THE PROBLEM OF FREEWILL: AN APPROACH FROM UTILITARIANISM

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PREFATORY REMARKS

Prefatory Remarks

The present dissertation is a statement of my personal reactions, cognitive as well as affective to the life at large. As a result I have not faked dispassionateness either in the style of writing or in the gathering of materials. Man in honesty, takes sides and ethics avowedly is an affair of taking sides, though often it is cloaked under logic. This has been an established way of dealing with the problems of ethics. But that need not be the only way. The problem of free will, in particular, has an existential ring about it, and in keeping with the existentiality of the issue I have ventured freely between literature and philosophy. Both are, as Richard Rorty has suggested, are narratives of human encounter. There is hardly any literary work of depth without a philosophical dimension. And Greek drama, the tragedies in particular, are the sources of philosophical issues and ideas to the European mind of the subsequent ages. I open my book in a similar fashion.

Why at all do I address myself to dealing with the problem of free will? The answer, to start with, may appear non-academic, but a sharp distinction between the two worlds, academic and non-academic cannot perhaps be made. Our philosophical problems have their roots in the context of the non-academic world ; physics is temporally prior to metaphysics. As a conscious member of a society one cannot but fail to notice acts of corruption, nepotism and bribery in high places such that the common people have lost faith in politics, bureaucracy, legal institutions, defence etc. Virtue has become defunct and vice is being worshiped. All these may appear as mere tall talks but these are the problems of the time. All such things must be taken into consideration in order to understand the philosophical mood of a person of this time because no one can jump over his or her own shadow.

Each case of corruption, bribery or indiscipline is attributed to "system failure". Corruption and bribery are argued by some as necessary lubricants for a slow and cumbersome system of administration. Human responsibility is thus disowned. If no individual is responsible for the mess that exists, then there is nothing we can do to improve the situation. If we could ask a cleric, an officer, a physician, a teacher or a student about the illicit means they use, they will point either to a system or to another person; none of us is willing to shoulder the responsibility of the things we do and their consequences. But that would lead us to say that we have no freedom of will; whatever we do, we do—not out of our will. If that is the case, the institution of morality is at stakes, for freedom of will is looked upon as the essence of morality. Another point we would like to mention here, namely that whatever vices have been mentioned earlier as a sign of moral decline are also matters of legal concern. There are reasons to believe that the moral and the legal have essential similarity. Freedom of the will is presupposed by both the institutions. The difference between the two lies in the nature and extent of the authority each exercises. If freedom is a mere fantasy, the legal institution too looses its teeth, its prescriptive authority. However, it is hard to believe that human choices or decisions are not free and deliberate, that they are determined. But again, it is not a matter of mere personal belief or conviction. The whole thing must be looked at in an unprejudiced manner. This is how I intend to concern myself with the problem of free will.

The problem of freewill as opposed to determinism is an ancient one. In the West, the will and the problem of its freedom was brought to a sharp focus by the Greek tragedians. It was later taken up by Aristotle. But before we proceed to map the heritage, we would like to chart out the conceptual tension obtaining between freedom and determinism, two apparently opposed concepts. :

The theory of free will is the theory that man is free to choose and act the way he wants to. Determinism, on the other hand, postulates that all events, including human actions are predetermined. It is a fact of our everyday experience that on many occasions we are free agents, able to do or refrain from doing something. The ordinary, commonsense man has always a belief in his personal free will. But that is questioned both by Christian theology and Physical sciences particularly physics. In the theological context it is usual to speak of termination, implying that everything, including every human choice, has been fixed in advance by divine fore knowledge. If God is all knowing does that leave any room for human choice and responsibility? The omniscient supreme Being of Christian theology renders human freedom a sham. A far more rigorous deterministic theory appeared with the progress of classical physics from the seventeenth century down to the end of the nineteenth century. Its continued success made determinism an absolutely inescapable doctrine, not only in the explanation and prediction of natural events but of human actions too.

The philosophical issues of the problem of free will are concerned with logical presuppositions and logical incompatibilities, to discover what the presuppositions and implications of the theories of freedom and determinism are and whether or not the two can be reconciled. The adherents of the reconciliation thesis are called compatibilists. Those who deny that such reconciliation can be brought about are the incompatibilists.

Sometimes the two concepts of freedom and determinism are so defined that one explicitly excludes the other. Yet it is worthwhile to notice that many philosophers are compatibilists e.g. Locke, Hume, Leibnitz etc.

Ordinarily, we contrast acting out of our own freewill with acting under compulsion. But, even the person who acts under compulsion is an agent, whereas, the person who is simply picked up by main force and thrown as missile-victim is not. The crux here is what is essentially involved is action, not freewill in everyday sense. Determinism too may be considered only in terms of causes necessitating these effects. But it is also possible to speak of conduct determined by the motives; and to say this is not so is clearly to imply that there was no alternative.

Modern problems in this area have centred round the claim that human actions are, or are capable of being (had we the knowledge) causally explained; that is, they either (a) fall under (causal) physical laws or (b) are physically determined (in the sense in which the movements of inanimate physical objects are held to be physically determined). This might mean, of a given event c (falling under a law) that its effect e (a) could have been predicted or (b) could not but have happened. When e is a human action, the tension is between describing it as voluntarily (if this means "within our power to do or not to do, as we choose") and claiming that it could have been predicted, or (given circumstance c) e could not but have happened. But to deny that human actions fall into the realm of causality as ordinarily understood creates problems. In what sense then can we be said to cause our own actions (and hence be responsible for them, as the concept of freewill implies) rather than have them accidentally happen to us? Compatibilists believe that the concept of freewill must involve causality.

In a nutshell, the summary of our present work may be given as follows : what we have tried first is to trace the problem in the history of human thought. The view on freedom to be held depends to a great extent on the theory of obligation one holds. In this regard, the utilitarian theory of obligation, with a special reference to Mill's utilitarianism would be undertaken. Human actions may not always be oriented to pleasure and happiness but in a broad sense, teleology can be pertinently talked about in connection with human actions. The Indian tradition too mostly took it for granted that the natural human attitude is to pursue happiness and try to avoid pain. However, there is also a critique of happiness and its aspects in the concept of *nivṛtti.* If there is a sense of *sukha*, which is not ultimately questionable and counterproductive, it has to be detached from the notion of desire and its pursuit. It must be associated with the cessation of desire. Instead of its gratification, it must be a happiness which amounts to contentment, inner peace, acceptance and recognition of one's identity. We find this in, different ways, in Buddhism as well as Hinduism. In modern iwestern thought also the idea of pursuit of happiness has not remained unchallenged.

It is survival, we may say. for which human beings act. There is no way out from this. Many questions would arise here. For example, what sort of survival do we have in mind? A brute also acts for survival. If survival is the last word, should we lead a life of a brute? By survival we mean survival with human dignity. To stand up like a man and not to submit like a brute, to measure up to our capabilities. Survival does not mean to exist merely but to have a fulfilled life. Such a kind of survival seeking fulfilment and self-realisation should incorporate a measure of altruism. should take other people seriously. We discharge our obligations and commitments because we are free agents. If human actions were inexorably determined by physical states we could not have talked of going out of our way to help others, we doubt whether we could have talked of even acting selfishly. We have not gone for describing or explaining the quality of life to be led in detail. We are only in search of a least common factor in all of acts that are called moral, namely what makes a man a moral agent? . And whatever may be our theory moral obligation, it must have its corresponding theory of freedom. We have attempted to advocate a theory of "rational determinacy". It is what has freed man from mere brutality, but freedom cannot be completely de-linked from motives or causes. There are many technical ways to tackle the problem. But simply speaking, to act morally is to act rationally for survival. And this survival could not mean the individual survival, because no man can live alone.

To sum up, what we want to emphasise in an idiosyncratic manner is that exercise of the freedom of will is connected with our survival. By 'survival' we do not mean a raw, physical existence, but a 'good life' informed by duties and commitments, acquisition and practice of virtues and responsible dealings with our fellows. The moral agent as a free agent is not a solitary person. Morality presupposes a non-solipsistic universe.

CHAPTER I

DETERMINISM : AN ARGUMENT FROM MYTHS AND TRAGEDIES

I

Bertrand Russell writes, "one of the defects of all philosophers since Plato is that their inquiries into ethics proceed on the assumption that they already know the conclusion to be reached".[1] May be Russell uses the word "know" in a strict sense of the term. But to write philosophy or to speak philosophy is something different from to think philosophy, at least at some points. A philosopher puts questions to himself. He may find his answer, not necessarily in the form of knowledge, but often in the shape of a haunch or that of a strong feeling. He may ask the same question later in order to gather evidences to turn the haunch into a true belief or to find support in favour of his feeling. The Socratic questions can be understood in this light. The Socratic method of examining man's everyday opinions by means of a carefully elaborated system of questions was not aimed at imparting knowledge, but extracting the principles of good life which are concealed under a sheath of everyday opinions. A systematic philosophical quest cannot proceed without having an idea of the end. But if one is honest, the quest may lead to a different answer altogether.

As a humble student of philosophy, I would not pretend of being totally unaware, or ignorant of the problem I pose before me. My problem is that when we speak about the moral decline of society, in what way hould we react, what should be our understanding of the states of affairs? We find that people try to evade the problem laying the burden either on failure of administration, or laxity of the legal authority, or lack of education. The situation is not seen as a moral one of our ability to exercise our free will, but as the mundane one of some defect or aberration in the situation in which we act. To state the more primary question: if we are to look for a minimum morality from human beings, where should we appeal? To the conscience of human beings or to the legal or some other social institutions? There is hardly any way out if freedom of the will is embedded in deontology of the Kantian type. In spite of the Moral Law Kant mentioned many cases of pathological actions. When the 'Kantian home' is shaken, the quest may begin for a teleological mooring for the freedom of will. We have hinted at that in the introductory remarks.

The problem seems to be a more basic one, that of the meaning of morality. We have already referred to the similarities and differences between morality and law, the legal and the moral in the opening remarks. Despite the similarities, morality is often looked upon as a matter of conscience and law as that of enforcement. Many things which are morally reprehensible cannot be brought to book through a legal process. On the other hand, legal codes and decisions may outrage our moral sensitivity. One can disobey the laws of the state on conscientious grounds, on the ground that they are unjust. Socrates is the luminous example of a civil disobedient so is Gandhi in our part of the globe. "... political laws and laws generally, can commend or forbid external actions, they can do little or nothing to ensure that the action is done or refrained from in the right spirit, and the 'right spirit' is very important for morality at the level of conscience."[2] Moreover, physical force and prudential considerations do not belong to the idea of a moral institution of life. Morality has also been contrasted with convention or with prudence. "Thus morality is distinguished from convention by certain features that it shares with law; similarly, it is also distinguished from law by certain features that it shares with convention ..."[3]. But whether it is a law or it is a convention, prudential considerations are there behind. This is how morality and law are sought to be contrasted. The moral and legal are two different domains having only some points of contact between them. "Certain acts may be judged both legally and morally wrong—robbery or murder, for instance, other acts that break no law may be judged morally wrong. Still others may be illegal but not immoral. ... violation of the law entails sanctions, for example, formal punishments like fine or imprisonment. Moral failure does not entail statutory penalties ... moral obligations, in many, if not most cases, are left to individual consciences or to the approval or disapproval of the society."[4] I should not say that I am in a position to understand clearly the qualitative difference between what makes an act legal and what makes an act moral. This is made more obscure by the fact that the laws of the state have a tendency to speak in the voice of morality in order to establish its authority and strengthen its grip. The society has gained an unwanted ability to justify the immoral as legal and illegal as moral. For instance, given the condition that there are politically independent and sovereign Nations, the question of moral dilemma that could possibly arise in a person who has got the aspiration of being the political head of the country in which he or she is not born is overshadowed by the constitutional shade. It seems that Demon parts the God-made moral into moral and legal for this purpose.

But should not what is not moral would also be not legal? Should not the illegal also be immoral? Are the history of the development of laws of state and that of moral laws two different histories? Does the non-teleological Kantian-will behind morality distinguish moral laws from the purposive laws of state? Or only the political laws have a history and the moral laws don't? What I mean to ask is, are the moral laws *apriori* in contrast with the *aposteriori* political laws? For, the *apriori* cannot have a history. Let us look into the history of laws in the early Western thought. We have Greek literature in our hand.

The primitive people discovered themselves to be governed by the forces of nature to be at their mercy. Of such forces those that wrought death and diseases were the most powerful and inevitable and most acutely felt. With any primitive people, their mythologies, sub-terrainean layers of their attitude to nature, destiny and God is a manifestation of their deterministic life-worlds. Dialogues with spirits, i.e. those invisible agencies which are supposed to determine the good and evil in human life, are central to day-to-day behaviour of primitive people. The use of spells, charms and rituals and the things which they wear during performance of rituals are means of appeasing the spirits as well as the forces of nature to stall diseases and death. In Greek mythology the natural forces are operative as natural laws. They gave the name ''fate' to these laws. One of the laws of nature, the instinct of survival, kept men always in fighting with fate. Fate is not to be thought as an instrument in the hands of gods, nor are gods the authors of these laws. Though it may seem so as the mythical men are found several times to seek help from gods with the hope of victory over fate, and also because fate sometimes revealed itself in the form of oracle. The real nature of fate as "the laws of the nature" is revealed in the myths and plays of the great Greek tragedians. Nature, once declares that a future-son of Metis the Titaness and Zeus would depose Zeus. Hearing this, Zeus immediately swallowed Metis and made the oracle impotent.[5] The concept of God is nothing but the expression of man's ambition to conquer fate. But could any moral device be proof against destiny? One part of the mythical man always had the belief in the prophetic verse "what will be, will be ..."[6] and the other had shown a great assertion of his will to say "No" to the laws that determines his existence. The tragedy is that his hope for freedom from the deterministic world was a hope without a belief. The working of destiny or more precisely, fate as the determinant of human life has been stated in its full-fledged form in the great dramas of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides.

Sophocles' (495-405 BC) *Oedipus the King* is such a story of a man who failed in conquering his destiny. Tragedy begins with Oedipus even before his birth when he was destined by Apollo's oracle to kill his father and become his own mother's husband. Lians, the King of Thebes and who would be Oedipus's father at once put Jocasta, his wife away. But they failed to avoid sex and Oedipus was born. The child's feet were pierced with an iron pin and he was exposed on Mount Citheron. A Corinthian shepherd found him and handed him over to childless Polybus, the king of Corinth. Thus, none of Lians's devices could prevent the birth and survival of the unwanted child. Later, Oedipus mourned his survival

> ... I was not snatched from death
>
> That once, unless to be preserved
>
> For some more awful destiny ...[7]

So many times destiny made mockery of human strivings to frustrate fate. Young Oedipus, after becoming aware of the fact that he had been destined to kill his father and marry his own mother, sought to give lie to the oracle and fled from Corinth because he knew Polybus and his wife Periboea as his parents. But the "demon of the destiny" brought Lians on Oedipus' way. Oedipus killed his father unknowing in an encounter. He then moved towards the city of Thebes and set the city free from the grip of Sphinx by answering her cunning riddles. He became the King of Thebes and married Jocasta, his mother. Thus happened what had to happen. The Sophoclean Oedipus says of himself :

> .... Shedder of father's blood
> Husband of mother is my name
> Godless and child of shame,
> Begetter of the brother-sons;
> What infamy remains
> That is not spoken of Oedipus?[8]

But why such a cursed life has been chosen as a central character of the drama? The drama is a tribute to a man who fought against his destiny but did not succeed. It is a tribute to a man who always wanted to go the other way, but demon of destiny puts him on the way to sin in spite of his good will (but not a free one) and noble heart. God once cried against him "Away from my shrine, wretch![9] But why? He was not responsible for what he had to do. Such a life arouses pity and fear in us. We begin to utter with the citizens of Thebes:

> He was our bastion against disaster, our honoured king;
> All Thebes was proud of the majesty of his name
> And now, where is a more heart rendering story of affection?
> Where a more awful swerve into the arms of torment?
> O Oedipus, that proud head![10]

It would be difficult to interpret *Oedipus the King* as a story of the punishment for pride. The deeds for which the hero would be 'punished' were preordained before he was even conceived. But it is true that the endowments which make him grand—his impulsive intellect, his passion for truth, his great physical strength, his integrity and his pride—are all necessarily used to work out and highlight the pattern of his fate down to its final fulfilment in the realisation of what that fate had been "Through the conflict between individuals who remain sharply characterised is written the eternal conflict between private conscience and public authority".[11]

Thus, king Oedipus is not morally responsible for what he did. His innocence and helplessness in the face of fate was at least recognised by his fellow humans. There is only a few subtle references to rudimentary moral or family laws in the drama such as: 'it is wrong to marry one's own mother', 'it is wrong to kill ones own father' etc.

In *Antigone* of Sophocles, the presence and the conflict of moral laws are more prominent. It is said that the "classical instance" of moral conflict "... is found in *Antigone* of Sophocles, where the definite law of the state comes into collision with customary principles of family affection."[12] *Antigone* is the story of a conflict between Creon, the King of Thebes and Antigone, daughter of the former king Oedipus :

> A king, in full and sincere consciousness of his responsibility for the integrity of the state, has, for an example against treason, made an order of ruthless punishment upon a traitor and rebel—an order denying the barest rites of sepulture to his body, and therefore of solace to his soul. A woman, for whom political expediency takes second place, by a long way, to compassion and piety, has defied the order and is condemned to death. Here is a conflict between two passionately held principles of right ...[13]

Now what kinds of laws are they of which we are made conscious of in *Antigone*? Is there really a conflict between two totally different

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sorts of law, one is the moral law defended by "the woman ruled by conscience"[14] and the other the law of the state? It appears that in *Antigone* we are made conscious of three different kinds of laws that demand obedience from us.

