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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

This issue of *Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences* contains eight research papers. All the contributors of this issue have spent some time of their academic life at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, in various capacities. In this issue, five papers are directly related to the discipline of philosophy, while two are primarily concerned with politics and one tries to synthesize Islamic discourses, political theory and psychoanalysis. All essays have been anonymously reviewed. The first essay by Vrinda Dalmiya innovatively reads the *Mahābhārata* and brilliantly situates the nature of moral agency in care ethics. She does so by taking refuge in the academic works on feminist ethics. At the same time, she reminds us that the feminist agenda is not simply to focus on care in our *ethical* lives but to locate the domain of the 'political' as well. According to her, care agency based on the philosophical category of *dvaidha* ('double-ness' or 'forking') not only becomes foundational to ethical choice but can also ground a truly ethico-*political* agency in diverse ways.

The second essay by Varun Kumar Tripathi intends to examine certain aspects of Buddhism from the viewpoint of moral psychology in order to enquire as on what grounds moral evaluations of human conduct are possible. This is a paper that directly addresses the concerns of moral philosophy, a branch of philosophy which examines the 'value-world' in which some human acts and practices are recognized as morally 'commendable' or 'good' while others are regarded as 'reprehensible'. Since, there are different modalities and theories in moral philosophy to deal with the idea of 'good', Tripathi asks a fundamental question of whether one can meaningfully talk about virtues and vices at all. He further enquires whether 'Buddhist ethics' can be evaluated in terms of either cognitivism or non-cognitivism apart from dealing with the limits of such evaluations. He essentially tries to present some insight about how the question of 'ought' be dealt with from a Buddhist perspective.

The third essay by Balaganapathi Devarakonda problematizes the understanding of Indian philosophy as presented by two different prisms of western and Indian scholars. Analyzing the two genres of history writing of classical Indian philosophy, one

represented by the Orientalist and the other one by the Nationalist, he argues that Indian philosophy in a contemporary sense of the term, is a colonial construct. According to him, such 'contemporary conceptions of the classical' assumes that there is a specific body of knowledge called the Indian philosophy, which is an available monolithic structure and, therefore, it must be understood, interpreted and commented in its totality. Such simplified understanding of the so-called homogenous stream of classical Indian philosophy is marked by certain essential characteristics, which depicts an epistemic distinction between India and the West. In analyzing the roots of the 'contemporary conceptions of the classical', he traces the *history* of history-writing of the colonial period. He argues that since history in India has been mainly written during the modern period through the Western categories, and that the initial attempts of writing such histories, by and large, came from the Western scholars, it is indeed necessary to understand how India's past and 'Indian Philosophy' are being narrated. He also briefly points out the limitations of the early colonialists in comprehending and explaining the Indian philosophical tradition in a foreign language. Finally, he examines the two histories of Indian philosophy, one by Max Muller—representing the Orientalists and the other by Radhakrishnan—representing the Nationalists to demonstrate the dialectics between these two schools in producing the monolith called 'Indian Philosophy'.

The fourth and fifth essays of this volume take a flight from the terrain of Indian Philosophy to the works of a great western philosopher: Ludwig Wittgenstein. Priyambada Sarkar's essay highlights the analytical philosophy of early Wittgenstein. It asks an original question: how could Wittgenstein's *Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus*, a treatise on the philosophy of logic is concerned about 'the mysticals', including his remarks on ethics and aesthetics? Through a detailed study of Wittgenstein's diaries, notebooks, letters and other manuscripts, Sarkar makes the case that Wittgenstein's remarks in the last few pages of *Tractatus* were as much important as those of earlier pages. In no circumstances, one can deliberately ignore such linkages as it would amount to neglect of the historical scholarship, which might lead us to a complete misunderstanding of the early work of one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century. She also makes an interesting move by attempting to interpret Wittgenstein's remarks on ethics in the light of the poems of Rabindranath Tagore, one of Wittgenstein's favourite poets.

In contrast to the early Wittgenstein, Enakshi Mitra's paper focuses on the works of later Wittgenstein, particularly that of *Philosophical Investigations*. However, like Sarkar's paper, which has twin anchors in Tagore and Wittgenstein, Mitra's joint anchors are Wittgenstein and Davidson. Her paper narrates parallel accounts of *actions* by Davidson and the later Wittgenstein. In trying to understand what Davidson and Wittgenstein had to say on 'actions', she tries to accentuate their points of concurrence as a strategy to extract their irreducible difference. Her contrastive exercise concentrates on the polemic about the causal theory versus the reason theory of actions, endorsed by Davidson and Wittgenstein, respectively, and seeks to integrate it with the semantic issue of reference and description. She tries to argue that Davidson's philosophical temperament is one of a conscientious investigator, noting the overwhelming variety and anomalies of the world and yet striving to rake up the hidden foundations with a fine-grained analysis. In contrast, Wittgenstein's project is flattened out with all hidden depths into an open expanse of uses, and is always indeterminate and incomplete. Her essay throws light on important philosophical categories like 'intention', 'nomological', 'semantic transparency and opacity', 'extension and intension', and 'anti-foundationalism'.

The next two essays of this issue are largely concerned with politics. While Harihar Bhattacharyya's article is primarily interested in the normative political idea(l) of *democracy*, Arnab Chatterjee's paper foregrounds the politics of everyday. Bhattacharyya's paper seeks to highlight a great lacuna in the scholarship on democracy with regard to 'democratic intention'. Bhattacharyya argues that the idea of democratic intention has remained neglected, if not ignored, in democratic institutional arrangements and practices. He treats the subject from comparative historical perspectives by taking recourse to the classical scholarship of the Greeks, the contending theoretical literature on the topic since the days of the European Enlightenment and with special reference to the post-colonial democratic experience in India. He asks a core question: why people doubt democracy even if they have consented to such a form of government? In other words, he tries to analyze the paradox between the great expectations of the people from democracy and its great failure at the operational level. He raises questions about deficient institutional designs and practices and argues that democratic intention has critically remained problematic. This is because an absence of democratic intention can be located even in

the activities of 'proud' democrats, who ostensibly and resolutely fight for democratic restoration. In tracing the gap between the representatives and the represented under conditions of representative democracy, Bhattacharyya suggests that popular pressures from below for more fuller and meaningful participation in the polity in and through the existing institutions, can radically recast the appropriate space of democratic intention in democracy. According to him, it is through such continuous popular participation that the democratic intention of democracies, institutionally speaking, can be defined and restored.

Arnab Chatterjee's penultimate essay of this volume deals with the 'politics of dirty hands and personal attacks' as part of everyday politics. He argues that although modernity appears with a burgeoning impersonality and a formal rationality spread to life-spheres—where the domain of the private and the public are separated along with the idealized forms of formal law—the 'politics of dirty hands and personal attacks' overwhelms such a disjunction and lands the modernity project into a peculiar crisis. This is because the personal agency in politics and the person(s) involved in formal politics can manipulate the private and the public zones with their (im)pure 'dirty politics'. In order to demonstrate such a theoretical argument, Chatterjee refers to the scandalous and often abusive, scathing 'personal attacks' with its Greek origins that reached its jocular heights in the 18th century political pornography as iconic examples that point towards the underbelly of objective events, ethics and their sane, symbolic dressing. Therefore, according to Chatterjee, the very existence of dirty tricks in politics at a very personal modus operandi are the first signs of a spillover of the person standing apart and standing out of the judicious separation of the public and the private. His article actually rehearses the extant, later and distinct intervals, of the 'utter jubilee' of everyday narrative experiences of lying, negative gossiping, backstabbing, favouritism, treachery, betrayal, machinations, deception, taking undue advantage, intrigue and malice into our conceptions about politics. He suggests that our limited understanding of politics should not be just contented with grand concepts of 'state', 'democracy', 'nation' and *almost* 'other' empty-formal, substantive issues but it must also take into account of such arrival of 'pure' politics of *dirty hands*.

Finally, the concern over private versus public is also being echoed in Maidul Islam's essay. He precisely tries to argue that the dimensions and boundaries of politics and religion seems to be a

fuzzy and artificial one as the western modernist enlightenment tried to bifurcate between church and the state/politics. He further points out that the very notion of organized religion in general and Islam in particular is essentially *political*. In other words, the possibilities and potentialities of 'political' are very much embedded within organized religion. He suggests that to ignore the political identity of religion and to distinguish between religion and politics by equating religion with the private sphere and politics with the public sphere is, therefore, a futile task and would be a continuation of the erroneous construct of the mainstream of the western Enlightenment. According to him, such a project of the European 'Enlightenment' that separates between religion and politics has in fact shown its limits with the return/re-turn of religion haunting the political spheres of even modern western countries and certainly in contemporary Muslim societies. So, if religion exists in society, then the possibilities of political challenge of religion also exist as well. To locate such political dimensions of Islam and the politics within Islamic traditions and history, his paper is primarily anchored by two theoretical frameworks: (a) psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan and (b) post-Marxist combination of Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek who are indebted to the Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis. At the same time, in analysing the metaphysics of Islam from a critical perspective, he also takes refuge in some Children's Stories from the *Quran* and writings on theology and history of Islam in order to deconstruct the (personal) faith based religion of Islam.

HUNTING DEER AND SEARCHING
FOR THE SNAKE'S FEET:
EXPLORING CARE ETHICAL AGENCY
IN A COMPARATIVE CONTEXT

Vrinda Dalmiya

Introduction: The Comparative Context

Yet Yudhiṣṭhira acts. According to some contemporary commentators,[1] the eldest Pāṇḍava, the mild-mannered Yudhiṣṭhira, is the hero of the *Mahābhārata*[2] rather than Arjuna, the flashier, swashbuckling protagonist of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. But Yudhiṣṭhira is full of doubts. He is always asking questions—the answers to which only seem to confuse him further. Yet, like us all, he can *not* act: Yudhiṣṭhira after all, though Hamlet-like is not a Hamlet. He is the son of Dharma and is, therefore, 'by conception' tied not only to the realm of action but to good action. This leads us to wonder whether his doubts, his questioning, his hesitations—in short his *irresolution*—could be a mark of ethicality rather than a sign of moral weakness. Furthermore, Yudhiṣṭhira is the only character in the epic who is ushered into heaven in mortal form. Is this suggestive of Dharma being *in/with body* always—of the inseparability of ethicality from embodiment? And could 'being bodied' be tied to irresolution in any way? I will use an affirmative answer to these questions (arising within the *Mahābhārata*) to deepen our understanding of the nature of moral agency in care ethics, a movement originating in the work of development psychologist Carol Gilligan,[3] and often characterized as form of feminist ethics.

Clearly then, I construe Yudhiṣṭhira as a care ethical agent. This anticipates discussions of why the epic lends itself to a care ethical analysis in the first place, and of the plausibility of saddling an admittedly patriarchal text with an explicitly feminist orientation. I do not defend these contentions but work within their parameters in this paper. Briefly, the shift within the *Mahābhārata*, from the notion of *ahiṁsā* or non-violence to that of non-cruelty or *ānṛśamsya*,[4]

I take as marking the transition to the technical notion of 'care'. Moreover, the move from mothers and/or women to a *male king* as the exemplar of the caring voice, has both advantages and disadvantages for the feminist agenda and sets the stage for a nuanced construction of care within a comparative philosophical context. Presupposing this framing, I move the philosophical lens from the nature of the *actor* or the 'relational self' to the nature of *action* and *agency*. The purpose thus is to read certain strands in the *Mahābhārata* as gesturing towards a much-needed theory of action consistent with care ethics.

Of course, the feminist agenda is not just to focus on care in our *ethical* lives but to make it central in the political domain as well. According to Joan Tronto,[5] political life is ultimately about allocating caring responsibilities. Democratic theory must deal with the question of 'who cares?' and re-think the equality of citizens in terms of them being receivers and givers of care. Sidestepping this substantive issue, I try at the end of the paper, to initiate a dialogue between the *Mahābhārata's* vision of ethical agency as articulated here and some contemporary forms of conceiving the political space.

Yudhiṣṭhira as a Care Ethical Agent

The birth of care ethics in the West is traced to the different responses given by Carol Gilligan's experimental subjects, Amy and Jake. When asked whether the penniless Heinz should steal a drug to save his dying wife, Jake had come up with the unambiguous and confident answer that he should. He applied the clear-cut principle 'human life is more than money'[6] to the situation of Heinz and computed an affirmative answer to the moral question 'like a math problems with humans.'[7] Amy, the poster child of the care perspective, on the other hand, tried to flesh out the formal dilemma presented to her. She painted alternative scenarios that situated the choice in a 'narrative of relations that extends over time.'[8] What if Heinz stole the drug and was sent to prison, wouldn't his wife suffer more? What if the druggist depended on the sale of the drug to save his *own* wife? What if Heinz could talk it over with the pharmacist and negotiate a payment in installments? What if the druggist could be persuaded to give the medicine for free? What if.... and what if.....? Each of these imagined scenarios called for a *different* moral response. So Amy stalled. Her deliberations were punctuated by 'I don't know', 'I don't think so', 'It really depends' and the like.

Now what is it about the nature of moral life that makes Amy— and Yudhiṣṭhira—so naturally hesitant? In a telling episode from the childhood of the Pāṇḍavas, their archery teacher Droṇa devised a contest whereby the princes had to pierce the eye of a decoy parrot. They were each asked what they saw before being allowed to shoot their arrows. Arjuna, who was to become the charismatic war-hero later in the epic, won the show by replying that he perceived nothing but the parrot's eye. Yudhiṣṭhira, on the other hand, reported seeing the decoy situated in a larger context. He observed not only the model of a parrot, but the branch it was perched on, the tree, the sky, the clouds—all that formed the background and framed the target. Yudhiṣṭhira was, as we know, summarily disqualified. He failed Droṇa's test just as miserably as Amy had failed to score on Kohlberg's scale of moral maturity. However, there is a method lurking in their apparent incompetence.

What are distracting noise-factors for hitting the bull's eye in archery is the substance of responsible ethical negotiations in a care perspective. Unlike the Utilitarians, the terrain of care is not constituted by agents who are mere 'receptacles of utility'. Rather, the moral domain (in the words of Seyla Benhabib[9]) is made up of un-substitutable 'concrete others' whose individualized and unique histories make them who they are. The wider relational contexts of such subjects, therefore, become *constitutive* of ethical situations. The moral mandate now is to be 'non-cruel' (or avoid harm/pain) of such embodied, relational agents. Consequently, care ethicists cannot work with neutral, universal rules because the specific relational configurations make up the very situations calling for a moral response. This explains why both Yudhiṣṭhira and Amy share a dis-inclination for abstraction and a penchant for contextual and holistic elaboration—why according to them, the right thing to do varies with the relations constituting a particular context. Being mindful of the pain of others (and of oneself) cannot depend on pat formulas, but on heeding the specific relationships that cause the pain in the first place and the particular bonds that can be mobilized to address it.

Furthermore, because we are located in a web-like matrix of *multiple* relations with often contradictory demands, it is quite likely that no matter what one does, someone or the other will get hurt. Moral life is thus a life of dilemmas but relationally responsible ethical subjects negotiate these dilemmas by looking at the details on a case-by-case basis. The *Mahābhārata* too reinforces this stance.

Dharma is *avasthā* (situation)-generated moral embroilment and hence, is *āvasthika* or contextual. But importantly, the consequent ethical open-endedness is not a cause for lament but is fore-grounded in the epic as a unique meta-ethical stand on moral epistemology. I dip into this as a conceptual resource to make sense of ethico-political agency consistent with the care perspective—a perspective that demands (for example) that we do the right thing when faced with the options of staying at home with a sick child or attending a professional meeting, but gives us no rules that tell us which is the right choice.

The Problem—Moving Snakes and Absence of Rules

So Yudhiṣṭhira laments. There is after all, a comfort and safety in rules which he yearns for. Very much like Arjuna in the *Gitā*, Yudhiṣṭhira at the end of the war gives up on morality (*dharmo me śithilīkṛtah,* he says. Śānti Parvan 142.2) when he learns that even the sage Viśvāmitra's stealing dog-meat from the house of a *candāla* is an acceptable action according to the text. The *Mahābhārata* regales us (and Yudhiṣṭhira) with a panorama of stories about exemplary ethical behaviour. But there is no consistent thread running through them. An action lauded as 'right' in one case is criticized as 'wrong' in another. In fact, instances of the traditional vices—lying, stealing, cheating, killing, betraying—are all marked as virtuous in some situations. Confused by these moral reversals (particularly in the times of crises (*āpat-kāla*)), Yudhiṣṭhira plaintively and desperately asks if there are *any* lines that cannot be crossed, if there is *some principle* which could be held up as inviolable even in the most extreme of circumstances. 'Even bandits and thieves seemed to have a code of conduct, so why was nothing absolutely prohibited for a ruler facing the consequences of a dire and depleting war?' he asks (Śānti Parvan, 142).

But wherein lies the root of this desire for universal principles? This question plunges us into the debate between universalists and particularists in ethics. Universalists rely on laws and principles. A moral principle is a universal claim to the effect that all actions with a certain general nature have a certain ethical quality. The advantage of this is twofold: First, such laws tether values to the world of concrete, natural events. For example, an action that *causes happiness* (a natural property) may be designated as being 'right' (a non-natural property); or behaviour that involves *willful distorting of facts* (a natural property) may be deemed morally 'wrong' (a non-natural

property). In this way, we have law-like connections 'grounding' the ethical in the ordinary, natural world. This removes the metaphysical weirdness of value-facts and tames the mystery of ethical distinctions. Secondly, knowledge of these regularities enables us to choose responsibly, reliably and rationally. Rules are not only action-guiding and help us stay 'on the rails'[10] but also explain and account for the rationality of moral decisions. It is easy, for instance, to ward off the suspicion of foolhardiness about a maneuver that risks our life and those of others in an attempt to save a drowning neighbor, if there is a universal rule requiring us to do so.

The *Mahābhārata's* classification of the same action as right in one situation and wrong in another belies such law-like connections. Even if (for example) an action is deemed wrong in a particular context because it is the cause of (say) death and injury, we cannot use the feature 'causing death and injury' as a sign of moral disvalue in another context and choose accordingly, because the same natural feature might well lose its negative moral valence in a different situation. To use Margaret Little's[11] example, a dab of red may enhance the aesthetic value of a picture because of its relation to the particular colors on the canvas; but that is no 'reason'[12] to believe that a red patch augments aesthetic value across the board. Given a holism, no natural feature per se can be the mark of ethical value in *all* situations. But without rules, Yudhiṣṭhira is left wondering if there is any non-random distinction between good and bad; and whether without such a reasoned distinction, the moral effort of *trying to choose responsibly* itself becomes meaningless.

The *Mahābhārata* registers this philosophical angst of Yudhiṣṭhira in an evocative metaphor in Śānti Parvan 132.20. Feet are the standard means of locomotion. But what are Dharma's feet whereby moral excellence can move into our lives and move our lives? Our desire to be good usually seeks out rules of the form: 'in such and such situations, everyone with such and such end should act in such and such a way'. While contemplating a future action one weighs alternative *kinds* of deeds. And action-types are general 'such and such ways' of doing. Thus, rules connecting moral qualities to natural properties in a proto-nomic fashion become the *dharmic* feet. They provide usable criteria for applying moral predicates. But according to the *Mahābhārata, Dharma* is like a snake. It moves meanderingly but with no feet. If ethical situations are inhabited by concrete particulars, not subsumable under general concepts, then there can be no moral laws. *Just as there are no snake feet.* Yuddhiṣṭhira's

problem then is that the logic of the *Mahābhārata* narrative positions him within a particularist framework. However, the resources accounting for responsible moral action are available only within a Universalist perspective. Clearly then, an alternative account is needed: for remember that snakes do move and slither *even without feet.* But what could non-standard means of locomotion be?

Care ethics too, like the *Mahābhārata,* is a particularist ethic. Concrete subjects are embedded in webs of relations that determine the moral valence of any act. Thus what is right in one situation can be inapplicable given a different relational constellation. There are no a priori rules—like there are no snake feet to take us to the morally right end. Yet, reminiscent of the snake, care ethical agents *do* act and often act *well* when negotiating conflicting needs. But figuring out how we learn to do the right thing is as painfully difficult as finding the mechanism of locomotion in snakes (*aheriva hi dharmasya pada dukham gaveṣitum*: Śānti Parvan, 132.20). And that is the philosophical challenge raised by Yudhiṣṭhira's moral angst. He asks Bhīṣma point blank *how* one can be ethical in the absence of moral rules, thereby squarely confronting the need (more than Western care literature) to give an alternative account of responsible ethical choice within the particularist framework of care.

The Answer—the Running Deer and 'Balancing'

The *Mahābhārata's* response to this issue is found in another elaborate metaphor of a hunter chasing down a running deer (Śānti Parvan, 132.21). But before coming to that, it is interesting to note that the text's immediate response to Yudhiṣṭhira's moral angst is a celebratory entrenchment and deepening of exactly *what had caused* his anxiety in the first place. Conflicts between different scriptures, between scriptures and our intuitions, between different conventions and even between different exemplars of good conduct are re-iterated in an odd bid to reassure Yudhiṣṭhira who is puzzled *because* of these conflicts! Note also that when befuddled, Arjuna had listened to only a single divine authority in the *Gītā.* (Although even he found the single Divine voice to be indulging in double-speak: 'Now you praise renunciation, then again you commend engagement'; *Bhagavad Gītā* 5.1) However, Yudhiṣṭhira's muddles are often sorted out under the tutelage of several authorities - his four brothers, his brilliant wife, and Vidura—each with *conflicting moral persuasions* and advice. In fact, one such teaching session is even called the *Ṣādjagītā*—the 'Song of the Six.'[13] From the

Mahābhārata's point of view, this immersion in conflicting variety is *dvaidha*, literally 'two-ways' or 'forked' (Śānti Parvan 142.8). Chasing the meaning of the running deer for a while will enable us to grasp the central concept of *dvaidha* and understand the seemingly perverse strategy of dissolving ambiguity by underscoring and heightening it.

Hitting upon the right thing to do is like hunting down a wounded, but still running deer (*yathā mṛgasya viddhasya padam ekam padaṃ nayet*: Śānti Parvan, 132.21). The deer has four feet. But when it runs and leaps forward, only one of them touch the ground at any particular time. The running deer leaves a trail of blood. And the hunter chasing after it conjectures which particular foot will next hit the ground, when and where, by looking at this bloody trail (*lakśed rudhiralepena*). Based on such speculation, he takes aim. But he gets his game only if lucky. Hitting a moving target is always chancy.

A layered reading of this metaphor enables us to pull out three different threads here. The central idea is the notion of a distinctive way of knowing that may be called 'balancing' or 'cumulative reasoning.' This I claim, references the special faculty of *yukti*. However, *yukti* in turn is associated with contextualism and uncertainty—both of which are configured in the metaphor of the deer hunt. Let us look at each of these in turn.

The running deer foregrounds contextualism in a straight forward manner. The commentarial literature on this metaphor speaks of four 'legs' of an elusive *dharma*-deer as the four disciplines of (i) *ānvīkṣiki* (logic/philosophy), (ii) *veda* (scriptural injunctions), (iii) *vārtā* (norms of social practice like agriculture and commerce) and (iv) *daṇḍanīti* (laws sanctioned by an administrative, penal code). The running deer is supported by *different* legs at different times, suggesting that the particular system of rules / codes that are appropriate for guiding action depends on and varies according to the context. Moreover, the injunctions of these four systems often pull in different directions. How then does an agent decide what to do and which particular code, amongst the four, to rely on when making an ethical decision?

This leads to the second layer in the metaphor. To identify the particular leg supporting the deer at any particular time, one has to look at the trail of blood left by the other legs when they had previously touched the ground. I read this incredibly vivid image as suggesting that all systems of rules are exclusionary. Thus, no matter what principles are followed, *some harm* is bound to occur. Scriptural

rules (*vedas*) are notoriously discriminatory. *Daṇḍanīti* serves only the interests of those regarded as citizens. The *Mahābhārata* often refers to insects and worms that are 'hurt' through the practice of agriculture (*vārtā*), and logic (*ānvīkṣiki*) harshly 'excludes' our emotional needs. An ethical agent must, therefore, keep in mind the constellation of 'pains' caused by each of these systems—their 'bloody tracks'. But how then does she pick the system of rules to rely on when making a choice? The agent, it is conjectured, is like the hunter. She keeps the bloody tracks of each of the suggested (and imagined) courses of action in mind and while 'holding them together', balances them,[14] and *projects* to a leg to be targeted. This is extrapolation to the course of action deemed the least harmful in a particular situation.

Nilkantha, a prominent commentator on the *Mahābhārata* says that the deliberative practice being referenced here is *yukti*. *Yukti* is mentioned in the *Caraka Samhitā* as a unique *pramāṇā* (means of knowledge) involved in medical practice and diagnosis.[15] It is 'balancing' or amalgamating the demands of all received normative systems before us and coming to a conclusion, while being mindful of their shortcomings. It is a context sensitive 'holding together' that is more intuitive than discursive, more narrative-imaginative than logico-deductive and is far from rule-based calculations.

The third message in the running deer image is uncertainty. Zeroing in on the best course of action in the above manner is always a hit or miss affair. The deer may well escape our aim and consequential bad luck may inflect our most thoughtful choices. Yet, this does not mitigate ethical responsibility. Our not *knowing* with certainty which leg of the deer to target does not mean that there is no leg to be aimed at or that we should not try. Note here that though we began with parallels between the hesitation of Amy (Gilligan's care ethical mouthpiece) and Yudhiṣṭhira (the *Mahābhārata's* care ethical protagonist), *uncertainty* itself as a care ethical trope has dropped out or been underplayed in subsequent elaborations of care ethics in the West. The *Mahābhārata's* analogy thus reinforces a unique feature of the voice of care as it was originally conceived.[16]

So we return to the irresolution of Yudhiṣṭhira as constituting the core of ethical agency. To begin with, Yudhiṣṭhira firmly desires *Dharma* as a goal and his confusion is restricted to the *means* of achieving it—should he lie to Droṇa or should he not, for example. But then, epistemic doubt about how best to act, morphs into a moral epoch and the very questioning of morality itself as a viable

goal. From an indecision about which course of action is ethically apt, we find Yudhiṣṭhira swinging irresolutely between whether he should remain a morally-engaged dharma-king at all or become a world-renouncing and ethics-jettisoning ascetic. By indicating that moral action does not rely either on firm belief or on rules, the *Mahābhārata* drives a wedge between these two distinct levels of Yudhiṣṭhira's irresolution. The running deer opens up a space to actually celebrate indecisiveness and doubt as the ground of ethical agency without undermining the moral project itself. This rather startling take on moral psychology and phenomenology is the idea of immersion in *dvaidha* or 'double-ness'. The uncertainty associated with *dvaidha* does not lead to *dvidhā* or a paralyzing dithering. It is, according to the *Mahābhārata*, Yudhiṣṭhira's moral strength. Hence, the epic does nothing to mitigate but everything to enhance the initially anxiety-producing open-endedness. But why and how are moral choices tinged with uncertainty? We turn to this question in the next section.

Dvaidha and the Different Shades of Uncertainty

We have spoken of *yukti* as 'balancing' or 'cumulative reasoning' underlying the choice of a particular course of action in a particular situation. This non-rule-based weighing of pros and cons is enabled by the capacity of insight or intuition called *prajñā* in the text (Śānti Parvan, 142.3, 4). Thus the extrapolative and projective function of *yukti* presupposes the intuitive faculty of *prajñā*. *Prajñā* gives the moral agent an epistemic vantage point. It is compared to the balcony of a high palace *(prajñā prāsādam āruhya)* from where a king can survey the panoramic view of the field of action down below. However, the natural propensity of *prajñā* needs to be trained. In subsequent philosophical literature, the ancient philosopher of grammar, Bhartṛhari, commented that one can project and extrapolate very little by the exercise of *individual* subjunctive reasoning (*svatarka*) that is isolated from others. According to him, *prajñā* needs to be refined by *viveka* through listening to conflicting and diverse traditions and philosophical views (*prajñā viveka labhate bhinnair āgama-darṣanaiḥ*[17]). One could conjecture that the *Mahābhārata* expresses this same insight by saying that *prajñā* needs to be trained through *dvaidha*. Thus successful *yukti* leading to appropriate decisions about what to do is based ultimately on a *dvaidha*-trained *prajñā*. *Dvaidha* then, becomes foundational to ethical choice.

Dvaidha can be translated as 'double-ness' or 'forking'. The concept hinges on the fact that any action judged to be 'right' can turn out to be wholly or partly 'wrong' in a different context. *Dvaidha* acknowledges this and is the condition that every action (or judgment about an action) appears different from the 'other'/ 'opposite side' *even while it appears a certain way from one side. Dvaidha* thus, on a first level urges on us the imaginative flexibility to 'double think'.

The text asks us to actively imagine a 'right' action in situations when it is considered not right. We are actually told to widen the differences among these alternative scenarios by imaginatively playing out each option to its limits like 'poets' (*kavibhih*) or people who can creatively 'see far into the horizon' (*krānta darṣi*). But we are then asked to bring together these conflicting possibilities and *set them side by side* as it were, as counterbalancing or counter-point to each other (*pratividhāna*).[18] This is not a tentative assimilation or synthesizing of alternatives. Rather, it generates an imaginatively enriched, multi-faceted experience funneled like 'collected drops of honey' (*sambhṛtam madhu*) and collected into a pool of an experiential store of plurality (*bahvyah*). This pool is the source of epistemological nourishment. *Prajñā*—the capacity underlying extrapolation—is strengthened through an immersion in such a pool of diversity and difference actively generated by 'double-think'. When strengthened in this way, it makes imaginative counterfactual connections (*ūheta*[19]: Śānti Parvan, 142.19) and extrapolates the right course of action on a case by case basis (*tataḥ tataḥ*: Śānti Parvan, 142.4).

It seems clear then, that according to the *Mahābhārata*, confining oneself to single-minded judgments of the good weaken the imaginative muscles of moral sense. In fact, a moral decisional faculty that has not confronted the possibility of variety stalls and freezes when faced with real life dilemmas (*na eka śākhena dharmeṇā yatraiṣā sampravartate*: Śānti Parvan, 142.4). The point is that ethical decisions based on *yukti* require improvisation and creativity. This imaginative flexibility is enabled by a *prajñā* that is nurtured by exposure to the double-ness of 'double-think'.

Now, such a moral epistemology based on *dvaidha* introduces an ethically enabling (rather than disabling) uncertainty in three different ways. First, as noted, *dvaidha* is at bottom 'double think' or seeing a particular as having a value opposite to what we ascribe to it even as we ascribe an original value to it. We may judge, for instance, 'taking someone's property without permission' to be bad.

But we are asked to imagine (perhaps Robin Hood like) situations wherein that action is good. Such thinking of the action from the 'opposite side' not only de-stablizes its fixed classification on the moral scale but imaginative explorations of alternatives to our view open up the possibility that these alternatives are actually held by others. Thus, recognizing 'double-ness' also makes visible what can be called 'second knowledge'—views and ideologies explicitly opposed to ours. Our conviction in the virtues of socialism for example, is balanced by equally strong arguments against it. We thus face an array of diverse world views that plunge us into the second level of uncertainty about the cogency of our own view. After all, rational disputations can well end in a tie.

The uncertainties of 'double think' and 'second knowledge' are both hesitations *prior* to the critical hour of decision-making. A faculty exposed to and trained by these ambiguities, however helps us zero in on the salience of a particular alternative before us. So paradoxically, doubt about how to classify acts and what to believe, enables us to *act firmly* and unhesitatingly. Firm action here emerges from temporarily *silencing*—and not eradicating—the other possibilities in our 'pool' of epistemic consciousness. But this simmering and clamoring background of alternatives from which a choice is made, is ever-present. Their multiplicity of claims forces us to step back and question an action *after it has been performed*. The hesitations associated with *dvaidha* now becomes a way of encouraging 'second thoughts'—a third level of uncertainty that reflects back in humility on the actions and choices.

On this model then, ethical action is flanked by irresolution both before and after. The uncertainty that propels us to action is because of seriously entertaining alternatives to our perception of the world through 'double-think' and 'second knowledge'. The uncertainty after the action is performed is having 'second thoughts'—the self-critical moment born of humility. The heart of progress is thus infused with uncertainty. The movement of the dharma-snake gets stalled in a life wedded to the closure, smugness and certainty of rules.

Veena Das' evocative interpretation[20] of strands in the epic (of course, for a different purpose) intertwines with the theory of ethical agency given above. Das agrees with Alf Hiltebietel's contention that the *Mahābhārata* employs narrative techniques wherein 'shadows of an alternative present fall on episode(s) as these unfold'[21] in the text. Thus, *hovering unrealized possibilities* are as much part of the present as those that are actualized in the plot. In fact, if

we take the Mahābhārata not just as a Sanskrit text but as a 'tradition', then folk renditions can be seen as picking up on and playing out these alternative trajectories in order to place before us, readers, a rich tapestry of ethical alternatives. In the context of our discussion of ethical agency, this reinforces the insight that the *Mahābhārata* instructs us not just by plot and character, but by keeping alive a *sense of alternatives* beyond the chosen and the obvious. Thus narrative techniques of 'side-showing'—the stylistic framing of the central plot by counterpoints that play out alternative possibilities inherent in it—now becomes not a mere aesthetic ornamentation but integral to the epic as a text for ethical instruction.[22]

The oddity that attends the *Mahābhārata* idea that an agent is morally better off if she 'knows two ways' (*dvaidhjña*) rather than acting on a single-branched ethical order (*eka-śākhā-dharma*) seems to disappear if we interpret *dvaidha* as capturing the notion of scruple. The concept of scruple so deeply entrenched in ordinary moral thinking has not usually been picked up by moral philosophy. *Dvaidha* can easily be cast as a dithering that slides into irresolution—that Hamlet-like quality which standard moral psychology decries as a weakness of character. But 'scrupulousness' is praised as a virtue, flowing from and requiring reflection and critical second thoughts about what one has decided to do. Scruple is not incompatible with resolute action; just as firm action is sandwiched by 'double think' and 'second knowledge' on one hand, and a reflexive 'second thought' on the other.

Yudhiṣṭhira's Good Decision

So Yudhiṣṭhira acts. At the end of the epic he acts without rules, and guided by a *prajñā* that has been nurtured by *dvaidha* all through the epic narrative. Let us look at his last agentic decision in this world - a decision for which he is clearly praised by the text. The episode is familiar from Chapter 3 of the *Mahāprasthānika Parvan.*

Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers set out for the 'final journey' during the course of which the other Pāṇḍavas and their wife, Draupadi, fall in quick succession. Yudhiṣṭhira, however, trudged on alone, accompanied by a stray dog that had attached itself to the group. At one point, God Indra appeared in his chariot with much bugle-blowing fanfare to escort him to heaven. Yudhiṣṭhira was ready but wanted to bring the dog along with him. Indra recoiled in horror. Remember that dogs are pollutants in traditional Indian society and

Indra was headed towards heaven, the purest of all places. He pleaded:

> O king! You have won immortality and status equal to mine; all the felicities of Heaven are yours today. Do cast off this dog. *In this there will be no cruelty* (*na atra nṛśamsyamasti*: Mahāprasthānika Parvan, 3.8, 10).

Yudhiṣṭhira remained unswayed. He saw in the helpless gaze of the dog, trembling in the stark, desolate surrounding, an appeal not to be abandoned. Filled with compassion (*anukrośa*), he was unable to disregard this silent cry. Indra, however, was dismayed by this unexpected and literally, unreasonable obstacle to his mission. He lost his temper and railed that sympathy for a stray dog was really *not* required even for a paragon of justice and that Yudhiṣṭhira had become ensnared in *moha* at the end of his life—entangled in a blind and irrational love. Refusing to be shamed, Yudhiṣṭhira stood firm in his decision. The dog personified in his own words, among other things

> ...a person who is terrified, or one who is devoted to me, or one who seeks my protection saying that he has nowhere to go, or one who is afflicted, or one who is weak and unable to protect oneself .....(Mahāprasthānika Parvan, 3.12)

Yudhiṣṭhira explained that his moral stance was never to abandon such persons.

Of course, there is a happy ending here. The dog revealed himself to be *Dharma* in disguise and explained the entire incident as a test—one that Yudhiṣṭhira did pass this time—with flying colors. But even on his way to Heaven, Yudhiṣṭhira expressed his wish to go where his family members were, provoking a bemused Indra to mutter, 'Why do you *still* cherish human emotion!?'

Yudhiṣṭhira's Agency and Vulnerability

Refracted through the 'theory' of *dvaidha*-agency articulated above, this episode emerges in an interesting light. It forcefully underscores rejection of conventional exemplars and conventional rules. Yudhiṣṭhira takes a stand against the highest exemplar, *God* Indra Himself, who reminds him that extant moral codes clearly did not require compassion for a dog. This negative moral principle is flouted by Yudhiṣṭhira in spite of Indra's admonitions. The point is that Yudhiṣṭhira's compassion for the dog is not the product of applying the universal rule 'Be kind' and hence, is unaffected by Indra's pointing out that dogs were exceptions to that rule.

Yudhiṣṭhira's felt compassion here (*anukrośa*) is rather an assertion of the *valence* of the plight of the dog that he sees in that particular situation. It emerges from a 'balancing' of the details of the empirical condition involving the dog, the conventional codes championed by Indra, and his own self-interest of going to Heaven. The decision not to abandon the dog is an extrapolation (through *yukti*) and is enabled by a *prajñā* trained by Yudhiṣṭhira's lifelong practice of irresolution. Yudhiṣṭhira is very much aware of the 'opposite view' represented by Indra even as he makes and sticks to his own decision.

The decision to stay with the dog when parsed through the above conceptualization of action yields an interesting interpretation of Yudhiṣṭhira's *own* earlier definition of morality. In a previous episode, Yudhiṣṭhira had said: '*The essence of dharma is hidden in the cave/The Way is what the mahājana follows*' (Vana Parvan, 311) Commentators have not tired of pointing out that the term '*mahājana*' can mean either 'majority' or 'exemplary figures'. But there are many different moral exemplars who do not agree with one another, and the views of the majority for the most part, can conflict with those of exemplary figures. Because of this ambiguity, the real nature of *Dharma* is said to be inscrutable–'hidden in the cave'.

A richer interpretation emerges given the theory of ethical agency that we have been foregrounding. The controversies, debates and ambiguities in the 'ways' of the *mahājana*—whether of the majority or of exemplars—can be now configured as part of the process of moral training and an immersion in *dvaidha*. The 'essence of *dharma*' lies in the 'cave' in the sense that right choices are grounded in the individual psycho-affective apparatus or inner character—the constellation of habitual dispositions associated with *dvaidha* or a two-sidedly trained capacity of *prajñā*. The right thing to do is 'hidden' there because it cannot be articulated or made public in the form of rules prior to experiencing the situations that call for a moral response. An ethical course of action flows out of years of training in heeding conflicting perspectives of others, authentically feeling double-binds that life puts us through, and self-criticism. We stay on track—but not on a rigid rail—because of 'being a certain way' due to this training.

There are two wrinkles in this neat, non-rule based interpretation of the dog-episode. The first is introduced by Yudhiṣṭhira himself saying that he is the *kind of person* who does not abandon certain kinds of individuals (i.e. those in need). Is this not a characterization in universal terms and the articulation of a self-

imposed rule? In response, one could say that generalizations need not be universalizations *that intend to guide*. There is a distinction between descriptive and prescriptive rules. In saying that he is the 'kind of person' who does not abandon the helpless, Yudhiṣṭhira offers a *description* of virtuous character. Such a compassionate person will still need to decide what constitutes 'abandonment' on a case by case basis. The imaginative, creative or extrapolative aspect of ethical agency is thus not denied.

The second objection queries whether agency in this episode sits well with uncertainty. Yudhiṣṭhira shows no hesitation and is, in fact, lauded for remaining unmoved by Indra's diatribe. Now this is an *iṣṭāpatti*—a criticism that actually strengthens rather than demolishes the hypothesis. Firm action is, after all, a desideratum for any ethical position—even for the care ethical particularist. The *Mahābhārata's* theory is that epistemic uncertainty always moves in tandem with firm resolve. The *dharma*-serpent progresses slowly in a three-stepped manner. The decisional moment undergirded by *yukti* is sandwiched by different kinds of hesitations before and after. Yudhiṣṭhira is able to firmly extrapolate to the moral salience of the dog's fear because of a prior history of questioning and doubt. If the narrative had not ended just then—if he had not been beamed into heaven the minute he formed this resolute will—Yudhiṣṭhira would have *acted* out his resolve. The dialectic of ethical agency then, according to what I have been suggesting, would have required him to revisit, re-consider and question the action, post facto.

Moreover, there are resources in the dog episode that also reinforce uncertainty in ethical life. The story, after all, is a story of vulnerability that comes with embodiment—and responses to it. Yudhiṣṭhira is moved by the fear and trembling of the dog. But care ethical protagonists, as embodied, are also embedded in *natural causal networks*. Consequently, they have to contend with circumstances beyond their control. '(T)he very young and old, the weak, the sick, ... *depend* on the sense of moral responsibility of others (who are) *unlucky* enough to be stuck with the circumstances of their need...'(my emphases).[23] My embodiment makes me count on the ethical agency of others in times of my bad luck of (say) sickness. But this imposes on those *others*, the bad luck of being morally responsible for situations that they never have dreamed of. I might, for example, choose to go for a walk; but I do not orchestrate the drowning child I encounter as I make the next turn. You don't orchestrate my sickness but might still be required to morally respond to it. In this case, responsibility outruns control. Moral life

is thus infused with luck which brings uncertainty in its tow.

Yudhiṣṭhira 'finds' himself facing the fear of a helpless dog due to 'circumstantial luck'. Indra urges him to shrug off this sheer happenstance as ethically irrelevant. But Yudhiṣṭhira does not do so. Moreover, embodied agents trying to address the needs of other embodied agents must be prepared for the natural order taking over and their best intentions going awry. 'Resultant luck' always lurks around the corner. Being bodied therefore, entails the vulnerability of being surprised—and hence an openness to uncertainty and doubt. Amy, Gilligan's care ethical subject, makes this poignantly clear while ruminating on her choice. She says:

> If both the roads went in totally separate ways, if you pick one, you'll never know what would happen if you went the other way – that's the chance you have to take, and like I said, it's just really a guess.[24]

Expanding accountability to include surprises brings with it the possibilities of recognizing failure, of critique, shame and remorse. All of which inhabit the same conceptual space of self-reflexivity—the 'second-thoughts', the 'second knowing' and the 'double-think' of *dvaidha*.

Thus Yudhiṣṭhira acts. In spite of uncertainty and because of uncertainty. And he acts well. Steady in strife, firm in battle is after all, what *Yudhi-ṣṭhira* means. Steady one must be, but only after and through an inner strife. Firm one has to be in the midst of the double-nesses of a divided morality.

Dvaidha-Nourished Agency and Politics

To conclude, let us briefly explore how such an articulation of agency on the moral register bleeds into an understanding of political agency. Care, after all, is intended as a feminist political voice and it is a bonus if a (care) ethical agency, crafted in terms of *dvaidha,* can sustain a robust notion of the *political* as well. Of course, there is no consensus on what the latter term signifies. I gesture towards mapping of *dvaidha* onto three different ways in which politics can be conceived. Each of these involves oppositions and conflicts in the public domain. A choice between these alternatives - or their reconciliation—remains an agenda for further research and closer comparative study.

Politics, in its 'routine mode'[25] constructs shared ends out of different—often conflicting interests. It crafts a common goal through contest of reasons in public space, which is then concretized

in institutional forms. A *dvaidha*-nourished *yukti* in this world of praxis is part of the policy-maker's eclectic tool-kit, just like it is part of the medical healer's bag of epistemological tricks. It signifies a deliberative process that acknowledges standpoints of others before 'projecting' to a solution deemed to be binding for all. This makes it a potential resource of 'public reason'.

Through an inbuilt receptivity to arguments of those opposed to us, a *dvaidha*-agency helps us acquire sensitivity to the views of others and the epistemological vulnerability of our own position. The stance of 'double-ness' can free us from ideological smugness and extremism. In fact, *dvaidha* generates virtuosity in the classical Aristotelian sense of arriving at a 'mean'—putting us back in the middle ground of extreme views. It underscores the necessity of re-negotiating that location each time and politics becomes a matter of ongoing persuasions and about turns conducted through this unique process of deliberation. Note that the 'song of God' in the *Mahābhārata* could be sung only after the 'devious divinity' complied with Arjuna's request to park his chariot in the *middle* of two warring armies. An Aristotelian agent cannot decide how to be courageous unless he clearly knows what would be rashness (excess) and what would be cowardice (deficiency) in each particular situation. The metaphor of the 'middle' requires us to keep the opposition between two opposite options alive. A sense of *dvaidha* is thus helpful for consensus-building in the face of conflicting plurality. But given its three-fold complexity, it also suggests that no negotiated conclusion is fought out once and for all: constant re-thinking and contestation of an achieved stability and compromise becomes the heart of political life.

But more interesting is to see how *dvaidha*-agency can reinforce what some have called 'politics at its best'[26]—the conception of the political as a site of radical freedom, disclosing 'new' ways of experiencing the world when our tired concepts of making meaning prove inadequate. This is politics as a process of articulating 'reasons that move the imagination.'[27] Mediating solutions are often not a result of what follows logically from what is in place, but requires seeing new, hitherto undreamt of, facets and potentialities. Political excellence now becomes akin to (though not reducible to) artistic excellence—an ability to *imagine* unnoticed connections and 'open up' the world in radically different ways. In this light, the 'double think' of *dvaidha* is an imaginative moment. The 'second knowledge' and 'second thoughts' it inspires enable us to see our best ideas for maximum flourishing as harboring seeds of radical evil. It thus

becomes a means of *making present* the voice of possible victims whom we have learned *not* to see, *not* to hear, and *not* to understand through our faculties of perception and reason. *Yukti* as a non-rule based 'projection' from the *shortcomings* and exclusions of the positions available to us, could well be a leap to imaginatively re-constitute our normative map.

When a concept like equality crafted for white, propertied males is extended, for example, to women, to children not yet born, to the mentally disabled, and now used in a global world with porous national boundaries, then its extension cannot be a mere drawing out of what is already available to entrenched conceptual habits. Rather, it is an artistic creation of novel connections and possibilities—it is a plea for us to *see* radically and differently. Could Yudhiṣṭhira's angst be heard as the call of a political agent in this, second sense—of a political subject yearning, after the annihilation of a destructive war, for the 'new' (after the fashion of a Hannah Arendt[28])? If so, the response of the epic in terms of *dvaidha* comes to signify an encounter with the *particular* not subsumed under pre-given concepts, but of particulars as *examples*—from which we are 'free' to extract new forms that claim universality. Here our discussion of ethical particularism in care ethics segues into an experience of political particularity not subsumable under entrenched concepts.

Finally,[29] an even more radical possibility suggests itself through the agonistic construal of 'the political' by Chantal Mouffe.[30] According to Mouffe, *antagonistic* relations between enemies have to give way to *agonistic* relations between 'adversaries' in a pluralistic democracy. Here we move from the political as a space of deliberation and of freedom aimed at generating agreement, to the political as the realm of conflicts 'for which no rational solution could ever exist.'[31] In this light, the 'second knowledge' induced by the clamoring alternatives suggested by 'double think' captures we/they distinction of legitimate and irreconcilable oppositions. However, as noted above, although *dvaidha*-agency is prefaced and nourished by oppositional alternatives, it results in a moment of decision. This is important in Mouffe's theory as a political or *hegemonic* closure that challenges and upturns an existing power structure. This re-articulation of power is of course, unstable itself because of the legitimate positions it necessarily excludes. The reflexive 'second thoughts' induced by the ever-present alternative(s) to any decision, come to structure an agonistic terrain. It remains possible for any one of them to erupt to the foreground

leading to a 'disarticulation of existing practices and creation of new discourses and institutions.'[32] This reads hegemony, in Mouffe's sense, into the decisional moment of *dvaidha*. The many-layered complexity of *dvaidha* is now appropriated not just to capture a constant struggle against closure, but to signify the decisional moment of re-articulation of power.

One problem in this juxtaposition of *dvaidha* with Mouffe's idea of agonistic conflict is that she is stridently opposed to the 'moralising' of politics. *Dvaidha*, however, has been spelled out above as the heart of moral sense and ethical agency. In using it to understand the political domain, do we not end up introducing the *antagonistic* (as opposed to the agonistic) relation of good and bad, right and wrong in the political space? A defense could lie in pointing out that the *Mahābhārata's* sense of 'right' and 'wrong' is far from that of traditional morality. In fact, the good here is conceived as having a 'constitutive outside'.[33] Just as the meaning of our identities is relational and depends on the nature of what they exclude, the status of the 'good' in the *Mahābhārata* is contextually constituted by the alternatives it rules out in any particular situation.[34] There is nothing that is universally right or wrong. The ethically appropriate is a choice in the strong sense of taking a stand in a genuinely dilemmatic and therefore, rationally un-decidable situation. An ethical decision is therefore, also one that never leaves opposition behind. Consequently, what we seem to have here is a *politicization* of the ethical, rather than the other way around.

Conclusion

To sum up, if decisions of *who we care for* make us *who we are*, and if our decisions to care are based on a *dvaidha*-nourished process, then there is hope for a radically 'new' remodeling of ourselves and our communities. Citizenship is making and re-making of new identities inscribed through relations of care that are institutionally supported. This hope can be teased out on two levels: first as grounding an aesthetico-imaginative and pragmatic process of reaching temporary consensus and creating provisional order out of conflict; and second, as sustaining the limits of rational consensus and the symbolic space of conflict lying at the heart of politicization. In this way, care agency based on *dvaidha*, can ground a truly ethico-*political* agency in different ways. The political here is either the ability to give shape to our life as a collective, or the representation

of the world in terms of inherent oppositions of power. The details of the functioning of these two senses of the political and their oppositions and inter-relationships through the lens of *dvaidha,* is of course the topic of a closer comparative research in the future.

