



**VIDYANKUR**  
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God Stuck in Enlightenment Prejudices

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Humanistic Challenge to Acknowledge  
Ignorance

**Carmel Raj D.**

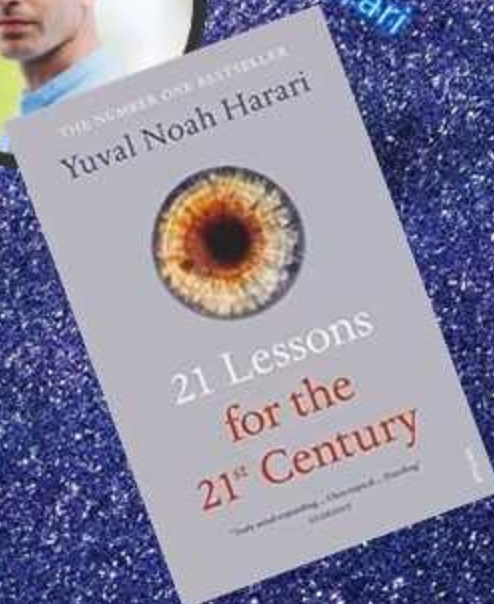
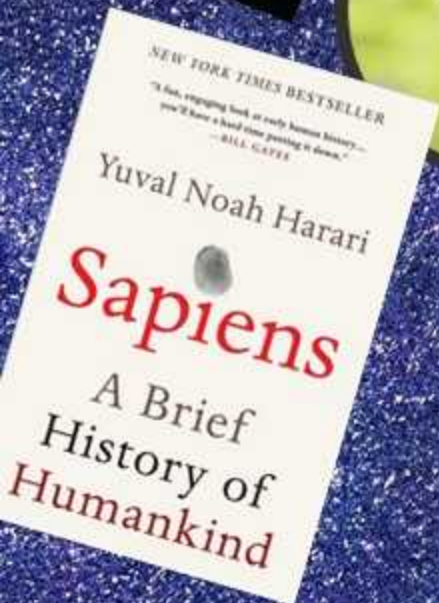
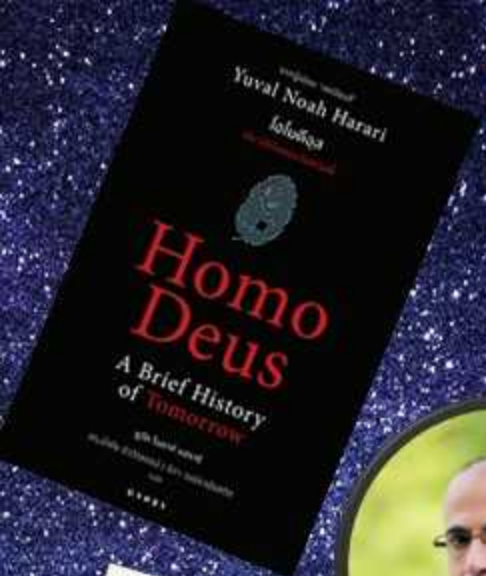
Immigration: Both a Blessing and a Challenge

**Khumtang Y Tikhir**

Meditate: Just Observe and Be

VIDYANKUR

"History began  
and will end when  
humans become gods."  
- Yuval Noah Harari





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## Contents

Editorial: Harari and the Contemporary World ----- 3

**Paul Thelakat** ----- 5  
God Stuck in Enlightenment Prejudices

**Henry Jose** ----- 16  
Ignorance is Not Bliss: Reflections on Harari's  
Humanistic Challenge to Acknowledge Ignorance

**Carmel Raj D.** ----- 33  
Immigration: Both a Blessing and a Challenge

**Khumtang Y Tikhir** ----- 51  
Meditate: Just Observe and Be

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## Editorial

# Harari and the Contemporary World

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Yuval Noah Harari (1976- ) is an Israeli public intellectual, historian and a professor, Department of History at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. He has authored three highly acclaimed bestsellers regarding the nature and future of human beings: *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*, and *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*.

*Sapiens* tells us how the cognitive revolution, the agricultural revolution and the scientific revolution have affected humans and their fellow organisms.

It's one of those books that can't help but make you feel smarter for having read it. Barack Obama and Bill Gates have undergone that experience, as many prominent persons at Davos and Silicon Valley. The tragic irony is that one of the book's warnings is that we are in danger of becoming an elite-dominated global society. *Homo Deus* (from Latin "Homo")

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meaning man or human and “*Deus*” meaning God) deals more with the abilities acquired by humans (*Homo sapiens*) throughout their existence, and their evolution as the dominant species in the world. The book describes mankind’s current abilities and achievements and attempts to paint an image of the future. Many philosophical issues are discussed, such as humanism, individualism, transhumanism, and mortality. examine possibilities of the future of *Homo sapiens*. The book presupposes that during the 21st century, humanity is likely to make a significant attempt to gain happiness, immortality, and God-like powers and possibilities!

In *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*, Harari explores what it means to be human in an age of bewilderment. This crucial book raises some fundamental questions to ourselves: How can we protect ourselves from nuclear war, ecological cataclysms and technological disruptions? What can we do about the epidemic of fake news or the threat of terrorism?

This issue of the journal takes up four important issues (God, ignorance, immigration and meditation) from this book and explores them further. We look at the relevance of Harari’s vision for the contemporary world with critical eyes.

May this vision make our world more egalitarian and equitable! May we learn from history to use wisely the incredible power available to us through technology!

The Editor



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## God Stuck in Enlightenment Prejudices

Paul Thelakat

Editor, Light of Truth, Kochi, Kerala

**Abstract:** This article is critique of the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of on “God” of Yuval Noah Harari’s book *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*. It betrays the Enlightenment’s closed-world of atheism and “dogmatic” prejudice against even the possibility of faith as an offense to reason. Enlightenment urges to critique everything came from the tradition which is a prejudice. The author believes in scientism with falling back algorithms recognizing mathematical patterns. He is stuck in Enlightenment rationalism estrangement from its own rational sense of life and hostility to the sense of the divine. As Derrida argues secularism is not secular but arises from Judeo-Christian faith and his rationality. Rationality is given. The given gives sign of an absence in the presence. The starry heavens above and the moral law within give thought of the silence which makes wonder at the ineffable other. The phenomenological look is closely related to the aesthetic

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look and moral look, it is not a look in order to enjoy aesthetically and morally but to discover and assume an aspect of the sublime and giving language to divine.