(1) Destiny or the Law of nature :

Earthquake knows no children, no sick or no saintly person. Likewise, it is futile to pray before destiny. It came to the noble hearted Oedipus in the form of an oracle. And Creon was no villain. He was a man of reason who understood Oedipus; whatever he did, he thought at his heart, that he had done for his country. He was honest when he was saying,

> No man who is his country's enemy
>
> Shall call himself my friend. Of this I am sure—
>
> Our country is our life; ...[15].

He speaks like a true king when he says,

> ... How, if I tolerate
>
> A traitor at home, shall I rule those abroad?[16]

It does not sound immoral that the king has no sympathy for a person, who invaded his country and was shedder of bloods of his people, even though he was his nephew. Nevertheless, if we take it for granted that all Creon did. Creon, the king gave up his own law and decided to set Antigone free. But Creon was not forgiven. Gods of the myths in fact had no power to stop misfortune. All the Creon's dear ones committed suicide one after another. "What is to be, no mortal can escape."[17] Thus, although fate has been spoken sometimes by the myths as coming from the hands of Gods, in true sense, it was no power of Gods. The mythical god was only an ambition of man to conquer destiny. That is why I call destiny, the unavoidable law of nature. Hobbes also sometimes equates law of God and law of nature.[18]

(II) Law of The State :

These are laws by which a king rules the country. "Your will is law", said the citizen of Thebes to their king Creon.[19]

(III) There are "**the unwritten and unalterable laws of God and heaven** ..."[20] which are said to be the moral laws as distinguished from laws of state. And Antigone prefers the former, because "... it is of immemorial antiquity and its origin cannot be traced, whereas the law of the state has been made and may be unmade again."[21]

Now, the difference between (II) and (III), as it is suggested to my mind, is not such that they can be nomenclatured differently. Or if they could be named differently, the difference between the legal and the moral is not a qualitative one,at least as far we are concerned with Greek literature. Their difference does not lie in the fact that laws of the state are man made and moral laws are God's laws. Both Creon and Antigone, for the sake of their arguments, called up the name of God. Creon's law was:

> ... he who puts a friend
>
> Above his country; I have no good word for him.
>
> Further, ... God above is my witness, who sees all ...[22].

On the other hand, Antigone's objection against Creon's law is, "That order did not come from God. Justice/ That dwells with the gods below, knows no such law."[23]. Thus, God seems to be a double agent here. It is very much interesting to note that Anigone is defending the laws of "family affection" the breaking of which invites terrible consequences like those came in her father Oedipus's way. And it is the same God whose laws are being defended by Antigone, has, as she said, brought much suffering to innocent and noble hearted Oedipus who in fact broke the laws of the family at God's will.

If the myths and ancient Greek literature reveal any difference between the moral and the legal, their difference is contained in one of the utterances made by Antigone herself, and that is, the former is of immemorial antiquity and the later is not. About her law, she said that "...where they come from, none of us can tell.[24] It is true that political laws are datable but some rules and customs cannot be traced in this way. That only means the one is more ancient than the other. And if Antigone is really defending moral law then she must be regarded as ungenerous and narrow minded. A family is a smaller unit than a state. Creon was concerned for more people than Antigone was. But not all rules or laws to which people refer to as moral family rules are family rules. Anyway, the imaginary distinction between moral and legal as two qualitatively separate categories on the basis of some vague concepts had not taken shape at Sophocle's age. Thus, the laws by which Antigone and Creon were being guided by, differ only in their antiquity and the extent of their field of application. Family came into existence because there was the need of survival and security in hostile circumstances. A state is a complex system of families. A detailed history of evolution of the society is not within our scope. But what must be taken into account by us is that the basic force behind a family and a state is the same and that is the instinct of survival. Society emerged for our practical purpose of survival. Family and state are only two different units regarding their size and operations within society. Morality, being a social institution cannot be of more antiquity than society. Man, by nature is not social, so man cannot be moral by nature. The only law we can see behind the formation of all these institutions is that of survival. I would like to quote a few words regarding the views of Hobbes in this context from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* :

> … he speaks of human desires as directed to various specific objects of which the chief is self preservation. What is, however, continuously clear is his denial that human nature is social. All man's natural instincts and passions are self-regarding … Hobbes appeals to direct introspection in support of his views … Bees and ants are social animals; they do not compete for honour and dignity and show envy and malice to one another as men do; they do not set private above public good, criticize and malign each other as men do. … The object of every voluntary act is some good to himself.[25]

One need not be an unqualified Hobbesean. Yet, as we have already pointed out, survival in a restricted sense, is a valuable norm. We can transcend the crude sense of self-love to a meaningful social life with others. Now what this has to do with the so-called conflict between the different kinds of laws or norms we are talking about? So far the moral laws and laws of state are concerned, both have a tendency to become habitual. Like well-worn clothes, they may dispose one to adopt, in well-practiced ways, to the situations one meets, upon which one spends little mental effort or normative reflection. And then there is very little to distinguish human actions from the arbitrary actions of brutes—the necessitation which characterises them. The human psyche, however, refuses to be necessitated in this way. It has the capacity of self-correction and this entails that laws—

whether moral or legal—reflect the normative sensitivities of the agent. The moral is not reducible to the legal. But what is legal has moral overtones.

In the Greek dramas, cited above, man's life was destined by laws over which he had no control, as he had none over laws of nature. This way of being is 'natural' and god is sometimes identified with nature. Yet in the man-god conflicts and feuds, sometimes god's law wins and sometimes man's. God was not even thought of as the creator of human beings. It was Prometheus, the Titan who was the creator of mankind.[26] Sometimes the law of nature as human law wins and sometimes the law of nature as god's law wins. Once a dispute took place at Sicyon, as to which portions of a sacrificial bull should be offered to the gods, and which should be reserved for man. Prometheus was invited to act as an arbiter. He formed two bags from the skin of the sacrificial bull and filled one with the flesh concealed under the stomach and the other with the bones hidden beneath a rich layer of fat. He then offered Zeus the choice of either. Zeus, easily deceived, chose the bag containing the bones. Prometheus was laughing at him behind his back. Zeus punished Prometheus for his trick by withholding fire from mankind and cried, "Let them eat their flesh raw."[27] Prometheus made a backstairs admittance to Olympus with the consent of Athene and stole fire in the form of glowing charcoal and gave it to mankind.[28] Thus, myths suggest a constant struggle for existence of mankind in the world of nature. But the man of the age of myths realised the tragedy. The human freedom was chained along with Prometheus who was bound naked to a pillar in the Caucasian mountains by Zeus for ever!

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[28] Ibid, 39 (g).

CHAPTER II

TELEOLOGY AND DELIBERATE CHOICE : ARISTOTLE

II

The last movement of Beethoven's last quartet is based on the following two motifs :

Muss es sein ?
Es muss sein! Es muss sein!
(Must it be?
It must be! It must be!)[1]

And this is the voice of fate. This is the voice that dominates whole of the age of myth and the great Greek tragedies. But man of every age asks again and again: *Muss es sein*? Must it be? Must the world experience nuclear threat? Must I have to hate the people of Pakistan in order to love India? Is there nothing that would prevent man from digging his own grave? Is there no way out from legalising the immoral? A determinist would argue by putting counter questions: "Are not human actions, like everything else in nature, under the reign of natural law, which rigidly determines whatever happens in the world, including human behaviour? Are we not all caught in the clutches of the law of cause and effect, so that every act of ours is caused by some preceding event or condition? Can the human will escape the chains of mechanism which prevail throughout nature?"[2] If we are to avoid chance and chaos reason suggests that all our actions, like events in nature, should obey nature's laws, that they are strictly deducible from other antecedent events. But we are not ready to accept this, "We think that the future is open and although only one out of various paths into the future can be followed, we believe that it is sometimes up to us to decide which one to follow. That is, we believe that we have what Fisher would call a 'regulative control' over our future."[3] And it is a common belief among the moral agents that moral responsibility requires regulative control. This regulative control entails freedom of will. In fact, that we have a "regulative control" is more a hope than a belief. Any way, if in antiquity determinism has found expression in the myths and "tragedies", the first confident voice upholding freedom of will is found in Aristotle. Before we pass on to Aristotle, we shall have a brief excursion into the theory of the Sophists and the ethical ideas of Plato.

Sophists make a distinction between what is man in himself and what he is in society. They maintain that our moral judgements represent not real values we set on things, but our fear of suffering injustice. Society makes laws and punishes because it is afraid. There is no morality apart from the laws made by society. Thus "... no man is just willingly, but only on compulsion."[4] Clearly sophists maintain a deterministic outlook and cast doubt on the power of human intellect to arrive at truth. They hold that, "...there is no question of one ethical view being true and another false, but there is question of one view being 'sounder', i.e., more useful or expedient than another."[5]

If we sharpen the sophistic view we find that according to them there are conflicting ethical opinions that are equally valid. That may be understood in at least two ways. First, it may be interpreted to mean that some ethical opinions are not more valid than some others which conflict with them. Second, it can be interpreted as saying that different individuals sometimes in fact have conflicting ethical opinions. This is established by showing that people disagree. Third, it can also be taken to assert the more radical thesis that individual's ethical opinions are at least, to some extent dependent on the cultural mores of their own group. But every one will also agree that societies somehow spawn their own moral critics. If a society enjoins upon its members the principle: Never say what is false, an individual member of the society who subscribes to the principle, may, nevertheless decide to say what is false, perhaps because the nature of his situation requires him so to decide. If his judgement conflicts with another's, that means they do not have the same belief and appraisal of the situation. If this understanding of the sophist's view is unobjectionable then we may venture to say that they have given a place to individual freedom, freedom of criticising, of changing and even abandoning mores of a community. Such a theory however has its difficulties. It envisages the possibility of their being a number of ethical 'truths'. Every truth being equally useful, leads us nowhere, becomes equally useless. The result is not illumination but obscurity. Instead of providing a guide to conduct it creates a state of mental befuddlement. However, the sophists at least laid bare the fact, so rightly insisted upon by Socrates that "the proper study of mankind is man". Where they erred was their excessive emphasis upon individual differences.

Again every man thinks that injustice is more profitable to the individuals than justice ..."[6] The conclusion of sophism is the natural outcome of the sophistic introspection with their "empirico-inductive method".[7] They do not intend to discover truth which lies outside the realm of man because, as Sophocles says, "Wonders are many on earth, and the greatest of these is man".[8] The arguments of sophists are fair but contain a little inconsistency. With a fear to suffer one cannot think injustice to be more profitable. Injustice as well as justice presuppose the existence of other people. So the act of injustice cannot be separated from suffering injustice. If one fears suffering injustice, one should think justice as more profitable than injustice. Secondly, Thrasymachus, a sophist linguistically used 'justice' and 'injustice' as two different words (The Republic, Book

II). I cannot think of one who recognises the difference between 'justice' and 'injustice' as justice. If I condemn an act 'X' and you don't, then it must be that I think 'X' as wrong and you think it as right. But we may doubt Plato's impartiality in bringing out sophist's actual view. Plato must have been forgotten that it is his Master Socrates who says that no one does wrong knowingly. "We must, however, remember that Plato tends to bring out the bad side of the Sophists, largely because he had Socrates before his eyes, who had developed what was good in sophism beyond all comparison with the achievements of the sophists themselves."[9]

The tragedian discovered the necessary laws of nature dictating our future from outside. The sophists seemed to have believed that moral principles cannot be shown to be valid for everyone and that people ought to follow the conventions of their own group. This position seems to belong in a twilight region between teleology and deontology. In Plato too, we do not find any abstract morality. Like his master Socrates, his interests were practical. Morality is discussed in legal or political terms. "Justice exists in a state as well as in an individual, because a state is simply the lives of its citizens; and if we find that society is a natural expression of man's nature, we may conclude that the social justice is the natural expression of the justice in man's soul."[10] In Plato's own version,

> Then perhaps justice may exist in greater proportions in the greater space [in a city than in an individual] and be easier to discover. So, if you are willing, we shall begin our inquiry as to its nature in cities and often that let us continue our inquiry in the individual also, looking for the likeness of the greater in the form of the less.[11]

Plato finds that the sophistic distinction between man- individual and man-social is invalid and unreal.[12] Secondly, for Plato good life is not something to be lived apart from, and often in spite of the social system of the day. To Plato the division of life into a public and a private sphere was not to be tolerated. Politics and morals were the same. The good life was possible only in a good state. In this ideal of harmonious living, the Aristotelian or the Kantian moral tension could have no place. Moral reason can have no meaning there other than logical reason. Moral ideas are the results of true and faithful reflection on the ordinary world. Plato is clearly a moral determinist by assuming "virtue is knowledge and that virtue is teachable."[13] Athenian Plato is rather an admirer of Sparta.

Aristotle, however, recognises the difference between moral and logical reason. "As to the question what is the good of man, Aristotle points out that it cannot be answered with the exactitude with which a mathematical problem can be answered, and that owing to the nature of the subject matter, for human action is the subject matter of ethics, and human action cannot be determined with mathematical exactitude."[14] As to the nature of the human action that makes a human being different, Aristotle points out that it is not the mere act of living since this is also shared by the vegetative kingdom. A step higher is the life of experiencing sensation; but this is also shared by horses, cows and brute creation as a whole. And then remains the rational part of man and this really is peculiar to man. So, the function of man is the exercise of his non-corporeal facilities in accordance with a rational principle.[15] Aristotle then makes note of the fact that human beings have a corporeal body which cannot be ignored. In chapter thirteen Book I of Aristotle's *Ethics* we get a clear picture of human soul which he divides into two parts: rational and irrational. The irrational part again consists of a vegetative part and an appetitive part. The former is devoid of any rationality and the latter, i.e., the appetitive part, from which spring the appetites and desires in general, in a way, takes part in rational activity. In a sense, the rational part may be divided into rational part proper and a derivative part.[16] Aristotle says "... the irrational emotions are no less human than considered judgements."[17] Aristotle's ethics of virtue is to be understood in the light of his above consideration. Virtues are of two kinds : 'intellectual' and 'moral'. The former probably belongs to the world of so-called 'pure reason' and the latter is to be considered in the context of double citizenship of human soul.

The important points in Aristotle's conception of moral virtue can be noted down as follows:

(i) Virtue is a "child of habit"[18]

(ii) Virtues and dispositions

(iii) Virtues consist in avoiding extremes.

Aristotle accepts the Platonic concept that virtues can be taught, without doubt. Therefore, he infers that virtues are habits; they are "... produced in us neither by Nature nor against Nature."[19] The argument of course could run in the opposite way: virtues are habits, therefore, they can be taught. It may turn out to be circular. It is interesting to note that both Plato and Aristotle hold that virtues can be taught but unlike Plato, the pure spiritualist, the compatibilist Aristotle is not saying that virtue is knowledge. As to the second point, that virtues are dispositions, Aristotle defines virtues as "... a mean condition as lying between two forms of badness, one being excess and the other deficiency ...".[20] "Virtue, then, is a disposition, a disposition to choose according to a rule, i.e., the rule by which a practically wise man would determine it." Virtue is a disposition and not an arithmetic mean, neither it means any mediocrity in the moral life. Virtue is a mean only from an ontological point of view. From the axiological point of view, virtue is excellence.

To establish virtue as a disposition in contrast to some *apriori* or innate quality and to account for moral responsibility, Aristotle is first, in a true sense, to introduce the concept of free-will as postulate behind virtues. "... our virtues are in a manner expressions of our will; at any rate, there is an element of will in their formation."[21] The first two of the points mentioned earlier about his concept of virtue can thus be reconciled in the light of his concept of will in the following statement : Virtue is a habit of willing or habit of deliberate choice of the mean condition. Man should be courageous, courage is the main between cowardice and rashness. Man should be generous, generosity is the mean between miserliness and overspending. Following the biological analogy Aristotle recognises that as good health consists in the right state of the body, a rightly balanced state of its components, so the mind also enjoys good health so long as it avoids excess on one side and deficiency on the other. Through this conception of mean Aristotle links ethics to the needs of man, and it becomes an ethics of achievable virtues. It never occurred to Aristotle to doubt the freedom of the will. But it is not some power of acting without any motive. "... we all have some pleasurable or honourable motive in everything we do."[22]

Free will has been described as a deliberate choice by Aristotle. It is a choice of means and not of ends, because the end is determined and that is "*eudaimonia*". The word "*eudaimonia*" is usually rendered as "happiness", but the word really means "good life" or "well being" or "blessedness".[23] Again, he says that it is the rational part "which makes deliberate choice". Are reason and will the same? It needs a separate and detailed investigation. It suffices for the present to note that the exercise of the highest virtue, pure contemplation, flows from the worthiest part of human nature, the intellect or mind. Pure contemplation is necessarily accompanied by the greatest happiness man can possibly find. Intellect the worthiest or the highest of the components which make up human nature is not separated from the remaining constituents of man.[24] Hence Aristotle's view offers a rational vision of morality. Being an advocate of freedom of will, Aristotle is not at all a deontologist. The necessary connection between voluntarism and deontologism, I think, is a Christian contribution. Aristotle is a teleologist in respect of moral obligation. Whenever he seems to be a deontologist or whenever his philosophy seems to contain deontological elements, he is not consistent. For instance, in the fourth chapter of Book II of *Ethics*, Aristotle says that the doer (moral agent) must be in a certain frame of mind when he acts (page 61). In this respect, he mentions three conditions :

(I) The agent must act in full consciousness of what he is doing.