NOTES

1. Buddhadeva Bose, *The Book of Yudhisthir,* trans. Sujit Mukherjee (Calcutta: Sangam Books, 1986).
2. My references to the *Mahābhārata* are from *The Mahābhārata* with *Bharata Bhawadeepa* Commentary of Nilkaṇṭha, Pandit Ramchandrshastri Kinjawadekar (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1979).
3. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).
4. See for example, Mukund Lath, 'The Concept of *Anūshamsya* in the *Mahabharata*' in T.R.S. Sharma (ed.), *Reflections and Variations on the Mahabharata* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2009), pp. 82-88.
5. Joan Tronto, *Caring Democracy: Markets, Equality, and Justice* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).
6. Gilligan, *Different Voice,* p. 26.
7. Ibid., p. 28.
8. Ibid.
9. Seyla Benhabib, 'The Generalized and the Concrete Other: The Kohlberg-Gilligan Controversy and Moral Theory' in Eva Kittay and Diana Meyers (eds.), *Women and Moral Theory* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1987), pp. 154-177.
10. Evoking John McDowell, 'Virtue and Reason', *Monist,* Vol. 62 (1979), pp. 331-350.
11. Margaret Olivia Little, 'Moral Generalities Revisited' in Brad Hooker and Margaret Olivia Little (eds.), *Moral Particularism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 276-304.
12. To operate as a 'reason' it must be an instance of a generalization codified in propositional form.
13. Śānti Parvan 167. The text references a discussion that Yudhiṣṭhira *invites* with his four brothers and Vidura on which of the 'aims' of life, *dharma, artha* or *kāma* is prior.
14. Note that Michael Slote in *Morals from Motives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) also uses the notion of 'balancing' as the mode of deliberation to meet conflicting needs. Slote explains it in terms of the example of a parent negotiating the demands of her two children. The needs of one child does not trump the needs of another, and neither does he think of 'aggregating' them into a composite good as a Classic Utilitarian would. The demands of neither

child are ultimately given up, though one of them can acquire priority at different times.

15. Yukti is a term of art used to specify a distinct kind of clinical reasoning in the medical sciences. See 26.31 of Sutrasthana (*Caraka Samhita*). It is given the status of a unique *pramā* which is subsequently picked up to be refuted by the Buddhists in *TattvasaC graha*. Thanks to Arindam Chakrabarti for pointing this out to me. This is discussed in a Bangla book, Dalia Bandury, *Carakasamhitar Darsanik Bhavana-Samiksa* (Kolkata: Asiatic Society, 2006). There are two kinds of medical practice: *Dravyajña* (based on chemistry and pharmacology) and *Yuktijña* (based on diagnostic skills). The latter is a deliberative practice that consciously seeks inputs from various sources and then argues 'holistically' or 'cumulatively' *(yojang)*.

16. Recently, Colin Danby in 'Lupita's Dress: Care in Time', *Hypatia*, Vol. 9 (2004), pp. 23-48 has used a post-Keynesian framework to speak of the forward looking responsibilities of care practice as involving uncertainty. As an economic agent, a care ethical agent has an in-time existence where the future is radically and not just probabilistically uncertain.

17. Bhartṛhari, *Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari*, Kāṇḍa II, ed. K. A. Subramania (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), Verse 484.

18. Nilakantha says that *pratividhāna* means *cikitsanīa* or 'to be investigated'. It is fascinating to note that *cikitsqā* which means investigating both sides of a doubt came to mean treatment, therapy, and cure.

19. *ūha*' is a technical term for a form of reasoning. See Jonardon Ganeri, 'Intellectual India: Reason, Identity, Dissent', *New Literary History*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Spring 2009), 247-263, in speaking of the 'resources' of reason in Ancient India that can be mobilized to enrich 'public reason' and articulate dissent mentions both *ūha* and *yukti*. However, he translates *yukti* as 'empirical generalization', p. 251.

20. Veena Das, 'Sexuality, Vulnerability, and the Oddness of the Human: Lessons from the Mahabharata', *Borderlands* e-journal, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2010), pp. 1-17.

21. Ibid., p. 4.

22. Das' reading of the pivotal scene of Draupadi's violent disrobing in court—where all the elders, including Yudhiṣṭhira are silent, is also instructive for our purposes here. We could follow Das in looking at the thundering silence of the '*mahājanas*' in court and wonder whether that signifies the impotency of a rule-based Dharma. Could this be the 'freezing' of an ill-trained *prajñā* in the time of crises? Das says that the epic 'dramatizes the moral as the point when we are put in the grip of an uncertainty' (p. 4). If rules silence ethical judgment, if morality is this uncertainty which 'hangs over the everyday as an unresolved question' (p. 4) then ethical response can emerge only from the experience of *hesitation*. The fact that this silencing signifying a genuine hesitation, arises due to the interrogation emerging from the *body* of a menstruating woman is of course not irrelevant from the perspective of a care ethical interpretation.

23. Margaret Walker, 'Moral Luck and the Virtues of Impure Agency' in *Moral Contexts* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), pp. 21-34, p. 31.

24. Gilligan, *Different Voice*, p. 32.

25. Politics in its 'routine mode' and politics 'at its best' are terms used by Alessandro Ferrara 'Politics at its Best: Reasons that Move the Imagination' in Chiara Bottici and Benoît Challand (eds.), *The Politics of Imagination* (Abingdon: Birkbeck Law Press, 2011), pp. 38-54.

26. 'Politics at its best is the weaving of *vision* into the texture of what is possible'. See Ferrara, 'Politics at its Best', p. 51.

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27. Ferrara, 'Politics at its Best', p. 42.
28. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).
29. I remain grateful to Maidul Islam for suggesting this direction to me.
30. Chantal Mouffe, *On the Political* (London: Routledge, 2005).
31. Ibid., p. 10.
32. Ibid., p. 33.
33. Ibid., p. 18
34. This might be a reason why *dvaidha* is better seen as mapping agonistic relations rather than *antagonistic* ones. Remember that according to the latter; differences are plotted as 'foes' where resolution implies the elimination/death of one of the parties in the conflict. The differences referenced by *dvaidha* are *inbuilt in* and *constitutive* of a position. Thus, the encroachment of a peasants land by an industrialist is *both* 'good' and 'bad'. We are not allowed the 'death' of one, once and for all. The vanquished side forever raises its head demanding to be taken seriously as an 'adversary' and always tempers the moves made by the victor.

THE BUDDHIST MORAL PSYCHOLOGY: BEYOND COGNITIVISM AND NON-COGNITIVISM

Varun Kumar Tripathi

Introduction

There have been some prevalent observations by the commentators and writers of Indian philosophies of post-colonial period that adequate consideration was never given by Indian philosophers to the formulation of moral principles that one can accurately call 'ethics'.[1] Here in this paper, I do not intend to grapple with such observations or charges. At the same time, I envisage three alternative views as possible responses to the above observation: (i) Some disciplines other than philosophy, such as spirituality or law, engaged with moral questions. (ii) Morality can be dealt with, at least, in two ways—a) by constructing a theory formulating basic principles to respond to moral questions, and b) by taking recourse to the underpinned epistemology of a philosophical system which has sufficient potential to address the moral questions when needed. The point (ii)b is part of 'moral epistemology'[2] which none of the Indian philosophical systems is deprived of. (iii) Some of very prominent systems of Indian philosophies (such as Buddhism) are more interested in laying down the description of human behaviour upon which morality can actually be based. Such attempts form 'moral psychology'[3] which is more fundamental to ethical enterprise.

As far as Buddhism is concerned, I see the question as *in what mental conditions one really experiences a moral question or a dilemma,* is of greater importance (instead of putting the questions straightforward as 'what is good' or 'what is not good'). It is because only in the context of the origin of the question the nature of the responses towards the modalities of moral thinking is to be understood. Therefore, the direction of moral inquiry would shift to a psychological examination of human experience of pain and pleasure, virtue and vice, and relevant mental states. The standard of moral living has to be based upon the findings of the causal

structure of the psycho-genesis of these mental states accordingly. Perhaps, then, we may not be able to delineate a *sui generis* theory of moral philosophy but we can very well lay down necessary description upon which moral decision can be made.

Moreover, a moral standard or criterion is essential to lead a moral life, to evaluate human conduct and to give moral judgments. An 'ideal', a 'value' or 'belief' (whatsoever humane and glorified it may be) cannot serve the purpose of the said criterion because such ideals would require factual (empirical) verification. Accordingly, the assumption 'a moral standard must be based upon a first-hand descriptive moral episteme duly verifiable in the empirical realm' can be taken as the first premise for the present discourse. Here, the 'empirical' may include not only the sense-data but also the so-called subjective (inner) experiences, which according to Buddhism do not occur random. They rather have unique causal structure (*hetu-pratyaya*) and accordingly yield output in terms of behavioural patterns. The said experiences may be subjective but their having a causal structure allows an objective study of it. Of course, then, one requires a compatible method of knowing the causal structure, i.e., an introspective method. The application of the method presupposes that the 'unconscious' can be brought to the realm of the 'conscious'. Therefore, the assumptions that 'there is no permanent divide between the conscious and unconscious and, hence, the unconscious can be brought to the domain of the empirical which may in turn add to understanding our conduct in totality'. This is taken as the second premise. The further discourse on the Buddha's moral psychoanalysis would be based upon these two premises.

The Buddhist Ethical Formulation and Some Problems

The Buddha's ethical formulation is based upon some basic points of departure such as 'ethics has no necessary relation with metaphysics'. Rather, elimination of metaphysics is a necessary ground for authentic and virtuous life. The Buddha's ethical formulation is based upon three main principles that are: principle of causation (dependent origination), impermanence and the principle of non-self. These principles themselves are causally inferable from the assumption of causation itself. To illustrate, if we do not assume causation nothing can be made intelligible, and if we assume that everything arises due to some cause would imply 'impermanence' as per the philosophical logic of the system. If,

whatever is caused is impermanent, then we cannot identify ourselves with anything that we can call 'self'. As Damien Keown points out, '[t]he Buddha was the first to unravel the skein of false consciousness within which the notions of permanence and selfhood were fostered. The theory of the *skandhas* was the first step in this process of critical analysis, exposing the illusory "self" as a projection onto these underlying mental and physical "aggregates". The categories of the *Abhidharma*, which are essentially based on the *skandhas*, represent the continuation of the analytical critique and an extension of its application beyond the human subject to reality as a whole.'[4]

Moral consciousness is (though not innate to human nature) part and parcel of the human psychodynamics provided the concealing factors of the consciousness (*ācchādana* or *nīvaraṇa* of *citta*)—the malevolent intentions (the *akuśala*) are removed. Further, in the Buddha's formulation of ethics, ethics occupies a teleological nature. The cessation of suffering is the only and ultimate goal—the *telosend* of the system. Generally, in Indian idealistic ethics, we witness a thorough delinking of action from the *summum bonum* of life, i.e., the ultimate goal of life (liberation) cannot be achieved through action. But, for the Buddha the virtuous actions (moral conduct and refraining from the non-virtuous acts) enjoy the status of *morally commendable* and constitute the *śīla* part of his ethical program. In his broader classification of ethical programme, i.e., *śīla, samādhi* and *prajñā* (which can be called the Buddhist cardinal virtues), the latter two cannot be achieved unless the former flawlessly mastered. In his scheme of psychoanalysis the Four Noble Truths and the ethical programme is causally explained. Through his exposition of principle of causation the Buddha not only describes the psychogenesis of human suffering (*paṭiccasamuppāda* in Pāli; *pratītyasamutpāda* in Sanskrit) but also draws a path for the annihilation of suffering without violating the causal principle (rather taking advantage of it). In his Noble Eight-fold Path, the first component—the *sammā diṭṭhi*, describes the sources of virtues and miseries (*kuśala-mūla* and *akuśala-mūla*) which are deeply rooted in the unconscious. To understand the causality of the unconscious, a compatible psychoanalysis is warranted which I prefer calling psycho-causal-analysis. The reason is that the modern psychology has often expressed doubts about the causal sequencing of the development of the unconscious.[5] It also raises doubts about the rational of the unconscious, as Ian Craib notes, '…the unconscious is timeless. It does not develop or change; it does not mature, although if we are lucky the rest of our psychic apparatus

does change, becoming more complex and handling the unconscious impulses in more creative ways.'[6] Such types of apprehensions may give rise to some possible obstacles and charges as following and that need to be addressed at the outset.

The Behaviourists' Limitation

Before presenting the project of moral psychoanalysis, it is required to respond to the possible behaviourist's question. The behaviourist approach,[7] which emphasizes only the behavioural aspect of human being and dismisses the inner or mental procedural aspects, is likely to be rejected by the present discourse. The behaviourists in general make a programme of formulating theories of interaction between stimuli and responses on the basis of stimulus generalization. For them, external stimuli are *input variables* and behavioural responses are *output variables*. A radical behaviourist like B.F. Skinner holds the environmental factors directly responsible for individual's behavioural responses and precludes inner processes, 'not that they do not exist, but that they are not relevant'[8] to the prediction, control, and experimental analysis of behaviour.

The present paper tends to show that stimulus generalization cannot be taken as a proper method of understanding mental functions as it is possible that a particular external dispositions of behaviour is caused by different mental states or intensions, and *vice versa*, a particular mental state may yield different behavioural disposition (different with reference to time, type and mental formations or states). On this account, it can be explained as why in apparently similar situation the responses of different persons or, the same person's response at different occasions, vary. In other words, responses cannot be explained from the side of stimuli alone, rather it should be explained from the side of inner mental states. Inner mental states or the psychic facts shape the complex concrete behavior such as speech act, motor effects, etc., which are the end-results of the inner shaping. The behaviourists' presumption that the molecular psychic function is too far removed from our experiential capacities needs to be re-examined, because such a presumption would suspend the possibility of a meaningful behavioral analysis.

By a meaningful behavioural analysis I mean when one can successfully (or at least in principle) take recourse to certain mental causes for explanation of one's conduct for which one can be held responsible. Otherwise, human action will be a mere reaction to

environment—an accident, and left to mere 'chance'. In this case, no moral discourse can take place. If it is argued from the behaviourist side that the external/environmental factors affect human conduct, then the conduct of a person who commits a crime would be termed as 'compelled by situation' or the 'natural reaction of human being'. In such case, the responsibility of the person cannot be fixed and, hence, no theory of punishment can be meaningfully talked about. If certain pattern of reaction is defined as human nature, it can then be argued that one commits a crime under certain circumstances and, hence, if there is prevalence of those circumstances, the corollary will be the same.

The Possible Psychologism Question

Philosophers, on the other hand, like Gottlob Frege denies that prescriptions based on psychological laws can qualify as proper logical laws. Such prescriptions can be no more than demands to confirm to current thinking habits. But, such philosophical positions, perhaps, lack a suitable measure to evaluate the facticity of psychic facts. It is difficult to maintain the concepts like 'truth' independent of psychology. One's decision about something as *concept* or as *object* is also a psychological decision. The difficulty with some philosophers is that if one lays emphasis upon *human conditions of knowing* rather than the objective conditions (object *independent of cognition*), one would be treated as a subjective idealist. The issue is not whether anything exists *independent of mind*, but nothing can acquire cognitive status *independent of mind*. What cannot acquire cognitive status cannot be meaningfully talked about. Our engagement with the concept of 'truth' has been one such case. One feels that there can be 'truth' independent of psychology as Frege once held.[9] Such convictions have evaded psychoanalysis.

Similarly, Edmund Husserl presumed psychological laws as vague. His arguments against psychologism are centred to the belief that logical laws do not refer to psychological entities,[10] which is surprising. Every logical decision is justified only on account of their appeal to human cognitive faculty (such as law of identity or contradiction). Therefore, a one-to-one causal mapping of relation between mental states and rational decisions or behavioral expressions is possible. So, taking recourse to psychology for interpretation of such decisions or expressions may not necessarily be treated as 'psychologism'. Psychic facts and objects cannot be seen as two segments since the procedure of experiencing

(cognizing) the two are not radically different. The *object-hood* of an object is rather transitional with reference to the reference-point of their experiencing.

My intention here is not to go into the intricacies of these debates, but I just needed to indicate that above doubts may arise and gave reasons why I chose a by-pass to avoid above predicaments. In course of the further discussion, the reader will find some grounds for overlooking the above debates as their being not so relevant in the context.

The Buddha's Psycho-causal-analysis

In context of the above, the Buddha's insight into the understanding of mind (through the principle of dependent origination—*paṭiccasamuppāda*) can be of great help to evolve a comprehensive method of psychoanalysis. The Buddha's analysis, of course, asserts a method of knowing the inner procedures of mind. An introspective method is often believed to be something a-rational, extra-ordinary or *other mode of knowing*. The received understanding about such method is that it cannot be universalized, as being intuitive it can at the best reveal subjective feelings, psychic facts, and alike. The best resolve in this regard is that even in case of ordinary perception it requires the involvement of consciousness. If knowing is a conscious act, then knowing an objective fact and a psychic fact may have a common generic structure. They cannot be *toto genere* different from each other. Introspective methods intend to suspension of the preoccupations of mind with sensory objects so as to enable it to be aware of the inner facts.

The Buddhist Pāli canons give detailed and sequenced account of inner precursors determining human behavior. Behavioral expressions such as speech act (*vāk-samskāra*), motor effect (*kāya-samskāra*) - have mental associations (*āśrava*) as their precursors. The *āśrava* like *kāma-āśrava, bhava-āśrava and avidyā-āśrava*; are caused by 'inappropriate attention' or 'inappropriate grasping' (*ayoniso manasikāro*)[11] – contemplation of or engaging mind into unrighteous psychic function. It would be interesting to notice the Buddha's schema of presentation of the whole issue. The causal structure right from *input variables* to the *output variables* suggests how mental faculties get activated and a mental state gets translated into a behavioral expression. The Buddha describes[12] as the initial input (a sensation in this context) received in the given environment is often the *auditory perception* (in a naturalistic human environment

– *asappurisasevano, asaddhammasavanam*), which activates other sense-perceptions too; that gives rise to the formation of inappropriate beliefs, concepts, ideas, images (*assaddhiyam*), etc. These psychic episodes after getting mixed with other psychic episodes result into a complex behavior. That is to say, a behavioral response is a constitution of multiple psychic episodes. If one attends to these improperly, they would result into the loss of awareness about the very nature of their content or referent (i.e., what they represent). This improper grasping – *ayoniso manasikāro* – yields concealment of awareness (*asatāsammpajañño*). The inappropriate attention or grasping can be taken as emotional dysfunction. The contents of the initial input – the auditory perception, are prone to undergo *ayoniso manasikāro*, because they are received in a naturalistic environment (of people and interpersonal relationship); and also because they have already attracted formation of other psychic facts too (which are present in the mind in advance). The naturalistic process of receiving incessant inputs, multiple images are formed through the impression resulted by the input, leading to 'sedimentation' of impressions further constituting the so-called 'unconscious' (here, *avijjā*).

In the Buddhist sense, the unconscious is to be understood as awareness about which (realm of *manasikara*) is concealed by the current preoccupation of mental contents or grasping. This unconscious is in fact called *avijjā* (ignorance). The concealment of awareness gives rise to 'loss of control over senses and motor effects' (*indriya asamvaram*). The 'unconscious' is not totally dormant, rather is under processing and keeps on affecting the behavioural output. Loss of such control is the cause of the behavioral disorder (*tīni duccaritāni*); that is, three types of misconduct—association, aversion and delusion at mental level; inadequacy of speech act at speech level; and stealing, violence, non-chastity, etc., at physical level. These behavioural disorders strengthen the five fundamental miseries (*pañca-nīvaraṇa*).[13] A mental state overpowered by these miseries is the state of ignorance (*avijjā*). The Buddha calls the process as the process of nourishing (*āhāro*) of ignorance. The above analysis can be put as under:

> *The naturalistic environment ⇨ sensory inputs from the environment ⇨ naturalistic beliefs ⇨ inappropriate attention and mental processing ⇨ concealment of awareness ⇨ loss of control over motor effects ⇨ behavioral dysfunction ⇨ further defilement of consciousness ⇨ further addition to ignorance.*

On account of the above fundamental framework of processing of

input variables received in form of *auditory perception* in a naturalistic environment, the output variables can be understood properly. The Samyukta Nikāya gives another detailed description of *ayoniso manasikāro* as source of fundamental miseries.[14] It is because of inappropriate attention the un-arisen libido (*kāmacchando*) arises, un-arisen aggression (*byāpādo,* which causes violent behavior) arises, un-arisen ennui (*thīnamiddham*) arises, un-arisen restiveness (*uddhacca-kukkuccam*) arises, and un-arisen distrust or bewilderment (*vicikicchā*) arises. Here, *vicikicchā,* if taken in literal sense, also mean 'uncured' – the mental state that requires to be cured.

The process as represented above by *ayoniso manasikāro,* is something which needs to be removed, as it is highly deplorable (*hānabhāgiyo*).[15] The Buddha also exposes a counter-scheme, describing *yoniso manasikāro*—appropriate grasping, for attainment of mental peace and emancipation. And, that scheme tends to alter the *output variables* by proposing alteration into the *input variables.* Other than this, there can be no authentic way out. If *input variables* are rightly attended to or grasped appropriately, they are processed to engender positive virtues (*bahukārā dhammā*). Appropriate attention or grasping (that is, being aware of the nature of *input variables*—about the nature of sensations—that they are mere clinging of mind and their contents are all momentary, i.e., perishable—*anicca;* and therefore, are non-self—*anattā*) would not attract inappropriate mental processing. Appropriate attention— *yoniso manasikāro*—engenders happiness (*pomojjam*); happiness engenders delight (*pīti*); delight removes restiveness (*kāyo pasambhati*), i.e., engenders calmness; calmness engenders contentment (*sukham vedeti*); contented mind achieves equipoise of mind (*samādhiyati*); it is only in state of equipoise of mind that one sees or experiences things as per their true nature (*yathābhūtam jānāti passati*); and then one becomes aware of the nature of sensations (*nibbindati*)—that one's awareness does not get ensnared by stimuli; and then springs dissociation (*virajjati*); it is the dissociated mind that enjoys emancipation (*vimuccati*). The Buddha designates these nine virtues (*dhamma*) as extremely advantageous.[16] These can successively be put as under:

Appropriate attention ⇨ *happiness* ⇨ *delight* ⇨ *bodily composure* ⇨ *mental contentment* ⇨ *equipoise of mind* ⇨ *cognizing things as per their nature/without interference of subjective contents* ⇨ *awareness about nature of sensations* ⇨ *dissociation* ⇨ *emancipation.*

Thus, as per the Buddhist exposition, one may say that what is called 'unconscious' in popular psychology is basically our inattentiveness about the *manasikāra*. The naturalistic environment and the grasping therein attract the *ayoniso manasikāro* resulting into various emotional states. *Ayoniso manasikāro* can be interpreted as emotional disorder and *yoniso manasikāro* as emotional order. Modern psychologists apply techniques to correct maladaptive patterns of behavior by improving emotional response, viz. by correcting negative emotions. The primary focus of psychodynamics is to reveal the unconscious content. Such concerns of a modern psychologist can be well responded to on the basis of the Buddha's psycho-causal-analysis. It explains to us how to bring about the emotional order—the *yoniso manasikāro*. And, so as to understand the unconscious content one has to understand the entire causal structure of the *manasikāra* so as to understand the dynamics of behaviour. This can be presented in form of the explanatory scheme *ut infra*:

S > M > R

Whereas, 'S' signifies *input variables* (*asappurisasevano, asaddhammasavanam*, etc.), 'R' signifies the *output variables* (emotional disorders and behavioral incoherence - *indriya asamvaram*, etc.), and 'M' signifies the *manasikāra*. As per the abovementioned psychoanalysis 'M' tells about how one's knowledge (here knowledge is also taken as a mental episode) and intention at one point of time condition one's conduct. On the same account, the intention becomes the determiner of the action. It is only intention upon which one's conduct can be morally evaluated.

Here, I may take certain cues from Clark Hull who tried to give a scheme wherein the 'internal states of the organism' does occupy necessary space.[17] He investigates as what elements of human psychology should actually be treated as 'factor' in determining the agents that affect human behaviour or, for the examination of psychodynamics what conscious-episodes should be taken as denominators. In the above scheme of psychoanalysis, we can say that the role of an enlightened person—right companionship and right communication, i.e., *sappurisasevano*, the psycho-spiritual environment created by the presence of such a person, is a *significant factor*. Having trust in such a process of annihilation of miseries, in other words right intention, is a *key factor*.

The Question of 'Ought'

According to the Buddha the nature of the action or the ethical value of volition is determined by the intention of the person. He defines action in terms of *cetanā* (intention), which is at work while developing a will to do. A sensation received through senses gets colored by the *kuśala* or *akuśala* (as per the *manasikāra*) of the recipient consciousness and gives rise to a will to do (inclination or *sankappa*). The 'will' determines the nature of action and hence, the ethical purport and worth of the action lies in the ethical value of the 'will' itself. On the same account, one can be held responsible for one's actions as one has a role in development of one's 'will'. The same position can be validated through a negative approach also as one is always in a position to 'think, will or do otherwise'. Thus, the Buddha's analysis escapes the possible charge of psychological determinism which proclaims that our desires and choices are determined by the 'unconscious' over which we hardly have control.

Moreover, since each psychic fact is causally efficacious, one cannot manipulate (by applying some mental gimmick) the course of psychodynamics without genuinely transforming one's 'intention'. And, that is why; one has no other option but to be aware of the mental consequences of every thought-episode, will-function, speech-act, or behavioral output. The causal efficacy of the mental states alone determines the ethical value of the act. To illustrate, if I choose an act (such as stealing) such that the mental progeny of the act (*citta-santatai*) gives rise to negative psychological processing, and that in turn would never let me attain mental peace or happiness adding to negative 'sedimentation' to my unconscious. So, if I am to pursue peace and happiness, I must avoid such act. However, the partial comprehension of this aspect of Buddhist ethics has led its readers conclude that Buddhist ethics is a variety of 'consequentialism', which is not completely true.

The psychic facts are 'morally efficacious' too, as the cognition of the psychic facts have moral implication. I am not inviting the old debate of ethics whether or not 'values' can be derived from 'facts' (or, whether 'ought-judgments' can be obtained from 'fact-statements'), rather bypassing the problem by indicating that the knowledge of the causal structure may contextually be axiologized. For example, the knowledge that 'fire burns' may help arrive at 'I ought not to put my hand in fire'. Similarly, the knowledge that a particular act yields a particular consequence, than on the basis of

desirability or undesirability of consequence, the action may be performed or avoided. For instance, if one knows that 'telling a lie' ultimately leads to 'unrest of mind' and if one is 'desirous of overcoming the unrest', one may conclude that 'telling a lie ought to be avoided'. If the clause, 'desirous of overcoming the unrest', is ignored as a necessary minor premise or bridge between fact and value, it would be impossible to think of deriving *ought-judgment* from *knowledge of fact*. I may further argue that philosophers engaged in the *is-ought-discourse* have often failed to recognize the essential difference between logical inference and moral inference.

Here, I need to make clear what the 'unrest of mind' actually refers. I use the term as an alternative paraphrase for 'morally reprehensible'. By 'unrest' I mean a state of mind (or even the chain of mental episodes—*citta-santatai*) which inflict pain to oneself, what one desires to avoid or get out of (in all normal conditions—not under any internal or internal pressure). In turn, because of the unrest one tends to purse happiness (instead of understanding the cause of pain) assuming that altering the state of mind would grant peace of mind. Such a pursuit of (imaginary or assumed) happiness is an example of 'escape psychology'—one desire to be self-oblivious of one's unrest. If unrest is caused due to some unwarranted action or failing to perform some doable deeds, this as a postulate asserts that the action/non-action was morally reprehensible. So, if one wishes to be at mental peace one may not perform (or intend to perform) any such action the nature and consequence of which is 'genuinely undesirable'. In other words, if 'unrest of mind' is not genuinely desirable, the action which produces such unrest is 'morally reprehensible'.

Ethical Evaluation: Limits of Cognitivist and Non-Cognitivist Approaches

The reason for evaluating the above scheme of moral psychology in terms of cognitivism or non-cognitivism is that the above analysis bears characteristic of both the approaches. And also, there have been such readings of Buddhist ethics, as Damien Keown puts it, '...virtues and vices may be either cognitive or non-cognitive. Aristotle, for instance...distinguishes between the intellectual virtue (*aretai dianoetiki*) such as insight (*sophia*) and practical wisdom (*phronesis*); and the moral virtues or virtues of character (*aretai ethikai*) such as generosity and courage... this distinction may be seen in Buddhism in the form of an opposition between the intellectual vices rooted

in *moha*, and the moral vices rooted in *rāga* and *dveṣa*.'[18] Such readings are definitely based upon two different dimensions of the Buddhist expositions of virtues and vices. The exposition bears cognitive character in terms of its project of seeking justification of actions in the cognitive elements (such as cognition of mental states as inner facts) which are 'knowable' given the scheme of the Buddhist psychology.

The most important cognitive dimension of the Buddhist ethical project is that it starts its ethical formulation with the conscious episodes (*viññāṇa* in Pëli, or *vijñāna* in Sanskrit) and locate the genesis of virtues and vices in it. William S. Waldron puts it as, '...*viññāṇa* also refers to cognitive awareness insofar as it arises in conjunction with specific objects. Whereas the "*samsārika*" aspect of *viññāṇa* is usually discussed in terms of what has resulted from past actions (i.e. *sankhāra*), "cognitive *viññāṇa*" is typically discussed in the context of its present objects..."Cognitive awareness" is also directly involved with the processes that *generate* new karma, and it is this karma that, in turn, causes "*samsārika viññāṇa*" to continue being established in cyclic existence, thereby completing the vicious circle constituting the formula of dependent arising.'[19] But, there is a purpose of the cognitive discovery of the *viññāṇa*-function. Cognitivism speaks as though it expects the ethical purport of an act to be describable as empirical facts. Buddhist discovery of the *viññāṇa*-function is to lead to a pragmatic ethical utilization of the cognitive awareness. This is what I try to explain through introduction of the concept of the 'moral efficacy' of facts.

Non-descriptivism (or, non-cognitivism)[20] holds that moral judgments have no descriptive function. They rather evoke emotive function of human consciousness. No doubt, the emotive aspects can very well be seen in the above presentation of psycho-causal-analysis, but it also takes a great deal of care of the descriptive aspect upon which the due axiologization is to take place. Simply on the basis that the non-rational dimension of psychic life which manifests itself across a spectrum or continuum of non-cognitive responses ranging from aversion, hostility, anger and wrath, etc. (encapsulated by the term *dveṭa*), to attachment, craving, longing and lust, etc. (encapsulated by the term *rāga* or *lobha*); one cannot render the Buddhist ethics a non-cognitivist one. The difficulty lies in seeing a division between cognitive function of mind and emotive elements. Buddhism focuses upon 'understanding' of 'emotions'. One needs to understand positive emotions to replace with it the negative emotions, and utilization of the positive emotions for annihilation

of the *āśrava* (unaware states of mind leading to sprouting of vices—the emotional disorders). Speaking plain, one requires development of both the faculties, intellectual as well as emotional.[21] In this context, Keown's following observations contain a greater characteristic of Buddhist moral psychology:

> One important conclusion to be drawn from the Abhidharmic analysis is that virtues and vices – since they are dharmas —are objective and real...good and bad are not abstractions to be apprehended by observers according to their various intuitions and sensibilities. Nor can morals be reduced to questions of taste or personal preference, as suggested by Emotivism. A final implication of this objectivisation of ethics is that relativism is ruled out: what is to count ultimately as good and bad is not determined by accidental factors but grounded in the reality of human nature. Since human nature is everywhere the same the moral teachings of Buddhism are of universal extent and will hold good at all times and in all places. The corollary of this is that Buddhist ethics cannot be a self-contained system which is intelligible only in its own terms or within its own frame of reference.[22]

It would also be apt to note that even though Buddhism would also not grant any truth-value to the emotional or cognitive elements, but the ground is entirely different from as furnished by cognitivist or non-cognitivist. Buddhism refrains from assigning truth-value to any cognitive or empirical episode because all such episodes are 'caused' (they are emergent conscious dispositions of the causal function—*vijñapti*) and also because all such emergent dispositions are impermanent. It can be formulated as—'Whatever is 'caused' (hence impermanent) cannot bear truth-value'. The formulation must not bring confusion that all emergent conscious dispositions (*vijñapti*) are meaningless. They are causally and morally efficacious and, hence, pragmatically valuable. Truth and falsity have no logical bearing for the Buddha, they are rather psychological categories. Cognitivist and non-cognitivist are not free from the propositional way of thinking of moral judgments. That is why, the former accepts truth-value and the latter denies. Both the approaches mistakenly reduce morality into either a logical category or into emotion and hence fail to grant an independent standing to the 'moral'.

Can Buddhist Moral Psychological Approach be universalized?

Since, the Buddha's psychoanalysis lays much emphasis on virtue aspect of morality; there are popular readings of Buddhist ethics as a type of 'virtue ethics'. As Keown, one of the recent examiner of it

presents it as, '...Buddhist ethics is aretaic: it rests upon the cultivation of personal virtue in the expectation that as spiritual capacity expends towards the goal of enlightenment ethical choices will become clear and unproblematic.'[23] There is no serious harm in such reading excepting for its blind comparison with Aristotelian virtue ethics.

Buddhism does not stop with the statement or declaration of moral virtues, but also paves a path for the attainment of it. If, in ethics, virtue is moral excellence, the ethical formulation must contain a verifiable principle of accomplishment of the virtues—whatever accepted in a system. Given the two premises stated in the initial section of the present discussion, the Buddhist moral psychology makes a space of accomplishment of virtues on the following accounts:

(i) all vices or virtues are caused under certain mental conditions, there is no particular or fixed nature of human action. One's intention actually has a role to determine the course and nature of action. The psychological consequence of an action (unrest or peace) is the consequence of one's intention (so called bad or good). [The physical consequences may be determined by other physical factors which are not relevant to the discourse in question]

(ii) if an action resulting mental unrest is not genuinely desired under normal conditions, one would not only avoid such action on one's own part but also unto others. Thus a moral decision is extrapolated to a decision for all. Such universalizing is not based upon essentiality of an action but upon the commonality of human nature to avoid pain.

One does not designate a particular thought, belief or act morally commendable because they are assigned 'value' by a religion, cult, culture, tradition, scripture, history, or people; but, because they are inner and aware development ('virtue' - kuúala) which lead to stripping off the defilements of consciousness. Speaking in later Buddhist terminology, 'value', 'truth', 'good', 'right' etc. are constructions (*vikalpa*)—what the Buddha calls '*sankhata dhamma*', whereas 'virtue' is blossoming of consciousness that pulverizes the *akuśala* and 'sediments' already present in the mind—the source all miserable psychic development (what the Buddha calls *dukkha*). Thus, since, the debate is not pertaining to 'value'; there cannot be a meaningful Buddhist debate of deontology or consequentialism;

egoism or altruism; relativism or absolutism; objectivism or subjectivism; constructivism or naturalism; and so on. Not that the Buddhist formulation would stand in opposition to these notions, but it subsumes all such characteristics in some sense or the other contextually.

The Buddhist approach of moral psychology is a kind of 'intelligent and sensitive occasionalism' as a blueprint of human mental states, its inner and external pressures, liking and disliking determining one's intention cannot be made in advance. To choose a right action one needs to be always aware of one's intention—the preconditions of one's own mind. Such an approach can be universalized provided that there is a mass level effort for the uplifting of human moral consciousness. In a sense, under framework of the Buddhist morality, the fixing of responsibility of an act on part of an agent is difficult (as in case of behaviorism though for different reasons). If a person commits a crime, he commits so because of certain mental causes. If such an act (a crime) is not desirable, the causes of act have to be addressed. The 'agent' has to undergo a therapy, a process of realization or transformation. Hence, a 'theory of punishment' would be a redundant notion.

NOTES

1. For instance, one may refer Prof. Matilal who observes, '...except [for] some cursory comments and some insightful observations, the professional philosophers of India very seldom discussed what we call moral philosophy today.' See Bimal Krishna Matilal, 'Moral Dilemmas: Insights from Indian Epics', *Philosophy, Culture and Religion: Collected Papers of B.K. Matilal*, ed. Jonardon Ganeri, Vol. I, *Ethics and Epics* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 21.

2. Donald M. Borchert (ed.), *Philosophy and Ethics: Selections from The Encyclopedia of Philosophy and Supplement* (New York: Macmillan Library Reference, 1999), p. 680.

3. Ibid., pp. 685-686.

4. Damien Keown, *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics* (New York: Macmillan, 1992), p. 58.

5. For example, Craib notes that, 'The unconscious ideas are not subjected to the laws to which our conscious ideas are subjected; they do not work themselves out rationally, and they do not take any notice of the restrictions of the outside world. They accept only the reality of the *internal world*. This explains one of the peculiar difficulties of psychoanalytic treatment, which is concerned primarily with the unconscious and the internal world. In a society which looks for causal, scientific explanations it is always tempting to look for external causes for psychological difficulties.' See Ian Craib, *Psychoanalysis: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), pp. 22-23.

6. Ibid., p. 24.

7. Behaviorism, a philosophical and psychological trend with variety of streams, abandons introspective or meditative attempts of making *consciousness* a subject

matter investigation and experimentation. Thinkers in the trend firmly opine that nothing can meaningfully be claimed about the inner procedural aspect of human mind, rather the task of behavioral psychology is to interpret human behaviour on the basis of the behavioral engagements, interactions and experiences. Such trends are based on a conviction that nothing substantial can be known about mental procedure leading to *ban on appeal to inner processes*, as Skinner says, 'it serves as the last refuse of the soul in psychology.' Cited from G. E. Zurrif, *Behaviorism: A Conceptual Reconstruction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 80.

8. See B.F. Skinner, *Science and Human Behavior* (New York: Macmillan, 1953).

9. 'If being true is thus independent of being acknowledged by somebody or other, then the laws of truth are not psychological laws: they are boundary stones set in an eternal foundation, which our thought can overflow but never displace'. See G. Frege, *Grundgesetze der Arithmetik: Begriffsschriftlich Abgeleitet,* Vol. 1 (Jena: Hermann Pohle, 1893).

10. Husserl argues that, if logical laws were psychological laws, they would refer to psychological entities. Logical laws do not refer to psychological entities; therefore, logical laws are not psychological laws. In this argument the second premise is not based on any viable fact, rather is a presupposition. Even if it was true at the time of Husserl, recent development in psychology does not support it. Husserl's move has also been criticized by many others like J.J. Katz who agrees with Schlick and other early critics that Frege and Husserl are wrong to take psychological laws to be vague and inexact. Katz's criticism echoes Schlick's *petitio principii* charge: One might well reply that not all psychological laws are vague and inexact; logical and mathematical laws are the psychological laws that are exceptions to what is otherwise the rule in psychology for now but that in the future the rest of psychology will catch up. See J. J. Katz, *Language and Other Abstract Objects* (Totawa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981), p. 175.

11. *Majjhima-Nikāya*, 1/1/2, sabbgsava-sutta, trans. in Hindi by Pt. Rahula Sankrityayana, 1933 (Saranath, Varanasi: Mahabodhi Sabha, 1964), pp. 6-7. Also described in *Angutara-Nikgya* (3.68): See *Anguttara-Nikāya-Pāli*, ed. Swami Dwarikadas Shastri, Vol. 4 (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 2002). Tithiya Sutta as why un-arisen association or passion, aversion and delusion arise; the cause is inappropriate attention. And why they do not arise is because of appropriate attention.

12. *Anguttara-Nikāya-Pāli* (10 Daśaka-nipāto, 7 Yamaka-vaggo, 1 Avijjā-sutta), p. 229.

13. These five miseries are enumerated as *kāmacchando, byāpādo, thīnamiddham, uddhacca-kukkuccam, vicikicchā. Majjhima-Nikāya*, 1/1/10, Mahásatipaññhāna-sutta, pp. 36-41.

14. *Samyukta-Nikāya-Pāli*, 5 Mahā-vaggo (Bojjhanga-samyuttam, 4; Nīvaraṇa-vaggo catuttho, Ayoniso-manasikāra-sutta): See *Samyukta-Nikāya-Pāli*, ed. Swami Dwarikadas Shastri, Vol. 4 (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 2008), pp. 1738-1739.

15. "Katamo eko dhammo hānabhggiyo? Ayoniso manasikāro – ayam eko dhammo hānabhāgiyo." *Dīgha-Nikāya-Pāli*, Pathika-vagga (11 Dasuttara-sutta): *Dīgha-Nikāya-Pāli*, ed. Swami Dwarikadas Shastri, Vol. 3 (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 2005), p. 821.

16. *Dīgha-Nikāya-Pāli*, Pathika-vagga (11 Dasuttara-sutta), p. 844.

17. Clark Hull presents the explanatory scheme as S & O > R; where O signifies 'intervening variables'. [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy; http://www.iep.utm.edu/behavior accessed on 6th Oct. 2010. Here, internal states of

the organism, i.e., 'intervening variables' can be better explained on the basis of the Buddha's insight, without which the above explanation would remain mystical.

18. Keown, *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics*, p. 63

19. William S. Waldron, *The Buddhist Unconscious: The Ālaya-vijñāna in the Context of Indian Buddhist Thought* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), p. 28.

20. Non-descriptivism (or non-cognitivism) holds that the function of normative judgments is not, or not primarily, to describe or state facts and that because of this, these judgments lack a truth value. A strong form of ethical non-descriptivism says that moral judgments have no descriptive function, but weaker forms say only that their non-descriptive function is primary or dominant. See Borchert, (ed.), *Philosophy and Ethics*, p. 718.

21. Razzino (1981: 94) quotes the following statement by Rahula (1978: 10), which expresses a view central to her thesis and to Keown: For a man to be perfect there are two qualities that he should develop equally: compassion (karuṇā) on one side and wisdom (paññà) on the other. Here compassion represents love, charity, kindness, tolerance, and such noble qualities on the emotional side, or qualities of the heart, while wisdom would stand for the intellectual side or qualities of the mind. If one develops only the emotional neglecting the intellectual, one may become a good-hearted fool; while to develop only the intellectual side neglecting the emotional may turn one into a hard-headed intellect without feeling for the others. Therefore, to be perfect one has to develop both equally. That is the aim of Buddhist way of life: in it wisdom and compassion are inseparably linked together. See A. Razzino, A. '*Paññā' and 'Karuṇā' in Theravada Buddhist Ethics Compared to love in Protestant Christian Ethics,* PhD Thesis, Northwestern University, 1981, cited in Keown, *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics*, p. 10.

22. Keown, *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics*, p. 64

23. Ibid., p. 2.

HISTORY OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY: ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY UNDERSTANDING OF THE CLASSICAL THROUGH THE COLONIAL

Balaganapathi Devarakonda

Classical Indian Philosophy is characterized with astonishing conceptions—such as being 'damaged, stunted and defaced',[1] 'gone into backwaters',[2] 'captured by the West'[3] 'blanketed by the West',[4] 'frozen and mummified',[5] and 'structurally altered'[6]—in the contemporary period. There is a need to explicate the presuppositions and background of these conceptions to have a better understanding of the classical Indian philosophy. These 'contemporary conceptions of the classical' presuppose that there is a body of knowledge called Indian philosophy that is available as a monolithic structure to be understood, interpreted and commented in its entirety. This monolith is characterized by certain essential characteristics such as spirituality, pessimism, mystical and intuitive nature, soteriological and otherworldly, static and unprogressive character, etc., which depicted an epistemic distinction between India and the West. Roots of the analysis of the 'contemporary conceptions of the classical' would take us not to the classical period which is far away, but to the recent past i.e., colonial period. It is the recent past that shapes the present conceptions of the remote past. This paper attempts to investigate the recent past to explicate the background for the 'contemporary conceptions of the classical'.

History of Indian Philosophy, in general, means the way the philosophical thought in India originated, took different directions and developed into a heterogeneous system of thought. Given that history writing in India, through the Western categories, is developed during the modern period, and that the initial attempts of writing histories of India are by Western scholars, there is a need to understand how we are told to see/visualize our own past and philosophy. Modern historical interest in Indian philosophy began with the Orientalist interest in the Indian past. Situating itself broadly

in the debates on Orientalist and Nationalist notions of history of India, the present paper argues that Indian philosophy, as we understand it today, is a colonial construct. After making some remarks on the development of historical writing of India, I would briefly look at the limitation of a foreign language in comprehending and presenting the Indian philosophical tradition by the early colonialists. Readings on the two histories of Indian philosophy, one by Max Muller representing Orientalists and the other by Radhakrishnan representing Nationalist historians, are presented to show the dialectics between these two in producing the monolith called Indian Philosophy.

I

The history of Indian Philosophy extends at least for about 2500 years. This lengthy period of history has witnessed the growth of a rich variety of philosophical thought presented in incalculable number of works written by innumerable number of scholars. This vastness of the period and the literature exhibits the depth and richness which further complicates the attempts to draw a comprehensive picture of the history of Indian philosophy. Notwithstanding the limitations, there were attempts at recording the previous philosophical thought with varied motives and views. In the classical period, there were works such as *Saddarsana Samucchaya*, *Sarvadarsana Sangraha*, *Sarvamata Sangraha*, *Sarva Siddhanta Sangraha* and *Sarva Darsana Sangraha*, which have recorded the philosophical thought of their previous and contemporary times with the motive of pointing out the inadequacies of their earlier thought and propagating their own in a more robust way. In the modern period, there were attempts by scholars like Max Muller,[7] Zimmer,[8] S. Radhakrishnan,[9] Surendranath Dasgupta[10] etc., in recording the history of Indian Philosophy with the intention to bring a comprehensive understanding of the philosophical thought of India. Each of the attempts though tried to provide a better understanding of Indian Philosophy, have endowed with their own limitations. The limitations are the outcome of the historical context of the then India. These limitations have not only influenced but also structured the future course of discussions on Indian philosophy. In order to understand the influence of these limitations we need to look into the historiography of India itself i.e., how and why histories of India and Indian philosophy are written and rewritten.

Let me here prepare the context in which I would like to place the modern histories of Indian Philosophy that I shall bring into discussion a little later. I take the support of the illustration of different phases of writing and rewriting of Indian history in general provided by Neeladri Bhattacharya[11] that would work as a useful platform for discussion on writing history of Indian Philosophy.

II

While discussing the practice of writing and rewriting of the India's past, Neeladri Bhattacharya illustrates various phases that existed in the modern period. Let me summarize some of these phases that are useful for the present work which are most eloquently dealt by Bhattacharya. 'History in India', points out Bhattacharya, 'began its modern career implicated in projects of colonial knowledge.'[12] This legacy of colonial knowledge was embedded in 'the sources that were collected and stored and the institutions of research that were built up'. There were successive phases of Orientalist, Liberalist and Nationalist notions of the past that abetted in rethinking and rewriting the history of India. Whereas Orientalist ideas structured historical representations of Indian past by glorifying the classical age, Liberals restructured it in the light of modern liberal notions. While criticizing the Liberal histories, Nationalists borrowed the Orientalist notions of India's past. Let me briefly discuss these three phases as it forms the context of our discussion on the development of history-writing of Indian Philosophy.

Orientalists like William Jones, H.T. Colebrook and Max Muller, inspired by the romanticism and classicism of the time, discovered the greatness of the glorious past of India embodied in its language, laws, institutions and religious texts. There was a decline of the glory which resulted in the degenerated present before the British rule. Orientalists while assigning themselves the task of rediscovering the glory played the role of 'codifiers and translators' in discovering the ancient texts and ascribing their 'true' meaning. 'As researches into ancient texts and projects of translation proliferated, and institutions and journals for Asiatic researches were set up', states Bhattacharya, 'modern history in its colonial form began to take shape.'[13] Oriental histories were questioned by Liberals from within the fold of imperial thought. Liberals condemned the same past of India that was glorified by the Orientalists. Liberal histories idealized the principles of modern West such as 'Individualism, Freedom and Democracy' and demarcated the other societies strictly on the

basis of the presence and absence of these liberal values. As a result of this, Liberals like James Mill could only see shades of darkness where Orientalists have seen a succession of golden ages in India's past. The dynamism of historical time of the modern West was contrasted with the static time of the Orient by the liberals. Liberals propagated that the civilizing power of the West is the only solution to problems of India.

Nationalist histories, points out Bhattacharya, developed in opposition to imperial and communal frames. In criticizing Liberal histories, Nationalists borrowed the founding notions of Orientalists—'the idea of classical golden ages and the corollary myth of a subsequent civilizational decline'. Thus, nationalist histories were caught up in the same trap—which they intended to transcend. Bhattacharya eloquently brought out this when he says:

> Assumptions and terms naturalized by earlier discourses become part of accepted commonsense and shape the nature of subsequent reasoning. And when new arguments are framed in terms of these old assumptions, their truth is reinscribed, their taken for granted status is reaffirmed.[14]

The attempts of nationalist histories in returning to the ancient past to constitute a sense of self have only reinscribed and reaffirmed the earlier assumptions of Orientalists and Liberals. As pointed out by Bhattacharya, 'in looking at the past and present, they operated with Western modernist ideas of what constituted progress, and what was to be criticized as primitive, backward and irrational.'[15]

This is the general historical background of history-writing in which we find different phases of writing and rewriting of India's past develop. Initial attempts of Orientalists were criticized and modified by Liberals that were further rejected by the Nationalists, but only to accept the initial frameworks developed by the Orientalists.

My attempt here is to locate the development of histories of Indian Philosophy within this Orientalist-Liberal-Nationalist framework. This is the way in which the histories of Indian Philosophy are initially written which in a way determined and structured the whole conception of it. In other words, this background—Orientalist-Liberal Utilitarian-Nationalist patterns of history-writing—has structured how Indian Philosophy was written about, how trends and interests in research have changed and how and why people have come to comprehend Indian Philosophy in the way it is now read understood and taught in academic institutions.

By saying that Indian Philosophy, as we understand it now, is an

outcome of the dialectics of Orientalist-Liberal utilitarian-Nationalist discourses, I do not mean that it is an imposed one. Rather it is a negotiated and moderated one. It is a product of continuous contestations and negotiations—but all this, within the framework developed in the early colonial depictions. It would be an interesting study to take up, if one investigates whether one is going far from the Indian Philosophy itself as a result of these negotiations. However, such an investigation should not intend to discover the original or essential or pure Indian Philosophy, rather should attempt to see the possibility of looking for alternative ways of doing Indian Philosophy outside the framework of the Orientalist-Nationalist construction of Indian philosophy.