**Keywords:** Yuval Noah Harari, God of Enlightenment, Enlightenment Prejudice, Ineffable Other

Yuval Noah Harari is a Hebrew Israeli historian and professor in the Department of History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Harari is gay, lives with his husband. Yuval Noah Harari in *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* considers

humans have two basic types of abilities: physical abilities and cognitive abilities. He wrote in his book: “Man is simply animal, but in cognitive level he is not different.” “If you think you can tell the difference between human creativity and machine output, you are welcome to test your claim.” “Silencing annoying noises inside your head seems like a wonderful idea, provided it enables you to finally hear your deep authentic self. But if there is no authentic self, how do you decide which voices to silence and which to amplify?” For him art does not provide us with any ultimate (and uniquely human) Sanctuary. “Art is not the product of some enchanted spirit or metaphysical soul, but rather of organic algorithms recognising mathematical patterns. If so, there is no reason why nonorganic algorithms couldn’t master it.” His chapter on God in his book *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*

“Art is not the product of some enchanted spirit or metaphysical soul, but rather of organic algorithms recognising mathematical patterns. If so, there is no reason why nonorganic algorithms couldn’t master it.”

concludes, “We don’t need to invoke God’s name in order to live a moral life. Secularism can provide us with all the values we need.” “You will never find the truth.” The position of author is simply that of Enlightenment’s closed-world of atheism and “dogmatic” prejudice against even the possibility of faith as an offense to reason. Enlightenment urges us to critique everything which came from the tradition, which is a prejudice. This was everywhere taken to the extremes of free thinking and atheism.

### Leading to Enlightenment

Harari cannot be considered a thinker who takes philosophy seriously nor does he follow a philosophical methodology. He is stuck in dataism and belief in scientism. “Science is converging on an all-encompassing dogma, which says that organisms are algorithms, and life is data processing.” Kant’s “starry heaven above and the moral law within” are acknowledged, but Harari is basically stuck with the Critique of Pure Reason. But he does not proceed to the moral law within and does not recognise that the Ought is within the Is of human interiority. His study of religions is purely historical and negative. In his court of reason God is accused of crimes of history of all religions and condemned to death. He is a humanist, but within the confines of Enlightenment ideology. He never bothers about the history of philosophy or the phenomenological thought with the hermeneutical thought of the consciousness of human personality. Why man returns to the truth of interiority or why poets invent Gods or names what is holy? I. Kant the inaugurator of enlightenment did try to reconcile the pure reason with the practical reason in his third *Critique of Judgement*. Truth, beauty and goodness meet in the Sublime.

## The Crisis of Reason

Enlightenment is said to be mankind's exit from his self-incurred immaturity (Kant, 1996: 58). Immaturity is understood as the state of inability to make use of one's own understanding without the guidance of another. It is freedom to make *public* use of one's reason in all matters. A permanent creation of ourselves in our autonomy (Foucault, (1984: 43-44). Rationality, which is often considered universal, is actually not unique and invariable. We use the word "rationality" only to mean rationality that is based on certain "necessity, style, axiomatics, institutions, community, and historicity" (Derrida, 2005: 121). Husserl is critical of this rationality and evokes, in the name of phenomenological reason, the inevitability of a transcendental pathology. As a sickness of reason for it is cut off from its roots. The medical model which distinguishes between "scientific medicine" and the "nature cure". Husserl wonders why we have never developed a "scientific medicine for nations and supranational communities." "The European nations are sick; Europe itself, it is said, is in crisis, (Die europäischen Nationen sind krank, Europa selbst ist, sagt man, in einer Krisis)" (Husserl, 1970: 270). The universal scientific reason produces this amnesic evil called objectivism. Reason itself produces this evil as if by an irresistible internal secretion that is nothing other than finitude. Husserl singles out objectivism and denounces it. Rationality can become an "evil" when specialized a one-sided (Husserl, 1970: 291). Scientific reason, in its very progress, spontaneously produces the crisis. It is reason that throws reason into crisis, in an autonomous and quasi-auto-immunitary fashion.

We must consider the historical and political climate between the two world wars, the rise of Nazism as well as

European fascism. This is absolutely necessary if we are to hear today what Husserl said then, if we are to understand him as historians and philosophers concerned about our current responsibilities. These responsibilities are at once different and analogous. The reason for the failure of a rational culture, however, as we said, lies not in the essence of rationalism itself but solely in its being rendered superficial, in its entanglement in “naturalism” and “objectivism”. Whether faith in reason remains, through and through, something rational—something reasoned or reasonable. Its estrangement from its own rational sense of life; its fall into hostility toward the spirit. The dignity of a reasonable being is incalculable as an end in itself. It is at once universal and exceptional. “Morality, and humanity so far as it is capable of morality, is the only thing which has dignity” (Kant, 1964: 102). Derrida says: “Without the absolute singularity of the incalculable and the exceptional, no thing and no one, nothing other and thus nothing, arrives or happens” (Derrida, 2003: 32-33). He concludes his critique enlightenment: “Reason reasons, to be sure, it is right and it gives itself reason, to do so, so as to protect or keep itself, so as to keep within reason . It is in this that it is and thus wants to be itself; that is its sovereign ipseity” (Derrida, 2003: 52).

### **Phenomenological Openness to the Divine**

Sadly, Harari has misconstrued secularism from its roots for as Derrida rightly has argued it is not secular at all. “Faith has not always been and will not always be identifiable with religion, nor, another point, with theology” (Derrida, 2002: 48). The reason religion is dangerous is the reason it is indispensable: it opens our imagination to a beyond that has not yet come into view. Derrida said, “faith is not pure faith. It is already knowledge, that’s why, sometimes, you call me an atheist” (Derrida, 2007: 26).