(II) He must will his action and will for its own sake.

(III) The act must proceed from a fixed and unchangeable disposition.

Now willing an action for its own sake seems to be a deontological standpoint. But in the previous chapter, i.e., chapter three of the same book, Aristotle writes :

(IV) "... moral virtues have to do with pains and pleasures". Actions and emotions are accompanied by pains and pleasures.

> "Moral goodness is a quality disposing us to act in the best way when we are dealing with pleasures and pains.[25]

Now, (II), to will an action for its own sake together with (I), being conscious of doing that action such that (IV), pleasures and pains are dealt properly are certainly not consistent. Another point can be mentioned concerning Aristotle's rational vision of morality. True that Aristotle does not, like Plato, identifies virtue with reason or prudence. But reason plays a great and indispensable role in his ethics. Virtues are attitudes but cannot be without prudence. They are not rational but all reasonable. "Virtues are not only the right and reasonable altitudes, but the attitude which leads to right and reasonable choice, and right and reasonable choice in these matters is what we mean by prudence."[26] Aristotle, then, is not a deontologist; he holds a teleological view in morality. Although our end in morality is fixed according to him, he is not a determinist. We are free to choose the means to the end. If the real issue in ethics is the "... opposition between rationalism and voluntarism",[27] Aristotle is a compatibilist.

It is one of the prejudices of the moral philosophers, specially of the Christian tradition to distinguish moral from the political or legal and this is done on the basis of free-will. Freedom of will is only compatible with deontology, they think. Bradley, for example, thinks that it is illegitimate to ask why should one be moral. To ask it would suggest that there was some ulterior purpose behind the exercise of virtue, or the performance of duty. Bradley thinks that to take virtue as means to an ulterior end is in direct antagonism to the voice of moral consciousness.[28] But this is not the case with the legal or political. It is always legitimate to ask why should one obey the law of the state. But does Aristotle divide ethics and politics in that way? Let us examine.

For Aristotle, ethics is a branch of politics. He has no doubt about that. "Now, most people would regard the good as the end pursued by that study which has the most authority and control over the rest. Need I to say that this is the science of politics?[29] In what sense is ethics a branch of politics? Is it the sense in which metaphysics or epistemology is a branch of philosophy? If so, then ethics would not be an indispensable part of politics. That is, without ethics, politics could maintain its identity. Aristotle writes: "It is political science that prescribes what subjects are to be taught in states, which of these the different sections of the population are to learn, and up to what point."[30] In this sense, ethics and politics are both branches of politics in the same sense. But that's not all and Aristotle has something different in his mind. He writes "... end of politics as well as ethics can only be the good for man. For even if the good of the community coincides with that of the individual, the good of the community is clearly greater and more perfect good to get and to keep."[31] That is, the state and the individual have the same good, though this good as found in the state is greater and nobler. Ernest Barker rightly observes : "It would thus seem, from the beginning of the *Ethics* that ethics is in a sense subordinate to politics – which does not mean for a moment that political *raison d' état* can over bear ethics, but only that 'community ethics' is a higher stage in the march of human development than individual ethics."[32] Thus, politics is only the greater ethics and free will does not distinguish between them. Free will is a necessary condition for both moral and political responsibility. Both ethics and politics have the same end and community good is nobler only because it includes the good of the individual and of other members of the community. In the light of the above discussions, it is evident that ethics and politics are intimately related, and differ only in their extent of field of application.

Now considering the facts that for Aristotle (i) happiness is the only thing worth having and that a life is to be judged good if it makes the life of man happy, we may say that he is a teleologist and from the fact that (ii) the greater the number it, i.e., happiness, covers, greater the good it is, we can say that he is certainly a utilitarian.

Notes and References

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[1] Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*,Delhi : Rupa and Co. 1998, page 32.

[2] G. T. W. Patrick, *Introduction To Philosophy* : page 305.

[3] William Rowe on Fisher's *The Metaphysics of Free-will* in "Ethics"(Journal), vol. 107, No. 1 Oct. 96.

[4] Plato, *The Republic* , (Book III, 360c), page 37.

[5] F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Vol I), London : Search Press, 1976, page 89.

[6] *The Republic* (Book III), page 37

[7] F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*: (Vol I), page 83.

[8] Sophocles, *The Theban Plays* (translated by E. F. Watling), London : Penguin Books, 1974, page 135.

[9] F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*: (Vol I), page 86.

[10] From the Summery of *The Republic*, page xxii.

[11] *The Republic*, 369a, page 45.

[12] Ibid, page xxii.

[13] F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Vol I), page 219.

[14] Ibid, page 332-333.

[15] Aristotle, *Ethics* (Book I), page 38.

[16] Ibid, page 52.

[17] Ibid, page 82.

[18] Ibid, page 55.

[19] Ibid, page 55.

[20] Ibid, page 66.

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[21] Ibid, page 63.

[22] Ibid, page 79.

[23] *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Vol. VIII), London : Encyclopaedia Britannica Ltd., 1958, page – 763.

[24] F. Grayeff, A short Treatise on Ethics, London : Duckworth, 1980, page 5.

[25] *Ethics*, page 60.

[26] F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*: (Vol I), page 344.

[27] *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (vol. II), (ed. Paul Edwards), New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1972, page 35.

[28] M. Warnock, *Ethics since 1900*, London : Oxford University Press, 1976, page 2.

[29] *Ethics* : Book I, page 26.

[30] Ibid, page 26.

[31] Ibid, page 27.

[32] E. Berker, (Appendix to) *The Politics of Aristotle*, London : Oxford University Press, 1952, page 355.

CHAPTER III

IN THE QUEST OF A MORAL STANDARD : UTILITARIANISM

III

When we look at this world of chaos and cruelty, of wars and worries, of rapes and reptiles, we curse men for their immorality. What, then, is it to be moral? How it can be explained? A minimal characterisation that suffices for the present is that to be moral is to be rational. If morality is not a rational enterprise, we could expect very little from it. It could even cease to exist for us. A rational conception of morality as we understand it, should be distinguished from the theory of ethical rationalists. For our purpose it is rather a teleological conception which says that the end of morality is to serve human interest in a rational manner. This, in a way, brings law and morality closer. It also opposes the view that "... whether it (morality) is thought of as an instrument of society or as a personal code, morality must be contrasted with prudence."[1] This way of looking at morality's link with reason is not something novel. The Greeks had viewed reason as the source of practical wisdom—the virtuous life was, for them, inseparable from the life of reason. The modern version of rational morality is associated with forms of utilitarianism. J. S. Mill holds that our faculty of morality is a branch of our reason[2] and in order to accept or reject the utilitarian standard, rational grounds have to be produced.[3] Even, contemporary thinkers, like Amartya Sen and Bernard Williams have said that "... utilitarianism has appeared to be the 'rational' moral theory per excellence.[4]

We will examine the utilitarian theory as a rational vision of morality, that morality has to do with fulfilling some end through some principles. The famous book *Utilitarianism* of John Stuart Mill has been described by many as an intellectual link between the eighteenth and twentieth century.

The utilitarian theory has actually been initiated by Hutcheson as early as 1725 who stated that the objective or material end of good conduct is 'the greatest happiness for the greatest number.[5] That phrase became the slogan of British utilitarianism in the modified form as 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number'.[6] It is Jeremy Bentham (1748–1833) who worked out a complete system of utilitarian ethics. For Bentham, determinism in psychology is important, because he wishes to establish a code of law or a social system which would automatically make man virtuous. Bentham holds that the end of our actions is happiness. "Bentham held not only that the good is happiness in general, but also that each individual always pursues what he believes to be his own happiness."[7] Bentham uses the words 'pleasure' and 'happiness' as also 'pain' and 'unhappiness', as synonyms. John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), the most influential of the utilitarians continued and considerably modified the tradition in the mid-Victorian period. According to him, "... utility, or the greatest happiness principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness".[8] Very next, Mill equates happiness with pleasure. "By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, ...".[9] But on the nature of pleasure as the end of our actions, Mill differs from Bentham.

The utilitarian principle as it has been stated by Mill may be summarised as follows :

1. "All actions are for the sake of some end ...".[10]

2. "...actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness ...."[11]

3. By happiness is meant pleasure.

4. "... the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned."[12]

5. Not every kind of pleasure is good or right to desire but "... some *kinds* of pleasure are more desirable and valuable than others."[13] That is, Mill introduces a difference of quality among pleasures and there are accordingly higher and lower pleasures.

6. Which one of two pleasures is more desirable or higher? Mill answers, "Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure."[14]

7. Mill offers a proof for the principle of utility in two parts :

   A. "The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible is that people actually see it. The only proof that a sound is audible, is that people hear it ... In the like manner, I apprehend the sole evidence it is possible to produce that any thing is desirable, is that people actually desire it."[15]

   B. "...each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons."[16]

As to the first point stated above, Mill takes it for granted from the very definition of action that every action must have some end. Action is the process of doing things.[17] Doing things implies a conscious agent behind an action. Nature does not perform actions. Natural events just happen. Thus human actions are different from natural events. An unconscious human activity may also be called an event. A conscious agent always acts for some end – this is self evident. "Actions are explained by invoking the agent's reasons for performing them. Characteristically, a reason may be understood to consist in a positive attitude of the agent toward one or another outcome, and a belief to the effect that the outcome may be achieved by performing the action in question".[18] Again, "Of human actions, in the stricter sense, which are expressive of consciousness or which, to use the technical term of psychology, are 'conations' – the most obvious type is the purposed action, in which the performance of action is preceded by an idea of the thing to be done."[19] By the word 'stricter sense', actions are differentiated from unconscious human activities. But, some actions, e.g., reflex actions, which though unconscious, are not without purpose.

Regarding the proof offered by J. S. Mill, Bertrand Russell, of whom 'Mill was the godfather'[20] writes, "John Stuart Mill, in his utilitarianism, offers an argument which is so fallacious that it is hard to understand how he can have thought it valid".[21] This is undoubtedly very harsh but not unexpected from Russell. The criticism of Mill's proof to which Russell refers to was actually made by G. E. Moore in his *Principia Ethica*. "Moore's criticism of Mill's argument ... has had a considerable effect upon the subsequent history of ethics ...".[22] If Moore's argument is valid, it not only prevents one to define good as pleasure but one would have no other way but to accept Moore's non-hedonistic utilitarian ethical theory. It states the following :

I. Things which ought to exist for their own sake are things that are intrinsically good. Moreover, it is impossible to define 'good' since it denotes a simple unanalysable property known by intuition. In Moore's own language, "If I am asked 'what is good?' my answer is that good is good, and that is the end of the matter".[23] And,

II. We ought to perform actions that will cause most good to exist as a consequence.[24]

Moore's teleology is not easy to understand. It seems to me a sheer contradiction to speak both of intrinsic, simple, unanalysable 'good' and of degrees of 'good'. 'Good' is as simple and unanalysable as 'yellow' is.[25] But can we speak of degrees of yellow? Can we speak of 'more yellow' or 'less yellow'? What we can speak of is only different shades of yellows (or simply different yellows) but not of most yellow or least yellow. However, let us concentrate on Moore's critique of Mill. Moore calls the attempt to define 'good', in terms of natural properties the 'naturalistic fallacy'. He writes "... philosophers have thought that when they named those other properties they were simply not 'other', but absolutely and entirely the same with goodness. This view I propose to call the naturalistic fallacy ...".[26] (It is not only a fallacy to define non-natural into natural, the fallacy is also involved in the confusion between two natural objects. The term naturalistic fallacy is somewhat unfortunate). He rejected all attempts to derive the notion of good from natural objects, the attainment of which might be felt to be desirable, such as honour or aesthetic enjoyment of a glorious sunset but also from reasoning or metaphysics or *apriori* insights into the essence of good. By definition, Moore means analysis. This is the analysis of a complex thing into its simple components. Moore's concept of definition, Mary Warnock states, is very obscure.[27] We will come to this point later. Only a complex thing like a horse is definable but not a simple thing like yellow is.[28] His argument that good is indefinable (or unanalysable) rests on the analogy between 'good' and 'yellow'. 'Good' is indefinable as 'yellow' is. If one tries to define 'good', say, as 'self-realisation', Moore would say that it is still significant to ask whether self-realisation is good. And if the definition were a correct one, it would have to be the same as asking whether self-realisation is self-realisation. In the like manner, 'good' cannot also be defined as pleasure. Because "when they say 'pleasure is good', we cannot believe that they merely mean to say 'pleasure is pleasure' and nothing more than that."[29] He also says "... there is no meaning in saying that pleasure is good, unless good is something different from pleasure."[30] Thus, Moore seems to maintain that to define 'A' as 'B' is to identify 'A' and 'B'.

The problem, as it seems to me, is a linguistic one. The confusion that "whether we are supposed to be discussing a word or some object denoted by a word" may be of less importance to Mrs. Warnock,[31] but to me it is not less important. From the manner in which Moore speaks of 'definition' and 'analysability', it seems that Moore understands definition as analysability. But then, it is still significant and legitimate to ask 'what is the definition of analysability'.

Secondly, Moore's notion of analysis also does not hold good. "an analysis of a complex notion never sets out to give an identity, nor is the statement in which the analysis is given an identity statement."[32] If one defines man as a rational animal, one is not identifying humanity and rationality; it does not prevent one to say that besides rationality, man has other properties. Rationality is only an essential characteristic of human beings that differentiates them from other creatures of the world.

Mill's proof and his analogy between visible and desirable have also been vehemently criticized by Moore. Mill gives a proof, which, Moore thinks consists 0f a fallacious confusion of 'desirable' with 'desired'.[33] And the fallacy is so obvious that it is quite wonderful how Mill failed to see it, Moore says, there is after all, no analogy between 'visible' and non-visible'. Moore argues that 'visible' means 'able to be seen' but 'desirable' does not mean 'able to be desired'. The analogy is rather to be sought between 'desirable' and 'damnable', which does not mean what is damned but what should be damned. Bertrand Russell also writing on Mill's proof says that "He does not notice that a thing is 'visible' if it can be seen, but 'desirable' if it ought to be desired. ... We cannot infer what is desirable from what is desired."[34] These criticisms remind us of what Hume said before : We cannot validly derive a moral conclusion from factual premises; the 'is' bird cannot lay an 'ought' egg.[35] And Moore rejects utilitarianism simply because Mill commits the naturalistic fallacy in identifying 'desirable' with 'desired'.[36]

But Moore's critique is not as wonderful as it seems. Being a consistent empiricist, Mill is not offering a deductive proof of matters of fact. As 'visible' does not mean 'ought to be seen'. We know that there are philosophers of the empiricist tradition who hold that values fall neither into analytic nor into empirical or synthetic categories. Wittgenstein writes at the end of the *Tractatus*:

> The sense of the world must lie outside the world. In the world, everything is as it is and happens as it does happen. In it there is no value and if there were it would be of no

> value. If there is any value which is of value, it must lie outside all happening and being so. For all happening and being so is accidental".[37]

Ayer says that ethical concepts are 'pseudo-concepts' and they do not stand for qualities of things which can be picked up by senses. But I would like to state some points here. True, values are not in things, but they are about things. They may represent our emotions, but emotions about matters of fact. Values are imposed by us on matters of fact; they are ends of our actions. It can be said that values are interpretations of matters of fact on the basis of consequences. Thus, if really Mill would have been passing from 'is' to 'ought', he would have done not much harm as it had been said. But Mill is not doing any such thing. Mill is not passing from 'is' to 'ought'. Visibility is not a quality of the object we see. An object is visible because we see it; light is a condition which makes it possible. Similarly, a thing is desirable because we desire it. Chapter IV of Mill's *Utilitarianism* has the subtitle – "Of what sort of proof the principle of utility is susceptible". And when he says that "The only proof that a sound is audible, is that people hear it"[38] etc. he is simply pointing to an empirical fact by the word 'proof'. Similarly, the statement "... the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it"[39] points to an empirical fact. Mary Warnock says, "The sole evidence is not evidence in the sense of proof that something is good, but it is evidence simply that people already know, without waiting for proof that it is good."[40] Secondly, Moore's criticism of Mill is not justified because . their approaches towards ethical problems are not same. Mill is trying to discover the principles of ethical conduct whereas Moore's problem is to find-out the reference of ethical terms and this moves him to an intuitionist epistemology. Thus, Mill cannot be a legitimate opponent of Moore.

