. These intuitions are strengthened if we consider variation of the CRA where it is not the man inside the Chinese room, but the reverse, i.e. when the man is supposed to have internalized all the CRA apparatus. In such a case whenever the man is presented with a string of Chinese symbols, he would in his head carry out the grammatical subroutine and if the string is proper the computation will go through and the man will know now he can proceed to choose an answer for it. If not the man will not be able to carry out the grammatical subroutine properly and will know that he can not go on computing with the string. Other than the fact that in actual cases the computations are unconscious processes this internalized CRA picture is quite akin to the what linguistic/syntactic theory tells us about the syntactical aspects of our own language use.

Even if the level of understanding that can be achieved in the above case would be miniscule, it is not a trivial matter. For one thing, there are some states of understanding pertaining to the Chinese symbols that the man inside will be have purely on the basis of symbol manipulation and that are not merely perceptual states directed towards the symbols but would qualify as linguistic cognition, not cognition of the stand for meaning or referents of the symbols but of their structural significance. As such, even if Searle's use of the CRA with respect to intentionality would not be undermined his case against cognition in general would be. But, even for intentionality grammaticality is significant. In the word salad example the string of symbols can not correspond to any state of affairs. Only if the string was grammatical in English would a(n) (English speaking) person be able to discern the relevant state of affairs, and have a thought intentional towards them. Also, changing the position of the terms and “man” and “book” in a grammatical English form of the string⁷ would signal distinct states of affairs. Thus, even though grammaticality by itself does not determine intentionality, the grammatical structure of a sentence is very significant in computing the right states of affairs that correspond to it. I believe one thing has been shown. The CRA cannot make a case against symbol manipulation giving rise to cognition where the symbol manipulations are being used to ground

⁷ Which happens to be: “The man has a given a book to those women.”

grammatical understanding of linguistic strings or, by analogy, structural understanding of non-linguistic strings where such an understanding makes sense.

Computationalism and Snowflakes

At this point of time a computationalist might want to say well in cases like these where structural significance is in question, the mental states consist of just the relevant computations. But, this I believe can lead to certain absurd conclusions. To see this consider an analogous scenario to the thought experiment above. The understanding emerging in the experiment above is the understanding of the structure of the output string. There could be another room where the symbols instead of representing Chinese words, represent other things, having outputs that also have notable structural properties.

Snowflakes do have very significant structural properties. They can have highly complex structures but almost always maintain a high degree of symmetry around their geometrical centre. But perhaps, the most consistent feature of snowflakes is that they always display a hexagonal structure and the symmetry is always six-fold. Their final structure is a function of the physical-chemical properties determining the crystal structure of ice particles on the basis of the nature of bonding between water molecules, and the values of the atmospheric variables mainly temperature and humidity during various points of time in the development of the snow-crystal. The snowflakes begin as tiny micro sized droplets of water which freeze and start gathering more and more water molecules by the condensation of water vapor directly into solid form. Thereon the atmospheric determinants result in the shape of the snowflake at any given time since the beginning of its formation.⁸ (Libbrecht 2004/5)

⁸ This is quite analogous to the Universal Grammar notion in linguistics. The inherent combinatorial tendencies of the water molecules dependent upon the physical-chemical properties of water molecules play the role of the Universal Grammar and thereon the atmospheric determinants result in the particular structure of any given snowflake just as the Universal Grammar and the environmental stimuli result in the particular structural/grammatical properties of the natural language acquired with the categorial properties of the words then deciding the grammatical structure of individual sentences.

Now imagine that, the program being run in the room is not one for understanding Chinese with the symbols being Chinese symbols, but instead a computer model simulating the process of snowflake formation with the symbols representing water molecules. If the simulation is accurate then the program will never output anything that does not have a hexagonal structure. Also as Libbrecht says, “The exact shape of each of the six arms reflects the history of the crystal’s growth,” (I-vi) given a complete understanding of the physics involved, we can design the model to not only simulate the formation of snowflakes but also be run in reverse to take a representation of a given snowflake and trace back its plausible histories. Designed this way, if the model is presented with an anomalous snowflake representation, say one displaying an octagonal structure, the model will not be able to select any plausible histories as it will not be able to recognize the input string as valid and the computation will crash. Similar to as in the modified CRA above with the grammatical subroutine, here too the man inside will be able to tell between (the representation of a) proper and (that of) an anomalous snowflake.

Given this the computationalist would have to say that even the understanding of snowflakes can be had by merely running a computer program, a statement that is in fact not in itself problematic for the computationalist. But it becomes, or ought to become, problematic when we consider what is or can be considered as a computer performing some computation. In fact, any thing, or process any aspects of which can be understood in terms of symbols, inputs and outputs can be computationally described and anything that can be computationally described can be thought of as a computer. It can at the very least be thought of as computing the function that has been used to describe it. Something as usual as a walk can be seen as a computation. All that needs to be done is to imagine a 2-D grid on the ground that a person walks. The man’s positions on the grid can be taken down in terms of a set of (x, y) values. There would be a mathematical function that captures this set of values (in fact, there would be infinite such functions). The man’s walk can then be said to compute this

function, with his x-positions as inputs and his y-positions as outputs. Thus anything can be seen as a computational system.⁹

Given this consideration what could better computationally simulate the process of snowflake formation than the process of snowflake formation itself seen computationally. All that is needed is to attach the notion of symbols appropriately, i.e. taking any water molecule as a token symbolic representation of the symbol type corresponding to water molecules. Similarly, any individual snowflake would be the token representation of the string¹⁰ type corresponding to the class of snowflakes physically identical to that one. Now we could even use the natural process of snowflake formation as a computer implementing a computational simulation of itself, akin to the one in the thought experiment above. When we have to see what kind of a snowflake would be formed given a history certain atmospheric values, we simply locate natural conditions where that history obtains.¹¹ Similarly, given a snowflake type we calculate for it a plausible history by simply locating a corresponding snowflake and tracing back its atmospheric history, assuming for the sake of argument that we are able to maintain a record of that. And, if we were to try and find a plausible history for an imagined octagonal snowflake we would not be able to assign it a corresponding string type and thus the computation crashes and no history is obtained. Of course, most of these things are impractical and some even impossible to actually perform. But, the point is not that we actually be able to use the process of snowflake formation as its own computer simulation but only that we be able to see it as implementing one. The fact that we can see how in principle it can be used to that effect tells us that we can, in fact, see it as implementing its own computer simulation.

⁹ Note that I am not saying that every thing is every computer but only that everything is some computer, even if a computer computing nothing more than its own computational description. As such this may escape Block's (1995) criticism of Searle's idea, presented in (*Ibid*) that every thing is every computer, since here we only consider that thing/process as machine the computational description of which is to be computed. A wall is not really isomorphic to the computation $1+0=1$, since not all aspects of the wall can be mapped on to it, but this obviously is not the case for a walk and a mathematical curve that describes it perfectly.

¹⁰ A snowflake would be seen as a (3-D) string of water molecule symbols.

¹¹ Of course, this is easy only in principle but may be close to impossible in realit. But, we are only running a thought experiment here.

Any computationalist who thought that in cases where structural significance is in question computers can understand will have to admit that even the natural process of snowflake formation literally understands a snowflake from a non-snowflake, and thus has a mind. This I believe is a totally absurd thing to believe in. Searle (1980) says:

If Strong AI is to be a branch of psychology, then it must be able to distinguish those systems that are genuinely mental from those that are not. It must be able to distinguish the principles on which the mind works from those on which nonmental systems work; otherwise it will offer us no explanations of what is specifically mental about the mental.

The same also goes for computationalism. What Searle had in mind above were machines, like thermostats and the normal computers. But, Searle's concern becomes much more relevant when even natural processes begin to be counted as mental. Human beings have a mind and so do dogs, cats, elephants and dolphins. Perhaps, all higher animals do. The boundary is not clearly drawn and developing understanding about cognition might make it clearer where it lies. It may even tell us some dubious cases are on the same side as us. But, natural processes forming snowflakes, ferntrees or quartz crystals are clear cases of non- mental and if you get a theory of cognition “that denies this point you have produced a counterexample to the theory and the theory is false.” (Searle *Ibid*).¹²

Some cursory remarks on symbols and consciousness

One more thing needs to be considered about computation, and this might tell us why symbol-grounding might be, in both of its aspects problematic for computationalism. As we already saw, any thing or process can be seen as a computation. What is important is interpreting certain aspects, objects, as symbolic representations of something. In other words the notion of a symbol is paramount for computation. And while sometimes a symbol is interpreted as standing for something, sometimes all that is necessary is the shape of the symbol. But, whether seeing a symbol as a symbol for something or just as a symbol with a certain shape, what is necessary is *seeing* it as a symbol. Be it any (possible) computer, an intel chip or a

¹² Having said that, the computational theory of mind is not committed to saying that mental states just are computational states. That computation is necessary for (some) mental states though not sufficient are also a recognizable doctrine under the computational theory of mind.

natural process, there is no such thing as a computation without someone attaching the notion of a symbol to something. But, objects or physical processes do not see anything as a symbol, only cognizing beings like us can. Seeing a symbol as a symbol is itself a cognitive act, one that logically precedes the notion of computation. As such, computation simply cannot account for cognition in general. The computational theory of mind to make any sense of its main tool must itself rely on the notion of cognition. Symbol-grounding therefore might not only itself be a (somewhat) hard problem for the computational theory of mind but also make providing a full account of cognition problematic for it. Furthermore, if we consider what kind of cognition must seeing a symbol as a symbol be, in terms of the qualitative aspects of cognition, i.e. can merely unconscious mental states ground the notion of a symbol as a symbol, we might be inclined to answer in the negative.¹³ In such a case, this problem attaches itself to the problem of consciousness and inherits its level of hardness. (cf. Chalmers 1995)

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¹³ I only speculate here about the possible relation between consciousness and meaning; space and time constraints do not allow a fuller inspection.

GAZZANIGA'S VIEW ON SELF: SOME OBSERVATIONS

ATREYEE MUKHERJEE

The Philosophical Dispute: SAG versus SAC

The philosophical approaches to self are diverse. However all these multifarious theories can be roughly brought under two broad heads: (i) The self as 'given' and (ii) The self as 'constructed'. The 'self as given' theories (hereafter to be referred to as SAG theory) are often real-self theories. Most of the traditional theorists have proposed their definition of real self based on this theory. This theory claims that the self is something that is given to us with its essential quality and other pre-characteristics. These theories insist individuals to discover such an entity, which is entirely different from the brain or any other part (or organ) of the biological body. Versions of this theory were pioneered by the Upanisadic seers of ancient India who believed that the ultimate purpose of life and existence is the realization and discovery of the self (Atman or Brahman). In the west the most prominent version of the theory of a given self is due to Descartes.

However last few decades witnessed the emergence of the latter theory namely self as 'constructed' theory (hereafter to be referred to as SAC theory)¹. These theorists not only claim that there exists no such given entity corresponding to the traditional notion of self rather this whole concept is a natural creation of us human beings which has an evolutionary endorsement. According to some versions of this theory, our biological mechanism (brain cells) is responsible for producing in us a feeling of continuous inner self over and above the body. These theorists consent to the fact that it is both a matter of biological and psychological necessity that we try to find a common denominator for all our unified experiences, which we coin as 'self'. Proponents of this theory mostly conceive self in terms of a narrative, a concept imported into philosophy and cognitive science by Daniel Dennett. We find two divergent views on how this narrative self is constructed. Although both the views subscribe to the minimal contention that the narrative self is constructed, theorists from one camp call this self a

¹ However we can interpret the notion of self propounded by the *Sunyavadins*, a Buddhist school of thought (main proponent Nagarjun) as a version of SAC thesis.

‘rich amalgam of narratives’, which is something more substantial, richer and which accounts for all sorts of contradiction, equivocation and self-deception. While the theorists from the other camp call this narrative self nothing more than an illusory or fictional entity.

Today progress in neuroscience reveals that all the mental processes (feelings, thoughts, memories etc) underlying our sense of self are scattered in the different zones of the brain (Antonio Damasio). Since these neurological processing is for most of the part distributed in various sections of the brain, there is no real simplicity of experience at one time, or real identity across the time that we could label as self. Although it is a well-agreed fact amongst present-day neuro-scientists that it is our brain activity which gives rise to our sense of self, however there is still no consensus amongst the researchers regarding the fact how exactly ‘the six-layered cortical sheet gives rise to the sense of self’.² Cognitive scientists are still exploring how the neuron firings give rise to a coordinated goal-directed behaviour. However they are firmly convinced that there exists no self apart from the brain. Brain is the physical basis of all our thoughts, language, aspiration, sense of consciousness, moral beliefs etc. There has been a long debate both in ancient times and contemporary times as to how discrediting the reality of self would dissolve the long-standing philosophical problems especially related to the ontological status of self. However such a position brings with it a fresh baggage of challenges relating to personal identity, free will and moral responsibility of an individual’s actions. More importantly reality of self would greatly tear apart the way we lead our life, our current belief environment. So the pressure to rehabilitate the self is no easy task.

