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Editorial

Memory, Muses, Mimesis

MEMORY INTIMATIONS of intimate ties between memory and narrative go way back, to the ancient Greek myth of Mnemosine, the mother of nine creative daughters known as the Muses. Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory in Greek mythology was the daughter of Uranus (Heaven) and Gaea (Earth), and, according to Hesiod, the mother (by Zeus) of the nine Muses. She gave birth to the Muses after Zeus went to Pieria and stayed with her nine consecutive nights. The Muses were goddesses of poetic inspiration, the adored deities of song, dance, and memory, on whose mercy the creativity, wisdom and insight of all artists and thinkers depended.

Calliope was the muse of epic poetry. Clio was the muse of history. Erato was the muse of love poetry. Euterpe was the muse of music. Melpomene was the Muse of tragedy. Polyhymnia was the muse of sacred poetry. Terpsichore was the muse of dance. Thalia was the muse of comedy. Urania was the muse of astronomy.

In those days, when written materials were not freely available, memory was very much necessary as a precondition of narrative, and when it is disturbed or malfunctioning, narratological coherence and efficiency suffer as well. In fact, narration not only depends on memory. It is inherently constructed by it as well, as seen in the

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ubiquity of memory-based techniques like retroversion – also known as a flashback – in any narrative or story.

However, the memory-narrative relation is far from unidirectional: just as memory engenders narrative, so is narrative, at times, indispensable for the agility of the faculty of memory. The classical art of memory, or “architectural mnemonics”, is a case in point, as it is based on the use of narrative structures for the improvement of the ability to memorise, particularly for the use of orators.

In its original version, created in antiquity and thriving all through the Middle Ages and up to the sixteenth century, the art of memory consisted of the creation of an imaginary place, say a house. Within the house, several more specific locations were defined, and the items to be memorised, incarnated in visual images, were then allocated to these locations. To retrieve those items, one had to imagine a tour of the house, visiting each place in turn, finding in it just the right image placed there, so to speak, in advance. Thus, the time-based narrative was superimposed on a spatial ordering to ensure the fulfilment of Mnemosine’s task.

The art of memory, thus described, rests on two principles, often naturalised and overlooked in spite of their fundamental importance and their dependence on cultural norms. The first is the perfect, transparent translatability of verbal concepts into visual images. To be sure, as Mary Carruthers explains in her *Book of Memory*, this does not necessarily mean that there is a resemblance between what has to be memorised and its mental image, but the unambiguous relation of signification between the two is nonetheless taken for granted, as is the need of the image and its location to be clear and perfectly visible (Sapir. 2006).

The second principle is the absolute necessity of a “place” in order for something to happen. In this case, a place is indispensable for the images to function according to the role allotted to them in the “art of memory” system. It is quite remarkable that many European languages have retained this

“locational prejudice” in their vocabulary: English, for instance, uses “to take place” as an equivalent to “to happen”, whereas French prefers the less active “*avoir lieu*”, to have a place, to denote the same meaning (Sapir. 2006). Things that happen should occupy a place – a single, clear locus or site, on which, like a theatre stage, the narrative can run its course.

Both these principles – translatability and localisation – are also an inherent part of the theoretical framework accompanying one of the mightiest artistic movements in the history of western culture – Italian, more specifically Florentine, Renaissance painting. This self-proclaimed apotheosis of European art was solidly grounded on the iconographical rendering of verbal concepts and on the creation of perspective-guided places where the resulting depiction was to take place. Or so, at least, claims the Renaissance painting manual cum theory, Alberti’s *On Painting* (Alberti & Sinisgalli, 2913). . Not surprisingly, this opus also makes the somewhat dubious statement that the starting point for any painting should be a *historia*, a story or a narrative – although, as the new French edition of *On Painting* (Alberti & Sinisgalli, 2013) reminds us, this fundamental notion cannot be simply translated into its modern derivatives (Sapir, 2006).

Mimesis, (*mīmēsis* μίμησις) provides basic theoretical principle in the creation of art. The word means “imitation” (though in the sense of “re-presentation” rather than of “copying”). Plato and Aristotle spoke of mimesis as the re-presentation of nature. When the Greeks of the classical period wanted to characterize the basic nature of painting and sculpture, poetry and music, dance and theatre, i.e. things we today call works of art, most of them agreed that such things were *mimemata* (in singular form *mimema*), the result of an activity they named mimesis.

The theory of mimesis is now generally regarded as the oldest theory of art. But the theory of mimesis as we find it in ancient texts is not a theory of art in a modern sense; it is rather a theory of pictorial apprehension and representation. The basic distinction for the ancient theory of mimesis was that between *mimemata* and real things. For example, a house is a real thing whereas a painting or a sculpture representing a house is a *mimema*, a thing that looks like a house but is not a house.

Both Plato and Aristotle saw in mimesis the representation of nature, including human nature, as reflected in the dramas of the period. Aristotle also defined mimesis as the perfection, and imitation of nature. Art is not only imitation but also the use of mathematical ideas and symmetry in the search for the perfect, the timeless, and contrasting being with becoming. Nature is full of change, decay, and cycles, but art can also search for what is everlasting and the first causes of natural phenomena.

Through memory, when the artist imitates the world and represents it through mimesis, not only the object of art but also human meaning surfaces. If we can draw meaning from art, the re-presentation of the world, we can draw more meaning out of the world, including human beings themselves. Art facilitates this process. Memory is essential for it. Mimesis is the process of discerning this meaning. Then we shall be open to the muses in our own lives.

Some of the articles in this issue deal with these themes of memory, Muses, mimesis and meaning. May our memories and history enable us to imitate our great heroes and make meaning as a community of human beings.

The Editor

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The Touch of a Text: Promoting Healing and Compassion

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Abstract: Touch, being our primary access to the world, is paradoxically least explored. Here I am not aiming to fill in this gap but wish to explore how text whether holy text or a secular one can touch us to the core of our being. To do this task I make a humble attempt to explore the phenomena of touch and its role in the gospel of St. Luke. Luke to me is a gospel of touch. The author takes three Lukan narratives: the restoration of the widow's son 7:11–17; the parable of the Good Samaritan 10:25–37; the parable of the Prodigal Son 15:11–32) to consider the question that might give us an insight how a text not just speaks to us but touches us and leaves us speechless. Besides the text that expresses physical touch as healing, we also have Lukan texts where one is touched to the depths of one's being and moved to compassionate action. The author discerns in each of the three texts a sense/ kind of seeing that triggers compassion that draws the chief person in the text to an act of

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compassion. The seeing that moves a person to the action of compassion is not just physical seeing.

Keywords: Touch, Hēpsamēn, Touch of compassion, Silence speaking compassion.

WE MAY NOT KNOW that Aristotle was a philosopher of touch. To him, touch was the primary sense. It appears that he got the right sense of touch. Touch is indeed inescapable. We are always in touch with the earth with our feet and with the air with our skin, with the light with our eyes and sound waves with our ears and water with our tongue. Touch gave us contact with the world of the primary elements of the ancient philosophers. We in India called these primary elements as *panchamahabhutas* (the five basic elements namely, earth, water, fire, air and vacuum (ether). Touch being our primary access to the world is paradoxically least explored. Here I am not aiming to fill in this gap but wish to explore how text whether holy text or a secular one can touch us to the core of our being. To do this task I make a humble attempt to explore the phenomena of touch (Gunn, 1974). and its role in the gospel of St. Luke. Luke to me is a gospel of touch. I take three Lukan narratives: the restoration of the widow's son 7:11–17; the parable of the Good Samaritan 10:25–37; the parable of the Prodigal Son 15:11–32) to consider the question that might give us an insight how a text not just speaks to us but touches us and leaves us speechless.

There is unlikely to be any single theoretical perspective that proves the only meaning of what is human consciousness but it has evolution in it understanding and has a lot of different meanings and theories which give understanding.

The Compassionate Touch

We can notice a touch of compassionate responsiveness in these narratives. Contemporary thinking of touch does not just deal with flesh to flesh, flesh to stone or flesh to soil touch but also includes how we are touched by a text. Luke is indeed an explorer of touch of the text. He speaks about it, for instance, when he writes about the hearing of scriptures that cause the hearers hearts to 'burn' (24:32). Texts do touch us in several ways and it would be interesting to explore the tact of any text to touch us. This means texts are inscriptions and act like exscription when they touch us. Thinking with Derrida's *Grammatology* (Derrida, 2016) we can think of the touch effect of texts as forms of writing. Texts when they touch us do something (affect) to us. following Derrida, we can think that they 'write into us'. Writing is a dynamic image that can stand for the form of communication of the text. Through a form of 'writing, they ex-scribe into us the world evoked by the text. In fact, texts have a way of writing the world they evoke/ provoke into us.