Mill, we have seen, says that the end of our actions is pleasure. We have also seen that Moore is not successful in his attempt to show that Mill commits a naturalistic fallacy by reducing 'good' to pleasure. But Moore is not saying that our actions do not have any end. In fact, though an intuitionist, Moore is not a deontologist like such intuitionists as Prichard and Ross. Moore is a teleologist. The ultimate value, the good by itself cannot be derived from anything beyond itself. About the values that occur in our experience Moore says that it is by anticipating and judging the consequences of any action which we intend that we do or do not find the good in the world of experience. Since we desire the good, we shape our action in accordance with the good. We do not derive the good from an anticipated future reality. This teleological argument is rather a complex one. "... by aiming at the good we cause it to happen" rather than extracting the good from an anticipated future reality and hence avoiding the naturalistic fallacy. Do all these allow us to accept Mill's "pleasure as an end" theory? We do not think so for there are other difficulties in accepting 'pleasure as an end' theory of Mill. Controversy arises when Mill poses himself to make his distinction of higher and lower pleasures consistent with his version of utilitarianism. From his arguments, it seems that there is a psychological dilemma within him. After this distinction is stated by him, Mill writes about the distinction made that "It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognise the fact, that some kinds of pleasure are more desirable and valuable than others."[41] But we find none other than Mill himself to doubt the compatibility of the distinction. He cannot bear the objection against the utility theory having pleasure as end to be a doctrine worthy only of swine.[42] But the qualitative differentiation between various kinds of pleasure cannot save the 'pleasure as an end' theory.

In the summery of Mill's theory which we have stated earlier this chapter, we can see that for Mill, of two pleasures to which all or almost all give a preference is the higher pleasure. That is, the quantity determines the quality! But is almost all of the people desire the sort of pleasure that is worthy only of a swine? No, this is not possible, says Mill. An 'intelligent' person, a person of 'feeling and conscience' would give "a most marked preference to the manner of existence which employs their higher faculties".[43] Here one may sense a fallacy involved. First, it is said that the higher pleasure is that which is desired by 'almost all of the people and the very next moment it is said that an intelligent person could not desire a lower pleasure. (Here a double standard is used). Now, which one is the mark of higher pleasure? 'Intelligence' or the number of people who desire pleasure? It cannot be said that 'number of intelligent people' should determine pleasures to be higher. If it could be so said, then too, the standard would be intelligence, and not the number. First of all, almost all of the people may not be intelligent. Second, if I want almost all people to choose the higher pleasure, I must ensure that almost all of them are intelligent. Once they become intelligent, intelligence alone becomes the mark of higher pleasure. Thus, 'intelligence' and 'quantity' both cannot have the same status. Socrates did not need to say that virtue is that which is desired by most of the people; he only said that virtue is knowledge. And Mill says,"It is better to be a human being dissatisfied that a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied".[44] Moreover, intelligence certainly is important, but it cannot be a moral standard. One cannot be judged morally in terms of his intelligence. A 'fool' cannot be said to be 'immoral' simply because he is a fool. Finally, ethical hedonism is based on psychological hedonism. In that case, hedonism does not allow any qualitative distinction between pleasures: How could Mill overlook this point? "He did not notice that these terms 'higher' and 'lower' introduce a non-hedonistic standard of value."[45] Henry Sidgwick also writes "If the pleasures are not compared in respect of mere pleasantness, we have intuitivism in the place of hedonism".[46] I do not intend to say that the distinction between higher and lower pleasures cannot be made. We may legitimately call one higher or superior and the other lower and in that case elements other than pleasantness may contribute to goodness of superior pleasure, "... but it is a distinction that cannot be made by the strict hedonist, for it does imply that there are other elements of value in a good whole besides pleasantness ...".[47]

Thus, if Mill is to fare as a strict hedonist, pleasures cannot be measured qualitatively. A more serious objection is made against this 'pleasure as an end'- theory that do we really pursue our own pleasure? The question aims at the very foundation of psychological hedonism. Let me quote

> "When it is said that each man desires his own happiness, the statement is capable of two meanings, of which one is a truism and the other is false. Whatever I may happen to desire, I shall get some pleasure from achieving my wish; in this sense, whatever I desire is a pleasure ... This is the sense of the doctrine which is a truism.
>
> But if what is meant is that, when I desire anything, I desire it because of the pleasure that it will give me, that is usually untrue. When I am hungry I desire food, and so long as my

> hunger persists, food will give me pleasure. But the hunger, which is a desire, comes first; the pleasure is a consequence of the desire.[48]

Butler also holds that our basic desires are actually our 'primary appetites' e.g., food, fame, sex etc. Mary Warnock finds this objection against hedonism to be a ingenious one and asserts that a distinction is to be made between a 'pleasant thought' and a 'thought of pleasure'.[49] At this point we may borrow William McDougall's words to expose the mistake made by the hedonists and to point to the complexity of the human mind that often is exploited by a hedonist. Let us quote at length :

> Of other theories, the one which has exercised the greatest influence in modern speculation is the theory of psychological hedonism; this is the theory of action which was unfortunately adopted by the founders of utilitarianism as the psychological foundation of all their social and ethical doctrines. It asserts that the motive of all action is the desire to obtain increase of pleasure or diminution of pain.
>
> ... It is, no doubt, possible to show the fallacious nature of the doctrine by careful examination of our own motives and unbiased consideration of the conduct of other men. For such consideration shows that when we desire any object or end, as, for example, food, what we normally desire is the object or end itself, not the pleasure that may attend the attainment of the end. But the complexity of the human mind is so great, its springs of action to obscure, that, in almost every instance of human behaviour, it is possible for

> the psychological hedonist to make out a plausible interpretation in terms of his theory.[50]

From what we have discussed so far, we can conclude that Mill is not committing any naturalistic fallacy by reducing good without alteration of meaning to properties of natural objects. But pleasure cannot be the end of our moral conduct. Moreover, morality being a social institution, it cannot take a subjective condition like pleasure as a standard for granted. What could be the standard then? What does prompt us to act morally? Could it be our 'primary appetite'? An unprejudiced investigation reveals the undeniable truth of struggle for existence. It is our instinct of survival that lies behind our moral conduct. Human beings primarily think of protecting themselves from alien, unfriendly situations. And this is at least implicitly contained in the thinking of the utilitarians. "Bentham's ideal, like that of Epicurus, was security ...". When I call something good, it may be because of its pleasantness, but it is pleasant because it is conducive to or at least not a threat to my survival or existence.

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CHAPTER IV

SURVIVAL : WHY DO WE ACT MORALLY?

IV

We love ourselves. We cannot avoid loving our own selves. We are so constituted by nature. Some philosophers say that we seek our own pleasure by nature, and therefore we ought to act for our own pleasure. We are not in the same boat with those hedonists, we say that we act for our own protection and our instinct of survival moves us in that way. Should we say then 'We ought to act for our own survival?' Many will raise their eyebrows if self-love is proposed as a moral standard. They need not to, because no one is going to set self-love or self-protection as the end of morality. But there is nothing wrong in loving one's own self. There is a prejudice among some moralists that self-love is a dirty thing and only love for others is worthy of praise. But this is not true. "And you must love your neighbour just as much as you love yourself."[1] The Gospel does not condemn self-love but says that you have to love others as much as you love your own self. Self-love cannot be a moral standard because of two things :

(i) It does not carry any meaning to say that we ought to do something which we do by nature.

(ii) Morality is a social institution. A Robinson Crusoe need not to be moral, although he may need to protect himself. It is natural that an individual would strive for his own survival or protection. Morality is not self-love, but morality starts with self-love, it is the self that initiates the institution of morality. Let me cite an example to make my stand clear. This is the famous story of Captain Scott which I would quote from an article by Mr. Valson Thampu, published in "The Statesman", 19th May, 1999 :

> On 18 January 1912, Captain Scott and his four Companions reached the South Pole. On their return journey, Petty Officer Evan fell ill. Captain Scott now faced a painful dilemma. Either he could carry the sick man along and risk the lives of the rest of the party, or he could let Evans die alone and ensure a better chance of survival for the rest. Scott took the first course; they carried Evans along until he died. The delay proved fatal to the rest of the group, too. The blizzards overtook them. Their frozen bodies were found six months later only 10 miles from the next depot which they had been unable to reach.[2]

Now, for our purpose, it is interesting to note Mr. Thampu's interpretation of the above story. His view represents the view of many of the intellectuals of our society. Mr. Thampu is a Reader in English, St. Stephen's College, Delhi. He writes, "Captain Scott, in the agonising dilemma he faced, rejected a way of life based on the instinct of self preservation. Exclusive pursuit of self-interest creates a culture that undermines social cohesion and imperils human security and well-being. Captain Scott rejected expediency as a paradigm of human conduct." But in the previous paragraph, he states "... Captain Scott's choice seems quixotic only as long as the situation is not viewed from the perspective of Evans. All the more so because Captain Scott, or anyone else, could also be in Evans's predicament. As a rule, those who would vote in favour of abandoning Evans would vehemently condemn this decision if they were to be the victims of such a choice". I have every respect for the spirit that Mr. Thampu expresses. The title of the article is "Morality must be the basis of politics". But I must say that he expresses a typical moral reasoning like most of the educated intellectuals. His observation that expediency should be rejected in morality is Kantian. But the later part of his comments contains the elements of hypothetical reasoning. We should have the moral courage to acknowledge the hypothetical nature of morality. We think it bad to act in terms of self-expediency although we act consciously or unconsciously in terms it. It was because of expediency that society came into existence. It is not that one fine morning a "social contract" was signed, but the difficult and intolerable situations paved the way to the forming of a society for the survival of the thegreatest number of people. Extremely cohesive and close-knit life of the primitive people can be explained in this light. Is morality then to be built upon biology? Yes it is to be. Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) felt that a moral code which could not meet the tests of 'natural selection and the struggle for existence', is from the beginning doomed to lip service and futility. Spencer claims that the principles of ethics have a 'natural basis' for, moral conclusions follow the general law of evolution".[3] All of us, as did Captain Scott, carry the experience of evolution or the history of formation of society. Selfishness is a tendency within human nature. Morality supervenes on the myriad roles and relations in which man finds himself in society. In fact, the life of a human being from childhood to adulthood is the history of the development of moral consciousness. "As a matter of fact, a young child has practically no consciousness of morality at all. The sense of morality grows with the development of men in association with society. The young child lives in a universe, mostly of appetites. The development of its personality goes on in proportion as his association with other fellow-beings continually grows."[4] Thus Captain Scott did not reject "a way of life based on instinct of self preservation" as Mr. Thampu says. Scott did not reject expediency. But, that he should carry Evans along, rather than abandoning him is moral conduct learnt from the social environment. For me, I am important. But for the society, it is not the individual but the greatest possible number (it may mean the hundred percent) that is important. The emergence of the spirit of self-sacrifice is not a smooth one, it has its ups and downs. Everyone of our actions implies struggle between self-interest and other-regarding interests. Each time the outcome means victory for one or the other.

What has been discussed above can also be discussed from the point of view of moral sanctions. The rational or the teleological view of morality allows one to ask "why should I be moral?" The question has actually two parts :

(i) What could I gain by being moral? For what consequence should I be moral?

(ii) What could happen if I don't?

As to the former of the two, answers are many : that you may get salvation or happiness or pleasure etc. or the answer is, what we have said, the security on survival. In answer to the second, concept of moral sanction comes. Bradley, the deontologist would say that these sorts of question are illegitimate in morality,[5] but Mill rightly says that all standards in morality must have to answer such questions.[6]

Sanction is a penal term with a controlling character implying the penalty that will be imposed by a public authority on a convicted wrong doer in respect of his breach of the law. Sanctions are either external or internal, says Mill. He accepts external sanctions offered by Bentham. Bentham, in his *Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Chapter 3, distinguished four types of sanction :

(I) 'Physical Sanction', which is in Bentham's terminology, the natural imprudence, as when a man's house is set on fire because he failed to put out his candle.

(II) If God set the man's house on fire because of a sin he had committed, this would be the imposition of a 'religious sanction'.

(III) If the house was burnt down as a legal penalty for a crime, this is the imposition of a 'political sanction'.

(IV) And if the house burns down because the owner's neighbours will not help him to put it out on account of some dislike to his moral character, this is a punishment of 'moral sanction' or 'popular sanction'.[7] In Mill's language, "They are the hope of favour and the fear of displeasure, from our fellow creatures or from the Ruler of the Universe ...".[8] And "The whole force therefore of external reward and punishment, whether physical or moral, and whether proceeding from God on from our fellow men ..."[9] The internal sanction or the conscience, which Mill describes as a feeling in our own mind, is a very complex phenomenon. It is an acquired faulty -a feeling of pain which we suffer when we fail to do our duty.[10] According to me this feeling is the essence of conscience. James Mill, John Mill's father, argued that a conscience gets built up in the individual by means of the association of ideas through parental punishment and approval.[11] This internal sanction, I think, cannot be looked at as being totally separated from the external ones. In fact, it is the effect of the external sanctions on the mind for many years. The complexity of the internal sanction cannot be described in an easy way but the undated past of its origin gives morality a mystical sort of character. Mill too has no doubt in his mind that moral feelings are acquired and in no way innate.[12] Mill is not interested to pursue the theory of the nature, or origin of conscience. For him conscience as the ultimate sanction is a subjective feeling in our mind. Thus, all our common principles of morality like 'telling the truth', 'keeping promises' etc., are based on the shared experience of human beings over 'untold thousands'r of years.

If sanctions are answers to the question 'what if I don't be moral?', our rational activity tries to answer the quest 'how to be moral?'. For instance, reason has shown to human beings that a moral man is a social man, so, make a society and be in a society. Reason or our rationality, ultimately serves the purpose of our urge of self-preservation. As to the rational activity, Karl Popper mentions two: (i) Utopian Engineering and, (ii) Piecemeal Engineering. According to utopian engineering any rational action must have certain aim and it determines its means according to this end. Choice of the end is the first step to act rationally. There are some intermediate or partial ends which are actually likely to promote the ultimate end. We must be able to see in this manner otherwise we will fail to act rationally. There is another kind of rational activity, namely, piecemeal engineering. According to it, it is very "... difficult to reason about an ideal society. Social life is so complicated that few men or none at all would judge a blue print for social engineering on the grand scale ...". And further, perceptions differ from person to person. Thus instead of searching for greatest good, the piecemeal engineer will adopt the method of locating for the greatest and most urgent evils of society. Thus, we should go for better health care or educational reform etc. Popper opts for this piecemeal engineering and declares this as the only "rational one". Popper thinks that blueprints for single institutions are less risky because if they go wrong, the damage is not great and a readjustment can be made easily. Popper, thus, rejects holism. "Popper, though maintaining that scientific method is applicable to the study of individual aspects of social systems, has rejected holistic attempts to formulate laws holding for social wholes ...".[13]

But I wish to differ from Popper on the type of social engineering to be adopted. The philosophy behind piecemeal engineering is not acceptable at all. True, that perceptions vary, but there are common interests in society e.g., health or education. And if there is no ultimate practical end, or at least an idea of that, how could one recognise 'evils of society' as evils? Why is health-care good? Without knowing or answering this, how and why should one fight against "the greatest and most urgent evils of society"? An unprejudiced probing will show that health or education etc. are good for they serve the ultimate purpose of human survival. Thus, a social engineer must adopt to accomplish the ultimate purpose of security and survival of members of the society. But the question "why survival is good" cannot be asked because it is the inherent and fundamental disposition or property of life itself.

In his book *An Introduction to Social Psychology,* William McDougall defines instinct as innate or inherited tendencies "which are the essential springs or motive powers of all thought and action ...".[14] In this book, McDougall criticizes all other theories like hedonism (page 314), ideo-motor theory of action (page 323) and intuitionist theory (328) etc., and defends only ' instinct as end of our actions'—theory. "We may say, ... directly or indirectly the instincts are the prime movers of all human activity

...".[15] An instinct moves our actions towards its satisfaction. McDougall does not mention any instinct like 'instinct of survival'. But there are instinct of food seeking, instinct of escape, instinct of pugnacity, reproductive and parental instincts, sex instinct, instinct of acquisition and construction, gregarious instinct etc., etc. Instinct of survival, may be said to be common to all these instincts or serves as the real purpose underlying their operations. McDougall disfavours any mechanistic model of psychology and defends a purposive psychology. The word 'instinct' indicates an urge to action, an impulsion to strive towards a goal which is *sui generis* in nature, says McDougall.[16] This purpose or goal is certainly self preservation or survival. Thus, McDougall is an exponent of Hormic psychology.

The Hormic Psychology of McDougall : McDougall is an exponent of the teleological theory of action. We have already seen the inadequacy and fallacies of hedonistic theory—a variety of teleological theory. There is the other alternative—the hormic theory of action, which McDougall says is "the only alternative teleological theory of action".[17] The essence of the theory may be stated very simply as the following : "To the question—why does a certain animal or men seek this or that goal?—it (the hormic theory) replies : Because it is his nature to do so."[18]

But what does 'hormic' mean? McDougall quotes from Sir P. T. Nunn's book *Education, itsData and First Principles* : The "... element of drive or urge, whether it occurs in the conscious life of man and the higher animals, or in the unconscious activities of their bodies and the (presumably) unconscious behaviour of lower animals, we propose to give a single name—*horme.* In accordance with this proposal, all the purposive process of the organism are hormic processes, ...".[19] But one must not confuse it with connative process for "... connative process being the subclass whose members have the special mark of being conscious".[20] Again, this "*Horme* ... is the basis of activities that differentiate the living animal from dead matter, and therefore, of what we have described as the animal's characteristic attitude of independence towards its world."[21] I must mention here, that in addition to Dr. Nunn's view, McDougall regards the subconscious hormic process not as entirely blind but rather as involving something of that foresight (however vague) which is the essence of our most clearly purposive activities.