Before entering into the arguments in favour of restoring the self, forwarded by the contemporary SAC theorists, some questions always come to my mind – what is it that we are seeking to rehabilitate? If suspending the self shatters our belief environment to such a large extent, will we really be ready to discard such a notion? All the contemporary SAC theories accept that there exists a human individual and nothing beyond this individual. This individual engages in thought, action and deliberation. His

² Broks Paul. (2003) *Into the Silent Land: Travels in Neuropsychology*. Atlantic Books

arm rises because of the activity in the brain and impulses in the nerves and not because there is an inner self-directing person (homunculus) who does the deciding and acting. Since denying this self is a 'life-shattering denial', SAC theorists have left no stone unturned to show how this denial is well grounded and how to rebuild the life that the denial of this self has shattered.

Another common belief that the contemporary SAC theorists share is that they reject that thing which has no place in science at the outset. So whenever they talk about denial of reality of self, 'reality' is taken to mean scientific reality. What does this denial of self mean? It means denying a person over and above the organism with its brain and other scientifically describable properties. Now denial of this self is as Baron remarks 'at once both less and more radical than it first appears'. It is 'less radical' in the sense that denial of the concept of a person does not cease our feeling like individuals or stop us from identifying people by names. However discarding such a concept of person may seem 'more radical' in the sense that whenever we will hereafter try to reflect upon our actions, the way we reason for our particular actions, values etc, denial of self seems to have a catastrophic effect.

Another aspect that almost all the contemporary SAC theorists are concerned with is the distinction between the *feeling* (or as many philosophers like Dennett would call it fiction) that an individual is a self or that an individual possess a self over and above its organs and brain (brain-states) and the *fact* that an individual really possesses such a 'given' self. In this context the SAC theorists cite examples from various disciplines (and also from daily life) how we work successfully with concepts that really do not exist. However here it is cautioned again and again that though metaphysically or ontologically such a concept may not exist, yet the corresponding brain-states to those concepts do exist.

A contemporary SAC theorist would for instance explicate Keats' writing 'An ode to a Nightingale' in the following manner³: Keats heard a nightingale and his then present state of the brain (along with other factors like genetic preferences, his previous memory of a nightingale's song etc.) sent an impulse which traveled to the auditory

³ I have borrowed this example from Richard Baron.

nerve which triggered several other impulses which in turn brought about change in patterns in the brain and finally led him to his write an ode. Now from the perspective of science, an exemplar of *Homo sapiens* wrote an ode to a nightingale and not a person. Here the SAG theorists can object that an ode makes sense only when we presuppose a self (or may be a community of selves) who can appreciate poetry. However science would say an 'ode' is nothing but a few series of marks on paper which produce certain effects in the brains of a certain set of people. However it will be a misreading if the mission or intention of the SAC theorists is considered here to be simply reducing the human or folk concepts to scientific jargon. What is actually intended here is that we can give a complete description of such concepts in a purely scientific term referring to brain-states and so on. However such descriptions do not account for value laden-ness (like achievement, appreciation etc.).

Again a SAG theorist may raise an objection against a SAC theorist that even their sincere attempt to chart out a complete scientific description of our behaviour etc fails to account for the corresponding justification of our behaviour. For instance Keats' Ode is a product of beauty in the sense that reading it produces brain-states, which are associated with sensations of pleasure. We seem to praise Keats for his product. But science cannot perhaps answer questions like~ why we feel grateful to Keats for gifting us with a beautiful poem? What is the justification for doing so? The SAC theorist would respond to this problem of justification by saying that we are justified in responding to people's actions so as to maximize the frequency of occurrence and strength of brain-states (that corresponds to happiness) following the evolutionary theory. Thus we can come up with a scientific account of justification. However a SAG theorist would then say "..... if that were done, our concept of justification would be severely impoverished. It is of its essence that it rises above the facts, that it does not just follow them. We want justifications to do more than [just] recite the facts".

However the difficulty of justifying evaluations of our actions still remains. Even if one 'looks inside' the head of a person who saved one from falling down a cliff one will find neurons and impulses and neurons responding to impulses but have no grounds for evaluating his action as praiseworthy or blameworthy. To whatever degree of refinement of mechanism science arrives at, we can only see what happened and never understand the moral worth of actions. So interpreting our electrical impulses is not possible. Rather

the only way left is to take resort to the concept of self, a moral agent who can be held responsible for his actions; only then, there remains a scope for evaluation of our actions. Now the program of denial of self means blocking the way to recognize the moral agency in me. Thus this denial leads us with no ground for blaming or appraising our actions. So this denial is disastrous.

Now the whole issue of whether at all the self can be held responsible for his actions results from the debate between determinism and randomness. In the deterministic end, the organism is simply a part and parcel of the 'universal clockwork ticking away inevitably'. So in this scheme he has no choice, he merely acts what he has to do. On the other hand in the random model, the clockwork is not wholly predictable. Unfortunately we cannot still confer responsibility to the self in this model because when we do something, which is not in our control (there are some neurons randomly firing in our brains), we cannot be held responsible for that action. So we cannot find any basis for our attributions of responsibility (praising or blaming any of our actions).

Therefore when we are talking about a responsible self we are transcending the scientifically describable organism. Now at this juncture a question may arise in our mind why do the SAG theorists take such a move of transcending the scientifically describable organism? The motive behind taking such a step is betterment of our society. Appraising our actions stimulates further good acts, though these appraisals or sense of personal responsibility may not be real. Here some contemporary theorists like Daniel Dennett forward an evolutionary line of argument and say that perhaps nature found that brain states (neuron-firing) corresponding to sense of personal responsibility were more favorable to species' existence than those without that sense. However it still remains a debatable issue for even the specialist evolutionary biologists to explore how our sense of personal responsibility originated and how it is transmitted. While talking about personal responsibility it is worth mentioning that today all SAC theorist across the board acknowledge that the responsibility we attribute to the self is not absolute, it is influenced greatly by both socio-cultural factors and genetic factors. Though the classical trend in philosophy is to acknowledge a watertight distinction between the external influences and realm of personal choice. Today when we talk about the choice of the self it includes both the personal choices and biases (hard-wired) of the individual that have genetic bearing and also environmental moorings (what Dennett calls memetic effects).

Another important effect of possessing a self is that it makes us feel our life is precious. And because we feel our life is precious, we perform all sorts of actions to protect our lives (or even that of others). Now a member of SAG theory argues that if we consider ourselves as organisms and nothing more than that, then there is really nothing special to make our persistence good. It is only because we think ourselves to be more than just organisms, that we invest our lives with value. We consider specific individuals to be precious in themselves. That is to say even if all the qualities which makes him special or precious were listed and reproduced in another individual, our feeling would not be same towards the latter individual as it is towards the former one. There is really no rationale for our special preference for the former individual unless we assume there is a self, which we value simply because of its identity and not its qualities⁴. The SAC theorists on the other hand argue here that we do assign value to people and their lives but we are really not justified in doing so. Even if the justification issue is pursued the SAC theorists would say 'isn't survival an important part of any organism's life, whether that organism has a sense of self or not?'

So when we are doing scientific realism, there is little or no place for an objective self over and above the socio-biological organism. In fact the SAC theorists generally agree that not only denial of self is well grounded but also such a stance gets us out of many conceptual tangles, which has little prospect of their being resolved even in the long run. The individual, the organism is recognized by the contemporary science but the self is an unnecessary add-on. They have shown how dropping the concept of self dissolves many of the long-standing philosophical knots. Does this mean that concept of self does not play a vital role in the lives of the contemporary SAC theorists? It does play an important role in a SAC theorist's life so does it play in a SAG theorist's life, the difference being while the SAC theorist proposes to acknowledge the unreality of self at the same time pretend as if the self is real, a SAG theorist sincerely believes the self to be real. In fact the faith or belief in the existence of a self is not always made consciously.

⁴Feminists across the board will protest at this juncture and say that whether one is a constructivist about the self or not, a self can never be understood as an individual, unrelated entity. A self is a relational thing, even if it stands in relation to just another self. So, the claim that there is no rationale behind our special preference for one individual over another will not be supported by feminists and other relational self theorists.

Such a faith may be hardwired in the human brain or developed as part of the process of socializing. Denial of an independent ontic status to the self does not mean denying the concept of self an evolutionary, sociological or survival value.

Origin of the contemporary SAC thesis:

To the seventeenth century French philosopher Descartes the self essentially meant a nonphysical, conscious principle, which was not identical with any physical thing (not even ones body). However the eighteenth century philosopher Hume did not agree with Descartes. Keeping pace with his empiricist spirit, he proceeded to investigate whether there was really such a non-physical conscious entity (self) apart from the body. And the conclusion he reached tallied with anything but that of Descartes'. Hume found that even if we monitor our experience closely we find a continuous flux of perceptions, sounds, memories and thoughts but no single experience to which we can refer to and say 'that's the self'. (We can contrast this with our felt experiences like 'tooth ache' or 'leg pain', which we can refer to pointedly). Again there is no singular continuous object with any spatial reference other than our body, which we can refer to as the self.

However for Hume too no statement seemed to be more obvious than the statement 'I exist' (Cogito ergo sum). Moreover when we introspect reflectively we do realize that that there is a single notion of 'me ness' or 'mine-ness' running throughout the entire strand of our experience. So when I hurt myself, I know the pain is mine. Again when I scold myself for being clumsy, I know it is me scolding myself. Though Hume too thought that these were reasonable beliefs (that there seems to be more to me and myself than just my body and its parts and my body is not simply equivalent to my self), but these beliefs do not contribute to the answer of the question "what is the self?"

So there poses a puzzle for Hume – I think, I am something and this thing which many call self is something we cannot observe at least like we recognize our pain or observe our body and our bodily parts. Now if the self is not something I can observe, then is it a mental construction, 'mode of thinking about my experiences'? If we have an affirmative reply to this question, then three tagged questions immediately come up: a) who is responsible for such a construction? b) what are the properties of this constructed self? and c) why do we at all construct such a notion of self?

Today due to progress in cognitive neuroscience, we are in a better position to address these questions than it was for Hume in the eighteenth century. The contemporary SAC theorists have tried to approach Hume's questions from a scientific perspective. Progress in cognitive science today has assured the theorists across the board that thinking is essentially an activity of the brain. So thinking, of oneself, as a singular thing existing throughout the fabric of ones' life must also be an activity of the brain. So in a very loose sense, we have an answer to Hume's question concerning the self. It must be the brain, which is responsible for constructing such a notion of self. As far as the question 'why does the brain at all construct such a notion of self?' is concerned, evolutionary biology suggests that such a concept plays a vital role or function in the 'neuronal organization' used to coordinate movement with needs, perceptions and memories and such coordination is directly related with the individual's survival and well-being. For human beings and other organisms with higher-level cognition such self-representational capacities are constructed to facilitate our thinking about the future.

In the section to follow I will address what one of the leading cognitive scientists Michael Gazzaniga has to say about how the brain constructs or generates our sense of self, that is to say generates the 'I' that I am. Before we enter into any expository investigations of theses on constructed self forwarded by these cognitive scientists, we first need to be clear about the difference senses of the word 'self'. While talking about the self, we at times compare our self in terms of 'object metaphors' (like I pushed myself to finish the work); again we at other times we talk of self in terms of 'person metaphor' like 'I have treated myself with a chocolate ice cream'. It is interesting to note that generally when we think of self as a person, we tend think of ourselves not in terms of a singular self but rather in terms of group of selves but these groups as if being parts of a unified partite entity I call myself. Thus we talk about our good self, our bad self, our public self, our private self and so on. Again in such cases mainly when we engage into describing our character traits, we may refer to one's real self which one may hide from public or reveal as required. This real self can be contrasted with the public self (we do not really talk about unreal self), which veils our true selves. Still at other times self is thought of as a project and thus we engage into self-improvement or self-discipline program.

What these strikingly diverse and contradictory metaphors suggest is that self is ‘not a thoroughly coherent, single, unified representational scheme, rather the self is something like a squadron of capacities flying in loose formation’. These diverse metaphors also suggest the multifarious functional capacities we assign to the self. There are still other capacities which these metaphors cannot grasp which too are related with the functioning of self like detection of changes in glucose and CO₂ levels, explicit memories and many more. Thus the self as we know it now on the basis of neuro-physiological evidence is a collection of capacities and representations, each of which get activated under specialized circumstances and under specialized demands. One of the central requisites of this representationally coherent scheme we call ‘self’ is the ability to coordinate ‘needs, goals, perception, and memory with motor control’. Neurobiology of self-phenomena mainly addresses issues related to the role or function of self-concept in making our inner life coherent.

Though there are large gaps in our knowledge regarding these self representational capacities, still we have knowledge about two important facts regarding the self, first it is not a thing or a substantive entity and even if it is a representation, it is not a single representation (‘Self-representations may be widely distributed across brain tissue, coordinated only on a “as needed” basis, and arranged in a loose hierarchy’). Rephrasing Hume’s problems in terms of self-representational capacity by the contemporary cognitive scientists has helped in formulating questions regarding the function of self better. Since majority of the contemporary SAC theorists have advocated the hypothesis that ‘self’ is actually a ‘loosely connected set of representational capacities’, it important to know briefly what exactly representations are in terms of neuroanatomy.

Representations are states of the brain or patterns of activity across groups of neurons, which carry information. For instance, a pattern of neuronal activity can embody information that something hot touched the left hand or that food is needed. So when we talk about a representational model, it considers a coordinated organization of representations embodying information about a connected set of objects and what changes occur in them across the temporal frame. So the brain can have a representation of the body, sensation of one’s limbs etc.