The word sense is multiple in its meaning. The sense in this sense is touching all our senses. Besides we have common sense, aesthetic sense, moral sense, semantic sense and intellectual sense. We come to sense even nonsense through these shades of senses. Derrida does see a link between the language of sense and the language of touch. Thus, we are physically, emotionally, aesthetically, spiritually as well as intellectually touched. Within

We can think of the touch effect of texts as forms of writing. Texts when they touch us do something (affect) to us. following Derrida, we can think that they 'write into us'. Writing is a dynamic image that can stand for the form of communication of the text.

these touching, we have a narrative touch and even a touch of a voice. Touch is the way we as beings towards each other and the world exist (Leonard, 2014).

Touch mediates our being towards the human community as well as our being towards the earth community (other than the human world). We have a sense of touch in the touching experiences that we receive as well as give. We not only touch the human and the earth community of beings but we are also touched by other humans and the earth community of beings. Hence the ability of the word, especially the scriptures to touch us comes within this range of being touched by other humans as well as things and beings of the earth, the universe and the divine. Receiving touch can be seen as text, texting or ex-scripting/ writing into us. Maybe this will enable us to understand the dynamism in which we make sense of all forms of touchings that we receive. In this sense, even a text in the book/ holy book can materially affect us. Because there is temporal as well as the cultural distance between the text and its receivers, each of us is touched by a text differently.

Touch can be gentle, soothing or violent, abusive or healing and therapeutic. In Greek, the verb *hēpsamēn* means to touch or take hold of. Thus, it can refer to touch as a means of conveying a blessing', but also as bringing harm or injury. Luke being a gospel of touch uses *hēpsamēn* in several of his narrations. It is used of Jesus touching: a leper (5:13); a bier (7:14); children (18:15); the ear of the high priest's slave (22:50). We do not have a sense of violent touch in these episodes. Luke chooses other words to express violent touch such as to whip (mastigoō, 18:33); to beat (*derō*, 22:63), to strike (*paioō*, 22:64); to discipline or scourge (*paideuō*, 23:16, 22). But it appears that Luke has reserved *hēpsamēn* for a healing

touch as we have it in the narrations of the crowd (6:19), the woman who washes and anoints Jesus' feet (7:39) and the woman with the flow of blood (8:44–47).

Concluding Remarks

Besides the text that expresses physical touch as healing, we also have Lukan texts where one is touched to the depths of one's being and moved to compassionate action. These texts are important as they reveal how touch becomes an exscription and writes into the persons moving that person to acts of compassion and mercy. These narrations are vital because they can open us to the horizons or the way that the text burns our hearts (Luke's image of touch effect of texts). The three episodes that we had set aside to examine use the verb *splanchnizomai*, which means

In each case, we can notice a chief character in the narration being moved/being touched into acts of compassion which certainly involves physical touch. One can see in each of the three texts a sense/ kind of seeing that triggers compassion that draws the chief person in the text to an act of compassion.

to 'have compassion' or 'feel sympathy', literally 'to be moved in the gut'. The first incident is in the story of the restoration of the widow's son outside the town gate of Nain (7:11–17), the second in the parable of the Good Samaritan (10:25–37), the third in the parable of the Prodigal Son (15:11–31). In each case, we can notice a chief character in the narration being moved/being touched into acts of compassion which certainly involves physical touch. One can see in each of the three texts a sense/ kind of seeing that triggers compassion that draws the chief person in the text to an act of compassion. The seeing that moves a person to the action of compassion is not just physical seeing. Like the sense, touch, seeing is also multivalent and is

a language of its own. This is why we may say we are touched by a text (scriptural or secular) only when the text triggers/ ignites a seeing in us. The seeing that is emanating from the text burns our hearts in the Lukan sense and we are moved into a speechless/ wordless silence that speaks through acts of compassion.

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Freud on God and Religion as the Sublimation of Unconscious Mind

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Abstract: This article explores the ideas as well as convictions of Freud on God and religion. Freud propounded that God and religion originated as a result of the sublimation of unconscious mind. In Freud's view, religion originated as a result of the sublimation of unconscious mind filled with guilt and remorse, and the notion of God has its source in the sublimation of the father figure who is the source of protection in the face of danger. He related religious practices to obsessional neurosis. Refutation of Freud's views from the field of psychology points to the relevance of belief in God and practice of religion for a healthy society.

Keywords: Sigmund Freud, Religion, Sublimation of Unconscious Mind, God as Father-figure

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GOD AND RELIGION have been the talk of almost all the disciplines in philosophy for centuries. Psychology is one of the disciplines which explains God and religion in its own way using its methods. In their understanding of God and religion, the psychologists differ from one another. Their explanations of God and religion mostly depend on their background, experience, experimentations and observations. The ideas of God and religion, as seen in psychology, are both subjective and objective. This article explores the understanding of God and religion as the sublimation of the unconscious mind, based on the works of Sigmund Freud. Freud has been well known for his innovative concepts that are most controversial and unaccepted, especially by the religions. His explanation of religion as neurosis and reduction of the human beings merely to an instinctual being has drawn very many criticisms from all disciplines of philosophy, especially from psychology itself.

Introducing Freud

Freud was born in Frieberg, Moravia in 1856, and later along with his family, he moved to Vienna, where he spent almost all of his life except his last two years which he spent in London till his death in 1939. Freud was a physiologist, medical doctor, psychologist and psychoanalyst, and is considered the Father of Psychoanalysis.

Freud is regarded as the most influential and authoritative thinkers of the twentieth century. His explanation of ideas involving the human psyche attracted all walks of disciplines, especially psychology. He is best known for the elaboration of the theory that the mind is a complex energy system. He articulated and refined concepts like infantile sexuality, unconscious, repression, and proposed a three-tier account of the mind's structure – Id, Ego, and Superego.

These tools he used to understand human psychological development and the treatment of abnormal mental conditions (Kaipan, 2014).

Defining Sublimation

The word ‘sublimation’ means “to change forms” or “to improve and raise to a higher status” (Thomas, 2020). In psychology, sublimation is defined as the ‘drastic transformation of unwanted and harmful impulses into something less harmful and acceptable.’ It is the method of transforming destructive energies into constructive energies that are more productive, creative and socially acceptable (Changing Minds, n.d.).

The word sublimation’ means “to change forms” or “to improve and raise to a higher status”. In psychology, sublimation is defined as ‘drastic transformation of unwanted and harmful impulses into something less harmful and acceptable.’

According to Freudian understanding, sublimation is the diversion of instinctual drives, usually sexual ones, into non-instinctual channels, in pursuit of more acceptable and socially valuable achievements. For Freud, this impulsive energy is the result of the unconscious desires of the id, particularly sexual impulses (Encyclopedia Britanica, 2020). Freud termed and defined sublimation as one of the mature defence mechanisms. This defence mechanism protects the ego from the id’s unconscious impulses and transforms them into socially acceptable behaviours.

Sublimation of Unconscious Mind

When we explore Freud’s idea of religion and God, we cannot ignore the philosophical backgrounds of religion and God, from where Freud draws his ideas and inspirations. Generally speaking, Freud was influenced by many philosophers,

especially by Feuerbach who said that religious belief is a product of anthropomorphic projectionism and the concept of God is an anthropomorphic projection of the human mind. According to Feuerbach, man is the beginning the centre and the end of religion. And God is the unconscious creation of man in his own image and likeness (Alan, 2010).

Freud, in a similar way, chose the path of anti-religion/God, rejecting them as unscientific and irrational. He pointed out that “religion is the projection of the father with his prohibitions and commands into cosmic dimensions” (Kaipan, 2014). And he was convinced that religion was a neurotic symptom, an illusion far removed from a healthy, mature understanding of reality. For him, religion is one of the means to avoid individual neurosis, where the person finds security of childhood in adulthood (Heije, 1976).

According to Freud, the primitive, egoistic, destructive energies are part of human beings. For we human beings naturally covet for things, want to harm others, to give way to despair or to have sex in every taboo and damaging ways; we want to enjoy life without doing any work etc. To overcome these urges human beings used the defence mechanism called ‘Sublimation’. According to Freud the sublimations “emerge at the cost of the infantile sexual impulses” (Freud, 2011).

Origin of Religion

Freud considered God and religion as the sublimation of the unconscious mind. In his book *Totem and Taboo*, he explains that religion arose from the consciousness of guilt and remorse, initially in the form of totemism. Totemism is therefore perceived by Freud as a kind of way to calm the conflicting emotions of man and to make amends for the committed criminal offence to later obedience to his chosen deputy of his father - totem. Freud claims that totemism

exists only to prevent incestuous relations (Baitenova & Demeuova, 2015).

Freud asserted that in a similar way the modern monotheistic religions came into existence. For instance, for Freud, the origin of religions, Judaism and Christianity, was the consequence of the unconscious sense of guilt and remorse for murdering Moses and Jesus respectively (Jones, 1957). God and religion, therefore, came into existence as the sublimation of the unconscious mind which is filled with guilt and remorse. Freud says that since modern societies are now much advanced, where science has the upper hand in the best explanation of reality, we do not need such a system. For Freud, there is no proof of God's existence. Therefore, God is the fairy tales of religion and religion is a mere illusion, (Coles, 2013) "derived from human wishes" (Freud, 2011), that impels people to hold a religious belief. Therefore, there is no good reason at all to accept religion.