This whole exercise of writing history of Indian Philosophy is to find whether there is Indian philosophy in the Western sense of the term and construct whatever exists in those terms. It would be interesting to note when and how the term philosophy, in the Western sense of the term, is applied to Indian thought by the non-Indians. Most of the depictions of traveller-historians of India did not make note of philosophical thought in India, even if they did, it was termed as a religious one. India has been projected as a wealthy and a mystic religious country in the pre-colonial times. This impression was carried forward with some modifications by the Orientalists and Indologists. Along with the material wealth, there was found a literary wealth. But the term Indian Philosophy is used either as a mere label or as another term for the mythology or religious mysticism of India in the early colonial period. Even Sir William Jones (1746-1794), who is responsible for the establishment of the Asiatic Society of India (1784) after getting fascinated by the rich Sanskrit literature, though written about the history and culture of Hindus, did not mention the term philosophy in relation to India anywhere in his writings. It is H.T. Colebrook, in his 'On the Philosophy of Hindus',[16] who has written about the six philosophical systems of India referring to Nyaya-Vaiseshika, Samkhya-Yoga and Purva-Uttara Mimamsa (Uttara Mimamsa is also known as Vedanta). His purpose, in his own words, is not to exhibit a contrasted view of the tenets of different philosophical schools, but to present a summary of the doctrines of each set.[17] By his time, the *Sarvadarsana sangraha* of Madhava Acharya is translated and the philosophy of six systems is available for the Orientalists.[18] The label Indian Philosophy might be getting strengthened during the time of Colebrook. In the writings of Max Muller the skeleton and label of Indian philosophy completely strengthened with flesh and blood provided

by the Colonialist and Eurocentric structuring. This would be elaborated a little later.

For the time being let us explicate the language limitations involved in the Orientalist constructions of Indian philosophy. Language has played a very crucial role in the colonial construction of Indian philosophy. Understanding and interpreting a knowledge system existent in one language through another language structured with another knowledge system always poses a problem. The problem accentuates when the interpreting language is loaded with an ideology as it happened in the Indian context.

The problem of language of the colonialists is not just an issue of terminological equivalences between Sanskrit and English, though it is also a big barrier in carrying the cultural load of the terms and concepts. It is, rather, also the ideology with which the language operates, which allows the interpretative language to construct Indian philosophy to suit their prejudices and idiosyncrasies.

Significant outcomes on the way to construct the Indian Philosophy that have played a pivotal role are philology and comparative studies. These two helped the Orientalists to look for not only the similarities in words and thought, but also in positing and further developing the theories of origin of languages and philosophy. These theories situated the origins of language and thought outside India through the propagation of the theory of Aryan invasion.

To understand the features of the ideology of colonialism let us look at the depiction of Indian Philosophy as constructed by a very significant Indologist, Max Muller. Significance of his place in the history of Indian Philosophy lies not just in his translations of the ancient Indian Sanskrit literature, but also in ideological construction of Indian Philosophy with certain characteristic features.

III

Max Muller: The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy

After his first contributions to the study of Indian Philosophy as early as in 1852 published in German, Max Muller had written *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* in 1899. The gap between these two periods is filled by publication of the translation of *Rigveda* and the *Sacred Books of the East.*

It is in the depictions of Max Muller that we see a clearly

formulated set of Eurocentric traits which tried to construct the Indian Philosophy in a formidable way. It is in his writings that we see the terms, Indian Philosophy, National philosophy along with Hindu philosophy and qualifying it as a universal philosophy. In these depictions, there exists an underlying ideology of constructing a national philosophy or universal philosophy which can be thrust upon the people of India. There is a difference between this National philosophy and the Nationalist thought developed in the subsequent period. In a country where there exists a complex diversity and plurality of not just cultures and languages but also philosophical positions, construction of a National philosophy which can be accepted by all the people is attempted by him. Max Muller explicates his objective in publishing the results of his studies on Indian Philosophy to be 'not so much to restate the mere tenets of each system, so deliberately and so clearly put forward by the reputed authors of the principal philosophies of India, as to give a more comprehensive account of the philosophical activity of the Indian nation form the earliest times, and to show how intimately not only their religion, but their philosophy also, was connected with the national character of the inhabitants of India...'.[19] By attempting to provide a comprehensive account of philosophical activity of India which extends for about 3000 years before him and attributing national character, Max Muller has sowed the seeds of European conceptions of nation and nationality with regard to India.

The categorization of six *astica* systems of Indian Philosophy was initially mentioned in the Sanskrit literature in the works such as *Saddarsana Samucchaya, Sarvadarsana Sangraha, Sarvamata Sangraha, Sarva Siddhanta Sangraha* and *Sarva Darsana Sangraha*. However, with regard to 'what are the six systems and what is the meaning of *astica'*, almost all of these works differed substantially which was discussed by the author elsewhere.[20]

While attempting to give a comprehensive account of Indian Philosophy, Max Muller points out a defect (not limitation) of his work. He skillfully attributes the defect of his work to the whole of Indian philosophical tradition. The defect pointed out is lack of chronological framework, though chronology is not the only way of looking at the history.[21] This led to the later conception of 'existence of past but lack of history' in regard to the Indian tradition.

In his construction of National philosophy of India, Max Muller intentionally leaves out certain particularities and lays excessive stress on certain other specificities which have resulted in stereotype depictions of later colonial scholars. He claimed appreciation for

omitting whatever is 'less important' and 'not calculated to appeal to European sympathies' in the history of Indian Philosophy when he says, 'if I can claim any thanks, it is for having endeavored to omit whatever seemed to me less important and not calculated to appeal to European sympathies'. This intentional omission of the so-called 'less important' and 'non-appealing aspects to European sympathies' is guided by an ideological agenda.

Max Muller is popularly understood to be one who has glorified the ancient India specifically philosophical literature embedded in Sanskrit literature with much appreciation and admiration. But if his statements are read with a closer examination then his ideological agenda can easily be traceable. His reading of Indian philosophy is a 'sympathetic' one, as he himself claims. One can wonder how appreciation and admiration can go along with sympathetic reading. Sympathetic reading presupposes a certain kind of pre-conceived hierarchical structure. This sympathy is consolidated with the following depiction of the ancient India which gave birth to the philosophical knowledge. He says:

> It was only in a country like India, with all its physical advantages and disadvantages that such a rich development of philosophical thought as we can watch in the six systems of philosophy, could have taken place. In ancient India there could hardly have been a very severe struggle for life. The necessities of life were abundantly provided by nature... What was there to do for those who, in order to escape from the heat of the tropical sun, had taken their abode in the shades of groves or in the caves of mountain valleys, except to meditate on the world in which they found themselves placed, they did not know how or why? There was hardly any political life in ancient India...and in consequence neither political strife nor municipal ambition. Neither art nor science existed as yet, to call forth the energies of this highly gifted race. ...Literary ambition could hardly exist during a period when even the art of writing was not yet known.[22]

The rich development of philosophical thought was facilitated by abundant availability of necessities of life and lack of struggle for life. As a result political life, political strife, art, science, literary ambition, public applause, private gain—all the modern Western categories are found absent in the ancient Indian life.

Appreciation is always qualified by pointing out some lacunae by Max Muller in his writings. For instance, he says, 'however imperfect the style in which their (Indian) theories have been clothed may appear from a literary point of view, it seems to me the very perfection for the treatment of philosophy.'[23] Yet in another

place, he says '...it cannot be denied that the Sacred Books of the East' to publish which he has spent much of his life time, 'are full of rubbish.'[24] But he further adds 'that should not prevent us from appreciating what is really valuable in them.' This dichotomous representation- imperfection and perfection; rubbish and valuable - shows a kind of ambivalence in the mind of Max Muller. It could also be the case that he is only defending his own interest in the project or he is attempting to sell the import of his life work to his home audience.

The depiction of the idealistic thought of Vedantic philosophy, especially the Sankara Advaita Vedanta, as the culmination of all Indian philosophical thought which has continued to dominate the Western understanding of Indian Philosophy for centuries is sowed by the Max Muller. He considered the Vedanta philosophy to be 'a system in which human speculation seems to have reached its very acme' and written specifically on this system with lot of appreciation and admiration.

In this way, Max Muller has sowed the seeds of constructing a comprehensive account of history of Indian Philosophy with national character, while glorifying as well as pointing out the lacunae signified by the Western categories of understanding. As a representative of Orientalism, he endorsed the view that there is a decline of past glory of India into degenerated present, assigned himself the task of rediscovering glory and played the role of codifier and translator of ascribing the true meaning to the ancient texts. Thus, Max Muller makes the first attempt to write the history of Indian Philosophy in the modern period with clear-cut orientalist perspective and conviction.

The Liberals who took charge of colonial thinking later disagreed with the Orientalists in condemning the Indian past. The liberals like James Mill and Thomas Macaulay could see the shades of darkness where the Orientals have seen succession of golden ages in the Indian past. Structured by racial, climatic and evolutionary theories, historical explanations of liberals focused on the innate inferiority of Indians and their culture.

As stated earlier, nationalist histories rejected the Liberal's interpretations of Indian history. One of the prominent writers of history of Indian Philosophy from the Nationalist perspective is Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. Now let us look at the history of Indian Philosophy written by Radhakrishnan to see how the Orientalist depictions of Indian philosophy were countered without being able to transcend the imperialist framework.

IV

Radhakrishnan: On Indian Philosophy

Radhakrishnan's *Indian Philosophy* written in two volumes (first one published in 1923 and the second one in 1927) appeared in print nearly 25 years after the work of Max Muller. The gap between these two works consolidated the Orientalist conceptions of Indian philosophy. This consolidation was contested by Nationalist historiographers. At least two scholars were prominent among the Nationalist historians of Indian philosophy at that time; one is S.N. Dasgupta (who has written five-volume history of Indian philosophy published during 1922-1955) and the other is S. Radhakrishnan. Without going into the details of the differences among the two scholars' approaches, let us focus on Radhakrishnan's contribution to the Nationalist histories and, thus, his participation in the Orientalist-Nationalist discourse.

Radhakrishnan straight away in his preface to *Indian Philosophy* criticizes the earlier existent colonial notions of Indian thought by stating: 'Ignorance of the subject of Indian thought is profound. To the modern mind Indian philosophy means two or more "silly" notions about *maya*, or the delusiveness of the world, karma, or belief in fate, and *tyaga*, or the ascetic desire to be rid of the flesh.'[25] 'Even these simple notions,' he further adds, 'it is said, are wrapped up in barbarous nomenclature and chaotic clouds of vapour and verbiage, looked upon by the "natives" as wonders of the intellect.'[26] He condemned the earlier notions propagated by the colonialist framework which dismissed the whole of Indian culture and philosophy as 'pantheism' 'worthless scholasticism' 'a mere play upon words', and 'at all events nothing similar to Plato or Aristotle or even Plotinus or Bacon.'[27]

After criticizing the existent notions, Radhakrishnan goes on to explicate the glory of Indian thought by stating: 'There is hardly any height of spiritual insight or rational philosophy attained in the world that has not its parallel in the vast stretch that lies between the early Vedic seers and the modern Naiyayikas.'[28] In saying this he was obviously getting into a dialogue with his contemporary colonialists and asking them to study Indian thought 'in a true scientific frame of mind, without disrespect for the past or contempt for the alien', which may prompt one towards a 'sympathetic reading' adopted by the Orientalists.

Being aware of the fact that Indian philosophy as rendered in English is a colonial construct, Radhakrishnan finds a strange

alienness to it. According to him, '[t]he special nomenclature of Indian Philosophy which cannot be easily rendered into English accounts for the apparent strangeness of the intellectual landscape.'[29] He smells the strangeness of the intellectual landscape though it is of Indian philosophy, since it is developed in English.

Thus, Radhakrishnan is aware that the Indian Philosophy rendered in English is a colonial construct and has attempted to enter into a dialogue with colonialists to disprove their 'silly notions' and, thus, to project a system of philosophy of India in tune with the Nationalist ideological demands of his time.

While saying that he is not attempting to write a history of philosophy, Radhakrishnan intentionally discusses the characteristics that should be there to a historian of philosophy in general and Indian philosophy in particular. In his opinion a philological or linguistic or historical approach adopted by the early Colonialists to the history of philosophy is unprofitable. A linguist or philologist will regard the views of ancient Indian thinkers as 'fossils lying scattered throughout the upheaval and faulty strata of the history of philosophy.'[30]; and would dismiss 'any interpretation which makes them alive and significant as far-fetched and untrue.'[31] History, according to Radhakrishnan, is more than just a collection of facts and the accumulation of evidence. The historian, he says, should be a critic and an interpreter and not a mere mechanical 'ragpicker'. 'He must', points out Radhakrishnan, 'pay great attention to the logic of ideas, draw inferences, suggest explanations, and formulate theories which would introduce some order into the shapeless mass of unrelated facts.'[32] The historian should, in fact be a philosopher, 'who uses his scholarship as an instrument to wrest from words the thoughts that underlie them', and should realize 'the value of the ancient Indian theories which attempted to grapple with the perennial problems of life and treat them not as fossils but as species which are remarkably persistent.'[33]

These views of Radhakrishnan on historians of philosophy implicitly criticize the colonialist histories of Indian philosophy, since most of them have used either philological or linguistic approach, or have condemned Indian Philosophy for lack of historicity. It should be noted that none of the colonial historians of Indian philosophy are philosophers, but were either philologists or historians.

Though the nationalist prerogatives instigated Radhakrishnan to reject the imperialist notions, his understanding of history is a clear example of how he is still entangled to the colonialist

framework. He accepts the Eurocentric conception of the notion of history as linear and joins hands with colonialists in arguing for the lack of historicity in India. According to him, '[i]n the absence of accurate chronology, it is a misnomer to call anything a history.'[34] As against the native notion of cyclic notion of time, Radhakrishnan opted to adopt the linear notion to denounce any attempts to call his work a history of philosophy. In contrast, Surendranath Dasgupta (1922) who calls his work *A History of Indian Philosophy*, the first volume published one year before the work of Radhakrishnan, does not give any importance to chronological placement of the various philosophical systems and their philosophers. 'I have never considered it desirable that the philosophical interest should be subordinated to the chronological' states Dasgupta. Without getting into the debate on the necessity of chronological data for the construction of Indian philosophy, it is sufficient for us, from the above, to note that Radhakrishnan has accepted the Western conception of history and tried to look for it in Indian tradition.

Radhakrishnan accepts the essentialities of the 'India and the West' conception that was naturalized by the colonialists and constructs his Indian philosophy within that framework. He explicitly states that his aim is not to narrate Indian views alone and to explain them, but particularly to bring them within the focus of Western traditions of thought.[35] While attempting to address the West in explicating the depth of the Indian thought, Radhakrishnan has a tough task of bringing Indian Philosophy within the focus of Western thought. In other words, his attempt is more to bring the Indian thought within the West's focus than to explicate Indian thought as existent in the classical period. In doing so, the Indian thought that he was dealing with is the one developed by the Orientalists. Being within the colonial framework he tried to contest and thus negotiate with the Orientalist conceptions. On his way, he has even carried forward certain Orientalist conceptions such as— culmination of Indian philosophy in Advaita, essentially spiritual nature of Indian philosophy, a-historicity, and soteriological orientation of all systems of Indian philosophy.

Radhakrishnan is also aware of the charges against Indian philosophy in terms of pessimism, dogmatism and indifference to ethics and uprogressiveness.[36] These are the imperialist charges forged on the Indian thought to prove its inferiority to the West. The development of human thought in general, depends upon the dialectics of pessimism and optimism, dogmatism and openness to change. In these dialectics sometimes pessimism or dogmatism

would be dominant and at other times optimism or openness. Branding a particular tradition by ascribing any one of the alternatives is to unrecognize the growth of its development. By branding this way, the imperialists, not only attempted to demean the growth of rich Indian tradition, but also kept the Indian thinkers in defense in criticizing, and rejecting this branding. It is also politically motivated, as it has started the discussion on Indian thought by drawing imperialist framework. Charges such as pessimism, dogmatism, indifference to ethics and non-progressiveness were levied, so that the subsequent discussions would be centered only on them either in contesting or rejecting or modifying. Radhakrishnan, while criticizing and rejecting these views, has only become a part of their politics.

Though Radhakrishan has written the history of Indian Philosophy in opposition to the imperialist framework, he remained tied to the framework which he sought to transcend. The assumptions and terms invented and imposed by Max Muller and others became part of the accepted common sense and shaped his nature of reasoning. By arguing within the frames of the colonial assumptions, he inscribed their truth and reaffirmed their taken-for-granted status. The Orientalist notions of India's past—the idea of classical golden ages and the corollary myth of a subsequent civilisational decline—were also accepted by Radhakrishnan, and in looking at past and present he operated with Western modernist ideas of what constituted progress, and what was to be criticized as primitive, backward and irrational.

Conclusion

To conclude, the paper attempted to study how Indian Philosophy is written about and why a body of writing called Indian Philosophy has taken the shape that it has. Indian Philosophy is largely comprehended as a monolith and is declared damaged, stunted and defaced; gone into backwaters; frozen and mummified; captured, blanketed and structurally altered by the recent philosophers. It is argued that investigations into these declarations would lead us to a larger canvass of the phenomenon of writing histories initiated by the colonial scholars. I argued that the construction of Indian philosophy as a monolith is a product of negotiation between Orientalism and Nationalism with the mediation of liberal utilitarianism. How the seeds of the monolith are sowed by Max Muller which were negotiated and taken forward

after modification by Radhakrishnan comes out of the readings of the histories of the two scholars. It is argued that the history of Indian Philosophy which is presently available to us is a colonial construct. To be precise, it is a construct of the orientalists such as Max Muller which was later negotiated, modified and reconstructed by the dialectic of Nationalists such as Radhakrishnan.

Note: I am thankful to an anonymous reviewer for pertinent comments and cautions which helped me in modifying the paper.

NOTES

1. 'The Indian brain' according to Aurobindo 'is still in potentially what it was; but it is being damaged, stunted and defaced. The greatness of its innate possibilities is hidden by the greatness of its surface deterioration': Sri Aurobindo, 'The Brain of India', *Karmayogin* (October-November, 1909).

2. In his conclusion to the second volume of *Indian Philosophy* (first published in 1927) Radhakrishnan remarks: 'During the recent past, India was comfortably moored in a backwater outside full current of contemporary thought': Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II [1927] (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 721.

3. Kalidas Bhattacharya says, 'The picture altered with the Britishers consolidating their hold on this country. They somehow captured the Indian mind, primarily through science (and technology) and, secondarily through three human values– equality, fraternity and love. The Indian mind–at least the mind of the mainstream that was Hindu–being thus captured': Kalidas Bhattacharya, (1982): 'Traditional Indian Philosophy as Modern Thinkers view it' in S.S. Pappu Ramarao and R. Puligandla (eds.), *Indian Philosophy: Past and Future* (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1982), p. 172.

4. Michael Dummett says that the massive impact of Western culture upon the East has been all the more crushing because political hegemony accompanied the cultural imperialism. As a result, he says, indigenous traditions have been not killed, but blanketed. By blanketing, I mean that the tradition did not die; it was and still is, preserved... It was being handed down, without alteration, but not being added to; the creativity had gone. See Michael Dummett, 'Motilal's Mission: A Memorial Address', *Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1996), pp. 14-15.

5. Daya Krishna while expounding thee myths about Indian Philosophy points out the 'dead, mummified picture of Indian Philosophy' and argues that this false picture is to be removed and the living concerns of ancient thought are to be brought to life. See Daya Krishna, *Indian Philosophy: A Counter Perspective*, revised and enlarged ed. [1991] (Delhi: Sai Satguru Publications, 2006), p. 36.

6. Raghuramaraju in his 'Debates in Indian Philosophy' while pointing out the insufficiency of the 'use of lucid metaphors such as "mere surface deterioration", "dead and mummified", "captured", and "blanketed'" to capture the picture of Indian thought subsequent to colonialism, argues that it is in fact 'structurally altered.': A. Raghuramaraju, *Debates in Indian Philosophy: Classical, Colonial and Contemporary* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 102.

7. Max F. Muller, *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* [1899] (New Delhi: Associate Publishing House, 1984).

8. H. Zimmer, *Philosophies of India* (London: Routledge, 1951).

9. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I [1923] & Vol. II [1927] (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008).

10. Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vols. I-V [1922-1955] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

11. The discussion that Neeladri Bhattacharya developed in the essay 'The Problem' was very useful to me in situating my discussion on Indian Philosophy in the context of modern historiography of India. See Neeladri Bhattacharya, 'The Problem', framing essay of *Rewriting History: A Symposium on ways of Representing Our Shared Past, Seminar*, No. 522 (February 2003), pp. 12-18.

12. Bhattacharya, 'The Problem', p. 12.

13. Ibid., p. 13.

14. Ibid., p. 14.

15. Ibid.

16. Henry Thomas Colebrooke, 'On the Philosophy of the Hindus', Part I, *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1824), pp. 19-43.

17. Ibid., p. 20.

18. E.B. Cowell, one of the translators of *Sarva-Darsana-Samgraha* (the other being A.E. Gough) in his preface to the work mentions that the work was originally published in the *Biliotheca Indica* in the year 1858. He further informs the readers that the work has been used by Wilson in his 'Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus' (first published in the Asiatic Researches, Vol. XVI, Calcutta, 1828). From the above statements of Cowell we can infer that probably *Sarvadarsana Sangraha* might have got translated even before Colebrook's work came out and European presentations of Indian Philosophy might have got their early source in this work. Even the translation of Cowell and Gough was first 'published at intervals in the *Benaras Pandit* between 1874 and 1879': Madhava ṛchírya, *The Sarva-darúana, Or, Review of the Different Systems of Hindu Philosophy*, trans. E.B. Cowell and A.E. Gough (London: Trhubner, 1882), p. 2.

19. Muller, *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. vii.

20. My article discusses the inadequacy of *astica-nastica* distinction as well as Six-Three distinction of schools in the light of the original Sanskritic sources. See Balaganapathi Devarakonda, 'Limitations and Alternatives: Understanding Indian Philosophy', *Calicut University Research Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (August 2009), pp. 47-58.

21. looking at the history. One cannot judge the Philosophical histories of others on this basis. Surendranath Dasgupta and D.P. Chattopadhyaya and many other scholars have pointed out alternative ways of looking at the histories of philosophy, especially Indian Philosophy.

22. Muller, *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, pp. vi-vii.

23. Ibid., p. x.

24. Max Muller says, 'I am no promiscuous admirer of everything that comes from the East. I have again and again expressed my regret that the Sacred Books of the East contain so much of what must seem to us mere rubbish, but that should not prevent us from appreciating what is really valuable in them.' Elsewhere he states, 'It cannot be denied that the Sacred Books of the East are full of rubbish': Max F. Muller, *Vedanta Philosophy* [1904] (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1985), p. 113. He also remarks, 'I know I have often been blamed for calling rubbish what

to the Indian mind seemed to contain profound wisdom, and to deserve the highest respect': Muller, *Vedanta Philosophy*, p. 112.

25. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 7.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., pp. 7-8.
28. Ibid., p. 8.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., p. 671.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p. 672.
33. Ibid., p. 671.
34. Ibid., p. 8.
35. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 10.
36. Ibid., p. 54.

ETHICS AND THE THRESHOLD OF LANGUAGE: EARLY WITTGENSTEIN AND RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Priyambada Sarkar

Wittgenstein's characterisation of his own *Treatise on the philosophy of Logic* (*Tractatus-Logico-philosophicus*[1]) as a book on Ethics[2] have baffled interpreters, right from the publication of his letter to Ludwig Von ficker (1967), his closest confidante during the early period of his life. Even before that, Wittgenstein's dense and cryptic remarks on ethics in the last few pages of the *Tractatus* have made it's commentators puzzled and intrigued. The puzzle is: how could a treatise on the philosophy of logic talk about 'the mysticals' which include remarks on ethics, aesthetics and other such disciplines? Not only that, the remarks characterise ethics i) as *transcendental* hence *beyond significant language* ii) as *mystical* and *non-sensical* and iii) as being *one and the same with aesthetics.* Early commentators were eager to brush aside these remarks as unimportant to the main thesis about language and meaning of the *Tractatus.*[3] Now, with the publication of Wittgenstein's diaries, notebooks, letters and other manuscripts, it has become evident that these remarks of last few pages were as much important as those of earlier pages;and to ignore all these deliberately is to ignore the historical scholarship which results in a complete misunderstanding of the work.

In this paper, there will be an attempt to interpret these remarks on ethics in the light of the poems of Rabindranath Tagore, one of Wittgenstein's favourites. As we already know Wittgenstein preferred reading poems from Tagore's Gitanjali to answering members of Vienna Circle as far as clarification of the remarks of*Tractatus* is concerned. However, my bringing in Tagore is not intended to imply that Wittgenstein's view in this regard is a direct consquence of, or an influence from writings of Tagore. Rather, I intend to point out that there are striking similarities in the structure of their thinking about ethics and its 'being one' with aesthetics. Hence, there will be an attempt in this paper to bring out the parallels of Wittgenstein's thoughts on ethics with those of Tagore. The paper

will be divided into three main sections in accordance with the characterisation of Ethics in the *Tractatus*, where views of both the thinkers will be juxtaposed. The first section will be about the inexpressibility/transcendentality of Ethics, the second will take care of the mysticality and non sensicality of ethics, and the final section will be on the sameness of Ethics and Aesthetics.

Before one moves on with the project of finding parallels of Wittgenstein's thinking with that of Tagore, one should explore the relationship of Tagore to people of Germany in 1920s. In 1913, Rabindranath was awarded Nobel Prize and by 1920 Rabindranath's writings were available in German translation. Rabindranath had visited Germany for quite a few times, but his visits in 1921, 1922,1926 and 1930 are specially significant, because during this period he was literally swayed by 'frenzied ovations' of the people of Germany. Astounding intellectuals like Rainer Maria Rilke, Albert Schweitzer, Thomas Mann, Stefan Zweigg, Hozman Hesse, and many others had dialogues with Rabindranath Tagore and they were moved by his intellectual quality along with the innermost spirituality of his thinking. All these poets, thinkers and writers were in their prime as creative writers and it is important to mention that some of them were also Wittgenstein's favourites. Not only intellectuals, but common masses of Germany were also overpowered by him. To quote from Martin Kampchen:

> The immense popular enthusiasm, the frenzied ovations, which built up to a Tagore mania in1921 resulting in the sale of one million copies of Tagore books by the end of 1923 are seen as a proof of the poet's tremendous appeal to the masses and the success of his mission of peace and understanding between the people of east and west.[4]

In Germany, Tagore's 61st birthday was celebrated in 1922 with much enthusiasm and ovation. Engelhard presented a 450-page biography of the poet with unadulterated admiration and devotion. The publication of his collected works (8 volumes) in 1922 by Kurt Wolff Verlag and its success are evidences of 'Tagore-mania' in Germany. We have no difficulty in imagining that at that time billions of people in Germany had enjoyed his poems, plays and other writings. Tagore had, thus, become 'a myth' in Germany' during the early 1920s.

From the background, we can well imagine why Wittgenstein had admired the poems of Rabindranath and we can take the liberty to assume that he had also read other books apart from Gitanjali. And when he reacted to the members of Vienna circle—it is possible to imagine that he was immersed in Rabindranath at that time.

And the reason behind his choosing these poems for the so-called modern scientifically minded members of Vienna circle was not at all casual or non-deliberate. Rather, I think Ray Monk seems to be right, when he points out:

> In Particular—as if to emphasize to them (Members of the Vienna circle), as he (Wittgenstein) earlier explained to Von Ficker, that what he had not said in the *Tractatus* was more important than what he had—he read them the poems of Rabindranath Tagore.[5]

Wittgenstein perhaps thought that reading these poems could be an effective form of teaching them 'what we cannot speak of, we must pass over in silence'.

I

Inexpressibility/Transcendentality of Ethics and Aesthetics

In this section, I'll deal with the remarks on ethics in *Tractatus, Notebooks* (1914-1916) and '*A Lecture on Ethics*,' (1929) the totality of which will represent the thoughts of Early Wittgenstein. We can begin with relevant quotes from the *Tractatus*:

> T6.421: It is clear that ethics cannot be put into words. Ethics is transcendental (ethics and aesthetics are one and the same).

> T6.42: So too it is impossible for there to be propositions of Ethics. Propositions can express nothing that is higher.

But why can ethics not be put into words? According to the *Tractatus* what can be put into words are only the propositions of natural science. This is a direct consequence of the theory of language and meaning worked out in the *Tractatus*, that describes language as a picture of reality. Now the statement that 'there can be no propositions of ethics' is intended to mean that they are not factual statements by any means. They are concerned with values. Thus, a proposition is sensible if it can picture a fact of the world. If it pictures accurately, it is a true proposition, if not, it is false. As language consists of the combinations of complex sentences, so the world consists of a combination of highly complex facts. Here Wittgenstein thinks that a complex proposition is the truth function of elementary propositions and an elementary proposition pictures an atomic fact. To elucidate the notions of 'elementary proposition' and 'atomic fact', we can state that if we analyse a complex proposition we get less complex propositions, if we analyse a less complex proposition, we get simple propositions. Now, we can go on analysing the simple

propositions, and thus ultimately we reach a proposition which is not further analysable.Such propositions, Wittgenstein claims, are called elementary propositions.

Similarly the world, for Wittgenstein, is the totality of facts, which are very complex. When we analyse a complex fact we get less complex facts, simple facts and, thus, ultimately such facts which are not further analysable into any other facts. Such facts are designated by Wittgenstein as atomic facts. Elementary propositions, for early Wittgenstein, picture these atomic facts.

However, an elementary proposition, though not analysable into any further proposition, is analysable into names,the ultimate logical atoms of language. 'Names' have been used technically in the *Tractatus* denoting indefinable, unanalysable logical atoms of language. Had they not been so, these names could have been analysed, defined in terms of other propositions and they would not fit the criteria of being unanalysable. Similarly, atomic facts are not composed of other facts, but they consist of objects. These objects are not our ordinary objects. 'Objects' also have been used in a special, technical sense. They are also indefinable, unanalysable atoms of the world. Moreover, we do not have any example of a 'name' or an object in the *Tractatus*. Once asked about the reasons for their non existence Wittgenstein said that he had arrived at these logical atoms by adopting an apriori method and he is a logician and not supposed to give a concrete example of what he deduced as the conclusion of a deductive argument.

Hence, according to the *Tractatus*, if someone uses a sentence meaningfully he uses it to picture an atomic fact and this meant that there was a special kind of correlation between psychic elements in his mind, elements of the sentence in a language and elements of the state of affairs of the world. A sentence which in this way pictures an atomic fact would be true or false depending upon whether the atomic fact obtained or not (depending upon whether or not the sentence pictures a fact).

This idea of what had to be the case for a sentence to make sense also led to the view that many collections of words which might seem in one way or another to be sensible sentences were not so. This was because they were not representations of any state of affair. First of all we have the notion of logical form and pictorial form. A logical/pictorial form is the form, which a proposition must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it. This form cannot be pictured; as picturing itself is a two-termed relation. It holds between two complexes when they are related in a certain

way, i.e., when one is projected onto, or used as a projection of the other. But this does not allow a rule of projection to be pictured.For it is neither a complex nor a state of affairs. So it cannot be related to a complex by another law of projection. So no complex can be a law of projection or of the relation two complexes must have if one is to picture the other. Thus, these pictorial/logical/ representational forms are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest in a picture.

Similarly, propositions of Ethics, Aesthetics, Metaphysics, Religion, Art, etc., are also not pictures of worldly state of affairs. The criterion of meaning of the *Tractatus* makes all these propositions at the same time non-sensical; although they manifest the meaning of life and the world. He believed that it is the tendency of human beings to try to go beyond the boundaries of language and say something which is unsayable (about the totality, meaning of life and the world) thus amounting to 'being non-sensical' from the point of view of the *Tractatus*.

But at this point one feels like asking: If it is really impossible for there to be propositions of Ethics, then what about the status of the literature entitled as 'ethics' right from the days of sophists to the present day? How do we regard them as inexpressible? What does 'higher' signify in this context? Why should we treat value as transcendental and higher?

If we remain confined only to the remarks of the *Tractatus*, we'll find no clue how to answer these questions or how to explain the cryptic passages of the *Tractatus*. But in 'A Lecture on Ethics', we find Wittgenstein elucidating the reasons why he thought that ethics cannot be put into words and why ethics is transcendental[6]. While discussing ethical matters in this lecture, Wittgenstein distinguishes between relative value judgments and absolute value judgments. Relative value judgments are those for which we have factual criteria, which mean that in each case in which the statement of relative value is true, there is a factual criteria in virtue of which it is true. To put it simply, the relative value judgments could be reduced to mere statements of facts. For example, we can consider these:

He is a good orator.
This is the right way to go to Alipore Campus, University of Calcutta.

Corresponding to the first relative value judgment, the factual criteria are: he has got a command of the language, and the topic he is giving a speech on. He can express his points clearly within a

short period of time. His voice is appealing to the masses. But these are all contingent matters of fact which may vary from one situation to another.

So is our second example. One could equally well describe it by "this is the right way, that is, shortest route, without traffic signals, and the condition of the road is smooth enough for a ride etc., you have to go if you want to get to Alipore Campus, University of Calcutta, in the least time.

In contrast with this, 'there are absolute judgments of value for which there are no factual criteria'. There will be no factual statements corresponding to these statements, which will serve as the criterion for making such judgments, e.g. you ought not to tell lies; you ought to love your parents.

According to Wittgenstein, these absolute statements go beyond any facts. What would have to correspond to them if they were to be true, would be something like a necessary truth about the world. As he says:

> If one could talk about the absolutely right road, it would be the road which, everybody, on seeing it would, with logical necessity, have to go, or be ashamed for not going. And similarly, the absolute good, if it is a describable state of affairs, would be one, which. everybody, would necessarily bring about or feel guilty for not bringing it about. And I want to say that such a state of affair is a chimera.[7]

Regarding these absolute value judgments, Wittgenstein wants to make two important points:

First of all, these judgments cannot be put into words. He elucidates:

> Suppose one of you were an omniscient person, and suppose this man wrote all he knew in a big book, then this book would contain the whole description of the world; and what I want to say is that this book would contain nothing that we would call an ethical judgment or anything that would logically imply such a judgment. It would of course contain all relative judgments of value and all true scientific propositions and in fact all true propositions that can be made. But all the facts described would, as it were, stand on the same level.[8]

From this quotation, it follows that we cannot write a book on Ethics as consisting of absolute judgments of value because that would contain facts, facts and facts, and facts cannot express something which is higher.

In *A Lecture on Ethics*, he is quite explicit about what he means by 'higher'. He says:

> There are no propositions which, in any absolute sense, are sublime, important and trivial.[9]

 So it seems by 'higher' he wanted to mean something absolute and sublime, which he attached to his notion of Ethics.

> Ethics, if it is anything, is supernatural and our words only express facts... so far as facts and propositions are concerned, there is only relative value and relative good, right, etc.[10]

Now the second point which he wants to emphasize is that our words, as we use them in sciences are capable of conveying only facts but they cannot express anything other than that. That is beyond their capacity, as a tea-cup is incapable of containing a gallon of water; similarly a word is incapable of expressing anything other than facts. To quote from Wittgenstein:

> ...our words will only express facts; as a teacup will only hold a teacup full of water even if I were to pour out a gallon over it.[11]

This reminds us of similar remarks made by Rabindranath in *Personality* (Lectures delivered in America) translated in German as *Personlichkeit* by Helene Meyer Franck, Munchen, Kurt Wolff, in 1921. Both Tagore and Wittgenstein agree that words in our everyday language is incapable of expressing the higher truth. Hence, in spite of their different intellectual make-ups and them belonging to two different modernities, their visions overlap in this significant respect. Rabindranath wanted to stress that facts are inadequate tools for the expression of Truth.

> They (Facts) are 'like wine cups that carry it (Truth), they are hidden by it, it overflows them. It is infinite in its suggestions; it is extravagant in its words. It is personal, therefore beyond science'.[12]

Rabindranath did not approach the theme through linguistic analysis, still striking similarities abound in Rabindranath's distinction between fact and truth *and* the distinction between expressible and the inexpressible in Wittgenstein. Distinction between fact and truth is fundamental to the philosophy of Tagore, an introduction of which is necesary at this point. Rabindranath defines fact as '(t)he characterisation of whatever exists in whichever manner is a fact'[13] (Translation by author).

To state it clearly in Wittgensteinian terminology, a fact is the existence of state of affairs (T1.13). If the state of affair is of the form 'S is P' [i.e. S has the characteristic of P], the fact will be S is P and that S exists. From this definition it follows that a fact is something

which is objective and impersonal. When we are saying about the fact that S is P, we are not talking about one's thinking or feelings for 'S' or 'P'. Thus, a fact is something with which science is concerned.

Now, it is very easy to verify or examine a picture or an object of art by reference to facts. What we have to do is just to find out whether it agrees with the state of affairs or not. If it does, it is true, if not then it is false. Rabindranath explains it with the example of a horse. It is not difficult to prove whether the picture of a horse is exact or not. As far as facts are concerned, there are very many points which one can compare with the picture and find out if it satisfies all the criteria or not. This again goes well with the view of the *Tractatus*. I quote:

> T2.201; A picture depicts reality by representing a possibility of existence and non-existence of states of affairs.

> T2.21 A picture agrees with reality or fails to agree; it is correct or incorrect, true or false.

So far the above discussion shows that there are close affinities in the views of the early Wittgenstein and Rabindranath Tagore as far as facts are concerned. Here one might object by saying that 'the suggested affinity between Tagore and Wittgenstein on the notion of facts can set off with the required significance in the background that both of them are realists, both of them seem to endorse a correspondence between pictures, propositions and reality as scientifically determinable. This common admission will be significantly opposed to philosophers of the Idealist genre. While some idealists would refute mind-independent fact, others (Hegel) would also emphasize that any such purported fact is already invaded by the whole. Such theories will make the logical atoms, their recursion in various combinations to forge atomic facts, notionally impossible, thus leading on to a falsification of analysis. As we know, this trend was taken up in different ways by Quine and later Wittgenstein himself. Now while one can safely categorize early Wittgenstein as a Realist, and Atomist, it is difficult to put Tagore under the standard philosophical brands of Realist or Idealist, Atomist or Holist'.

In order to answer this objection, I feel one should have to be more careful about labelling these two thinkers either as a realist or an idealist in a straight forward manner. It is customary to regard Tagore as an idealist and Wittgenstein as a realist though we'll see

in a moment that none of them could be titled as such. Rabindranath clearly states it in an article. I quote:

> Realism and idealism in the east do not have the same import as they have in the west. Realism in India is not absolute but comparative, as if it were a 'realism of idealism'.[14]

Rabindranath does not think that realism and idealism are mutually exclusive. And his 'Realism of idealism' ceases to appear paradoxical when we see it from two different perspectives. His view is idealistic in the sense that he does not limit aesthetic experience to the realm of objectively verifiable reality. It is realistic to the extent that he regards art as something which brings us very close to reality. Coming to Wittgenstein, we can ask: in what sense and to what extent is Wittgenstein a realist? I would like to suggest that Wittgenstein's early works are uniquely characterized by a commitment to what is essentially human in the subjects they address. According to the prevailing opinion, the *Tractatus* can be regarded as a prototypical realist theory.[15] But a careful analysis will show that Tractarian ontology is intended as a description of the structure of reality that is presupposed by language and thought. As a scholar on Wittgenstein argues:

> Starting from an a priori fixed set of logical principles Wittgenstein undertakes a search for the conditions of any meaningful language to be possible. His aim was to provide us with a completely general characterization of its possibility. The picture theory of meaning is his answer and this theory contains as one of its essential elements a theory about the logical structure of reality, the totality of objects is the limit of the logical analysis of sentences, that is, a logical construction that shows how meaning is possible. So in whatever sense objects can be said to exist, it is in a different way than ordinary things and ordinary situations. That is why we neither have knowledge of objects, nor are able to state their identity criteria. As the ontology is tied to language, the question of realism as such need not arise. The world and the way it is built up, as it is described in 1-2.063, is the world as language and thought present it. It is the world in so far as we can know it and talk about it scientifically.[16]

The similarity with Tagore lies exactly here as the term *tathyo,* as he uses it in Bangla, denotes facts, rather scientific facts of the world *in so far as we can know it.* But the notion of truth as Tagore explains in his writings apparently seems to be far away from the views of Ludwig Wittgenstein. To Rabindranath, Truth goes beyond the domain of facts in the sense that it is personal and subjective. Rabindranath treated the Truth as 'the Truth of relationship, the Truth of

harmony in the Universe, the fundamental principle of creation'. He identifies this Truth with some inner value which is not 'extension in space and duration in time', and this eludes factual representation. We have mentioned earlier that facts are impersonal. Facts must be devoid of personal attachments, otherwise they cannot achieve objectivity in knowledge, but that also makes a fact an abstraction, makes it separate from the whole, the reality. Regarding Truth, Tagore thinks that it can be grasped only if we leave the domain of facts which is limited within the bounds of space-time and objectivity. Truth transcends those limits. He re-iterates:

> In the region of Nature by unlocking the secret doors of workshop department, one may come to that dark hall where dwells the mechanics and help to attain usefulness, but through it one can never attain finality. Here is the storehouse of innumerable facts and however necessary they may be, they have not the treasure of fulfilment in them. But the hall of union is there, where dwells the lover in the heart of existence. When a man reaches it, he at once realizes that he has come to truth, to immortality, and he is glad with a gladness which is an end and yet which has no end.[17]

Facts are necessary, facts are useful for our everyday life, but they cannot reach The Truth, The Eternal, which is also The Personal. Rabindranath, while distinguishing between fact and truth, has referred to Keats's famous poem 'Ode on a Greecian Urn' and quotes:

> Thou silent form, dost tease us

> Out of thought, as doth eternity[18]

Here the poem conveys the 'speechlessness of the true language of Art' [Klaus, 251] Rabindranath explains:

> When Keats said [this] in his Ode to a Grecian Urn...he felt the ineffable which is in all forms of perfection, the mystery of the One, which takes us beyond all thought into the immediate touch of the Infinite. This is the mystery which is for a poet to realize and to reveal.[19]

Thus, for Rabindranath, it is the ideal of perfect harmony pervading the outer as well as our inner world that a poet wants to realize and to reveal. He believes that the Supreme One resides in our own inner selves. When He wants to create, he wants to manifest his oneness in the outside world. Through literature, paintings, drawings, songs, sculptures, this One gets manifested, and then there is the union of our own inner world with the outside world.

To elucidate the ideal of harmony we can take an example of a

rose. We feel happy when we see a rose, we see the beauty of harmony in colour, smell, contour i.e.in the form of a flower. Our inner self, which we term as One, treats the rose as His own relative and thus the rose becomes valuable. It does not require any other value. The unity which we find residing in colour, smell, petals of a rose is the same unity that resides in inner core of the world. The music of the world finds affinity with the tune of the rose. Thus the inner One realizes Oneself in the unity of the outside world. Here one might ask: why did Rabindranath call the harmony of the inner and the outer world joy in itself? And the answer might come from the teachings of *Upanishad* which Rabindranath used to refer to:

> In our country the supreme being has been defined as saccidananda (one who combines in his self being, consciousness and joy) *ananda* or joy is the last of the three terms, and there is no utterance beyond it.[20]

When the rose expresses truth, it expresses the infinite in finite and since the truth about expression inheres in joy, it becomes joy in itself, becomes beautiful, valuable and at the same time source of special delight.

Now this Truth, which is beautiful, valuable, and a joy in itself, has to be freed from the shackles of facts. When an artist draws pictures, he does not want to give us information. He takes as much or as little information as needed in creating the pure harmony of an Art object. That is, if that object, say for example, the sculpture of a horse possesses the beauty of the harmony of colour, painting, drawing, and music, then our heart recognizes it as real or true. If this sculpture does not agree with facts, it does not matter. But if it does not have this harmony, then however accurately it gives information or however accurately facts are represented, it will be rejected by an artist as it fails to capture the Truth.

Another important distinction between fact and truth lies in that Truth belongs to the domain of surplus whereas facts belong to the domain of necessity. We'll elaborate on this notion of surplus in a moment. However, to Rabindranath, in spite of their differences, facts and Truth are related to each other. He believes that we can get an inkling of what Truth is, only indirectly via suggestiveness (Vyanjana) of language. It is clear that the Truth is indescribable as far as our factual, scientific language is concerned. The Truth lies beyond that language. But it gets manifested in Art, Literature, Music and Dance. However, in whatever form, Truth shows itself, it is indescribable i.e. indescribable in ordinary scientific language which depicts facts.

It seems that for both the thinkers ordinary words are incapable of expressing Truth; hence they cannot be put into words. In his letter to Ludwig von Ficker, which I have referred to earlier, he states clearly that 'Ethics...does not add to our knowledge in any sense'. Obviously, he means that it does not add to our factual scientific knowledge.

At a meeting in Schlick's house on 17 December 1930, Wittgenstein said:

> At the end of my lecture on ethics, I spoke in the first person. I think that this is something very essential. Here there is nothing to be stated anymore; all I can do is to step forth as an individual and speak in the first person....Running against the limits of language? Language is after all not a cage.

> All I can say is this: I do not scoff at this tendency in man; I hold it in reverence. And here it is essential that this is not a description of sociology but that I am speaking about myself [21]

The above quotation clearly states that Wittgenstein feels within himself this tendency to run against the boundaries of language, since he personally feels that this is the only way one can understand or talk about Ethics, Aesthetics, Religion, Art, Literature, etc. Hence, one cannot give a sociological description of ethics as these are not, however, statements of facts or events. Ethics, as depicted by Wittgenstein, lies beyond sociological description. There is another puzzling point in the quotation. Here we see Wittgenstein saying both that language is a cage and not a cage. He took language as a cage when he stated that 'this running against the walls of our cage is perfectly, absolutely hopeless'; and not a cage when he stated 'language is after all, not a cage'. To solve this puzzle one can refer to Cyril Barrett who solves it in the following way:

> Language is in one sense a cage and in another sense not a cage. As a cage it sets limits and establishes boundaries to what can be said. We run up against these boundaries when we try to say what cannot be said in the manner in which we try to say it. But in another sense it is not a cage; by using it obliquely or by just running up against it, we can transcend it and make ourselves understood. We are still not saying anything but we are communicating with one another and can therefore be understood.[22]

This interpretation comes very close to the philosophy of Tagore to whom ethics belongs to the domain of Truth, which comes from 'surplus'. The notion of surplus is the central notion in the philosophy of Tagore. To elucidate, human beings like animals, have hunger,

thrust and bodily cravings, but what makes men different from animals is that apart from these bodily cravings, human beings crave for completely different things. He compares animals to retail shopkeepers who earns his bread but cannot make profit; hence, he is bound by necessities whereas a human being is a big merchant. He fulfils his necessities but can also be extravagant and can have useless expenditure.

Animals possess knowledge but that knowledge is employed for useful purposes like how to build nests, how to jump on preys, how to avoid danger, etc. Human beings also have knowledge which he often employs for immediate necessities in life, but he can go far beyond and declare that I am acquiring knowledge just for the sake of knowledge and not for anything else. There he differs fundamentally from animals. Animals possess certain altruistic tendencies like parenting, taking interest in herd and hive, man also knows that he has to be good because his goodness is necessary for his race, yet he goes far beyond that; he can afford to say that goodness is for the sake of goodness. Animals also have emotions which they use for self preservation. Man has a fund of excess emotional energy which does not get satisfied with simple preservation. It seeks outlet in creation of Art, Literature, Music and Dance. For man's civilization is built upon his surplus. This surplus is something that distinguishes men from all other creatures.[23] It is expressed in his poem.

> The bird or animal cannot go beyond nature; they follow nature even in singing. Man goes beyond what is given to him, he creates. Man is given voice, yet he goes beyond it. He creates songs, he sings.[24] (Translated by author).

When we see the world through music, through Art, through Literature, we understand it properly.[25]

> Of all creatures only man knows himself because his impulse of knowledge comes back to him in its excess. Therefore in Art, man reveals himself, feels his personality more intensely than other creatures because his power of feeling is more than can be exhausted by his objects, Man as a knower is not fully himself.... His mere information does not reveal him.[26]

Here we find that there is a difference between description and revelation. Facts can be described but human excesses or surplus gets revealed only in Art, literature and other discourses which can never be described in factual terms. They are indescribable in factual language. Hence they are unsayable in Tractarian terms, but they

are also showable, they show themselves in Art, literature, Ethics, Aesthetics and Religious discourses.

Hence for Tagore, ethics is beyond the domain of science, where man

> ...can amply afford to say that goodness is for the sake of goodness. And upon this wealth of goodness—*where honesty is not valued for being the best policy, but because it can afford to go against all policies*—man's ethics is founded. (Italics mine).[27]

While elucidating this notion of goodness for the sake of goodness, he points out that 'there is a division in man, a dualism in his consciousness of what is and what ought to be. In the animal this is lacking, man's conflict is between what is desired and what should be desired.' What is desired' dwells in the heart of the natural life which we share with animals (the domain of facts); but 'what should be desired' belongs to a life which is far beyond it' (the domain of surplus).[28]

Now there is often a conflict between what is desired and what ought to be desired, conflict between animal life and man's life. To desire what ought to be desired often demands sacrifice on the part of the agent. Most of the time it is what he/she desires most. So he has to fight against his own desires, against himself. Rabindranath believes that this necessity of a fight with himself has introduced an element into man's personality which is character. From the life of desire it guides man to the life of purpose. This life is the life of the moral world.[29]

We find its counterpart in Wittgenstein's fabric of the moral world represented in *Notebooks 1914-16*. He speaks of renouncement which can provide us with a 'happy eye', can transform the world by bringing in changes in 'the limits of my world'. He himself practised it in his own life by renouncing his inheritance and living a modest life throughout his career.[30] Now this distinction between what is and what ought to be runs parallel to the most fundamental distinction between 'fact' and 'truth'. What we do or what happens belongs to the domain of facts whereas 'good' as predicate belongs to the domain of surplus. Unlike ordinary predicates, it does not refer to any factual property of an object. Thus 'goodness' points to something which transcends beyond utility, beyond the domain of facts. The 'goodness' which one 'ought to desire' is not reducible to usefulness. By 'goodness' Rabindranath means rather 'what works for better harmony and is a mark of our spiritual plenitude' (sahitya, pp. 37-38.). To elucidate:

> Whatever is beneficent is in deepest union with the whole world, in secret harmony with the mind of all humanity.[31]

It is this deepest union that does not allow a person to use another *as a means*. If one uses another as a means then the deepest union with the whole world is disrupted. Moreover, Rabindranath was of the opinion that 'we do not express the whole truth about the benign if we say it is called 'good' because it benefits us. The truly benign serves our need and it is beautiful: that is, it has an unaccountable attraction that surpasses its use.'[32] What surpasses its use is also beyond significant expression. Thus, ethics is 'an attempt to run up against significant language', although it gets manifested in creative actions. The goodness of an action depends on the way a human being survives on its surplus and the manner in which he is related to other human beings. That is, if by performing an action a man rises above his physical, material ego and its desires and transcends himself to the spirit of surplus, he does something good; for to transcend to the spirit of surplus means to be united with 'universal man' or 'the man of one's heart'. In order to transcend to the spirit of surplus one has to 'turn his own passions and desires from tyranny into obedience.'[33] To put it simply, for Tagore, to be moral means to rise above one's emotions and passions, to be happy and in tune with the whole world. Here, one can hear the echo of this in *Notebooks 1914-1916*:

> How can man be happy at all, since he cannot ward off the misery of this world? Through the life of knowledge....The life of knowledge is the life that is happy in spite of the misery of the world. The only life that is happy is the life that can renounce the amenities of the world...To it the amenities of the world are so many graces of fate.[34]

Commentators are puzzled regarding the interpretation of such passages in the writings of early Wittgenstein. Cyril Barrett is of the opinion that 'it has to be admitted that Wittgenstein is pretty isolated in his view. He is not in line with hedonists or utilitarians or emotivists or ethical relativists.'[35] We can see Wittgenstein's view meshes nicely here with that of Rabindranath's as far as the transcendentality and inexpressibility is concerned.