Self representation comes in grades or degrees. Certain self representational capacities may increase or decrease depending on several factors including neurochemical secretions, behavioral state, task demands and immediate history. Self representation is a many-dimensional phenomenon, not an all-or-nothing phenomenon. Our memories of how we feel or what we saw or did forms an important part of our autobiography. And for each of us our autobiography contributes a major role in determining who we are. So it seems that autobiographical memory is necessary for conscious representation of oneself as an agent, as being a person. However few case studies reveal that autobiographical memory is really not essential for self representation. It is reported in Damasio lab (in Iowa City) that a patient who is called R.B suffered from Retrograde Amnesia. Due to attack of *herpes simplex encephalitis*, R.B suffered massive destruction of both temporal lobes including the overlying cortical areas, as well as the deep structures including the amygdala and the hippocampus. Resulting effect was that he lost all his memories of the past (whether he was married or not, whether he had any children or not etc).in short his autobiographical memory. Interestingly R.B retained some of the important features of self-representation. The most strong evidence in support of such a claim is that he would without extra effort refer to himself with the personal pronoun 'I'. Again there are cases of schizophrenic patients who have good amount of autobiographic memory but are still confused about self/non-self boundaries. This is referred to as depersonalization effect.

The Self in Cognitive Neuroscience: Gazzaniga's Version

What I am concerned with here is the notion of self as cognitive neuroscientists view it. Tracing the history of the SAG versus SAC debate, it is easy to arrive at a point where the neuro-scientific picture must get clarified. In a sense this cuts across the SAG-SAC barrier, since the picture painted by cognitive neuroscientists may be interpreted either way – as a SAG theory or as a SAC theory. We shall soon see why.

In this section I will briefly sketch Michael Gazzaniga a leading cognitive scientists' views on the origin of the notion of self. Gazzaniga in his book *The Mind's Past* (1998) gives us a detailed story of a self, which is nothing but a product of the 'brain's inventory power'. Gazzaniga argues that evolution has endowed us with a particular brain device called the 'interpreter', which creates a fictional or illusory sense of self. Thus an individual's sense that he is a unified self in charge of his actions and decisions is an

outcome of the illusion created by this brain device. This brain device has evolved through natural selection and is present in a human infant even at birth. Thus the fictional self generated weaves a narrative in which the traditional 'given' self gets the credit for issuing orders (nodding our head, going for a stroll etc) which are already executed.

While focusing on brain construction Gazzaniga asserts that most of the development of brain structure and functioning is genetically pre-programmed. He, unlike most developmental psychologists, lays less prominence on environmental factors and more on native ones as shaping our brain structures.

Now we may see why Gazzaniga's account may cut both ways. The reason why the neuro-scientific picture of self presented by Gazzaniga and many others like him may be interpreted as a SAG theory is that a very specific physiological part of the body may be assigned the central function of self, namely coordination. If a particular area or part or structure of the nervous system (brain) may be assigned that role, then one cannot but become confident about the ontologically concrete nature of the self. On the other hand, the necessity that is associated with the notion of a given self is missing in the neuro-scientific account of self. It is an evolutionarily contingent fact that a certain part of the body has taken upon itself the task of coordination. It could have been any body part or any part of the brain indeed. In fact, we might one day realize that the task of coordination may be carried out equally effectively by some other part of the brain in the face of certain environmental contingencies.

It is worth mentioning at this juncture that all SAC theorists do not endorse the same view regarding the issue of brain plasticity. An extreme version of this theory held by Steven R. Quartz⁶ and Terrence J. Sejnowski⁷ claims that brain is a *tabular rasa* and even ordinary everyday learning involves high degree of plasticity (neural constructivism). Moderate version of this theory claims that some particular ways of learning enhances the neurons for better and improved results. Again another extreme version of this theory from the other end of the graph would propose that neural

⁶ Computational Neurobiology Laboratory, and The Sloan Center for Theoretical Neurobiology, The Salk Institute for Biological Studies.

⁷ Department of Biology, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, The Salk Institute for Biological Studies. University of California, San Diego.

mechanisms are completely hard-wired and any brain development is guided along this genetic trajectory (genetic determinism). Gazzaniga unfortunately unlike most theorists neither takes the empiricist pole nor the middle path but rather sides with the nativist pole⁸. He believes that though at times brain development seems to be driven by environmental or cultural factors, however it is dominantly driven by our genes. He remarks thus ‘the broad scaffolding of the brain is genetic mechanism, which also control almost independently the specifications of what connect to what, but the details of cortical arrangements might be left to experiential effects. However the so-called experiential effects are nearly brain activity, not necessarily encoded information from the environment’⁹. Gazzaniga maintains (like Wolf Singer 1987, 1995) that some areas of the brain are plastic but such plasticity is limited in the sense it is directly related with the extent of genetic development. For instance the size of the eyeball at an early developmental stage is adaptive to some extent.

Gazzaniga instead speaks on functional plasticity rather than brain plasticity to account for the human uniqueness. To quote Gazzaniga ‘Human have a greater functional plasticity than other species, and appear to have repertoires of responses that go beyond the simple variability that allows species’ to adapt to changed environments through selection’¹⁰. However while ascribing functional plasticity as belonging to the organism as a whole; Gazzaniga calls this sort of plasticity as something achieved by the highly developed brain itself. Gazzaniga develops a cognitive model based on what he calls “interpreter” to account for the complex human adaptive capacity. The interpreter ‘is a capacity, or a set of mechanisms, that resides in the left hemisphere of the brain and its functions include enabling us to infer and form beliefs about both internal bodily states as well as external events (our own action and that of other)’¹¹.

This creative venture of the interpreter became all the more evident in cases of the split-brain patients. They are patients suffering from intractable epilepsy who do not even respond to drug treatments. The only available alternative treatment was to

⁸ This is where Dennett’s critique of Cartesian Materialism may be applied to Gazzaniga’s account.

⁹ *The Mind’s Past*, Gazzaniga, 1998 pg 46

¹⁰ Gazzaniga, M.S., 1992, pg112, *Nature’s Mind*. New York: Basic Books.

¹¹ *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 5.No 5-6, 1998, p706-717.

surgically sever the commissures connecting the right and left hemisphere (commissurotomy) to avoid the excessive electrical activity generated within one hemisphere to be transmitted to the other hemisphere. This severing reduces the force of the convulsions and have relieved the patients to some extent. The hemispheres of their brains can no longer communicate with one another. In coping with this crisis, these patients will concoct narratives wildly (through their language producing left hemisphere) to conceal their ignorance of what their right hemisphere knows or perceives. Consider a split-brain patient whose left hemisphere is visually presented with a picture of a chicken claw and his right hemisphere is presented with a scene of snow falling. Now suppose the patient is presented with an array of pictures and asked to pick out pictures that are best associated with the pictures initially shown. As expected the right hand (controlled by the left hemisphere) points to the chicken while with his left hand he points to the shovel consistent with the snow scene presented to the right hemisphere. Now if we ask the patient why he selected the respective pictures, he would respond that the chicken goes with chicken claw while we need a shovel to clean the chicken shed. The reasonable interpretation which makes sense out of a piece of information that has its proper context registered in the right hemisphere (the shovel) is fully generated in the left hemisphere. In normal, non-split persons, the contextualized information from the right-hemisphere is conveyed to the interpreting mechanism in the left-hemisphere across the nerve fibers of the corpus callosum. The interpreter integrates that information and spawns rational coherence *vis-à-vis* other aspects of present and past experience.

Gazzaniga's central aim is to attack the traditional notion of self forwarded by most SAG theorists. He argues against the reality of self drawing on the evidences from cognitive neuroscience that what we supposedly call self is nothing but a product of brain's inventory power. Based on the research findings in the Sperry laboratory on the split brain subjects, Gazzaniga came to the conclusion that all our conscious activities, speech, free will etc are nothing but accomplishment of the brain cells. To begin with it is a very disheartening feeling to realize that we are simply puppets in total control of our brains so smart that they can even produce the illusion that it is we who control our own thoughts and actions. At this juncture one might doubt about the novelty of such a claim (illusoriness of a real self) since decades back even philosophers like Hume and Parfit and some schools of Buddhism asserted about the illusoriness of self. However the

evidences from which the contemporary SAC theorists draw such a conclusion are very different from that of Hume etc. Much of the arguments of the earlier philosophers were conceptual while the contemporary theorists have both conceptual and empirical arguments in their baggage to strengthen their claims.

Findings in cognitive neuroscience reveal that there exists an interpreter on the left hemisphere of the brain which lures us to a first person certainty about our own nature. This interpreter is neither a self nor a part of the self but just a brain device. The interpreter amalgamates information and fabricates rational coherence with our other experiences (both past and present). This function almost coincides with the function the ancient Greeks assigned to the rational part of the self. The left brain's interpreter work is to interpret (as the name suggests) our own behaviour and actions (both emotional and cognitive) against the backdrop of environmental challenges. It constantly generates a running narrative of our actions, emotions, thoughts, and dreams. It is the glue that keeps our story unified and creates our sense of being a coherent, rational agent.

The interpreter accounts for a reconstruction of our past experiences by weaving its story in order to convince us that it is we who is in full control. Moreover by generating this personal story or narrative the interpreter (spin doctor in the left brain)¹² gives us the feeling that a self exists, detached from the brain. Gazzaniga's main endeavor is to assert that such a detached self is, not only illusory but a sheer by-product of brain activity (the diverse workings of the cortically based systems working outside the realm of our conscious awareness). Our brain mechanisms control our cognition and behavior and not vice-versa in the sense that whatever we decide to do next our brain has already decided for us a few milliseconds ago ('By the time we think we know something - it is part of our conscious experience - the brain has already done its work. It is old news to the brain, but fresh to us')¹³. So viewed most of our memories are reconstructions to fill out gaps in the narratives our brain generates. A question may still linger in our mind will not Gazzaniga's left brain interpreter leave us dismally deterministic in the hands of the genes?

¹² *Ibid*, p.26

¹³ *The Mind's Past* p.63

Different action and occurring of our lives are plaited into a belief-system which is produced in the development of the brain, yet the scene is not so (dismally deterministic) since the interpreter makes room for unique development based on the personal experiences of the individual which is culturally tainted so the self is the product of the rationally inventive brain working collaboration with unique culturally structured experience. Thus this process paves the way for biases and interpretational prejudices to participate in the formation of our self concept. This stance stands as evidence to the fact that human brain transcends the automatic processes. The personal self which appears to us as an integrated entity is the product of the sub-personal inventive mechanism. So this is not a product of phenomenological construction but a hard wired mechanism designed to transcend its own material determination” Gazzaniga’s model of self is the “outcome of a self organizing neuronal process that creatively incorporates biases, and even errors, in perception, memory and judgment ”.

It has been questioned again and again whether the notion of real and substantial self can be totally dissolved into the illusory self thesis banking on the left hemisphere’s ‘interpreter’? It is worth mentioning here that though Gazzaniga himself calls the opening chapter of his book *The Mind’s Past* as The Fictional Self, yet he never really claimed that the notion of self is fictional like many other cognitive scientists. First Gazzaniga mainly sketched how the interpreter, a brain device generates or contributes to our sense of self. So his thesis about the interpreter shows how our notion of self is constructed rather than the fact that our selves are fictions. Moreover the adjective fictional has a special connotation in Gazzaniga’s scheme. In a conversation with Shaun Gallagher in fact he remarks that ‘Now in *The Mind’s Past* the lead chapter is called “The Fictional Self” but that was to draw attention to the fact the interpreter calls upon all kinds of false information to build that narrative. So the construct that is derived comes from true facts of ones’ life as well as false facts, which we believe to be true. The resulting spin that comes out as our personal narrative is, as a result, a bit fictional, like the idea we are in control of our behaviour’. So, the idea of a fictional self does not merely refer to the fact that the self is a construct but also refers to the fact that the story has its black, white and grey areas, some actualities and some imagination. So, ‘fiction’ here also means ‘imagined’ or even ‘untrue’.

Again by citing such a novel view he intends to herald that the sermon (that we human beings have 'centric' view of the world) the SAG theorists have been preaching must be dissolved. To proceed with a serious scientific story of self we must stop 'think[ing] our personal selves are directing the show most of the time'.¹⁴ Progress in neuroscience also shows that there is a disparity between what our brain does and how we experience such an activity.¹⁵ So Gazzaniga asks us to shun the illusion of the existence of a centric self but the not the narrative it weaves no matter however fictional it may be for it serves a major role in our life like reasoning and '[enables] us to become psychologically interesting to ourselves as a species'.¹⁶ However ardent critics of SAC theories have still not spared from shooting at him plenty of questions to be answered like~ isn't it hard to conceive that such an assumption (the feeling that we are endowed with some inner initiating cause of thought and action) could emerge without the contribution of culture and language that forges a preliminary idea of "I" allowing us to speak and think about ourselves as centric selves endowed with the power to produce autonomous action? Or may be an even more skeptical question like ~would a culture without the word for 'I' develop some idea of a centric self? A brief but significant reply to this question may be that the notion of self or 'I', though culturally and linguistically embedded is experientially or phenomenologically prior to culture and language. So even though a child may not learn self-talk but still be said to have self-experience as is obvious from the way it behaves and also from some of the theoretical writings available.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. xii

¹⁵ In fact this led Dennett to search for a new method for studying the self and the mental, which he named Heterophenomenology (the SAG theorists' favourite being phenomenological method).