Philosophy can show us the borders of the finite, but perhaps cannot transgress them. The centrality of the question of the divine to philosophical hermeneutics is best approached with its own kind of *via negativa*. Exclusive atheistic humanism is inhuman humanism. Phenomenological understanding opened the way of theology. If grammar tells me anything, it is theological. In the very act of knowledge the mind receives without mediation its essence from God. The term “ontology” describe as what appears in one’s phenomenological analysis of the thinking subject. Precisely, on the basis of critical self-reflection, a rich description of the structure of human consciousness, and a corresponding ontology of meaning as mediated through history. One is able to assert the findings of his phenomenological investigation as real, albeit within the confines of human interiority. Relevance of the question of God as such within always dialogical openness to the world. That beyond which nothing can be thought of can be poetically reached as the holy or the trace of the holy. It gives us no intelligible programme for a way of life, no goal or ideal to strive after, because God can only appear as a god in the dimension of the holy. This openness concerns the phenomenon of understanding. The treatment of human self-awareness must therefore be in the hermeneutic event of understanding. The self-structuring activity of the human mind, an interior dynamic, is certainly real. Human mind’s quest for understanding is therefore a constitutive element of what it means to be human. Phenomenology, can help us to explore the inner region of human experience and free modern man from the secularization of interiority. The self-structuring activity of the ethical subject is a way to introduce concepts of cause and effect, act and telos, and ultimately a *summum bonum* into an interior description of man. We can only understand finite humanity in

comparison with the presumably infinite divine. We are always thrown back upon the experience of life. This is a key to the question of the divine no less than to historicity.

That experience of the mystery of things calls ‘cosmic wonder’. In some way we sense that the world should make sense, that there should be a reason why things are the way they are, even a reason that gives us a sense of meaning and an understanding of our place in the universe. From the philosophical point of view, it is purported to uncover the real meaning of Being, and

The self-structuring activity of the ethical subject is a way to introduce concepts of cause and effect, act and telos, and ultimately a *summum bonum* into an interior description of man.

the still ‘unthought’ in the difference between Being and beings, or, to strip away the traditional theological appearance from the question of Being. We can think God without any condition, not even that of Being and to think God without pretending to inscribe or describe him as a being. Nothing is without ground. We can perceive the sense of the belonging together of Being and ground. Only from the truth of Being can the essence of the holy be thought. Only in the light of the essence of divinity can it be thought or said what the word ‘God’ is to signify.

### Thinker, Poet and Fugitive

Literature is the place where art and science merge” (Gadamer, 1995: 163). “Literature” is the category where Gadamer’s general norms governing all understanding become applied to writings in the arts and sciences in his attempt to provide a broader basis for hermeneutics: Every work of art, not only literature, must be understood like any other text that

requires understanding, and conversely, “hermeneutics must be so determined as a whole that it does justice to the experience of art” (Gadamer, 1995: 164).

In deciphering and interpreting it, a miracle takes place: the transformation of something alien and dead into total contemporaneity and familiarity. This is like nothing else that comes down to us from the past. The remnants of past life ... a written tradition, once deciphered and read, is to such an extent pure mind that it speaks to us as if in the present.... In it, time and space seem to be superseded (Gadamer, 1995: 163-164). Literary hermeneutics has as its basic task understanding texts such that “the dead trace of meaning” is transformed “back into living meaning” (Gadamer, 1995: 164). Heidegger explores the kinship between the poet and the thinker and their common dependence (in the sense just specified) on language. The thinker utters Being and the poet names the Holy (Heidegger, 1949: 360). “To be a poet in a destitute time means: to attend, singing, to the trace of the fugitive ... It is a necessary part of the poet’s nature that, before he can be truly a poet in such an age, the time’s destitution must have made the whole being and vocation of the poet a poetic question for him. Hence poets in a destitute time must especially gather in poetry the nature of poetry.” (Heidegger, 1971: 94). He came to see modern man’s increasingly technological framing of the earth and all beings as our destiny. Every metaphysics and every technology finally deconstructs itself. Man will survive even after the last technological ding-dong of doom. But

as we live technology which may deconstruct itself like the expelled demon of a gospel story and leave its metaphysical shell intact and inviting. Or a technological demon may have been relatively benign if it had not been metaphysically or technologically yoked to the seven new demons it has invited into its house. May be the demons could fend for themselves if we would truly learn to exorcize their bad habitats. But this is what Heidegger means by overcoming metaphysics.

For if it is Heidegger's insight that every technology contains metaphysics, it also provides the space for poems. And Heidegger was certainly correct: many or most of the best modern or postmodern poets have in many of their greatest poems expressed or attempted to express what it is that is poetry. These have not been "how to" works. The exodus from the kingdom of means seeks one's own in the alien, to become at

home in it being driven to communism by love for human. We cannot but hear the sound of birth in the world. It is the sound of Life, the silence in which the Word of life keeps talking to us of our own life. If we hear the word that resounds unmistakably speaks, keeps talking about the Word of God. When anything appears, there is an epiphany. Appearing

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If we hear the word that resounds unmistakably speaks, keeps talking about the Word of God. When anything appears, there is an epiphany. Appearing seduces, it is good. May I say He expresses Himself, He reveals Himself.

seduces, it is good. May I say He expresses Himself, He reveals Himself.

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## **Ignorance is Not Bliss: Reflections on Harari's Humanistic Challenge to Acknowledge Ignorance**

**Henry Jose Xavier**

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Philosophy and Theology, Pune 411014

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**Abstract:** “Ignorance is bliss.” A catchy phrase that we have come across many times in our lives. A seemingly harmless, funny and a wisdom quote that gives consolation, as it pampers the lazy, comfortable, afraid-to-take-risk attitude within us. Harari strongly criticizes the system that subdues us in clipping our wings; that serves as blockade in our forward evolution as *Homo Deus*. Ignorance is not bliss, but rather a golden chain; an intoxicating drug that binds us within a limited horizon and hampers our development to meet the challenges of the present digitally explored universe. In this article I have tried to show that ignorance

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not only breeds sorrow, but brings about great confusion in ourselves.

**Keywords:** Ignorance, *Homo Deus*, *Sapiens*, Challenges and Development of Technology, Evolution in Biology, Politics and Religion, Knowledge as observation.

## Introduction

The term ignorant is an adjective that defines a person in the state of being uninformed or unaware, or even mental discord and other cognitive relation, and can describe persons who intentionally ignore or neglect important information or facts, or individuals who are unmindful of important information or facts. Ignorance can appear in three different types: factual ignorance (absence of knowledge of some fact), object ignorance (unacquaintance with some object), and technical ignorance (absence of knowledge of how to do something).

Ignorance can have negative effects on peoples and societies, but can also profit them by creating within them the desire to know more. For instance, ignorance within science unlocks the opportunity to seek knowledge and make discoveries by enquiring new questions. Though this can only take place if the individual possesses an inquisitive and curious mind. Research suggest that adults with adequate education who perform enriching and challenging jobs are happier, and more in control of their environment. The confidence that adults obtain through the sense of control that education provides allows those adults to go for more leadership positions and seek for power throughout their lives.