This is a standpoint which is not clearly Darwinian but speaks out for a Lamarckian flavour. The real issue is not then between rational and voluntarism. The issue is, or the antagonism is between mechanism and teleology. Thinkers like Democritus, Galileo, Spinoza, Darwin etc. argue for a mechanistic model and thinkers like Anaxagoras, Aristotle, Leibnitz Lamarck etc. argue for a teleological theory of actions. McDougall takes Lamarck's side. But, I want to mention one name here, who, even before McDougall had argued for a Lamarckian teleology and that is the forgotten name of Edward Von Hartmann (1842–1906). William McDougall writes "... Von Hartmann ... may be said to have first written psychology on purely hormic basis ...".[22] According to Hartmann "All thought begins with instinct, which is nothing else than purposive action without consciousness of purpose or even conscious willing of means to an unconsciously willed end."[23] Von Hartmann struggled against Darwinism in his attempt to establish a vitalistic interpretation of the phenomena of life. He opposes the purely mechanistic interpretation of the phenomenon of life, as the Darwin-Spencerian formula of the struggle for existence and all that it involves seem to represent. Hartmann draws the conclusion that the theory of Darwin has nothing positive to offer us.[24] The problem is—is it really a mere 'chance', as with Darwin or an evolutionary tendency guided by a plan through inner causes that determines the evolution. I still believe with Hugo de Vries that new species can but not must arise through minimal variations. What Darwin's formula would and should do, namely, explain purposive results from mechanical causes, seems to be incapable of being done. At least in the micro level, Darwinian formula has already been proved to be unsatisfactory. However, Hartmann was closer to reality by introducing purpose into the theory of instinctive actions, but he is unintelligible when he stresses on the "unconscious". Hartmann's theory, as McDougall writes is "… marred by the extravagance of his speculations on the unconscious."[25] The hormic theory of McDougall also rejects the Darwinian assumption that mechanistic categories are sufficient in biology. By stressing on the intelligent striving of the organism as the creative activity to which evolution is due, hormic theory points to the reality of the Lamarckian transmission.[26]

We turned to the hormic theory of McDougall to find a scale of values in moral philosophy–we may now recall. We are in need of a 'value' which is in consonant with human nature. One virtue of the hormic theory is that it outlines an intelligible, consistent, and tenable story of continuous organic evolution, evolution of bodily forms and mental functions in intelligible relation to one another. "Of all forms of psychology the hormic is the only one that can give to philosophy the psychological basis essential to it.[27]

Let us now go back to the discussion of reason. 'Reason' is sometimes used to mean a 'mental cause' or it may mean a special kind of capacity or faculty of human mind (ultimately, the two senses are like the two sides of the same coin). But in neither sense reason can create an activity or desire to act. Consider this example from McDougall :

> Suppose a hungry man to be in the presence of a substance which he does not recognise as food; by the aid of reason he may discover that it is edible and nutritious, and he will then eat it or desire to eat it; but if he is not hungry, reason will not create the desire or impel him to eat.[28]

McDougall also adds to the above that "... in the moral sphere, the function of the reason is the same. Reason aids us in determining what is good ...".[29] My understanding of reason is that it is our faculty of anticipating the consequence. Reason serves the practical purpose of our drives for survival and in this sense, it is really "the slave of our passion", as Hume puts it. Passions or emotions arise when our instincts are thwarted. The real purpose of instincts is survival or self preservation and human beings have reasoned out that they could survive only by forming a society and being in it. Reason comprises of memory and experience, and experiences itself in deducing propositions from other propositions prior to the experience corresponding to the propositions deduced. For instance, the primitive man discovered that he did not succeed in killing wild animal when he went alone for hunting but the result was different when he went with a group. Thereafter, none went alone. "If I go alone, I will not succeed" could be deduced by them without relevant experience. In this way, human beings realised that it is only through living in a society, only through joining hands with one other, sharing food and roof that they could survive. They survive without further bodily evolution. Thus the rational realisation in morality is:

> Just as in developed animal organisms the individual cells have an independent life to live but yet they cannot do so without the co-operation and co-existence of other living cells, so each individual social being has a double life, a life that he has to himself and a life he leads in co-existence and co-operation with the lives of other selves. Yet the very independent life, which the cell or the man may be said to have as different from the life of other cells in the organism or of other men in the society, would not have been possible except for the co-presence of these other cells or men."[30]

Can we then say that moral values have evolved biologically? It would not be outlandish if we are inclined to answer in the affirmative. There is no one notion of value which is ubiquitous. The trinity of truth-goodness-beauty represents the norms of our cognitive, volitional and affective experiences respectively. But there is a subset of values which are founded upon satisfaction of our basic needs, providing security for the future. In other words, there are values based on instinctive urges. In the absence of a better word we have called such values 'biological values'. We should not say that since these values are biological they are devoid of moral sense. For many of the moral agreements are extensions of biological values—agreements which we enter into with our fellows for security, Spencer held that "the new morality must be built upon biology".[31] Although the Darwin-Spencerian approach has lost much of its strength, we may quote from S. N. Dasgupta in support of Spencer :

> "... the teleological value ultimately manifests itself for its satisfaction in the same direction as the moral value. Two

> values may not be exactly identical but they would not point to two different poles; and in tending to be normally good one would find a supreme satisfaction of what is biologically good in the highest degree. If this is so, the biologically good should have to be acknowledged as being in some sort of unity with the morally good,...[32]

Before we close the present chapter, we wish to restate our contention that the institution of morality started with the impulse of self-preservation, but it did not stop at individual survival.

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[13] See Kart Popper "Aestheticism, perfectionism, utopianism" in *The Philosophy of Society*, page 212 ff..

[14] William Mc Dougall, *An Introduction to Social Psychology*, London : Mathuen Co. Ltd., 1950, page 17.

[15] Ibid, page 38.

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[16] Ibid, page 407.

[17] Ibid, page 458.

[18] Ibid, page 458.

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[22] Ibid, page 490.

[23] Ludwig Stein, *Philosophical Currents*, Calcutta University Publications, 1919: page 243 – 244.

[24] Ibid, page 255.

[25] *An Introduction to Social Psychology*, page 490.

[26] Ibid, page 481.

[27] Ibid, page 482.

[28] Ibid, page 325.

[29] Ibid, page 325.

[30] S. N. Dasgupta, *Philosophical Essays* "International morality", page 43.

[31] *The Story of Philosophy*, page 385.

[32] S. N. Dasgupta, *Philosophical Essays,* "International morality", page 40.

CHAPTER V

KANT : AN INTERFACE WITH EMPIRICAL MORALITY

V

The utilitarian theory of morality is often criticised for not accommodating justice, J. S. Mill was aware of that and writes "In all ages of speculation, one of the strongest obstacles to the reception of the doctrine that Utility or Happiness is the criterion of right and wrong, has been drawn from the idea of Justice."[1]Let us see how Bentham and Mill understand the principle of pleasure. The greatest happiness of the greatest number introduces a distributive principle: each person is to count for one, and nobody for more than one. Right and wrong, good and evil turn on the distribution of pleasure produced by an action. A less amount for others might be preferable to a greater amount for me. A less amount equally distributed, might be preferable to a greater amount unequally distributed. Justice means equal distribution of available good among men making an equal contribution to the goodness of their lives. Equality cannot be taken to mean identically, that pleasure should be distributed in 'equal measured amounts to each person.' It must be in proportion to the needs, capabilities and special status (e.g., the handicapped or belonging to a backward class). This principle of equality, the critic of utilitarianism points out, is not in any way based upon ' maximizing pleasure or minimizing pain,' but upon the principle of justice which takes precedence over the pleasure-principle. This problem, as we have already noted, was not unknown to Mill. He elucidates the idea of justice as follows:

> The powerful sentiment and apparently clear perception resembling an instinct, have seemed to the majority of thinkers to point to an inherent quality in things; to show that the Just

> must have an existence in Nature as something absolute, generically distinct from every variety of the Expedient, and, an idea, opposed to it, though (as is commonly acknowledged) never, in the long run, disjoined from it in fact."[2]

Mill then attempted to show that the principle of utility does not violate the principle of justice (chapter V, *Utilitarianism*). His arguments are presumed to be based on Hume's *Enquiry*. Hume looks upon justice as an artificial virtue, the consequence of human social and political contrivances which have the utility to promote the good of society and its members in the long run. Justice is one of the greatest of all utilities. Mill's views on justice follows the same line of thinking. There are situations in which we think it right to do an action which though not in conformity with the maxim of utility, arise out of the existence of institutions that serve human happiness, e.g., right to property, keeping a promise, paying a debt etc. The loyalty to such institutions, though, is not based on utility. Utilitarianism has attracted critical attention from its very inception. In what follows we shall take up two attacks on Utilitarianism from two different positions. One is from Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the other is from M. K. Gandhi (1869-1948). We shall first deal with the views of I. Kant.

"In emphasising the rights of the individual, Kant sets himself against every form of Utilitarianism. He believes that neither morality nor law can be founded on social utility, the general happiness, or the common good; they are founded, rather, on the rights of individual man."[3] Thus not only the 'happiness theory' but any sort of utilitarian theory would have been discarded by Kant as "... he categorically repudiates the principle that the end justifies the means, however good and worthwhile the end may be."[4] Kant's own idea of justice has been discussed by him in his book *The Metaphysical Elements of Justice* (*The Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Rechtslchre*). This book forms Part I of his *The Metaphysics of Morals* (*Metaphysik der Sitten*). In whole of Kant's major philosophical works, these metaphysical element plays the most important role. The meaning of 'metaphysics' as used by Kant must be made clear in order to understand his philosophy, whether it be pure reason or of practical reason.

Metaphysics in the Philosophy of Kant : Epistemologically, Kant rejects the possibility of Metaphysics as a science. To Kant, knowledge means scientific knowledge, e.g., mathematics, physics. "The analysis of mathematics and theoretical knowledge results in the thesis that all theoretical knowledge consists in categorising perceptual material located in space and time. Knowledge is thus the joint product of perceiving and thinking."[5] Thus, *apriori* categories and sense perceptions are both necessary for knowledge to be there. But we can have no sense perception of the metaphysical entities like God, soul etc. "Thus cognitive function of the categories lies in their application to objects as given in sense intuition, that is, to phenomena. Things-in-themselves are not, and cannot be, phenomena. And we possess no faculty of intellectual intuition which could supply objects for a meta-phenomenal application of the categories."[6] Hence metaphysics of the classical type, when considered as a possible source of objective knowledge is discarded by Kant. Any speculation about metaphysical entities will give rise to mere transcendental illusions or antinomies. For example, the thesis (according to quality), "Nothing exists but the simple" and the antithesis "There exists nowhere in the world anything simple" can both be shown by reason to be equally valid and also opposed and inconsistent with each other. But if metaphysics can yield no knowledge, what does the word 'metaphysics' signify in the titles of the books *The Metaphysics of Morals* and *The Metaphysical Elements of Justice*? Do these books maintain that speculations on morals or justice will end up in smoke? Or he is creating a new metaphysics in his preoccupation with practical reason? Copleston writes, "It seems to me, …, to be arguable that what Kant is doing is to substitute a new type of metaphysics [in morality and religion] for the metaphysics which he rejected in the *Critique of Pure Reason*."[7] A Kantian would seek for different interpretations in different contexts and justify the different uses of the term. An opponent would demand for a consistency in use. Hegel also has criticised Kant by saying that if noumenon is unknowable in Kant's sense, then how can Kant apply the category of 'causation', 'reality' and even 'existence' to it? Kant accepts noumenon at least as a cause of the phenomenon. But here, some words can be said in support of Kant. Hegel did not seem to take seriously Kant's distinction between knowing and thinking. The unknowable can be thought, but without being given in sensibility cannot be known. It can be thought because mind with its *apriori* categories are there. Thus, "… in so far as the unschematized categories can be used by the mind to think things-in-themselves and to form ideas which contain no logical contradiction, metaphysics of the traditional type is a psychological possibility. It is psychologically possible, for example, to think of things-in-themselves as substances."[8] Secondly, the word 'metaphysics' in the titles "The Metaphysics of Morals" or "The Metaphysical Elements of Justice" stands for "... the science which exhibits in systematic connection the whole body (true as well as illusory) of philosophical knowledge arising out of pure reason"[9] thus "metaphysical elements of justice" points to the *apriori* elements of justice contributed by the mind) the metaphysics of morals embraces only the pure *apriori* part of morals, in abstraction from its empirical components, whereas, the word metaphysics in the *Critique of Pure Reason* certainly does not mean the *apriori* contributions but the entities to which *apriori* categories cannot be applied to yield knowledge.

Our concern is to judge whether utilitarianism as a moral theory violates justice. (On my part, I feel uncomfortable) to value a moral theory at the point of justice. This is because, it would presuppose that 'moral' and 'justice' are two different standards and justice has the higher authority over the moral. But the word 'justice' has a very wide range of senses in the history and thus the relation of it to morality is made obscure. To a modern student of humanities, moral philosophy, political science and jurisprudence are three different branches of learning. *The Republic* of Plato has come down to us with a double title—'The State' or 'Concerning Justice'.[10] First, in spite of these two titles, it must not be assumed that it is a treatise either on political science or on jurisprudence, but it is both or more than both. Second, the question which Plato sets himself to answer in this book is: what is a good man and how does a man become good ? Such questions might seem to belong to moral philosophy. But, to the Greek it was obvious that a good man must be a member of a state and could become good only through membership of a state. Upon the first question, therefore, a second naturally follows: what is a good state, and how is the good state come into being? Moral philosophy thus comes closer to political science and in fact, it can be said that for Plato, there is no other word for morality than justice. In *The Republic*, the word morality is absent but the subject is present in the guish of justice (one thing we must however keep in our mind that the Greek word for justice–'*dikaiosyne*' has a broader sweep than its English counterpart). In Aristotle, the word 'justice' begins to gather its own distinctive features from morality. For him, though moral philosophy is a Ground of Politics, justice is a moral virtue, ... the virtue of justice, which is necessarily accompanied by all other virtues is a virtue which acts in social relations.[11] Justice is again, in *The Politics*, general and particular. General justice is 'righteousness ', being the exercise of goodness as a whole and particular justice as a component of the former, consists in behaving 'fairly' or 'equally'. Kant certainly makes a distinction between morality and justice if morality is concerned with virtue only. Kant writes "All duties are either duties of justice, that is, those for which external legislation is possible or duties of virtue, for which such legislation is not possible."[12] Thus, Kant too holds like Aristotle that justice is a matter of exercise. Again, the above division made by Kant is under the head of "Division of the metaphysics of morals in general."[13] That may mean that the study of justice is a part of the study of morals. That may also mean that the *apriori* contribution of the mind to justice and to morals (i.e., to virtue) are essentially the same. The only difference between the two is that duties of virtues are internal acts of mind (and that is why no external legislation is possible for them) and duties of justiceare external actions (for which external legislation is possible). Mill, on the other hand, gives justice an upper hand over morality when he entitles himself to show that his moral standard of utility does not violate justice.

We have addressed ourselves to the task of judging the utilitarian moral standard in the light of Kant's concept of justice. Contrary to the fact that the Greek ethics cannot be properly understood without their politics, Kant's theory of justice can be understood without the theory of morals, Kant certainly links justice with an activity. Duties of justice are those for which external legislation is possible, but for duties of virtue (morals) no such legislation is possible. This legislation than constitutes the watersheds between justice and morality. A just action is defined by Kant as follows : "Every action is just [right] that in itself or in its maxim is such that the freedom of the will of each can co-exist together with freedom of everyone in accordance with a universal law."[14] Kant's moral dictum of virtue also says like "Act only on that maxim ..." etc., but the real significance of this dictum does not consist in 'acting' so much but in 'willing' that maxim to be a universal law. Thus virtue really is consisted in willing. But both justice and virtue, as they come under the same head of "morals", have the same *apriori* or metaphysical elements. Being a deontologist, Kant hold that our willing must be categorical, i.e., We cannot ask for a 'why' behind moral will; but can't we ask for a 'why' even that for which external legislation is possible? But, our moral will and the metaphysical elements of justice (and morals), both belong to that part of our soul which is called the noumenal self.

Throughout his philosophy, Kant relies on a distinction between two sorts of objects of thought : the objects with which empirical science is concerned and the objects with which ethics, theology and politics with which ethics, theology and politics are concerned. Phenomena are the objects of empirical knowledge. They exist in space and time. In addition to phenomena, there are another kinds of objects which we can think only but cannot know applying our categories of understanding. Such non-phenomenal objects are called "noumena". It can be said that "... the objects of ethical, legal and political thought, insofar as they are not matters of empirical knowledge, are noumena."[15] As a phenomenal being, man must be considered as subject to causal laws and as determined. But "... insofar as men are moral, they cease to be phenomenal."[16] Thus, for Kant, the moral self of man is beyond any determination. One point we must note here that Kant would maintain that to be free is not to be under any causal law.