Freud asserted that in a similar way the modern monotheistic religions came into existence. For instance, for Freud, the origin of religions, Judaism and Christianity, were consequence of the unconscious sense of guilt and remorse for murdering Moses and Jesus respectively.

Another account of the origin of religion given by Freud in his work "*The Future of an Illusion*", states that "Religion has its origin in man's helplessness in confronting the forces of nature outside and the instinctive forces within himself. Religion arises at an early stage of human development when man cannot yet use his reason to deal with these outer and inner forces and must repress them or manage them with the help of other affective forces" (Fromm, 1950). Being confronted with danger arising from uncontrollable and non-understandable forces from outside world, from within and fellow human beings, humans

seek protection from unknown reality that is superior in power and can protect them. Hence comes the object of worship, the need of the father, i.e., God (Baitenova & Demeuova, 2015).

God as Father Figure

Freud considers the idea of religion as springing from infantile complexes and expounds on the idea that the individual psychological image of God in monotheistic religions is formed based on the image of one's power, a benevolent father figure that provides protection against the threat of destruction. He says, "Psycho-analysis has made us familiar with the intimate connection between the father-complex and belief in God; it has shown us that a personal God is, psychologically, nothing other than an exalted father.....Thus, we recognize that the roots of the need for religion are in the parental complex" (Freud, 2011). For Freud, God is an exalted father on whom we see the almighty, just and kindly nature, which is nothing but grand sublimations of father and mother (Freud, 2011). Further, the religious ideas are neither reasonable nor based on experience but ancestral need to overcome the fear of an ever-threatening nature. They are illusions, fulfilments of the oldest, strongest and most urgent wishes of humankind, and obstruction of the individual's development toward full and responsible maturity, a maturity which could be arrived at only by means of science, which as Freud says, is the only way of arriving at the true knowledge of reality (Heije, 1976).

Obsessive Actions in Religious Practices

In his work, *Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices*, Freud states that the essence and origin of religion are related to the obsessional neurosis, which is the unconscious impulse of the man. Performing rites and rituals, following the strict dogmas, worshipping etc. are obsessional and this is the sublimation of obsessive-compulsive disorder in the form of religion. Freud describes neurosis as an individual religiosity and religion as a universal obsessional neurosis (Freud, 2011). Thus, in the psychological interpretation of Freud, religion acts as a protective measure of a person against his/her unconscious drives. Religious beliefs provide an allegorical form of satisfaction so that the individual intrapsychic conflicts

between conscious and unconscious lose their sharpness (Baitenova & Demeuova, 2015).

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Concluding Remarks

Freud outrightly rejected the metaphysical understanding of reality by providing the methodology of self-understanding for people living in the rationalized world. He made reason as the sole instrument for the development of the human psyche, rejecting the mystical and spiritual aspect of the human psyche,

which is very much part of human life. And this rejection meant the rejection of an important dimension of human existence.

The worldview of Freud on God and religion is criticized by many. Carl Jung, who was the student of Freud himself, was one of the earlier critics of Freud's explanation of religion as infantile complex and illusion. Jung recognizes the value of religion as a spiritual fact (Gemelli, 1955). Jung refused to consider religion as a simple product of sublimation. He, through his psychological interpretation, affirmed that Freud in his theory of sublimation had misunderstood the psychological value of religion (Gemelli, 1955).

Jung believed that religion was in fact very beneficial to society and should stay forever; he saw religion as the natural expression of the collective unconscious that leads to the realization of who we are (DK, 2018). For Freud, religion may be an illusion and danger to the human being, but Jung values the contribution of religion to the formation of

Jung believed that religion was in fact very beneficial to society and should stay forever; he saw religion as natural expression of the collective unconscious that leads to realization of who we are

Western culture with respect to intellectual values as well as moral values (Gemelli, 1955), which are the very foundation of human existence in this world.

Regarding the relationship between God and man, Jung asserts that it is not instinctual or infantile complex. Moreover, he affirms that the doctrine of the existence of God and that of the God-Man contains a core of psychological truth, and this truth is nothing else but the tendency of humankind to go beyond the instinctual stage

of the unconscious. The religious symbols and mythologies are psychologically true because they serve as the bridge which has carried humankind to its conquests (Gemelli, 1955).

Freud considered religious rituals and practices as obsessional. Refuting this point, Erick Fromm in his book *Psychoanalysis and Religion* states that religious rituals are by no means always irrational, they are the meaningful and rational expression of inner cleansing without any obsessional or irrational component, as a symbolic expression for inner purity (Fromm, 1950). The rituals and practices are symbolic expressions of our thoughts and feelings through actions. So, in no way Freud's view of religion as an obsessional neurosis institution could be approved.

Today, if we look at the reality of the world around us it is not religion and God that cause destruction to the society, but the deification of the state and power in authoritarian countries and the deification of the machine and of success in our own culture which threatens the most precious spiritual possessions of humanity (Fromm, 1950). Today, human existence is not so much threatened by religions, but it is the deification of the state power and technology, which overrides the reality of ethics, aesthetics, religion, and God on which the foundation of human existence lies.

Though Freud's idea of God and religion as the sublimation of the unconscious mind has been criticised by many, it has challenged the human mind to move beyond simplistic notions of God and religion. It has changed our thinking pattern and made us rethink the relevance of some of the religious beliefs and progress towards a more profound understanding of God and religion.

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Platonic and Aristotelian Views on Body-Soul Relationship: A Comparative Approach

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Abstract: This article deals with the relationship between body and soul according to Aristotle and Plato. The body-soul relationship presented in Plato's *Phaedo* and appears in Aristotle's thesis *On the Soul* and is unequivocally criticized by both. Plato's, epistemological and ethical arguments ascertain the dualistic nature of soul and body. Aristotle insisted that the human being is consists of body and soul and that the soul is inseparable from the body. The two intangible approaches to the mind-body problem by Plato and Aristotle have been established throughout history. Plato observes human (matter) as split into two or more divisions, while Aristotle perceives the human as a basic unity. Both Plato and Aristotle excellently contend that the soul and body are two different kinds of entities. They also see that the materialistic body and immaterial soul and are able to act and be acted upon because there is a communality between the

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soul and body. Our purpose here is to address the different aspects of the philosophy of mind and matter of Plato and Aristotle. We also discuss the active and passive capabilities of the soul and body according to Plato and Aristotle. This article shows that Plato almost agrees with the relational feature of mind and matter as active and passive. But Aristotle attempted to fine-tune the mind-matter issue with a ‘middle-path psychological theory,’ the two extremes of ‘crude materialism,’ and a ‘pure immaterialism.’

Keywords: Body-Soul Relationship, Plato, Aristotle, Crude Materialism, Pure Immaterialism.

Introduction

THE BODY-SOUL relationship presented in Plato’s *Phaedo* and in Aristotle’s thesis *On the Soul* is unequivocally criticized by both. Plato’s, epistemological and ethical arguments ascertain the dualistic nature of soul and body. Aristotle insisted that the human being consists of body and soul and that the soul is inseparable from the body. The two intangible approaches to the mind-body problem by Plato and Aristotle have been established throughout history. Plato observes human (matter) as split into two or more divisions, while Aristotle perceives the human as a basic unity. Both Plato and Aristotle excellently contend that the soul

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and body are two different kinds of entities. They also see that the materialistic body and immaterial soul and are able to act and acted upon because there is a communality between the soul

and body. Our purpose here is to address the different aspects of the philosophy of mind and matter of Plato and Aristotle. We also discuss the active and passive capabilities of the soul and body according to Plato and Aristotle.

The Dualistic Approach of Plato

The dualistic claims of Plato are based mainly on two arguments: metaphysical or epistemological and ethical. Platonic dualism is supposed to be the coexistence of two different levels – physical reality and a metaphysical realm, one of which is invariably compromised. According to Plato, the metaphysical dimension is superior; this is to the impairment of the body, of earthly life, of relational ethics, and politics.

One of the most vital Platonic passages dealing with this philosophical interpretation is the famous parenthesis in the *Theaetetus*. According to Plato the aim of human life is grasped to accord with man's integration to God: ¹

And therefore we ought to try to escape from earth to the dwelling of the gods as quickly as we can; and to escape is to become like God, so far as this is possible; and to become like God is to become righteous and holy and wise. But, indeed, my good friend, it is not at all easy to persuade people that the reason generally advanced for the pursuit of virtue and the avoidance of vice – namely, in order that a man may not seem bad and may seem good – is not the reason why the one should be practised and the other not; that, I think, is merely old wives' chatter, as the saying is. Let us give the true reason. God is in no wise and in no manner unrighteous, but utterly and perfectly righteous,

and there is nothing so like him as that one of us who in turn becomes most nearly perfect in righteousness.