According to the American novelist Thomas Pynchon, “We are often unaware of the scope and structure of our ignorance. Ignorance is not just a blank space on a person's mental map. It has contours and coherence, and for all I know rules of operation as well. So as a corollary to writing about what we

know, maybe we should add getting familiar with our ignorance, and the possibilities therein for ruining a good story.” (Wikipedia Contributors: Ignorance, 2020)

Ignorance exists even though one may have great knowledge, a good education, be sophisticated, have capacity in the exercise of which one achieves fame, notoriety, money. Ignorance is not dispelled by the accumulation of a great many facts and much information. The computer can do all that better than the human mind. Ignorance is the utter lack of self-knowing. Most of us are superficial, shallow, have so much sorrow and ignorance as part of our lot. Again, this is not an exaggeration, not an assumption, but an actual fact of our daily existence. We are ignorant of ourselves and therein lies great sorrow. That ignorance breeds every form of superstition, perpetuates fear, engenders hope and despair and perpetuates all the inventions and theories of a clever mind. In this paper we would be critically examining the topic of ignorance taking inspiration from the book *21 Lessons for the 21st Century* by Yuval Noah Harari, the celebrated author of *Sapiens* and *Homo Deus*. I would be basing my thoughts from the author and especially from the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book, “Ignorance.” So, this article attempts to show that ignorance not only breeds sorrow, but brings about great confusion in ourselves.

## Introducing Yuval Noah Harari's *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*

Worrying is a predominant factor of the human mind. This is not essentially a bad thing. When the house is on fire, worrying about it may save our life. Modern life presents plenty of other reasons for concern: terrorism, climate change, the rise of Artificial Intelligence, infringements on our privacy, and also the obvious decline of international cooperation. In his latest book, *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*, the

Harari predicts that a human life's individual value will ultimately vanish. Due to the rapid advancements of the digital revolution, our cyborg selves will be sucked deeper into the online world and turned into faceless data.

historian Yuval Noah Harari creates a suitable outline for meeting these fears. While his previous best sellers, *Sapiens* (Harari, 2014) and *Homo Deus* (Harari, 2015), covered the past and future respectively, his latest book is all about the present. The trick for putting an end to our anxieties, he suggests, is not to stop worrying. It's to know which things to worry about, and how much to worry about them. As he writes in his introduction: "What are today's greatest challenges and most important changes? What should we pay attention to? What should we teach our kids?" (Harari, 2018)

These are indeed big questions, and this is a far-reaching book. There are chapters on work, war, nationalism, religion, immigration, education and 15 other weighty matters. But its title is misleading. Although one would find a few concrete lessons scattered throughout, Harari mostly resists handy prescriptions. He is more interested in defining the terms of the discussion and giving you historical and philosophical perspective. After learning of the importance of Harari's work,

*21 Lesson for 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, we are in a better position to understand his insights on Ignorance, which is part of this book. From his insights we would be delving into why ignorance does not have a positive impact in our lives and society and why the proverb ignorance is bliss would breed sorrow and great confusion in ourselves.

### **The Discovery of Ignorance**

Throughout history, we knew little about 99.99 percent of the organisms in our planet namely, microorganisms. Not because they are insignificant. We are hosts to billions of single-celled organisms within us. They are our allies and at the same time our worst foes. Some digest food and clean our body, others make us ill. They were discovered in 1674 for the first time, when Anton van Leeuwenhoek spotted them through his microscope at home. In the course of the next 300 years, we've become more accustomed with them. The deadliest diseases caused by them have been eradicated and these microorganisms are being used in the service of medicine and industry. Science has advanced a lot in the last few centuries, but the most defining moment in the last 500 years occurred in July 1945, when American scientists detonated the first atomic bomb in New Mexico. From then on, humans have had the ability to not only change history, but to end it.

Usually, in case of ignorance about something, all that had to be done was to approach someone who is knowledgeable and experienced. There was no need for anyone to go on a quest to discover anything that was unknown. A thousand years ago, a simpleton need not have to look further than his local priest to discover the story of how the universe began. Further, if a tradition was ignorant about something, then that something was not significant. If the Bible didn't have any information about

bird's nests, then bird's nests were simply not very important, otherwise, an explanation would have been found in the Bible. Science altered this. Modern science openly acknowledges collective ignorance regarding the most important questions. Scientists confess the lack of knowledge pertaining to the operations of brain producing consciousness or the root cause behind the Big Bang. Rather than studying old traditions, science looks at the latest observations and experiments for answers. But simple observations are not sufficient. Earlier they were described through theories in the form of myths or stories. Today, modern science uses mathematics and physics.

Alexander Webster and Robert Wallace, two clergymen in Scotland, developed statistics, a new branch of mathematics that was developed in the last 200 years (Harari, 2014: 219). They had to set up a life-insurance fund, but to do so they had to look at some numbers. How long would wives outlive their husbands? And how many ministers would die each year?

“Leaders are thus trapped in a double bind. If they stay in the center of power, they will have an extremely distorted vision of the world. If they venture to the margins, they will waste too much of their precious time”

They did not pray to God for the answer, and they didn't get into philosophical argumentation. They were pragmatic in their approach. They came into contact with a mathematics professor, and the three of them collected the data they needed to make their predictions. Their work was based on Bernoulli's equations and other advances in statistics. Bernoulli's Law of Large Numbers states that while it may be hard to predict the death of a single person, it is possible to accurately predict the average number of people that would die over a given period. “According to their calculations, by the year 1765 the Fund for a Provision for the Widows and Children of the Ministers of

the Church of Scotland would have capital totaling £58,348. Their calculations proved amazingly accurate. When that year arrived, the fund's capital stood at £58,347 – just £1 less than the prediction! This was even better than the prophecies of Habakkuk, Jeremiah or St John. Today, Webster and Wallace's fund, known simply as Scottish Widows, is one of the largest pension and insurance companies in the world. With assets worth £100 billion, it insures not only Scottish Widows, but anyone willing to buy its policies" (Harari, 2014: 220).