But, Mill being an empiricist would not agree with Kant; self for him would be purely phenomenal. Kant could not have disproved Mill if he faced the latter and probably he would not need to do such. First, noumena is a matter of faith or belief and if Mill does not believe in, it would not carry any meaning to say that Mill is wrong. Second, Kant admits that men are phenomenally determined. But the difference is that the moral self of Kant is noumenal and that of Mill is phenomenal. Kant says that Hume awakened him from his dogmatic slumber, but Russell doubts. The latter writes "... he soon invented a soporific", Russell may mean is Kant's search for the *apriori*. In order to provide a necessary ground for science (and even morality), Kant contends himself with the mirage of the absolute. It is another question that recent studies agree rather with Hume then Kant; that all science is relative in its truth. It is another question that "perhaps, after all, 'necessary' knowledge is not necessary?[17] But for our purpose at the moment, it would be sufficient to remember that J. S. Mill has no faith in *apriori*.

Kant defines justice as "... the aggregate of those conditions under the mill of one person can be conjoined with the will of another in accordance with a universal law freedom"[18] or a just action is "... that is itself or in its maxim is such that the freedom of the will of each can co exist together with the freedom of everyone in accordance with a universal law."[19] Freedom of will, the most important postulate in Kant's moral philosophy will be discussed later. But what is that 'universal law'? Kant refers to a universal law whenever he speaks of justice. In addition to his above statements about justice, Kant further writes, "... the universal law of justice is: act externally in such a way that the free use of your will is compatible with the freedom of everyone according to a universal law."[20] This universal law is the categorical imperative. In this regard Kant's theory of justice differs from his theory of right. The theory of right concerns what we can be compelled to do. No body can be compelled to act out of a sense of duty, but they can be compelled to keep promises, pay debts, or in general to perform right actions.[21] Justice has to do with ends that cannot be externally compelled. By 'being properly compelled' in the context of right Kant means 'being properly compelled by law'. However Kant had a liberal conception of the proper sphere of law in that he regards the state as essentially functioning to prevent people interfering with the freedom of others.

Actions to be moral must be unconditional. What is a command or imperative? In Kant's words, "The conception of an objective principle so far as it constrains a will, is a command (of reason), and a formula of this command is called an imperative.[22] Imperatives are expressed by an ought : Moreover, "All imperatives command either hypothetically or categorically."[23] An imperative is hypothetical if it states that some action is right or advisable as means to some specific good. Such an imperative has an "if-clause". For example, "If you want to get help, help others." Kant dies not count these sort of imperatives as moral. A moral imperative is categorical, i.e., unconditional. Such imperatives are not connected with any "if-clause" and do not refer to any goal but are desired from the mere concept of "ought" or the "idea of obligation" itself. Thus, the categorical imperative "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law[24] is the criterion for deciding whether a maxim is moral. This is the one and only categorical imperative. A maxim is the subjective principle of an action. Moral laws are not given as universal laws like the other laws of nature. Moral laws are to be made universal. Until and unless I will my subjective principle be a universal law, it remains a mere maxim. One makes a maxim universal by consistently willing that maxim to be a maxim for all rational beings. One's will is consistent if he could also count himself under the jurisdiction of that maxim. For example, if I could withstand or will myself being a slave owned by another person, then the 'slave owning' would be a moral act. Kant points to the logical impossibility of such cases. Once the categorical imperative is obeyed, it becomes "universal law according to which, justice demands we should act externally. This categorical imperative must be *apriori,* having its seat in reason. Thus, the idea of justice necessarily follows from the idea of morality.Now, I wish to make certain points.

I) Why should an imperative, to be a moral one, be categorical and not hypothetical? Kant writes that "... all moral concepts have their seat and origin entirely *apriori* in reason". But why is it needed to assume this? In his theory of knowledge, Kant sets his goal to show how synthetic *apriori* judgements in physics and mathematics are possible. It was not his problem that whether *apriori* elements in judgements are present or not. Our critical philosopher somewhat dogmatically maintains that there are *apriori* elements in knowledge. Hegel points out that Kant's assumption of twelve categories is a dogmatic attempt. Why twelve and not more or less? Hegel however gives some more of them. But recent developments in science clearly shows that "necessary knowledge is not necessary." Not a single category or concept is needed to be present *apriori* in mind. (This dogmatism is not unique in Kant. Many examples are there in the history of philosophy. Plato, for example, says that knowledge must be necessary and universal, perception cannot give that, therefore knowledge is through concepts etc. etc. But why at all knowledge should be necessary? It is for the sake of modern science Kant sought for *apriori* concepts. But the modern science rejects his thesis and holds that concepts are rather an achievement, not a gift. Similarly, Kant's demand for an *apriori* categorical imperative can be criticised as a dogmatic one. I would like to quote a passage here from Will Durant's *The Story of Philosophy* :

> "The nineteenth century dealt rather hardly with Kant's ethics, his theory of an innate, *apriori*, absolute moral sense. The philosophy of evolution suggested irresistibly that the sense of duty is a social deposit in the individual, the content of conscience is

> acquired, though the vague disposition to social behaviour is innate. The moral self, the social man, is no special creation" coming mysteriously from the hand of God, but the late product of a leisurely evolution. Morals are not absolute; they are a code of conduct more or less haphazardly developed for group survival ... No action is good in itself, as Kant supposed."[25]

(II) Are the socalled categorical imperatives really categorical? Let us examine. Categorical means two things : (i) non-teleological, and (ii) *apriori*. Does a law to be a universal one really need to be non-teleological? The law of survival is universal in a sense and yet it is teleological. Being a teleologist, Mill criticizes "*apriori* moralists". Of these *apriori* moralists, Mill says, Kant was the "most illustrious." Mill has the highest regards for "this remarkable man, whose system of thought will long remain one of the landmarks in the history of philosophical speculations, ...".[26] But Mill is critical of Kant's concept of categorical imperative. Mill writes :

> ... when he begins to deduce from this precept (The categorical imperative) any of the actual duties of morality, he fails, almost grotesquely, to show that there would be any contradicion, any logical (not to say any physical) impossibility, in the adoption of, by all rational beings of the most outrageously immoral rules of conduct. All he shows is that the consequences of their universal adoption would be such as no one would choose to incur.[27]

The allegation of Kant's being a utilitarian in those arguments is not accepted by some philosophers and scholars of Kant. He is not arguing, they say, that one must keep one's promises because the results of every one's breaking them when convenient or advantageous to themselves would be so bad as to be intolerable, "Kant, however, is contending that one cannot even will such a maxim to be universally acted on, because in so doing, one would be involved in a contradiction of will; one would be willing both that it be possible to make promises and have them credited and that everyone be free to break promises to suit his own purpose."[28] This argument too cannot eliminate the element of consequentialism from Kant's morality. If it is purely formal, it too has some consequences, because, no argument is without consequence. A contradiction is also an outcome of a deduction. Second, a will cannot be separated from the possibility of the act of which it is a will. Will after all is not a will that wills nothing: Third, even the author of the above view, Frankena, admits that Kant's arguments are not always as convincing as the one against deceitful promising, as for example—slave owning.

(III) Modern philosophers do not always identify utilitarianism with the happiness principle. Kant, in criticising utilitarianism is focussing on the "happiness as an end" theory. "If moral philosophy were nothing but eudaemonism [the happiness theory], it would be absurd to look to *apriori* principles for help."[29] Kant, in fact would criticise every form of teleology in morality. But has Kant succeeded in eliminating the element of happiness or teleology from his theory? He writes "Morality is not properly the doctrine of how we make ourselves happy, but how we make ourselves worthy of happiness."[30] I really cannot find much difference between "making ourselves happy" and "making ourselves worthy of happiness." The difference between the two either is a matter of words or it consists in that the process of 'being worthy of happiness' is a more lengthy process than the process of 'making ourselves happy'.

Kant maintains that 'moral laws with their principles' are essentially distinguished from every other kind of practical knowledge in which there is anything empirical; and 'all moral philosophy rests wholly on its pure part' that is, its *apriori,* non- empirical part. Even when we 'apply' moral principles to man, we do not need—do not, in Kant's phrase, 'borrow the least thing from'—empirical knowledge about humans. In 'the metaphysic of morals', as distinct from the human sciences, we do not only require, but must even carefully and on principle rule out and disregard, empirical information about people.[31] Now, the above contentions are absolutely consistent with the deontologism of Kant. Moral values and laws of justice are absolutely determined by 'a priori intuition of pure reason.' But if a*priori* intuitions were wholly different from all that are found in experience it would be impossible to establish any relation between these and the experience. Kant says that so far as our actions are chosen or determined by that unique and universal sense of value they are to be called moral. But, S. N. Dasgupta, in his essay 'International Morality' writes that "... it is difficult for us to agree with Kant, that such a notion of value should always remain transcendent yet practical. To be practical requires the notion of value to be immanent. The notion of value, therefore, must be immanent in our experience. The chief fault of Kant both in his *Critique* *of Pure Reason* and *Critique of Practical Reason* has been the assumption of the transcendental factors which have been permitted to remain transcendent and yet are allowed to take part in experience in .which their immanence is denied."[32]

Let us look at the matter afresh. There have been several value theories of non-deontological readings of Kant in the last few years. The most influential have been the interpretations of Allen Wood, Onora O'Neil, Barbara Herman and others. These interpretations suggest that Kant hardly ignored the issue of moral life as a whole, or the substantive value that underlies it, or the anthropological and historical facts without which the theory remains formal and empty. Real human life is emotionally responsive and historically, socially situated. Kant did not ignore the role that moral commitments and difficult judgments must play in a real human life. This modern interpretation seeks to replace the traditional emphasis on deontology in Kant studies with a substantive value theory and therewith the theories of practical rationality and teleology such an approach requires. Allen Wood who relies heavily on an analysis of the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, the *Metaphysics of Morals* and various of Kant's lectures in practical philosophy, proposes a re-focussing of our attention not on the first two formulations of the categorical imperative, the Formula of the Universal Law, and the Formula of the Law of Nature, but on the Formula of Humanity, the Formula of Autonomy and the Realm of Ends.[33] Wood holds that for Kant, moral action is not concerned with bringing about states of affaires, and in that sense is certainly not 'consequentialist'. But Kant does regard life as expressing a reverence for a substantive value, such as 'humanity' or 'our rational capacity to set ends' or the priority of

Humanity as an end in itself–all these are central to Kant if his full position is understood (Kant's Ethical Theory,page127). Rational human nature exists as an objective end-in-itself. A certain being or state of mind is better and so provides us with strong reasons to pursue it. Such pursuing furthers or promotes what we must be presumed we are seeking to realize or fulfil. Such an understanding frames a more substantively and somewhat teleologically oriented construal of Kant's project. Wood also has given us an account of the ways in which Kant understood the various empirical claims about human nature. He gathers facts from Kant's lectures on anthropology and ethics as well as passages from the *Metaphysics of Morals.* Wood is not proposing that according to Kant morality is based on facts of human nature. He deals with a much deeper role of the latter. Empirical knowledge of human nature is required to determine which ends will honour the rational nature of human beings and which ends are contrary to the respect we owe to human dignity. Further the uniting of the ends of rational beings in a kingdom of ends cannot ignore what ends such beings are empirically disposed to accept.The above interpretations have made us to think twice about the formalistic-rigoristic interpretation as *the* interpretation of Kant. In a way, the modern interpretations have 'taken away the winds from the formalistic-rigoristic sails of Kant studies', being inclined towards a teleological interpretation.

From what has been discussed so far in this chapter, we can make the following observations. Kant's theory of justice is a subordinate part of his theory of morals. And Kant's theory of the *apriori* cannot give a verdict against Mill's empirical moral theory for not accommodating justice. We have discussed the modern teleological interpretation as against the adequacy of a strict deontologism and thus, so far we have found no reason to discard 'utilitarianism' as a teleological theory.

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CHAPTER VI

GANDHI : THE ARGUMENT FROM UNITY VERSUS THE GREATEST NUMBER

VI

M. K. Gandhi's critic of utilitarianism is significant for a number of reasons. Gandhi was no academic philosopher. As a political activist and leader of mass movements during India's struggle for freedom his views gave expression to the colonised psyche. He develops an anti-utilitarian moral theory and calls it *sarvodaya*, welfare of all. Gandhi, who discards utilitarianism, holds, "... in comparison with *sarvodaya*, utilitarianism shows a lack of dignity and humanity."[1] To put it in his own words :

> A votary of *ahimsa* cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula (of the greatest good of the greatest number). He should strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realize the ideal. He will therefore be willing to die so that others may live. He will serve himself with the rest, by himself dying. The greatest good of all inevitably includes the good of the greatest number, and therefore, he and the utilitarian will converge in many points in their career but there does come a time when they must part company, and work in opposite directions. The utilitarian to be logical will never sacrifice himself. ...[2]

The conviction that took deep root in Gandhi is that morality is the basis of all things and truth is the substance of morality. He also realises that India's crisis is moral in nature. Gandhi is particularly critical of the decline in man's faith in religion." He has written extensively and often critically " about the traditional Hindu morality, sexuality, duties of husband and wife, parents and children, teachers and pupils, leaders and followers, employers and employees, on neighbours, friends, widows, government ministers, citizens and those in charge of running private and public organisations. He criticises ... the Indian lack of punctuality, the habit of not answering letters, wastefulness, the ill-treatment of the poor and the weak and social and economic inequalities and injustices."[3] Gandhi's problem, it is clear then, is moral besides being political. One of the finest things to honour in Gandhi's thoughts is that the separation of politics and morality is unacceptable to him. In this respect, he also differs from his political 'guru' Gokhale. Gokhale, like most of the thinkers and activists, separates politics and morality, but for Gandhi, the two are inseparable. Bhikhu Parekh writes, "Gandhi was one of the first to define morality in political terms and politics in terms of active struggle against injustice and oppression".[4] Gandhi's political activity is meant for the moral regeneration of the Indian mass and independence has no meaning without national regeneration. For Gandhi, "... true politics consisted in revitalising Indian society, culture and character by working in the villages, fighting against diseases, hunger and local injustices, helping ordinary men and women acquire courage and self-respect, building up local communities and people's power, and in general devoting oneself to creating an energetic, courageous, cooperative and just country."[5]The identity of morality and politics in Gandhi's philosophy is also evident from the inseparability of both from his concept of religion. In the introduction to his autobiography Gandhi comments that the essence of religion is morality. At the same time, he also refuses to draw a distinction between religion and politics. "To talk of learning religion for politics or politics for religion was incomprehensible to him for he conceived of every activity as determined or governed by one's religious outlook ... Far from advocating that religion should be kept out of politics, he insists that to be truly religious means taking an active part in political life."[6]

Gandhi's views on morality and religion are influenced by his family environment. He describes his father as truthful, brave and generous. Gandhi inherits the art of simple living from his parents. Gandhi was born in the *Vaishnava* faith and his parents were deeply religious. He was a regular visitor to *Vaishnava* temples with his mother although the '*Haveli'*—the *Vaishnava* temples never appealed to Gandhi much for there were rumours of immoral acts being practised there. He was critical of many aspects of traditional Hinduism, even so his moral and religious ideas were shaped by the deep religious faith of his family.[7] We will come to this point again later.

But what is it to be moral? Or what should be the aim of our moral life? We have already mentioned that for Gandhi, truth is the substance of all morality. Truth is Gandhi's sole objective. The subtitle of his autobiography is 'The story of my experiment with Truth' and "... his whole life might well be interpreted as an attempt to live in accordance with or an existential quest for Truth."[8] That truth is the essence of morality reminds us of the Socratic or the Platonic proposition 'virtue is knowledge'. Romain Rolland contrasts Tagore and Gandhi and compares Tagore with Plato and Gandhi with St. Paul. But I find no less similarity between Gandhi and Plato or to be more precise, between Gandhi and Socrates. Whenever Gandhi attempts to explain what he means by truth, he is involved in metaphysical speculations of which he may or may not have been aware. What Gandhi means by Truth or *Satya* is what is meant by the word '*Sat'* (Reality) in the Hindu Philosophical traditions. Truth is the '*Sat'* of Vedanta, i.e., God or Self. Gandhi makes no distinction between Self-realisation and Truth-realisation or the realisation of God. He maintains, what he claims to be the Advaita or non-dualist position that the Self within man is at one with the essence of reality, which is Truth or God."[9]

If the goal of our moral life is Truth and Truth is God, how this goal is to be attained? Or to put the question in another way, how should we act towards that goal? To be precise, what is a moral action? According to Hindu teaching, actions themselves bind human beings to the empirical world, *samsara*, the endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth. But it is also in the Hindu text—the *Gītā*, that one is enjoined to act without the desire for fruits, *nişkāma karma,* to attain liberation, *mokşa*. Gandhi's views on morality have much to do with the teachings of the *Gītā*. He prescribes an action that is selfless, detached and non-violent. "It is Gandhi's contention that the only inevitable means for the attainment of Truth is *ahimsā*. *Ahimsā* is the means and Truth the end. But since ends and means are convertible terms for Gandhi, Truth and *ahimsā* are intertwined. The practice of *ahimsā* inevitably leads to Truth."[10] According to Gandhi, *ahimsā* or non-violence in its negative connotation involves doing no injury to any living being either physically or mentally. *Ahimsā*, in its positive sense means love for all, for our friends as well as enemies. *Ahimsā*, in this sense, "...reflects a great deal of the teachings of the *New Testament* on love and it is not really surprising that Jesus should be referred to as one who manifested *ahimsā* in its perfect form." Non-violence is the law of our species and violence is the law of the brute.