If there is an active–passive relation between the soul and body the soul, even in Plato’s works there is a certain co-dependence relation between them.

According to Plato, the soul (ψυχή) has more superiority than the body and it is separable from the body. It

implies that the soul is in an ethereal and purely spiritual condition and it can also exist on its own. There is a possibility that the soul may lead an improved life in ethereal form. The life of a bodiless soul or the ethereal soul is a form of life unknown to us but entirely different from the life in the world which we experience. This valuable property of the soul makes it ‘more treasured’ than the body.² Plato distinguishes the soul from the living body and he argues that the soul rules over the body. Socrates proposes the following interpretation of what the separation of body and soul (death) is:

Is it anything other than the separation of the soul from the body? And that being dead is this, the body’s having come to be apart, separated from the soul, itself by itself, and the soul’s having come to be apart, itself by itself, separated from the body? Can death be anything other than this?³

In *Phaedo* Plato organized his points of view regarding the state of the soul before, during and after its incarnation: the Cyclical Argument (69e6-72e1)⁴, the Recollection Argument (72e3-78b3)⁵, the Affinity Argument (78b4-84b4)⁶ and the Final Argument (102a10-107b10)⁷. In these urgings, Plato endeavours to establish the immortality of the soul. The Affinity

Argument has been regarded as Plato's weakest proof for the soul's immortality by some of his commentators.⁸

If there is an active-passive relation between the body and soul, even in Plato's works there is a certain co-dependence relation between them. It is asserted by Plato that there is no active without passive or passive without active.⁹

Plato identifies a variety of views about the soul in *Phaedo*. The first one is clearly a philosophical view about the soul, but the rest of them are more compatible with the general or customary view.¹⁰ These views are discussed below.

(1) The soul is the rational faculty.

The soul is responsible for our intellectual or cognitive functions. The soul, he claims, grasps the truth (65b9)¹¹; reasons (65c2-5)¹²; has knowledge of the forms (76c2-5)¹³; and has wisdom (76c12)¹⁴. It opposes the affections of the body like hunger and thirst (94b8-10)¹⁵ as well as its passions and fears (94d5)¹⁶.

(2) The soul is the person.

The soul, both personified and spiritual has the same character (81e2-82b2)¹⁷.

(3) The soul is the subject of conscious states.

Plato describes the embodied soul can get confused (66a5-6)¹⁸; has wanted, desires and fears (66c2-3, 83b5-7)¹⁹; can become confused and dizzy (79c7-8)²⁰; and can suffer pain and pleasure (83b5-7; 83c5-6)²¹. The soul is the seat of conscious states both in a living human being and in an ethereal soul. According to Plato, the soul has very little difference between the soul in person and incorporeal life.

(4) The soul is the cause of life.

Plato treats the soul as the 'animating agent'²² of the body it inhabits. This plays a prominent role in the Final Argument for the immortality of the soul (102a10-

107b10)²³. In the course of the Cyclical Argument (69e6-72e1)²⁴, Plato seems to attribute souls to human beings as well as plants and animals (70d4-e4)²⁵.

(5) *The soul is (or can be) spatially extended.*

Plato describes the soul as spatially dispersed throughout the body and can be haggard and collected together (80d8-84b8).²⁶

Hence, for Plato, the possibility of separation between the soul and body constitutes both the basis for future eternal life and the most operative and explicative model to understand and standardize the life of man in his present condition of the body. When we look at each claim Plato makes, the soul has four properties which it shares with the forms: (i) When soul and body are present in the same thing, nature ‘orders’ (ἡ φύσις προστάττει)²⁷ the latter to be ruled and to be a slave (τῷ μὲν δουλεύειν καὶ ἄρχεσθαι).²⁸ (ii) The soul, in being intangible, is unchanging,²⁹ invisible³⁰ and divine³¹ and the body is mortal.

For Plato the possibility of separation between the soul and body constitutes both the basis for a future eternal life, and the most operative and explicative model to understand and standardize the life of man in his present condition of the body.

In accordance with Plato, illogical wants are related to the body, not to the soul³², and the body is avowed to be interference for attaining truth and wisdom; it is nothing but a source of confusion and real evil.³³ Since the body needs nurturing, it fills us with erotic desires, appetites, fears, fantasies, the pleasures of food and drink,³⁴ sex,³⁵ fine clothes,³⁶ shoes or other bodily adornments.³⁷ Therefore body acts as an irritating element because it averts us from having wisdom (φρονῆσαι) and its appetites (ἐπιθυμῖαι).³⁸ Plato has put this point rather fervently,

asking whether the body helps or hampers the soul's attempts to gain wisdom:

Do sight and hearing offer any truth to people or, as the poets are always saying these sorts of things that we neither hear nor see anything accurately? And yet if these among the bodily sense are neither accurate nor clear, the others can hardly be; for they are somehow worse than these.³⁹

The soul suffers from both the proficiency and sequence of opposites. Plato responds to the retaining of the same state by the soul in this way:

When the soul investigates by itself, it passes into the realm of what is pure, always existing, immortal and unchanging and on account of its kinship with it, always stays with it, whenever it comes to be itself by itself and is able to do so; it ceases from its wandering and always stays in the same state on account of its laying hold of things of the same kind and this condition of it is called 'wisdom.'⁴⁰

The Integral Approach of Aristotle

According to Aristotle, the soul (form) and the body (matter) are intimate, inseparable and reciprocally interdependent constituents of the living compound. It is difficult to speak about the soul as a "material (or embodied) form", or about the body as an "informed (or animated) substrate." Aristotle articulated two concepts of the soul using the methods of division and induction and

they are complementary to each other. In the first notion, the soul is defined as “substance in the sense of being the form and the first actuality of a natural body potentially possessing life; and such will be any body which possesses organ.”⁴¹ The principle and first cause of the faculties of the living is given as, “whereby we live and perceive and think in the primary sense”⁴².

According to Aristotle the soul is not blended with the body and is not a body. It is always ‘located’ in a body and exists through a body.

According to Aristotle the soul is not blended with the body⁴³ and is not a body. It is always ‘located’ in a body and exists through a body (de An. 403a16–19, 414a19–20). Aristotle challenges Plato’s ‘substance dualism’, according to which the soul exists independently of the body (Pl. Phd. 78c-79b). Aristotle also believes like Plato that body and soul are different entities. But he argues that the soul cannot advance in its vital functions autonomously of the body.⁴⁴

Plato splits the ever-moving phenomenal world from the true and everlasting ideal truth. But Aristotle proposes that the ideal (essence) was found “inside” the phenomena, the universals “inside” the particulars. Aristotle’s views on the body and the soul are briefly described in the passage:

Substances are, by general consent, [taken to include] bodies and especially natural bodies; for they are the principles of all other bodies. Of natural bodies some have life in them, others not; by life we mean self-nutrition and growth (with its correlative decay). It follows that every natural body which has life in it is a substance in the sense of a composite. But since it is also a body of such and such a kind, viz. having life,

the body cannot be soul; the body is the subject, or matter, not what is attributed to it. Hence the soul must be a substance in the sense of the form of a natural body having life potentially within it. But form is actuality, and thus soul is the actuality of a body as above characterized.⁴⁵

There are several definitions of the soul by Aristotle (or different interpretations of Aristotle's definition of the soul) that are found inconsistent with each other by some scholars. The ambiguity in different definitions can be explained as follows:

The divergences between the definitions arise not from an incoherent notion of soul, but from ambiguity in Aristotle's use of the Greek word for 'body'. Sometimes the word means the living compound substance: in that sense, the soul is the form of a body that is alive, a self-moving body. Sometimes the word means the appropriate kind of matter to be informed by a soul: in that sense, the soul is the form of a body that potentially has life. The soul is the form of an organic body, a body that has organs, that is to say parts which have specific functions, such as the mouths of mammals and the roots of trees.⁴⁶

The affections of the soul listed are passions (*pathe* in the strict sense of the word, or *pathemata*), such as anger and fear,⁴⁷ and all the characteristic activities ("any function or affection") of the soul as perceiving and thinking.⁴⁸ He attributes some of the affections exclusively to the soul and not to the body which may influence the very explanation of the soul.⁴⁹ However, "it is evident" (*phainetai*) that most of them involve the body.⁵⁰ The sub-class of affections of

the soul “anger, gentleness, fear, pity, courage and joy, as well as loving and hating”⁵¹ are “associated with the body.”⁵² Experiments show that they comprise “simultaneously” (*hama*) body and soul, “for when they appear the body is also affected.”⁵³

There is good evidence for this. Sometimes no irritation or fear is expressed, though the provocations are strong and obvious; and conversely, small and obscure causes produce movement, when the body is disposed to anger, and when it is in angry mood. And here is a still more obvious proof. There are times when men show all the symptoms of fear without any cause of fear being present.⁵⁴

Aristotle describes perception (*to aisthanesthai*) as the exercise that involves the sense organs. In this exercise, the discernment of sensory variances is created by the contact of the sensible object with the sense organ through a medium and the sense organ receives the sensible qualities “without the matter.”⁵⁵ The perceiving is described as a process that is fundamentally focused on the understanding of an end, that is, as a “completion” (*teleiosis*).