Mathematics used to be a field that was not taken seriously even by educated people. A proper education in medieval Europe implied studying logic, grammar, and rhetoric. Today, the situation is changed. Mathematics has permeated almost all the subjects. Even the social sciences requires one to take statistics courses. *The New Instrument* was a scientific manifesto published by Francis Bacon in 1620 (Harari, 2018: 222). He argues that knowledge is power because it empowers us, not because it is true. Scientists do not assume that their theories are 100 percent accurate. Truth is a poor test of knowledge anyway, as claimed by American pragmatists. (Pragmatism and utilitarianism says). The actual test is how worthwhile the knowledge is. A theory that helps us exercise new things constitutes knowledge. World War I was decided not by the soldiers who fought the war, but by the most dangerous minded scientists. Combat jet-craft, poisonous gas, armored tanks, submarines and ever more efficient machine guns, artillery pieces, rifles and bombs were the real heroes of war.

Science played an even greater role during World War II. The V-2 rocket and jet-powered aircraft brought new hope to the Germans when they thought that they were on the verge of defeat. But at the same time, the Manhattan

project by the United States developed the atomic bomb. Germany had surrendered by the time the atomic bomb was ready. But Japan, the ally of Germany at the time refused to yield. An American invasion of Japan would cost the U.S millions of lives and lots of time and resources. President Truman ordered the use of the atomic bomb twice in two weeks. The war came to an end with the surrender of Japan.

Traditionally, poverty and death were always considered a fact of life. Today, scientists view them as technical problems. “Poverty is increasingly seen as a technical problem amenable to intervention. Its common wisdom that policies based on the latest findings in agronomy, economics, medicine and sociology can eliminate poverty” (Harari, 2014: 227).

In the Epic of Gilgamesh, a person’s quest to defeat death which includes many battles, across the world, yielded nothing but the realization that man’s inevitable end was death. But the people of progress do not agree. To them, death happens because we don’t know enough. If organs fail, machines can be used to augment them, or to replace them. While not all biological problems can be solved today, we have made a lot of progress since Gilgamesh. “Genetic engineers have recently managed to double the average life expectancy of *Caenorhabditis elegans* worms. Could they do the same for *Homo sapiens*? Nanotechnology experts are developing a bionic immune system composed of millions of Nano-robots, who would inhabit our bodies, open blocked blood vessels, fight viruses and bacteria, eliminate cancerous cells and even reverse ageing processes. A few serious scholars suggest that by 2050, some humans will become a-mortal (not immortal, because they could still die of some accident, but a-mortal, meaning that in the absence of fatal trauma their lives could be extended indefinitely)” (Harari, 2014: 231).

Central to our pursuit of progress, is financing. Without money, Darwin, Columbus, and Galilei would not have accomplished what they did. Brilliant minds are not enough. And science cannot set its priorities, there needs to be commercial reasons to invest in one thing and not another. For science to advance; politics, finance, and ideology must be combined towards the same objectives.

The discovery of ignorance have led to breakthroughs in various fields of life. It is not without its negative side-effects that instigates us to think that it would be better off without these knowledge. As the proverb goes that “Truth is bitter,” people have tried their best to avoid the hard truths of life and have close themselves within the comfortable prison of ignorance. The following paragraph would prove that people are not interested in the facts of life but with information and principles that would adhere to their thinking and world view. It is those people who are comfortable in their own prison of ignorance have formulated the proverb ‘Ignorance is bliss’ and created confusion in themselves and in others as we would be seeing in the following paragraph.

### **Ignorance: A Comfortable Prison?**

From the perspective of evolution, it has been valuable to trust in the knowledge of others. But like other characteristics of the past that may have worked well but may not be useful today, the illusion of knowledge can be dangerous. The world we live in is more complicated and only few people understand the limitations of their knowledge. “Consequently, some who know next to nothing about meteorology or biology nevertheless propose policies regarding climate change and genetically modified crops, while others hold extremely strong views

about what should be done in Iraq or Ukraine without being able to locate these countries on a map” (Harari, 2018).

People do not seek out new knowledge that challenges their existing standards but trap themselves in a closed container of like-minded friends and subscribe to news feeds that are agreeable to them. Their beliefs are seldom challenged. The problem is that facts do not matter since people rarely change their minds when they are presented with sheets of statistical data, it simply is not how human beings operate. It is a belief that Liberal groupthink results in the product of individual rationality. It may be the case that individual rationality is overvalued. Harari recalls a scene from Monty Python’s *Life of Brian* where a crowd of starry-eyed followers mistake Brian for the Messiah. “Brian tells his disciples that ‘You don’t need to follow me, you don’t need to follow anybody! You’ve got to think for yourselves! You’re all individuals! You’re all different!’ The enthusiastic crowd then chants in unison ‘Yes! We’re all individuals! Yes, we are all different!’ Monty Python were parodying the counterculture orthodoxy of the 1960s, but the point may be true of the belief in rational individualism in general. Modern democracies are full of crowds shouting in unison, ‘Yes, the voter knows best! Yes, the customer is always right!’” (Harari, 2018).

It isn’t merely that groupthink affects ordinary voters but presidents and CEOs. The powerful do not prioritize the discovery of truth or seeing reality for what it is. They are driven to changing reality whenever they can. There is a pragmatic consideration: how to allocate time effectively? “Leaders are thus trapped in a double bind. If they stay in the center of power, they will have an extremely distorted vision of the world. If they venture to the margins, they will waste too much of their precious time” (Harari, 2018). From the above paragraph it is clear that people are happy being subservient to someone whom they deem superior in knowledge, wisdom and

power. Adding to that, the worst part is they feel confident that they know the best and therefore, the leader whom they appoint to govern over them would know the best and that they need not take control over their lives. In the following paragraph we would be debating if accumulating more and more information is a source of power or burden and whether it would result in the alleviation of confusion in our lives and in those around us.

### Is Ignorance Power?

In *Sapiens*, Harari analyzed the intellectual and physical development of human beings until today. He visualizes how societal developments alongside technological progressions of the current ‘digital revolution’ will take us to the status of ‘god-like’ (Deus) humans in the next few decades. How will artificial intelligence effect our everyday lives? And when will we be able to demand our bioengineered children on the internet? Soon, he says. Harari predicts that a human life’s individual value will ultimately vanish. Due to the rapid advancements of the digital revolution, our cyborg selves will be sucked deeper into the online world and turned into faceless data. Why? Because “Dataism” is our 21st century religion. We are willing to share every detail of our lives on Google or Facebook and give them more power than ever before by knowing us, and our every move, better than anybody offline (Harari, 2015: 325).