Gandhi's non-dualistic religion and the concept of *ahimsā* inevitably lead to his concept of *sarvodaya*. He is also influenced by the core idea of John Ruskin's *Unto This Last*: The good of the individual is contained in the good of all. And this is what is meant by *sarvodaya*. The ideal of *sarvodaya* is a corollary of *ahimsā*. The upliftment of one cannot be done at the cost of the welfare of another. The basic presuppositions of the concept are the indivisibility of Truth, the identity of the Self and Truth (or God) and the essential unity of all existence: "By the concept of *sarvodaya*, Gandhi really means universal uplift or the welfare of all and not just welfare or greatest happiness of the greatest number."[11] This clearly indicates Gandhi's rejection of utilitarianism as a doctrine of the aim and purpose of life. We may note here that Gandhi is a political activist too, and he fights against the British rule in India. J. S. Mill, the chief exponent of utilitarian philosophy, on the other hand, was an employee of the East India Company. Although Mill was against the transfer of the Company's rule in India to the British Government after the Mutiny of 1857 (he drafted the company's objection) and retired from his post, the philosophical tradition to which he belonged has always been the official philosophy of the British rule. So, Gandhi's opposition to utilitarian philosophy is significant in many ways. We have already mentioned that Gandhi refers to it as an 'inhuman' doctrine. The significance of his allegation may be explained in the following words from Glyn Richards :

> It would be in order, for example, as Gandhi shows, to sacrifice the happiness of 49 per cent of mankind in order that the good of 51percent might be promoted. In the light of facts like these, if one were to judge the issue on purely practical grounds alone, *sarvodaya* would appear to be a more dignified and humane doctrine. If it is argued that *sarvodaya* is an unattainable ideal, and that in the end one may have to settle for the happiness or good of 51 per cent, it would be stated in reply, that it is infinitely better to strive for *sarvodaya* and fail to realize it, than to start out with a

> limited objective and attain it at the expense of an unfortunate minority. That is, better an unattainable ideal than a limited attainable goal when it comes to the welfare of our fellow men. At least it can be said that the former shows a more commendable motivation.[12]

The ideal of *sarvodaya* is no doubt high, but we must compare it to the utilitarian principle on the question of their practicality. This would involve examining the premises from which the principle of *sarvodaya* follows. Gandhi's concept of Truth corresponds to his concept of religion and conversely. Gandhi maintains that all religions are true and the essence of one religion is identical with that of another. In his autobiography, Gandhi maintains that his father, apart from Hindus, had Jain, Musalman and Parsi friends who paid frequent visits to his father and that he had an early grounding in toleration for all religions. Although he disliked Christianity in his early days, he later developed great respect for that religion. But apart from his commendable openness to the plurality of religious traditions, he is a Hindu by heart. Most of the truths he lives by, for example, the importance of promises, truthfulness, non-injury to living beings, the control of senses and sexual desires etc. for centuries have been important parts of the Hindu moral tradition. Bhikhu Parekh has observed as follows:

> … although Gandhi thought otherwise, he was not so much experimenting with truths as living according to already accepted truths, an important distinction blurred by the English expression 'experiments with truth' as well as its Gujrati original (*satyanā proyogo*). He took a good deal of Hindu metaphysics and morality for granted. He accepted

> that '*Brahman*' alone was real, all life was one, selfhood was an illusion, and so on, none of which was a truth based on his own on anyone else's experiments. And he uncritically accepted such principles of middle class Hindu morality as vegetarianism, truthfulness, non-violence and matrimonial fidelity. He was not interested in trying out different values or ways of life and making a comparative assessment as, for example John Stuart Mill had proposed. Rather, he was only concerned to live by one set of values. ... His experiments were thus intended not to discover new truths but to try out old ones, and formed part of the technology of moral conduct rather than a science of moral principles.[13]

Thus, in defining Truth, when Gandhi says that it is 'what the voice within tells', his definition faces a problem of relativity of truth. The point is that "... the inner voice or the voice of conscience is not self-authenticating. There are criteria which determine the ways in which a man thinks and acts, and in Gandhi's case, they are the religious and ethical ideals of his own form of life."[14] I would say that one of the most strong factors that determines the nature of the 'inner voice' is his Hindu view of life. " And to attribute knowledge of truth to the voice of conscience in this way, or to the religious and ethical criteria of a particular form of life, inevitably brings Gandhi face to face with the problem of relativity of truth ... That is, there are criteria which determine the way in which others also think and act which may be completely contrary to those of Gandhi."[15]

Gandhi admits that it is impossible for man to lay claim to attain or to possess perfect Truth. Moreover, what Gandhi calls Truth is an affirmation of faith according to him.[16] A confession of faith requires no external verification in the same way as statements of fact. This view not only would face the problem of relativity, it would also face the objection that is raised by S. N. Dasgupta against Kant: "The chief fault of Kant has been the assumption of the transcendental factors which have been permitted to remain transcendent and yet are allowed to take part in experience in which their immanence is denied."[17] The place of the faith in Kant's philosophy is similar to that in Gandhi's moral philosophy. Richards rightly points out that followers of Gandhi explicitly maintain that he was essentially a practical man with no concern for metaphysics ... yet it is clear that whenever he attempted to explain what he meant by Truth, he drifted into metaphysical speculation whether he or his followers realised it or not.[18]

Gandhi's theory of *sarvodaya* is exactly contradictory to the utilitarian formula, as far as their logical relation is concerned. It would regard a utilitarian as an advocate of *himsā* (violence), because a utilitarian is ready to sacrifice the good of the lesser number for the greater number, whereas, *sarvodaya* means the welfare of all. If it is argued that *sarvodaya* is an unattainable ideal then its advocate could state in reply that "... it is infinitely better to strive for *sarvodaya* and fail to realise it, than to start out with a limited objective and attain it at the expense of an unfortunate minority. That is, better an unattainable ideal than a limited attainable goal when it comes to the welfare of our fellow men. At least, it can be said that the former shows a more commendable motivation."[19] It sounds good, there is no doubt about that. But to recognize the limitations of *sarvodaya* by the exponent himself as an unattainable formula prior to its application puts it in no better position than utilitarianism. It is no less a weakness to be ignored. And it is not a true that a utilitarian would hold that we must sacrifice the good of at least one for the good of the rest. To maintain that J. S. Mill could never mean 'hundred percent' by 'the greatest number' would be unjust. The greatest number would well be the total number.

It is said that *sarvodaya* is a necessary outcome of Gandhi's concept of *ahimsā*. It would have been so, if *ahimsā* were necessary and universal like the categorical imperative of Kant. Traditionally, *ahimsā* means non-injury and non-killing. Complete non-violence means complete cessation of all activity. But Gandhi's *ahimsā* is not a passive but an active concept; his view of *ahimsā* diverges from the traditional Indian view. "Gandhi does not equate *ahimsā* with non-killing and notes the distinction between *ahimsā* and *himsā* by indicating that *himsā* means killing from motives of anger or selfishness and *ahimsā* means refraining from so doing. Then it might be possible to be a believer in *ahimsā* and yet kill, ..."[20] This view of *ahimsā* is found in classical India of course. The *Mahābhārata* calls killing an evil-doer, *vadha* but also *ahimsā*, an act of killing but not out of violence, it is an act of non-violent killing. Society has a duty to protect its members and so long as its measures are not motivated by hatred and ill will, it does not constitute *himsā*. We may mention here that Buddhist and Jain thinkers are most critical about the Hindu view of *ahimsā*. (They) say that it encourages casuistry and is exploited by various social institutions and religion to sanction unacceptable violence. Their view of *ahimsā* is categorical. However, Gandhi has revived the concept of *ahimsā* from classical India in his time. I must say that the spirit behind the theory of *ahimsā* is great, but Gandhi's theory itself has some paradoxical features. "On the one hand, he carried *ahimsā* much further than any other theorist of it had ever done. Unlike most of them, he did not merely attack wars but also the institution of state including armies, the police and prisons and unlike almost all of them, he showed a remarkable sensitivity to the non-human world and insisted on the 'absolute efficacy' of *ahimsā*. On the other hand, he permitted or condoned violence in many more types of situation than most of them had done."[21] Gandhi recognises that individual existence or our existence as a social being requires some form of *himsā*; killing or injury is permitted for a greater purpose. Gandhi cites the example of a man who in a fit of madness goes about with a sword in his hand killing indiscriminately. To destroy such a man may be necessary and unavoidable in order to protect other members of society.[22] We remember Socrates defining justice. Gandhi would not call the above act a violation of *ahimsā*. With all my respect to Gandhi's *ahimsā*, I want to state that what follows from a conditional *ahimsā* is not *sarvadaya* but utilitarianism, the theory Gandhi opposes so much :

Gandhi does not distinguish between politics and morality. Plato does not too. And Gandhi may also be called a utopian like Plato considering the resemblance between the essence of the *Rāmarājya* and the Republic. Gandhi is fond of Geometry. After overcoming the initial fear, he realises that "A subject which only required a pure and simple use of one's reasoning power could not be difficult" and also writes that "geometry has been both easy and interesting for me."[23] So it is quite natural that "Gandhi understood moral life in the image of Euclidean geometry."[24] Thus, by referring to *Rāmarājya*, he is not pointing to the mythological *Rāmarājya*. Acharya Kripalini maintains that the Rāma invoked by Gandhi with his dying breath was not the historical Rāma or the mythological Rāma, but rather the highest self. Gandhi himself refers to Rāma as the all powerful essence whose name is inscribed in the heart. Hence the formless, omnipresent Rāma in Gandhi's thought is at one with highest self which in turn is identical with the Truth. Thus, by insisting for a *Rāmarājya*, Gandhi refers to an ideal state. My analogy between Republic and *Rāmarājya*, I think is not a loose one. Take for example, Gandhi's view on Education. His attitude to education is in some respect reminiscent of Plato. He speaks, for example, of the education of the whole man, body, mind and spirit. Like Plato, Gandhi maintains that gymnastic and music should be an integral part of education for the development of body and soul.[25] There is nothing objectionable in Gandhi's view on education, at least in these respects. The similarities I point to are only to show the likeness in thinking and imagination of Plato and Gandhi. Both of them have insisted for a utopia, an ideal state. But in an ideal state, could there be any place for morality? God is not moral as he is perfect. Morality is meant for man because he is imperfect, he suffers from dilemma between the good and the bad. Morality is not needed where everything follows necessarily as in a *Rāmarājya* or a Republic. It may be argued that morality is necessary in order to attain an ideal condition or state. But, first, although I have no doubt about the necessity of the institution of morality, I doubt in man's desire to attain an ideal state where everything would follow necessarily. If man were to choose between paradise and this earth to live in, he would not have chosen paradise. Second, like Plato, Gandhi too recognises the human limitations, the imperfect *irratio* but both of them ignored the fact. It is Aristotle who realises the importance of impurities in human beings and he never argues for a utopia.

Gandhi's criticism of utilitarianism does not mean that the theory is without substance. The theory is being criticised ever since it is proposed, and it is the centre of lively debates right now. Every theory is subject to improvement. In fact the internal critique of utilitarianism has shown that.

Gandhi's use of the 51/ 49 distribution calculus does not mathematically nullify the utilitarian position. 51 percent is marginally greater than 49 percent, but 51 percent is not the greatest percentage. Gandhi and the utilitarian, we may say, are working from different presuppositions. Gandhi, as we have seen, started with the metaphysical presupposition of the unity of all living things. Utilitarianism, on the other hand, assumes that empirical procedures can determine when something maximises utility. It is also rational to adopt a moral theory if it will maximise the agent's or society's expected utility. It can be recommended to a person of broad human sympathies as a theory which maximises the expectation of general welfare. We may also add that every moral theory has the notion of equal regard at its heart, looking at things from the moral point of view, regarding each person as in some sense on an equal footing with every other one. The notion of 'equal regard' is a vague notion. Different moral theories posit this vague notion into different conceptions, utilitarianism into maximisation; every one counting for one. Indeed there are ways in which utilitarianism allows individuals to matter and ways in which it does not. Everyone to count for one means that in a way individuals do matter, they matter equally in the maximisation calculus. Equality crops up in different places although moral theory. There are many possible principles of equality, several of them plausible and others may be doubted. One of the hard jobs in moral theory is to sort out these easily confused but different principles of equality, and get one's thinking about equality straight. It is hard to reject the utilitarian concept of distributive justice from the start as 'inhuman'. The utilitarian theory of distributive justice is impressive, though it stands in the need of supplementation. I think that it even has something to recommend it contrary to received opinions. Utilitarianism is a teleological theory. Virtually all of us are teleologists in the relevant sense, for virtually all of us believe that the consequences of our actions matter morally in some way. Many of those who criticise utilitarianism on this score may not be consequentialists of the familiar modern variety, but consequences do enter their theories. No plausible principle of equality could be fully distributive without a maximising element.

From what has been discussed hitherto, it can be said that *Savrodaya* as advocated by Gandhi is a noble ideal, but it is not practicable. A practical idealist like Gandhi is more an idealist than practical. To set an ideal of *sarvodaya* and yet to recognise and admit the difficulties in its attainment is like telling a person who is always late "Your watch is kept ten minutes fast because you are always late". There is no harm in setting an ideal like *sarvodaya* (welfare of all) as our political or moral goal, as an ethical ideal in spite of the difficulties of attaining it, but it does not mean that utilitarianism has no merit as a tangible moral standard.

Notes and References

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[1] Glyn Richards, *The Philosophy of Gandhi* , Calcutta : Rupa and Co., 1991, page 74.

[2] *Young India,* 9th December, 1926.

[3] Bhikhu Parekh, *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1989, page 84.

[4] Ibid, page 93.

[5] Ibid, page 92.

[6] *The Philosophy of Gandhi*, page 135.

[7] M. K. Gandhi, *Autobiography* (abridged), Ahmedabad : Navajaban Publishing House, 1994.

[8] *The Philosophy of Gandhi*, page 1.

[9] Ibid, page 32.

[10] Ibid, page 8.

[11] Ibid, page 72.

[12] Ibid, pages 72 – 73.

[13] *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform*, page 105.

[14] Ibid, page 9.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid, page 10.

[17] S. N. Dasgupta, *The Philosophical Essays*, Delhi : Motilal Baranasidass, 1990, page 33.

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[18] *The Philosophy of Gandhi*, page 1.

[19] Ibid, page 73.

[20] Ibid, page 41.

[21] *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform*, pages 135 – 136.

[22] *The Philosophy of Gandhi*, page 36.

[23] *Autobiography*, page 8.

[24] *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform*, page 128.

[25] *The Philosophy of Gandhi*, page 97.

CHAPTER VII

FREE WILL AND RATIONAL DETERMINATION

VII

In this concluding chapter we wish to gather the different strands of thought put forth in the previous ones together. We have said that any act to be morally significant must be free. Man, as a moral agent, looks on himself as one who has this prerogative over all other beings that he fixes his ends for himself. Will is the power in man that decides his conduct in relation to values; it is his power to choose. Moral values are essentially bound up with freedom of will. As Nicolai Hartmann says that questions of moral values are only one half of the ethical problem and the other half is the metaphysics of moral acts in the centre of which stands the problem of the freedom of will.[1] A man is not simply one who is marked by the value, he is also looked upon to be the originator of its fulfilment or of its failure. To elucidate the meaning of the 'originator', I quote from Hartmann :

> By this origination we mean something quite definite : whoever does wrong could just as well have acted rightly; whoever tells a lie or breaks his word could nevertheless have done otherwise; he was not constrained; he was in a position to tell the truth and to keep his promise. And only in so far as this was possible for him is there any question as to a real lie or a breaking of his word. In the same way, whoever does right, whoever speaks the truth, and so on, is only in so far actually just and truthful as it was possible for him to do otherwise.[2]

If an agent's will is not free, that is to say, it what an agent does, does under some compulsion, he or she could not be said to be responsible for his or her acts. No moral value would be ascribable to the agent in that case. In a word, the whole significance of morality will be lost, if freedom is an illusion.

But some philosophers do not care to ask questions about the very foundation of the moral institution and the controversy regarding free will arises. The problem of freedom is grounded in human nature. On the one hand we believe that (at least sometimes) to choose whether to act in a certain way or not; we believe that we are responsible for so acting or refraining from action; we believe that for those parts of our history which do not lie within our choice, we can not be held responsible. On the other hand, we believe that nature is uniform, that whatever happens results from and can be explained by a set of causes and conditions and in particular that our actions result from our inherited character as modified by environment. The problem of freedom of will may be stated as follows :

> Are decisions and choices in principle capable of being caused and capable of causing actions? Are actions identical with sets of events that in principle can be predicted on the basis of antecedent conditions and relevant causal law? If an action is more than a set of events, does this preclude causal determination of actions?[3]

The controversy in the history of philosophy has been seen differently by different philosophers and theorists. The issue has been said to be between either of the following :

1. Rationalism and voluntarism,
2. Mechanism and teleology,
3. Empirical view and a priorist view,
4. Heteronomy and autonomy.

But the most widely accepted view that cuts across all the above is the issue between determinism and indeterminism.