¹⁶ *Ibid*, pg152

EXPLAINING QUALIA

ARPITA SINGH

Introduction

Consciousness is at once the most familiar and the most mysterious aspect in our life. It is the very core of our existence yet it is very difficult to describe and explain consciousness. The word “consciousness” and “conscious” have been used in many ways. We talk of losing and regaining consciousness, of being conscious of one's appearance and of taking conscious decisions. The original meaning of ‘consciousness’ was awareness *or* knowledge. It is used to describe our state of awareness of our surroundings and self. Consciousness has been the subject of study of many diverse disciplines, though the study of consciousness is as old as philosophy. Despite of being the medium of all worldly knowledge and knowledge of inner self, consciousness still is an intractable problem. Consciousness has some features which make it puzzling, such as: subjectivity, phenomenality, intentionality, and qualia. For a conscious mind there is a subjective point of view, which is accessible only to the conscious being itself and can be known only from first- person perspective. So, self is subjectivity, which covers one's feelings, thinking and perception. David Chalmers has divided the problems of consciousness into “hard” and “easy” problems. The easy problems of consciousness are concerned with explaining the functions, dynamics and structure of consciousness as they are directly receptive to the standard methods of cognitive science, so the phenomena are explained in terms of neural mechanism. On the other hand, hard problem of consciousness is to talk about subjective experiences associated with physical mechanism or processes of brain. In other words, the hard problem is the problem of explaining the relation between physical phenomena, such as brain processes, and the subjective/phenomenal experiences associated with these physical mechanism or processes. For example, while watching the blue sky we experience visual sensation: the *felt quality* of blueness. These qualitative or phenomenal properties of experiences are named as “qualia”, which is the heart of hard problems of consciousness. The phenomenal structure of conscious experience involves both sensory ideas and qualities and complex representations of time, space, cause, body, self, and the organized structure of lived reality in all its conceptual and non-conceptual forms.

Intentionality is the characteristic of consciousness whereby it is conscious of something-i.e., its directedness toward an object. The raw feelings of experience are known as qualia. Let us discuss the problem of qualia.

The Problem of Qualia:

The qualitative properties of our conscious experience are called 'qualia'. For example, when we see a rose in the sunlight; the way it looks to us- the particular, personal, subjective visual quality of the rose is the *quale* (singular of "qualia") of our visual experience at that moment. What it is like to be sad or happy, to have pain, etc. also are examples of qualia. According to Shoemaker: Qualia - the qualitative or phenomenal features of sense experiences, in virtue of having which they resemble and differ from each other, qualitatively, in the ways they do.¹ Thus, qualia are the properties of experiences what give each of experiences its characteristic "felt quality" and also what distinguish them from one another. Apart from above simple definition of qualia some philosophers have defined qualia variously on the basis of use of the term.

Historically, the term "quale" was first introduced by C. S. Peirce into philosophy in the context of phenomenal character of experiences.² The phenomenal character of an experience is what it is like to have subjectively in the experience. For example, let's consider our gustatory experience: there is something it is like for us subjectively to undergo the experience of tasting a ripe tomato. Now, this experience will be very different from what it is like for us to experience a ripe mango. This difference in experiences is often called 'phenomenal character'. While focusing on our experience we can figure out that phenomenal character of experiences has certain qualities, these are accessible by introspection and these together form the phenomenal character of experiences and known as 'Qualia'. C. I. Lewis in his discussion of sense-data theory used the term "qualia" as the properties of sense-data themselves. His notion of qualia is very close to the contemporary use of the term,

¹ Shoemaker, S. (1982). "The Inverted Spectrum". *Journal of Philosophy*. Vol. 79, No. 7, p. 367.

² For detail see Crane, T. (2000). "The Origins of Qualia", In Tim Crane & Sarah Patterson, eds., *The History of Mind- Body Problem*, London: Routledge. <<http://www.timcrane.com>> access September 30, 2020-09-30. P. 14.

though Lewis uses it in the context of sense data. According to the Lewis qualia are introspectible, intrinsic and non- representational features of sense data and other non-physical objects and these are responsible for their phenomenal character.³ In the contemporary period, the term has been used in aforesaid sense, though it now refers more generally to properties of experiences rather than sense-data. Standard examples of experiences with qualia are perceptual experiences, bodily sensations, emotions, and moods. The philosophers like Thomas Nagel⁴ and Ned Block⁵ maintain this sense of qualia. But these interpretations of qualia as phenomenal character of experiences invoke the controversy: whether qualia, so defined, can be characterized in intentional, functional or purely cognitive terms. Opponents of qualia, e.g. Dennett, define the term in a restricted way in order to that qualia are intrinsic properties of experiences that are ineffable, nonphysical and ‘given’ to their subjects incorrigibly and thus nonscientific in nature: So, to summarize the tradition qualia are supposed to be properties of a subject’s mental states that are:

- a. Ineffable
- b. Intrinsic
- c. Private and
- d. Directly or immediately apprehensible to consciousness.⁶

The philosophical question related to qualia is whether it can be or cannot be explained in scientific terms.

For some aspects of consciousness, it is relatively direct to see how they can be suit within a physicalist picture. For example, our abilities to access, report on, and attend to our own mental states. It is reasonable to presuppose that as neuroscience progresses and we learn more and more about the brain, we will be able to explain

³ For detail see Keeley, B. L. (2009). “The Early History of the Quale and Its Relation to the Sense”, In J. Symons & P. Calvo, eds., *Routledge Companion to Philosophy of psychology*, London: Routledge. pp. 71-89.

⁴ Nagel, T. (1974). “What Is It Like to Be a Bat?” in Ned Block, Owen Flanagan, and Guven Guzelder, eds., *The Nature of Consciousness: Philosophical Debates*, A Bradford Book. The MIT Press: Cambridge. pp. 519-527.

⁵ Block, N. (1990). “Inverted Earth” in Ned Block, Owen Flanagan, and Guven Guzelder, eds., *The Nature of Consciousness: Philosophical Debates*, A Bradford Book. The MIT Press: Cambridge. pp. 677-693.

⁶ Dennett, D.C. (1997). “Quining Qualia”. in Ned Block, Owen Flanagan, and Guven Guzelder, eds., *The Nature of Consciousness: Philosophical Debates*. A Bradford Book. The MIT Press: Cambridge. p. 622

these abilities in terms of neural mechanisms. Aspects of consciousness that can be explained in this way are referred as the easy problems of consciousness by David Chalmers. But what kind of mechanism could give reasons for qualia? Though we strongly suspect that the physical system of the brain gives rise to qualia, we do not have any understanding of how it does so. The problem of accounting for qualia has thus become known, following Chalmers, as the *hard problem of consciousness*.⁷

Explaining Qualia

In this section we will discuss critically various arguments put forth to explain qualia. We will analyze four arguments such as, knowledge argument, inverted spectrum argument, absent qualia argument and explanatory gap argument as follows.

The Knowledge Argument

The knowledge argument is the most popular argument against the Physicalist explanation of qualia, given by Frank Jackson in his famous paper “What Mary didn’t know”.⁸ The fundamental idea lies in the argument is that there is some knowledge about the experience that can be gained only by having the particular experience oneself. No physical knowledge of what goes in brain while having that experience would suffice to know the phenomenal character of the experience. Jackson presents the hypothetical case of Mary, the super colour scientist, who has spent her whole life raised in black and white environment in which she learns all the physical and functional facts about the colour vision. However, she moves outside for the first time and according to Jackson she learns a new fact: what it is like to *see* red. Thus he concludes what it is like to see red cannot be merely a functional or physical fact.

A wide variety of objections have been raised against the knowledge argument: Does Mary in fact learn new knowledge? What sort of knowledge does she acquire? Paul Churchland has raised three objections against Jackson’s claim. First objection is that the knowledge argument contains the defect of “simplicity itself” and

⁷ Chalmers, D.J. (1995). “Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness”. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 201

⁸ Jackson, F. (1986). “What Mary Didn’t Know.” *Journal of Philosophy*. Vol. 83, No. 5: pp. 291-95.

argument carries an equivocation on “knows about”.⁹ Second objection made by Churchland is that knowledge argument is an exclusive argument in sense that it proves too much. So the argument works against both physicalism and dualism.¹⁰ Paul’s third objection is that knowledge argument claims that Mary couldn’t even imagine what the relevant experience would be like, despite her thorough knowledge about neuroscientific functions, and so must still be missing certain crucial information.¹¹ David Lewis holds the view that Mary gains *know-how* (dispositional abilities), not *knowing-that* (knowledge of facts or propositions). Lewis negates the argument and gives the *ability analysis*, according to this, what Mary gains after leaving the gray environment is the only new practical abilities to recognize and imagine and remember the pertinent phenomenal properties of experiencing red.¹² But the ability reply doesn’t seem plausible to many philosophers, as Van Gulick writes:

...and like many other philosophers I find that claim not very plausible. Part of what Mary gains is know-how, but that does not seem to be all she gains. There seems to be a fact about how phenomenal red appears that she apprehends only after her release.¹³

Here is a different and more strengthened objection to Jackson is raised by Loar and also supported by Van Gulick. Loar argues that what Mary acquires when she experiences red is a new phenomenal concept; a recognitional disposition that let her to distinguish a certain type of phenomenal feel (acquired discriminative abilities). This new phenomenal concept is component of veritably new knowledge, which is the knowledge of what it is like to see red. But this new concept adopts the old properties which are assigned by physical or functional concepts that she already had. So, difference is here nothing but ways of knowing: before leaving the room, her knowledge to see red was of third-person way; after leaving the room, she acquires a

⁹ Churchland, P. (1985). “Reduction, Qualia, and the Direct Introspection of Brain States”. *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 82, No. 1: p. 23.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 24.

¹¹ *Ibid.* 25.

¹² Lewis, D. K. (1983). “Postscript to ‘Mad Pain and Martian Pain’,” *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 131.

¹³ Van Gulick, R. (1997). “Understanding the Phenomenal Mind: Are We All Just Armadillos? Part I: Phenomenal Knowledge and Explanatory Gaps”. in Ned Block, Owen Flanagan, and Guven Guzelder, eds., *The Nature of Consciousness: Philosophical Debates* A Bradford Book. The MIT Press: Cambridge. p. 560.

new way (first- person way) of knowing the same fact.¹⁴ Conclusively, what she gains does not eliminate any possible worlds that were not already obviated by the facts that she already knew, and knowledge argument sets no danger to physical doctrine of qualia. Eventually, recognitional disposition hints how qualia could come out to be relational: a relational physical state of the brain or even a functional state.

The Inverted Spectrum

The inverted spectrum argument is based on a thought experiment about two different people with behaviourally identical (including verbal) but different qualia; for example, I see ‘red’ the way you see ‘green’. There is the possibility that the brain state that I have when I see red is the same as the brain state that you have when you see green, and vice versa. So, it might be said, our experiences are inverted. The assumption here is a supervenience doctrine that the qualitative content of a state supervenes on physiological properties of the brain. The possibility of inverted qualia sometimes objected on the verificationist grounds that we could never know that anything different is going on, so that there could be no real difference. Chalmers refuses the objection and says that the nature of qualia is not conceptually tied to behaviour.¹⁵ To reply inverted spectrum Dennett uses intuition pump 4: *the brainstorm machine*. In the thought experiment one could report your visual experiences accurately with the help of some neuroscientific apparatus fits in your head and feeds your experiences in one’s brain. Eventually we find that no intersubjective comparison of qualia is possible. As Dennett says:

Designing and building such a device would require that its “fidelity” be tuned or calibrated by the normalization of the two subjects’ reports- so we would be right back at our evidential starting point. The moral of this intuition pump is that no intersubjective comparison of qualia is possible, even with perfect technology.¹⁶

¹⁴ Loar, B. (1997). “Phenomenal States”. in Ned Block, Owen Flanagan, and Guven Guzelder, eds., *The Nature of Consciousness: Philosophical Debates* A Bradford Book. The MIT Press: Cambridge. pp. 597-616. For detailed argument see pp. 598-600.

¹⁵ Chalmers, D. J. (1996). *The Conscious Mind: in Search of Fundamental Theory*, New York Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 264.

¹⁶ Dennett, D.C. (1997). “Quining Qualia”. in Ned Block, Owen Flanagan, and Guven Guzelder, eds., *The Nature of Consciousness: Philosophical Debates*. A Bradford Book. The MIT Press: Cambridge. p. 623.

Defenders of inverted spectrum move a step ahead and discuss about improved version of inverted qualia: *intrapersonal inverted spectrum*- in this version the experiences to be compared are all in one mind. Dennett describes this version in intuition pump 5: *the neurosurgical prank*. According to this thought experiment, evil neurophysiologists tampered with your neurons so that you have undergone visual colour qualia inversion. It has gone like, (1) you have normal colour vision. (2) Neurophysiologist has inserted colour inverting devices your retinas, now you see the grass has turned 'red' the sky 'yellow' and so forth. (3) No one else notices any colour anomalies, so the problem must be in you. (4) Conclusively you have undergone visual colour qualia inversion. Dennett attacks on this improved version in his intuition pump 6: *alternative neurosurgery* and concludes that intrapersonal, inverted spectrum is an illusion, since the link to earlier experiences, the link via memory, is analogous to the imaginary cable that might link two subjects in original version. Thus, according to Dennett, the result of this series of thought experiment creates a paradox of qualia: if there are qualia they are less accessible to our cognizance than we thought. Not only are the classical intersubjective comparisons impossible, but we can't say anything in our own cases whether our qualia have inverted (intrapersonal inversion); even not by introspection.¹⁷

Absent Qualia Argument

The absent qualia argument states that mental state can be type-individuated on the basis of the causal functional relation they bear to each other and to the inputs and outputs of the relevant system. Michael Tye characterizes the absent qualia:

The hypothesis that it could be the case that a system that functionally duplicates the mental states of a normal human being has no phenomenal consciousness (qualia).¹⁸

Absent qualia argument establishes that any system could instantiate the functional state of any mental phenomena, for example- pain, without having any pain qualia. Ned Block initiated this objection to functionalism with the thought experiment of the homunculi- headed robot. This thought experiment appeals to oddball realization of our functional organization by huge human-duplicates (artificial

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 624.