Ethics as Mystical and Non-sensical

> T6.522: There are indeed things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical.

> T6.44 It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists.

> T6.45: To view the world sub-specie- aeterni is to view it as a whole- a limited whole. Feeling the world as a limited whole—it is this that is mystical.

In our earlier discussion, we have seen how Wittgenstein distinguished between what can be talked about and what cannot. Here he is adding that what cannot be talked about falls under the head 'mystical'. 'The mystical' is related to a particular type of viewing the world,viewing it as a limited whole. Now we will see how Ethics for Wittgenstein as well as for Rabindranath fits in with all the above characterisations.

About the mystical Wittgenstein says:

> T6.44 it is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists.

Again:

> It is the experience of seeing the world as a miracle.[36]

These quotations suggest that Wittgenstein is equating wonder at the existence of the world with the treating of the existence of the world as a miracle.Since what is mystical is that the world exists, the wonder, he speaks of, is wonder at something mystical. This also fits with what Wittgenstein suggests in the *Notebooks 1914-16*, where he writes:

> Aesthetically, the miracle is that the world exists.[37]

We can see that he holds that his seeing the world as a miracle—wondering at its existence—is not the scientific way of seeing things; for he also says:

> The truth is that the scientific way of looking at a fact is not the way to look at it as a miracle.[38]

Now the question arises: which way of looking at the world makes it a miracle? According to Wittgenstein, this is the way of seeing the world '*sub specie aeterni*' (T6.45). For Wittgenstein then seeing the world as miracle and taking its existence as mystical is the same thing as what he speaks of in T6.45, seeing it as a limited whole or seeing it *sub specie aeterni*. We can see that this is closely connected with things Wittgenstein says in the *Notebooks*. There he says:

> The usual way of looking at things sees objects, as it were, from the midst of them, the view sub specie aeternitatis,from outside. In such a way that they have the whole world as a background. Is this it perhaps...In this view

> the object is seen together with space and time instead of in space and time.

> The thing seen sub specie aeternitatis is the thing seen together with the whole logical space.[39]

It seems that here he suggests that to view a thing *sub specie aeterni* means viewing it as the most significant thing which is not at par with other things in the world, it comes to the fore and the whole world goes to the background. We will see later that this viewing from eternity is peculiarly common to both ethical and aesthetical viewpoint.

Most importantly, 'The wonder that the world exists' serves for Wittgenstein, as an example of 'absolute value judgement'. To him, it is experience par excellence and it is mystical; it cannot be put into words. Here one might object that the term 'wonder'is being misused. We usually wonder at a thing which is not natural or normal;whereas in the case of the wonder that the world exists, we cannot even conceive of the world as non-existing. So it cannot have proper sense.Now do we really understand what exactly he intends to mean by the expression 'I wonder that the world exists'? Do we really understand the nature of these experiences? Even as simile it goes far beyond our comprehension. We understand clearly how it lacks sense but we fail to grasp actually what these experiences connote and how it becomes absolutely valuable. Here I would like to point out that the examples Wittgenstein uses, to elucidate absolute value judgements which cannot be represented factually are nicely articulated in the poems of Rabindranath Tagore. Hence, I shall bring in some of Rabindranath's poems to elucidate Wittgenstein's notion of absolute value judgements. The first poem I will refer to is 'The Awakening of a Stream'.[40] This poem depicts unbounded joys experienced by the poet for the existence of the world. Regarding this experience he says in his Hibbert lectures:

> When I was 18, a sudden spring breeze of religious experience for the first time came to my life and passed away leaving in my memory a direct message of my spiritual reality. One day while I stood watching at early dawn the sun sending out its ray from behind the trees, I suddenly felt as if some ancient mist had in a moment lifted from my sight, and the morning light on the face of the world revealed an inner radiance of joy. The invisible screen of the common place was removed from all things and all men and their ultimate significance was intensified in my mind....[41]

Another important insight we find in another *poem* where he speaks of the wonderful experience of the whole world embracing his

heart: 'That is, I don't know how my heart unfolded and embraced the whole world today'[42] (translated by author). It is true that one cannot picture the event of the world embracing one's heart or awakening of one's 'vital consciousness', still one is attempting to express something which is inexpressible (in the Tractarian sense) and in this way one commits oneself to non-sensicalities. Still they are important because they are artistic representation of 'viewing the world *sub specie aeterni*'.

Wittgenstein, while elucidating the experiences representative of absolute value judgments stated another example, such as: I am absolutely safe, whatever happens. Here also the term 'safe' has been misused, because the term 'safe' can be used meaningfully only if I can compare it to or contrast it with other words depicting the imminent danger from which one can claim to be safe. I can meaningfully say that I am safe in my room in the sense that a leopard cannot attack me, and I am safe if I had Chikungunia but it did not relapse; but I cannot use the term 'safe' while saying 'I am always safe'. If I do that, I am misusing the language. Explaining this, Wittgenstein says that 'it is the state of mind in which one is inclined to say 'I am safe, nothing can injure me whatever happens'. This is connected with the idea of 'I am safe in the hands of God'. Now 'being absolutely safe' does not imply that it excludes the possibility of happening any misery to the individual. Rather he can face all kinds of misery without being affected by it. One might feel the presence of the Indian concept of *sthita prajna* here. Cyril Barett says:

> [T]his notion of being absolutely safe is an oriental notion which Wittgenstein imbibed from Schopenhauer.[43]

Wittgenstein was influenced by Schopenhauer no doubt, but he read Schopenhauer at the age of 19, but when he is writing '*A Lecture on Ethics*' in 1929, it was not Schopenhauer, but Rabindranath's writings that impressed him much at the time. I do not want to say that Wittgenstein took these ideas from Rabindranath, for so far we do not have any evidence regarding acknowledgement or indebtedness to Rabindranath in any of Wittgenstein's writings; but what is evident is that there are affinities between the ideas of two great minds as far as these experiences are concerned. For example, we can cite a poem from Rabindranath:

> Even if there is a tempest, the headache is not yours, enjoy the fury of the waves and do not worry. Let the night and deep darkness descends, the helmsman secures the boat and will row you across to safety.[44]

The helmsman is no other than God and you are absolutely safe, whatever happens, in the hands of God. Here Wittgenstein points out that 'certain characteristic misuse of language runs through all ethical and religious expressions', which has made them non-sensical. And we have seen earlier how much reverent he was towards these non-sensicalities. Here what leads to nonsensicality is 'the longing to reach out' and 'a passion for the absolute'. It is this desire to know the reality that makes us unsatisfied with saying what can only be said. Whether or not this feeling is communicable (shown or said), Wittgenstein feels in himself this tendency deeply. So this drawing of a boundary around the sphere of what can be said significantly is not done to condemn or ridicule those who have attempted to cross the boundary. But still the question remains: If nothing about the absolute value and ethics can be put into words then what about the status of those examples which Wittgenstein uses (e.g. you ought to do such and such, I wonder at the existence of the world) to make us understand what the absolute value judgements are like? Wittgenstein says that they are all non sensical, as we have seen in the example of 'the wonder that the world exists'.

Let us see what Wittgenstein thought about this sort of non sensicality which is involved in ethical and religious expressions, he says:

> I see now that these non-sensical expressions were not non-sensical because I had not yet found the correct expressions but that their non-sensicality was their very essence. For all i wanted to do with them was just to go beyond the world and that is to say, beyond significant language. But this is just impossible. My whole tendency and the tendency of all men who ever tried to write or talk ethics or religion was to run against the boundaries of language. This running against the walls of our cage is perfectly, absolutely, hopeless. Ethics, so far as it springs from the desire to say something *about the ultimate meaning of our life, the absolute good, the absolute valuable,* can be no science. What it says does not add to our knowledge in any sense. But it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply and I would not for my life ridicule it.[45]

Wittgenstein, instead of ridiculing this tendency, conceived the true centre of ethical interest lying in the investigations of 'the meaning of life' or again 'the sense of the world'. As to the sense of the world, Wittgenstein says: 'The sense of the world must lie outside the world' (T6.41). Answers to the questions concerning the sense of the world must necessarily take us beyond the world (i.e., all that is the case). It is true that Rabindranath will not allow his 'truth' to

be 'non-sensical' as he did not approach it from a linguistic point of view. But his reverence to silence as depicting the sense of the world[46] comes very close to the heart of Wittgenstein. We cannot sensibly express our communication with reality in words, this is sensibly inexpressible. One can reach there silently and 'lay down one's silent harp at the feet of the silent.'[47]

Truth is inexpressible though it gets manifested in various things, especially Art, which includes drawing, painting sculpture, music and dance, ethics, aesthetics and religious experience. Now we will move to the second section where the sameness of Ethics and Aesthetics will be discussed.

Ethics and Aesthetics are One and the Same

The important paragraph regarding Aesthetics in the *Tractatus* is at the close of the proposition T6.421 with a parenthetical remark: *Ethics and Aesthetics are one and the same.* Apparently though, these two discourses are different. Usually ethics deals with actions which can be judged as good or bad, just or unjust depending on whether it fulfils or fails to fulfil the ethical criteria. In that sense, the approach of ethics is more general and objective whereas the approach of Aesthetics is rather subjective. Aesthetic attributes are not generally applicable to human actions, it applies to individual items of the world, right from the domain of the appearance of human beings to the domain of plants, animals, and insects and also the non-living universe. Ethics deals with action, whereas aesthetics deals with 'contemplation'. 'Moreover, it is possible, we are told, to bypass the aesthetic in a way in which we cannot bypass the ethical: aesthetic awareness is rarely forced upon us and aesthetic situations do not seem to affect our lives significantly but ethical situations, in Sartre's words, 'spring up around us like partridges' and even if a person decides to ignore an ethical matter then that decision is itself an ethical one.[48]So why mix the two domains? Why think that the two are one or 'one and the same'? There are controversies[49] regarding the ontological identity of these subjects of discourses as Pears and Mcguinness translation provokes one to think in such terms. The original sentence in German Language is: *Ethik und Aesthetic sind Eins.*

Pears and McGuinness translate '*eins*' as 'one and the same' though '*eins*' usually means one. 'One' does not necessarily connote ontological identity, rather according to some interpreters, it might hinge on the concept of unity. There are other interpretations as

well which translate '*eins*' as representing unity and inter-dependencies.[50] However, there is one reference in which Wittgenstein provides us with a clue how to interpret this *'eins'*. In 'A Lecture on Ethics' delivered in 1929, he says he will use the term 'ethics' in a sense:

> *...which includes what I believe to be the most essential part of what is generally called Aesthetics.'* Ethics, he says, is 'the enquiry into what is valuable, or, into what is really important...the enquiry into the meaning of life, or into what makes life worth living, or into the right way of living.

Here he is explicit that the two subjects are not identical as the definition of Ethics will include only a part of Aesthetics; that might be 'the most essential part', still it is not the whole of it. Hence, he is not obliterating the basic distinction between the two subjects but pointing to some fundamental points of affinities and interdependencies of the two.

However, we can here refer to Engelmann, who writes about this sentence:

> I guess that the statement of the Tractatus, 'Ethics and aesthetics are one', is one of the most frequently misunderstood propositions of the book. Surely it cannot be assumed that this wide-ranging and profound thinker had meant to say that there is no difference at all between ethics and aesthetics! But the statement is put in parentheses, said by the way, as something not really meant to be uttered, yet something that should not be passed over in silence at that point. And this is done in the form of a reminder recalling to the understanding reader an insight which he is assumed to possess in any case.[51]

Here, following David Olson Pook, I would like to suggest that we should take Wittgenstein (and Engelmann, for that matter) at their word. Ethics and aesthetics are one, and yet at the same time Wittgenstein certainly did not mean to say that there is no difference between them.'[52]

Why did he think that ethics and aesthetics are one? We get a clue rather in *Notebooks 1914-16*:

> The work of art is the object seen *sub specie aeternitatis* and the good life is the world seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. This is the connection between art and ethics.[53]

Viewing *sub specie aeterni* provides the link between these two disciplines. Now what does this phrase *sub specie aeternitatis* connote? We find references to this Latin phrase *sub specie aeternitatis* in writings of Baruch Spinoza.[54] Spinoza uses it while elucidating his concept

of 'intellectual love of God'.Wittgenstein did not use *sub specie aeternitatis* all the time. He uses *sub specie aeterni*(T6.45) ,*sub specie eterni* (NB p.86e) as well. However, all these expressions mean the same: 'viewing from eternity'.

In *Culture and Value*, we find Wittgenstein explaining what he means by viewing *sub specie aeterni* :

> It seems to me that there is a way of capturing the world *sub specie aeterni*...It is as though thought flies above the world and leaves it as it is, observing it from above, in flight'(CV 5/7).

Explaining 'viewing *sub specie aeterni*' in terms of 'viewing from above,in flight' might remind us that Ludwig was an aeronautical engineer at the beginning of his career. And it provides us also with an insight that such viewing leaves everything in the world 'as it is'. It cannot bring about any change in the facts or events of the world. And when you see from above, as if from flight, everything seems to be on the same level.

Now what happens when one views an object 'from eternity'? That object becomes the whole world. Wittgenstein elucidates: 'the thing seen *sub specie aeternitatis* is the thing seen together with the whole logical space.'[55] Logical space 'in the *Tractatus* indicates the domain of possibilities, of those which are actual, constitute the world. Again the world is also equivalent to reality which consists of both positive and negative state of affairs i.e., it comprises the whole logical space; hence if the object viewed *sub specie aeterni* is viewing it with the logical space then it implies that it constitutes the whole world.

Rabindranath also says the same thing about viewing an object from the point of view of aesthetics. He says that we find a rose beautiful when we feel the unity of a rose coinciding with the unity of the universe, and thus it takes us beyond temporality. This unity tunes with the inner unity of oneself along with the unity of the universe.[56] For Wittgenstein, to view a thing *sub specie aeterni* means also viewing it as the most significant thing which is not at par with other things in the world. He explains it with the example of a stove.

> As a thing among things, each thing is equally insignificant: as a world each one equally significant. If I have been contemplating the stove, and then am told but now all you know is the stove, my result does indeed seem trivial. For this represents the matter as if I had studied the stove as one among the many things in the world. But if I was contemplating the stove, it was ***my world*** and everything else colourless by contrast with it.[57]

So, it seems that viewing the world as a limited whole or *sub specie aeterni* is also connected with viewing it ethically or attaching a value and significance to it. Viewing *sub specie aeterni*—means viewing from outside. And the sense of the world with which ethics is related also lies outside i.e. 'outside the whole sphere of what happens and is the case'. For all that happens and is the case is accidental. What makes it non-accidental cannot lie within the world, since if it did it would itself be accidental.[58] Similarly if one views the world ethically then it becomes a different world.

Wittgenstein makes connection between viewing from eternity and good life explicit when he says:

> Good life is the world viewed sub specie aeterni.[59]

However, the above discussion points out that viewing *sub specie aeterni* are the connecting link between ethical and aesthetical discourses. Such viewing differs from any factual or scientific viewing as the latter is always fragmentary. Hence, it can never be expressed in scientific language. Factual representation thus functions as a cage and ethics and aesthetics can be taken as attempts to run against the boundaries of the cage. But in their attempt to transcend the boundaries they show themselves and make ourselves understood. It can show that factual or propositional representation is not everything. There are items which go beyond factual representation; there are points of views which are not fragmentary or partial; but which can take an overview of the whole. Thus, we experience value as transcendental, since the facts and propositions that represent them all function at the same level (T6.41). It is interesting to note here that Wittgenstein connects this kind of viewing as 'viewing with a happy eye' 'because...the beautiful is what makes happy' (NB 20.10.16 & 21.10.16). The experience of value arises from such wholeness, from the perceived harmony between the individual and the world.[60] 'This experience of unity is what being happy means',[61] seeing from the viewpoint of eternity is not to perceive the object in terms of causality or in orientation toward a certain end. With this move Wittgenstein separates the question of human value from scientific questions.[62] There are several opposite interpretations regarding the source of such cryptic remarks. Here I would like to suggest that it is in essence Tagorean. Tagore says:

> Whatever is beneficent is in deepest union with the whole world, in secret harmony with the mind of all humanity. When we see this beautiful accord of the true and the beneficent, the beauty of truth no longer eludes our perception. Compassion is beautiful; so are forgiveness and love....In our

Puranas Lakshmi is the Goddess of not only beauty and riches, but also beneficence. *The image of beauty is the fullest manifestation of the good and the image of the good the consummate self of beauty.*[63] (Italics by the author).

To Rabindranath, both Ethics and Aesthetics belong to the domain of surplus which is beyond the domain of facts. We have seen at the outset that beauty exceeds what is necessary. That is why we recognize it as wealth. Rabindranath believes that 'beauty cannot be the aim of art and literature unless it is good. In goodness also we discover that wealth...When we see a brave man abandon his self interest or sacrifice his life for the sake of moral principle, we witness a marvel that is greater than our pain and pleasure, larger than our self interest, nobler than our lives. By virtue of this wealth, goodness does not count loss as loss, or stress as stress. It remains unhurt by any injury to self interest. That is why goodness as much as beauty induces us to willing sacrifice. Beauty expresses God's plenty in all the world's functions; goodness does the same in human life. Goodness has made beauty more than something to be seen with the eye or understood with.'[64]

This is the reason that they cannot be represented by ordinary factual language. They are the inexpressible. But like Wittgenstein, Rabindranath also thinks that they transcend the boundaries of language and somehow make themselves understood by means of suggestiveness of language. He believes that 'poets reveal the benign to the world in its ineffably beauteous form. The truly benign serves our need and it is beautiful: that is, it has an unaccountable attraction that surpasses its use'. This is why ethics and aesthetics are one and the same for both the thinkers. Their views converge in maintaining that words are incapable of expressing Values which incorporate Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Ethics, thus, depicts human tendencies to run against the boundaries of language which, though fruitless, still deserve our deep respect and admiration.

NOTES

1. Henceforth it will be referred to as *Tractatus* and in short form: *T*.
2. The book's point is an ethical one. 'My book draws limits to the sphere of the ethical from the inside, as it were, and I am convinced that this is the ONLY rigorous way of drawing those limits.' Paul Engelmann, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein with a Memoir*, trans. L. Furtml̦ller, ed. B. F. McGuinness (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), pp. 143-144.
3. P.M.S. Hacker did not take this point seriously. He said 'Wittgenstein's attempt to maintain that the Tractatus is an ethical treatise is "either self-deluding, or disingenuous" (83).Von Wright completely ignores the ethical implications of

the work, Frank Ramsey's criticism 'But what we can't say we can't say, and we can't whistle it either is seconded by Otto Neurath that 'One must indeed be silent, but not about anything.'

4. Martin Kampchen, *Rabindranath Tagore and Germany,*(Calcutta: Max Mueller Bhavan, 1991), p. 12.

5. Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius,* (New York, The Free Press, 1990), p.131.

6. This lecture is the only public lecture that Wittgenstein delivered in Cambridge during his stay. It had been prepared sometime between September 1929 and December 1930.

7. Ludwig Wittgenstein, 'A Lecture on Ethics', *The Philosophical Review,*Vol. LXXIV (1965), p. 7.

8. Ibid., p. 6.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., p. 7.

11. Ibid.,p. 6.

12. Rabindranath Tagore, *Personality: Lectures Delivered in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1923), p. 34.

13. Tagore made a distinction between '*tathyo'o 'satya'*. I have translated 'tathyo' as fact. 'Fact' is a loaded philosophical term referring to 'meaning of a proposition', 'objects in relation' and 'true state of affairs'. Here, I mean existent state of affairs, which give us information in the spirit of Tagore's writings.

14. Rabindranath Tagore, *Kavyer Gadyariti,* published in the journal *Rupam*, 1924, Cited in V.S. Naravane, *Rabindranath Tagore: A Philosophical Study* (Delhi: Macmillan India, 1977), p. 34.

15. There are commentators like Norman Malcolm who discern an independent ontology in the *Tractatus* and view the structure of language as derived from that. David Pears defends a 'basic uncritical realism' as the proper interpretation, and Hintikka and Hintikka espouse a form of 'sense data realism'. See Martin Stokhof, *World and Life as one Ethics and Ontology in Wittgenstein's Early Thought* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 246.

16. Stokhof, *World and Life as one Ethics and Ontology in Wittgenstein's Early Thought*, p. 246.

17. RabindranathTagore, *The Religion of Man* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1931), pp. 106-107.

18. John Keats, *Ode on a Grecian Urn,*The Oxford book of English verse 1250-1900, ed. A.T. Quillar Couch (Oxford: Clarendon Press,1919), p. 17.

19. Rabindranath Tagore, *Creative Unity* [1922] (Portland: The Floating Press, 2009), p. 17.

20. Rabindranath Tagore, 'Sahitya' [1924], trans. Swapan Chakravorty, in *Rabindranath Tagore: Selected Writings on Literature and Language,* ed. Sukanta Chaudhuri (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 264.

21. Friedrich Waismann, *Wittgenstein and the Vienna circle* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1979), pp. 117-118.

22. Cyril Barrett, *Wittgenstein on Ethics and Religious Belief* (Oxford: Blackwell,1991), p. 49.

23. Tagore, *Personality*, pp. 9-11.

24. 'Pakhire diyecho gaan, gai sei gaan, tar besi korenase daan, Amare diyechho swar, ami taar besi kori daan, ami gaai gaan', Rabindranath Tagore, 'Balaka', poem no. 27, in *Rabindra Rachanavali,*Vol. 2, p. 271.

25. Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitabitan*, Puja parjai, song no. 26, trans. Amitabha Basu, *Lyrics to love from the poet ofthe world.*

26. Ibid. Also see Tagore, *Personality*, p. 12.

27. Tagore, *Personality*, p. 10.

28. Ibid., p. 80 (bracket used by the author).

29. Ibid.

30. Wittgenstein donated a large part of his inheritance to Ludwig von Ficker, whom he had never met and only knew as the editor of the literary journal Der Brenner, requesting that the money should be distributed 'among Austrian artists...without means.' See Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein*, p. 106.

31. Rabindranath Tagore, 'The sense of beauty', trans. Swapan Chakravorty, in *Rabindranath Tagore: Selected Writings on Literature and Language*, ed. Sukanta Chaudhuri (NewDelhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 172.

32. Ibid., p. 173.

33. Tagore, *Personality*, p. 81.

34. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell,1969), p. 81.

35. Barrett, *Wittgenstein on Ethics and Religious Belief*, p. 49.

36. Wittgenstein, 'A Lecture on Ethics', p. 11.

37. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, p. 86e.

38. Wittgenstein, 'A Lecture on Ethics', p. 11.

39. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, p. 83e.

40. 'Nirjhaer Swapnobhongo'. Abu Sayeed Ayyub refers to it as 'the awakening of a stream'.

41. Tagore, *The Religion of Man*, pp. 93-94.

42. '*Hridoy* aji mor kemone gelo khuli, jagat asi setha koriche kolakuli'.

43. Barrett, *Wittgenstein on Ethics and Religious Belief*, pp. 54-55.

44. 'Tufan jodi ese thake, tomar kiser dai,Cheye dekho dheuer khela, kaj ki bhabonai.Asuk nako gohon rati, hok na andhakar,Haler kache majhi ache, korbe tori paar.Poschime tui takiye dekhis meghe akash doba,Anande tui puber dike dekh na tarar sobha. Uthbe re jhor, dulbe re book, jagbe hahakar, haler kache majhi ache, korbe tori paar.' Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitanjali*, Song no. 53, trans. Tapati Gupta.

45. Wittgenstein, 'A Lecture on Ethics', pp. 11-12.

46. 'But there where spreads the infinite sky for the soul to take her flight in, reigns the stainless white radiance, there is no day, nor night, nor form, nor colour and *never never a word*.' (Poem no. 68).

47. Tagore, *Gitanjali*, Poem no. 53.

48. Diane Collinson,'Ethics and Aesthetics are One', *British Journal of Aesthetics,* Vol. 25, No. 3 (Summer 1985), p. 266.

49. This issue is rather vague in the *Tractatus,* a fact that entails a continuous dispute among its commentators (Chason, pp. 34-49). Most of them tend to reject logical equivalence between aesthetics and ethics, and the remained question is what, then, is the common radix of the separate notions (Tilghman, p. 46; Barrett, p. 20; Zemach, pp. 55-57) cited in Shlomy Mualem, 'The Imminence of Revelation Aesthetics and Poetic Expressions in Early Wittgenstein and Borges', *Variaciones Borges*, Vol. 18 (2004), p. 200.

50. Kathrin Stengel, 'Ethics as Style: Wittgenstein's Aesthetic Ethics and Ethical Aesthetics', *Poetics Today*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (2004), pp. 609-625.

51. Paul Engelmann, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein with a Memoir* (Oxford: Basil Blackwll, 1967), p. 143.

52. David Olson Pook, 'Working on Oneself: Wittgenstein's Architecture, Ethics and Aesthetics', *SymplokÁ*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Winter 1994), pp. 65-66.
53. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, dated 07.10.1916.
54. Prop. XXXV: 'God loves himself with an infinite intellectual love'. Prop. XXXVI: 'The intellectual love of the mind towards God is that very love of God whereby God loves himself, not in so far as he is infinite, but in so far as he can be explained through the essence of the human mind, regarded under the form of eternity (sub specie aeternitatis); in other words, the intellectual love of the mind towards God is part of the infinite-love wherewith God loves himself.'
55. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, p. 83e.
56. Tagore, *Personality*, p. 82.
57. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, p. 83e.
58. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, para 6.41.
59. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, p. 73e.
60. Julian Friedland, 'Wittgenstein and the Metaphysics of Ethical Value', *Ethic@*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (June 2006), pp. 91-102.
61. Ibid., p. 92.
62. Benjamin R. Tilghman, *Wittgenstein, Ethics and Aesthetics: The View from Eternity* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 44.
63. Tagore, 'The sense of beauty', p. 172.
64. Ibid., p. 173.

WITTGENSTEIN AND DAVIDSON ON ACTIONS: A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

Enakshi Mitra

There are several philosophical issues which are usually woven around the notion of actions. Apart from the dominant question as to how actions (as contrasted with involuntary happenings) are different from, and related with, cognition, wish and will—a question which boils down to the controversy whether actions are *caused* by these mental antecedents or *justified (rationalized) atemporally*—there arises the further dispute about which of the ontological categories like particulars, universals, events, substance, etc., will be suitable to house them. From the standpoint of philosophy of language, issues like analysis of the logical form and semantics of action-words and action-sentences demand special attention. A typically semantic problem regarding the difference between reference and description comes up with regard to actions, for the same action seems to be available to several descriptions. To take an instance cited by Davidson, the same action of flipping the switch may alternatively be described as 'driving off a bat', 'checking the degree of luminance', 'checking the functionality of the power point', 'illuminating the room', 'disturbing air molecules', 'alerting a prowler', etc. The strong suggestion that it is the very same action that is intentional under some of these descriptions and unintentional under other ones stirs up some prevalent philosophical anxieties—those regarding the extensional identity of the action, the ontology of its attributes and their mutual relation—with a fresh resurgence.

In this paper, I seek to bring out the difference between the later Wittgenstein's[1] and Davidson's view of actions with a special focus. This will be an attempt to compare and contrast their respective approaches to the correlative notions of wish, will (intention) and actions, an issue which has customarily been categorized as 'reason'-approach of Wittgenstein as against the 'mental causation' theory endorsed by Davidson. I have sought to integrate this theme with the semantic issue of the distinction

between reference and description or that between the extensionalist and intensionalist approach to actions. While in the two broad sections of this paper we deal with Davidson's theory and the Wittgensteinian critique respectively, we have concluded with a brief indication of McDowell's treatment of this cause/reason polemics phrased in terms of the non-conceptualist versus conceptualist debate—suggesting a new direction to engage with Wittgenstein's insights on action.

DAVIDSON'S THEORY OF ACTION: A BRIEF EXPOSITION

From the richly detailed corpus of Davidson's writing on actions[2], I focus on certain specific topics—his mental causation view of actions, his notion of agency, and his treatment of will or intention. This will also acquaint us with the exact nuances of his treatment of this distinction between reference and description (or that between extension and intension) and see how it recurs across the different aspects of his theory.

Davidson's Causal Theory of Action

To say that a person performs an action is also to say that he does it for a reason, and in so far as this reason *causes* his actions it becomes the primary reason. For Davidson R is a primary reason why an agent performed the action A under the description d when it satisfies two conditions: (1) R has to consist of a pro-attitude (desires, wants, urges, aesthetic principles, social conventions) of the agent towards the action with a certain property, and a belief (knowing, perceiving, remembering, etc.) of the agent that A under the description d has the relevant property. (2) This pair of belief and desire has to *cause* the action. (Let us call this couple of statements C1).[3] Stated more cryptically this would run as: 'For an event e to be an intentional action under a description d, it must be caused by something which was *a* reason for doing e under d'. (We may term this as C2) Let e be the event of the agent's hands moving over the switch in a way that the latter is pressed down, and let this event be an intentional action under description d (viz. 'driving off a bat')— here the agent must have the required pro-attitude towards the general species of actions having the relevant property (viz. the property of driving away a bat) and also the belief that this particular action falls under that species. Further, as one may have the primary reason and yet refrain from doing the action, Davidson, in order to

bridge the gap between the primary reason for an action and the action itself, has to bring in the additional requirement of the former as also *causing* the latter.

This mental causation theory of action is to be appreciated against the rationalist or justificatory account.[4] According to the latter, actions to be actions must be intelligible or describable in terms of their reason. Reason amounts to their identification, ruling out the possibility that the reason be posed as preceding and thus being separate from the action itself. As the cause of an action will necessarily antecede and, thus, be separate from the action itself, reasons are not causes. Thus this rationalist account alleges the causal-theorist as making a false split between the action and its primary reason, in so far as he projects the latter as its cause. The crux of Davidson's defence against this position is roughly as follows. Wanting to do an action x is multiply satisfiable, and hence, cannot logically incorporate the precise way it is to be carried out, nor can it cover the innumerable contingencies that stand in the way of its implementation. As the notions of wanting to do x and doing x are logically independent, the conceptual identity claimed by the reason-theory does not hold ground, and the logical gap has to be closed only by actual causation. Davidson will further argue that one can adopt the simple verbal trick of bridging this gap by turning the causal statement into the following analytic statement: 'The pro-attitude and the beliefs which are the causes of doing x in all possible worlds are the causes of doing x.' The artificial triviality of such exercises becomes apparent—in what for Davidson is the obvious fact—that we can very well identify our belief and desire for x without doing x itself.[5]

However, in Essay 4 'Freedom to Act'[6] Davidson himself works out an inadequacy of C2, and goes on to build his causal theory on stronger grounds. He hits upon innovative examples that betray C2 as merely necessary and not sufficient for explaining the notion of an intentional action. He describes the situation of two mountaineers hanging on a rope in a precarious position where the action of loosening the rope by the first mountaineer will save his own life at the cost of the second. Here the event e is the fingers loosening on the rope, the description d is 'getting rid of the weight' that is supposed to turn the mentioned event into an intentional action A, and the agent, viz. the first mountaineer evidently has the required pro-attitude and belief about the relevant property of the action, which causes the actual event of loosening the grip and the fatal fall of the second mountaineer. Yet we cannot say that the first

mountaineer committed the action of intentionally loosening the rope to let his friend fall. Here Davidson points out that the primary reason of the action is not *the* reason but *a* reason, for the causal chain leading to the fall does not follow a straightforward track. The agent's pro-attitude and belief about the desirable property (of getting rid of the weight) is overpowered by the unnerving fear that his desire may supersede the professional norms and commitment to his friend, and finally it is this fear which actually precipitates the action. Such recalcitrant instances lead Davidson to add that the causation should be in 'the right way' and finally to incorporate the richer notion of *intention* to supplement his initial formulation. In the real course of life our pro-attitudes are often intractably entwined with and constantly overpowered by our con-attitudes which lead Davidson to observe: 'What I despair of spelling out is the way that attitudes must cause actions if they are to rationalise actions.'[7]

Agency and the Distinction between Extension and Intension

One of Davidson's stock example of floating this tension between reference and description with respect to actions is that of flipping a switch, which though extensionally the same as or numerically identical with actions as driving off a bat, checking the degree of luminance, checking the functionality of the power point, lighting the room, disturbing air molecules, alerting a prowler etc., not all these descriptions will render the action intentional. Davidson claims that while the *criterion* of agency is in the semantic sense intentional or conceptual, the *expression* of agency is extensional or referential.[8] That is to say, the agent comes into a 'direct', or rather what Davidson will call, a 'semantically transparent contact' with actual features of the event, whether he actually represents them or not in the course of his action. On the other hand, for a third person to decide whether the agent has acted intentionally or not, the factor whether he (the agent) knows the real features of the event (which would include the features of the objects involved in the action as well as its consequences) is indispensable. Thus while the person flipping the switch expresses his agency with respect to all his knowable and unknowable consequences, while firing a gun by an agent connects his agency with the unintentional killing of another person, the criteria for describing and interpreting the action, whether in the first person or the third person are semantically opaque, they fall back on the crucial factor whether that particular

description of the event pertains to the agent's representation and intention.

Davidson further explores whether the notion of agency can be explained in terms of a person   bringing about or *causing* an event in a primitive way, or to put it slightly otherwise, in terms of causing a primitive action. Interestingly Davidson does not design the notion of primitive action against those that are non-primitive. Opposing Arthur Danto's view Davidson claims that there are no basic or primitive actions that are commonly shared amongst all actions of different levels of complexity, nor can this primitive/non-primitive distinction be drawn with respect to specific actions relative to specific contexts. For Davidson, primitive actions can neither be defined as being immediately caused by brain-events or muscle-contractions, nor can they be cashed out in terms of causing secondary phases or consequences of the action. The agent might be ignorant about the physiological details, but the latter do not cause his actions, rather in doing the action the agent also causes them to obtain. Further Davidson asserts that when I do any action A by doing B (disturb air molecules by flipping the switch; kill the archbishop by checking out the trigger), actions A and B are numerically or extensionally same. It is the same action that can, like an accordion, be squeezed or stretched out in terms of its different aspects and consequences, like the same action of flipping the switch can be squeezed into the bare movements of the arms and fingers or stretched out to absorb its variant offshoots. So once the rift between primitive actions and the consequences are flattened out, we have to digest that the primitive actions are all the actions there are, for the customary notion of the so-called non-primitive actions as being mental or rather more conceptual and cerebral, accommodating various descriptions *vis a vis* the primordial non-descriptional character of the primitive actions can no longer persist. Being primitive and non-primitive are the two ways in which an action is described.[9]

Though Davidson deliberately seeks to impress this notion of extensional agency as simpler and more basic than that of intention (and intension) he is careful to note that this extensional identity of the action itself cannot be made ready for receiving alternative descriptions (i.e., descriptions pertaining to the conceivable intentions and possible consequences) unless it is clothed in a minimal descriptional load of a primary intention. Indeed how can the self-same action of one's moving one's legs in structured intervals in the forward direction, or the minimal act of flipping the switch

with one's arms, be identified except under the intention of making perambulatory movements or an intentional manipulation of the switch? In the absence of an intention (i.e. in cases where my body was forced to move in a walk-like movement by some invisible pressure, or my fingers ran over the switch involuntarily) the accordion effect is not applicable. So what makes a primitive action an *intentional* one, with respect to *some* consequences at least, needs to be answered.

Davidson on Intending

Apart from the demand that we have just noted, there are other reasons for which the notion of intention demands a special place in Davidson's scheme of actions. Davidson certainly does not want his theory of action to glide into some form of behaviourism either of Wittgensteinian or the Rylean variety. He wants his intention to figure as mental foundations of actions—and also with the further demand that they ground our actions as their *causal* antecedents and not as their *rational* basis, primarily because actions according to him are events that happen in time. At the same time he does not want to posit his intentions as pure acts of will working mysteriously in a non-deterministic model of causation as is conceived in traditional Dualism.[10]

Most vitally, Davidson is concerned with the notion of pure intending that may occur without practical reasoning, action or consequence. He also seems to admit this pure intending as being a detachable identity shared commonly with performed actions— the latter having a certain degree of deliberation and successful execution as an add-on feature.[11] Davidson is quite sensitive to the fact that most intentions are not formed, if forming an intention involves conscious deliberation and decision. Davidson thinks that the notion of intention that we need as the explanatory basis of action has to be 'broader and more neutral', it does not have the imposing character of a plunge, and yet despite its slow, subdued and gradual emergence it is an event, it is an action in so far as it is something that the agent does.

Further, the theory of mental causation of action, even in his revised formulation phrased in terms of primary reasons causing the action 'in the right way' (discussed earlier in this paper) fails to break free of a nagging circularity.[12] Obviously what Davidson implies is that the revised account falls into a dilemma: Either it fails to close the gap between primary reasons and the intended action or

closes it only at the cost of inserting the notion of intentional action into the definition–the very notion that it sets out to define. Besides, this account (of primary reason causing the action in the straightforward or right way) is not adequate to capture the notion of intention, for the purported action is not familiar or observable even to the agent himself.[13] This leads Davidson to enrich the notion of primary reason itself into that of intending in a non-circular way that keeps clear of the notion of action and yet explains the latter.

Davidson goes on to explain the main difficulty in defining the notion of intention (rather *forming* an intention) in terms of belief and desire in the Aristotelian model of practical syllogism. We know that for Aristotle the format of practical syllogism runs as:

Any action of mine, which has xyz features (e.g. consumption of sweets), is desirable.
This action of mine has xyz features (is one of taking sweets).
Therefore, this action of taking sweets is desirable.

Aristotle said that the action itself follows as the conclusion of the syllogism.

Davidson rightly points out that on this account there remains an unbridgeable gap between the major premises and the conclusion. On the one hand, the conclusion is an evaluative judgment expressed in terms of a demonstrative reference to a particular action; the major premise on the other hand makes a broad sweep over actions only in so far as they are sweet-consuming, it does not have the power to address the specificity of each individual action which in spite of having the general feature of being sweet-consuming, has variant shades of desirability and undesirability. It is not till one is acquainted with the particular action demonstratively referred that he is able even to put up the stance of subsuming the conclusion under the major premise.

Let us take the liberty of projecting this form of practical syllogism as fundamentally different from two other types of theoretical syllogisms. First, in the stock example of theoretical syllogism like 'All men are mortal, Ram is a man, and therefore Ram is mortal', the particular presented in the subject-term of the minor premise and the conclusion are *possible* particulars, not actual ones. We may add that the referring expressions (proper names, definite descriptions, pronouns and indexicals) occurring in the subject-position of the minor premise and conclusion of theoretical

syllogisms are sometimes put to an attributive use, not a referring one.[14] In a second type of theoretical syllogism however, we can put Ram as an *actual* individual (with whom we are actually acquainted) in the conclusion, and thereby subsume it under the major premise, in so far as the predication of mortality is not subjected to further conditions or viewpoints. But the conclusion of the *practical* reasoning under consideration, though may be matched with the major premise as a hind-sight, what remains as the crucial point is that in choosing to perform the relevant action I went beyond the scope of the major premise; 'my choice represented, or perhaps was, a judgment that the action itself was desirable.'[15] The major premises of a practical syllogism never have a law-like character; there the general predicate of desirability is always qualified by a proviso, what Davidson terms 'prima facie' desirability. All that is warranted by such premises is the conclusion about the particular action as being desirable only under *that* respect. Davidson goes on to assert that the judgment corresponding to, or perhaps identical with, the action must be an 'all-out unconditional' judgment. The full form of this judgment will run somewhat like this: 'Any action of mine in the immediate future that has the required xy features (consumption of sweets) would be desirable, given the rest of what I believe about the immediate future'. As the exclusion of an endless set of frustrating conditions cannot be incorporated as provisions in the major premise, what is crucial for the all-out judgment is that of there being an assumption that nothing will come up to make the action (of eating sweets) undesirable or impossible. Obviously this judgment does not incorporate this condition in its own body; rather this assumption forms the very condition of our intentions. The intention 'assumes and does not contain a reference to a certain view of the future.'[16] Davidson further claims that it is this special assumptive nature of the all-out judgment shared in common between pure intending and enacted intentions that despite the absence of the demonstrative, forges the required connection between the homogenized generality of the major premise and the desirability of the particular and complete action performed by the agent. Overall, this judgment is also hoped to ensure the causation of action as obtaining in the non-deviant or 'right' way.

Causation and Causal Explanation of Actions

As we have seen, the principal motivation behind Davidson's causal theory of action is the claim that no amount of cognition, however

certain it is, and no extent of desire, however strong it is, are adequate to account for the action, unless the all-important input— that of the primary reason as *causing* the action—is filled in. But Davidson is careful to note the special characteristics of this mental causation—its being holistic, normative, intentional and non-nomological. Let us briefly explain at least some of these features:

Holism: Contrary to the causal relations that obtain between physical events in an isolated fashion, the causal relations between mental states and actions are holistic. What seems to be a straightforward causal operation between a mental state and a plain physical behaviour actually spills over their purportedly specific boundaries into a holistic mesh of other beliefs and desires. To go back to our old example where we attribute the intention of illuminating the room on the basis of seemingly plain behavioural indication of turning on the switch, we just need to reshuffle the environment of the agent's preceding and succeeding behaviour, incorporate more information about the agent's wants and beliefs, to activate alternative intentions like alerting the prowler, driving a bat, checking the switch etc.. Let us engage in a more complex and imaginative example: Suppose we attribute to somebody the desire of stealing a painting of Rothko on the basis of what we think to be plain behavioural indications.[17] However, if we take care to place this behaviour in a more pervasive pattern of his life, the same behaviour can be read as a move to save the painting from a foreseen risk of being stolen by another person, or muscular exercises in relation to the picture, or a play with the shadows of both the picture and his body, or rearrangement of objects in the museum or exhibition. Similarly, once we have attributed a desire for stealing, his subsequent act of not taking it, even if provided with ample opportunities, does not conclusively warrant the withdrawal of that previously attributed desire. That desire may have been overpowered by another desire for preserving an honest reputation, or been delicately adjusted to an exaggeration of risk-factors, etc. 'There is no assigning beliefs to a person one by one on the basis of his verbal behaviour, his choices, or other local signs no matter how plain and evident, for we make sense of particular beliefs only as they cohere with other beliefs, with preferences, with intentions, hopes, fears, expectations and the rest.'[18]

Intension, Causality and Causal Explanation: Davidson rephrases his special view of mental causation in terms of a distinction he draws

between *events* as *particulars*, i.e.,as *referentially transparent* entities, and *actions* as *events described* in one way or other. For Davidson the mental and the physical are two aspects of the same event, a relation which turns out to be one of 'token-identity', independent of any type or property binding the two. Events being neutral bits of reality, instantiate laws only when described in certain ways and not in others. *Causality* and identity obtain between individual events no matter how they are described. *Causal explanation* on the other hand falls back upon laws or at least on the specific descriptions that the events receive in exclusion of other options. Consider the statement 'The explosion on 21 July 1990 in Kolkata caused the collapse of the Howrah Bridge'. If that explosion happens to be the loudest thing on that day then we can safely substitute the phrase 'the explosion in ...' with 'the loudest thing...' without altering the truth-value of the original statement of causality. Evidently this *Interchangeability Salva Veritate* is possible due to the extensional character of causality and identity, whereas causal explanation (whether nomological or not) will obviously be referentially opaque, putting a particular screen of description between our language and the event. So for Davidson a mental causation does not hold in the sense of physical causation, for while the latter obtains between non-descriptional events, the former *qua* explanation or rationalization, though non-nomological, relate to actions only in so far as they are described or categorized   in terms of specific intentions.[19]

Mental Causation Being Non-Nomological: We have already noted that the indeterminate and the intractable way in which an action meshes up in a web precludes a nomological relation between reason and action. Overall, Davidson views causation as operating in a more relaxed manner allowing a spectrum of possible degrees of causal explanation. Psycho-physical and psychological relations obtain as generalizations that are distinct from laws. To attribute an agent (the mountaineer or the Rothko-coveter) a belief and desire in favour of their action, or another person the desire to crush a snail, is not to engage in a law-like prediction, for the simple reason that such beliefs and desires are invaded by a multitude of other cognitions and emotions. To attribute an agent such beliefs and desires in favour of an action is to attribute him a mere tendency to act in a certain way in a contra-factual situation. This analysis relieves mental causation from the threat of counter-examples and the burden of nomological prediction while supplying it with the

required freedom or under-determination that is characteristic of voluntary actions.

Placing Davidson's Theory of Action within his Theory of Meaning

We can round off this account with a brief indication of the extent to which Davidson's theory of action can be synthesized with his general theory of meaning. Can the action-sentences of our natural language be interpreted in the model of deducing T-theorems from certain extensional axioms and rules of inference of first order predicate-logic along with the tool of recursive semantics?[20] Davidson's format of T-sentences illustrated in terms of his standard example of flipping the switch will read as:

'Rajiv flips the switch' if Rajiv flips the switch. (A)

An attempted understanding of the theory of interpretation of actions as an integral part of his general theory of meaning will have to focus on the following points:

(a) While events are bare particulars actions as intentionally loaded events do not form a part of the extensional entities of the world. Hence one cannot formulate the axioms for a theory of interpreting actions in terms of ascribing extensions to action-words.

(b) Actions are particulars and their adverbial modifiers are simply relations that they (actions) pass into and pass out without compromising their original semantic identity.

The logical form of action-sentences, for instance of 'Rajiv flips the switch cautiously' will be:

Ee ((Flips the switch (Rajiv, e)) and (Cautious (e)) (B) where e is an individual variable ranging over events.[21]

From (B) one can deduce both conjuncts separately. However Davidson is cautious to note that a co-extensive (but *not co-intensive*) substitution of the action-phrase in (B) say by the phrase 'Drives off the bat' will not preserve its truth-value. Similar analysis will apply *a fortiori* to the adverb 'intentional'.[22]

(c) The crucial answer to the question as to how the T-sentences give interpretations of the action-sentences framed in object-language, we know that Davidson's response will come in terms of holism and indeterminacy. Each T-theorem will be deduced not in isolation but in a network of other T-theorems. One cannot confront

a single belief, a singly uttered sentence, or an action performed in isolation, and *then* goes on to work out the specific pattern of causal relation in which it enters with other beliefs. Thus, reference is achieved in a holistic manner, starting with the full sentences, and not in the piecemeal fashion of the causal theories of reference. And as we have seen, in the same circumstances there will be several non-synonymous sentences in the meta-language, all of which are different interpretations of the same sentence in object-language. Both the axioms as well as the statements about beliefs and desires in this theory are theoretical constructs, on whose basis the theorems are deduced along with the pre-supposition of a common basis of rationality. That is to say, our evidence of accepting a particular truth-condition for an action-sentence must be based on a shared stock of rational principles that connect belief, desire and action in a way that is universal for all humankind.[23]

DAVIDSON AND WITTGENSTEIN: DISTANCE BEYOND PROXIMITY

Davidson's style of philosophizing shows a temperament that is fairly sensitive to the overwhelming irregularities and the prodigal variety of the worldly phenomena, as well as the intractable difficulties of its detail that make it extremely difficult to put them under theoretical explanations, to make neat categories of mind and body, or to draw neat quantitative boundaries between different objects and events. Yet his highly observant spirit always strives to bring these anomalies under control, with a steadfast conviction that beyond this superficial chaos lies the fine-grained world of structured regularity. While he ensures that the T-sentences are interpreted in a holistic background of other T-sentences, his universal prescription of charity is not sensitive to the Wittgensteinian insights about the inherent indeterminacy of all purported foundations of language—be it inner or outer extension, beliefs or assumptions, verbal rules or principles. For Wittgenstein, all proposed foundations of our language are ruptured internally, i.e., even *within* a specific holistic network. His way of exploring the anomalous and chaotic extravaganza is not to recoil into foundations or originary sources, not to substitute global foundations with local ones, but to dissipate all supposedly hidden depths to an open expanse of uses and behaviours, to dissolve all explanations into unfounded actions.

Working out Wittgenstein's Critique of Davidson's Mental Causation

Wittgenstein's resistance against the causal theory of action principally consists in the insight that no state of intention or volition can be segregated from an action, from which the action can said to follow as an effect. This needs to be appreciated against the backdrop of his reflections on the so-called mental concepts in general. He points out that a study of phenomena like seeing, hearing, thinking, expecting, hoping, believing, willing etc. invites a question of criterion, viz. what external behaviours one must exhibit to be in that state. In the first place, hopes, expectations cannot be given an insular phenomenological quality of the present—their content spills over to imbibe the precedents and consequents of the situation (*Philosophical Investigations* (Henceforth *PI*) 584).[24] Suppose the entire morning I am hoping that N.N. will come and bring me some money—if one minute is cut off from this context 'will it not be hope?' The question can be answered sensibly only if we realize that whether we cut off a chunk of one minute or five hours from the stretch, hoping cannot preserve a purely mental status if the words do not belong to the language-game, i.e. if the 'feeling' of hope is displaced from the entire institution of money-lending in which it is situated. Secondly, the diverse cases of hoping, expecting, intending does not share a common self-identical character in the shape of a special mental undertone that can be retrieved through introspection. To dissipate such myths Wittgenstein takes to his characteristic style of actual survey of cases where these terms are used (*PI* 588). (i) I am revoking my decision to leave tomorrow. (ii) Your arguments do not convince me, I stick to my previous decision. (iii) Asked how long are you going to stay I say 'Tomorrow my holiday ends'. (iv) At the end of a quarrel I say, 'Okay I decide to leave tomorrow'. There is no characteristic experience of 'tending towards something' underlying all these diverse phenomena. Intention to say something does not consist in opening one's mouth, drawing one's breath and letting it out again, for such things can happen in a completely different situation to feed a completely different concept. (*PI* 591) On the whole the dimension of 'depth' in the cases of genuine intentions as contrasted to faked ones consist in a flattening out of this depth in painstaking descriptions of humdrum uses (*PI* 594).