The evolution of Homo sapiens in the 21st century, having survived famines and eradicated many life-threatening diseases, Harari asks if there are just not enough other issues to worry about anymore. “For the first time in history, more people die today from eating too much than from infectious diseases; and more people die from old age

than from infectious diseases; and more people commit suicide than are killed by soldiers, terrorists and criminals combined. In the early twenty-first century, the average human is far more likely to die from bingeing at McDonald's than from drought, Ebola or an al-Qaeda attack" (Harari, 2015: 10).

It's true, we do have somewhat diverse complications now than 300 years ago. Like which Youtube or Facebook video to watch next. I find myself in a state of disagreement. With the rapid rise of 'fake news' and misinformation, we seem to live in an age of endless confusion. In the competition for who-gets-more-views, the media shows us what we want to see, as do Facebook and Youtube, due to their methodically programmed algorithms. Will there ever be a time when the balanced 'two sides to every story' become the standard?

"In the past, censorship worked by blocking the flow of information. In the twenty-first century, censorship works by flooding people with irrelevant information. People just don't know what to pay attention to, and they often spend their time investigating and debating side issues. In ancient times having power meant having access to data. Today having power means knowing what to ignore" (Harari, 2015: 350). It's not a new theory in cognitive psychology that people prefer to consume facts and ideas that align with their existing beliefs, rather than opinions that challenge their beliefs (it's called "reinforcement theory" in media psychology)."

Is the world moving too fast for us to adjust? Shouldn't we be 'in charge' as Homo Deus; the most powerful creature on this planet? Harari stresses again how change is the only constant in our lives. "People are usually afraid of change because they fear the unknown. But the only constant in history is change" (Harari, 2015: 67); and we should get better at preparing for it. It all comes down to teaching each other about different points of view, and finding information that isn't consumed only

because it's most convenient to me, or of low risk to change my pre-existing beliefs of the world.

We should use our 'god-like' powers, such as being able to produce, share and circulate our own opinions unlike previously, to learn the ability of adapting to change. This is the basis to influence change, and this is easier than ever before through our digital and scientific evolution. We just need to figure out how to boost the development of the skills that enable us to filter and analyze the incredibly large amount of information out there, so we can adapt to an ever-changing world. And not let watching funny and trending videos replace our curiosity to find out what else is going on in our increasingly digitally explored universe. In order to grow out of our ignorance, the primary thing that ought to be done is to learn to acknowledge what we do not know. In the next topic we would be discussing the importance of curiosity and an inquisitiveness to gain knowledge and information.

### Learning to Acknowledge Ignorance

Harari offers outlook on the beginning days of the Enlightenment's Scientific Revolution. As it began, there were a few cities of almost 100,000 people, but the buildings were mud, wood and straw. Technology advances were not the result of organized science, but primarily creative improvements accorded to the craftsmen. At the dawn of the Enlightenment, there was no sense of progress. The Golden Age was long gone. Strict adherence to the past may bring a little of the good times back, but nothing was going to change much. "If even Muhammad, Jesus, Buddha, and Confucius, who knew everything there is to know, were unable to abolish famine, disease, shortage, and war from the world, how could we expect to do so?" (Harari, 2014: 226).

Curiosity was amusing but not a thoughtful attempt. There was no sense of humanity's ignorance. The traditions asserted that the gods were omniscient and knew everything important and revealed it to us in scriptures and oral traditions. "It was inconceivable that the Bible, the Quran or the Vedas were missing out on a crucial secret of the universe" (Harari, 2014: 215).

One instance of ignorance in my life lately was this. The name America had been a familiar word in my vocabulary. But it never occurred to me to know the reason behind naming the continent as such. The American continent should have originally be named Columbia; which apparently is the name of a single state. But acknowledging my ignorance and willingness to know the answers paved way towards the consequent knowledge. Christopher Columbus had no idea that he had discovered a continent. When his crew met the locals, he called them "Indians" because he assumed that they were in the East Indies. A decade later, Italian Amerigo Vespucci led expeditions north of Columbus's route. Vespucci's texts wondered if the lands were indeed an entirely unknown continent between Europe and East Asia. Respected German mapmaker Martin Waldseemüller read the texts and published the first maps of a new world, naming the continent in honor of its discoverer, America. The name stuck. Many of us are still unaware that so many scientists were aboard the early oceanic expeditions and in their subsequent first landing parties. Indeed, the reason for expeditions was to obtain economic advantage. What the scientists learned, and converted into ways to use resources, promoted the economic improvement beyond our wildest imaginations.

In this article, after introducing ourselves to the basic insights of Harari, we spent some time discovering the significance of ignorance. We tried to show that ignorance is a comfortable and convenient prison, which most people enjoy. Then we

asked ourselves if ignorance is really a power? Finally we concluded asserting that we need to learn to acknowledge our ignorance so that we can move forward. Otherwise our ignorance not only breeds sorrow, but brings about great confusion for the whole of humanity. That needs to be avoided for the growth of science and for the betterment of humanity.

## Conclusion

To summarize the views of my argument, I would say, Ignorance is a bane of our existence. Rather, than accepting it as inevitable, challenging the obstructions and going ahead into the abyss is the purpose of our human existence.

When we come across unknowns, whether in our private or professional lives, we should explore them. Chris Shelton recommends using the scientific method.

- Make observations, use existing knowledge and assumptions to form a hypothesis.
- Engage with scientists and see what they observe and think.
- Brainstorm to come up with an experiment to test the hypothesis.

“Experiments give back more detail, more specifics, more intricacy than the hypothetical concepts with which we design them. The response of nature to experiments breaks up the concepts and theories with which we came, and forces the researcher onto the edge.” (Bhattacharjee n.d.) The learning process goes like this; analyze the data from the experiment. If necessary, develop another experiment, or revise the hypothesis to conform to the data one’s experiment had produced.

As a human being of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, I personally confess to my ignorance, but I can say this with conviction. What I learn in this experiment would not be a universal truth; it would only apply to my personality and circumstances. But learning what works for me is a suitable goal. Perhaps one day my investigation into what I don't know will lead to a universal, scientific discovery. I will only find out by remaining curious, exploring and using science to reveal truths. The scope of my paper has been limited. I have tried to examine only one aspect of this broad field of ignorance. Which is, its limitation in our lives and the way it would bound us if we do not take the necessary steps to break away from its chains. My paper also opens up the possibility of exploring the other side of this study; which is, the systematic eradication of ignorance which would include aspects of education and teaching techniques.