¹⁸ Tye, M. (2006). "Absent Qualia and the Mind-Body Problem". *philosophical Review*. Vol. 115, No. 2. p. 140.

brainless robot). If this China- body system can share our functional organization, then our functional organization cannot be sufficient for qualia.¹⁹ Many critics face the difficulty to reply to case like China- body system and say that China- body system could undergo qualia. According to functionalist like the oddness of this view comes from our relative size. We are each so much smaller than the China-body system that we are unable to get a general understanding of whole system. Just like a creature the size of a neuron trapped inside a human head might well be wrongly persuaded that there couldn't be consciousness, so we also wrongly conclude as we contemplate the China-body system.

The Explanatory Gap Argument

The underlying idea of the argument is that neither anything known about brain nor anything for anyone has been imaginable that would explain the qualia. The basic assumption of the argument aims to show unintelligibility of materialism in respect to explain the phenomenal aspect of mind such as qualia, rather than proving materialism false. According to Robert Van Gulick explanatory gap argument's strength derives from the above intuitive appeal of its conclusion.²⁰ Despite of agreement on the issue that the gap is unclosable difference in attitudes towards the argument can be seen in philosophers (some has positive views and others have negative explanation). Colin McGinn argues that the essential nature of consciousness is not accessible to humans' cognitive capacities so the gap is unclosable:

The problem arises, I want to suggest, because we are cut off by our very cognitive constitution from achieving a conception of that natural property of the brain (or of consciousness) that accounts for the psychophysical link. this is a kind of causal nexus that we are preclude from ever understanding, given the way we have to form our concepts and develop theories. No wonder we find the problem so difficult!²¹

¹⁹ Block, N. (1978), "Troubles with Functionalism.", In David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings*. New York Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. pp. 94-98.

²⁰Van Gulick, R. (1997), "Understanding the Phenomenal Mind: Are We All Just Armadillos? Part I: Phenomenal Knowledge and Explanatory Gaps". In Ned Block, Owen Flanagan, and Guven Guzeldede, eds., *The Nature of Consciousness: Philosophical Debates* A Bradford Book. The MIT Press: Cambridge. p. 563.

²¹ McGinn, C. (1991). *The Problem of Consciousness: Essays Towards a Resolution*. Basil Blackwell Inc. p. 2

Joseph Levine holds the view that psychophysical statements assert such crude fact identities that those are unintelligible and they leave an explanatory gap that we have no idea how to fill.²² Following the John Locke's seventeenth-century's approved claim that sensory qualia are arbitrary,²³ Levine attempts to support his point by appeal to a standard philosophical case of hypothetical spectrum inversion with red and green qualia switching causal roles in an otherwise normal subject. He concludes that the important suggestion here is that the basic ideas, such as colour qualia are simples. They have no structure and as each one is what it is *sui generis*, it is hard to see how their connection to anything could fail to be anything but arbitrary.²⁴ On the basis of aforesaid suggestion Gulick reconstruct a deductive argument form of the gap argument for consideration:

Since qualia such as phenomenal hues are basic simples; they have no structure. Therefore: 1. Any links between such qualia and the organizational structure of their neural substrates must be arbitrary. 2. The links between qualia and their neural bases are unintelligible and present us with an unfillable explanatory gap.²⁵

On the basis of this formulation of argument Larry Hardin replies that we must reject first premise of given argument. Hardin says phenomenal hues are not in fact such as *sui generis simples*, but rather elements within a highly organized and structured colour space. Any attempt to invert them *in undetectable ways* would have to preserve that structural organization. Moreover, the junction of organized structure among colour qualia renders the basis for establishing explanatory connections between them and their neural substrates.²⁶

A number of philosophers argue that the unclosibility of the gap has nothing to do with nature itself, but it has to do with our concepts. They have contributed to

²² Levine, J. (1983). "Materialism and Qualia: The Explanatory Gap". *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, p. 357.

²³ Locke, (1690) *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed., Yolton, Everyman's Library, 1971, Bk. II, Ch. VIII, sec. 13, and Bk. IV, Ch. III. Secs. 12 and 13.

²⁴ Levine, J. (1983). "Materialism and Qualia: The Explanatory Gap". *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, p. 357 & 358.

²⁵ Van Gulick, R. (1997). "Understanding the Phenomenal Mind: Are We All Just Armadillos? Part I: Phenomenal Knowledge and Explanatory Gaps". in Ned Block, Owen Flanagan, and Guven Guzelder, eds., *The Nature of Consciousness: Philosophical Debates*, A Bradford Book. The MIT Press: Cambridge. p. 564.

²⁶ Hardin, C. L. (1988). *Color for Philosophers*, Hackett Publishers, Indianapolis, In. pp. 134-42.

produce the idea that reductive explanation in science depends on a priori analyses of the phenomena to be explained, ordinarily in functional terms. For consideration Chalmers gives the example of reductive explanation of life: life can be roughly analyzed in terms of such general terms as metabolism and adaption or in specific concepts like digestion and reproduction, and these concepts can themselves be given a functional analysis.²⁷ According to Chalmers to explain these functions, a priori, is to explain life itself. But in some case, for example water, the a priori analysis becomes more complicated. We can't give an a priori analysis of water as colourless, odourless liquid in rivers and ponds called 'water', because water might have colour and odour, there might have not been ponds etc. but we can formulate an a priori reference fixing definition of the sort that Kripke has underlined: Water = R (the colourless, odourless liquid in rivers and lakes called 'water'), where 'R' is a rigid operator that turns a definite description into a rigid designator.²⁸ (A rigid designator takes the same thing in all possible worlds in which the thing exists.) The consequence is that closing the gap requires an a priori functional analysis of qualia. But if we choose qualia by their qualitative character then no a priori reference fixing definition can be given for the qualitative concepts of the sort that can be given for 'life' and 'water'. For example, pain = R can be true and necessary without being a priori. And if the qualia inversion argument is right, there is no a priori conceptual analysis of qualitative concepts either, and so the explanatory gap is enclosable. As Chalmers points out that functional and physical account can explain only the functions associated with qualia. But there will be curiosity remain that why these functions are accompanied by qualia.

Conclusion

After a review of above arguments about qualia we can conclude that qualia still remain as the most baffling feature of consciousness. Knowledge argument creates the explanatory elusiveness of phenomenal qualities against the materialism, but despite of being appealing it fails to maintain its standpoint clearly and it falls out

²⁷ Chalmers, D.J. (1995). "Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness". *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 203.

²⁸ Kripke, S. (1980). *Naming and Necessity*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

to be weak in a wide variety of ways, so it couldn't defend itself from opponents. Likewise, the inverted spectrum and the absent qualia argument also fails in providing an inevitably insurmountable hurdle to functionalist doctrine. Talking about the explanatory gap we can conclude that it compels us to think that science of mind has not yet generated the required concepts to explain qualia. But the reductionists deny this, blaming the explanatory gap on our ordinary concepts, not on science. The opponents of qualia try to define qualia objectively but fail to explain qualia adequately. Neither they give it's any functional or scientific explanation correctly nor they get success to eliminate it. On the other hand, we can't say that proponents of qualia achieve their goal of explaining qualia accurately. So, in case of explaining qualia we are still at the same position where we start from. The quale is significant because as it is the properties of experience and these are the experiences which make a person an individual and separate human from other creatures and robots. Just because of qualia we can know 'what it is like to be a human'.

AKHYĀTIVĀDA: AN EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL STUDY

TRISHA PAUL

In Indian philosophy the problem of error is discussed in different theories usually known as the *khyāti-vādas*. The word *Khyāti* stands for knowledge and hence *khyāti-vāda* may mean theory of knowledge. The word *jñāna* has been used in Indian Philosophy in two different senses by two different sets of thinkers. In one set, it is taken in the sense of *pramā* only. The Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas championed this theory. For them, *jñāna* always means true cognition (*jñāna*). A cognition can never be invalid. Hence, *bhrama* for the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas cannot be a variety of *jñāna*. The Prābhākaras do not accept *samsāya*, *viparyaya*, etc. as necessary constituents of cognition. Hence, their view of *jñāna* is restricted only to the scope of valid cognition. On the other hand, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophers accept the word '*jñāna*' with a wider scope and in a very comprehensive sense. Unlike the Prābhākaras, they include both valid and non-valid cognitions within the jurisdiction of *jñāna*.

The Naiyāyikas are common sense realists. They analysed error through common sense realism. In our daily life we make mistakes. If we do not make any mistake then how will we learn to do it correctly? The correction of wrong teaches us the correct one. When we apprehend rope as a snake, we make a mistake. When we realize it later, we correct it that 'it was a wrong judgment'. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas accept the word 'cognition' in episodic sense. According to the Nyāya philosophers, knowledge in the sense of *pramā* is always 'object oriented'. According to them, *jñāna* is infallible in some cases and fallible in some other. They put forward various causal and justificatory grounds (*pramāṇas*) for distinguishing the infallible kind of *jñāna* from fallible one. And that very reason, they advanced logical grounds for admitting *apramā* within the jurisdiction of *jñāna*. Hence, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika accept the word *jñāna* in a much wider sense which includes both valid and non-valid cognition.

Nature of Knowledge

In Indian philosophy, the Sanskrit word *jñāna* is used in a variety of senses. It is often used in the sense of *buddhi* (cognition) or *anubhava* (consciousness) and it

also means *upalabdhi* (apprehension). The basic characteristics of a valid piece of knowledge, which are accepted by all schools of Indian philosophy, are unanimous or non-contradictory.¹ A valid cognition cannot be rejected by any subsequent cognition. In the case of invalid cognition, it is substituted by the subsequent cognition. So, every philosopher holds the view that truth should be non-erring, non-dubious and novel. But when we perceive a snake in a rope, it is not a valid cognition. As we perceive the rope properly without any barrier, the cognition of 'rope-snake' is sublated by the real cognition. It is clear that valid cognition cannot be neglected.

Another characteristic of a valid knowledge is that it must be definite and it can be distinguished from all indefinite, dubious and hypothetical cognition. In other words, valid knowledge is always connected with firm belief which is free from error. That means, valid knowledge cannot be refuted any time or anywhere by any posterior cognition. Knowledge here corresponds to the word *pramā* which is defined as novel in nature.² Novelty means that knowledge should be true and new or previously not acquired. If truth is the only characteristics of *pramā* then memory is also to be called *pramā*. A remembered experience is to be considered as true, just because it is regarded as identical to the content of a past experience which it claims to put forward. So, the experience which reveals the new is called *anubhūti*. In other words, reproduced knowledge is called *smṛti*.

Any valid knowledge is called *pramā*. In the case of valid cognition, the object of knowledge is called *prameya*. When we perceive a pot by our sense organ, we gain knowledge of a pot and we know it with its attribute of pot-ness. Pot-ness is called *dharma* and the pot is called *dharmī*, because pot-ness inherits in a pot and their relation is not detached. As for an example, the knowledge about silver-ness of silver - the attribute of this object is called 'dharma' or 'this-ness' and the object is called *dharmī* or 'this.' So, the detachment of those objects and attributes is not accepted to the knower.

On the flip hand, regarding the knowledge about 'silver' in a shell – no relation exists between the 'silver' and the shell. Here, the knowledge of detachment

¹ D.M. Datta, *The Six Ways of Knowing*, (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London), 1932, p. 20.

² *Ibid*, p.20

or *asāmsarga* remains as there is no relation between the *dharmā* and *dharmī*. Here, *dharmā* is silver-ness and *dharmī* is shell. Silver-ness inherits in silver and similarly, shell-ness inherits in shell. But when we get to know the shell as silver, we know the shell with the attribute of silver-ness. They are detached or *asāmbandha*. So, it is not the valid knowledge or *pramā*. It is actually invalid knowledge or *apramā*.

Meaning of *Akhyāti*

The word *Akhyāti* means non-apprehension. But this non-apprehension is not explained as due to non-objectivity. It is said to be due to non-judging of the discriminative features between two cognitions.³ The theory of *Akhyāti* is also named as *Bhedāgraha* or *Asāmsargāgraha* or *Smṛtipramoṣa*.⁴ Śālikanātha Mīśra in his *Prakaraṇapañcikā* established the validity of all cognitions before defending *Akhyātivāda*. Because the establishment of *Akhyātivāda* is dependent upon the establishment of the validity of all cognitions. It is notable that the Prābhākaras hold that all cognitions are actually 'self-revealed'. According to the Prābhākaras, all cognitions are valid or non-erroneous.