According to Aristotle *phantasia* acts as a “bridge” between sensory knowledge and the activity of thought. Malcom Schofield started a heated debate regarding the exact definition of the notion of *phantasia* according to Aristotle.⁵⁶ The schematic definition of the term *phantasia* is: “that by virtue of which x appears or presents itself to y as z” where x is the object of a perception and it is qualified as “post-perceptive” (“imagination”, y the perceiving subject, and z the mental picture.⁵⁷ So also *phantasia* “seems to be a certain movement (*kinesistis*).”⁵⁸ According to Aristotle, it is “the movement produced by the perception in act.”⁵⁹ The sensory impressions

are fixed in mental pictures only after they have been transmitted to the “central sensorium” (the heart) and there, they leave a kind of “imprint” or “likeness” (*typos*).⁶⁰

In the third book of *De Anima*, Aristotle explained that the activity of thought that is not possible without imagination.⁶¹ Aristotle used the analogy of painting to explain the connection between the mental picture reflected “in itself” and the mental picture reflected “in relation to something else” which is a “portrait” (*eikon*).⁶²

In so far as we consider it in itself, it is an object of contemplation (*theorema*) or a mental picture (*phantasma*), but in so far as we consider it in relation to something else, e.g., as a likeness (*eikon*), it is also an aid to memory (*mne-moneuma*). Hence when the stimulus of it is operative, if the soul perceives the impression as independent, it appears to occur as a thought (*noema*), or a mental picture.⁶³

Mental pictures can be endangered to a succeeding noetic process that leads to the development of perceptions:

We have already dealt with imagination in the treatise *On the Soul*. It is impossible even to think without a mental picture. The same affection is involved in thinking as in drawing a diagram; for in this case although we make no use of the fact that the magnitude of a triangle is a finite quantity, yet we draw it as having a finite magnitude. In the same way, the man who is thinking, though he may not be thinking of a finite magnitude, still puts a finite magnitude before his eyes, though he does not think of it as such. And even if the nature of the object is quantitative but indeterminate, he still puts

before him a finite magnitude, although he thinks of it as merely quantitative.⁶⁴

Thus, we come to the conclusive thesis of the compulsory participation of mental pictures in the activity of thought:

Since apparently nothing has a separate existence, except sensible magnitudes, the objects of thought—both the so-called abstractions of mathematics and all states (*hexeis*) and affections (*pathe*) of sensible things—reside in the sensible forms. And for this reason (...) no one could ever learn or understand anything without the exercise of perception (...).⁶⁵

Subsequently, it would be unbearable either “to learn” or “to understand” anything without perception,⁶⁶ which is the basis of imagination and, therefore, of thought.⁶⁷

The Convergences and Differences

Plato believes in a different entity of soul which is completely different from the materialistic world. He proposes the cave analogy to elucidate his theory of dualism. According to him there are two distinct realms, the realm of the forms and its reflection, physical realm. He assumes that the reason for the commonality between body and soul is that they have both passive and active capacities. The soul is more valuable, because of the active property of the soul. Plato believed that after the death of bodies, the soul goes to the realm of the forms to gain wisdom. According to him, the body is constantly changing while the soul is immortal and unchanging.

As a materialist, Aristotle holds a different view of the body and the soul. According to him body and soul are interconnected and they cannot be separated. The soul is manifested by conscious bodies of appropriate structure and provides abilities to the body. According to Aristotle, there are different kinds of souls depending on the specific case of corporeal bodies, i. e., plants, nonhuman animals and human beings. He clarifies that the soul is

As a materialist, Aristotle holds a different view on the body and the soul. According to him body and soul are interconnected and they cannot be separated. The soul is manifested by conscious bodies of appropriate structure and provides abilities to the body.

located and exists through a body and not blended with the body. Aristotle emphasizes the primacy of the soul and the co-dependence between soul and body. It is clear that Aristotle does not ratify substance interactionism, the causal powers of the soul over the body. Even though Aristotle and Plato believe that the body and soul are different in all aspects, Aristotle refutes the independent vital powers of the soul. The theoretical root for the difference is that for Plato, the soul is separable from the body whereas, for Aristotle, it is a form or act of the living organism.

Conclusion

This paper discussed the feature of the soul and body detailed by the two philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. Their teachings on the nature of soul and body are profoundly distinct. They explain the functional behaviour of the soul that acts upon the body, the body's capacity to receive the

soul's action, and vice versa. Plato almost agrees with the relational feature of mind and matter as active and passive. But Aristotle attempted to fine-tune the mind-matter issue with a 'middle-path psychological theory,' the two extremes of 'crude materialism,' on the one hand (the atomists), and a 'pure immaterialism' (Plato), on the other.⁶⁸

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Notes

- ¹B. Jowett (1976) The dialogues of Plato translated into English with analyses and introductions. Plato, *Theaetetus* (**Plat. Theaet.**) 176a8-c2
- ² B. Jowett (1976) The dialogues of Plato translated into English with analyses and introductions. (Plato, *Alcibiades*) Plat. Alc. I 129e-130c; D. Gallop(1975), Plato. *Phaedo*. Translation with Notes, Oxford: Oxford University Press (Plat. Phd.) 79e8-80a6.
- ³ Plat. Phd. 64c4-8
- ⁴ Ibid. 69e6-72e1. As a proof that the soul persists after death, Socrates offers a cyclical argument. He draws inspiration from the Greek myth that as the bowels of Hades are filled with the souls of the dead, so too is the land of the living repopulated from Hades.
- ⁵ Ibid. 72e3-78b3. Theory of Recollection, asserts that learning is essentially an act of recollecting things we knew before we were born but then forgot.
- ⁶ Ibid. 78b4-84b4. The Affinity Argument explains that invisible, immortal, and incorporeal things are different from visible, mortal, and corporeal things. Our soul is of the former, while our body is of the latter, so when our bodies die and decay, our soul will continue to live.
- ⁷ Ibid. 102a10-107b10. Plato claims that only by being free from the body can the soul attain desirable knowledge. His argument that the soul exists before and after death and argues the theory of forms, the existence of forms and our knowledge.
- ⁸ Bluck, R.S. 1957. claims that only the Final Argument is convincing. Hackforth, R. 1955. offers only a lame endorsement of the argument—"we cannot simply wipe it out as otiose and valueless." Gallop, David. 1975. Dorter, Kenneth. 1972. who takes the argument as logically flawed, but persuasive
- ⁹ B. Jowett (1976) The dialogues of Plato translated into English with analyses and introductions. (Plato *Timaeus*) Plat. Tht. 157a5–6
- ¹⁰ Gallop 1975
- ¹¹ Plat. Phd. 65b9
- ¹² Ibid. 65c2-5
- ¹³ Ibid. 76c2-5
- ¹⁴ Ibid. 76c12