It is interesting to note Davidson's response to similar arguments raised by Melden against the causal theory of action. Davidson observes that mental causation of actions does not require either 'a

stab, a qualm, a prick or a quiver, a mysterious prod of conscience or act of the will',[25] nor a mental event which is common or peculiar to a particular kind of action, say the driver raising his arm with the purpose of signaling.[26] For Davidson what is required is a mental event at some moment before the action, something that the driver saw before he raised his arm. Besides, Davidson argues that in complicated actions like driving or swimming it is not a single event but a sequence of activities that bears the stamp of its mental causation—'...there are more or less fixed purposes, standards, desires, and habits that give direction and form to the entire enterprise, and there is the continuing input of information ...in terms of which we regulate and adjust our actions.'[27] Such responses show that Davidson is far from appreciating the purported mental phenomena—like the sudden visual observation of the driver, or the standards, purposes, and the style of continuous reception of inputs—as inextricably entwined with, and not antecedent to, a rich corpus of behaviours (*PI* 242-315).

Further, though Davidson admits verbal uses as a kind of action, he thinks it to be substantially different from the non-verbal ones. For Wittgenstein on the other hand, they blend into a single continuum very much in the same way that pain-language becomes a sophisticated extension of pain-behaviour. When a child hurts himself and cries out in pain, we teach him new pain-behaviours— e.g., exclamations like 'oh!' 'ouch', putting his hands on the sore place; and later, pain-languages like 'stubbing one's toes', 'itching', 'tooth-ache' etc. Teaching pain-language is teaching him a new kind of pain-behaviour, and none of these behaviours (linguistic and non-linguistic) are labels or signboard-indicators for his internal and private pain-sensations. Learning and teaching a new cluster of pain-behaviours (linguistic and non-linguistic) is not the end of language game, but rather its beginning. It is the beginning of a process of forming and expanding the concept of pain along the transitional links of family-resemblances. Actions for Wittgenstein are not the consequence of language, nor are passively represented in the same; rather language in general is an extension of the consensus of actions, of forms of life, in the same manner as pain-language in an extension of pain-behaviour.

This vital distinction between the two philosophers naturally casts a far-reaching impact on various aspects of their views on action, particularly with respect to will or intention. We have already noted that both of them dismissed the dualistic assumption of a special state of will or intention and treated it as an action that may stop

short of generating further actions as in the case of pure intending. However, while Wittgenstein stretches out all the separate links of belief, desire and action into a seamless complex, Davidson uses his notion of intending as a missing link in his mechanism of explaining actions. The foundationalist commitments of Davidson convinces him of a state of intention that lies beneath the riotous flow of conflicting beliefs and desires, holding the key to all the questions as to why we act as we act, and why we intend as we intend. Now how will Wittgenstein respond to Davidson's operation of tracking down a subdued assumption of an all-out judgment underlying our intentions? To put it more precisely, how will Wittgenstein react to the way Davidson opens up a gap between flat generality of the major premise of a practical syllogism and the particularity of the conclusion, only to close it up with the all-out judgment? For Wittgenstein, once an action-theory creates a gap in this manner, it refuses to be closed up in the prescribed way. The indeterminacy of the major premise does not simply consist in its glossing over several species or aspects of desirability, and thereby failing to capture the specific aspect of the particular action referred to in the conclusion. For Wittgenstein, each of these species or aspects will be internally ruptured precluding an entailment even when the aspects of desirability are specified in the major premise. For one thing, the semantic indeterminacy of each of the words with which the premises and the conclusion are coined, cannot be foreclosed by rules. For another thing, the proper names or demonstratives in the minor premise do not cut out an immaculate individual—be it an individual man or animal or an event-action—either in a conceptual or a non-conceptual manner. Both individual as well as conceptual identification are in this sense non-foundational and reduce to actions. In other words, the major premises of both theoretical and practical syllogisms, in their predicative content as well their range of individual variables, flesh out bit by bit, through each derivation of a conclusion.[28]

Davidson asserted that the judgment 'that corresponds to, or is perhaps identical with the action' must be an all-out unconditional judgment. The verbal expression of such a judgment will be 'This action is desirable.'[29] Here interestingly Davidson is equating judgment with action, and since he distinguishes the judgment from its verbal form, we may conclude that for Davidson this judgment is a mental action. Now Davidson's way of refuting Dualism by forging a relation of token-identity between physical and mental events gets bogged down with a neat scaffolding of definite spatio-temporal

identities, missing out the significance of their inter-penetration. In this sense it is doubtful as to what extent Davidson appreciates that manipulating verbal symbols, or running images sequentially, or combining them with one another—spill out of their supposedly mental content into indeterminate motley of uses and behaviours. Similarly what makes an action a typically physical event is not a neatly detachable space-time eventuality, but the way it overflows its prescribed boundaries to what is thought to be exclusively mental - the silent speech, images, feelings etc. All these Wittgensteinian insights will have their repercussion on the Davidsonian ontology of intention, challenging its pre-verbal or mental status as well as the semantic transparency of its verbal clothing, showing them to be inoperative even *within* a system.[30]

Davidson seems to oscillate between two positions on the nature of intending – on the one hand he appreciates that the 'all-out judgment corresponds to, or perhaps is identical with the action',[31] while at the same time he characterizes the intentional action and intending as two concepts which need to be linked by the said judgment.[32] And in this connection his theory of intention may be frustrated by a substantial drawback. If the intention or the all-out judgment is identical with the action then it cannot *cause* the latter. In that case Davidson has either to abandon his causal theory of action or has to admit that it is the prima facie judgments that cause the all-out ones. Evnine points out an interesting problem pertaining to the possible mechanism of this causation.[33] All prima facie judgments, whether on desirability or undesirability of the action, even if compared and computed as regards their relative weightage, will at most generate another prima facie judgment on desirability and never an all-out judgment. This yawning chasm between the mental cause and the effected action that persists in Davidson's scheme may push it against the intentional character of mental causation that is so vital to his action-theory. Causation of an action will lose its essential reference to the *representation* of the desirable/ undesirable features and aspects of the action by the agent, it will lapse into a brute relation of mere causality between the unknown physical correlate of desire and belief on the one hand and physical movement on the other.

Further, Wittgenstein's critique of will exposes its traditional notion as a counterpart of the Fregean sense. In the model of sense catching the reference, the will is conceived as fixing the exact point on which to catch hold of the action. We may venture to suggest that Davidson's   all-out judgment figures somewhat as an

intermediary sense, with its generality chiseled down to catch hold of the particular action, even when the latter is absent (as in the case of pure intending), along with which the required assumption, viz. that of the absence of all invalidating circumstances is woven in. Thus it also has an interesting similarity with the Strawsonian mechanism of reference—where the referent is acquired by *presupposing*, and not *stating* its unique existence.[34] With Davidson's theory, we find that the reference to a particular action under the required description is achieved by the assumption of its blending with generality, or rather the assumption of the generality thinning down to the individual action with the aid of negating the invalidating circumstances. All theories of meaning or action that invoke an intermediary to connect words with the world or wish with the action—viz. the sense or intention, respectively—will fall into an endless exercise of interpretations of interpretations of interpretations...in their vain attempt to justify the putative self-interpretive character of the intermediary. Davidson's theory of action too has a strong tendency to lapse into the same pitfall.

We can use a picturesque analogy given by Wittgenstein to show how the official doctrine of dualism as well as Davidson's treatment of will or intention suffers from the same folly. Both look upon causation in the model of the working of a machine and envisages the failure of causal nexus of the wish, will and action only in one way: As they cannot identify an effective mechanism connecting the parts of the machine, i.e., since they cannot locate the apparatus through which the wish links up to the will or the will links up to the action, they declare the failure of the deterministic causal narrative on that account. For Wittgenstein on the other hand, the causal narrative of the will fails because the causal nexus fails in another way, viz. because the machine-parts mesh into each other or because the cog wheels mesh with what they have to mesh. In the similar fashion the wish meshes with the will and will with the action. This is what Wittgenstein states explicitly when he says that willing, if it is to be distinguished from wishing, cannot stop short of the action itself. Trying, attempting, making an effort are a plethora of activities (*PI* 613-615). While Davidson openly claims that we can know our wishes and desires independent of our action, for Wittgenstein it is the certainty of the statement and action that is the criterion of there being a previous thought (*PI* 633). Feeling is not the criterion for determining actions; rather the action, the space and the objects are the criteria for determining the feeling (*PI* 625-626). We do not perceive mechanical motions, we perceive

what the agents do *in terms* of their wants and beliefs. Just as we look at a cat when it stalks bird, or a beast when it wants to escape (*PI* 647), similarly we see the pedestrian step aside to let a vehicle pass, we see a child observing a bird climb on a chair to get a better view of it.

Wittgenstein further argues that the thought or intention of saying something is like a brief or incomplete note, and action is like following out that brief note. It is not that there are several interpretations of that brief note and I choose one line of interpretation in my action. On a later occasion I just remember what my action was, I do not remember my choosing one alternative among others. It is straightforwardly remembering my intention, what I was going to say. This clearly shows the absurdity of splitting the intentions and actions (*PI* 634).

Wittgenstein's observations about intention being like brief (incomplete) notes or a snapshot with incomplete details (*PI* 635-637) can be fruitfully compared with his notion of a rule being like a 'short bit of handrail'. As there *is nothing* beyond the handrail, and there *isn't nothing* beyond the handrail,[35] similarly the incomplete details of the snapshot-like intention is neither irrelevant nor relevant. It is not irrelevant in the sense that a crow crowing in the background of my performing an action is irrelevant; it is not relevant in the sense that the action was encapsulated in that snapshot. Using the statement of one's intention as a way of filling out the background of an action is a regressive exercise; it is not a forward movement from the prior causal antecedent to the subsequent effect. Had Davidson's all-out judgment not been invested with a positive (though revisable) content, and had it not been pulled back one step short of the action, it could have been treated on par with this notion. Wittgenstein emphasizes that this incomplete and scanty snapshot cannot by itself account for actions, nor should one try to design a complete story (in the shape of the cause or reason), cast it into a neat boundary and make it stop before the action itself (*PI* 638). One has to take the entire background where the wish, opinion, intention and action are blended in an indissoluble whole. The ontology of action does not involve the temporal split of causality, or the logical split between wish, will and action in the model of entailment. This continuum should not be conceived in a fashion where several thoughts tie up in a chain, for this will generate further questions whether these ties are separate thoughts or feelings too, in the same manner as each link invoked to tie up the word with reality only invokes a further link.[36]

Wittgenstein's observations that 'one is unable to show such connexions, perhaps that comes later' (*PI* 639), may be taken as suggesting a hindsight, provided we do not to let it lapse into the model of a logical system. Wittgenstein rounds up his discussion on will with the explicit statement that any proposed foundation—a verbal statement or a non-verbal intention – underdetermines the action (*PI* 641).

Action and the Sense/Reference Conundrum: Inter alia Cause-Reason Polemics

We may initially tune up to Wittgenstein's take on the issue of reference and description before we can appreciate how the difference between his and Davidson's respective approaches to this matter distanced their views on action. The crux of Wittgenstein's contention on the issue of reference and description comes in the shape of his critique of the Augustinian model of language. The Augustinians think that every word—proper name, common noun, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc.—refers to a static, readily available entity, while the function of descriptions or sentences is simply to combine these references in a variety of permissible ways. Thinking in this way stands on a par with equating each lever of a locomotive - the light-switch, crank, door-handle, brake—with their external projections jutting out from different positions and all looking alike (*PI* 4). For Wittgenstein, the special character of a referring game consists not in pinning down pre-descriptional logical atoms, but in putting up a preparatory stance of a discourse, projecting an object with a non-relational, isolated and solitary character with an apparently indivisible identity, playing down its internal complexity and relations with other objects. Putting pieces on the board before playing any real moves (*PI* 47), a builder calling out the words "slab', 'pillar', 'block', 'beam' and his assistant bringing the relevant material (*PI* 2), a person being trained to utter different noises in response to different colour-samples (*PI* p. 187) are cited as illustrations. On the other hand, tracking down the levers in their inextricable modes of connection with other parts of the cabin, delivering actual moves of the game, absorbing the building blocks in the full-fledged process of construction, distributing the sound-labels of colour-samples in time and space, will be the corresponding descriptive games. With regard to actions we can surely conceive the following games (in the analogy of illustrations given above): The trainer calls out 'Walk'/'Walking',

'Lie'/'Lying', 'Jump'/'Jumping' and the learner responds either by actually performing, or drawing the picture or recalling an image of the appropriate action, or even uttering specific noises allotted to different sample-pictures of standard actions. The corresponding descriptive games will be exercises of recasting actions in terms of their phases or narrating internal details, taking note of the duration of a particular action, comparing different actions in terms of their respective temporal orders, or in terms of their respective configuration of limbs, and so on.

Wittgenstein points out that the basic flaw in the Augustinian model consists in conceiving the relation between reference and description in terms of pre-given chunks and their passive assortment. Now reference is no doubt a simple preparatory move in contrast to description. But on a close analysis, these games of putting the pieces on board, the builder's exercise, or uttering a special noise for a specific action-sample—in so far as they have no tendency to move to the actual steps of playing, or the intricate stages of construction, or distributing them in space and time—cannot even be called simpler games in any sense. The simplicity of these so-called simple moves can only be appreciated in so far as they do not remain as truncated fragments but are seen as incorporated into the full-fledged games. And the way the simple is incorporated into the complex, or reference is incorporated into description is obviously not through a passive and linear assortment but in a dialectical interplay of an extremely intractable nature.

With this prelude we can go on to examine how Wittgenstein's view of reference seeks to purge off all vestiges of foundation—how it breaks forth all 'isms' in Davidson's holism, how it de-stabilizes all agreements underlying Davidson's indeterminacies, how it would rupture all identities that either play the role of intra-linguistic justifiers or extra-linguistic constraints of actions.

Davidson's notion of the extensional character of a self-same action *vis a vis* the intensional mediation of agency and intention seems to be confusing. Despite of refuting Danto's basic actions (posed as counterparts of logical atoms of language) he seems to be labouring under a faulty assumption of an action being the self-same referent invested with a uniquely basic or primary intention prior to secondary ones. Is walking more primary that making a linear pattern on the ground, testing the density of the soil at regular intervals in the forward movement, feeling the heart-beat when one takes forward steps, preventing oneself from a sequence of falling, testing the comfort-quality one's shoes, etc. etc.? How can

Davidson claim that it is *one* action in terms of a primary intention while the variance of descriptions only pertains to alternative aspects or consequences? Sneddor[37] also observes that Davidson could only dissolve the basic/non-basic distinction at the cost of a prior individuation of actions in terms of primitive and non-primitive. In the same vein he (Davidson) seems to commit himself to the minimal semantic fact *given* to a radical interpreter—the fact of the alien interpreter uttering phonemes and/or moving his limbs with the intention of making these marks and movements go *beyond* themselves. It is indeed notable that both Wittgenstein and Davidson desist from the absurd skepticism of Dualism—the absurd proposal that we as interpreters of others' actions start with purely mechanical or robotic movements , to which we adjoin beliefs, desires and other mental states. But the crucial difference between these two philosophers begins to emerge as soon as we realize that for Wittgenstein there cannot be anything like a semantic primitive posing as the starting point of all alternative descriptions, or rather as the neat gateway for entering into the holistic mesh of actions, desires and beliefs. Without this entry-point it makes no sense for Davidson to situate the agent in a *causal* network, for the action as an effect or consequent requires a separate spatio-temporal identity for itself. This separability is also demanded by the principles of radical interpretation which claim both the speaker and hearer to be situated in the same causal and logical network, sharing a common stock of logical and non-logical beliefs connected through universal principles. For Wittgenstein, this putative entry-point is already absorbed into the mesh; there is no neat physical movement of the interpreter with a clean starting and end-point for the interpreter to lay his hands on.

For Wittgenstein, the polemics about actions being caused by antecedent reasons or being *atemporally* justified, and the further dispute whether an action has an extensional identity over and above its intensional aspects, is not so much an ontological issue; it is rather the difference between two language-games played with respect to action-words. First, we need to appreciate that like all other cases, causal language-games too are sophisticated extensions of our instinctive behaviours. Wittgenstein mentions some proto-typical occasions from which our causal expressions take off—collision of billiard balls, pulling a string (traction), clock-works which combine both collisions and tractions, human reactions on being hit physically or emotionally, and lastly, occasions of Humean succession. It is important to realize that these events do not contain the real essence

of causation which we passively represent in our cognition, to be further expressible in language and to be followed up by suitable actions. On the contrary all these expressions like 'collision', 'impact', generation, 'action and reaction', 'tit for tat', 'you hit me so I hit back', 'so', 'therefore' etc. are shaped by our spontaneous actions. While both the causal paradigm and the reason-paradigm are designed to link things and events together, they are, as we have already noted, vitally different in so far as the cause and the *effect* are mutually external, while the *reason* and the *reasoned* are virtually identical, allowing themselves to be read off from one another.[38]

This insight that the difference between cause and reason are *enacted* in our behaviours should pave the way to appreciate how actions themselves may be framed in two different ways by the causal paradigm and the reason-paradigm respectively. Causal paradigm takes up the stance of describing the actual process or mechanism through which an action is generated stage by stage, while the 'reason'- account is interested in turning this mechanism into a path, where the process and the result are engulfed in a circular equivalence[39]. To give a simple illustration: A shows a colour-sample to B, defines it as 'red', and later orders B to paint a red patch. B's action of painting a red patch exactly like the sample will be amenable to two accounts. The causal account will run somewhat as follows: I am shown a colour-sample, the word 'red' was pronounced in such and such a tone, after some time when the order to paint red was uttered, the image of 'red' came to my mind, (or then I experienced an adrenaline rush), whenever I experience that I paint a red patch, etc. A reasoned account of this action will be: 'I was ordered to paint a red patch according to this colour-sample and so I adopted the colour and shape exactly similar to the sample.'[40] It is important to note that the causal paradigm puts up the stance of an extensionalist narration trailing behind the real process through which the action comes into being, making no effort to invoke any of its feature as *represented* or *judged* by the agent as showing him a *way* or a *rule* for performing the relevant action. Even the introduction of the mental image leaves out the crucial factor of the image being judged as corresponding to the word 'red' given in the ostensive definition as well as in the order, or being seen to be relevantly similar to the colour of the given sample. Obviously all the gaps in the mechanism—ignorance about some links, forgetting or mis-describing them, a rectification made by a third person—are integral to this causal paradigm of describing actions. On the other hand, since the 'reason'- account absorbs the

reason into the action itself in a single circle; there remains no possibility of an epistemological gap between the agent and the reason of his action. Further the distinction between the extensionalist and intensionalist approach to actions is not constrained by an external ontology of events and its internal representations; rather the purported externality and internality are internal to the language-game.

In the light of the above clarification we can handle the apparently recalcitrant incidence of epistemological gaps between the agent and the cause of his actions, commonly encountered in our ordinary uses. Indeed Davidson in order to fortify his causal theory claimed that on occasions of conflicting motives one may be wrong about identifying the correct one and thus mis-describe one's actions. Thus, when one has two reasons for poisoning his friend Charles—either saving his pain or to get him out of the way—he may err about the real reason.[41]Mr X who prefers to spend more time with his beautiful lady-friend than his wife, may describe this action as an effort of sympathetic counseling, while as a matter of fact it is the sense of importance and feminine appreciation he gets from his lady-friend that figures as his actual motivation. Now Wittgenstein will point out that when we talk about the agent's missing, mis-representing or mis-describing the real cause behind his actions, such claims virtually amount to the mis-representation or mis-description of his entire pattern of wants, intentions and movements; one cannot have an epistemological gap with the pure mental antecedents of his actions while retaining the actions themselves as brute physical effects. When an agent oscillates between several options as possible causes of his actions, he is actually oscillating between different actions with different descriptional identities. Often the purported cases of mis-apprehensions or mis-descriptions of real intentions are actually cases of missing out the details, inability to fill up the backdrop of the action with rich minutiae, or amount to recasting the action by shuffling its background and foreground etc. Thus, the psycho-analytic interventions cannot meaningfully claim to haul up the hidden cause of an action from the sub-conscious, for the simple reason that the success of analysis is supposed to be shown by the agent agreeing to the detection, a phenomenon that does not tally with the exercise of formulating hypothesis, which is an integral part of the causal account. '[T]he investigation of reason entails as an essential part one's agreement with it, whereas the investigation of a cause is carried out experimentally.'[42] This disposes of Davidson's theory of

mental causation of actions in so far as it is seen to involve confusion between two language-games.

Barring certain obvious restrictions (like an action plainly going against the agent's report, his claim being insincere etc.) the verbal explanation of a non-verbal action is an extension or enrichment of the latter, not a verbal trail of an anteceding event. While one can readily appreciate that an explanation of a verbal utterance is a way of paraphrasing it, it is rather challenging to digest the verbal explanation of a non-verbal action as forging a neat and indissoluble whole with the latter. Schroeder gives an example: A throwing snowball on B's window for two consecutive times in order to get his attention, where the second act which defines and jells up with the first act is actually comparable to the verbal explanation of the first act.[43] The question is not one of explaining a language-game by means of our experience, but of noting a language-game (*PI* 665). Similarly the psycho-analytic exercise of hauling up hidden motives from the sub-conscious is virtually to equip oneself (both the analyst and his patient) with a 'means of representing' the action, shaping up its referential identity as a point of departure.[44] This insight cannot be accommodated in Davidson's scheme of mental causation.

This referential identity, as we have already noted, is not an isolable datum of action to serve as the entry-point into the mesh of belief, desire and physical movements. And this virtually amounts to saying that the references of action-words flesh out bit by bit through each move of the narrative, through each description of the various facets. This phenomenon of what we call the external and internal rupture of reference may require further explanation. We shall follow Wittgenstein's own illustrations of other expressions—other parts of speech like nouns, adjectives, etc.—to extend the same mode of analysis to the action-words. To take a simple example—seen from one standpoint, the simple components of a chessboard are each of the 64 squares, while from a different standpoint, its components may said to be colours black and white and the schema of squares (*PI* 47). While this external rupture of a mode of reference is unanimously accepted as the standard reading of later Wittgenstein, what is not often appreciated is that *within* each language-game or each mode of reference-description interplay the reference does not precede but stretches out bit by bit through each description. Of course one may ask, shouldn't each of the 32 black squares and 32 white squares be given as immaculate units before one can undertake their combination?

Shouldn't the schema of squares be given as a neat framework before it can start taking in the colours to fill its empty slots? To address the second example first—the identity of the schema, as to what constitutes its outer frame, what constitutes its slots, what constitutes the colour of the frame itself as different from the filling colours, progressively unfold through each move of filling out the frame. Similarly what constitutes the boundary-line of each square, what constitutes the exact extent of its third dimension, only fleshes out through each cut of its being re-adjusted and re-shaped in the process of being combined with other squares. If we appreciate this internal rupture of reference with respect to the linguistic actions we may readily extend this insight to non-linguistic actions as well. To say that it is the same basic intention or description (of making linear movements with one's legs) that receives alternative descriptions one needs to be careful that this basic description attains its basicness only in relation to its being enriched in each of the alternative modes of configuration or in its thickening out into other descriptions. The basic description (linear movements of the legs) can well up to the non-basic descriptions (testing density of earth, making patterns etc.) only through being absorbed in the whole at every stage, and not through a passive and linear combination.

Davidson makes the further mistake of straining out a brute physical event—commonly shared by and independent of all descriptions of the action. What seems to be the single physical event underlying an action of walking can be read as some subtle atmospheric factors constraining one to move his limbs in such and such ways, or presence and absence of gravity alternating in succession to generate the walk-like movement. Or it may well be a fragment of a much expansive event, viz. concerted operations of different persons in different positions, related by electric signals, where each person is receiving remote signals by making matching movements of the body in a seemingly ambulatory structure. Thus, what seemed to a neat and independent physical event of leg-movements is actually an arbitrary bit cut out at random; it does not even cover a phase of the action of a single participant in the entire operation. In both these examples the so-called common event seemingly served on a platter breaks up into numerically distinct ones having different quantitative boundaries. Each time we seek to extract a neutral physical event commonly shared by and prior to all intensional descriptions, this putative exercise of cutting up a bare physical identity turns out to be a fabricated operation to match the subsequent descriptions. To put it more explicitly, to demonstrate

the applicability of Davidson's theory of extension versus intension to various actions we strained ourselves to concoct apparently pre-descriptional or neutral referents like movement of legs in the forward direction, downward movement of the fingers on the switch, etc.; while what we actually did was to devise a cyclic enclosure between reference and description. The bare physical event and its embellishments were not genuine progressions from simple to complex, but were designed in mutual alliance – the putatively bare reference was thickened out into descriptions and the latter in their turn reverted to their pre-descriptional counterparts. Following Wittgenstein, we can compare this with the process of fashioning a white beam of light into a cycle of dispersal and reversal (of itself and its seven components) through the mechanism of crossing prisms.[45]

Concluding Remarks

Both Wittgenstein and Davidson resist the causal and atomic theories of reference to come up with an apparently common claim: One cannot interpret a seemingly uninterrupted noise or physical movement unless one already enfolds it in a conceptual network. However, Davidson fails to appreciate the internal rupture of these networks and doggedly retains an identity that sticks out as a doorway to these.

Besides in his scheme, though actions themselves are caused intensionally or conceptually, both first person agency and third person interpretation of actions is sparked off—causally and non-conceptually—by an external reality, i.e. physical objects and the bare events or particulars. The main folly of this theory, as pointed out by McDowell,[46] is that the freedom or autonomy generally attributed to voluntary actions, description or conceptual operations will lose its sense—our actions and conceptions will virtually turn into a free spinning wheel rotating in a vacuum. McDowell further explains that this theory labours under an unhealthy dichotomy—that between sensibility and concepts, nature and norms. Sensing or being acted upon by the world falls within the realm of a primal nature, while concepts have a *sui generis* or spontaneous character that falls outside. The capacity to move our arms falls within the realm of our receptive nature, and the *sui generis* spontaneity involved in the intention to move the arm carves out an exclusive realm for itself. Rephrased in Kantian terms, this theory commits the blunder of not realizing that intentions without overt activity are empty, and

the mere movements of limbs without concepts are blind happenings, not expressions of agency. McDowell holds that Wittgenstein finds out an ingenious route out of this dichotomy— by showing how the way our nature (sensibility) embeds reason or concepts itself becomes our second nature, although these natural conceptual exercises cannot be formulated in terms of laws. At the same time in our conceptual operations we do not have to step out of our natural kind and become non-natural. Whether McDowell's account constitutes the best reading of Wittgenstein in terms of doing justice to the radical extent of his anti-foundationalism is a matter that goes beyond the scope of the present paper.

NOTES

1. Henceforth all references to Wittgenstein will be to the later Wittgenstein only.
2. Donald Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001).
3. Ibid., pp. 3-5.
4. Both A. I. Melden and the later Wittgenstein will fall under the broad category of reason-theory. This paper however cannot afford the space for the internal differences between these two philosophers.
5. Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events*, Essay 1.
6. Ibid., p. 79.
7. Ibid.
8. Davidson, 'Agency' in *Essays on Actions and Events.*
9. Ibid, p. 59.
10. Ibid., p. 83.
11. Ibid., p. 89.
12. Ibid., footnote 3 of p. 87.
13. Ibid., pp. 89-90.
14. Since we borrow the distinction between referring use and attributive use of definite description from Strawson, we also need to add that it is in special second-level contexts like teaching logic, giving examples of syllogisms, teaching the use of 'therefore' that we can claim the use of the subject-term as attributive. For a clarification of the above distinction, see P. F. Strawson, 'On Referring' in R. R. Ammerman (ed.), *Classics of Analytic Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1994).
15. Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events*, p. 97.
16. Ibid., p. 100.
17. I have taken this example from Simon Evnine, *Donald Davidson* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), Chapter I, pp. 15-16.
18. Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events*, p. 221.This holistic theory of causation is quite consonant with Quine's seminal critique of empiricism. Quine claimed that any sensory stimulation can be matched with any sentence provided we make necessary adjustments in the total scheme of beliefs. See W. V. O. Quine, 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism' in R. R. Ammerman (ed.), *Classics of Analytic Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1994). Similarly, any behaviour can be matched with any intention provided we effect a compensatory reshuffle in the entire pattern of beliefs and desires of the agent.

19. Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events*, Essay 7.
20. Davidson's theory of meaning is mainly presented in 'Truth and Meaning' in *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).
21. Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events*, Essay 6, also 8 and 9 ,
22. One should specially refer to Davidson's analysis of adverbs in 'Adverbs of Action', in B. Vermazen and M. Hintikka (eds), *Essays on Davidson: Actions and Events* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp 230-41. For an overall account of Davidson's analysis of the action-expressions, I have also heavily relied on Evnine, *Donald Davidson*, pp. 87-90.
23. The way Davidson works out his theory of meaning in consonance with a theory of interpretation of actions is presented in many essays of Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984) especially Essays 4, 9, 10, 13 and 15.
24. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, ed. G.E.M. Anscombe, R. Rhees, and G.H. Von Wright, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984). All numerals used in connection with *PI* will refer to its sections, unless otherwise specified.
25. Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events*, p. 12.
26. Ibid., pp. 12-13.
27. Ibid., p. 13.
28. Wittgenstein lays out the groundlessness of verbal rules in *PI* 185-242, and also in *Remarks on the Foundation of Mathematics*, ed. G. H. Von Wright, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1956), I -1-5, 13.
29. Davidson, *Essays on Events and Actions*, p. 98.
30. For Wittgenstein, the mental images, isolated from the vast corpus of verbal and non-verbal uses have no inherent semantic power. His arguments against the popular supposition about mental images are scattered all over his texts, of which one may mention *PI*, p.18, pp. 175-177, and sections 166, 370, 389 of the same text.
31. Davidson, *Essays on Events and Actions*, p. 98.
32. Ibid., p. 101.
33. Evnine, *Donald Davidson*, p. 57.
34. Strawson, 'On Referring'.
35. Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundation of Mathematics*, V- 45.
36. Wittgenstein's critique of ostension (outer and inner) traditionally claimed as foundational links between word and the world is presented in *PI:* 33, 85, 21, and 389. Also see his *The Blue and the Brown Books*, ed. Rush Rhees (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), p. 2.
37. Andrew Sneddon, 'Does Philosophy of Action rest on a Mistake?',*Metaphilosophy*, Vol. 32, No. 5 (October 2001), pp. 502–522; See especially p. 512.
38. Wittgenstein's accounts of causation and the distinction between cause and reason is mainly contained in his article 'Cause and Effect: An Intuitive Awareness', *Philosophia*,Vol. 6, Nos. 3-4 (September–December 1976), pp. 409-425;*The Blue and the Brown Books*, p. 15; *Wittgenstein's Lectures, Cambridge: 1932-35,* ed. Alice Ambrose (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982). Besides I have substantially relied upon H. J. Glock, *A Wittgenstein Dictionary,* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 72-76 for his comprehensive account of causation.
39. Ibid.
40. The above illustration of cause and reason figures in Wittgenstein, *The Blue and the Brown Books*, p. 15.

41. Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events*, p. 18.
42. Wittgenstein, *Wittgenstein's Lectures*, p. 40.
43. Severin Scroeder, 'Are Reasons Causes? A Wittgensteinian Response to Davidson' in Severin Scroeder (ed.), *Wittgenstein and the Contemporary Philosophy of Mind* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), p. 166.
44. Wittgenstein, *Wittgenstein's Lectures*, p. 40.
45. Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundation of Mathematics*, III 42.
46. John McDowell, *Mind and World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

DEMOCRATIC INTENTION: PROBLEMATIZING INDIAN DEMOCRACY*

Harihar Bhattacharyya

The Problem

It is a common political knowledge that the citizens of democracy, by and large, doubt their democracy; they wonder about the true purpose of the government they themselves have consented to constitute. They lament that their democracy is bereft of any democratic intentions. It becomes particularly so obvious when those who expected much from democracy are grossly disappointed because the things they associate with democracy are found missing from the agenda of democracy, as it operates. This does not mean, of course, that there is a preference expressed here for throwing the baby out with the bath water, in favour of any authoritarian, military or autocratic system. What puzzles them is why democracy fails them. Or, to put differently, why is democracy failed? If your dignity as a human being is impaired and dishonoured because you belong to a certain social group, such as the *dalits* and women in India, in a country which boasts itself as being the world's largest democracy, then one quite naturally begins to doubt the true intention of Indian democracy. It is even a greater paradox that no democratic intention is displayed, let alone proven, in the activities of those who proudly declare themselves to be democrats, and fight, ostensibly, resolutely for democratic restoration. It is no less perplexing to note that very often, in the whole morass of institutional arrangements designed ostensibly to establish and sustain, democracy itself is found to be on a sticky wicket when it comes to ensure effective popular participation, or for fulfilling some very minimum needs of the people. The lack of fit between democratic ideals or principles, institutions, and practices has been noted by scholars.[1] Shapiro and Hacker-Cordon argued that much is expected of democracy: democratic participation in public decision making, public deliberation, accountability most often to be ensured by periodic elections, diminished injustice and oppression, less likelihood of war and more chances of economic growth.[2] This is

apparently enigmatic though as to why so much is expected of democracy compared to earlier regimes. But on closer critical scrutiny, it might seem that it is connected with social consequences of democracy itself compared to earlier regimes in that democracy's association with liberty, equality, participation and so on is responsible for generating expectations in conditions where the latter are in short supply.

To be sure, democracy disappoints: in its operation and consequences, in producing only 'fleeting participation and only nominal accountability, and the obscure mechanism of 'democratic decision'.[3] What accounts for this lack of fit? Why does democracy disappoint more the people, the real beneficiaries and upholders of democracy, than the so-called 'democratic politicians'? The reason seems to lie in the absence of democratic intention on the part of those who 'officially' and only nominally uphold democracy, but never intending to pursue it in practice; it remains relatively absent also in the so-called democratic institutional arrangements. This deep-seated lack of democratic intentionality invades its way into the institutional edifice of democracy to make sure that democracy properly so-called is never realized in practice; that the genuine citizen participation in public affairs never takes place. Our demagogic electoral systems have guaranteed that the real democratic intention is never in place. Pointing our attention to how the so-called 'popular consent' for popular sovereignty (which became very prevalent as a practice of governability post-Second World War), Partha Chatterjee highlighted the subversion of the same with apt sarcasm:

> Whether the autocratic monarchs, military rulers, or the one-party rulers, they all proclaim themselves to be the representatives of the people, and governing the country as such. They, therefore, proclaim a republican constitution, hold elections like rituals, the meetings of the assembly of peoples' representatives (or parliament) as a matter of show only. There are many such metaphorical efforts to conceal the actually authoritarian governing apparatuses in order to present, ostensibly, a case of the republican system (Translation mine).[4]

The subversion of the democratic faÁade, as indicated in the above passage of Chatterjee, is but an instance of the near total absence of democratic intention on the part of the rulers, elected or not.

Defining Democratic Intention

What then is democratic intention? Whose intention is it anyway?

What does it entail? Why does it have a limited space? Why is it failed and by whom? What relation does it have with the democratic institutions and the principles? The Concise Oxford Dictionary (COD) defines intention as 'intending', 'one's purpose of doing or to do' Embedded in the literal meaning of the word is the object or purpose of doing something, that is, the thing intended. What the literal meaning does not make clear is that our actions often produce what is termed 'unintended consequences'. History is replete with examples of such occurrences. But what is to be noted here is that even partially intended and designed democratic institutions are more susceptible to produce more democratic effects, that is, when people get motivated to bear upon such institutions more popular weight for meeting popular demands. This then paves the way, if not subverted in the mid-way, for a cascading democratization process whose consequences again are not always predictable, as Alex de Tocqueville in his two-volume classic *Democracy in America* (1835) argued strongly long time back.

Democratic intention is, thus, a critical space generated as a result of designing and operation of specific institutions of governance that allow varied scope of citizen-participation in public affairs, and is associated with popular aspirations such as liberty and freedom, and equality, even if only political; it proclaims the rule of law to be followed, even though meant for a specific purposes and so on. Although the rulers have sought to embrace the ideals of democracy in fighting against their own enemies (e.g., the democrats against the aristocracy in Europe), their 'democratic intention' was very limited in import indeed; their invocation of democracy was designed to rally mass support for their cause rather than mass participation in public affairs. Therefore, the space of democratic intention is the one which both the rulers, and the officials of the state elected as well as non-elected, seek to take control, not to fulfill the promises of democracy, but to make use of it for legitimacy. And, at the same time, it has to be kept in mind that all types of regimes are not susceptible to generate democratic intention. Hard and heavy autocratic regimes of different hues do generate, not democratic intention, but often a social upheaval for the overthrow of the regimes themselves. Even limited presence of the above may provoke more democratic intention to be brought to bear upon the system and actualized. As we shall later see, this points to a great liberal dilemma of instituting government by embracing such high idealistic pitch as liberty, equality, consent, participation, and popular sovereignty when the intention was different, if not lacking.

Democracy, Identity and Equality

If the required intention is missing, then the mere institutional designing for democracy does not work and serve the purpose for which it was so designed. It must also be pointed out that the problems often lie in the surrounding social and cultural milieu that have not yet learned to adhere to the underlying principles of our modernity that demands that a polity is to be reordered on a different principle of authority, and based on achieved power and status, and not on ascribed identity of varied sorts, and the attendant aspirations and desires. This takes us to another dilemma of democracy vis-ë-vis identity. In the context of India, the issue has remained quite poignant. It must now be clear to observers of Indian democracy that the so-called mutual impact of caste and democracy on each other[5] has not in the end ensured more effective democracy, meaning, in today's terms, generation of more equality among the citizens.[6] As the recent researches on Indian castes show, the castes have taken advantages of democracy by mobilizing for identity giving lesser weightage to hierarchy.[7] This constitutes of course an achievement of democracy of sorts. But then democracy here has been pressed into the service of ascribed identity—caste or ethnicity. This raises the further question of whether diversity accommodation of varied forms in India, and fulfillment of identity aspirations, also of many forms, has strengthened democracy or not. The answer should be both 'yes' and 'no' because while recognition of identity of varied forms and hues has meant increase in social standing and dignity in a society of hierarchy and inequality, and which is beyond doubt an achievement of democracy via fulfilling what may be termed the 'diversity-claims', this has not resulted in the generation of more social and economic equality; in fact, in many cases, even the value of political equality has been compromised, often violently, for the sake of diversity! Ethnic demagogues in different nook and corner of India are least inclined to allow the full play of even political equality on the part of ordinary voters in elections!

Those familiar with the literature on processes of federation-building in India are aware that the major mode of accommodation of diversity accommodation in India remains the State reorganization, or State-building primarily on the basis of language though conjoined subsequently to ethnicity, regional identity and partly religion.[8] The other form has been the policy of positive discrimination in favour of the socially and culturally discriminated.

In both, the Indian state has can claim tangible successes achieved. And in this Jawaharlal Nehru's appropriation of Dr B.R. Ambedkar in the latter's elevation to the very high ground in constitution-making was symbolically skillful, and far-sighted in implications, as aptly pointed out by Kaviraj.[9] But what have been the democratic effects of such an exercise? Has it led to generation of more equality, or more empowerment of the masses? The available researches have shown that in nearly all cases, some dominant caste or communities have been the main beneficiaries of such processes.[10] Such instances could be multiplied to show how post-independence politicians, including the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, resorted to democratically deficient constitutional provisions to satisfy the needs of diversity and locality[11] for purely short-term electoral gains that has served to hamper the cardinal political principle of democracy: political equality.[12] There is, thus, a valid reason to doubt the democratic intention of our democratic politicians elected by the people.[13] Their policy responses to diversity/locality for short-term electoral gains, and for the sake of political equilibrium have meant that the 'equality-claims', even of the serious economic nature, are compromised. Very interestingly, however, varied and ever changing modes of accommodation of diversity including those in favour of the socially disadvantaged in India (including perhaps also elsewhere) create the conditions for generation of more democratic intention from below; the heretofore socially excluded now seek more control over the institutions of democracy for serving their interests.

Historical Experiences

Any attempt to rethink the routes to problematize Indian democracy must be located within the overall intellectual genealogy of democracy, and its historical evolution because the Indian story of democracy originally converged with and was part of a global context. The other preliminary remark to be made here is that democracy has stood out as the one which continues to produce wonders for everybody because its consequences are unpredictable.[14] Kaviraj argues, following Tocqueville, that democracy has an innate tendency to move from sphere to another, and also that the extension of the democratic principle from the one to the other sphere is demanded almost regularly in a democracy.[15] This is something which the liberals in the olden days could not perhaps visualize, and read the inherent logic inbuilt into the institutional arrangements of

democracy entailing such principles as universal adult suffrage, participation, equality of various brands and so on.

From the genealogy of democracy that Adam Przeworski has sought to prepare we come to know that the term democracy was first used in the 5th century BC in a small municipality in Southeastern Europe.[16] The term found its place for the first time in the Oxford English Dictionary in 1531. The first state which mentioned 'democratic or popular government' in its Constitution was the Rhodes Island in 1641; democracy became part of the public discourse since the late 18th century, but continued to carry a negative connotation for long; in the US and France, for example, the newly established systems of government were called 'representative' or 'republic'.[17] The deep-seated negative attitude to democracy would remain for a long time to come in various countries even in the West.

And this is precisely where democracy has been puzzling despite many an achievement scored, as it were, by the so-called democratic route. A careful reading of the so-called democratic institutions of ancient Greece shows that not only were they not democratic, based as they were on manifestly large-scale exclusion (of the slave, women and sublet-allies),[18] and on what was known as exclusive 'citizen-elite',[19] the democratic, albeit very limited, intention, if any, was not in this case to be expected because a system based on manifest and institutionalized exclusion are less likely to generate such intentions. To add further grist to our mill, there is evidence to suggest otherwise: the Spartan and the Athenian democracies, essentiallymilitary in character, were envisaged on manifold stratification such as 'age-class', sex and wealth (that included ownership of slaves!).[20] And yet, the traits of even the limited participatory character of the Athenian democracy as marked by the popular assembly, its system of quorum, payment for public job and individual accountability, etc.,[21] were remarkable political achievements, which, however, did not survive long. Comparative knowledge of similar examples from the mountainous Swiss Cantons and half-Cantons on the Alps are suggestive of a very close-community life necessitating some direct participatory system of governing the communities.[22] Nelson Mandela, the Nobel Laureate and epoch-making legendary leader of South Africa, in his autobiography informed us of the existence and operation of a democratic tradition in the governance of the village communities to which be belonged:

'Everyone who wanted to speak did so. It was democracy in the purest form...People spoke without interruption and the meeting lasted for many

hours. The foundation of self-government was that all men were free to voice their opinions and were equal in their value as citizens...Democracy meant all men were to be heard and a decision was taken together as a people. Majority rule was a foreign notion. A minority was not to be crushed by a majority'.[23]

Two implications follow from such ancient yet democratic experiments. First, like the Greeks, Mandela's democracy was also limited somewhat as the women were not treated on equal footing with the men. Second, such varied direct democratic experiments the world over were later replaced, as Robert Dahl explained, first by monarchies, autocratic despotism, or oligarchies, and then by representative democracies based on greater space of the principle of equality, particularly political equality.[24]

If the ancients' had had sociological compulsions/reasons of governing democratically in their own terms, for modern democrats, the reasons for ostensibly defending a democratic case would be legitimacy, and popular well-being, even though the modern 'democratic' states have suffered acute legitimacy crisis periodically, and the slogan of popular well-being has remained mostly rhetorical. It was no less a person than Robert Dahl, the outstanding political scientist and sociologist of democracy of our times, who has ruefully come to the following conclusion about the current health of the so-called established democracies of the world:

> 'Even in countries where democracy had long been established and seem secure, some observers held that democracy was in crisis, or at least severely strained by the decline in the confidence of citizens that their elected leaders, the political parties, and governmental officials would or could cope fairly or successfully with issues like persistent unemployment, poverty, crime, welfare programs, immigration, taxation, and corruption.'[25]

The huge critical literature on democracy, globally speaking, would speak volumes of such blemishes although overall the global consensus is that nobody today and, perhaps, tomorrow too would like not to live in democracies of sorts. The intriguing question here is that people, particularly those down the social scale have gradually developed a stake in maintaining, upholding and even enriching democracies by evolving mechanisms of safeguards when the original intention in liberal democratic institutional design was otherwise. Let us take the classic example of the very founding of the American 'democratic' republic in 1789 after the American Revolution in 1776. Samir Amin has in fact questioned the social content of the revolution which had only a limited political character:

'Their main aim was to press on westward, repeating the genocide of the Indian population. Nor was it the intention to question the institution of slavery: nearly all the main leaders of the American Revolution were slave-owners, whose prejudices on this score were quite unshakable.'[26]

The views of James Madison, one of the most powerful founding fathers of the US Constitution whose ideas proved to be central to *The Federalist* were one of the earliest statements on the somewhat anti-democratic yet republican approach to government. Madison is said to have held a 'dark view of mankind in general, a "Hobbesian", or "Calvinist" view of human propensity toward evil, which made it necessary to keep powers out of all hands, not simply the people's.[27] Democracy was not Madison's preference. He defended a 'strictly republican', 'wholly and purely republican' government (Paper No. 73) for the American people.[28] Hamilton who mostly concurred with Madison said as much: A democratic assembly is to be checked by a democratic senate, and both these by a democratic chief magistrate.[29] Finally consider also what Madison said in the Federalist Paper No. 51: If all men were angles, we would need no government.[30]

And yet, people have since long wished to live in a democracy if given the chance. There are a very few who somehow do not seem to defend the case of democracy, even if they do not believe in it, let alone practice it. Those who have lamented over the gap between the institutions and principles, on the one hand, and the practices, on the other, however, miss the fundamental fact of the very real possibility of absence of democratic intention both in the design, and the principles, let alone practices. The latter are most quite easily pronounced by those (politicians and other official across the ideological boards) who wear the garb of democracy because it is well known to them that they do not really mean it (That is, they do not mean to actualize it!).[31]

The historical experiences of democracy the world over would, thus, suggest that even the democratic principles and institutions are not above board. To take the example of ancient Greece in Pericles' times, nearly all three were absent. If only the Patricians (i.e., slave-owners) had the right to take part in public affairs to the exclusion of most members of Greek society[32] one then ought to exercise a lot of caution in putting the ancient Greek examples in the right perspective.

Perspectives

In this section, we seek to pay a brief but critical attention to one philosophical and two theoretical traditions in the West in order to highlight the embedded dilemma in them with regard to democracy. The philosophical tradition referred to above is the Enlightenment, which though developed differently in different countries, or regions in the West having differential emphases. Though centrally preoccupied, politically speaking, with liberty of the individual, viewed very often in opposition to the omnipotent state authority, this great philosophical tradition paid also important attention to democracy via equality. But then the mainstream traditions of thought in the Enlightenment tended to look at equality more as a formal, legal one than social and economic one. The theoretical traditions refer to liberalism and Marxism—otherwise two extremes in nearly all aspects, but both being the offspring of the same Enlightenment. Democracy with its emphasis on equality is an inalienable part of the Enlightenment but it received very different treatment at the hands of different proponents.

In the writing of the Enlightenment philosophers *per se* democracy was considered a threat to liberty because democracy was associated with equality. The great American federalist thinker Madison, for example, said in the Convention: 'role of the people was to elect the government, not to participate in governance.'[33] Of the Enlightenment thinkers, J.J. Rousseau was perhaps the one who defended the democratic intention more powerfully than his contemporaries. His often quoted remarks: 'Man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains'[34] is strongly indicative of this in a double sense. First, he broke away from the time-honoured Aristotelian tradition that had privileged inequality and considered democracy as a perversion. Consider his critique of Aristotle: 'Far earlier, Aristotle too had maintained that men are not by nature equal, but that some are born to be slaves, others to be masters.'....'Aristotle was right: but he mistook the cause for the effect. Nothing is more certain that a man born into a condition of slavery is a slave by nature. A slave in fetters loses everything—the even the desire to be freed from them'.[35] Second, Rousseau wanted to bring democracy to the centre stage of government in order to accord central role to the citizens in governance. He said in 'Social Contract' (1762):

> The Sovereign can, in the first place, entrust the machinery of government

to the whole people, or to most of the people, in which case the Commonwealth will contain more citizens acting as magistrates than simple members of the State. This form of government is known as democracy.[36]

However, Rousseau was mindful of the limits of such an experiment, and therefore identified also the means of defending democracy:

It must be added that the democratic or popular system of government is, more than most, subject to civil strife and internal dissension, because no other is so violently and continually exposed to the temptations of change, or demands so high a degree of vigilance and courage in maintaining itself.[37]

He further specified his preference for democratic governance with particular reference to the effects of democracy on the people:

Thus, in a democracy, *the burden upon the people is least,* (my emphasis) in an aristocracy greater, which under a monarchy it is heaviest of all.[38]

Liberalism *per se* is opposed to democracy and, therefore, one does not expect much democratic intention in liberalism. The liberals' dislike of the masses is rooted in their over-concern for individual liberty, which they believe, would be jeopardized with the incursion of the masses via democratic route into the polity. The masses, for the liberals, are thus no more than necessary evils. It is not surprising that Rotteck, first liberal writer of Germany, distinguished between two kinds of democracy: the rule of representatives and the rule of the masses; his preference for the former was predictable.[39]

Paradoxically, the idea of equality had had a place in the original liberal plan because a state of nature was egalitarian but powerless although it provided for the basis for the artificial construction of representative government.[40] All that the liberals would oppose rather vehemently is not equality per se but the passion for equality.