We have to accept that when we perceive the silver in a shell then the silver is the object of knowledge in the shell-silver case and for this reason, this cognition becomes valid. According to the Prābhākaras, it is impossible that the object appears otherwise than it is. In the silver-shell case, the silver is the object of knowledge which is accepted by all philosophers. It is already mentioned that the accepted all cognitions as intrinsically valid. So, the cognition of 'silver' in a shell is also valid. On the other hand, the cognition of 'silver' in silver is also valid cognition. If the cognition of 'silver' in a shell becomes adulterous with its own object then it would become doubtful to us that all types of cognition are erroneous. As a result, all knowledgeable things would be doubtful to us. So, all cognitions are valid in themselves.

³ Tadevam sati sarvatra samyagrahaṇam bhramah"- Prābhākara //- Bijayananda Kar, *The Theories of Error in Indian Philosophy*, (Ajanta Publication, Delhi), 1978, p. 34.

⁴ Bijayananda Kar, *The Theories of Error in Indian Philosophy*, (Ajanta Publication, Delhi), 1978, p. 34.

From the Prābhākaras' epistemological scheme, it is clear that knowledge is defined in terms of external given. According to them, no knowledge can be wrong. It is something logically impossible that the object appears otherwise than it is. On the other hand, it may be said that all cognitive expressions are the cases of only right judgement. There is no cognitive error. Validity is the very inherent feature of all perceptual cognitions. Any knowledge is valid in itself. Thus, in the case of a cognition of a snake in a rope, the rope does not appear otherwise than it is. The cognition of snake arises through memory as its shape which is common with rope. We perceive rope without its rope-ness and referring it with snake through memory. Hence, this view of error is called *Akhyāti* or non-apprehension.

Invalid Knowledge is theoretically Impossible

The Prābhākaras are the chief exponents of this view of error called *Akhyātivādain* Sanskrit. According to them, all cognition is valid in itself. According to the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas, *jñāna* is necessarily restricted to the scope of valid cognition. The Prābhākaras define valid knowledge as apprehension (*anubhūti*).⁵ All apprehension is direct, intermediate and valid in itself. A cognition which apprehends an object cannot be intrinsically invalid.

According to the Prābhākaras, non-valid cognition is not only theoretically impossible but it also involves self-contradiction.⁶ Valid cognition is apprehension but contrarily, we cannot say that all apprehensions are valid cognition. Valid cognition is something different from remembrance (*smṛti*) which is not valid.⁷ Memory arises from the impression of a prior cognition (*anubhava*) and therefore, cannot be treated as a valid cognition. Memory is invalid since, the object is not directly known but merely recollected or remembered.

⁵ *Anubhūtiḥ pramāṇam sā smṛteranyā smṛtiḥ punaḥ / pūrvavijñāna-saṃskāra mātrajannam jñānamuchate //* - *Prakaraṇapañcikā: Sālikanātha Mīśra [with NyāyaSiddhi.]* (Ed) A. Subrahmanya Sāstrī, (Banaras Hindu University Darsana Series, Benaras), 1962, p. 127.

⁶ According to the Prābhākaras, knowledge is self-revealing and guarantees its own truth without reference to anything else. Every unit of knowledge must carry in it an element of truth assurance and we should have no doubt on it. In this sense, a non-valid cognition is a case of impossibility and self-contradiction.

⁷ Gaṅgānātha Jhā derives the Prābhākaras' definition of *pramā* from the following verse of the *Prakaraṇapañcikā: pramāṇamanubhūtiḥ sā smṛteranyā na sā smṛtiḥ na pramāṇam smṛtiḥ pūrvapratipattivyapekṣaṇāt*, Gaṅgānātha Jhā, *Pūrvā-Mīmāṃsā* in its Sources, (Second Edition, Banaras Hindu University, Benaras), 1964, p. 70.

Why do we make a Mistake?

According to the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas, all cognitions are valid. The property of valid cognition is called *pramāṭva*. In the same way, the property of invalid cognition is called *apramāṭva*. According to the Prābhākaras, *apramāṭva* or invalidity is not the property of cognition. Always *pramāṭva* or validity exists in cognition. On the other hand, *apramāṭva* does not exist in cognition. *Apramāṭva* or invalidity exists in usages.

Illusion does not arise due to wrong apprehension of one thing as another but due to lack of apprehension of the distinction between memory and perception and their respective objects. We cannot decipher between two different types of cognition and their contents. When we perceive a snake in a rope, we perceive only the presented object which is rope without its rope-ness. Although, we do not perceive the snake but it is also true that we have a cognitive expression of a snake. Now the question arises: Why do we perceive a snake in a rope? The answer lies in the cognition of snake that arises through memory which we perceived earlier elsewhere. This is a valid knowledge of a snake. This cognition is a composite form of memory and perception. Although, we are not being able to distinguish between the presented object and the represented object. Now the question arises: why do we make a mistake to differentiate between these two different types of cognitions and their objects? The cognition of a snake is real and the perception of *Idam* or *this* is also real. We perceive only the common features of two elements, like the rope has in common with a snake which is “shape”. This partial perception revives the memory of a real snake. This is also the cause of the non-discrimination between memory and perception. As a result, the knowledge arises as the composite form of two cognitions and appears as a unitary one.

***Akhyātivāda* is Not a Unitary Cognition**

In the case of erroneous cognition, the perceptual error is not a unitary cognition. It is a composite form of memory and perception. The Akhyātivādīns do not accept a unitary cognition in the illusory case. The *idam* or ‘this’ and ‘rajat’ or the ‘silver’ are separated from each other. They are known through perception and memory. At first, a perceptual cognition originated due to the

connection between the object and the knower where the object exists in front of the sense-organ of the knower. After that the memory of 'silver' originated due to the similarities between the shell and silver. Since, we already had the impression of the 'silver' which is apprehended to the knower earlier.

The objects of memory are those things which we have already known before. Here, we have already been aware of the knowledge of silver. That is why, when we perceive a 'silver' in a shell, we misapprehend it due to the similarities between these two - such as the characteristic shine-ness and white-ness. Thus, unable to distinguish between 'this' and 'that' we perceive 'this', and memorize 'that.' But here the knowledge is the combination of two cognition and we are totally unaware of it. When we confront it as "this is silver", it is a combination of two types of knowledge which are memory and perception. We only perceive 'this' without its special attribute. On the other hand, we memorized 'silver' which we perceived before. But when we express it then we express it as 'this is a silver', not as 'that is a silver.' Actually, error arises due to the non-discrimination between two types of knowledge. But when we know what is the right knowledge, the 'silver-ness' vanished in the erroneous case. The difference between these two types of cognition like the perception and memory cannot be grasped due to their simultaneous occurrence. This knowledge is the non-discrimination of two cognitions which is the cause of fruitless inclination. As a result, it is called 'error.'

Critique of *Akhyātivāda*

The Naiyāyikas do not admit the Prābhākaras' view of *Akhyātivāda*. According to the Prābhākaras, *Akhyāti* is a "negative non-distinction." Anyathākhyātivādīns accept the intrinsic positivity of error which is different from "negative non-distinction" or *Akhyāti*. The Naiyāyikas point out that every error is a single complex unitary experience. It is not the combination of two psychoses which is falsely confused. In the snake-rope illusion, we are apprehended a single complex unitary experience of 'this' which is appearing to be a snake. When the perceiver comes to know that 'this is not a snake' and 'this is a rope', the correction does not cancel a negative non-distinction of two confused experiences. It rejects the single composite experience. Let us see, the difference between the Nyāya view of *Anyathākhyāti* and the Prābhākara view of *Akhyāti* in a nutshell. According to the

Akhyātivādīns, the two cognitions involved in error are different in nature - one is presentation and the other is representation. But according to the Naiyāyikas, it is not conjoined of two cognitions, like perception and memory. It is a single, composite, presentative and a unitary cognition.

According to the Akhyātivādīns, an error arises due to non-discrimination of two cognitions - memory and perception. We cannot distinguish between two objects as one is collected through perception and another is recollected through memory. On the other hand, the Nyāya has refuted the Prābhākaras' view. 'This' and 'snake' both are perceived through our sense organs. One is an ordinary and the other is an extraordinary perception. It is a unitary composite cognition where 'snake' and 'this' are both present. When we perceive a snake in a rope, we perceive only 'this' through sense experience. 'Snake' is perceived through *jñānālakṣaṇapratyakṣa*, a kind of extra-ordinary perception. Somewhere we perceived a real snake through our sense experience. The apprehension of a snake was real. When we perceive a snake in a rope, we perceive only "this" without its special attribute. Actually, error arises when we mischaracterize the snake as a rope. According to the Nyāya, error is a false cognition. It is not a non-discrimination of two cognitions.⁸

Kumārila and his followers like Sucarita Misra, are the direct critique of *Akhyātivāda*. They first denounced the theory on the ground that the theory is not a faithful rendering of Śābara's view that Prabhākara at least claims to have generally followed. Unlike the Prābhākara's view that the error arises due to non-discrimination. Śābara has clearly stated that error consists in a positively false cognition and is due to some defects in the source. Vimuktātman points out that if according to the Prābhākaras, all knowledge is self-revealed, two judgements i.e. one derived from memory and the other from perception are to be assumed as self-revealed. For this reason, these judgements need not to discriminate and confuse among themselves.

⁸ Sushil Kumar Maitra, *Fundamental Questions of Indian Metaphysics and Logic*, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, (First Edition, Published by the author, 48G, Anath Nath Dev Lane, Calcutta), 1956, p. 131.

According to the Prābhākaras, error is due to non-cognition of the distinction between two experiences and also between their respective objects. But this non-cognition of distinction is not possible for distinction. According to the Prābhākara, distinction is nothing but the nature of the distinct objects. So, along with the manifestation of cognitions and their objects, their distinction is also known, as the distinction is nothing else that they correlate themselves. Therefore, it cannot be said that though the distinct is cognized, the distinction itself is not cognized. Prabhākara says that perception and recollection of ‘this’ and ‘silver’ respectively are not known to be different in the shell-silver case. But this is actually not possible.

Concluding Remarks

While we discuss the problem of error from the Indian philosophical point of view, we find different approaches. In the knowledge episode, ‘what is true’ and ‘what is false’ is an integral part of philosophical study for acquisition of the highest knowledge. The nature of knowledge depends upon the mind. The cognitive faculties of the subject depend on the conditions in which the object is situated in relation to the subject. An error is caused due to a peculiar relation formed by the perceiver. *Khyātivāda*-s are seemed to base on the assumption that an erroneous perception negates the value of perception. This is not simply the human failure to perceive correctly. But it is something which occurs due to some peculiar special circumstances. The cognition can be either valid or non-valid. Non-valid cognition includes doubt and hypothetical reasoning in addition to invalid cognition. Error is an invalid cognition.

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**ROSS'S VERSION OF ETHICAL INTUITIONISM:
A STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF MOORE AND KANT**

ANUREEMA BHATTACHARYYA

The prime focus of moral philosophy in the last four centuries had been the relation of facts to values, specifically the ethical values. The issue evolved and centered round the Humean view that 'Ought cannot be derived from Is'. The naturalist philosophers attempted to define moral words like 'good' or 'right' in terms of natural properties. G. E. Moore in *Principia Ethica* criticized the naturalists' intention of defining ethical terms with reference to factual properties. He elaborated the issue and preferred to consider moral terms as in-definable and which refer to some non-natural property knowable through intuition.

The argument which Moore puts forward to refute naturalism may be stated thus. He solely concentrated on examining the object or the idea which the word 'good' stands for or refers to, i. e. the definiens of 'good'. Thereby he showed that 'good' is not definable. In every case that we use 'good' and any natural property to define it, we can look into our minds to clearly realize that 'good' refers to something unique and does not match exactly with any of the natural properties used to define it. This unique property, namely, goodness is, therefore, something which is dealt with in Ethics. Thus, it is through intuition that we come to know that 'good' denotes a unique feature which is not denoted by terms used in defining 'good' viz. 'producing happiness', 'conducive to evolution', 'fulfilling the will of God' etc.

It may be asked, do all men have before their minds the same unique object when they think about good? Even if it be admitted that there is the same unique object in all men's minds when they think of good, this does not prove that if any person fails to have such an object in his mind when he thinks of good, he is guilty of a fallacy. This may be simply a fact that he cannot conceive it, it is not a logical compulsion that it has to be the case. If we try to answer the first question, we are to first set criteria for determining the unique feature of goodness and then need to check whether all people satisfy to have the same criteria of uniqueness when they think of good. It is practically not feasible to determine the criteria for the uniqueness of goodness and therefore application of such criteria also does not come into question. This also answers the second objection raised here that if a person fails to

have such a feeling of unique object with regard to goodness, he actually does no wrong since it is not clear exactly what is meant by this uniqueness .

From the fact that Moore employs intuition to know that goodness is a unique property, we may consider him an intuitionist. But Moore himself declared in the preface of *Principia Ethica* that “I am not an ‘Intuitionist’ in the ordinary sense of the term.” One of the reasons for this self-declaration was probably that Moore did not support the view of the deontological intuitionists who held that judgements concerning right or duty cannot be proved with respect to the results of the actions which are judged, they are to be judged with respect to their intrinsic worth or obligations. Moore, on the contrary, judged actions as right or wrong, as our duty or not on the basis of how much good result, the actions had or failed to have. It is at this juncture that we come across the views of the 20th century philosopher W.D. Ross.