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- ¹⁵ Ibid. 94b8-10
- ¹⁶ Ibid. 94d5, Plat Rep. 4.435a-441b
- ¹⁷ Ibid. 81e2-82b2
- ¹⁸ Ibid. 66a5-6
- ¹⁹ Ibid. 66c2-3, 83b5-7
- ²⁰ Ibid. 79c7-8
- ²¹ Ibid. 83b5-7; 83c5-6
- ²² Borrowing the terminology of Bostock 1975.
- ²³ Ibid. 102a10-107b10
- ²⁴ Ibid. 69e6-72e1
- ²⁵ Ibid. 70d4-e4 Plat. Tim. 30c, 90c
- ²⁶ Ibid. 80d8-84b8 see also Rowe 1993, and Bostock 1986.
- ²⁷ Plat. Phd. 80a1
- ²⁸ Ibid. 78b4-79c4
- ²⁹ Ibid. 78c6-78e6; 79c2-79e8
- ³⁰ Ibid. 79a1-79c1
- ³¹ Ibid. 79e8-80a9
- ³² Ibid. 66b-d
- ³³ Ibid. 66a5-b6
- ³⁴ Ibid. 64d2-5
- ³⁵ Ibid. 64d6-7
- ³⁶ Ibid. 64d9-10
- ³⁷ Ibid. 64d10
- ³⁸ Ibid. Phd. 66b8-c7
- ³⁹ Ibid. 65b1-6
- ⁴⁰ Ibid. 79d1-7
- ⁴¹ De An. II 1, 412a19-b6. English transl. by W.S. Hett, in Hett (2000).
- ⁴² Ibid., 2, 414a12-13.
- ⁴³ See de An. 407b1-5, 429a24-25; cf. also Sens. 440b1-25, where it is also clear that mixture is among bodies.
- ⁴⁴ The problem that the soul can continue exerting its powers when separated from the body is envisaged by Plato as well; see especially Phd. 77c1-5.
- ⁴⁵ Brian Beakley and Peter Ludlow, eds., *The Philosophy of Mind: Classical Problems, Contemporary Issues*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, p.23.
- ⁴⁶ A Kenny, *Ancient Philosophy: A New History of Western Philosophy*, Volume 1, Oxford University Press, London (2006), p.242.
- ⁴⁷ Arist. de An. I 1, 403a5-8, 16-18. Aristotle's list of passions includes (but is not limited to) "desire, anger, fear, boldness, envy, joy, love, hate, lust, jealousy, pity and in general everything that is followed by pleasure and pain" (EN II 4, 1105b20-23; see also de An. I 1, 403a17-18; EE II 2, 1220b12-14; Rhet. II 1, 1378a20-23).
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- ⁴⁸ Cp. *ibid.*, 403a5-8; 4, 408b25-27; 5, 409b14-16; 5, 411a26-b5; III 3, 427b16-18; *Sens.* (On Sense and the Sensible)1, 436a6-10.
- ⁴⁹ Cp. *ibid.*, 403a3-5.
- ⁵⁰ Cp. *ibid.*, 403a5-7.
- ⁵¹ Cp. *ibid.*, 403a3-4., see *ibid.* III 10, 433b20; *Sens.* 1, 436a7-10; b2-3; *Mem.* 2, 453b11-14; PA I 3, 643a35- 36
- ⁵² see *ibid.* III 10, 433b20; *Sens.* 1, 436a7-10; b2-3; *Mem.*(*De memoria et reminiscentia*) 2, 453b11-14; PA I 3, 643a35- 36, *Ibid.*, 403a17-18.
- ⁵³ Cp. *ibid.*, 403a16-17., 403a18-19.
- ⁵⁴ *Arist. de An.* I 1, 403a19-24.
- ⁵⁵ As for the reception “without the matter” (anew tes hyles) of sensible forms or qualities, see *Arist. de An.* II 12, 424a17-19; a32-b3; III 2, 425b23-24; 4, 429a13-18; 12, 434a27-30; 13,435a21-24.
- ⁵⁶ Schofield (1978) For a reconstruction of the debate, see Astolfi (2011: 15–29).
- ⁵⁷ Mingucci (2015)
- ⁵⁸ *Arist. de An.* III 3, 428b11.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 429a1-2. See also *ibid.*, 428b13-14; *Mem.* 1, 450a27-29; *Insomn.* 1, 459a17-18.
- ⁶⁰ *Arist. Sens.* 2, 439a1-2; *Somn. Vig.* 2, 455b34-456a6; *Juv.* 3,469a5- 23; 4, 469a23-27; b3-6; PA II 1, 647a24-33; 10, 656a27-29; III 3, 665a10-13; 4, 666a11-b1; IV 5, 678b2-4; MA 9, 702b20-21; 11, 703b23-24.
- ⁶¹ Cp. *ibid.*, III 7, 431a16-17; 431b2; 8, 432a8-9. See also *Mem.* 1, 449b31-450a1.
- ⁶² Cp. *de An.* 8, 432a12-14.
- ⁶³ *Arist. Mem.* 1, 450b25-29
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 1, 449b30-450a7.
- ⁶⁵ Ross, D. (1961). *Aristotle. De anima*, Edited with Introduction and Commentary. Oxford. Oxford University Press. *Arist. de An.* III 8, 432a3-9.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.* III. 432a7-8;
- ⁶⁷ *Arist. An. Post.* I 18, 81a39-41.
- ⁶⁸ Boeri M.D. (2018)
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Ambedkar's Philosophy against Degradation of the Human Dignity

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Abstract: Ambedkar's philosophy on human dignity and his critique of the caste system and untouchability of Hindu religion has brought about a new life in the conscience of the downtrodden of the society as it gives them the motivation to assert one's right to dignity and social justice. Ambedkar questioned the fundamental degrading elements in Hindu society related to untouchability and the caste systems. Understanding the origin and the reasons for the continuation of such practices is vital to put an end to them and take a profound step to promote the universal brotherhood with the fellow human being.

Keywords: Human dignity, Defilement, Untouchability, *Manu Smriti*, Caste system, *Rig Veda*, Religion and caste.

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Introduction

THE CORE PROBLEM of untouchability and caste system in India has a degrading effect on the lives of people, especially the downtrodden masses. In the scenario, the so-called low caste people - as defined by Hinduism - have their rights manipulated and violated at will by the so-called upper caste people. The philosophy of Dr Ambedkar is a guiding force for the people who want to live their life with human dignity.

Life and Works of Ambedkar

Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, also popularly known as Babasaheb Ambedkar, was born in Madhya Pradesh to Ramji Sakpal and Bhimabai. His father was a Subedar in the Indian Army. Dr Ambedkar witnessed a harsh reality with the bitter stigma of caste discrimination because he belonged to the Hindu Mahar caste which was considered as

Humiliation and degradation haunted the childhood of Ambedkar. When he joined the army school, the teachers would segregate the students of upper and lower classes.

‘untouchable’ by the upper classes. Humiliation and degradation haunted the childhood of Ambedkar. When he joined the army school, the teachers would segregate the students of upper and lower classes (Cultural India, n.d.).

From among the lower caste, Ambedkar was the first to graduate high school and study BA in Economics and Politics from Bombay University. Later he studied at universities in the United States, Britain and Germany. He also became an active leader for the Dalits and wrote in several journals about them. Consequently, he obtained a special representative chair on their behalf in the legislative councils of the government and also became the head of the drafting committee of the Constitution of India. Dr B. R. Ambedkar died at his home in Delhi on 6

October 1956 (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2020). His important works are *Caste in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development*; *The Annihilation of Caste*; *The Untouchables and Who Were the Shudras*.

Ambedkar's Philosophy on Human Dignity

Ambedkar's political philosophy was influenced by some of the major political practices of that time, namely, left, conservative and radical which he transcended significantly and brought about a synthetic understanding in his philosophy. Some of the thinkers like John Dewey, Edwin R.A. Seligman and Edmund Burke inspired his way of thinking. The most basic theme of Ambedkar's ideology was theological and ethical where he researched the beliefs and metaphysical structures of Indian society. His political ideas are based on the theme of freedom, equality and brotherhood. At the same time, he was highly critical of Hindu authoritarianism and caste institutions and insisted that Hinduism is not a community (Dubey, 2020).

One of the most exceptional aspects of the intellectual life of Ambedkar was not the solution he proposed but the questions he raised. His questions dealt with the very core of the societal injustice within the systems and practices. The significance of Ambedkar was that he posed questions on the untouchability and the caste systems of the Hindus which nobody dared to speak about at that time (Lonkar, 2019).

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Untouchability and the Idea of Defilement

The fundamental question according to Ambedkar in his writing is *who are untouchables?* In explaining the origin of untouchability Ambedkar refers to Stanley Rice and says that there is a probability that the untouchables were outcasts, the survivors of the conquered people who were divided into castes which tend to coincide with their occupation like drum-beating, leather-working and other farm labouring classes working under landlords (Ambedkar, 1948).

According to Ambedkar the reason for the untouchability in India comes from the *Vedas*, specifically from the *Manu Smriti* which recognizes both physical defilement and also notional defilement. *Manu* treated birth, death and menstruation as a source of impurity. Among these, the defilement from death was regarded as having extensive implications, for death causes defilement not only to the family members and close relatives but also remote relatives, teacher, and also to those who touched the corpse. The idea of defilement in *Manu* is real and not merely notional as it also makes the food unacceptable if offered by the polluted person. However, *Manu* also prescribes the period of defilement which significantly varies from person to person. There is also a purification ceremony in *Manu Smriti* prescribed for the person tainted by three types of defilement, namely, from physical defilement; notional or psychological defilement and ethical defilement (Ambedkar, 1948).

But the interesting thing Ambedkar points out in the whole aspect of defilement or untouchability is that these cases of defilement and untouchability were present not only among Hindus but also in primitive and ancient societies. Hence, the concept of untouchability was common in the history of the ancient world but the idea of untouchability in Hinduism went far ahead of its notion of

The interesting thing Ambedkar points out in the whole aspect of defilement or untouchability is that these cases of defilement and untouchability were present not only among Hindus but also in primitive and ancient societies.

defilement, impurity and purification, for there came about another form of ‘untouchability in the Hindu system which was hereditary in nature. And this is the sole reason that untouchability in India still persists (Ambedkar, 1948).

Caste System

The caste system is one of the biggest problems in the country today. The growing consciousness of Hindu identity in the present time affirms the age-old practice of the caste system. Ambedkar vehemently opposed this practice which takes away the individual and collective dignity of human beings. However, the caste system has deeper implications in society.