Alex de Tocqueville, the French Enlightenment thinkers and a founder of political sociology whose two-volume *Democracy in America* are now the classic statement of democracy in America, and a source of great debates on democracy for many decades, was a kind of a bull in the China shop in the liberal understanding of democracy. Fed up with heavy doses of authoritarianism alternating with the republic form of government in France, and also disgusted with France's aristocracy, and hierarchies, democracy in America impressed him during his long visit and stay there in the early 19th century. The problematic of democracy that Tocqueville formulated centred on equality, and the equality of conditions, which was also

the 'social state' in America, something to be represented in the political institutions designed by the Americans. Consider how much he was moved by the above principle:

> 'It is an infinitely active principle, disrupting all aspect of social and political life, all aspects of human life. The new equality is not a state, it is a process—the growing equality of conditions—whose outcome is very difficult to predict.'[41]

Tocqueville also defended the negative moment of democracy in the sense that democracy excludes aristocracy and the inequality of conditions.[42] The originality in Tocqueville's problematic of democracy consists in the fact that democracy does not belong either to civil society or the political order, but is a 'particular type of relationship' among human beings, which is marked by the 'absence of any relationship'.[43] For Tocqueville, 'democracy tends to dissolve society'.[44] Tocqueville did not forget to remind us of the sociological roots of the American equality-centric democracy. He said that the art of self-government and association was something of a compulsion of living in the small immigrant communities.[45]

Marx, by contrast, was skeptical of the prospects of democracy although he did find some values in the institutions and practices of democracy that were evolving in his times.[46] But then, he was a prisoner of his experiences and could not go beyond leaving behind only a distinction between 'bourgeois democracy' and 'socialist democracy'. Although he did not develop the traits of 'socialist democracy' (something he had not experienced save the limited experiment of the Paris Commune), what he thought of a 'bourgeois democracy' was nothing other than the private property-based constitutional and limited democracy, something John Locke, a 17th century English Enlightenment thinker, defended. Democracy's irresistible force, its capacity of moving from one sphere to another producing in its wake 'unintended consequences', and the power of democracy to effect social, economic and political changes in turn was more positively appreciated by Tocqueville although he was no less cynical of the prospects of democracy, as Kaviraj has explored.[47] Lenin lacked Marx's cynicism, and thought democracy was merely a state form which will not survive but wither away along with the state:

> ...democracy is also a state and that, consequently, democracy will also disappear when the state disappears. Revolution alone can put an end to the bourgeois state. The state in general, that is, the most completed democracy, can only wither away.[48]

Surprisingly enough, Marx's context-bound distinction between bourgeois and socialist democracy remains still the standard approach to democracy by his followers. Lenin's advocacy for the 'abolition of democracy' was intended to refer to 'bourgeois democracy. However, Lenin retained some respect for some elements of 'bourgeois democracy'. He said:

> The way out of parliamentarism is not of course the abolition of representative institutions and the electoral principle, but the conversion of the representative institutions from talking shops into "working bodies".[49]

Lenin further added:

> Representative institutions remain, but there is no parliamentarism here as a special system, as the division of labour between the legislative and the executive, as the privileged position of the deputies. We cannot imagine democracy, even proletarian democracy, without representative institutions, but we can and must imagine democracy without parliamentarism....[50]

Be that as it may, Lenin could not go beyond the classical Marxist distinction between 'bourgeois democracy' and 'socialist democracy' and one is doubtful if Lenin's version of working of democracy in the midst of one-party state and absence of multi-party political competition let alone free press and civil liberties was possible. The failure of the 'socialist experiment' in the former USSR does suggest otherwise. This can, thus, perhaps be stated safely that Marxism does not have the space required for fully problematizing and understanding democracy as a dynamic and ever expanding phenomenon. The Marxists' socialist intention via democracy (though remains only announced but largely undefined in Marxism) seems to overshadow and subjugate the democratic intention, which in actual practice would mean subjugation of representative democratic institutions to the omnipotent authority and control of the communist party which claims to be the sole political embodiment of public affairs!

Representation and Democratic Intention

The notions of representation and representative institutions have figured in the democratic thinking of some thinkers mentioned above. But we should be clear about the distinction between representative institutions and democracy because at origin they were not the same thing. John Dunn reminded us that '[W]hen

representative institutions were first established, they were not democratic as they are seen today, nor were they seen as such by their founders.'[51]

Democracy got intermeshed with representation and representative institutions from a particular historical juncture, when societies became in particular large-scale and complex, and as a result of popular pressures from below for more space for the socially excluded. Scholars have examined the transit from ancient Greek 'direct democratic' institutions and the Roman republics to the modern representative institutions, and showed, that the routes were really complex.[52] But one overriding purpose, or intention, if you like, that was discernible was an impulse to include the thus far excluded in the public affairs. That at least was publicly propagated especially since the European Enlightenment and the revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries in the West. But the result has been just the opposite, confirming our argument about the lack of democratic intention in the whole transformation. Pitkin, who has researched into the subject extensively, has arrived, lamentably and ruefully, at the following conclusion: representative democracy has world over served to exclude the common people from taking part in 'public power and responsibility' and defended instead a case for direct democratic participation as a republican alternative.[53] Pitkin has also pointed out that in recent decades, a number of thinkers have expressed doubt and challenged the very concept of representation, 'its superiority to, but even its substitutability for the old ideal of direct participatory democracy.[54] The above remains a testimony to the fact that democratic intention has been missing in democracies the world over so that the latter have produced so much exclusion. Even if direct, participatory democracies are today receiving attention, one is doubtful if that could work given the entrenched dominance of party control in large-scale societies plus heavy societal hurdles in the form of classes, castes, race, religion, gender divisions and so on.

The Problematic of Indian Democracy

What then is the problematic of India's democracy? Is it a liberal or an egalitarian one? Following Tocqueville, as briefly discussed above, the American democracy was, at least when he visited America and studied it in the 19th century, the problematic of American democracy was egalitarian. One would, therefore, not simply place it under a typical liberal problematic. Be that as it may, to the extent

the US democracy was egalitarian; its democratic intention was not suspect. Indian democracy, except a brief interlude (the Emergency rule of June 1975-March 1977), has already achieved a remarkable record of sorts, and the writings on the subject are bourgeoning.[55]. Kaviraj (2009) points out the political appropriation of the ideal of equality by the Indian political elites, most notably Nehru.[56] When placed in comparison with many other post-colonial countries, India's remarkable record of holding more or less free and fair elections to different governing bodies at different tiers of the federation, and increasing interest and enthusiasm, especially since the 1980s, of the voters to take part in elections and stake a claim on the polity has received worldwide acclaim. However, the institutional arrangements and their formal operational dynamics are important in a democracy. But the reason why the people, particularly the socially underprivileged increasingly come out to participate and seek to stake a claim upon the polity would call for a different explanation.

To be sure, the British colonial authorities had had little or no intention of really introducing democracy in India. What they had done since the 1930s was but a dilution of the very principle of representation because instead of introducing the secular individual based political choice, they introduced group, nay, communities-based representation; the so-called representative institution that came out as a result of the above were empty shells without any real power. Consider the following apt observation of Sunil Khilnani:

> Representatives of these communities, along with the princes, were inducted into an ambiguously political world where they had to mouth the language of legality and representation, but these municipal and provincial chambers had no powers to legislate; they were enjoined simply to nod their approval of colonial laws. This was an anemic conception of public life.[57]

Often much is made of the Indian nationalist tradition of democracy, as distinguished from the doubtful colonial legacies.[58] Who among the top nationalist elites was most democratic in beliefs and practices? While the space here does not permit any detailed exploration of the democratic elements in our nationalist tradition, which can be the subject of a full-length study, all that we can do here is to indicate that except in the case of Jawaharlal Nehru, to some extent, democracy as an ideal, as a set of principles, and as a practice was anathema to most top leaders of the Congress, the major party of independence. Sunil Khilnani argues that 'before independence Congress could not pretend to any developed

meditation on democracy, though it did embody a formidable will to political power'.[59] According to Khilnani, most notably, Gandhi had had scant regard for the democratic principles inside the Congress organization although it was thanks to him that Congress was turned into a mass movement. Nehru as a democrat was of a kind: he defended the case of an 'indirect sovereignty' couched in the language of an abstract, historically durable 'people' or 'nation' rejecting a Jacobin type of popular sovereignty.[60] Post-independence 'democratic' institutional arrangements by way of the Constitution (1950-) and building on the ambiguous democratic tradition remains therefore privy to many contradictions. The Constitution did introduce individual-based right to vote (universal adult franchise), but provided for community-based reservations, which, in effect, allowed the political space for mobilization along communal and caste lines.[61] For one thing, any critical glance at the nature of our fundamental rights in Part III of the Indian Constitution would suggest that our rights are negative in nature and are not state-free spaces.[62] Very often Dr B.R. Ambedkar's majestic description at the closing moments of the Constituent Assembly of India's democracy as a 'life of contradictions' between equality in politics (one man, one vote) and inequality in social and economic life etc seemed apologetic of the limited democratic intention in the very arrangement of constitutional democracy.[63] Paradoxically, the major participatory transformation that Indian democracy underwent post-Indira Gandhi (since the mid-1980s) served to confirm our thesis that people at large began to develop a stake in the system and infuse it with the required democratic Èlan vitae.

Distinction between Equality-claims *and*
Diversity-claims *in Indian Democracy*

The theoretical argument advanced in this connection is a distinction between the *equality-claims* and the *diversity-claims* differently incorporated in the constitutional democracy of India. Equality-claims refer to various equality provisions for the individual citizens: formal political equality as well as redistributive social and economic ones. As we indicated above, the Constitution contains such provisions with a lot of limitations, and the latter aspects are placed in an otherwise unimportant part (Part IV) of the Indian Constitution (known as Directive Principles of State Policy). With highly circumscribed position in India's constitutional democracy,

and inaugurated in a society of deep-seated inequalities, discrimination and hierarchies, the egalitarian problematic *al la* Tocqueville does not hold much weight in the case of Indian democracy. This is, on the face of it, a little bizarre; because this happened despite the towering presence of Jawaharlal Nehru who had advocated for a socialist solution to India's problems on the assumption that liberalism had exhausted itself as a force. *Diversity-claims*, on the other, received a privileged position in Indian constitutional democracy evident in various provisions including some fundamental rights pertaining to protection and preservation of religion, language, culture, script, collective identity, reservations for castes, tribes and others. The part of the above is most often couched in the language of positive discrimination. The rest are provisions for political accommodation of various identities: linguistic, regional, ethnic and so on.[64] *Diversity-claims*, by implications, were designed to accommodate various collective identity demands and ensure political order, and had limited egalitarian and, hence, democratic import. The available researches on aspects of diversity-claims (federation-building and positive discrimination)[65] are doubtful of the equality-generating effects of diversity-claims because in the case of federation-building by way of conceding to statehood, some dominant caste groups in most cases have benefited at the expense of the vast majority;[66] and in the case of positive discrimination, while it served to satisfy identity needs to some extent, the impact has also not been as effective in equality-generation because the benefits, which are limited in any way, are reaped by a few at the top of such sections.

Diagram 1: India's Democratic Problematic

A. Diversity-claims <—> Democratic Intention (weak links)
B. Equality-claims <—> Democratic Intention (strong links)

In India's constitutional democracy (Diagram 1), diversity-claims occupy greater space and enjoy pre-eminence indicated by A when, conceptually, their links with democratic intention are weaker. Equality-claims, conceptually, have stronger link with democratic intention, but then they occupy a secondary place indicated by B. However, since the arrows move both the ways, some equality functions are also the outcome of both the routes relative to specific contexts in India's States and regions, and subject to such factors as the role of political agencies (the political parties, most notably)

whose democratic intention, institutionally and practically speaking, has often been a stumbling block to the full play of democracy. The limited space here does not permit a full-length discussion on the designing and functioning of democratic institutions at the grassroots, which is the real basis of measuring the space of democratic intention at play, if at all. But critical reflections on the institutional designs and practices of rural self-governing institutions known as the *panchayats* in India in the post-1992 period bring out, with a wealth of empirical evidences, the many limits imposed on citizen participation at the base of India's democracy.[67]

Conclusion

Democratic intention has, thus, fared rather poorly in the institutional designs and practices of democracy globally speaking. That was why democracy's failures are so grotesque. The globally celebrated 'equality of opportunity' premise of the American democracy, for instance, was inherently limited designed actually to serve the White male Americans to the exclusion of the majority of blacks, women, and the Native Americans, and African Americans.[68] Therefore, the above premise was not equalizing in intent for the citizens at large. No wonder, that basic premise has subsequently been totally subverted by the heavy and over-bearing control of corporate capitalism on American democracy. In the case of American democracy, therefore, Madison rather than Tocqueville seems to have proved more correct.[69]

Comparatively speaking, the discourses on Indian democracy have remained largely confined to the Tocquevillian model centring on the same equality premise despite the great failures of Indian democracy on the front of generating equality in society. India's democracy scholarship is yet to get out of the Tocquevillian 'enchantment', its over-concern for 'equality of opportunity, or simply, the great equality premise. The Indians were lucky though that the Indian Constitutional provisions are dotted here and there with the equality concerns. But a more critical reading of the original intention of the founding elites of the Indian Constitution would reveal that they were more concerned about unity and integrity, law and order, or political order and stability of the country (that is, the Hobbesian preoccupation!) than equality-centric democracy. In other words, those diversity and unity concerns, inadequately expressed by Indian federalism, were privileged and the equality concerns were rendered secondary. In a land of manifold inequalities

and discrimination, even a mere formal declaration of the ideal of equality became quite attractive though to the masses.[70] Political democracy, or what Ramchandra Guha[71] calls 'hardwares' of democracy, therefore, served a great instrumental and strategic purpose. In a land of inequalities, poverty and large-scale discrimination, democracy, however, continues to attract the poor and socially and economically underprivileged, and produce its unequal beneficiaries.

Finally, any rethinking on India's democratic reconstruction can hardly ignore an evolving but contradictory reality: a relatively long sustaining democratic facade with limited democratic intention but faced with a highly mobilized society (along many fault lines) has witnessed a democratic pressures from below which has resolutely demanded expansion of the ambit of democratic intention—evident in demands for greater decentralization and participation; smaller territorial units for recognition and development; more institutional guarantees for protection of rights of the socially underprivileged; and the greater actual participation of the thus underprivileged sections in the institutional political process.[72] Second, the above has been taking place at a time when Indian democracy has since the early 1990s been confronting the real possibilities of greater corporate control over democracy in the wake of reforms so that observers of Indian economy and politics have expressed grave concern about the very foundations of the democratic system because now the Indian 'state tends to be more accountable to the 'invisible sentiments of the market' than the more visible problems of its people.[73] Partha Chatterjee had argued how the new corporate capital of India (Indian and foreign) had since the 1990s been appropriating what he called 'political society' via Indian electoral democracy conceding in the end only a left-handed recognition to the inhabitants of political society, that is, rural and urban poor.[74] A genuine democratic rethinking on the recovery of democratic intent and restoring it to Indian democracy with greater strength and vitality today and tomorrow has, therefore, to grapple with the dialectics of *diversity-claims* and the *equality-claims* in a society of large-scale and now growing inequalities and deep-seated discrimination.

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NOTES

1. Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen, *India's Development and Participation* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002); Ian Shapiro and Casiano Hacker-CordÛn (eds.), *Democracy's Values* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
2. Shapiro and Casiano Hacker-CordÛn (eds.), *Democracy's Values*, p. 1.
3. Ibid.
4. Partha Chatterjee, *Proja O Tantra* (in Bengali) (Kolkata: Anustup, 2008), p. 14.
5. Rajni Kothari, *Politics in India* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1970); Rajni Kothari (ed.), *Caste in Indian Politics* (Delhi: Orient Longman, 1970).
6. Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
7. Dipankar Gupta (ed.), *Caste in Question: Identity or Hierarchy?* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2004).
8. See the following works: Ronald L. Watts, *New Federations: Experiments in the Commonwealth* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1966); Ronald L. Watts, *Comparing Federal Systems* (Ontario: Queens McGill University Press, 2008); Harihar Bhattacharyya, *India as a Multicultural Federation: Asian Values, Democracy and Decentralization* (Fribourg: Hellbing and Lichtenhahn, 2001); Asha Sarangi and Sudha Pai (eds.), *Interrogating States Reorganization* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2011).
9. Sudipta Kaviraj, 'Marxism in Translation: Critical Reflections on Indian Radical Thought' in R. Bourke and R. Geuss (eds.), *Political Judgment: Essays for John Dunn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 173-199.
10. King has shown that part of Nehru's reluctance in implanting the nationalist pledge of linguistic reorganisation of States was his apprehension that this would empower the dominant castes in the regions. See Robert Desmond King, *Nehru and the Language Politics of India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997).
11. The infamous doctrine of 'sons of the soil' came in very handy for the purpose. See Myron Weiner, *Sons of the Soils* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1978).
12. Harihar Bhattacharyya, A. Kluge and L. Koenig (eds.), *The Politics of Citizenship, Identity, the State in South Asia* (New Delhi: Samskriti, 2012), pp. 23-42.
13. It is a common political knowledge that most post-intendance national governments in India have been minority ones in terms of popular support. It is shown that over the last three Lok Sabha elections, the youth participation in voting has declined considerably.
14. Sudipta Kaviraj, 'The Culture of Representative Democracy' in Partha Chatterjee (ed.), *Wages of Freedom: Fifty Years of the Indian Nation-State* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998).
15. Ibid., p. 148.
16. Przeworski, *Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government.*
17. Ibid., p. 4, pp. 66-98.
18. S. Hornblower, 'Creation and Development of Democratic Institutions in Ancient Greece' in John Dunn (ed.), *Democracy: The Unfinished Journey, 508 BC to AD 1993* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 1.
19. Ibid., p. 3.

20. Ibid., pp. 1-17.
21. Ibid.
22. Bhattacharyya, *India as a Multicultural Federation.*
23. Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (London: Little Brown Company, 1995), pp. 24-25. Also, Tocqueville informed us that the art of self-government naturally grew among the small immigrant communities. In the case of post-Partition (1947) Hindu Bengali refugees in West Bengal, the Colony Committees grew in numbers as direct grassroots democratic associations of self-government. Ruefully, these were later subverted by the Communist party of India and other left parties in favour of building mass bases among the refugees for electoral mobilization. For further details, see Harihar Bhattacharyya, 'The CPI and the Post-Partition Refugees: A Comparative Study of West Bengal and Tripura' in Ian Talbot and Gurharpal Singh (eds.), *Region and Partition* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999).
24. Robert A. Dahl, *On Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 10-11.
25. Ibid., p. 2.
26. Samir Amin, *Obsolescent Capitalism: Contemporary Politics and Global Disorder* (London: Rainbow, 2004), p. 70.
27. Garry Wills, *The Federalist Papers: Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay* (New York: Bantam Dell, 2010), p. xxi.
28. Ibid., p. xvii.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., p. xxii. Also, this echoes Montesquieu who defended that a republic is possible only when there is republican virtue in people. The liberal dilemma with democracy remains, yet democracy has progressed, generating more equality wherever possible. We will come back to this dilemma subsequently. For an interesting new perspective on the dilemma, see Pierre Manent, *An Intellectual History of Liberalism,* trans. Rebecca Balinski [1987] (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995).
31. One is tempted to cite the example of India's much vaunted 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act 1992 providing for constitutional guarantee for the establishment, democratically, of the local rural self-governing bodies (known as *panchayats)* which has failed to ensure the institutionalization of such bodies even in the elementary procedural sense of the term, let alone in the real sense of democratic participation. If one reads the institutional design carefully one will not fail to note that the very institutional design was much deficient with no surrounding constitutional watchdogs, and the appropriate social and cultural back-up. As a result, the empirical experiences on the working of such bodies in various states of India are much to be desired, limited as they are by traditional vested interests as well as the overriding party control. For more details, see B.S. Baviskar and George Mathew, (eds.), *Inclusion and Exclusion in Local Governance Field Reports from the States* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2009); Harihar Bhattacharyya, 'Marxist Democratic Problematic and the Decline of the Left in West Bengal' in P. Singh (ed.), *Democracy in Asia: Discourse and Counter-Discourses* (*Asia Annual 2011*) (New Delhi: KW Publishers, 2013), pp. 101-117.
32. T. K. Oommen, 'Social Exclusion and the Strategy of Empowerment' in Harihar Bhattacharyya, et el (eds.), *The Politics of Social exclusion in India Democracy at the Crossroads* (London: Routledge, 2010), pp. 22-33; John Dunn (ed.), *Democracy: An Unfinished Journey, 508 BC to AD 1993* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

33. Quoted in Przeworski, *Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government*, p. 6.

34. Jean Jacques Rousseau, 'The Social Contract' in Sir Ernest Barker (ed.), *Social Contract: Essays by Locke, Hume and Rousseau* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 240.

35. Ibid., p. 243.

36. Ibid., p. 320.

37. Ibid., pp. 322-333.

38. Ibid., p. 349.

39. R. Michels, *Political Parties* [1915] (New York: Dover Publications, 1959), pp. 7-8.

40. Manent, *An Intellectual History of Liberalism*, p. 112.

41. Ibid., p. 103.

42. Ibid., p. 104.

43. Ibid., p. 105.

44. Ibid., p. 106.

45. Ibid., p. 107. Interestingly enough, similar democratic zeal and practices were found among the freshly arrived post-Partition refugees in West Bengal (India) who developed as grassroots direct democratic institutions of Colony Committees. Sadly, the then Communist Party of India (CPI) infiltrated them since the 1960s for mobilizing for electoral support and eventually subjugated them under the authority of the party. For further details, see Bhattacharyya, 'The CPI and the Post-Partition Refugees: A Comparative Study of West Bengal and Tripura', pp. 325-347.

46. Sudipta Kaviraj, *The Enchantment of Democracy and India: Politics and Ideas* (Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2011).

47. Ibid.

48. V.I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution* [1917] (Peaking: Foreign Language Press, 1976), p. 23.

49. Ibid., pp. 56-57. Here Lenin merely echoed the lessons of the Paris Commune of 1871.

50. Ibid., p. 58.

51. Quoted in Przeworski, *Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government*, p. 3.

52. Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967); Dahl, *On Democracy*.

53. Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, 'Representation' in Terence Ball, James Farr, and Russell L. Hanson [eds.], *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 150.

54. Ibid., p. 151.

55. See the following works: Andre Beteille, 'The Varieties of Democracy', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 48, No. 8 (February 23, 2013), pp. 33-40; Andre Beteille, *Democracy and Its Institutions* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012); Atul Kohli, *Democracy and Discontent: India's Growing Crisis of Governability* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Atul Kohli (ed.), *The Success of India's Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Subrata K. Mitra and V.B. Singh, *Democracy and Social Change in India* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999); Gurpreet Mahajan (ed.), *Democracy, Difference and Social Justice* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999).

56. Kaviraj, 'Marxism in Translation'..

57. Sunil Khilnani, *The Idea of India* (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 25.

58. Sumit Sarkar, 'Indian Democracy: The Historical Inheritance' in Atul Kohli (ed.), *The Success of India's Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

59. Khilnani, *The Idea of India*, p. 27.

60. Ibid., p. 41.

61. Added to this, the extent and quantum of reservation was finally left to the regional legislatures dominated by local politicians, who found infinite scope for political mobilization along many communal and ethnic lines for winning elections.

62. Manoranjan Mohanty, et al (eds.), *People's Rights* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998).

63. Karl Marx, incidentally, was aware of the contradictions, a century earlier and became cynical of the project of democracy.

64. Reference here is made to Arts. 2 & 3 of the Constitution; 5th and the 6th Schedules; provision for Special Category States and such other asymmetric federal measures.

65. Bhattacharya, *India as a Multicultural Federation*; Sarangi and Pai (eds.), *Interrogating States Reorganization*; Subrata Mitra (ed.), *Politics of Positive Discrimination: A Crossnational Perspective* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1990).

66. Nehru's cynicism about the linguistic provinces, as King (1997) pointed out, was therefore not very surprising. See King, *Nehru and the Language Politics of India.*

67. Harihar Bhattacharyya, *Micro-Foundations of Bengal Communism* (Delhi: Ajanata, 1998); Harihar Bhattacharyya, *Making Local Democracy Work in India: Social Capital, Politics & Governance in West Bengal* (New Delhi: Vedams Books, 2002); Harihar Bhattacharyya, 'Grassroots Democracy and Civic Participation in Rural West Bengal: The Case of Gram Sansad' in D. Sen Gupta and S. Ganguly (eds.), *Theme India: Essays in Honour of Late Prasanta Kr Ghosh* (Kolkata: Arambag Book House, 2005), pp. 63-76; Bhattacharyya, *India as a Multicultural Federation*; Baviskar and Mathew (eds.), *Inclusion and Exclusion in Local Governance Field Reports from the States.*

68. Partha Chatterjee and Ira Katznelson (eds.), *Anxieties of Democracy: Tocquevillian Reflections on India and the United States* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 9.

69. Those who are familiar with the writing of Robert Dahl, the famous American political scientist and political sociologist of democracy, must be aware of his notion of 'deformed polyarchy' in this regard, suggestive of the overriding control of corporate capital on American democracy, which he preferred to call 'polyarchy'.

70. Przeworski doubts though if it is correct to characterize democracy via equality because the founding fathers of democracy, globally speaking, 'used the language of equality in order to justify something else'. See Przeworski, *Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government,* p. 74.

71. Ramachandra Guha, 'Democracy and Violence in India and Beyond', *Economic and Political Weekly,* Vol. 48, No. 14 (April 6, 2013), pp. 34-38. However, Guha's subject though quite interesting, dealt with only episodic violence rather than the daily one, which would have made more theoretical sense. In this episodic sense, the violence in Northern Ireland and those in Kashmir and Sri Lanka (on the Tamils) would safely claim a comparative position with the United Kingdom.

72. Javeed Alam, *Who Wants Democracy* (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2004).

73. Srinivas Raghavendra, 'Economics, Politics and Democracy in the Age of Credit-Rating Capitalism', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 48, No. 5 (February 02, 2013), pp. 34-38.

74. Partha Chatterjee, 'Democracy and Economic Transformation in India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 43, No. 16 (April 19, 2008), pp. 53-62.

THE PURE POLITICS OF DIRTY HANDS AND PERSONAL ATTACKS: THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN PERSONALYTICAL IMMANENCE

Arnab Chatterjee

How poisonous, how crafty, how bad, does every long war make one, that cannot be waged openly by means of force! How personal does a long fear make one, a long watching of enemies, of possible enemies!

—Friedrich Nietzsche[1]

I have argued elsewhere[2] and have been arguing for quite some time now that the personal is the beyond of private/public binary and ought to be distinguished from the private vis-ë-vis the public: the personal and the private are not cute or vexed interchangeable(s) ready to become wet, or, absorbed in 'the impersonal rain'. Private/privacy is opposed to public/publicity and resists public scrutiny—the stuff by which the public is made. The Personal—the way we don't know what a person is, what his/her real/final intentions are or whether somebody is genuinely aggrieved or not—makes the personal—largely unpredictable and indeterminate in the final instance—unlike the private. Private/ public, being legal juridical categories, have specific indicators. The absence of these indicators makes personal relationships—like love (or hate), friendship (or enmity) remain outside legislation.

This article apparently indexes, singularly though, how I discursively arrived at the above instance. Inspired by Nietzsche's indictment above, and Immanuel Kant's immortal, controversial maxim, 'He who openly declares himself an enemy can be relied upon, but the treachery of secret malice... is more detestable than violence'[3], this article looks at some of the 'wicked', malicious and dirty everyday ways of experiencing the political where violence and nonviolence could rarely be distinguished, because, as we notice the public/private division is transgressed by the maneuvering person and his cunning of reason. In other words, this article is about something worse than violence. (And because these everyday

binaries are transcended in this form of politics, it is also called 'pure').

Such a pure politics of dirty hands is made up of persons being subjected to negative gossiping, malice, backstabbing, lying, treachery, deception, taking undue advantage, subtle —nearly invisible forms of discrimination, exploitation, etc. These examples recover, one might hazard, *mythical* forms of punishment and in order to reckon with this genuinely real, 'pure' politics of dirty hands with a distinct Machiavellian dig—they also comment on narratives of manipulations, machinations, intrigues and malice— all blossoming in non-violent peace where peace is also a product of leisure.

In the discourse of pure politics, lying is the first personal political act by which persons govern each other; coercion or domination thus comes always in personal forms of brute factuality (being *exploited* in this discourse is a matter of political *feeling*) and, thereby, personal attacks are often its primary raw materials. And personal invectives travel a long way to meet and demonstrate the way the person by his/her personal cunning transcends the public/private divide; personal invectives name the person with the 'dirty hands' and are not necessarily attacks upon the person's privacy—as it has often been argued—to denounce and disparage them without a heightened, livid scrutiny.

We shall notice later that after the classical and the medieval, it is only in the third or modern phase that personal attacks could be seen to have been disapproved in a form that is paradigmatic. This is because the logic of modernity itself, unlike the ancient Greek or medieval predicament, is emphatically moored against the tenor and vehicle of personal attacks, slander or abuse—even that of the personal itself. Let us, briefly, rehearse the motors of this modernity.

The Personal against and within the impersonal modern:
Weber's disenchantment

The best description of modernity in terms of politics is available in Max Weber with whom tradition, charisma and affective forms of patrimonial monarchies (*Sultanism* for example) receding to the background, what emerged is, to borrow Owen's brilliant capsule, 'the impersonal rationalization of the social organization [providing] an impetus towards the regulation of all public spheres of life on the basis of formal legal norm[s].'[4] The maintenance of this regime is ensured by a strict separation of the public and private spheres

where personal is understood as partial and an offspring of the specific, accidental subjectivity of a person. The formulation that it has had in Weber—to repeat its importance—is something like this:

> Objective discharge of business primarily means a discharge of business according to *calculable rules and* 'without regard for persons.' Without regard for persons', however, is also the watchword of the market and, in general, of all pursuits of naked economic interests. ...Bureaucracy develops the more perfectly...the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is appraised as its special virtue by capitalism.[5]

But this operation cannot be limited or short circuited to mean just the response required by a 'complicated and specialized modern culture'[6] since as Weber himself charts, it could be traced to that of Roman law, and late Middle Ages. Contractarian Natural Law evolved into rational natural law and this rational law was 'conceptually systematized on the basis of statutes.'[7] Pursuing this line of argument, the first signs of the modern bureaucratized impersonality were evident, according to Weber, in legal administration. Rational economic activity originates from the market and is oriented to money 'the most abstract and most "impersonal" thing in all human life.'[8] The more rational activity, the more is impersonalization of the economy.[9] 'One could regulate the personal relationship of lord and slave in a completely ethical manner, simply because it was personal. This cannot be said of...the relationship between the changing holders of credit notes and to the (to them) unknown and also changing debtors of a mortgage lending institution, between whom no possible personal relationship could exist.'[10]

Now, shifting the burden of this tangle to the domain of current discussion, we see how the public and the public sphere come to be invested with this impersonality. The point is, 'the regulation of all public spheres of life on the basis of formal norms'— is it successful?[11] If it fails, then in what form—is it the form of pure politics—where violence is not announced?

Politics in the Times of Peace: 'Personal Attacks'[12]
as Itemized within A Pure Political Imaginary

Pure politics is politics in the times of everyday, ordinarily mundane peace! This is far from defining politics as 'the way to organize and optimize the technological seizure of beings at the level of the nation.'[13] It is rather the technological seizure of beings at the level

of the person—the stuff of what some theorists[14] in the West have called it thinly—'the politics of dirty hands'[15] and that is, perhaps, because it debunks the neat distinction between the public and the private, it is 'pure politics' made up of deception, betrayal, treachery, malice, lying and such others. And an impossibility of refusal to accept these—say an affirmative denial—juridically or whatever, projects a recluse only in personal attacks which might end up even in a murder. Given a chance such perpetrators(s) would confess in these words:

> 'I'll lie when I must, and I have contempt for no one. I wasn't the one who invented lying. ...We shall not abolish lying by refusing to tell lies, but by using every means at hand....';

> [or]

> 'For years you will have to cheat, trick and maneuver; we'll go from compromise to compromise.'[16]

Lying is dirty mouth, though trying to deal with every means at *hand*. But what is the phenomenon of 'dirty hands' itself? This designation, 'dirty hands', might have been a product of a meditative listening to Sartre wherefrom this excerpt would be informative.

> 'Hoederer: How afraid you are to soil your hands! All right stays pure! What good will it do?...To do nothing, to remain motionless, arms at your sides, wearing kid gloves. Well, I have dirty hands. Right up to the elbows. I've plunged them in filth and blood. But what do you hope? Do you think you can govern innocently?

> Hugo: You'll see some day that I'm not afraid of blood.

> Hoederer: Really! Red gloves, that's elegant. It's the rest that scares you....'[17]

Now, is it possible to make sense of the politics of dirty hands in a phenomenological manner? This is necessary because we've been listening to the politics of dirty hands as far as the manifestation of certain effects are concerned, but what form does it assume before an experiencing consciousness?

While the legal juridical discourse and the bureaucratic-administrative apparatus do administer various applied notions of the person, public or private, the political deployments of such categories would be fluid, strategic and success oriented and that too with the cultural unconscious in action is, perhaps, expected. The question of distant, objective, impersonal reflection on value-

neutral questions and disagreement in both politics and culture are always already delivered to be governed by practical political imperatives—whether it entails instances of political deliberation or cultural expectancy. (And normative deliberation can be practiced only when it is freed from brute empirico-practical and practical-political considerations.) Now, to subject everything to the practical and eternally immediate is to accept:

> [t]he philosophical priority of the existent over being, ...it finally makes possible the description of the notion of the immediate. The immediate is the interpellation and, if we may speak thus, the imperative of language. The idea of contact does not represent the primordial mode of the immediate. Contact is already a thematization and a reference to a horizon. The immediate is the face to face.[18]

Then, with the immediate, deferred exigencies of 'dirty' politics, we approach what we'll call the appearance of a pure political imaginary of the person whose comportment is towards other persons; (We use pure in the sense where an object's form and content cannot be distinguished[19] and imaginary in its now established usage as 'not a set of ideas; rather...what enables, through making sense of, the practices of a society'[20]).

This we think is a Machiavellian moment.[21] The moment has approached all politics—slowly but decisively and now it only awaits a fair chance. And to address the question of the Machiavellian 'pure'[22] moment where the content of the experience and the experience cannot be distinguished, we need a political phenomenology—the way we experience the political and within horizons.[23] To exemplify such a phenomenology, to capture this moment and illustrate what is pure politics, here is a slice of an example; better said, here is a narrative and a figuration. We quote parts of a news report which appeared in *The Statesman* on 4 February 2000:

> Bhubaneshwar, Feb 3
>
> Mr Navin Patnaik today expelled BJD political affairs committee chairman, Mr Bijoy Mohapatra from the party. He also snatched Mr Mohapatra's Assembly nomination and gave the ticket to a local journalist instead. Mr Mohapatra was *left too stunned* to react. All he could say was he had been *back stabbed*. BJD leaders and workers were outraged. Mr Patnaik's completely unexpected move was described state wide as 'treacherous'. ...The move that removed the ground from under Mr Mohapatra's feet was obviously planned meticulously and *timed brilliantly* by Mr Patnaik. The rebel leader with whom Mr Patnaik had *ostensibly signed a truce*, was

> sacked and debarred from the polls at the eleventh hour….too late for Mr Mohapatra to file papers as an Independent, and the outwitted rebel had no choice but to watch helplessly… No one could read the BJD chief's mind. Mr Mohapatra had been the party's key negotiator during the tortuous seat sharing talks with the BJP. He had had a major role in selecting candidates for various seats. Even Congress and BJP circles who consider Mr Mohapatra as the lone political leader of mettle and strategist in the BJD, were taken aback. [Italics mine].

To the readers' surprise and a challenge to surmise, what kind of political science, political sociology would explain this enchantment? All such disciplinary categories as civil society, political society, family and the State just vanish into thin air before this. Because we all have had such moments in our lives but rarely have felt that those narratives would be included in political science textbooks. Those losses were ours and they will remain ours, those secrets will die with us—each separately. *'Too stunned to react'* is an adequate description because reaction could be a meditation on a prior act; here is an action without a reaction. In the disciplinary study of politics and criminal offence, stabbing—being a metonymy of murder and violence—has often been mentioned or studied; where do we get to know what is '*back stabbing*'? The third phrase in italics is *'timed brilliantly'*. What does it stand for? Punctuality is to go according to other's time: Passive timing. Timing in politics is the dominative monitoring of others according to one's own time where s/he himself is the frame of reference: Active timing. I'm waiting for the right moment to teach him a lesson, I know it, he doesn't, I'm waiting for him to enter *my* duration. Here time as a trap and emerging as a 'means of orientation'[24] is destructive of other's time—the space in which the victim thrived and swam along his moments. So I '*ostensibly sign.. a truce'*, give him a show of importance to mislead him and then '*remove the ground from under'* his '*feet'*. Notice the word *truce*: a signifier of peace and how it has been deployed. When we were dealing with speech generating violence, this is the point we wanted to argue: let us look at the varieties of peace and how they are being used for what purposes. *Truce* used to *back stab*? —This is the moment.

Here is a classic instance of the politics of dirty hands but with our rider 'pure' because this overwhelms and surpasses the implied notion of individuals of public, political, representative significance indulging in unavoidable, moral wrongdoing for a greater, public good. This is sheer, deeply internal politicking and where the solace of institutional differentiation and decisional segmentation

undercutting the first personal action system of a lone politician does not even arise. Mr Mahapatra is not even allowed to contest and, therefore, the topic of democratic answerability cannot be mooted.[25] The standard discourse on dirty hands invokes guilt or shame felt by the perpetrator of dirty hands; some have proposed 'tragic remorse'[26] which is a more unified product than mere guilt, shame or 'personal aguish'.[27] Is there any remorse here or there is a shining, stubborn sense of competitive joy and success in having had one's way by crushing another rival? 'The cases of dirty hands' ('do good by doing evil') 'and imperfect procedures' ('to do evil by doing good'), however, are two areas in which not only the normal model but also the relentless, 'pursuit of justice fails'.[28] This is why we have termed this irresolvable and in a sense, pure.

Where do we end then? What is the use of studying this phenomenon called personal attacks which name the persons with dirty hands? Peter Digester thinks we should be unforgiving towards the practice of dirty hands but forgiving towards imperfect procedural (in)justice. Then unforgiving—as it is, we shall be stunned when we are cheated, betrayed, fired, suppressed, deprived, or discriminated against in uncommon silence (and be *too stunned to react*). Those are the moments when we shall feel the hand of politics on our back, but nothing will save us, no category; they will be moments of pure experience. The politics of dirty hands will cleanse everything, remaining residually and strictly alive on the borderlines of our everyday being. We might *feel* exploited but that will remain only as a moral feeling, because the apparatus required to structure the feeling has been slowly but evenly de-contextualized: the state socialist project was criticized as being one of the most ruthless regime of techno-scientific, objective, impersonal, instrumental rationality where human beings without a personal touch were simply lost in a maze of bureaucratic cleaning. Now, if the death of all the grand narratives, thereby, has been conveniently announced, we need to engage with small and smaller events and listen to the narratives of pure, petty politics. Aren't we doing this, in this article too? Also to pure politics—the fragment or the micro-local is not a metaphor of place; for it, the fragment is that what we resist from allowing it to coincide with the norms of the public or the private and is limited to the overriding magic of the person.

> The rules and rituals of separation that function to maintain the purity of the categories of public and private also support the contemporary legal fiction that public servants act not as concrete individuals but as

articulations of the abstract body of the polity and, accordingly, are neutral, objective, and free from the passions and interests that may plague their private existence. The pragmatic problem here is that everybody knows this to be a fiction. Everybody knows that Bush as public servant cannot be abstracted from Bush as private citizen, that his religious fundamentalism, corporate alliances, and personal affiliations directly impact his conduct as president. The logic operant here is one of cynicism; we know that the idea of a public that is free of private interests and passions is fictional, nonetheless, we demand that all involved act as if this were not the case. We demand that the illusion of a real and substantive public be maintained even though we may not fully believe it.[29]

Then, bereft of illusions and abandoning grand investigations, we need to undertake studies of the micro politics of dirty hands: and being dirty, the term political pornography, therefore, is improperly apt. 'Power thus relies on an obscene supplement – that is to say, the obscene nightly law (superego) necessarily accompanies, as its shadowy double, the "public law". ...Obscene unwritten rules sustain Power as long as they remain in the shadows; the moment they are publicly recognized, the edifice of Power is thrown into disarray.'[30] Pure politics deals with this obscene underside of public and private law and for this, regrettably, personal attacks are its primary raw materials. We need to have then narratives of manipulations, machinations, intrigues and malice—more sinister, more ghostly than violence causing speech or violence itself: here is Kant, 'He who openly declares himself an enemy can be relied upon, but the treachery of secret malice, if it became universal, would mean the end of all confidence. This type of wickedness is more detestable than violence.'[31]

But history cannot be halted simply by condemnation; it has to address events where an open declaration of enmity is absent and such wickedness, so to say, runs riot. Now, it appears as a lesson to be learnt and exists only as a secured item in the inventory. A simple guilty conscience hardly suffices and, therefore, what is required is such a counter-declaration: 'To sell oneself for thirty pieces of silver is an honest transaction; but to sell oneself to one's own conscience is to abandon mankind. History is *apriori* amoral; it has no conscience. To want to conduct history according to the maxims of the Sunday school means to leave everything as it is.'[32]

We have returned to Machiavelli and the unspeakable confessions or suggestions of wickedness it entails. We are convinced about the personal nature of this politics, but it might be argued as an objection that in the absence of a private language or a language

that grasps the subject of existence, this genuinely personal would not be, and quite truly, communicated. But still this experience could be narrated as argued above. And that is the stuff of pure politics. After an elaboration, we have arrived at it, finally. But isn't it a straight corollary that the personalized pure politics of dirty hands will be responded to, or answered back in personal terms, too? If it is in the affirmative, then it is necessary to historicize it, immediately.

Responding to the Pure Politics of Dirty Hands:
'Personal attacks' via the Ancient Greek, the Middle Ages to Modernity

If we could discern three broad historical phases of 'personal' invectives or 'uncivil' rhetoric in the western political history of humanity, then the footfalls, as I hazard, could be three. First, the Greek sources with the first pioneers—Cicero or Diogenes, and Aristotle giving us the theory. Second, against the church in the 15ᵗʰ and 16ᵗʰ century, and the third during the 18ᵗʰ century which interestingly turned against the state.

Invectives present in the corpus of assembly speeches delivered in classical Athens portray the master orator—Cicero in his Philipic speeches asserting with fury the following words:

> 'Surely that is real moderation—to protest about Anthony and refrain from abuse! For what was left of Rome, Antony, owed its final annihilation to yourself. In your home everything had a price...Laws you passed, laws you caused to be put through your interests, had never ever been formally proposed....You were an augur, yet you never took the auspices. You were a consul, yet you blocked the legal right of other officials to exercise the veto. Your armed escort was shocking. You were a drink-sodden, sex ridden wreck. Never a day passes in that ill –reputed house of yours without orgies of the most repulsive kind. In spite of all that, I restricted myself in my speech to solemn complaints concerning the state of our nation. I said nothing personal about the man.'[33]

It is perhaps no wonder that Cicero would thus settle for a strategic catch phrase and would utter, 'Men decide far more problems by hate, or love, or fear or illusion, or some other inward emotion, than by reality.'[34] But an interesting point in this context is, the ruling templates of the time, did sanction Cicero's venom. Aristotle— if taken in entirety—would be difficultly poised to intervene in this debate since he both approves and disapproves the Ciceroian gesture in the same breath. Firstly, let us consider the way he would censor Cicero: For children being susceptible to imitation or the art of

acquiring 'a taint of meanness from what they' [first] 'hear and see', the ' legislator', Aristotle urges, 'should be more careful to drive away indecency of speech; for the light utterance of shameful words leads soon to shameful actions.'[35] But not only this, he goes so far as to promulgate a sort of indecent representation Act of ours: 'And since we do not allow improper language, clearly we should also banish pictures or speeches from the stage which are indecent.'[36] The second moment—the way Aristotle would endorse Cicero is reflected in the way he reserves a category for 'speeches of eulogy and attack.'[37] 'All eulogy is based upon the noble deeds—real or imaginary—that stand to the credit of those eulogized. On the same principle, invectives are based on facts of the opposite kind: the orator looks to see what the base deeds—real or imaginary—stand to the discredit of those he is attacking, such as the treachery to the cause of Hellenic freedo[m].'[38] Further, in absolute concurrence with Cicero, Aristotle urges the skilled speaker's 'power to stir the emotions of his hearers.'[39] Cicero, thereby, was then a representative who pushed this thought to extremes.

With this we reach a certain benchmark of the first phase of invectives—and the way to understand them. But Cicero apart there was Diogenes. Hegel, while wanting to address the cynics and talking about Diogenes, remembered him for 'his biting and often clever hits, and bitter and sarcastic retorts.'[40] But could Diogenes's bitter retorts be taken as a precedent for invectives in political modernity? Hardly so; Diogenes's cynicism was, Hegel points out, 'more a mode of living than a philosophy.'[41] This 'mode of living' (where philosophy itself was a way of life) in Diogenes bore peculiar results: He is said to have been gifted with the habit of masturbating in public. When asked he is reported to have said, he was experimenting whether hunger could be appeased in a similar manner—just by rubbing the stomach.[42]

In this light, what is so distinctive about Aristotle and which cannot be invoked in justifying today's deliberative democratic reasoning, or its exceptions is that, political deliberation in Aristotle is framed within an art of rhetoric as a form of skill or technique giving directions to decisions and a particular way of life. While it was to persuade the hearers about a particular action (for instance whether Athens should go to war); today's political deliberation begins with the vow to settle disagreement. Aristotelian deliberation is not a means to pursue political legitimacy as in today's governance. It is rather oriented to a form of practical rationality. And perhaps

for this reason he had a place for personal invectives and emotions because they invoke separate kinds of proofs and syllogisms. This supreme rhetorical necessity (not being a rational necessity) is unimaginable in impersonal modernity.

Amidst the medieval imagination of invectives, the most famous legacy has been borne by the anti-clerical writers, 'in the generation immediately preceding the reformation'[43], who were energized by the writings of Luther. A historian studying this lineage mentions, 'Much of the resulting literature of invective and abuse had been produced by the most learned humanists of the age, but they had generally written in self-consciously demotic style, usually publishing in the vernacular and often presenting their arguments in the form of plays and satires in verse.'[44] The bulk of its abusive content is its attack on the church who is 'depicted as Mother Fool' and who 'spends her time plotting and machinating with all the fools of the age.'[45] This results in the expected insistence 'that all clerics are lecherous, and that all money given by the pious laity for the saying of masses is 'spent among wanton lasses.'[46]

While this time it is the church, the next turn is marked by invectives turning against the state itself. In the 18th century, we've to reckon with the hatching of a political pornography in a descriptive sense—the theorization of which is derivatively based on the so called porno-theorists (Sometimes called low life litterateurs of the French Revolution and excavated by Low Literature Historians like Darnton[47]) and directed against the state. (Though enlightenment heroes like Diderot would—through *Memoirs of a Nun* still explore the sexual corruptions of the church but that critique had become, by then, clearly redundant). These researches reveal that intense personal-political attacks based on pornographic 'scatological imagery' in pamphlets performed a historical and revolutionary role[48] against Marie Antoinette during the late 18th century; while the Bourbon Kings—Louis XV was dubbed as sexually promiscuous—libertine, pornographic pictures of Louis XVI were circulated among the population showing him as impotent. These, according to an author, went on to 'discredit the monarchy as an institution and to desacralize the King's body...the aristocracy, and clergy.'[49] De-sacralizing the royal body finally engendered the birth of the republic.

But the force of a personalized persuasion was not lost, at least historically. It was picked up by the Fascists in the 20th century. One who studied this project in some tenuous but reliable detail is Theodor Adorno who starts with a very helpful, thumbnail observation:

This is one of its most important patterns. People are 'let in', they are supposedly getting the inside dope, taken into confidence, treated as the elite who deserves to know the lurid mysteries hidden from the outsiders. Lust for snooping is both encouraged and satisfied. Scandal stories, mostly fictitious, particularly of sexual excesses and atrocities are constantly told; the indignation of filth and cruelty is but a very thin, purposely transparent rationalization of the pleasure these stories convey to the listener.[50]

Supposedly for Adorno, the fascists thus aim the irrational and can successfully impart their 'mental defects' to the listeners but this they do not do by sheer abuse but by a crafted method of 'personalized' persuasion[51] (previously we had shown in the wake of Cicero how this has had its sources and justifications in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*). It is irrational because Adorno tells us that it is non-argumentative, anti-theoretical and not based on a discursive logic of reasoning footed to convince people. What is its substance then? According to Adorno they are 'oratorial exhibitions, what might be called an organized flight of ideas.'[52]

If the Greek Ciceroian to the communist or the fascist orator are master politicians of (official) personalistic dirty hands, we've shown and shall talk about more on how the non-violent times of democracy could be more subversive—though in the standard literature, impersonal, formal legal regimes and the separation of powers in the public political arena have been argued to have been stumbling obstacles to the 'overman' to block his authoritarian plot. But how does it feature and operatically exist in the other modernity requires to be viewed.

Personal Attacks in the Colony and the Post Colony: A Prehistory

Therefore, it is necessary to curve out this history as it featured in a colonial and as it still features in a postcolonial polity, or otherwise we shall be missing the diversity and specificity of historical voices and would be assuming, much against our broad intentions, the univocity of just one imperial reason, and a single imperial canon. To do this we shall hatch on to a representative modern icon: Bankimchandra Chatterjee, since in his writings, it is established by now, the discursive foundations of modernity and modernism are supposed to have been most emphatically drawn.

While reviewing Ishwarchandra Gupta—a 19th century Bengali soft satirist's collection of poems, Bankim praises *kabir larai* for staging 'abuse without enmity'[53]; he seems to hold the view that Gupta, having been brought up in that tradition, has written verses which

are free of *bidwesh* (hate or grudge or indignity).[54] Having said that, Bankim now emerges with the grand comparison, he is quick to notice that European satire is full of jealousy, bad blood, and indignation that devastates and depresses people. 'Various European bad commodities ('kusamagri') are entering this country; this killing comedy ('narghatini rasikata') has also made its entry.'[55] Iswar Gupta abuses without 'anger and enmity'; his is a satire without indignation ('biddeshhin byango'). His only determination is, he has to defeat the Brahmin in the use of corrupt language (*kubhasa*). Bankim does acknowledge that at times, Gupta is obscene but with a qualification: his obscenity is inspired by his genuine anger on artificialness—for instance 'artificial politics'. 'Often Iswar Gupta's obscenity derives from this anger' [which is] 'not true obscenity.'[56] So this is artificial obscenity in responsible response to a false politics. But then, what is real, genuine or true obscenity according to Bankim? One of the architects of the Obscenity Law in India, Bankim, argues that which is aimed at exciting the senses or expresses the nasty robustness of the author[57] is truly obscene—even if it is written in a 'pure… language'; but in cases where it is deployed to condemn or parodize sin and only sin, it is far from being obscene—even if it goes against the apparently standard structures of taste and civilization. A significant discursive resonance in Bankim's oeuvre is the way he captures obscenity as crass sensuality aimed at corrupting the morals of the reader which nearly coincides even unites with the primary and founding definitions of obscenity and pornography in the West.