The scientific thesis of determinism is that any event whatsoever is an instance of some law of nature. A famous and very graphic formulation of thesis by Laplace is that given a knowledge of state of universe at some date, it is in principle possible to predict all the subsequent history of the universe. The scientific theory of determinism is inspired by the development of physical science (although it may not be acceptable to the very recent developments of science). But the general theory of determinism is as old as philosophy; the rise of physical science only prompted philosophers to revise somewhat the content of deterministic theories to which they were already accustomed. The philosophical or the more general theory of determinism may be then stated as the view that every event, including human choices and volitions, is caused by other events and happens as an effect or result of these other events.[4]

The essence of ethical determinism is then the thesis that will is not free, choice is illusory and that how we act is determined. Nicolai Hartmann writes that ancient thinkers take freedom for granted as something self evident and that is why they do not pass through much metaphysical difficulties in this regard.[5] True that ancient thinkers are not disturbed by the problem of free will, but what I have observed is that they also did not combat determinism, at least till Aristotle came on the scene. We have noted earlier, in Chapter I that the age of myths and tragedies is fully governed by determinism. The laws of fate (fate ≡ nature) leave no room for freedom. This fatalism influences the early Greek thinkers like Diodorus Cronus and some others, referred to by Aristotle as 'the Megarians' who developed the school of logical determinism. It has been observed that the views of logical determinists "were associated by the ancients with the idea of fate, an idea which has, however, the same implication as certain forms of determinism with respect to human freedom."[6] Socrates thinks that every man always chooses what seems to him best and that no man can set something as the object of choice that seems evil to him. Plato holds the similar view that no man does wrong knowingly, that is no man can choose anything what he knows to be bad. Hence, the doctrine that virtue is knowledge and vice is ignorance. It is possible to interpret this ethical intellectualism as a theory of determinism—determination of will by what is good.[7] But, if determinism is true, question arises as to whether it is right to hold an agent responsible for his actions, and to praise or blame him and possibly to reward or punish him.

Aristotle, we have seen earlier, although a teleologist like his ancestors, rejects ethical determinism. He is a teleologist because he maintains that we act towards a fixed goal and that is *eudaemonia* (happiness). He is a champion of freedom for he realises that sometimes man's desires or appetites are in conflict with his reason and man exercises his freedom by choosing the means towards a fixed end. This, Aristotle calls 'deliberate choice'. The Epicureans are the prominent physical determinists of the past maintaining that everything, including man is composed of minute and impenetrable atoms and thus, human behaviour too is reducible to and understandable in terms of motions of atoms. But, by assuming that atoms have the power of occasional spontaneous motion, they allowed some amount of freedom to human behaviour. Among the moderns, the view of empiricists are considered as examples of determinism. Of them, Hobbes is said to be a physical determinist and Hume a psychological one. But these philosophers do not reject human freedom in any sense rather they have their own concept of freedom. "Hobbes and Hume were determinists and they needed a concept of freedom that could be reconciled with determinism. Such a reconciliatory view says that a man who can do what he wills to do is free, no matter how his will may have been causally determined."[8] Hume believes that men are both free and all their actions are causally determined. He maintains that the problem of free will is only verbal in character. We know that for Hume, causation is constant conjunction and there is no necessary connection between causes and their effects. Causes do not compel the occurrence of their effects, they only precede them. To say that human actions are caused only means that they are constantly conjoined with some preceding events. No one would contradict that certain human actions have always been associated with certain motives. Far from saying that no human actions are free, Hume holds the opposite view that it is the very nature of a free action that it springs from the motive of the agent. He then defines freedom as being able to act according to the determination of one's will.[9] Hume's view has more impact and influence in our times than his own. The advent of Darwinism in nineteenth century greatly strengthened the position of the absolute determinist. Patrick writes in beautiful language : "His (man's) humble origin has been discovered. He is only the highly developed form of simplest animal life. There is no break in nature—no place where its laws cease to operate. The leaves of the tree unfold in accordance with these laws. In the same way the child eats, sleeps, grows, thinks and even chooses, all in conformity with natural law.[10]

There is another way of approach to the subject of freedom prevalent in history of philosophy, known as indeterminism. The philosophers who regard determinism as incompatible with freedom and therefore deny the deterministic thesis are often called the libertarians. Indeterminism is the view that denies determinism and maintains that some events, among them human choices and volitions, happen without any cause or explanation. But indeterminism does not mean accidentalism. It only rejects the nexus which binds all existence in a unified and thorough determination.[11] Descartes stands out in modern philosophy as a defender of free will and his view may be called indeterminism with respect to the voluntary operations of the mind. In his *Meditations*, he describes human freedom as infinite, meaning that no limitation whatsoever is put upon the mind's power of choice. There have been several arguments given in favour of indeterminism. These arguments may be designated as positive and negative arguments. The positive argument in favour of indeterminism stresses on the fact of our direct experience. We all know directly that I could have done otherwise, i.e., other than what I have done. After having followed a particular road to my destination, I know that I could have taken another road or I could not have taken the journey at all. Thus freedom of will is a matter of intuition that is universal and that is why it deserves serious consideration. The negative argument in favour of indeterminism says that if determinism is true, that is, if we have no freedom of will, morality itself will be at stake, and there will be no hope for future as determinism admits no real change in the universe. However, determinism may argue that its laws are the laws of inevitable progress. As to the intuition or the feelings about one's own self, there is always a possibility of mistake.

A new interest has been given to indeterminism regarding human choice by the discovery of the principle of uncertainty or the Heisenberg principle of indeterminacy in physics. But, "The principle of indeterminacy in physics can be thought to provide a solution to the problem of the freedom of the will only at the expense of confused thinking, for there is no way of basing human responsibility on the impossibility of simultaneously determining the position and momentum of elementary particles".[12] And what is more important against complete indeterminism is that if the 'free' will is conceived of as a will that is not determined by anything else, it would imply that men's choices are completely random and capricious, utterly mysterious and inexplicable. John Hospers raises a pertinent point that freedom is possible only to the extent that determinism is true. If some act of mine were causeless, not even caused by my character, habits or motives or by anything that constitutes me as a person, how could I be held responsible for anything? How can some acts be mine if they are not caused in any way by me?[13] If one's action is strictly uncaused, then it is difficult to see in what sense it can be within the control of an agent or in anyway ascribable to him. Again, the difficulty with determinism is that it seems to render every action ultimately unavoidable. The implications of determinism do not significantly differ from those of pure fatalism.

In order to meet the difficulties of both determinism and indeterminism, some philosophers have defended another type of theory called self-determination. Kant, Fichte, Nicolai Hartmann, Thomas Reid, Samuel Clarke, C. A. Campbell, Chisholm are some of the defenders of this theory. They deny both that our choices are always caused by previous events in accordance with natural laws and also that they are in any way matters of mere chance. Instead, they argue for a special kind of 'agency' or 'self-determination'. The essence of this theory is that human beings are sources of causes of their own actions; that their being the sources or causes distinguishes those bodily motions that are actions from those that are not, the latter being caused by something other than themselves. Free actions are those that an agent performs but which he is not caused by anything else to perform. This theory thus distinguishes 'action' or 'agency' as a basic philosophical category, treating actions as different in kind from other 'events'. Nicolai Hartmann is one of the champions of this theory. Self-determination occupies a major place in his *Ethics*. He writes, "In the analytical argument for the freedom of the will, three complex facts of the moral life come into consideration as points of departure: the consciousness of self-determination, the fact of responsibility and accountability, and the consciousness of guilt."[14] We do not have the knowledge of this self-determination in ordinary sense of the term, rather it is a conviction. Not self-determination itself but only the consciousness of it is a phenomenon. In each case an action is done, man consciously receives the inevitable impression: I do this but I can also do otherwise; it depends upon me. This is the consciousness of self-determination.[15]

If this theory is true, it enables us to meet the difficulties of both determinism and indeterminism. But the question is, is the self-determination theory itself true? John Harpers raises the point in this way : "That our decisions are caused by our decisions is plausible enough. But can it be true that our decisions are self-originating, not caused by anything that went before? ... If it means that our decisions are self-caused, what does this mean? Can anything be the cause of itself? And what is its relation to antecedent conditions?"[16] Thus, this theory raises some serious metaphysical questions regarding the nature of human constitution that are not sufficiently clarified. Surely, the thesis is unintelligible enough and cannot be accepted.

What view on freedom then should we hold? It depends on the concept of the theory of obligation one holds. The concept of freedom of the teleologist differs from the concept of freedom of the deontologist. It can be said that generally deontologists deny that morality is compatible with determinism and a teleologist is a determinist. But there are different ways of approach to the problem. Ross, a deontologist holds moral responsibility to be consistent with determinism. Again, one can say Hume is a teleologist and a determinist both. But there is no harm in calling him a champion of freedom. There is no doubt that one's concept free will has to do with one's theory of moral obligation. A theory of obligation is about what makes an action obligatory. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* speaks of four types of theories of obligation :

1. Utilitarianism : It answers the question by reference to the good produced. Hedonistic utilitarianism is one of the variety but not the only variety of it.
2. Aprioristic view: Reference may be made to universal laws known *apriori* independently of the consequence produced. Immanuel Kant is the greatest champion of this view.
3. Intuitionist view : It says that we see what we ought to do by intuition in each particular case.
4. And there is another view that recognises certain *apriori* laws as holding independently of the good done by observing them yet regards them not as absolute laws but as instances of '*prima facie*' duties. A *prima facie* duty differs from an actual duty by the property of its being exceptionless. W. D. Ross is one of the proponents of this view.[17]

Some authors have legitimately reduced all the above four theories of obligation into two :

1. Teleological theories and
2. Deontological theories.

My use of 'teleology' is almost synonymous to 'utility'. A teleological theory says that the ultimate criterion or standard of what is morally right, wrong or obligatory is the non-moral value that is brought into being. A teleological theory judges an action by the amount of good produced or the comparative balance of good over evil or to say it in another way, an act ought to be done if and only if it produces a greater balance of good over evil. Such a theory allows us to ask, "Why should one be moral?" But a deontologist would not allow us to ask such a questions. It may be maintained that such questions are illegitimate, for to ask them would suggest that there is some ulterior purpose behind the exercise of virtue, or the performance of duty. To take virtue as a means to an ulterior end is in direct antagonism to the voice of moral consciousness. Thus, a deontologist denies that the right, the morally good or the obligatory is a function of what is non-morally good. A deontological theory is a mixed bunch and includes the aprioristic view, intuitionist view and the view that distinguishes between actual and *prima facie* duties.

We have shown our favourable inclination towards utilitarianism in our present thesis, but we do not consider hedonism to be the only form of utilitarianism. The voice of fate which we have noticed in the age of myths and the writings of the tragedians has changed into a voice of freedom in Aristotle. Aristotle has tried to make teleology and freedom consistent. We have not accepted J. S. Mill's version of teleology uncritically. Pleasure solely cannot and is not the end of our actions. . The very foundation of ethical hedonism, i.e., psychological hedonism is a faulty theory. We do not always seek pleasure, our basic desires are actually our primary appetites. But no doubt, there is some teleology behind our moral actions and Mill is right in holding that. We have considered William McDougall's views and have seen that even our instinctive actions are purposive and not mere blind tendencies. To the question "what do right actions have in common?" the answer is that a right action is what promotes the greatest possible conditions for human survival. Our moral actions are geared to our organic survival, consciously or unconsciously. We have considered two critics of utilitarianism : Kant and Gandhi, but we have not found it necessary to alter our view.

Our view concerning human freedom lies somewhere between the views of the teleologist and the deontologist, the empiricist and the apriorist. In this regard I shall heavily fall back on the views expressed in John Watkins paper, "Three views concerning human freedom" published in *Nature and Conduct.*[18] He criticises both the empiricist view and the aprioristic view which may roughly be taken to mean the teleological view and the deontological view. The 'third view' he offers is what I wish to develop in what follows. This of course does not mean that I am going to accept his views as whole. It is generally held that empiricist or teleological view of morality is necessarily associated with determinism and heteronomy. Watkins himself does not try that much to reconcile utilitarianism with autonomy, but I think that his paper contains potentials for an answer to that problem.

We may name our view on human freedom as "rational determination". There are four essential features of this rational determination theory which are as follows :

1. All rational thinking is problem oriented.
2. Problems exist objectively, 'out there' so to speak.
3. If p be the description of the main components of some problem situation and s be a promising scientific solution for p, then s will logically transcend p, go beyond p, or have excess content over p. That is s cannot be computed from a knowledge f p: it has to be invented.
4. A proposed solution cannot be verified, but it may survive testing and other kinds of criticism.

Of these four essentials mentioned, what seems to me most important for our purpose is that all rational thinking is problem oriented. To this, we add that freedom consists in reasoning out the solutions. Now, it is necessary that we make a distinction between merely reacting to an external situation in a causally determined way and responding to a problem situation in a rational and resourceful or innovative way. This distinction is ignored by strict determinism. If all behaviour is completely determined causally, we cannot single out certain human actions as having an extra something that lifts them out of the class of casually determined reactions. There are of course borderline cases, in which the distinction becomes blurred. But the distinction comes into its own in difficult and demanding situations where one may have the imagination and knowledge to see a possible way out where another man would have been trapped. Our idea of human freedom comes essentially to this—a man preserves his autonomy in a threatening situation so long as he continues to respond to it in a resourceful and inventive way of his own. Moreover, we regard freedom as a matter of degree and as Watkins would suggest, we replace the autonomy/ heteronomy dichotomy with a scale ranging from full autonomy to full heteronomy. Watkins gives an example of a heroin-addicted person as a case of full heteronomy. Full autonomy is unattainable. A person's position regarding freedom on this scale is a function both of the situation he is in and of the way in which he is responding to it.

We advocate not full autonomy, neither heteronomy nor casual determinacy, but a rational determinacy. "Such rational determinacy within an objectivity open situation does not entail heteronomy".[19] A person, who acts in a rationally determinate way, acts both freely and predictably. Predictability does not presuppose causal determinacy always. It would be justified and useful for our purpose if we make a distinction between two kinds of predictability :

1. R-Predictability – associated with rational determinacy.
2. C-predictability – associate with causal determinacy.

R-prediction may say nothing about the physical detail of the predicted person's behaviour; and C-prediction may say nothing about the predicted person's future course of action. Thus, our previously mentioned proposition may be modified thus—a person acting in a rationally determinate way acts both freely and R-predictably.

This rational determinacy may be legitimately called by some as a sort of self-determination, but it differs from the kind advocated by Spinonza and Kant. R-prediction associated with this sort of determination may misfire because of failure on the part of the observer or some external circumstances. Suppose that an agent A appears to a competent and informed observer B to be in a grim 'single-exist' situation : A can do X which will be nasty; anything else will be disastrous. So B predicts that A will do X. But then A does something else. But when B reflects upon what

A is doing he realises that, although it is something that he (B) would never have thought of doing in that situation, it does have some chance of succeeding. Suppose however, it fails. B now makes another 'single-exit' prediction which again fails. Such cases have not been considered by the apriorist self-determinism. Rational determinacy does not entail necessity and universality of moral acts. But what I would like to add to the above is that although R-prediction may fail at times, the possibility of finding out reasons behind the action performed always remains.

The above theory of rational determinacy fits well with our understanding of utilitarian morality. We have already mentioned earlier that by utilitarianism, we understand and mean a teleological view of morality based on facts of experience. We do not uphold the crude and narrow 'pleasure-seeking' standard of moral action but we are anxious to recognise man's urge for survival. We are to regulate our actions by reference to the existing needs and claims of ourselves and others. So the inclination to do the right thing is never an inclination to seek pleasure as such, but pleasure justly distributed. Reason has a role in seeking the best means to the enjoyment of pleasure whether by the individual or pleasure as interwoven with others. It is reason that takes us out of our individualism and makes us sociable. Reason comprises of experience and memory. Reason deduces for us conditions that would be best for our survival. It is reason that has shown that the individual existence is secured only in an organised society. Persons are both individual and social. Thus, society and the institution of morality come into existence. Society is a child of our reason. That we are social beings implies we are free because we are not social by nature. Human beings struggle for existence with a weapon that is typical to them and unlike those of the other creatures of nature. The true nature of reason is not fully known and probably will never be even with the use of reason itself; an eye cannot see itself directly. But we are convinced enough to say that reason is our Prometheus that brings freedom for us. Greater the power of reasoning, greater is the freedom.

Notes and References

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[1] Nicolai Hartmann, *Ethics,* Page 19.

[2] Ibid, page 20.

[3] *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (Vol. II), ed. Paul Edwards, New York : Macmillan and Free Press, 1972, Page 96.

[4] *Ethics*, page 30.

[5] Ibid, page 30.

[6] *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (Vol. II), page 360.

[7] Ibid, page 359.

[8] Peters, R. S. (ed.) *Nature and Conduct*, London : The Macmillan Press, 1975, page 201.

[9] *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, page 367.

[10] Patrik, G. T. W., *Introduction to Philosophy,* page 306.

[11] *Ethics*, page 65.

[12] *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (ed. John Urmson and Jonathan Ree), London : Unwin Hymann, 1989, page 78.

[13] Hospers, John, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis*, New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1988, page 326.

[14] *Ethics*, page 143.

[15] Ibid, page 145.

[16] *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis*, page 345.

[17] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, page 759.

[18] *Nature and Conduct*, page 200 *off*

[19] Ibid, Page 218

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