Ross’s intuitionism relates right with duty and goodness and finds a way of relating the explanation of each with the intuitive capacity of a person. Ross defined ‘right’ thus: ‘Right’ means ‘suitable, in a unique and undefinable way which we may express by the phrase “morally suitable” to the situation in which an agent finds himself.’ Such a definition clearly has two aspects of being right – the objective aspect and the subjective aspect. The objective right consists of the morally relevant facts about the persons or things involved, whereas the subjective right refers to the morally relevant thoughts of the agent about the persons or things involved. How do the two different aspects become morally relevant? Ross clarified the matter by bringing in the context of duties or obligations. He said that there are certain general principles of conduct which all men who have developed moral consciousness intuit. They are promise-keeping, fidelity, gratitude, justice, beneficence, self-improvement, non-malificence etc. These moral obligations are self-evident like the mathematical axioms. Ross, however, refused to finalize the list of these general obligations, because he believed that he might have missed out some of them which other people can intuit. This point seems not at all consistent with his view that those obligations are self-evident. Had they been so, it would have been equally obvious to everyone and therefore there would be no scope of keeping the list of those general obligations incomplete.

The definition of right as stated by Ross gives rise to the question as to how does he relate the ethical property of being right with the natural property of say being the fulfillment of a promise. In discussing on the relation between ethical property and natural property, he referred to the former as consequential characteristic and the latter as (constitutive) characteristic. Ross comments that the connection between keeping a promise and being right is grasped only by intuition. We directly see that if X is the keeping of a promise, then X is right. It is as if like seeing that if a triangle is equilateral, it is also equiangular. This comparison of moral intuition with mathematical intuition was introduced by Prichard and followed by Ross. But Ross while drawing the above analogy pointed at a limitation/restriction in doing so. He said that in case of mathematical intuition, we directly see that if a triangle is equilateral, it is equiangular, and this applies also vice versa. But in moral intuition, if X is the keeping of a promise, we see that if it is right, but we do not see the opposite, i. e. If X is right, it is not necessarily the keeping of a promise.

Ross brings in the concept of duty while elucidating the concept of right. As he defines right, we have seen that he distinguishes between objective right and subjective right. It is, therefore, quite relevant to understand whether it is our duty to perform subjectively right action or objectively right action. In order to make any judgement on the above, it is proper to analyze all possible ways of performing a right action - an action may be in fact right in the situation as it in fact is, an action which the agent thinks right in the situation as it in fact is, an action may be in fact right in the situation as the agent thinks it to be or it may be an action which the agent thinks right in the situation as he thinks it to be. Of all these ways possible for an action to be right, which should be considered as our duty? Ross's answer is the fourth. He argues that in case of the other possible ways of right action, it is implied that in order to know what an agent should do, one should have complete knowledge of all the actions which is open for the agent to do and also what consequences all such actions would bring to him or others concerned. Moreover, one should also have clear idea of the situations in which all such acts would be performed. But such complete knowledge is practically not possible, though logically necessary for choosing what our obligation should be. Therefore, in order to know which action an agent should practically choose to perform, Ross commented that it is the right action

in the fourth sense as stated above whereby an action is right which the agent thinks right in the situation as he thinks it to be. He argues that it is important to draw a distinction between what an agent should do and what he thinks he should do. It is not acceptable that an agent should do an action simply because he thinks that he should do it. If this happens, it is undoubtedly a mistake. Therefore, in order to talk about obligations prudently and also reasonably, Ross considered the fourth kind of right action where the two components are distinctly stated viz. what a person should do and what he thinks he should do.

Ross compares the prima facie concept of rightness with absolute concept of rightness. According to Ross, an action is right in the former sense, i.e. it is prima-facie right, and not absolutely. This is the peculiarity of Ross's deontology as he is not an absolutist in the Kantian sense, rather an objectivist who relates the rightness with the "prima-facie principles" which are valid rules of action that one should generally adhere to but, in cases of moral conflict, may be overridable by another moral principle, hence the moderation. When the two moral principles come into conflict, the relevant features of rightness and wrongness should be compared against each other in order to understand which of them has the greater weightage. For example - an action may be right in respect of its being the keeping of a promise, whereas the same action may be wrong in respect of its being a case of causing harm or evil to someone. However, whichever principle will have more weightage will amount to its being the guiding principle of the action. This leads us to understand the standards which will speak for or decide on the weightage factor. In answer to this, Ross says that it is merely by intuition we can weigh one moral principle against another, i. e. a morally developed man can simply see 'whether rightness outweighs wrongness in an action or not. Ross later described prima facie duties as "responsibilities to ourselves and to others" and he went on to say that "what we should do (our duty proper or our actual duty) is determined by the balance of these responsibilities

Let us point out the discussion in the context of analysing duty, rightness or obligation. What is a tendency to be right? Or, what is a tendency to be one's duty? Ross might be misinterpreted in this regard to mean that 'tendency to be right or tendency to be one's duty is a positive property of an action. This is because, when

we come across an action exemplifying the duty of keeping a promise, we understand that the tendency of being a duty is a property of the action. But Ross pointed out that duty is not a property of actions, it is a fact about agents. He was motivated by Prichard who said, "But, as we recognize when we reflect, there are no such characteristics of an action as ought-to-be doneness and ought not to-be-doneness. This is obvious; for, since the existence of an obligation to do some action cannot possibly depend on actual performance of the action, the obligation cannot itself be a property which the action would have, if it were done. What does exist is the fact that you, or that I, ought or ought not, to do a certain action. And when we make an assertion containing the term 'ought' or 'ought not', that to which we are attributing a certain character is not a certain activity, but a certain man. "From the above passage, it is clear that, we may ascribe rightness to a particular action which is done or is possibly done, but duty is never ascribed of an action, it is always said of a person or the agent who does the action that it is his duty. Hence, duty is always of a person. But an action is the duty of a person not only when it is done but also when it is not done. It means it is expected of a person to do an action which is his duty, but it is not always that one performs his duty .though he should.

Ross next tries to relate goodness with duty or what is right. According to him, what is morally good may be any of the following - moral good may be an action which is voluntarily performed as being part of one's duty, or to relieve from pain , or just for the sake of extending knowledge; or , moral good may be the desire to do such an action as mentioned above, even if the desire does not produce the action in reality ; moral good may also be the satisfaction to see that the action has attained the ends it aimed at, or the dissatisfaction to see that the ends are not achieved ; moral good can be the dispositions in the character of a person which lead him to do such an action . From the above, it is worth noting that any action done from the sense of duty is not morally good. Because, it may so happen that a man performs an action from a sense of duty but his motive is not good. Hence, his intention may be right though his motive is wrong. Such an action is not said to be morally good. On the contrary, it may so happen that a man has a good motive to do an action, but it goes against his duty, therefore, his intentions are not right. An action which is in accordance with duty is a right action, i.e. a right / dutiful action exhibits

the right intention. Whereas, an action is morally good, where the agent has a good motive behind it, irrespective of whether it is /is not a right / dutiful action. Therefore a good action may not be a right action and a right action may not be a good action. After having related / distinguished moral goodness with / from right or duty, Ross moves towards showing how the concepts are tied together under the common notion of intuition. He says that all the concepts of goodness, rightness or duty are recognised intuitively. To quote Ross, “when we have reached sufficient mental maturity and have given sufficient attention to the proposition it is evident without any need of proof, or of evidence beyond itself” (*W.D. Ross, The Right and the Good, 1930*)

As we intuit the moral principles and thereby perform an action, we do not evaluate/judge an action intuitively on the basis of its consequences. This clarifies that the version of intuitionism as propounded by William. D. Ross is unique in its approach and is unlike the consequentialist Intuitionism of Moore. Moore sees the goodness of an action performed intuitively on analysing the nature of the action, whereas Ross prefers to do good actions as guided intuitively by principles. This hints to Ross’s inclination as a deontologist in his approach towards ethical intuitionism.

Deontological (duty-based) ethics is concerned with what people do, not with the consequences of their actions. Under this form of ethics we cannot justify an action by showing that it produced good consequences, which is why it is sometimes called 'non-Consequentialist'. The word 'deontological' comes from the Greek word *deon*, which means 'duty'. Duty-based ethics is usually what people talk about when they refer to 'the principle of the thing'. Duty-based ethics teaches that some acts are right or wrong because of the sorts of things they are, and people have a duty to act accordingly, regardless of the good or bad consequences that may be produced. As Ross said, “Some kinds of action are wrong or right in themselves, regardless of the consequences. Deontologists live in a universe of moral rules. Someone who follows Duty-based ethics should do the right thing, even if that produces more harm (or less good) than doing the wrong thing. People have a duty to do the right thing, even if it produces a bad result. So, for example, the philosopher Kant thought that it would be wrong to tell a lie in order to save a friend from a murderer.

If we compare Deontologists with Consequentialists we can see that Consequentialists begin by considering what things are good, and identify 'right' actions as the ones that produce the maximum of those good things. Moore was a Consequentialist in the sense that he relied on intuiting the moral nature of an action in accordance with the consequence which followed there from. Deontologists like Ross appear to do it the other way around; they first consider what actions are 'right' intuitively and proceed from there. So a person is doing something good if they are doing a morally right action as guided by the intuitive moral principles.

Ross, though a deontological intuitionist, was not a deontologist in the absolutist sense like Immanuel Kant. He was an objectivist intuitionist. Many philosophers believe he created a stronger form of deontological ethics than Kantianism. Ross begins with intuitionism, which is the position that people immediately grasp right and wrong. An intuition is a truth we apprehend directly; no reasoning or evidence is necessary. For example, we intuit that we are currently conscious or that the rose is red. No reasoning is necessary to know these claims. Ross believed that moral intuitions are like sense perceptions. For example, we see a round object, and then notice it is red, and so on. Roundness and redness are immediate intuitions. We immediately intuit that parallel lines never meet on a plane surface. These are self-evident and cannot be proved. More importantly, they are not absolute. For example, redness does not always override roundness or blueness.

According to Ross, as we become educated and more experienced, we become better at intuiting the morally correct act in each situation. For example, we have an intuitive duty to keep promises and improve ourselves. So, Ross believed we have an immediate duty to keep promises, be faithful, and so on. For example, we should presume to keep promises unless a conflicting duty overrides us. So, we should keep our promise to meet our friend for coffee, but this obligation is overridden when we encounter a car accident. Our primary moral obligation is then to help them, not to keep the promise. In this case, beneficence overrides promise keeping. So, Ross is not an absolutist, but he is an objectivist, and it seems his system better captures how moral people actually reason. Both promise-keeping and beneficence are objectively valid, but neither is absolutely decisive. Promise-keeping overrides beneficence in some cases, beneficence overrides promise-keeping in other

cases, and so on. In a similar way, both earth's gravity and the laws that propel a rocket engine are objective, but the rocket engine wins out when it escapes Earth. Now, *actual duties* are what we should do in each case. For example, your actual duty is to help the victims of the car accident, while your conflicting prima facie duties are to keep promises and be benevolent. In this case, benevolence overrides promise keeping and becomes your actual duty. Again, Ross' system is not absolutist because every objective value is sometimes overridden by other objective values. Therefore, though Ross is an objectivist, he is not an absolutist, rather a relativist. Ross's theory also captures the idea that intelligent, wise, and experienced people intuit the morally best action in each situation. The wise and good action is not a matter of applying the categorical imperative or calculating consequences. Nor it is a matter of blindly following your culture or exclusively pursuing your own self-interest. Rather, it is a matter of intuiting the right action based on many irreducible principles, emotions, a priori categories, and experiences.

One criticism of Ross' Deontological Intuitionism is that, it does not seem people can argue for intuitions. We either see they are true or we don't. We either see that justice is good or we don't. No reasoning is necessary, and this seems to be a weakness of all forms of intuitionism. So, perhaps relying on intuitions in ethics should be no more problematic than relying on them in other fields. Again intuitionists like Ross do not claim intuitions are infallible. Just as our sensory intuitions can be mistaken, so can our moral intuitions be. It will therefore be highly optimistic though ambitious to claim that *Ethical Intuitionism* may be justified by an attempt to synthesize the views of Ross and Kant. From Kant, we may learn that universalizing reason leads to intuitions, whereas from Ross, we may accept the intuitions are not absolute.

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**THE ARGUMENTS OF SEED-FIELD THEORY IN HINDUISM: AN EXAMINATION
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FEMINIST ONTOLOGY
SOMA BHATTACHARYA**

Introduction:

What is popularly known by the word ‘Hinduism’ is one of the greatest world religions. But it is neither religion in popular western sense of ‘religion’ nor any ‘ism’ - it is *Sanātana Dharma*, the Eternal Law of the universe. The word *Dharma* is derived from the root *dhi* which has the meaning of “to hold, maintain and keep”. It is the unique principle known as *rta*. This *rta* is *Dharma - Ṛtasya dharman* (*R̥gveda*:1/90). It refers to the power which upholds the universe and society. In Hinduism, *Dharma* required for self-satisfaction, purity of mind and getting liberation of life. In this connection, here we are searching for the ontology of womanhood or what is essence of woman. Ontology of experience treats woman as a human being having equal status with male counterpart. But the social construct historically ignores this philosophical reality and as a result politics of discrimination continues in societies with norms and sanctions from religious law books.