The denigration and withering of ritual abuses and 'personal attacks' through *kheur* and the will to be incorporated within the grand project of modernity in order to civilize[58] dissent summarizes the state of things with us today—here and now. This question of culture later was translated to become a matter of political culture in the post colony, and the issue of civility soon became a placeholder for democracy. The paradigm was prefaced by the importation of an impersonal principle based politics pitted against personal interest based politics as in the West.

Thus, the ritualistic mooring of personal attacks, resembling the colony, is not altogether lost even in the post colony and it gravitates toward, and contaminates the singularity of an evolving politics. An essay by anthropologist Lawrence Cohen, titled 'Holi in Banaras and the Mahaland of Modernity'[59], could be considered in which Cohen documents an interesting cartoon among numerous others showing a man labelled as the *sikhandin janata* (meaning eunuch

or helpless people) having in his mouth the member of a man with a politician's congress cap (labelled as the '*gandu neta*') while being sodomised by a man standing behind in police uniform (with the label '*jhandu police*'). The circulation of these thin booklets particularly during the immensely popular Holi festival in Benares exhibits its incorporation within the ritual paradigm of festivity and the element of obscenity in a nearly carnivalesque manner. But what is remarkable about these are the common motif of condemnation where the victim is the member of the ordinary public, and which overrides all party lines. The narrative of mobilization in postcolonial India inheres in the structural pre-formation present in the above and is directed against the whole political class. We could briefly reflect on the foregone Section before we move on to the next: the objection of impersonally principled politics against a politics of the personal style was raised only after the colonial, politico-civilizing mission had arrived; what had pre-existed was the realm of personal abuses and attacks within the folk norms of ritualistic more; we could see Bankim—the modernizer striking a balance with a modern poser. This ritualistic remnant of personal invectives, in the post colonial predicament, is absorbed in the festive prolongation of Holi in Benares.

However, all along, the colonizing logic or ruse of colonial governance—which extends to contemporary times—was to bring the native to some kind of deliberative and decisive competence for self ownership. Here, therefore, the deliberative competence that is often asked for is seen with some justifiable and historically evolved suspicion. This is not unfounded. The communicative competence to insert civility into political questions (as we noticed in the Indian phase of invectives) would have to undergo, perhaps, for always a hermeneutics of suspicion. This historically correct caveat would precede any requirement for an impersonal civility to be instituted through impersonation and smuggled to the domain of democracy. Incivility can then feature only as a political question and as a kind of original contamination felt by constitutional questions. *Byaktigat* or personal inscribed within the norms of *bhodrotabidhi* or norms of civility is very differently political here. And this difference was historically recovered the moment we pushed the question of personal attacks to higher degrees: political pornography where the political and the erotic or the uncivil interrupt each other at the moment when power erupted and corrupted even the monarchical absolute.

How the Seduction of Pure Politics Disengaged the Person-Al,

Therefore, we tended to stumble against the impersonal nature of the public sphere in the wake of political modernity after having examined the historical trajectory of the so called personal attacks, where the personal being subjected to the regime of personal attacks, appeared without a mask. The politics of liberal idealism, in this sense, seems to offer 'a clean glove of legitimacy'[60] for dirty hands. At a particular site i.e., politics and at the level of rhetoric, we engaged with such a liberal-idealistic, concrete counter discourse which registered complaints such as personal attacks push out the impersonal discourse of 'principled governance' and pollutes a democratic political and a growing, albeit good modern, civic culture. This is in genuine consonance with the classical Weberian formulation. Now, in such a context where the personal-particular subverts and transcends the public-universal garb, it is often that personal attacks try, with or without success, in piercing this silencing, civil veil and address the illegitimate. And for the second objection—in this context—it was easily concluded (though it is not central to my argument) that the notion of civility, for instance, in India today is a matter of political sphere and not at all of civil society, therefore an advice of civility has to be politically negotiated than received as 'unmediated' discourse on civic virtues. In short, civility and violent disagreement could never go together. How peace and civility could be seen as being complicit with an (un)fairly (we are remembering Rawls here) unjust system[61] was also examined in the wake of the phenomenon of agreement with approved ways of protest. While we do a lot of lip service against violence, let us not forget to examine peace, too. Pure politics or, the politics of dirty hands made up of betrayal, malice, fraud, deception and treachery is politics in the times of peace: this was Machiavelli with a modern turn.

But this ought not to mean we are engaged in that infantile tryst to justify the personal through personal attacks; it would be similar to arguing like Mandeville that private vices necessitate public benefits and exposure of such vices would reap public benefits. A rational choice theory would surmise that if private interests are at stake equally—it may be so—that both will avoid exposure beyond a threshold; further, they can be feigned, they can be staged and they might just be deployed to override the propositional form of public reasoning, or, they can be used as a convenient form of silencing or listening. Our argument is not at all this. We are satisfied having shown that personal attacks did reveal to us the overriding

nature of the personal over the public and the private. It helped us arrive at the examination of the public nature of political modernity itself. And the moment we ventured into the so-called 'political pornography', dangerous vistas appeared.

Similarly, our relational and other—even official affinities— suddenly seem to have been tattooed, if we look in this light, by deception, betrayal, malice, backstabbing, envy and other propaganda. And we find it everywhere, from our first orientation to the second person to our last orientation to the third person plural. Examples are rife and always happening. With this we've departed from the established, surveyed usage of 'dirty politics' in terms of politicians only. Therefore, it is—as if—for public interest that his hands are dirty; we've done away with this long lasting explanation and brought the phenomenon down to the floor of our everyday living, which also—in a way—corroborates our argument that it is not always that a just war is being waged, under compulsion, with unjust means and it is with persons, as private or public individuals, who transcend the norms of privacy or publicity to engage in dirty hands. The context of an explicit, open violence is clearly redundant.

> If there were a clear line which marked the limit of manoeuvre, then there would finally be no Dirty Hands problem.[62] But we order or at least license our agents to pursue policies which cannot be translated into action, if honesty and openness are required too. The casualties of urban renewal, for instance, are greater if the plans are known in advance. The resulting blight then has to be remedied by wider destruction of property and community. Yet secrecy demands a firm lie in the face of questions. Thus, the family promised safety today will be Glencoed tomorrow. This too is violence, even if the weapon is not a musket but a clearance order.[63]

I'll disagree; I shall argue this clearance order is in the times of peace.

It would not be perfect, or well tailored, to call this violence; since not war, this is politics in the times of peace and why this is worst than violence will be told later. We've named them under one rubric: 'pure politics'. Now, perhaps, we are aware of the problems that this pure in phenomenology has suffered in the hands of—say—deconstructive criticism. But we are not trying to deploy 'pure' in the sense of absolute inwardness, solitary, free, etc., we're using it in the Piercian sense of brute facts (and a few more words will be laid down below). This apart—it may be found in Derrida himself, if we are not wrong, a catalogue of lexemes named as un-deconstructible: hospitality, justice, etc. Now, will it be quite a

sacrilege if undeconstructible is referred to as pure?

Let us grapple with an evident objection to this which could be the following: 'The truth is that, relative to the 'pure' position of transcendent judgment, such political acts are always, one way or another, 'dirty', mixed, impure, compromises or approximations.'[64] Therefore, if we are to say the status of transcendental, political judgment is pure, the politics expressed or experienced is always already impure, dirty; what does it mean to express, then, pure politics? A neutral, more universal and harmless explanation is offered by the same author here: 'Politics—even political philosophy at its most pure—is 'dirty'. Dirtiness is not a flaw or degradation; rather it names the necessity that politics itself emerges insofar as power is presented in judgment.'[65] In this view, immanent judgment—in this or that—everydayness—is already a fall and predestined to be dirty. The weight of this argument, turned on itself, surely must make space for a transcendentally impure politics; it denies, or it cannot think transcendence in immanence.[66]

However, we did not make it explicit—though we mentioned— that only a phenomenology of the political could make sense or go near as to what could be pure politics, and how one could begin talking about it is well said by Pierce (who remains unsung in this context with Husserl, Schutz and Ricoeur hogging all the light):

> A court may issue *injunctions* and *judgments* against me and I not care a snap of my fingers for them. I may think them idle vapour. But when I feel the sheriff's hand on my shoulder, I shall begin to have a sense of actuality. Actuality is Something *brute*. There is no reason in it.[67]

Secondly, what we mean by 'experiencing the political' isn't an ever increasing stock of happenings and events catalogued in a particular cognition; it would rather entail—if we are correct— what we would call a feeling of the political or, a bit more inexactly 'political feeling'. This feeling, again drawing from Pierce, is not subject to psychological laws and is not within the contours of a political psychology. An intimate touch may be likened to a good feeling of fondness or may be revolting or anything else: it is nearly impossible to generalize this at the level of the feeling. 'It is a state...a quality of immediate consciousness.' To foster this sense, we wrote— the experience of the 'pure' political could be narrated or described but a narratology out of it is quite distant and more often than not, an impossibility.

Politics in the times of peace is smeared with fierce politicking and it has destroyed more people than all wars and pogroms added;

so in order to dispel some aura around it, we also proposed a negative theory of peace. This theory does not entail debunking peace—the way Rousseau does it in the text quoted in the Section, rather it would lead, the moment we find its liaison with the politics of dirty hands, to a state of neither war nor peace. But this teleology apart, what could be such a formulation of peace? We think one of the primary theories of peace may be traced back to Aristotle where peace is connected to leisure since 'leisure which comes with peace' and also peace is the end of war and leisure is the end of toil. Peace is a kind of virtue that is derived from leisure.[68]

Now, the state of political pornography which we try to articulate as a collection of statements on the politics of dirty hands, can be had, derivatively from the above. Peace with its alliance with leisure gives truth also its power of governance. Truth is tied to leisure and comfort and such a liaison can take un-assumable forms—even that of lying. When its alliance is harangued or broken, it tends to become obscene and thus pornographic. In the main text we talked about it but in a sweeping mode. Here let us do some tinkering: '[w]hat we need to see does not involve any interior secret or the discovery of a more nocturnal world.'[69] Rather, it feeds, parasitically perhaps, on the fact-sheet spread before us like bones under non-violent light. So long as this mission is maintained, in order not to sacrifice one's own nature, even lying is comfortable, (in Bengali there goes a saying: 'It is better not to speak than utter 'opriyo satyi katha' [uncomfortable truths]; this endorses that what establishes truth as truth is its kinship with comfort than any substantive nuance). And as we tried to designate pornography by saying, it is 'giving names to persons or things beyond a threshold' we meant just this. Related to the (un)speakable experience of the political: the scream after being backstabbed or betrayed; here we are dealing with its felicity conditions; 'nothing that Machiavelli said...was really novel to his readers. They knew—everyone had always known—that politics is a dirty business'[70]; (given my argument and reiterated time and again—this phenomenon has to be stretched to all departments of existence and not only limited to the affairs of the State as Machiavelli and Kristol or Walzer does, at least that is the only way to reckon with Bengali novels where the middleclass *bhadralok*, will inevitably scream at least for once, '*sala, sab jaigay politics*' [damn it, everywhere there is politics]).

Here, let us anticipate another possible question and try to answer it: If we are saying that lying, deception, betrayal, backstabbing—these are techniques, one might wonder ...for

instance—whether they are at all political or not! Is lying or deception innately political? Or there are conditions when lying or deception become political? It won't be quite right to think lying or deceiving are innately political categories, I think they are phenomenological ones and in this sense they are pre-political (the sense in which Althusser connects Machiavelli with 'primitive political accumulation'): they provide the conditions by which the experience of the political becomes possible. And because they are a sort of a priori and are, in this sense, pure, they cannot themselves be subjected to the contingency of facts. A proof of this? We know what lying is but still we are cheated everyday. And with a vulgar but tempting variation of Levinas[71]—we might argue or designate the way in which the liar presents himself, exceeding the idea of lie in me, is *the face*, of the liar. And Machiavelli is obscene when, as one will have found in the article, he wants to regulate facts as value-ideals to be adopted to be successful; he is best when he says there are no fixed rules and he does say so.[72] And Kant is bang on the point when he discusses malice in this regard,: 'Men prone to this vice will seek, for instance, to make mischief between husband and wife, or between friends, and then enjoy the misery they have produced. ... The defence against such mischief makers is upright conduct. Not by words but by our lives we should confute them.'[73]

Conclusion

The undeconstructible, pure nature of this experience—becomes explicit by now. With this it would be possible to close up by following up once again how this whole discussion is relevant to our subject: personal as beyond private and public and how this could be related to divergent but related discussion on the same subject. First, politics in the times of peace! This is to rehearse for the first time, far from defining politics as 'the way to organize and optimize the technological seizure of beings at the level of the nation.'[74] It is rather the technological seizure of beings at the level of the person. We may begin or end with this vision. But as we had noticed: the personal was required to have been expelled from the public sphere for its incalculable, irrational emotional, deceptive signification. There are several ways, which have been tested throughout, to normalize this consequence: Aristotle expounds virtues for the political speakers and the moment we understand that these virtues can be feigned, we are into the scandal proposed by Nietzsche and Machiavelli. This deception at the level of the person forms a

cornerstone of this paper. Finally, where does this discussion might lead to in more worthy hands, could be well pointed out by the help of Althusser, who was, it seems to me, positively stumped by the presence of Machiavelli:

> [w]e can say: there are not two ways of governing men—by laws' [I'll say—by consent] 'and by force—but three—by laws, force and fraud. But as soon as this statement has been made, we realize that fraud is not a mode of government like the others; it is not on the same level. Laws exist—let us as say as human institutions, recognized rules and opinions; force exists—let us say as the army. In contrast, however, fraud possesses no objective existence: it does not exist. If fraud is a way of governing, given that it has no objective existence, it can be employed only when it is based on laws or force. Fraud, then, is not a third form of government; *it is government to the second degree, a manner of governing the other two forms of government:* force and laws. When it utilizes the army, fraud is stratagem; when it utilizes law, it is political guile. Fraud thus opens up a space, beyond force and laws, for diverting their existence—a space in which force and laws are substituted for, feigned, deformed, and circumvented. Mastery of fraud in the Prince [and all of us] is the distance that allows him [and us] to play at will on the existence of force and laws, to exploit and, in the strongest sense of the word, feign them.[75]

The personal then opens us up to a third invisible form of governance, and our beginner's argument as to how the person-al overflows the public and the private and can play with them by fraud, deception and treachery—or dirty hands, we believe, now comes full circle.

How do we conclude then? The personal to impersonal transit in modernity proposed by Weber undergoes an abortion because of an illegitimate marriage between Nietzsche and Machiavelli? Or to put more sharply, Weber destroyed by Nietzsche? Does the text comment on the theory of modernity which harps again and again on the private/public division wanting to forget that the person and the personal are capable of playing with both? But Weber was not so naïve; in the wake of the scienticization of the public sphere, he did see a withering away of the value-ideals with rational scientific activity failing to fill the lack of what it has destroyed. What Nietzsche showed was that these values, considered genealogically, could be shown to have been inconsistent: altruism for weakness, honeyed words for wickedness etc., Machiavelli's counter work was to re-state these facts as values: For instance this was formulated by Machiavelli way back in 1513, 'Everyone sees what you seem to be, few know what you really are and those few do not dare take a stand

against the general opinion. The masses are always impressed by the superficial appearance of things.....'[76]

This was unnecessary since we already live in the world of these facts. People misunderstand Machiavelli by alleging that he had documented anti-values wanting to regulate them as 'virtues'; but this is mistaken; he was involved in an impossible project where facts and values suffer a reversal: he restated facts as values and scandalized everybody. But this is unnecessary and excessive, in brief—giving names to things and persons beyond the (empirical) threshold and, thus, an act which is pornographic. Irving Kristol sensed it quite well but touched the wrong chord when he called Machiavelli a political pornographer.[77] Kristol may have intended a discourse—which while stating facts in this way avoids a figurative language that could have hid much of its sting. In this sense also, the description is apt: what is pornography if not the absence of figures or figuration. But this also, considered at a higher level, goes against the primary description of the political as pertaining to the problem of identity as a founding fiction masquerading as the essence of the political. In recent attempts to isolate the 'poetic or figural (figurative, even) essence of politics'[78] and therefore hit at the institutional root of western political thought, it would not be too fanciful to find its beginning in these Machiavellian insights. Meaning when takes figure becomes totalitarian truth or truth in itself is totalitarian in as much as it 'effaces transcendence'[79]; but the Machiavellian in his affirmation to open up, always, to the unstable play and ploy of figural identification in politics, denies to settle at a particular site of identification and, therefore, the recent interrogation, marked by questions like 'is there something which would allow the political to be thought outside of the will to figure? can the political be thought, finally, in a way which does not stem from the will to realize its essence as figure?'[80] has to be acknowledged as having been originally, though differently, formulated by Machiavelli. (Machiavelli having not had access to our modernity addressed himself to the person of the sovereign—this should be remembered well and all the time. The deeply debated distinction between facticity and validity or between facts and norms was not available to Machiavelli in the contemporary sense. Nevertheless, one finds even Althusser in his book on Machiavelli rightly celebrating him for reasons that we have already tabled above).

Finally, back to Weber again. While he was charting the disenchantment of the personal world of informal communities in

modernity, couldn't he sense this? He did but offered no solution. Through the structure of 'probity' the person in an act of self-legislation has to choose or abandon value-ideals within a particular life-sphere: henceforth, virtue or sin nothing comes with a warranty any more, which means that the person will speak to Aristotle to end preaching his catalogue of virtues; s/he will tell Machiavelli or De Sade not to display their table of brute 'facts' to be adopted as value-ideals too. No general option can be regulated because, and this is what is interesting in Weber, in as much as what he tried to show was that modernity has entailed the differentiation of life-spheres into irreconcilable compartments: political, aesthetic, religious, economic etc. Irreconcilable, because as Weber and Habermas have reminded us that they have emerged with their own criteria of validity. But there is a twist here; Weber has an interesting item to add: the erotic. (Habermas has a list too: Science, Morality and Art but the erotic is missing). Now this is interesting. The erotic is then not reconcilable with the political. (Hannah Arendt and Habermas would insist much against the feminist fury that 'take the private to the public' for redressal is finally problematic in the face of their own distinctive validity claims.) What happens then to political pornography, pure politics, etc., of which we've talked considerably?

We could now end up by posing this question so that we can help bring our own text to a crisis, but as a resolution promise how this will be dealt with in the future. Let us just dramatize this energy of irreconcilability by recalling how in the modern times or even contemporaneously a singer, a writer or an academician embedded in the worlds of music, social science or literature would complain of *politics* again and again happening to them? Consider this from Weber himself while he was considering people who choose science as their vocation:

> But we also have to ask all the others to examine their conscience and answer the question: 'Do you believe you could bear to see mediocrities getting ahead of you year after year without feeling inwardly embittered and crushed?'[81]

Or consider this from Geoffrey Boycott, the legendary batsman cricketer, talking about Fred Trueman, another great:

> Of course it is me. It's my character. But it's their character, too. Take Fred Trueman. He started it... when the club decided to dispense with my services he slagged me off. He couldn't even bring himself to say I were a good player. He said, 'If I get back on the committee I still won't give

Boycott a contract.' Well that was tantamount to saying, 'Fuck you , then.'...He had to belittle me. I was hurt.... It was dirty tactics, that. ... If he walked through the door now I'd say, ' what have I ever done to you?'[82]

Politics within the academia and 'dirty tactics' related to cricket. How is this possible? But while such complaints could be made and even entertained, they definitely cannot be resolved within these life spheres—and that is the reason why such complainants, could feel aghast and helpless; helpless being challenged by the internal norms of validation of these departments of existence. What are we to do? Shall we call for integrity of the public and the private? Or shall we invoke a strict separation?[83]

The answers to these questions must come, or emerge, *from* (yes, from) the future—since the future is the 'supreme anachronism': 'For the future is the time in which we may not be, and yet we must imagine we will have been.'[84]

NOTES

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, 'On the Genealogy of Morals' in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, transl. & ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), p. 226.

2. For those—among others—which are available on SSRN [Social Science Research Network] or other web consortiums especially see 'Beyond Private And Public: New Perspectives on Personal and Personalist Social Work', *The Indian Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 67, No. 3 (2006); 'Response to "From Ambedkar to Thakkar and Beyond",' *Economic And Political Weekly*, Vol. XLIII, No. 51 (Dec. 20-26, 2008), pp. 73-75; and 'Corporate Social Work or "Being" Empowered and 'Doing' Empowerment: Preface to a Discourse Ethical Monitoring of the Capability Approach', *Journal of Human Values*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (2011), pp. 161-170.

3. Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, trans. Louis Infield (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 215.

4. David Owen, *Maturity And Modernity: Nietzsche, Weber, Foucault and the Ambivalence of Reason* (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 117.

5. Max Weber, *Economy And Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Vol. II, eds. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich [1968] (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 975.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Max Weber, 'Intermediate Reflections on the Economic Ethics of the World Religions: Theory of the Stages and Directions of Religious Rejection of the World' in Sam Whimster (ed.), *The Essential Weber: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 222.

9. But Weber's critics, particularly Karl Fischer invokes John Stuart Mill in order to explain the emerging capitalist attitude, and argues, how money being an impersonal means to achieving things, becomes by a sleight of transference, the loved object-end itself. See Karl Fischer, 'Karl Fischer's Review of *The Protestant Ethic, 1907*', trans. Austin Harrington and Mary Shields, in David J. Chalcraft and Austin Harrington (eds.), *The Protestant Ethic Debate: Max Weber's Replies to his Critics*

1907-1910 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2001), pp. 28-29. Does this personalize the impersonal medium of money? Hardly so. Simmel elaborately shows how the money economy mediates and carpets the hiatus between possession and personality unlike the ancient Germanic law, thereby personality becoming increasingly impotent to possess (the medium) that dispossesses. We shall return to this historical point later. See Georg Simmel, *The Philosophy of Money*, trans. Tom Bottomore and David Frisby (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 334.

10. But Weber does note the exception in the attempt to personalize the nearly impossible credit machine in China, which resulted in the two way emergence of formal and material rationality, often, in conflict with each other. See Whimster (ed.), *The Essential Weber*, p. 222.

11. The revision in Weber was evident in some of his later formulations where he seemed to have been stressing on the power of informal networks and personal warranties for the purposes of credit lending imminent in particular sect societies. For a richer discussion see Benjamin Cornwell, 'The Protestant Sect Credit Machine: Social Capital and the Rise of Capitalism', *Journal of Classical Sociology*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (2007), pp. 267-290.

12. Throughout I've taken 'personal attacks' as they have been projected (within quotation marks) without distinguishing it from assaultive speech, libel, abuse, insinuation, invective and insult in terms of rhetoric and oratory. This specific legal-juridical exercise is beyond the scope of this article.

13. Miguel de Beistegui, *Heidegger and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 71.

14. An early statement of this is Michael Walzer, 'Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1973), pp. 160-180. Evidently though—the limitation of Walzer is in limiting the problem of dirty hands to governmental or public outcomes only.

15. '...[t]he problem of dirty hands is thought to be situated somewhere in between public and private. In this view, it is understood as a kind of discontinuity between the two spheres': J. Van Oosterhout, *The Quest for Legitimacy: On Authority and Responsibility in Governance*, (Rotterdam: Erasmus Research Institute of Management [ERIM], Erasmus University, 2000), p. 73.

16. Excerpts from 'The Problem of Choice' in Philip Green and Michael Walzer (eds.), *The Political Imagination in Literature: A Reader* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), pp. 208-210.

17. Jean Paul Sartre, excerpts from *Dirty Hands* in Philip Green and Michael Walzer (eds.), *The Political Imagination in Literature: A Reader* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 210.

18. Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2000), pp. 51-52.

19. 'Egoistic and professional forces may become conflated in reality and indistinguishable in practice. Machiavelli's advice illuminates this difficult problem': Laurie Calhoun, 'The Problem of 'dirty Hands' and Corrupt Leadership', *The Independent Review*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (2004), p. 384.

20. Charles Taylor, 'Modern Social Imaginaries', *Public Culture*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2002), p. 91.

21. And Machiavellism with all its moral pessimism and secular empiricism 'can be applied with the same force not only to the work of Kautilya but to the entire range of Hindu economic, legal and political literature': Benoy Kumar Sarkar,

The Positive Background of Hindu Sociology: Introduction to Hindu Positivism (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1985), p. 640.

22. 'Pure violence 'shows' itself precisely in the fact that it never appears *as such'*. For instance, lying or deception in order to be successful resembles a truth structure. This is the figurative essence of politics as I understand it and agree that they have the force to foreground identities. But I do not use it in the sense that it is the condition of every performative act (like saying 'all truths are fictions' or falsity is the phantasmatic base on which truth, indispensably, operates) entailing an unmediated immediacy or 'pure mediacy' so much so that 'that would mean, then, the death of the subject because the duality subject/object would have been entirely eliminated': Ernesto Laclau and Lilian Zac, 'Minding the Gap: The Subject of Politics' in Ernesto Laclau (ed.) *The Making of Political Identities* (London: Verso,1994), pp. 26-27. In this sense we retain the Kantian use of 'malice' as something more than violence (and therefore different from violence as such) and we use the rubric 'politics' to refer to all of these.

23. 'Whatever else a phenomenology of the political may offer, it should begin as a reflection on the first-person experience of the political.. to begin with a reflection on political experience': Steven Galt Crowell, ' Who is the Political Actor? An Existential Phenomenological Approach' in Kevin Thompson and Lester Embree (eds.), *Phenomenology of the Political* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000), p. 11.

24. We borrow this phrase and use it to our purpose from Norbert Elias, 'Time and Timing' in *On Civilization, Power and Knowledge: Selected Writings*, eds. Stephen Mennell and Johan Goudsblom (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 253-259.

25. Though this is in refutation of Sutherland's forceful thesis that the 'The dirty hands leader, by definition, operates quite alone in a supra ethical realm of elitist thinking' which is at odds in a democratic milieu, his other modification is largely acceptable where he raises doubts about such lone actions: 'The meaning of a particular politically intended action, rather, is not a pure philosophical concept, but can be puzzling even to the actors, who may have had confused motives, and is ultimately lost to the protagonist, being negotiated in society': S. L Sutherland, 'The Problem of Dirty Hands in Politics: Peace in the Vegetable Trade', *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (1995), pp. 506-507.

26. 'Tragic remorse is the sentiment we feel when we are moved by moral concerns to commit moral violations and in so doing suffer anguish, ... and a sense of moral pollution in addition to the usual feelings of guilt and shame that ordinarily accompany moral violations': Stephen De Wijze, 'Tragic Remorse—The Anguish of Dirty Hands', *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, Vol. 7, No. 5 (2005), p. 470.

27. Michael Walzer, 'Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1973), p. 176.

28. Peter Digester, 'Forgiveness and Politics: Dirty Hands and Imperfect Procedures', *Political Theory*, Vol. 26, No. 5 (1998), p. 717; the bracketed elaborations are from p. 708.

29. Peter Bratsis, 'The Construction of Corruption, or Rules of Separation and Illusions of Purity in Bourgeois Societies', *Social Text* 77, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Winter 2003), pp. 27-28.

30. Slavoj Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies* (London: Verso, 1997), p. 73.

31. Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, p. 215.

32. Arthur Koestler, excerpts from *Darkness at Noon* in Philip Green and Michael Walzer (eds.), *The Political Imagination in Literature* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 199.

33. Cicero, 'Attack on an enemy of Freedom: *The Second Philippic Against Antony*' in his *Selected Works,* trans. M. Grant (London: Penguin Books, 1971).

34. Ibid.

35. Aristotle, *Politics* in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), p. 1304.

36. '...except in the temples of those gods at whose festivals the law permits even ribaldry...' ; within the realm of his permission, Aristotle tends to include mature people also. Ibid.

37. Aristotle, *Rhetorica* in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), p. 1409.

38. Ibid., p. 1418.

39. Ibid., p. 1318.

40. G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 1, trans. E. S. Haldane [1892] (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955), p. 484.

41. Ibid.

42. David Sacks, *Encyclopedia of the Ancient Greek World* (New York: Facts on File Inc., 1995), p. 83.

43. Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, Vol. Two: The Age of Reformation [1978] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 27.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid., p. 28.

46. Ibid., p.29.

47. Especially Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-revolutionary France* (New York: Norton, 1996).

48. But how such radicalism could degenerate into underground commercial pornography as well, see Iain McCalman, *Radical Underworld: Prophets, Revolutionaries and Pornographers in London, 1795-1840* [1988] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

49. Mary L. Bellhouse, 'Erotic "Remedy" Prints and the Fall of the Aristocracy in Eighteenth century France', *Political Theory*, Vol. 25, No. 5 (October 1997), pp. 680-715.

50. Theodor Adorno, 'Anti-Semitism and Fascist Propaganda' in *The Stars Down to Earth and Other Essays on the Irrational in Culture*, ed. Stephen Crook (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 220.

51. 'The relation between premises and inferences is replaced by a linking up of ideas resting on mere similarity, often through association by employing the same characteristic word in two propositions which are logically quite unrelated. This method not only evades the control mechanisms of rational examination, but also makes it psychologically easier for the listener to 'follow.' He has no exacting thinking to do, but can give himself up passively to a stream of words in which he swims': Ibid., p. 223.

52. Ibid., pp. 222-23.

53. *Kabir larai* or the mock fight of poets in 'lewd' verses was an immensely popular cultural form which continued to remain popular till the middle of the nineteenth century in Bengal. The *larai* or fight would be staged mostly around the instantly created extempore 'obscene' parodies of Gods and goddesses orally presented in a running dialogue. Among several structural phases, the third part of the *larai*

named *lahar* or *khessa* would include what a historian calls 'personal attacks'. Absolutely 'vulgar' attacks involving the opponents' parents, lovers or girls in the families, affairs, habits would be called names through rhymes and the audience would applaud being absolutely delighted: Asit Kumar Bandyopadhyay, *Bangla Sahityer Itivritta*, Vol. IV [1973] (Calcutta: Modern Book Agency Pvt. Ltd., 1981), pp. 86-88.

54. Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay, 'Review of *Hindudharmer Sreshtata* by Rajnarayan Basu', in *Bankim Rachanabali*, Vol.II (Calcutta : Sahitya Samsad, 6th reprint, [B.S 1384]).p. 851. [Translation mine]

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Adopting Meaghan Morris we can identify this obscene as that which makes anything 'more visible than the visible' and deals with the secret in a way that exposes its identity as 'more hidden than the hidden': Meaghan Morris, *The Pirates's Fiancee* (London: Verso, 1988), p. 188.

58. This should not of course blind us to the fact that there was always another discourse on civility in the western narrative too: Consider for instance Norbert Ilias when he quotes Erasmus of the sixteenth century, '(Fools who value civility more than health repress natural sounds.) Do not be afraid of vomiting if you must; for it is not vomiting but holding the vomit in your throat that is foul.' See Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners*, trans. E. Jephcott (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), p. 58.

59. Lawrence Cohen, 'Holi in Banaras and the Mahaland of Modernity', *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (1999), pp. 399-424. Nearly all the issues like communal peace etc. and all the national leaders have been 'picturesquely addressed' in these books. I am grateful to Prof. Pradip Bose for suggesting and providing me with this reference.

60. Richard Bellamy, 'Dirty Hands and Clean Gloves: Liberal Ideals and Real Politics', *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (2010), p. 427.

61. 'The principle of cooperation ['with evil'] and double effect are accessible to private individuals, as well as public representatives, and thus there cannot be two moralities': Leslie Griffin, 'The Problem of Dirty Hands', *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1989), p. 53.

62. Martin Hollis, 'Dirty Hands', *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (1982), p. 397.

63. Ibid., p. 396.

64. Douglas Burnham, 'Heidegger, Kant and "Dirty" Politics', *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2007), p. 73.

65. Ibid., p. 84.

66. A much more promising and provoking line of objection to my way of arguing the politics of dirty hands expressed as immanent transcendence is this: 'Accordingly, politics is again a dirty game, in the additional sense that a critical analysis will always find its metaphysical grounds to be impurely taken up, riddled with contradictions or simply an expedient hotchpotch. To the extent that politics always involves ethical action, because of the primacy of the practical, then the 'dirtiness' of the metaphysical grounds of politics must raise ethical problems. As we have seen, ethical action cannot be grounded in or understood through the resources available to metaphysical thought'. Ibid., p. 85.

67. Charles Sanders Pierce, 'The Principles of Phenomenology' in Justus Buchler (ed.), *Philosophical Writings of Pierce* (New York: Dover Publications, 1955), pp. 75-

76.

68. Aristotle, *Politics* in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, pp. 1299-1300. We shall reiterate this in the article which thematizes Gandhi's nonviolence.

69. Michel Foucault, 'A Preface to Transgression', in *Essential Works, Vol. 2: Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. James Daniel Faubion (London: Penguin Books, 2000), p. 82.

70. Irving Kristol, 'Machiavelli and the Profanation of Politics' in *Reflections of a Neo Conservative: Looking Back, Looking Beyond*, Indian imprint (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1986), p. 127.

71. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 50.

72. Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. & ed. Robert M. Adams (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 29.

73. Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, p. 219.

74. Beistegui, *Heidegger and the Political*, p. 71.

75. Louis Althusser, *Machiavelli and Us*, trans. Gregory Eliott (London: Verso, 1999).

76. Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 49.

77. Kristol, 'Machiavelli and the Profanation of Politics', p. 127.

78. Simon Sparks, 'Editor's Introduction: Politica Ficta' in Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *Retreating the Political*, ed. Simon Sparks (London: Routledge, 1997), p. xxi.

79. Ibid., p. xxv.

80. Ibid.

81. Max Weber, 'Science as a Vocation' in *Max Weber's Complete Writings on Academics and Political Vocations*, ed. John Dreijmanis, trans. Gordon C. Wells (New York: Algora Publishing, 2008), p. 30.

82. Nigel Farndale, 'Geoffrey Boycott' in *Flirtation, Seduction, Betrayal: Interviews with the Famous and the Infamous*, (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd., 2002), pp. 35-39.

83. This question has been provocatively dealt with in Arnab Chatterjee 'Is Personal the terrorised Unity of private and Public? Rethinking Gandhi, Integrationism, and the Politics of Pure Means'—originally published in *Sociological Bulletin: Journal of the Indian Sociological Society*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (2010), pp. 407-422.

84. Gillian Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law: Philosophy and Representation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 126.

METAPHYSICS OF ISLAM: A CRITICAL INQUIRY

Maidul Islam

Theology and Ideology: The Overlap in Islam

Aristotle taught us that 'man is by nature a political animal.'[1] In this regard, religious community and religious institution constituted by human association can also be a *political* association. As Robert Dahl suggests that a citizen encounters politics in every humanly made organization, including the church, as 'politics is an unavoidable fact of human existence.'[2] In this respect, the dimensions and boundaries of politics and religion seems to me a fuzzy and artificial one as the western modernist enlightenment tried to bifurcate between the church and the state/politics. Moreover, if politics is primarily concerned with 'good for man',[3] or a political system is defined in terms of 'control, influence, power, or authority'[4] or the space of the 'political' is 'antagonism'[5] representing contestations between varied ideological worldviews, then the meaning of religion certainly can be expanded. As far as the political dimensions of religion in general and the case of Islam in particular are concerned, the very notion of organized religion in general and Islam in particular is essentially *political*. The possibilities and potentialities of 'political' are very much embedded within organized religion. Most organized religions have a sense of 'good' and 'bad', the concept of 'evil' and 'devil' as opposed to 'virtues' and 'purity', the demarcation between morally correct and incorrect and so on. Thus, most organized religions create an internal frontier of antagonism or have multiple forms of antagonisms with the constructions of 'enemies' and the 'other(s)'. These constructions of antagonistic frontiers lead to the *conditions of possibilities* for an emergent conflict, which is basically the starting point of 'politics'. So, political manipulation or maneouvering religion politically is always open because there is already/always a political space embedded within the very idea of organized religion. In this sense then the separation between religion and politics and demarcating the boundaries of religious versus political realms is contestable. Islam is not exceptional to this peculiar characteristic

of internal frontier of antagonism embedded within its theological edifice. Therefore, the arguments of 'politicization' and 'ideologisation' of religion in most academic, journalistic and polemical literature dealing with Islam is naïve and unimpressive, precisely because from the very beginning, the constitution of most organized religions is *political*.

In a pre-modern world, religion seemed to be a worldview and in that sense played its role as a political ideology. Interestingly, it is still an ideology for a significant section of world population with the existence of 'religious fundamentalism' among most organized religions.[6] From here, we can ask, why religion is still regarded as a political ideology by a number of persons and surely with the case of Islam, even if there are competing modern ideologies and even if the dominance of modernity has tried to vilify it as an 'anti-modern', 'backward', 'regressive' entity? Is this because organized religion always offers certain *political* visions so that it can be used by a political agency whenever it needs to do so? Thus, it depends exclusively on the particular political actors, how and whether it is using the space of the 'political' that is inherent in most organized religions. This political element within religion gets support from the *missionary aspect* of religion to grow further, to spread religion across the world, and hence enhance the number of its members belonging to its own authentic community. This missionary project is also the function of narcissism, self-proclamations and truth claims within organized religion like many political ideologies claiming— 'our path right path'. The narcissism of Islam as the only 'right path' can be seen in the Quranic claim of the Final apostle:

> O followers of the Bible! Now there has come unto you Our Apostle, to make clear unto you much of what you have been concealing [from yourselves] of the Bible, and to pardon much. Now there has come unto you from God a light, and a clear divine writ, through which God shows unto all that seek His goodly acceptance the paths leading to salvation and, by His grace, brings them out of the depths of darkness into the light and guides them onto a straight way. Indeed, the truth denies they who say, 'Behold, God is the Christ, son of Mary.' Say: 'And who could have prevailed with God in any way had it been His will to destroy the Christ, son of Mary, and his mother, and everyone who is on earth—all of them? For, God's is the dominion over the heavens and the earth and all that is between them; He creates what He wills: and God has the power to will anything!' And [both] the Jews and the Christians say, 'We are God's children, and His beloved ones.' Say: 'Why, then, does He cause you to suffer for your sins? Nay, you are but human beings of His creating. He forgives whom He wills, and He causes to suffer whom He wills: for God's

is the dominion over the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, and with Him is all journeys' end.' O followers of the Bible! Now, after a long time during which no apostles have appeared, there has come unto you [this] Our Apostle to make [the truth] clear to you, lest you say, 'No bearer of glad tidings has come unto us, nor any warner': for now there has come unto you a bearer of glad tidings and a warner—since God has the power to will anything. And, LO, Moses said unto his people: 'O my people! Remember the blessings which God bestowed upon you when he raised up prophets among you, and made you your own masters, and granted unto you [favours] such as He had not granted to anyone else in the world.[7]

The missionary aspect of preaching religion to include more people inside its fold while struggling with 'other' competing ideological worldviews, including *other religions* with an aspiration to be dominant is related to the question of *empowerment* and *relative strength* of any organized religion. These are essentially political questions, fundamentally connected to the very concept of power and the desire of a religion to be more powerful than any 'other' entity. If power and ideological worldview are the focal points of politics, then the normative question of how religion 'ought' to be or whether religion *should* be 'political' might encounter an ontological question—whether the *existence* of religion is essentially political or whether the political (id)entity is constitutive of religion, making it difficult for the political theorist to segregate politics from religion. To ignore the political identity of religion and to distinguish between religion and politics by equating religion with the private sphere and politics with the public sphere is, therefore, a futile task and would be a continuation of the erroneous construct of the mainstream of the western Enlightenment.[8] This Enlightenment separation between religion and politics has in fact shown its limits with the return/re-turn of religion haunting the political spheres of even modern western countries and certainly in contemporary Muslim societies. So, if religion exists in society, then the possibilities of political challenge of religion also exist as well. To locate such political dimensions of Islam, this paper is primarily anchored by two theoretical frameworks: (a) psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan and (b) post-Marxist combination of Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek who are indebted to the Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis. At the same time, in analyzing the metaphysics of Islam from a critical perspective, let us also take refuge in some children's stories from the *Quran*, and writings on theology and history of Islam.

Stories from the Quran*: A Psychoanalytical Deconstruction*

Children's stories are not as simple as it appears. It is during the formative years of childhood that faith in religion often becomes deep rooted by following these stories. Therefore, let us have a deeper and matured reading of children's stories. The *Stories from the Quran* series claims that it 'is written for very young children as an introduction to the enchanting and timeless stories found in the Quran.'[9] One such story is about the creation:

> *In the beginning there was only God. God was alone. Then He decided to make everything. He said: 'Be!' And everything was made.* God made light from dark. From the light He made angels and in the dark He placed stars. Millions of them! Then He made galaxies and comets, planets and the Milky Way. Then God made Earth. On Earth, God made the sky, to hold the water and the air. From the sky came rain and rain made life. Then God made tall mountains, volcanoes of fire and deep dark valleys. On Earth, God made every kind of plant and animal. From the trees and plants came forests and gardens of fruit and flowers. Yellow and red. Green and orange. Big and small. Round and thin. In the forests lived the animals, insects and birds. And in the seas lived the fish. Whales and elephants and gorillas. Mice and ladybirds and ants. They were all *swimming, crawling, flying, climbing, and creeping.* Then God made Man to care of the forests, trees and plants, the animals, birds, fish and insects. Man's name was Adam. And God looks over *all* of His Creation *all* the time. He never *ever* naps or sleeps![10]

The story above seems to suggest that before the creation of universe, God was *alone.* Here, one can add that God had his own loneliness and boredom, and albeit some kind of Lacanian *lack.* By *lack,* Lacan means 'want to be'.[11] Thus, God only *becomes* God, or if he *wants to become* 'God', then something must have an independent existence than God, which can have a subordinate relation with God. This subordinate relationship of the *created* with the *Creator* is always harped on by theology. Islamic theology like Judeo-Christian traditions of monotheism always tries to make the point that it is 'God', who is *the one and only Creator* and everything else in this universe is *created* by him or in other words, his *creatures.* Therefore, *to become* God, the original *lack* in the *being of God* was instrumental. Otherwise, God would not have been able to *become* God since there would not have been anyone else to acknowledge/recognize Him as God. In this regard, *the becoming* or *coming* (a metonym of emergence) of God depends so much on the proclamation: 'BE', signifying the birth of creatures and creation of universe. So, without creatures, there is no identity of Creator. That is why, Islamic theology

asserts this dichotomy or binary between Creator and creature expressed as a master-servant relationship, where God is the master and the creatures, including humans, are his born slaves, whose purpose is to serve the master by carrying out earthly life by his guidance in revealed texts like the *Torah*, the *Bible* and the *Quran*. We shall later discuss the possibility of the *creation* of God. That is to say how this *Creator* (God) was only *created* by humans and, thus, one might actually have an inverse relationship between the God and the humans. We shall also examine the possibility whether the theological argument of Creator and creation is actually the 'other way round' namely: It is not *the* God who is the Creator of humans, but it is actually *humans*, who have created God(s) for several thousand years.

In analysing totemism among primitive societies, Freud gives a psychoanalytical explanation of origins of religion via Darwin's biological treatise:

> There is, of course, no place for the beginnings of totemism in Darwin's primal horde. All that we find there is a violent and jealous father who keeps all the females for himself and drives away his sons as they grow up. ...One day the brothers who had been driven out came together, killed and devoured their father and so made an end of the patriarchal horde. United, they had the courage to do and succeeded in doing what would have been impossible for them individually. (Some cultural advance, perhaps, command over some new weapon, had given them a sense of superior strength.) Cannibal savages as they were, it goes without saying that they devoured their victim as well as killing him. The violent primal father had doubtless been the feared and envied model of each one of the company of brothers: and in the act of devouring him they accomplished their identification with him, and each one of them acquired a portion of his strength. The totem meal, which is perhaps mankind's earliest festival, would thus be a repetition and a commemoration of this memorable and criminal deed, which was the beginning of so many things—of social organization, of moral restrictions and of religion. ...[T]he tumultuous mob of brothers were filled with the same contradictory feelings which we can see at work in the ambivalent father-complexes of our children and of our neurotic patients. They hated their father, who presented such a formidable obstacle to their craving for power and their sexual desires; but they loved and admired him too. After they had got rid of him, had satisfied their hatred and had put into effect their wish to identify themselves with him, the affection which had all this time been pushed under was bound to make itself felt. It did so in the form of remorse. A sense of guilt made its appearance, which in this instance coincided with the remorse felt by the whole group. The dead father became stronger than living one had been—for events took the

course we so often see them follow in human affairs to this day. ...They revoked their deed by forbidding the killing of the totem, the substitute for their father; and they renounced its fruits by resigning their claim to the women who had now been set free.[12]

After narrating the story of the 'killing of the father', Freud situates the problem of fratricidal fights among the brothers who killed the father:

Though the brothers had banded together in order to overcome their father, they were all one another's rivals in regard to women. Each of them would have wished, like his father, to have all the women to himself. The new organization would have collapsed in a struggle of all against all, for none of them was of such overmastering strength as to be able to take on his father's part with success. Thus the brothers had no alternative, if they were to live together, but—not, perhaps, until they had passed through many dangerous crises—to institute the law against incest, by which they all alike renounced the women whom they desired and who had been their chief motive for despatching their father. In this way they rescued the organization which had made them strong—and which may have been based on homosexual feelings and acts, originating perhaps during the period of their expulsion from the horde.[13]

In later part of this paper, we shall see how the logic of 'father killing' can be extrapolated to the internecine battles among different clans, and in a much matured stage of civilization, among different groups in society. Now according to Freud, among these primitive men, the totem animal becomes the substitute of father as a taboo:

[T]he claim of totemism to be regarded as a first attempt at a religion is based on the first of these two taboos—that upon taking the life of the totem animal. The animal struck the sons as a natural and obvious substitute for their father; but the treatment of it which they found imposed on themselves expressed more than the need to exhibit their remorse. They could attempt, in their relation to this surrogate father, to allay their burning sense of guilt, to bring about a kind of reconciliation with their father. The totemic system was, as it were, a covenant with their father, in which he promised them everything that a childish imagination may expect from a father—a protection, care and indulgence—while on their side they undertook to respect his life, that is to say, not to repeat the deed which had brought destruction on their real father. Totemism, moreover, contained an attempt at self-justification: 'If our father had treated us in the way the totem does, we should never have felt tempted to kill him.' In this fashion totemism helped to smooth things over and to make it possible to forget the event to which it owed its origin. Features were thus brought into existence which continued thenceforward to have a determining

influence on the nature of religion. Totemic religion arose from the filial sense of guilt, in an attempt to allay that feeling and to appease the father by deferred obedience to him. All later religions are seen to be attempts at solving the same problem.[14]

By extending and applying Freud, we can argue that the totem animal was later replaced by idols in ancient religions like Hinduism and in many polytheistic religions like the pre-Christian Greco-Roman pagan traditions. We can call this replacement of totem animal with idols as 'a return of the repressed'. From a psychoanalytical point of view, the paradoxical nature and moments of failure of repression is disclosed into the fact that what was repressed is revealed but in a distorted form and, thus, the very act of repression invites the 'return of the repressed'. As Freud says, '[R]epression demands a persistent expenditure of force, and if this were to cease the success of the repression would be jeopardized, so that a fresh act of repression would be necessary...[w]ith a return to waking life the repressive cathexes which have been drawn in are once more sent out.'[15] In another instance, Freud proclaims: 'All phenomena of symptom-formation can be fairly described as 'the return of the repressed'. The distinctive character of them, however, lies in the extensive distortion the returning elements have undergone, compared with their original form.'[16] In later part of this paper, we shall also see how idolatry remained in pre-Islamic Arabia and how a distorted cum displaced form of idolatry is still present within Islam as a 'return of the repressed'. However, Freud reminds us about the totem feast—another important taboo of totemic religion:

> There is another feature which was already present in totemism and which has been preserved unaltered in religion...[W]e find that the ambivalence implicit in the father-complex persists in totemism and in religions generally. Totemic religion not only comprised expressions of remorse and attempts at atonement, it also served as a remembrance of the triumph over the father. Satisfaction over that triumph led to the institution of the memorial festival of the totem meal, in which the restrictions of deferred obedience no longer held. Thus it became a duty to repeat the crime of parricide again and again in the sacrifice of the totem animal, whenever, as a result of the changing conditions of life, the cherished fruit of the crime—appropriation of the paternal attributes—threatened to disappear. We shall not be surprised to find that the element of filial rebelliousness also emerges, in the *later* products of religion, often in the strangest disguises and transformations. Hitherto we have followed the developments of the *affectionate* current of feeling towards the father, transformed into remorse, as we find them in religion and in moral

ordinances (which are not sharply distinguished in totemism)…To the religiously based prohibition against killing the totem was now added the socially based prohibition against fratricide. It was not until long afterwards that the prohibition ceased to be limited to members of the clan and assumed the simple form: 'Thou shalt do no murder.' The patriarchal horde was replaced in the first instance by the fraternal clan, whose existence was assured by the blood tie. Society was now based on complicity in the common crime; religion was based on the sense of guilt and the remorse attaching to it; while morality was based on the exigencies of this society and partly on the penance demanded by the sense of guilt.[17]

This totemic feast is very much part and parcel of Islamic religion even today with the ritual of sacrifice of animal on the occasion of Eid-uz-Zuha to remember the practice of Abraham as we shall observe later in this paper. Let us now accept the story of Freud about the primitive man, the killing of the father, the fratricidal rivalry, the sense of guilt and remorse and subsequent discovery of religion as entry points to the theological story about Cain and Abel. The Genesis chapter of the Bible talks about the Cain and Abel story in the following manner:

And the man knew Eve his wife; and she conceived and bore Cain, and said: 'I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD.' And again she bore his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain: 'Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? and if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door; and unto thee is its desire, but thou mayest rule over it.' And Cain spoke unto Abel his brother. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain: 'Where is Abel thy brother?' And he said: 'I know not; am I my brother's keeper?' And He said: 'What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground. And now cursed art thou from the ground, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth.' And Cain said unto the LORD: 'My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the land; and from Thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth; and it will come to pass, that whosoever findeth me will slay me.' And the LORD said unto him: 'Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall

be taken on him sevenfold.' And the LORD set a sign for Cain, lest any finding him should smite him. And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bore Enoch; and he builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch.[18]

Thus, according to the biblical account, Cain is a crop farmer and his younger brother Abel is a shepherd. Cain is portrayed as sinful; committing the first murder by killing his brother after God rejected his offerings of produce but accepted the animal sacrifices brought by Abel. Accordingly, Abel was the first human to ever die. Cain is mentioned as Adam and Eve's first child; thus, Cain, according to Scripture, was the first human ever born. A few scholars suggest that the Cain-Abel narratives may have been based on a Sumerian story representing the conflict between nomadic shepherds and settled farmers.[19] Others think that it may refer to the days in which agriculture began to replace the ways of the hunter-gatherer.[20] More recent scholarship has produced another theory, where *Abel* is thought to derive from a reconstructed word meaning 'herdsman', with the modern Arabic cognate *ibil*, now specifically referring only to 'camels'. *Cain*, on the other hand, is thought to be cognate to the mid-1st millennium BC South Arabian word *qyn*, meaning 'metal smith'.[21] By equating Abel with 'herdsman' and Cain with 'metal smith', one can argue that *industry* (a metaphor for the 'metal smith) kills pre-industrial modes of production (a metaphor for the 'herdsman'). Also, one can argue by a deeper reading of the theological discourses of Bible that for religious God, pre-industrial form is an ideal society and, hence, Abel is a martyr and a favourite of God, while Cain—the representative of the modern industry in the making is considered villain. But a western modernist secularist would, perhaps, argue that the death of Abel (pre-industrial civilization) was inevitable at the hands of Cain (industrial civilization). Also, Cain was the first rebel against God and, thus, dared to challenge God. His non-fearing attitude was certainly heroic. Thus, the death of God's obedient religious person, or what, in the 19th century, Nietzsche famously proclaimed the 'death of God'[22] at the hands of the secular godless man, is forecasted in the theological discourses of the Bible.