A Religious Notion of the Caste

The history of the caste system in India is attributed to the religious theories of *Rig Veda*, an ancient Hindu Scripture that describes that the primal man or the *Purush* destroyed himself to create a human society also known as *varnas*, namely, the *Brahmins*, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaishyas* and the

Shudras. The caste system can also be defined as an endogamous and hereditary subdivision of any ethnic unit which occupies a position of higher or lower order in the society in comparison with other such subdivisions (Deshpande, 2010).

Ambedkar in his writing on the *Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development* highlights the fundamentals of the caste systems deeply rooted in the Indian society. He states that the problem of the caste system is very vast both theoretically and practically. The caste system can be said as a local problem but is capable of big mischief because as long as the caste system exists, Hindus will scarcely marry any outsiders. Caste consciousness is also a kind of institution that indicates tremendous consequence because if Hindus migrate to other regions Indian caste would become a world problem (Ambedkar, 1916).

Ambedkar's Definition of Caste

To understand the mechanism of the caste system Ambedkar analyses three definitions of Mr Sanart, Mr Nesfield and Dr Ketkar who have done extensive study on the caste systems respectively; First, Ambedkar draws the idea of pollution from Mr Sanart as a characteristic of caste in India. The notion of pollution as the core of the caste system is only because the high priestly class enjoys the highest rank in society. This also indicates that pollution in the caste system survives so far as it has the religious notion. Second, from the definition of Nesfield, Ambedkar points out that the caste system emerged from the notion of the exclusiveness of the particular group. The ideology of the group was not to mess with another which essentially came from the prohibitory elements of the religious injunctions. Third, the caste system can be explained from the prohibition of intermarriage and membership by autogeny as the two fundamental characteristics of caste as defined by Ketkar. However, Ambedkar says that they are the same thing, what is

common is the prohibition of intermarriage to outsiders (Ambedkar, 1916).

Superposition of Endogamy Behind the Mystery of Caste

Ambedkar claims that the reason for the existence and its continuation of the caste system in India is the practice of endogamy within the groups. Ambedkar himself asserts “endogamy as a key to the mystery of the caste system” (Ambedkar, 1916). According to the history claimed by Ambedkar, the people in India were actually exogamous, and endogamy was completely foreign to them. In fact, exogamy was a creed that no one dared to infringe. But later with the superposition of endogamy over exogamy, there was the creation of caste. This practice of endogamy to preserve the number of the caste also gave birth to other crucial problems like *sati* (*Sati* or *suttee* was a Hindu practice, in which a widow sacrifices herself by sitting atop her deceased husband’s funeral pyre) or lifelong widowhood for women which were highly degrading to the importance of the lives of women in India (Ambedkar, 1916).

Annihilation of Caste: Call for the Destruction of Religion

In his book *Annihilation of Caste* Ambedkar suggests a holistic approach to human dignity by the destruction of the caste system. He states that the real method of breaking up the caste system is not to bring about inter-caste meals and inter-caste marriages but to destroy the religious notions on which caste is founded. The caste system still scurries in India for the very reason that it is interlinked with religious teachings. Therefore, if we have to get rid of the degrading practice we need to destroy the religion (Ambedkar, 1915).

Ambedkar claims that Hindu religion as contained in the *Vedas* and the *Smriti* is nothing but a mixture of a mass of sacrificial, social, political and sanitary rules and regulations. Hinduism as a religion is nothing but a multitude of instructions and prohibitions. In short, Hinduism can be classified as a religion with legalized class ethics. Therefore, Ambedkar calls for the destruction of such a religion for he says that there is nothing irreligious in destroying such religion. However, Ambedkar does not deny the necessity for religion. Rather he asserts that religion as mentioned by Burke should be the foundation of society on which all true Civil Government rests (Ambedkar, 1915).

Conclusion

We have come a long way since the movement of Ambedkar's philosophy on human dignity. His critique of the foundations of Hinduism and its teachings on untouchability and caste system very much reflects in the Constitution of India as the sovereign, socialist and democratic country which still remains relevant in today's India. Ambedkar's philosophy uplifts human life. The philosophy of Ambedkar calls for a deeper understanding of human dignity. For human life cannot be that of the exclusiveness of caste and creed but it is about celebrating life in communion. Untouchability does not mean only the degradation of other's dignity but it also reveals one's spirituality or the lack of it.

The questions on religious teaching and its religiousness are highly significant in Ambedkar's philosophy. It is indeed the teaching of religion that becomes too rigid at times that it causes divisions in society and humanity at large. At the same time, a true religion nourishes human life, community and universality. It has been more than half a century since the birth of Ambedkar's movement, but India still faces the cruelty of caste and untouchability in many parts of the country. One of such

examples is the recent case of Hathras gangrape where the lower caste girl was brutally raped by the upper caste.

Today the philosophy of Ambedkar has significantly changed the conscience of the suppressed castes as they are awakening and raising their voices for their rights and dignities. In recent times, the voices of Dalits against the caste system has been witnessed all over the country as they take inspiration from the philosophy of Dr B. R. Ambedkar. His philosophy will always remain a foundational guiding principle for the suppressed people in the country.

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Samskaras: Their Significance and Benefits

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Abstract: *Samskara* is a process of purifying the human person and adding goodness as well in various times of life. It is not only making oneself good but also making others even good. It is a way to happy living. It is also known as a well-planned action. *Samskara* helps one to grow spiritually in life at the same it helps in the physical growth of the human person as well. *Samskara* also has to play a key role in moulding every society. Along with this purpose, there are also various other purposes for *samskara* on earth. *Samskara* also motivates our thoughts, communication, actions etc. Also, *Samskara* can take the negative to positive. The *Samskara* were a conscious effort to meet this need in life. From birth to death, it is a series of incidents from the desire to live, to enjoy, to think and ultimately to retire.

Keywords: Samskara, Hostile Influences, Favourable Influence, Significance of Samskaras

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Introduction

SAMSKARAS CAN BE defined as the process of increasing the potential and the refining step towards inner and outer progress. Each *Samskaras* lead one to a better, healthier and righteous way of life. Panini defines *Samskaras* as it decorates one's personality. Another definition for *Samskaras* is that it is absorbing other good quality or characteristics.

The word *Samskaras* has been used in many ways; the first is that *Uttarakshasadhanam Samskaras*, this *samaskara* gives prosperity, the second one is that *Samawaya* this *Samskaras* says that a thing happens at the *same* time as something else, the third is that *Abhushana*, this *Samskara* is used as a purifier. *Samskara* has a meaning, by adding the prefix 'sam' to the verb 'kri' and adding these suffix *ghanz* the word *Samskara* is formed (Shrikant, 2010).

Samskaras can be defined as the process of increasing the potential and the refining step towards inner and outer progress. Each Samskaras lead one to a better, healthier and righteous way of life. Panini defines Samskaras as it decorates one's personality.

Samskara means rubbing the dust, dirt and impurities from the self and soul. Such a soul could be purified by ideas and deeds. Only they can be called *Sanskrit*, All the lasting impression on our mind due to our *Samskaras*. Thus *Samskara* means to be good and also make others to be good, to get purified and purify others, to be healthy and aesthetically satisfying and to provide health and beauty to others, to purge the inner and outer self and to purge others for greater attraction and better. *Samskara* is processes that add value to life.

Samskara is really important as they ensure progress, prosperity, wisdom, moral character and ethical deeds, thus guarantee a better and prosperous social set-up and continuity of life. *Samskaras* are performed to add confidence to faith, to purge the body and mind and to gain health, to refine the sensibility and to define culture, and to free one from complexes and the fear of death. *Samskaras* are ways of natural and happy living, collective effort to strengthen an individual being which helps to be able to store energy, wisdom for doing the things more worthy (Kalus, 1987). *Samskaras* are scientifically checked and tested for individuals and it is said to be as that, *Samskaras* are the ultimate outcome of centuries of medical research and also study of natural phenomenon and man's regular celestial search; it is also performed to give stability and control. Early *Samskaras* pave the way to give pleasure, power, and vision. They were empowered with dedication, devotion and discipline. *Samskaras* is a process of increasing potential, acquiring qualities, knowing and behaving in a broader sense and also helps in improving and purifying the existing and removing shortcomings. *Samskaras* also help us to develop positive values and capabilities.

In Indian Philosophy *Samskaras* are the mental impressions, recollection or psychological imprints. In Hindu Philosophies, *Samskaras* are a basis for the development of the *Karma* theory.

Etymology

The *Sanskrit* word *Samskara* has a various context-driven meaning that broadly refers to “putting together, accomplishing well, making perfect, form recognition and getting ready and impression. The *Samskara* is a *Sanskrit* term derived from the root word ‘*sam*’ which means ‘well planned’ and ‘*kara*’ which means the action undertaken. The word *Samskara* comes from *Sanskrit* ‘*Sam*’ means complete or well planned and ‘*Kara*’

means action or the action undertaken. The first context is at the etymological foundation of *Samskara* term for rites of passage. The concept of *Samskara* is also discussed as *Vasana*. *Vasana* also means impression, the inclination of anything remaining unconsciously in the mind (Singh, 2002).