As we have said that woman is a human being just like a man, they are the half-sky in the world. But when we see the law books of religious orientation, such as Hindu or Vedic *Dharma* in our society, we see that woman is not being treated as a human being at par with male-counterpart. She is usually treated as a means, not as an end. Her identity is socially constructed by male-chauvinistic power structure. Like other religions in Hinduism, marriage and procreation are very important in the family system. Here the question arises: what is the status of women in this system? We have seen that the role of wife and mother is idealized for women in Hinduism. Down the ages, it has been worshipping the mother figure. So, we have instituted our searching for the actual scenario of the status of woman as a mother in Hinduism.

Women’s status in marriage and procreation

In the period of *Smṛti*, the right of the education of women was almost completely denied. Many religious rules had been imposed on women such as the nuptial ceremony is stated to be the Vedic sacrament for women (and to be equal to the initiation), serving the husband (equivalent to) the residence in (the house of the) teacher, and the household duties (the same) as the (daily) worship of the sacred

fire.¹ These were the main role of married women in Indian society. It is said in the *Mahābhārata* that the structure of domestic system (*gārhsthya dharma*) and society is dependent on marriage custom.² In support of marriage custom, it is said that the wife is the main medium of achieving *trivarga* (*Dharma, Artha, and Kāma*), three pursuits of life of the husband.³ The physical enjoyment is not only the main reason of family system but also essential reason in getting spirituality (*Dharma*). Though, it is considered that marriage is the main religious act in the life of women.

But the marriage system is not coming from the ancient times. Śvetaketu told his father, Uddāloka that “I am doing this rule, from now, man and women in the society will not be sexual arbitrariness. If someone breaks my rules, sin will be committed to killing foetus”.⁴ In that time, polygamy was the rules for both man and woman in society which was prohibited by the Śvetaketu’s rules. But it is stopped for the woman, not for the man. The *Taiterīya Samhitā* clearly says that “a husband may have many wives but one woman cannot be many husbands”.⁵ Though it is needed for the both man and woman, in the Vedic injunction marriage is the essential duty for woman. In result, unmarried women were condemned in the then society. And it is said that they are not found in superior place.⁶ Here this ‘superior place’ means the heaven. If a woman is unmarried, she cannot go to the heaven after her death. For this reason, the daughter of Ṛṣi Kunigarg at her old age was forced to marry Ṛṣi Prākṣṛṅgaban before her death for only one day. In this way, she took the superior place as heaven. But unmarried Bhisma was worshiped as a pious and godly person throughout his lifetime. How could we explain the necessity of marriage only in woman’s life? It is persuaded in the *Vaśiṣṭha Dharmaśāstra* that “woman has to be protected in childhood by her father, in youth by her husband and in her old age by her son”.⁷ We see that one of the objectives of dharma is to protect the human society. And this responsibility of protecting women has come upon men sometime as a

¹ *Manusamhitā* :2/67

² *Mahābhārata, Anusāsanaparva*: 45/9

³ *Mahābhārata, Vanaparva*:312/102

⁴ *Mahābhārata, Adiparva*:122/10-20

⁵ *Taiterīya Samhitā*: 6/6/4/3

⁶ *Mahābhārata, Śalyaparva* 52/10

⁷ *Vaśiṣṭha Dharmaśāstra*:5/1-2

father, sometime as a husband or sometime as a son. Naturally the question arose, what is the reason for protecting women?

The main goal of patriarchy is to protect the family and to keep the inheritance of family property. So, it is ruled that the woman have one husband and necessity to protect the woman. If it is not done, the children's fatherhood will not be properly determined. However, the purity of family inheritance does not dependent only on women. Because we see, there were *anuloma* and *pratiloma* marriage. A higher-class man when marries a lower class (*śudra*) woman - it is *Anuloma* marriage. It is not condemned. A lower-class man marries a higher-class woman - it is *pratiloma* marriage. This system is condemned in society. A *Brāhmaṇa* could marry a *śudra* woman and their child becomes a *Brāhmaṇa*. But if a *Brāhmaṇa* woman could marry a *śudra* or any other class of male as partner, their child could not become a *Brāhmaṇa*. His status was decided by the status of his father. If all the controlling power is in the hand of *Brāhmaṇa*, whatever they did, it would have become a rule.

Marriage has become essential for women who have lost their right to education. Unmarried women were condemned. Marriage is the highest achievement and goal of a woman's life. A married woman controlled by her husband and husband's parents. The purpose of marriage is for the devotedly serving and giving pleasure to the husband and to bear and raise children, particularly son. If a woman denies fulfilling her husband's sexual pleasure, then as Yājñavalkya advised that "If she is not willing, he should buy her over; and if she is still unyielding, he should strike her with a stick or with the hand and proceed, uttering the following *Mantra*, 'I take away your reputation', etc. She is then actually discarded."⁸ Here women have no right to their own body and no given importance of her willing.⁹

In the views of Manu, "Woman is viewed solely as the mother and the wife and those roles are idealized. The ideal wife is one who is faithful and who gives service to her husband and his family members without any complain is virtuous."¹⁰ There are no identity of woman without the relations with father, husband and son

⁸ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: 6/4/7

⁹ *Manusamhitā*: 9/28 and 9/29

¹⁰ *Ibid*

(offspring) in this patriarchal system. It is denied selfhood or personhood of a woman. The ontological autonomy as being human has been subjected to sub-ordination because of social construct.

The main objective of the marriage is to produce progeny, especially son for keeping and protecting inheritance of family property. We found the prayer for son in the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Dharmaśāstras*, *Gṛhyasūtras* and the great epics. “The woman is considered evil; daughter is a curse.”¹¹ The daughter is the cause of sorrow.¹² Kṛṣṇa said that “as a result of the sin of previous birth, one is born as a woman”.¹³ The girl child is unwanted but there was prayer for son in many ceremonies such as *garvādhān*, *pungṣaban*, *simantayan* etc.¹⁴ But the *Bṛhadāryaṇyaka Upaniṣad* tells about the birth of a daughter. “If man wishes that a learned daughter should be born to him, and that she should live to her full age, then after having prepared boiled rice with sesamum and butter, they should both eat, being fit to have offspring.”¹⁵ It is considered an exception. Yājñavalkya tells in this *Upaniṣads*, “the wish of the son same as the wish of the wealth”.¹⁶ Manu said the importance of sons, “Because a son delivers (*trāyate*) his father from the hell called ‘Put’, he was therefore called *putra* (a deliverer from Put) by the Self-existent (*svayambhu*) himself”.¹⁷ It may be presumed that since son protects the old parents and gives them support when they are incapable of supporting them, help them to reduce suffering (‘put *naraka*’), people desire children. If it is also done by a daughter, then a son and a daughter can perform the same duty to the aged parents. “Immediately on the birth of his first-born a man is (called) the father of a son and is freed from the debt to the manes; that (son), therefore, is worthy (to receive) the whole estate”.¹⁸ This is not enough; there had been recognition of different kind of sons in *Manusmṛti*. “The legitimate son of the body, the son begotten on a wife, the son adopted, the son made, the son secretly

¹¹ *Aiteriya Brāhmaṇa*:6/3/7/3

¹² *Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva*: 1/59/1

¹³ *Mahābhārata, Bhiṣma Parva* :33/32

¹⁴ *Sankhyalāyaṇa- Gṛhyasūtras*:1/19/6; *Aśvalāyaṇa- Gṛhyasūtras*:1/13/6; 1/14/4, *Atharvaveda*: 3/5/3/2 *Atharvaveda*: 8/3/5/5

¹⁵ *Bṛhadāryaṇyaka Upaniṣad*: 6/4/16

¹⁶ *Bṛhadāryaṇyaka Upaniṣad*:3/5/1

¹⁷ *Manusamhitā*:9/138

¹⁸ *Manusamhitā*:9/106

born, and the son cast off, (are) the six heirs and kinsmen”.¹⁹ “The son of an unmarried damsel, the son received with the wife, the son bought, the son begotten on a remarried woman, the son self-given, and the son of a *śudra* female, (are) the six (who are) not heirs, (but) kinsmen”.²⁰

Women’s Status in Seed-Field Theory

Now the question is: What is the role of women in producing a child? We have seen that son freed his father from debt, gives him immortality. But it was not said, a mother had not given any immortality. However, it is said, ‘Mother is the heaven of the heaven’. But there as such no place the heaven of heaven in any *Śāstras*. In other words, this patriarchal society had not given proper honour for women in most of the instances, but worshiped the mother status. That is very much doubtful.

In the context of the role of women in producing child, let us examine the arguments of ‘the seed-field theory’ which is presented in all *Śāstras*.²¹ A woman is called the field that acts as a nourishing agent for the growth of a seed. Man is called a seed (semen/sperm) that has the power to reproduce its own kind. The whole *Manusmṛti* speaks for the supreme importance of seed. Because of, the offspring of all created beings is marked by the characteristics of the seed.²² It is notable that in the form of a child, both father and mother have their own characteristics. Because of twenty-three chromosomes from female and twenty-three chromosomes from male come together to produce a cell that develops into a child. Manu did not accept the mother characteristics in the form of a child. This science of reproduction was not perhaps known to the ancients Indians. But due to the social constructs of the patriarchal society there is always emphasis more on the male. However, this scientific discovering of modern genetic investigation was not known during Manu’s time. It is said that “Seed, sown on barren ground, perishes in it; a (fertile) field also, in which no (good) seed (is sown), will remain barren”.²³ Even the child productive

¹⁹ *Manusamhitā*:9.159

²⁰ *Manusamhitā* 9.160

²¹ *Manusamhitā* 9/33 and 10/69

²² *Manusamhitā* 9/35

²³ *Manusamhitā* 10.71

role of the women was brought down to the level of zero. In the *Mahābhārata*, Droṇācārya was born without women's womb.²⁴ Is it believable? Simultaneously we have seen, in the *Ādīparva*, without the existence of women man is helpless to getting own child. Pāndu was unable to produce children by curse of Ṛṣi Kindam. In fact, he was perhaps impotent. So, he requested Kunti to get children from another male person.²⁵ Gradually, she had conceived by the *Dharma*, Bāyu, and Indra and given birth Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhima and Arjuna. Mādri also went to the same way and she given birth Nakula and Sahadeba by the two *Aświnikumāras*. This practice is called Niyoga.²⁶ This practice is to suppress the men's helplessness in case of man's impotency. And side by side, this practice established man's supremacy and therefore it permits man to use woman as a means of reproduction. Here also applies the analogy of land and woman. "In the case of the land, whosoever owned the land owned whatever was there in the land?"²⁷ Similarly, it was thought that whosoever was the husband owned and he owned all the children of woman. The children born out of Niyoga did not belong to the person concerned but to the rightful owner or the husband.

The new Genetic theory explains the human reproduction in terms of genes. It states that the ovary produces egg cells in the female, and the testis produces sperm cells in the male which are unite within a womb of a woman.²⁸ Thus sperm cells and egg cells together develop a human embryo and woman is nourishing the embryo in her womb. This implies that female has a more responsible function than male in reproductive system.²⁹ It is hard to deny that female and male bodily experiences differ in many ways. Women have unique bodily experiences - ovulation, menstruation, pregnancy, child birth, and breast-feeding but men have not such as

²⁴ *Mahābhārata, Ādīparva*: 63

²⁵ *Mahābhārata, Ādīparva*: 120/37

²⁶ Similar to the *Niyoga* system now a days, there are build Sperm banks which provide the opportunity to have a baby to single women and coupled lesbians and to heterosexual couples where the male is infertile.

²⁷ *Manusamhitā*: 9/51

²⁸ The eggs are then fertilized in the laboratory with her partner's sperm. The embryos are cultured in the IVF laboratory for two to six days. The embryo transfer procedure is done which places the embryos in the woman's uterus where they will hopefully implant and develop to result in a live birth.

²⁹ Meena A. Kelkar, *Subordination of Woman: A New Perspective*, Discover Publishing House, New Delhi, 1995, p.81

bodily experiences and they have experience of ejaculation of semen which helps to reproduction of life. Here specifically female bodily experiences actually confer on women superiority.³⁰ Patriarchal society has denied to accept it and established the opposite view.

According to Mill, “It is not that all process is supposed to be equally good, or all persons to be equally qualified for everything; but that freedom of individual choice is now known to be the only thing which procures the adoption of the best processes, and throws each operation into the hands of those who are best qualified for it”.³¹ It should be admitted that freedom of individual choice is very important for getting dignity of human being. The power system is hidden in the depth of society. So, the new genetic theory could not change the attitude towards woman. Even today the female foetuses have been killed behind the worship of mother figure.³²

Concluding Remark

The most important question of equality as a person remains unaddressed in Hindu society. Very often religious society uses the Scriptures in a dogmatic way and applies the social construct upon women. As a result, we see much such discrimination. Like the Scriptures of the world religions, Hindu social behaviour is also controlled by the patriarchal power-structure and consequently the status of women remains as a second class one. However, due to western education now a day it has been changing very slowly, it is still having a subordinate status. The distress becomes more because of the support of this patriarchal supremacy by the senior ladies. At present day, if couples have failed to birth children, this failure has to impose totally on woman only. Proper value education as a person, as a human being can enable a woman to see her own face with the philosophical mirror of wisdom. Philosophy of religion being a critical and second order activity will open the door of making sociology of Religion here with an understanding of personhood.

³⁰ This is an Eco-feminists’ argument.

³¹ Mill, J. S. *The Subjugation of Women*. Everyman’s Library, London. 1970. p.235

³² Current sex ratio in India, 2017 is 945 females per 1,000 males.

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