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## **Immigration: Both a Blessing and a Challenge**

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**Abstract:** The influx rise of immigrants to Europe has become most divisive issue of our time. We discuss the positive and negative side of the immigration. Moreover, we go deeper by asking the question why do we consider immigration a blessing as well as a Challenge? we examine the policies that supports as well as policy that restricts immigration. Modern debates based on immigration whether to assimilate immigrants or restrict their entry. The vast contributions made by the immigrants to the host countries in the field of industries, as well as the traumatic experience of immigrants during the pandemic and the call of Holy Father to the universal brotherhood and eventually the policies that help the host countries to integrate as well as restrict them.

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**Keywords:** Immigration, Colonization, Pro-immigrationists, Anti-immigrationists, Globalization of indifference Assimilation of Values.

In a sense, immigration is not a strange factor to this world since, we are all immigrants. We may be bewildered to hear that we are all immigrants. Actually speaking, the first place that we took shelter is the womb of the mother, from there we migrated to this world. And this world is also not our permanent home, there is a day, fast approaching for us to immigrate from this world. But before that we need to live our life well.

We live in a world of conflicts and chaos; people are leaving their home countries due to civil wars and ethnic persecutions. One of the serious crises which has risen in recent history is immigration. In recent years, immigration has tremendously increased. There is no guarantee for the lives of the immigrants. Countries have closed their borders. People are homeless, crying out for attention, crying out for a messiah, who will come. The facts in the present situation are well known. It has become most divisive issue of our time, without a critical analyzation, an intelligent understanding of the problem, no sound remedy can be given. If I ask you my readers, what you would like to have at this moment? At least many of you or some of you would answer with one word ‘vaccine’ for the Covid-19, but if I ask the same question to the immigrants, what would be their answer? Perhaps, the search for that answer is all about this article and considering why is immigration a blessing as well as challenge? Immigration is an asset to the host country as well as it is a challenge to them as it adulterates in many ways the host country. May be, if we swim deep in to the article, one may be better enlightened of why immigration is a blessing and a challenge. Let me begin by explaining who we are!

## **We are Descendants of Immigration**

From the world history, we understand that the human beings originated in Africa and migrated to different parts of the world, thus we are all called immigrants or descended from immigrants. People immigrate for variety of reasons, people move to colonize, and improve the wealth of the country. Of course, one need to understand the challenges of immigration, Usually the poor cannot migrate to the rich countries except to the neighbouring countries, on the other hand most of the economic migration takes place due to the rapid industrialization.

Current nation states are the result of successive waves of immigration, most of which took place before the twentieth century.

Today migrants are currently vilified and subjected to unprecedented levels of restriction, to deny part of the social nature of human beings. In recent times the rate of migration

When a migrant moves, it's not out of idle fancy or because they hate their homeland, or to plunder the countries they come to or even to strike it rich

is greater than it has been in the past. Since, the beginning of the industrial revolution and the imperialist expansion of Europe, the main migratory movements have resulted from the requirements of the capitalist industry. When a migrant moves, it's not out of idle fancy or because they hate their homeland, or to plunder the countries they come to or even to strike it rich. (Hayter, 2018: 8). The history and most of the researches tell that immigration takes place because of the accumulated burdens of history have rendered their homelands less and less habitable. Just, consider the subcontinent five thousand years ago, we have been one people, ruled undivided from the borders of Persia to china by emperors from Ashoka to Akbar, dissolved and merged. In fact, migration from one country to another

country involves profound losses, leaving behind familiar food, known people, places, customs, beliefs, languages and cultural practices. (Hayter, 2018: 9). However, it is more thrilling and exciting to see, how we got hooked up with immigration.

Indeed, it is interesting to look at how we hooked on immigration. Science had proved that human beings were first seen in Africa, from there they have immigrated to all over the world, thus immigration is not new to this modern world. Immigration had been practiced from our great, great grandfather's era. But what is interesting to note that the remarkable increase of immigration after the second world war to the European countries. The main reason for the sudden increase of immigration to the western countries were the loss of lives during the world war, the labor market in Europe was left without sufficient labors. Therefore, After the second world war each country had allowed and encouraged workers to come on to their countries. During the 1950s and 1960s West Germany, Sweden, Holland and Belgium among other countries, all instituted a 'guest-workers' scheme to fill gaps in their labor supply. In Germany the influx of workers came largely from turkey, seeing a huge swell in numbers after the German-Turkish labor agreement of 1961. The labor shortages especially in the low skilled areas of the industrial sector is the result of decolonization. (Murray, 2017: 22).

Across the continent it seemed to come as a surprise to government that the most of these workers would put down roots in the country they had entered. And they would seek to bring in their families, that their families would need assistance, and that their children would need to go to school. The standard of living was stable. These workers were able to enjoy in the west meant far more people stayed than returned to their country of origin. (Murray, 2017: 22).

Although Europe had opened up its borders at a time of need, the continent seemed to have no idea how attractive, it was too much of the world, even in its diminished state. In the course of time people who began their life as guest workers became part of the countries, they were in. some gained citizenship, some others gained dual citizenship, with in five decades, the census of the country showed that four million people in Germany of Turkish origin. Due to immigration many countries saw remarkable increase in population Growth.

There is a saying “larger population is better than smaller ones” (Coleman: 2004). and that population growth is therefore, welcomed, it boosts national security in many ways both military and civil. In so far as immigration contributes to population growth and averts population decline, it should be encouraged. And the population increase, in turn will surely help the expansion of the domestic market, facilitates labor force and economies of scale, thus averting labor shortages and wage inflation and promotion productivity. (Coleman, 2004: 6).

From the broader perspective it averts population aging because given the lower fertility and longer survival most European countries face the end of population growth within few decades. And thus, it becomes challenge. however, “In some countries such as Italy and Germany, deaths are already exceeding births, at least among the native population. Population decline also goes hand in hand with population aging and its problems.” (Coleman, 2004: 7). So, it is argued that immigration can erase the problem of supporting and caring for the relatively larger elderly population that is a consequence of population ageing. And the immune system of the immigrants seems to be strong and they fill undesirable jobs of the natives. In a well-developed country finding labour for undesirable jobs is expected to become particularly difficult. “Large- scale immigration specifically from poor countries with low wages and low expectations concerning conditions of work will be

needed to fill the so called ‘menial’ jobs that are difficult to mechanize and that the domestic labor force will not undertake as its expectations rise.” (Coleman, 2004: 7). A permanent stream of first-generation immigrants will be needed to fill the bottom layer of this ‘dual labor market.’ And thus, contributing to the economy of the host country. However, if immigration is not legal it leads to many illegal problems and so it is very suiting to look at some of the immigration laws that facilitates the entry of immigrants.