The Samskaras is essential for better, healthier, happier and blissful life. Samskaras is the purifying sacraments from the impurities.

Virtues of *Samskaras*

Physical faults and deformities, dirt and sins, impious attitude and vices are washed out by the *Samskaras* and the person is able to achieve spirituality. *Samskaras* are the elements of obedience to scriptures and classical behaviour. The person can achieve better and higher aims easily when he is enriched by his ideas and deeds. Purity, piety, compassion and other virtues are found in the *Samskaripurush* will lead a disciplined, balanced life by following the moral rules. Indian cultural heritage has always given priority to *Samskaras*, the cultivation of greater qualities that a man required. *Samskaras* starts from a man's beginning to the end of his life which make to grow more inside, and also help him to absorb the good qualities of around also the divine qualities. *Samskaras* are essential and must be performed to alert ourselves and to remain pious throughout life. *Samskaras* are the processes that add values to your life (Singh, 2002).

Physical and Spiritual Growth in *Samskaras*

Samskaras can be good and bad but only the good ones are taken as *Samskara* and the rest are rejected as *KuSamskara*. Hindus have been trying to improve the existing refinements by performing different acts, teaching, rites and rituals called *Samskaras*.

They can be divided into the physical and spiritual. With the help of *Samskaras* they tried to achieve a balance between the two. They work towards the healthy growth of both the physical body and spiritual body. It is not but to perform good deeds with the physical

and spiritual body. The physical body and spiritual body play a vital role in the concept and origin of the *Samskaras*. The *Samskaras* is essential for a better, healthier, happier and blissful life. *Samskaras* are purifying sacraments from impurities. Through the stages of *Samskaras* we can achieve the *Brahma* easily. *Samskaras* are said to be helping for achieving spiritual nourishment, peace of mind and ultimate *Moksha*. *Samskara* gives a spiritual touch to the important events at different stages in Hindu life, right from birth to post-death.

***Samskaras* for Human Growth**

Samskaras helps in better intellectual growth and also it is very important as they ensure progress, prosperity, knowledge, wisdom, moral character and good deeds. These guarantee a better and prosperous social and continuity life. The good and moral deeds make the world a better and a peaceful place to live in harmony with others and make collective progress (Singh, 2002).

Samskaras in Hinduism stands for the ways extent and quality of formation, growth and effect, the formation and the growth which really relate to the *samsakaras*. In *Samaskara*, the most important term is ‘*Dwija*’ which means ‘To Born Again’ *Samskaras* is like a second birth. This second birth is not physical, it is the inner change. There are many good and bad influences which we carry from one birth to another and experience at the utmost *Samskaras* gives us the power to distinguish between good and bad influence and help in opting for good influence and rejecting the bad ones. *Samskaras* will make us attain pure soul also make us able to absorb a lot of power, grow better and achieve significant success.

Importance and Purpose of *Samskaras*

Samskara plays a vital role in making a better society. It gives really important to ensure prosperity, progress, knowledge,

wisdom etc. Thus *Samskara* guarantees a better and prosperous life. Actually, *Samskara* is like a second birth. Not physically but mental growth. It can be divided into popular and cultural purposes. The former is motivated by questing faith and simplicity while the latter is priestly and cultural.

Ancient Hindus like others believed that they were surrounded by superhuman influences that were potent enough for good and evil consequences. They tried to remove hostile influences and attract beneficial ones so that they may grow and prosper.

a. Removal of Hostile Influences

Several means were adopted to remove the hostile influences. The first of them was propitiation. Demons were offered praise, oblations and food so that they may return satisfied without causing injury to the individual. The second was a deception e.g. at the time of tonsure, the severed hair was mixed with cow dung and thrown into a river so that none could play magic upon it. When the first two methods proved inadequate, a third step was taken. Mischievous spirits were plainly asked to go away, threatened and directly attacked. While performing *Chaturthikarma* (the fourth day after marriage), the husband invites Agni, Vayu, Surya etc. to remove injurious elements from the newly married wife. Other devices used were Water. It washed away physical impurities and warded off demons. The noise was made at the time of burial to scare away lurking spirits (Singh, 2002).

b. Attraction of Favourable Influences

Just as influences are to be warded off, favourable ones are to be attracted for the benefit of the recipient of a particular *Samskara*. The Hindus believe that every period of life was presided over by a deity. Thus, on every occasion the deity was invoked to confer boons and blessings on the man, e.g., at the time of conception, Vishnu was the chief deity. But there was no entire dependence on gods. Men helped themselves by various means. Touch exercised a

magic power, e.g., a branch of a fig tree was applied to the neck of the wife, as the touch was believed to bring fertility (Singh, 2002).

c. The Material Aim of the Samskaras

Were the gains of cattle, progeny, long life, wealth, strength and intellect? The *Samskaras* were domestic rites and naturally during their performance things essential for domestic felicity were asked from gods. It was believed that by prayer and appeal, their desires and wishes were communicated to the deities who responded to them appropriately.

d. *Samskaras* as Self-expression

The householder performed the *Samskara* to express his own joys, felicitations and even sorrows at the various events of life. The birth of a child or marriage of a couple was happy occasions while death was a sad one (Singh, 2002).

The Moral Purpose of *Samskara*

In the course of time, a moralizing feature emerged from the material body. *Samskara* gives eight good qualities of the soul that is mercy, forbearance, freedom from envy, purity, calmness, right behaviour and freedom from greed, covetousness. The *Samskaras* were never regarded as ends in themselves (Rajneesh, 2004). They were expected to grow in human values. For every stage of life rules of conduct were prescribed in the *Samskara*. Superstition there was but an ethical attempt for the moral upliftment on the individual is visible.

Spiritual Significance of *Samskara*

Spiritualism is a chief feature of Hinduism and every phase of Hindu religion is mixed with it. This spiritual outlook of the Hindus transformed the *Samskara* into a spiritual *Sadhana*. The spiritual experience is of those who have received the sacraments. To Hindus, the *Samskara* are “an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace,” like the sacraments for Christians. He looks beyond the ceremonial performance and feels something invisible which sanctified his whole personality.

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Need of *Samskaras*

The need for *Samskaras* can be easily understood. *Samskaras* are cultivated with conscious effort during a long period. Perfection is concerned with cultivating *samskaras* throughout your life. It is a goal to make an individual perfect. Every society gives importance to education because it is a remedy for all evil. It is the key to solve the various problems in life. *Samskaras* are the impressions created in our minds and thought and also by our action. These *Samskaras* play a huge role in our personal life also our personalities. *Samskara* also motivates our thoughts, communication, actions etc. Also, *Samskara* can take the negative to positive.

Benefits of *Samskaras*

There are numerous benefits from *Samskara* like mental and physical health is the best gift and the greatest benefit from *Samskaras*. *Samskara* makes the whole life better and refined. They give culture and refined sensibility for better control over intellect and its higher and deeper use. The intellect will work in a fine manner. Once the balance is achieved, the equilibrium is maintained throughout life. *Samskara* makes us lead a complete and satisfying life. A man with *samskara* in his life will be able to be confident and successful in facing the problems of life. He will be not afraid of anything or anyone. He knows what he has done the best and will

A man with *samskara* in his life will be able to be confident and successful in facing the problems of life. He will be not afraid of anything or anyone. He knows what he has done the best and will get the best only. *Samskara* give enough faith and confidence that a dying person will not be afraid of the unknown life after death because he has done nothing wrong in life if he had followed the *Samskara* in his life.

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Conclusion

Life has been a great mystery to man. Its origin, growth and disappearance have always exercised his thoughts and emotions. The Hindu *Samskara* was an attempt to facilitate the flow of this mystery. Through a process of trial and error, ancient Hindus realized that life was art, needed care, protection

and cultivation like plants in a garden. The *Samskara* were a conscious effort to meet this need in life. As in life so in rituals life was regarded as a cycle. From birth to death, it is a series of incidents from the desire to live, to enjoy, to think and ultimately to retire.

The entire *Samskara* and their ceremonies emanate from the centre of life and are happening with its circumference. In the beginning, the *Samskara* was occurring as a result of sudden, but not automatic. As the *Samskara* was developed and were amplified according to the social sentiments and needs, a conscious attempt was made at the action of the *Samskara* (Shobhit, 2017). While this provided stability to the *Samskara*, it hindered its spontaneous growth, which resulted in decay and rigidity.

Samskara covered all fields of life with religion being an all-embracing factor and rituals were given the sanctity and stability to all possible incidents in life. The *Samskara* aimed to create conditions for the development of an integrated personality of an individual, who can adjust himself with the world around him believed to be full of human and superhuman forces. Though the *Samskara* were comprehensive in their scope originally, they, later on, came to be included in the Path of Action (Kabil, 2001). The first path was a stepping stone to the second and third ones, meant for purification of the mind.

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