The *Qisas-ul-Quran* (*Stories from the Quran*)[23], on the other hand, draws its contents primarily from the Holy *Quran* and embellishes it with relevant commentaries. In the Cain and Abel story, the crux has been borrowed from the Holy *Quran* with additions from Old Testament. In short, the story about Cain and Abel in the *Qisas-ul-*

Quran is of the following: Adam and Eve gave birth to two pairs of children: first, Cain (Qābīl in Islamic tradition) and his twin sister and later, Abel (Hābīl in Islamic tradition) and his twin sister. Then after few years, God commanded Adam that for further progeny and to grow human civilization, Cain should marry Abel's sister and Abel should marry Cain's sister. When this proposal was brought to Cain by Adam, Cain disagreed with his father Adam and expressed his desire to marry his own sister instead of Abel's sister. According to Cain, his twin sister was relatively better looking than Abel's twin sister and he would only marry his own twin sister instead of marrying Abel's sister. Adam asserted that it is not possible as that would be a violation of God's revelation while being disobedient and disloyal to God. But Cain would listen neither to Adam nor to God and, in fact, sticks to the demand of marrying his own sister. In the mean time, Cain murdered his brother Abel out of jealousy and, in that sense, killed his sexual rival. This was the first murder of human societies according to the theological discourses of *Qisas-ul-Quran*. However, after this murder, Cain had a sense of guilt and started repenting while he was thinking about what to do with his brother's body. Then Cain saw how one large black crow was digging the soil to bury another crow. Then he learnt how to bury his brother's body. This murder scene is amply described in *Quran* with a note of caution and consequential punishment for the murderer and any such 'evildoers':

> AND CONVEY unto them, setting forth the truth, the story of the two sons of Adam—how each offered a sacrifice, and it was accepted from one of them whereas it was not accepted from the other. [And Cain] said: 'I will surely slay thee!' [Abel] replied: 'Behold, God accepts only from those who are conscious of Him. Even if thou lay thy hand on me to slay me, I shall not lay my hand on thee to slay thee: behold, I fear God, the Sustainer of all the worlds. I am willing, indeed, for thee to bear [the burden of] all sins ever done by me as well as of the sin done by thee: [but] then thou wouldst be destined for the fire, since that is the requital of evildoers!' But the other's passion drove him to slaying his brother; and he slew him: and thus he became one of the lost. Thereupon God sent forth a raven which scratched the earth, to show him how he might conceal the nakedness of his brother's body. [And Cain] cried out: 'Oh, woe is me! Am I then too weak to do what this raven did, and to conceal the nakedness of my brother's body?'—and was thereupon smitten with remorse. Because of this did We ordain unto the children of Israel that if anyone slays a human being—unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading corruption on earth—it shall be as though he had slain all mankind; whereas, if anyone saves a life, it shall be as though he had saved the lives

of all mankind. And, indeed, there came unto them Our apostles with all evidence of the truth: yet, behold, notwithstanding all this, many of them go on committing all manner of excesses on earth. It is just but a recompense for those who make war on God and His apostle, and endeavour to spread corruption on earth, that they are being slain in great numbers, or crucified in great numbers, or have, in result of their perverseness, their hands and feet cut off in great numbers, or are being [entirely] banished from [the face of] the earth: such is their ignominy in this world. But in the life to come [yet more] awesome suffering awaits them—save for such [of them] as repent ere you [O believers] become more powerful than they: for you must know that God is much-forgiving, a dispenser of grace.[24]

It is amply clear from the Quranic expressions that there was a *killing* and there was *remorse* after the killing, which we also noticed in Freud's story. Moreover, in the story of *Qisas-ul-Quran*, we find even more similarities with Freud's story regarding the conditions of incest and purpose of killing: the sexual desire. In the Cain and Abel story—Cain killed his brother Abel to eradicate the sexual rival of his own sexual desire, namely his own twin sister. As we know from Freud that after killing of the primeval father, the brothers became rivals and were engaged in fratricidal fights before banishing the practice of incest. But the question arises: what about the 'killing of the father' that is missing in the Islamic discourse? The Islamic discourse is silent about killing of the father. In fact, it emphasizes on the killing of the brother, which according to Freud would be the next stage/spate of killing after murdering the father. Now, the clue of killing of the father is very much present even within the Islamic discourses. Since, Islam cannot formally endorse any rebellion against God and Prophets; it might be silent on this issue. From the *Qisas*, we have learnt how Cain actually rebelled against both the God and his father Adam by violating the revelation of God apart from being disobedient to both God and Adam. Adam was the only hindrance to Cain's desire to marry his own twin sister, and the only obstacle to observe the old primitive practice of immediate incest. In fact, the major quarrel was actually between Adam and Cain, where Abel was not an issue and does not figure in the dialogue between Adam and Cain. So, it is logical that the rebellion against father Adam by Cain must have first led to the killing of Adam by Cain. Also, logically, without killing Adam, Cain cannot kill Abel since, Abel as a good obedient boy, would get protection from Adam. Thus, applying the Freudian argument, one can hold that Cain first killed his father Adam and then killed his

brother Abel in order to have a monopoly of all the women (his sisters) in his society. We have already noticed that it was not the *Quran*, which explained the marriage story, and the debates and disputes between father Adam and his son Cain. Rather, it was explained by *Qisas*. Although we have already noticed some similarities between the stories of Freud and the *Quran*, the argument about killing of Adam by Cain is only based on a deeper sub-textual reading of *Qisas*. We have seen earlier that Cain became a disobedient person to God and his Prophet Adam, but at the same time, Cain felt guilty after the murder of his brother Abel, and one can also add—after the murder of his father Adam. This primitive guilt according to Freud was the source of religion. Here, if we apply Freud, then after the guilt, Cain must have taken forward the legacy and message of Adam with a new religion. Therefore, Cain was the first rebel against the God and its Prophet, the first atheist or non-believer in the theological discourses. However, he could have later established a new religion, perhaps a totemic religion in the memory of his dead father, Adam and his slain brother, Abel after the remorse that he experienced.

The Islamic discourses claim that all Prophets have preached Islam. After the death of each Prophet, the religion of Islam was distorted and, thus, a new Prophet with the message of Islam became necessary. Therefore, let us now turn towards another children's story about the next major prophetic figure—Noah:

> God told Noah to build a big boat. First Noah planted some trees. Then he chopped the wood. Then he began to build the boat. It was *very* big. Some people laughed at Noah. They thought he had strange ideas. But Noah was a Prophet. When the boat was built, God said: 'Tell the good people to get on board and all the animals, two by two.' Monkeys, parrots and pandas. Giraffes, rhinos and elephants. Lions and tigers. The animals all came running. They all hurried into the boat. Soon, it began to rain and rain. All the land was covered with water. Even the mountains. Nothing was there but the big boat, bobbing up and down! After a long time, the rain stopped. Noah sent a dove to find land. It came back with a leaf from a tree. Land was near! *BUMP!* The boat landed on top of a mountain! The good people were safe. So were the animals.[25]

In the story of Noah (Nuh in Islamic tradition) and his ark, it is clear that religion seems to now making the bifurcation between believers and non-believers. Moreover, a new politics of antagonism between obedience and Godly path on the one hand and disobedience/ disloyalty on the other, a kind of chasm between 'good' and 'bad' seems to emerge within the theological discourses. This tussle

between 'good' and 'bad' is only an extension of the Cain and Abel story. If we further apply Freud's story in the case of Noah, then Noah is actually taking care of totem animals. By saving the life of all the totem animals, and his clan (the believers), Noah on behalf of his forefather, Cain (and Noah as the new head of his clan), actually performed a redemption of the old primitive crime of Cain to murder Adam and Abel. The story of Noah also reveals the missionary aspect of religion to reach out to more people. It can be also seen in another children's story of King Solomon (Sulaiman in Islamic tradition), and how Solomon converts the sun worshipper, Queen of Sheba, to believe in God and Islam with the help of his hoopoe.[26]

The story of Abraham (Ibrahim in Islamic tradition), as demonstrated below marks that point of human history when the totem animal in Noah's story and a different totemic 'Sun' in the Solomon story are replaced by a place of worship. Such a worship place would be later filled with idols, as we would eventually see in pre-Islamic Arabia.

> Abraham had a dream. God told him, 'Take your wife Hajar and your baby son Ismail. Go to the desert. Leave them there'. So they took a camel and water and a sack of dates to eat. Off they went. It was a long journey. In the desert, Abraham left as God had told him to do. Ismail ate all the dates. He drank all the water. He was still very thirsty. He cried and cried. Hajar looked for water. She ran up and down two hills. She ran up and down again. Then *whoosh*, lovely water bubbled out of the ground! They called it ZamZam. Birds came to drink the water. People came too. They put up tents and stayed. Their goats and sheep stayed too. Soon a town grew there. Its name was *Mecca*. Hajar and Ismail lived there. Abraham often came to visit. God told Abraham to build a Holy House in Mecca. Ismail helped his father. An angel brought a special black stone. It was very old. When the Holy House was built, they walked around it and prayed. Abraham asked God to make Mecca a wonderful place. His prayer was answered. *Years passed.* ...Many people came to Mecca from all over the world. Many people wanted to pray there. And to this day millions of people drink from the well of ZamZam.[27]

In *Qisas*, another dream of Abraham was discussed—the dream of his favourite thing to be sacrificed to God. After this dream, Abraham only found his wilful son Isaac (Ismail in Islamic tradition) as his favourite possession to be sacrificed. When Abraham was about to kill Isaac, he suddenly saw a sheep in place of Isaac. This means that during Abraham's period, the primitive totem feast became a part of more advanced stage of religion. In fact, killing of the father is replaced with a tendency to kill the son, which Freud would probably

not have disagreed since he suggested that the violent and jealous father kept all the females for himself and drives away his sons as they grow up. This simply means that the father used to see his son as a potential sexual rival as pointed out by Freud. Also, in the above Children's story, we see that Abraham visits his wife, Hajar and son Ismail in Mecca. That means, Abraham used to roam around different places or had multiple wives like Sarah and Keturah to look around as supported by Islamic theological discourses. The story of Abraham's dream for sacrificing his son, Ismail confirms that humans at that time followed the dream in real life acts and thought of it as a divine communication. They were unaware about the knowledge of dreams or what the Freudian discovery of unconscious has helped to interpret dreams as a form of either 'wish-fulfilment' or an attempt by the unconscious to resolve a conflict of some sort, whether something recent or from the recesses of the past that was repressed, and how the dream works by the processes of condensation, displacement, representation and symbolism.[28]

However, in theological discourses of *Qisas*, we find Joseph as a Prophet, who could interpret the dreams and indeed interpreted the dream of Egyptian Pharaoh, almost like a Freudian. The Pharaoh dreamt that seven thin cows were swallowed by seven fat cows and vomited. Joseph interpreted that for the next seven years, Egypt would be very prosperous. From eighth to fourteenth year, Egypt would experience famine. At the onset it would look like as if Joseph was a fortune-teller. But he was actually interpreting the dreams in the same manner as Freud, where dreams represent a non-imaginary unreal space with condensation, displacement, representation and symbolism[29] as evident from Joseph's story. Let us now briefly look at the children's story of Jonah (Yunus) before we concentrate on the story of Muhammad:

> Jonah was a Prophet. Jonah said, 'People! Be good. Don't steal! Don't cheat!' The bad people did not listen to Jonah. They were angry. They yelled at him! They threw things at him! Potatoes! carrots! eggs! Tomatoes! Fish bones! Jonah was upset. He said 'They don't care! They won't listen to me. I am going to run away. Far, far away.' Jonah found a ship and got on it. Soon a huge storm came. Waves crashed! Winds blew! The captain said, 'God must be angry!' Jonah began to shake and shiver. 'It's me,' he said, 'God is angry with me!' In a flash, the sailors grabbed Jonah and threw him off the ship. Into the sea with the fish, past an octopus, and into the mouth of a whale! It was dark inside the whale, Jonah was very scared. He said to God, '*Nobody* can hide from you! I am very sorry I ran away.' God forgave

Jonah and told the whale to take him back home. The bad people found him. They were sorry too. They said, 'Teach us to be good'.[30]

From the above story of Jonah (Yunus), we are again confronted with the idea of preaching and religious mission to reach out to more people as we have previously found in the story of Noah and Solomon. However, in this story of Jonah, we can also identify the note of caution and punishment for those who do not bother to follow the path of God or in other words, who escapes religious duties. This construction of an evil/devilish/hellish/dark path is the feature of any organised religion and, thus, we see the antagonistic frontiers of heaven and hell and the so called path between peace, victory and purity as opposed to destruction, violence, impurity, filth etc. in most organised religions. We would later see in this paper how, Islam as an organized religion also seeks to assert these precise boundaries of good versus bad and enlightened versus ignorant.

Freud asserted that both Moses and Christ as eminent father substitutes were killed and later on deified as part of the old 'heir of an unfulfilled wish-phantasy' and a 'reincarnated successor' of the 'most guilty, the leader of the brother horde who had overpowered the Father' and, thus, the 'Mosaic religion had been a Father religion' and 'Christianity became a Son religion'.[31] We shall follow this Freudian model of killing of the father and its subsequent deification in Islamic history.

Genealogy of Islamic Dogmatism

Islam believes in a shapeless god, namely *Allah. Allah* is beyond gender and is neither a son, nor daughter, nor father, nor mother. But according to believers, *Allah* exists as the creator of whole universe. Now, if *Allah* is shapeless, then why central attention is paid to the direction of *Kaba* (a concrete structure in the city of Mecca with a black stone inside it as we have seen previously in Abraham's story) during Muslim prayers? Why the shaped black stone and its shaped container of concrete structure is the central focus during *Haj* rituals (obligatory for all believers who can afford for this holy visit once in her/his lifetime)? Now, prior to the emergence of Islamic faith as preached by Prophet Muhammad in 7th century Arabia, the tribal community of Mecca was idolaters. There were idols inside *Kaba*, which the Meccan *Quraish* tribe used to worship during Muhammad's time. The historian writing about

the time of 6th century A.D. confirms to the idolatrous nature of pre-Islamic Arabia:

> Muslim tradition tells us that Muhammad lived in a society dominated by polytheism and idolatry, but it also tells us that monotheists and elements of monotheism leavened the lump of the prevalent paganism. There were individuals who had rejected the dominant heathenism and worshiped the one, true God; there were rituals that although they had been overlaid with polytheistic accretions, had originated as monotheist forms of worship; there was a sanctuary (the Ka'ba at Mecca) that, although it was now the home of idols, had been built by Abraham at God's command; and, although the vast majority of the Arabs worshipped a variety of local and tribal gods and idols, there was a general conception of a supreme god standing over and above them, called Allah. This Allah was associated especially with the Ka'ba, which pilgrimage (*hajj*) participated in by worshippers coming from all over Arabia. It is against this background that the traditional charge of *shirk* is usually understood. That Arabic noun (to which are related the verbal form *ashraka* and the active participle *mushrik*), is, as already indicated, frequently understood as 'idolatry' or 'polytheism' but in a basic, non-religious sense it refers to the idea of 'making someone or something a partner, or associate, of someone else or something else.[32]

Muhammad's followers, who were converted to Islam were driven out of Mecca by the idolaters and took refuge in Medina. In Medina's first Muslim mosque, the Muslims with their Prophet first used to pray in the direction of *Baitul Muqaddis* in Jerusalem, which was a holy site for Jews. Karen Armstrong describes this practice of Muslim prayers in the direction towards Jerusalem:

> 'Muhammad felt deeply attracted to the Ka'bah. He was drawn by the legend that was probably current in pre-Islamic Arabia that Adam, the first man, had built the earliest shrine on this sacred spot. It was, therefore, the first temple built in God's honor in the whole world. The Meccan Haram had been the site of the Garden of Eden, where Adam had been created, had named the animals, and had been honored by all the angels. Mecca thus represented that lost paradise, which could be momentarily recovered by performing the traditional rites of this holy place. The shrine was later rebuilt by Seth, Adam's son; by Noah after the Flood; and by Abraham and Ishmael. Finally it had been rebuilt by Qusayy ibn Qilab, the ancestor of the Meccan tribe of Qureish. The Ka'bah linked the past with the present, the human with the divine, the internal world with the external. Yet Muhammad taught his first converts to prostrate themselves in prayer before Allah as an outward sign of their interior Islam, he told them to turn away from the Ka'bah to face Jerusalem. The Ka'bah was now contaminated by idols, so Muslims must focus on the spiritual center of

the Jews and Christians who worshipped Allah alone. This *qiblah* ('direction of prayer') marked their new orientation away from their tribe toward the primordial faith of the whole of humanity. It also expressed Muhammad's sense of solidarity and continuity with the *ahl al-kitab*. Then in January 624, when it became clear that most of the Jews of Yathrib would never accept Muhammad, the *ummah* declared its independence of the older traditions. Muhammad made the congregation turn around and pray facing Mecca instead. This change of *qiblah* has been described as one of Muhammad's most creative gestures. It marked a return of the Muslims to the primordial faith of Abraham before it was split into warring sects by the Jews and Christians; it was an attempt to find a lost unity, represented by the primal shrine rebuilt by either Jews or Christians, the Muslims were tacitly declaring that they would bow to none of the established religions but only to God himself. ...The change of *qiblah* was also consoling for the Meccan Muslims who made the *hijrah* to Yathrib and were now living in exile. It healed their sense of dislocation and symbolically directed them toward the sacred associations of home.[33]

The Prophet changed the direction of Muslim *qiblah* towards the direction of Meccan *Kaba*, which was still occupied by several idols inside it. Afterwards, the victory of neo-converts led to the destruction of all those idols inside *Kaba*. Now, even if there was no idol, the black stone inside *Kaba* and most importantly, the *Kaba* as a concrete structure, remained as a central focus for all praying rituals. Therefore, the traces of the past—the tribal worship of shaped idols, which evolved from the primitive totem animals, remained even if the idols were destroyed. Thus, Islamic faith, which first questioned the irrationality of 'powerless' idols, in fact, remained silent on asking the same question about the *existence* of two shaped entities of *Kaba* and 'heavenly black stone' inside *Kaba* (most likely a meteor). Thus, the 'faith' which emerged with the help of 'reason' abandons the reasoned processes of introspection as a result of Lacanian *foreclosure*. Foreclosure means an element in the imaginary (visual or mental image) being denied or repudiated, access to the symbolic, which is the field of language. Foreclosure is, thus, a repudiation of access from the imaginary to the symbolic— as if the element in the imaginary (image) had never existed. So, its appearance in the field of language (the symbolic) never arises.[34] Precisely because of this collective foreclosed mindset of Muslim believers, it cannot understand that it is actually bowing its head in front of a shaped and man-made creation, namely the *Kaba*, despite the fact that Islam believes in a shapeless God.

This foreclosure among the Muslim believers that leads to abandoning of reason, therefore, starts after Islam secures itself in

the power bloc with a new dogmatism. This abandoning of 'reason' with a new Islamic dogmatism only creates the conditions of possibilities for several other irrational activities in future including *jihad* (holy war) against the *jahiliya* (ignorance of non-Islam) often claimed by leading 20th century Islamists as one of the most important duties of Muslims.[35] However, this paper is only hinting that the roots of dogmatism expressed in contemporary Islamism is much older. In fact, it goes back to this dogmatism of idolatry and non-critical approach of Islam while making an antagonistic frontier against the Jews as expressed in the change of direction of daily prayers towards Mecca. Moreover, the construction of an antagonistic frontier against the Jews by Islam is not only limited to the question of changing the *qiblah* but also revealed in the Islamic theological discourses of *Qisas* that Jesus would be born again as a Muslim, as a part of the *ummah* (community of Muslim believers) and as the follower of the Prophet Muhammad. This means that the Islamic discourses are clearly trying to make the Laclauian *logic of equivalence*[36] between Christianity and Islam. In other words, Islamic discourses are directly appealing to the Christians that they should now follow the Islamic bandwagon, since their Prophet—Jesus— would himself be reborn as a Muslim, while no such proclamation has been given for Moses—the Prophet of Jews. Rather, in the Islamic discourses of *Quran* and *Hadith* (sayings and practices of Prophet Muhammad), the Jews have been designated as those people who 'perverts', 'conceals', 'twists' and 'transgresses' the scriptures of God.[37] In fact, there is meticulous documentation of indisputable evidence that traces a long legacy of uniquely Islamic anti-Semitism within Islamic discourses including the *Quran* that expresses clear hostility towards Jews.[38]

The lack of self-critical approach within Islam also helps to make it as a narcissist (id)entity like many other organized religions and secular political ideologies. However, we are not discussing the reasons of narcissism of 'other' religions and ideologies but enquiring about the underlying logic of narcissism within Islam. However, this narcissism within Islam comes from the self-gratitude of Islam as the 'final apostle' as we have seen in the Quranic proclamation in the early part of this paper. According to the faith, it is the 'last prophetic religion' with Muhammad as the last prophet of *Allah,* and there would not be or cannot be any other Prophetic religion after Islam. Moreover, no one is permitted to change or amend the holy text or religious practices even if some of its tenets do not suit to address the crisis and problems of contemporary

societies. In Kantian sense, Islam can be identified with *dogmatism* 'without previous criticism of its own powers.'[39] This dogmatic confidence of Islam as the bearer of an 'absolute truth' and the right way to life gets shaken when it encounters such challenges like atheism and blasphemy because these trends only ignore the path of Islam and instead critique it for being 'backward', 'oppressive', 'irrational' and 'regressive'. In the face of such stiff challenges of atheism, blasphemy and consumerist hedonism, Islamists become confused and sometimes take refuge to violence to eliminate its opponent's claims and opinions—in this case the political articulations of atheism, blasphemy and consumerist hedonism.

Killing of the Father/Leader and Fratricidal Fights in Islamic History

We have already noticed that Freud informed us that Judaism was a father religion and Christianity was a son's religion. In this regard, Žižek makes an interesting analysis of Islam:

'[I]n contrast to both Judaism and Christianity, the two other religions of the book, Islam excludes God from the domain of paternal logic: Allah is not a father, not even a symbolic one—God as One is neither born nor does He give birth to creatures: *there is no place for a Holy Family in Islam.* This is why Islam emphasizes so much the fact that Muhammad himself was an orphan; this is why, in Islam, God intervenes precisely at the moments of the suspension, withdrawal, failure, 'blackout,' of the paternal function (when the mother or the child are abandoned or ignored by the biological father). What this means is that God remains thoroughly in the domain of the impossible-Real: He is the impossible-Real beyond the father, so that there is a 'genealogical desert between man and God'. (This was the problem with Islam for Freud, since his entire theory of religion is based on the parallel of God with the father.) More importantly still, this inscribes politics into the very heart of Islam, since the 'genealogical desert' renders impossible a grounding of the community in the structures of parenthood or other bonds based on blood: 'the desert between God and Father is the place where the political institutes itself.' With Islam, it is no longer possible to ground a community in the mode of *Totem and Taboo,* through the murder of the father, the ensuing guilt bringing brothers together— thence Islam's unexpected actuality. This problem is at the very heart of the (in)famous *umma,* the Muslim 'community of believers'; it accounts for the overlapping of the religious and the political (community should be grounded directly on God's word), as well as for the fact that Islam is 'at its best' when it grounds the formation of a community 'out of nowhere,' in the genealogical desert, as the egalitarian revolutionary fraternity—no

wonder Islam succeeds when young men find themselves deprived of a traditional familial safety network.'[40]

However, Žižek makes a partial and selective reading of both Freud and the Islamic history. Apparently, the killer of the father, who is a 'rebel' and 'hero', is missing in Islam but we see the Islamic subject as the killer of the 'idol' representing the worshiping traditions of polytheism or even monotheistic paganism. We have already seen how the traces of 'idol' remained within Islam by the existence of *Kaba* and the 'black stone' inside *Kaba*. Their existence means that the killing of the 'idolatry' was never complete in Islamic tradition. The killing of the 'idolatry' remained an unfinished task, which the Islamic religion could not historically perform by making alive the *Kaba* as its central focus in moments of daily prayers.

In this respect, we shall now see how the killing of the community leader, who is related to father identification in psychoanalytic terms, later became a part of Islamic history after Muhammad. After Muhammad nominated Abu Bakr as his successor, in 632 AD, after the death of Muhammad, Abu Bakr was elected as a Caliph (representative of Muslim *ummah* and vice-regency of God).[41] Both Prophet Muhammad and Abu Bakr, who was only alive as a Caliph for two years and mostly mourned the death of Prophet during his reign, were not killed. But the repressed desire of killing the leader (killing of the father) can be noticed in the killings of three successive caliphs after Abu Bakr—Umar, Uthman and Ali, all of whom were Muhammad's close disciples and killed by none other than the members of the Muslim *ummah* (community of believers). Abu Bakr was succeeded by his nominee, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab as the second Caliph in the midst of a renewed crisis appended by threats of revolts.[42] In 644 A.D., at the zenith of his power, Umar was assassinated by a Persian named Abu Lulu, in response to Umar's conquest of Persia.[43] This murder of Umar led to the concept of *shura* (consultative council) in Islam as 'on his deathbed he is said to have allocated the choice of his successor to a *shura* and named six leading Muslims to consult together and make a choice from among themselves accordingly.'[44] Uthman, who was elected by the *shura* designated by Umar as the next caliph, was killed in the summer of 656 A.D. by 'a band of tribesmen from the Egyptian garrison town of Fusat.'[45] After Uthman's death, Prophet's son-in-law, Ali became the fourth caliph.

In 656 A.D., Ali suppressed the revolt of some members of inner circle (six leading Muslims, who were all Prophet's companions and was chosen by Umar in his death bed) by killing Talha and al-Zubayr

while Aisha the widow of Muhammad was 'taken off back to Medina to be held in limited confinement.'[46] Ali had to also fight Mu'awiya (the founder of Umayyad dynasty after Ali's death) during 657 A.D. and had to come to truce with him.[47] Then in 658 A.D., Ali 'achieved a major victory over the Kharijites at the battle of Nahrawan in Iraq, but this, by providing the movement with martyrs, merely intensified the hatred against him.'[48] As a result, Ali was murdered by a Kharijite, Ibn Muljam in 661 A.D.[49] Later, all these assassinated caliphs were given pious status in the *Sunni* sect of Islam and we saw the birth of *Shiite* sect as a glorification and deification of Ali. Now, after the killings of Umar, Uthman and Ali, we saw three trends of Islam, slowly evolving and distinguishable from each other: Sunni, Shia and Kharijism. The major differences among these sects were on the issue of leadership to the Muslim world: In other words, who would be the caliph (a Sunni preference) or imam (mostly used in Shiite and Khariji traditions) of the Muslim *Ummah.* In this respect, the observations of an eminent historian, who is an expert in the history of early Islamic civilization on these three distinct trends within Islam, are of the following:

> The basic principle of Kharijism was a demand for peity and religious excellence as the only necessary qualification for the imam, and a rejection of the view that he should belong to the family of the Prophet, as the Shi'ites demanded, or to the tribe of the Prophet (Quraysh), as the Sunnins required...Each of these three main Muslim groups came to hold that Islam should be open to all peoples and that all should enjoy the same status within it regarding rights and duties.[50]

> If the legitimacy of the Umayyads was questioned too sharply, ammunition might be provided for the Shi'ites, most of whom came to see 'Ali as having been cheated not only by Mu'awiya but also by the first two caliphs, Abu Bakr and 'Umar, who are of central importance for the Sunni concept of the transmission of the Prophet's Sunna to the later community. Furthermore, Mu'awiya himself was a companion of Muhammad, his secretary according to tradition, and one of the characteristics of Sunni Islam is its championing of the companions as sources of authoritative teaching, as against the Shi'ites who viewed them in general with suspicion and as enemies of 'Ali and the imams.[51]

Historians inform us that there were civil wars (*Fitna*) among the three groups that led to the killing of Ali in 661 A.D. The end of the first civil war (656-661), which was a rebellion against Ali[52], was followed by the killing of Ali's sons including the claimant of Muslim leadership, al-Husayn during the second civil war (680-692 A.D.).

Mu'awiya (the first Umayyad Caliph and nephew of the third Sunni Caliph, Uthman)[53] attempted to end the continuous crisis over the Caliphate by proclaiming an Umayyad dynasty on the basis of simple patriarchal succession.[54] The second civil war consolidated the Umayyad dynasty as the Sunni caliphate of the Muslim world, particularly after the death of Ibn al-Zubayr (in 692 A.D.), another prominent challenger of Umayyad dynasty.[55] Finally, there were further internecine and fratricidal battles among the Muslim *ummah* (also seen as the community of Muslim brothers) during the third civil war (744-747 A.D.) that marked the collapse of the Umayyad caliphate.[56]

The death of Ali marked the beginning of deification of Ali than previous three Caliphs—Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman among the Shiite discourses. Historian Hawting gives an account how the death of Ali created conditions for the emergence of a new Shiite sect within Islam, first among the supporters of Ali:

> In 661 'Ali was murdered in Kufa, reportedly by a Kharijite seeking revenge for the massacre at Nahrawan, and Mu'awiya took advantage of the situation to march into Kufa where he was able, by a combination of tact, money and threat of force, to win the acceptance of most of 'Ali's remaining supporters. In the eyes of some of 'Ali's supporters the successor to 'Ali should have been eldest son, Hasan, but Mu'awiya, it is generally accepted, persuaded Hasan to retract his claim to the imamate and to withdraw into private life in the Hijaz where he died some years later. Naturally, acceptance of Mu'awiya as caliph was not unanimous. He was still opposed by the Kharijites and not all of 'Ali's former supporters accepted him, but they were no longer able to carry out a consistent armed struggle against him. The remnants of 'Ali's party formed the basis of what was to become known as the Shi'a (the 'Party' of 'Ali), supporting the claims of 'Ali and his descendants to the imamate and developing into a number of sub-groups as their religious and political ideas became more elaborate.[57]

It is evident from the above narrations that there were fratricidal and internecine fights among the Muslim *ummah* (who are regarded as Muslim brothers and sisters) after the killing of each community leader, who symbolically represents the 'Father' of Muslim *ummah* in psychoanalytic terms. After each killing of the 'Father', the Muslim brothers became rivals of each other but not primarily with regard to 'women' as in Freud's *Totem and Taboo* but specifically with regard to 'power'. In fact, the community leader/father known as the Caliph of the Muslim world did not have to bother about women since Islamic traditions permit polygamy up to a maximum of four wives at a time and also they were allowed to keep concubines or

slave-girls, especially those women who got captured as prisoners of war.[58] Umar married a total of nine women in his lifetime with six formal wives and three concubines,[59] Uthman had eight wives in his lifetime[60] while Ali had nine wives, some of whom were concubines after the death of his first wife Fatima—a daughter of Prophet Muhammad.[61] After Ali's death, his eldest son, Hasan had 'a brief and inglorious reign of five or six months.'[62] He was more interested in his 'ever changing harem than on the business of public life,' for his 'vagrant passion gained him the nickname *The Divorcer,* for only by continual divorce could he harmonise his craving for new nuptials with the requirements of the law, which limits freeborn wives to four.'[63] Hasan is said to have exercised the power of divorce 'as a matter of simple caprice, seventy (other say ninety) times'.[64] When the leading men complained to Ali that his son was continually marrying their daughters, and is often divorcing them, Ali said that 'the remedy lay in their own hands; they should refuse to give him their daughters to wife. These divorced wives were irrespective of slave-girls, for whom there is no limit.'[65] It is interesting to note that Ali was not harsh on Hasan by issuing an ordinance that one cannot divorce frequently and wishfully as was once done by Umar.[66]

The killing of Hasan and al-Husayn and the subsequent mourning till date on the occasion of Muharram are still observed by the Shiites. As historians point out:

> [Hasan] met his death by poison at the hand of one of his wives. It was a not unnatural end for 'Hasan the Divorcer'. Alyite tradition, indeed, would have us believe that the lady was bribed to commit the crime, and thus exalts the libertine to the dignity of 'Martyr'. But Muavia had no object in ridding himself of the harmless creature; and the jealousies of Hasan's ever-changing harem afford a sufficient and a likelier reason.[67]

> The Umayyad governor of Iraq 'Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad in particular, is associated in tradition with the suppression of Husayn's movement, although the bloodshed is often ascribed to others. The date of the fight at Karbala' was, according to the Muslim *hijri* calendar, 10 Muharram 61 (10 October 680). The event has attained a mythic quality in Muslim, especially Shi'ite, tradition. For the Shi'a Karbala' is the supreme example of the pattern of suffering and martyrdom which has afflicted their imams and the whole of the Shi'ite community. Each year the day of Karbala', 10 Muharram, is marked by Shi'ites as their greatest festival, and the passion plays and flagellants' processions which accompany it illustrate the feeling which memory of the event inspires. It is only to be expected, therefore, that it is virtually impossible to disentangle history from the legend and hagiography with which it is associated. Even Sunni Muslims are moved by

the fate of the Prophet's grandson. It seems unlikely that at the time itself the affair had very much importance for the Umayyads. Husayn's force had been small and was suppressed with relative ease.[68]

The first four caliphs were not elected on the basis of some hereditary rule.[69] Rather, Umar in his deathbed formed the *shura* (consultation committee) to *choose* or elect the Muslim Caliph among the community of believers. In fact, Islamists like Maududi in the last century have argued that the Caliph among the Muslims should be duly elected through a democratic election and only those can be regarded as potential candidates for the post of caliphate, who are known to have demonstrated the highest moral virtues, dignity, knowledge, and leadership qualities, etc.[70] It is, however, interesting to note that both Husayn and Umayyads were trying to establish a dynastic rule, which is a complete deviation from the Islamic tradition and principle. Husayn was claiming the seat of Caliphate after his father Ali was killed, while Umayyads successfully established a dynastic rule after the killing of Ali. In fact, Ali himself declared his own Hashemite dynasty and was, therefore, succeeded by his eldest son Hasan and after Hasan's murder, the Hashemite claim to the Caliphate passed to Ali's second son, Husayn.[71] Despite the fact that both Husayn and Umayyads were committing the same crime (establishment of un-Islamic dynastic rule), Husayn has been designated as a martyr within later Islamic discourses in general and Shiite traditions in particular[72] and not as a person, who just got killed in a power struggle. On the other hand, among Shiite discourses, Umayyads became vilified as evil conspirators. However, this particular mourning of Husayn's martyrdom and Umayyad vilification still becomes evident in Shiite discourses precisely because of the religious sanctions behind it.

Both Ali's sons: Hasan and Husayn as well as the Umayyad Mu'awiya's claim to the seat of power as the Caliph were made in a context when an already available and widely recognized practice of hereditary dynastic rule exists in non-Muslim societies. So, both persons did the same criminal act, craving for power while killing the (Muslim) brothers with the will to establish a dynastic rule that was completely un-Islamic. But one was more vilified than the other in Shiite discourses. On the other hand, the death of Hasan is still mourned among the Shiites while completely forgetting his irresponsible character as a statesman, who was only interested in his harem and not about the daily affairs of the state. Thus, two similar acts are treated differently. The killing of Hasan and Husayn are mourned without questioning their moral character while the

acts of Umayyads were vilified as evil conspirators in the later Shiite discourses.[73] This is what can be called as the problem of 'sanctioned violence', which is not used here in the same manner as Walter Benjamin calls 'legal violence'/'sanctioned force'.[74]

Explicit violence can be seen with naked eyes where force is illegitimately used by one or a group of actors on another. Some examples of explicit violence can be murder, unjust war, physical assault etc. By contrast, sanctioned or implicit violence on the other hand, is structurally inbuilt in a given society, where consensus by the (silent) majority backs such violence to operate in a system. This is precisely connected to the acceptance of the hierarchical nature of the society and allows the majority to keep silent on certain unjust conditions like poverty, economic inequality, unequal opportunities, oppression, marginalisation, exploitation, discrimination, exclusion etc. without challenging or revolting against a given system. Due to the existence of sanctioned violence in modern societies, the majority also *discriminates* between different violent acts because of ideological hegemony that justifies such an unjust and unequal system. For example, huge protests were witnessed against 2003 Iraq war but we kept silent during the judicial mockery of Saddam Hussein that led him to gallows (a capital punishment that is generally unwelcomed in modern societies) although both Iraq war and judicial mockery of Saddam by victor's justice followed by almost public hanging due to circulation of media images were imperialist acts. Sanctioned violence is a form of violence that is implicit within the very power structure of society. It is located behind the veil of modern structures of power like propaganda, media campaign, advertisements, publicity, imaging/ image building mechanisms via image industry etc. Sanctioned violence essentially produces *discrimination* between two similar works or persons committing/performing the same acts. This sanctioned violence is a form of omission/exclusion/silence due to abstraction for generalisation that at the end of the day is (un)conscious suppression while shaping a discourse. The power bloc in any society manipulates the psyche of individuals as well as collectives by imposing a sanctioned violence on the people who might be opposed to the political hegemony of a given power bloc, so that at the end of the day, *differences* and *distinctions* are made between various acts of the power bloc on the one hand, and *discrimination* is produced between myriad responses against the power bloc on the other. Sanctioned violence can be theoretically defined where consent of one agent produces a sub-space as Marx pointed out 'how human

consent can sometimes stand over against itself and brings forth effects in it turning over against him leaving little room for his further consent' like the worker entering the exploitative system of wage contract by his own consent and thus sanctions his own exploitation.[75] This system of sanctioned violence is constructed in such a manner of complex power relationship that the society seems to accept such an order of discrimination and inequality as *natural*. Such discrimination and unequal treatment as a result of sanctioned violence can be seen in the Shiite attitudes towards Hasan and Husayn on the one hand and Mu'awiya and the Umayyads on the other hand.

Conclusion

In this paper, what we have seen is that the repressed conditions of idolism as a primitive totem symbol and the killing of the leader (father) as a primitive totem act came as the 'return of the repressed' with idealization/idolization of *Kaba* among the global Muslim *ummah* and the idealization/deification of Ali in Shiism. Thus, the 'idolization' of *Kaba* is the 'original sin' of the entire Muslim *ummah*. The killing of three caliphs and later idealization/deification of Ali is the 'original sin' of the Shiite sect within Islam. Sunnis believe that Shiites are not puritan Muslims and, hence, are sinners because it emphasizes on excessive celebration of Ali and ignores the stature of three previous caliphs before Ali. But both Shias and Sunnis are original sinners by idolizing the *Kaba*, since Islam is a religion of non-idols and shapeless *Allah*.

Now, can the global Muslim *ummah* introspect on this issue of idolizing the *Kaba*? If *Allah* is omnipresent, then why Muslims cannot rethink to pray in whichever direction they like in order to start a more democratic practice. If Islam is a religion of non-idols then why a tribal mode of idolatry practice is still done by giving central attention towards the *Kaba* during daily prayers and *Haj* pilgrimage? Actually, this practice of praying towards the *Kaba* is an important mechanism to make a common bond within the community by invoking a number of similar practices across the world. The similarities of religious practices are helpful in religious identification on the part of the believer and further assist to form a collective identity called the 'Muslim community'. But what if some Muslims today rethink about such issues and question the practice of prayer towards the direction of *Kaba*? In that case, there is a possibility for a battle of hegemony between the reformists and

puritans. The reformist Muslim might argue in favour of rethinking and reformulating several theological practices whereas the puritan can just issue a fatwa or make violent mobilizations against the reformist to discredit her/him within the community. Otherwise, it can just kill the reformist by killing a challenging voice, which threatens the very authority of Islamic religion—a religion that cannot be amended as sanctioned by the puritanical faith. Then there can be confrontations among system of nation-states as well. Saudi Arabia might fundamentally oppose to rethink about changing directions of Muslim prayers since it earns billions of foreign exchange from religious tourism, particularly associated with Muslim visits during *Haj* when *qurbani* (ritual of animal sacrifice) is performed and *umrah* (occasional visit to *Kaba* on a non-*Eid-uz-Zuha* date and visit to Prophet's cemetery in Medina). It would simply lose the money and international attention that it gets if the direction of Muslim prayers is changed according to the wish of each and every believer to start a more democratic practice. Coming back to our original psychoanalytical questions in tracing the roots of Islamic traditions, we can argue that even after several thousand years of evolution, the two important symbols of totemic religion: (a) idolatry as a replacement of old totem animal in the form of praying towards the *Kaba* and (b) totem feast, in the form of *qurbani* (meat of sacrificed animal) in *Eid-uz-Zuha* can be still traced within Islamic traditions.

NOTES

1. Aristotle, *The Politics*, trans. and with an introduction, notes, and glossary by Carnes Lord (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 37.
2. Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1984), p. 1
3. Aristotle, *The Nichomachean Ethics* with a commentary by H.H. Joachim and ed. D.A. Rees (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 26.
4. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, p. 10.
5. Chantal Mouffe, *The Return of the Political* (London: Verso, 1993), pp. 1-7.
6. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (eds.), *Fundamentalisms Project, Vols. 1-5* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991-1995) is a detailed study of religious fundamentalism among Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists.
7. 5:15-20 of *The Holy Quran*; source quoted from *The Message of the Qurgn: The Full Account of the Revealed Arabic Text Accompanied by Parallel Transliteration* trans. and explained by Muhammad Asad, complete ed. [2003] (Bristol: The Book Foundation, 2008), pp. 168-170.
8. For Mulhall, the negation of religion, god or any other external being influencing or controlling *human actions* is discarded by the mainstream project of

Enlightenment since 'the Enlightenment conception of human self-sufficiency, since such extra-individual structural influences are themselves humanly comprehensible (identifiable and analysable by such thinkers as Marx, Freud, or Darwin); are in many cases the result of human action; and are, anyway, always in principle open to alteration, or at least amelioration, by collective human action. In short, even if the source of our problems lies beyond the individual wrongdoer, it does not lie beyond the human race as such; and so its resolution also lies within human minds.'—Stephen Mulhall, *Philosophical Myths of the Fall* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), p. 9. The traditional distinction between 'private' and 'public' was also challenged by Feminism. See Michael Freeden, 'Feminism: The Recasting of Political Language' in *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 488-525.

9. From the back cover of Noura Durkee, *Stories from the Quran Book 1: The Story of the Creation & Noah and the Ark*, illustrated by Shehraz Afzal (London: Hood Hood Books, 1998).

10. Durkee, *Stories from the Quran Book 1.*

11. See 'Translators Note', in Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller and trans. Alan Sheridan (Harmondsworth, Eng: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 281.

12. Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics* [1913], trans. James Strachey, 2nd ed. [1950] (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 164-166.

13. Ibid., p. 167.

14. Ibid., pp. 167-168.

15. Sigmund Freud, 'Repression' in *The Freud Reader*, ed. Peter Gay (London: Vintage Books, 1995), p. 572.

16. Sigmund Freud, 'The Return of the Repressed' in *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), p. 164.

17. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, pp. 168-170.

18. *The Bible*, Genesis: Chapter 4, Verses, 1-17.

19. Jeremy Allen Black, Transliteration of original language version: Dumuzid and Enkimdu at *Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature* (ETCSL); English translation at 'Chapter IV: Miscellaneous Myths: Inanna prefers the farmer.' Available at: http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/sum/sum09.htm Retrieved on 09/01/2010.

20. J. H. Hatfield, *Why Call Me God? The Gospel Seen with a Single Eye* (Frodsham: Capabel Press, 2009).

21. Richard S. Hess, *Studies in the Personal Names of Genesis 1-11* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009), pp. 24-25.

22. See Book 3, Sections 108 & 125 and Book 5, Section 343 of Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*; ed. Bernard Williams; trans. Josefine Nauckhoff; poems trans. Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 109, 120, 199. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, trans. Thomas Common with an introduction by Nicholas Davey (London: Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 1997), pp. 5-6; p. 75.

23. *Maulana Hifz-ur-Rehman Sevharvi, Qisas-ul-Quran*, trans. Shakir Rizwani and Khalid Mahmood (Lahore: Idara-i-Islamiat, 2006).

24. 5:27-34 of *The Holy Quran*; source quoted from *The Message of the Qurgn*, pp. 171-173.

25. Durkee, *Stories from the Quran Book 1.*

26. Ahmad Bhagat, *Stories from the Holy Qur'an: The Hoopoe of King Solomon*, illustrated by Hilmi Eltouni (London: Shorouk, 1983).

27. Noura Durkee, *Stories from the Quran Book 2: Abraham and the Holy House & Jonah and the Whale*, illustrated by Simon Trethewey (London: Hood Hood Books, 1998).

28. Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* [1900], trans. and ed. James Strachey, 4th imprint (London: Allen & Unwin, 1971).

29. For such an interpretation of Freud's theorization of dream, see Ajit Chaudhuri, 'From Hegemony to Counter-Hegemony: A Journey in a Non-Imaginary Unreal Space', *Economic and Political Weekly: Review of Political Economy*, Vol. 23, No. 5 (January 30, 1988), pp. 19-23.

30. Durkee, *Stories from the Quran Book 2*.

31. Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, pp. 108-114.

32. G. R. Hawting, *The Idea of Idolatry and the Emergence of Islam: From Polemic to History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 21.

33. Karen Armstrong, *Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths* (London: Harper Collins, 1996), pp. 222-223.

34. See Jacques Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VII* [1986], ed. Jacques-Alain Miller and trans. with notes by Dennis Porter (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 162.

35. See Sayyed Abul-Ala Maudoodi, *Jihad in Islam* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1976).

36. Logic of equivalence in Ernesto Laclau's terms is described as the process of different particular identities making an equivalential relation with each other against a common enemy or antagonistic frontier. For a theoretically engaged discussion on this issue with some concrete examples see Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985); Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason* (London: Verso, 2005).

37. Theodore Pulcini, *Exegesis as Polemical Discourse: Ibn Hazm on Jewish and Christian Scriptures* (Atlanta: The American Academy of Religion, 1998), pp. 14-16.

38. Andrew G. Bostom (ed.), *The Legacy of Islamic Antisemitism: From Sacred Texts to Solemn History* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2008).

39. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith [1929], 2nd impression with corrections (London: Macmillan, 1933), p. 32.

40. Slavoj Žižek, *In Defense of Lost Causes* (London: Verso, 2008), pp. 114-115.

41. Chris Horrie and Peter Chippindale, *What is Islam? A Comprehensive Introduction*, revised and updated ed. [1990] (London: Virgin Books, 2007), p. 68.

42. Ibid., p. 69.

43. Mazheruddin Siddiqi, *Modern Reformist Thought in the Muslim World* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1982), p. 147.

44. G. R. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate, AD 661-750*, [1986] 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 95.

45. Ibid., p. 26.

46. Ibid., p. 27.

47. On this issue see Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī, Vol. XVII: The First Civil War*, trans. G. R. Hawting (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

48. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, p. 30.

49. The event of Ali's death can be seen in Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, Vol. XVII, pp. 213-227.

50. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, pp. 3-4.

51. Ibid., p. 18.
52. Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-ṭabarī,* Vo. XVII.
53. John L. Esposito, *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 209.
54. Horrie and Chippindale, *What is Islam?*, p. 73.
55. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, pp. 46-57.
56. Ibid., pp. 90-103.
57. Ibid., pp. 30-31.
58. See Ida Glaser and Napoleon John, *Partners or Prisoners? Christians thinking about women and Islam* (Carlisle: Solway, 1998).
59. Mark Weston, *Prophets and Princes: Saudi Arabia from Muhammad to the Present* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2008), p. 47.
60. Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-ṭabarī, Vol. XV: The Crisis of the Early Caliphate*, trans. R. Stephen Humphreys (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), p. 254.
61. Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-ṭabarī,* Vol. XVII, pp. 227-228.
62. Sir William Muir, *The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall* (Orientalism: Early Sources, Vol. III) [1891] (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 302.
63. Ibid., pp. 302-304.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. See Sayyid Abul A'la Maududi, *Purdah and the Status of Woman in Islam* (New Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami, 2003).
67. Muir, *The Caliphate*, p. 304.
68. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, p. 50.
69. The first four Caliphs reign together for less than thirty years: Abu Bakr (632-634), Umar (634-644), Uthman (644-656) and Ali (656-661). See Abdul Ali, *Islamic Dynasties of the Arab East: State and Civilization During the Later Medieval Times* (New Delhi: MD Publications, 1996), p. 115.
70. Sayyed Abul-Ala Maudoodi, *Political Theory of Islam* (Lahore: Markazi Maktaba Jama'at-I-Islami Pakistan, 1959).
71. Horrie and Chippindale, *What is Islam?*, pp. 71-72.
72. 'Husayn's death is still commemorated by the Shi'ites at Karbala in their most important religious festival of the year—*Ashura*': Horrie and Chippindale, *What is Islam?*, p. 73.
73. 'The Shi'tes saw the 'Umayyads as Satanic usurpers who had stolen the Caliphate from the Hashemites in order to destroy it': Horrie and Chippindale, *What is Islam?*, p. 73.
74. Walter Benjamin, 'Critique of Violence' in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Vol. 1, 1913-1926*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 237-238.
75. Ajit Chaudhury, Dipankar Das and Anjan Chakrabarti, *Margin of Margin: Profile of an Unrepentant Postcolonial Collaborator* (Calcutta: Anustup, 2000), p. 92.

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