### Immigration Laws

Immigration policy has become very salient in many countries. The issue of allowing in and absorbing existing immigrants is very contentious. The growing immigration pressure has driven some countries to adopt substantial reforms of their immigration laws, aiming at controlling immigration flows. On the other hand, the need for the labour provided by some of these immigrants has pushed governments to create specific favoured-entry categories or to be lenient ex-post with those who entered illegally, by passing amnesties. Among economists there has been a growing interest on the study of the determinants of immigration policy. It remains unclear to what extent entry restrictions are able to control immigration flows. (Ortega, 2013: 4).

In the controlling effectiveness of immigration restriction policy makers plays a crucial role, it is unclear whether the same is true in the current context because in the past immigration restriction was easy since there was lack of transportation and communication costs and stronger economic incentives to migrate between poor and rich countries. (Ortega, 2013: 5). Now everything is entirely changed, instant communication, fast travelling and easy

communication have made immigration easier and globally comfortable.

## Globalization

Today, most of us think of international immigration as a problem, in need of a solution, a crisis crying out for attention. In proportion to world population, the number of global immigrants and the people living outside their country are equal to three percent of world population. (Kaushal, 2019: 1). The increase in immigration globally over the past quarter century is largely in line with the growth in world population. Thus, immigration has become one of the most divisive issues of our times.

Added to that globalization has greatly reduced cultural differences around the globe. It has brought the world closer and within our reach. (Harari, 2018: 119). However, due to tensions, conflicts and persecutions great number of people abandon their native and cross borders in search of better life. “nowhere are the problems more poignant than Europe.” (Harari, 2018: 119). The European union was built to transcend the cultural differences between French, Germans, Spanish and Greeks. Perhaps, it might collapse because of its inability to contain the cultural differences. The increase of refugees and immigrants produce mixed reactions between Europeans. Some Europeans say that Europe must shut their gates, and thus they betray Europe’s multicultural and tolerant ideals or are they just taking sensible steps to prevent disaster? Others call for opening the gates wider; are they faithful to the core European values? To deal with this problem of Europe Harari keeps three basic forms and terms and these three give rise to three forms of debates. (Harari, 2018: 119).

**Debate 1:** The first clause of the immigration deal says simply that the host country allows immigrants in; there are arguments for and against for this statement. On the one hand pro-

immigrationists would argue that the countries have moral duty to accept not just immigrants, but people from poverty-stricken areas who come in search of better livelihood. We are not people of primitive group who lived in same place, but we live in a globalized world. Each of us are responsible for the other. We should extend our solidarity to the needy. However, many pro-immigrationists stress that it is impossible to stop immigration, and no matter how many walls and fence we build desperate people will find a way through. So, it is better to legalize immigration and deal with it openly, than to create a conflict among ourselves (Harari, 2018: 120).

On the other hand, anti-immigrations vehemently defend the host country against invasion in the form migrants. They stress that if you use sufficient force, you can completely stop immigration. Since somebody suffers brutal persecution, you are not obliged to open your door. As for the migrants who seek the jobs and welfare, it is totally up to the host country whether it wants in or not, and under what conditions. The swedes have worked very hard and made numerous sacrifices in order to build a prosperous liberal democracy, and if the Syrians have failed to do the same, this is not the swedes fault. It is their right to refuse them entry. And if they do accept some immigrant, it should be absolutely clear that this is a favor Sweden extends rather than an obligation it fulfills. Moreover, what complicates the matter is that numerous countries turn a blind eye to illegal immigration, or even accept foreign workers on a temporary basis, because they want to benefit from foreigner's energy, talents and cheap labor (Harari, 2018: 120).

However, the countries refuse to legalize the status of these people saying that they don't want immigration. In the long run, it could create a hierarchical society, in which an upper-class citizen exploits an underclass of powerless foreigners, as happens today in Qatar and several other countries.as

long as this debate is not settled, it is extremely difficult to answer all the following questions about immigration. since, pro-immigrationists think that people have a right to immigrate to another country if they wish, and host countries have right to observe them. Anti-immigrationists see immigration as a privilege and absorption as a favor why to accuse of being racist or fascists, just because they refuse entry into their own country. (Harari,2018: 120).

**Debate 2:** The second clause of the immigration deal says that if they are allowed in, the immigrants have an obligation to assimilate into the local culture. (Harari, 2018: 122). But the question is how far should assimilation go? Should this assimilation mean that they should abandon their values and practices? Pro-immigrationists say that Europe itself is diverse and they have broad understanding of values and habits. Why should immigrants force to adhere some mythical identity that very few Europeans live up to? If Europe has any real core value, then these liberal values of tolerance and freedom, which imply that Europeans should show tolerance towards the immigrants, and allow them as much freedom as possible to follow their traditions, provided these do not harm the freedoms and rights of other people (Harari,2018: 122).

On the other hand, anti-immigrationists agree that tolerance and freedom are the most important European values and accuse of immigrants as people of intolerant and homophobia. If Europe allows in too many immigrants from the middle east, it will end up looking like the Middle East. Other anti-immigrationists go much further and pinpoint that a national community is far more than a collection of people who tolerate each other. Therefore, it is not enough that immigrants adhere to European standards of tolerance. They must also adapt the unique characteristics of the culture. (Harari, 2018: 122). By allowing the immigrants into the local culture is taking a great risk, if they neglect to

assimilate to the values of culture the host country may lose its identity.

**Debate 3:** Third clause of the immigration deal says that if immigrants indeed, make sincere effort to assimilate and in particular to adapt the value of tolerance, the host country is bound to treat them as first-class citizens. But exactly how much time it takes to pass before the immigrants become full members of the society. Pro-immigrationists tend to demand, a speedy acceptance, whereas anti-immigrationists want a much longer probation period. For the pro-immigrationists the third-generation immigrants must be treated as citizens whereas anti-immigrationists say that they must be patient. If your grandparents arrived here just forty years ago, and you now riot in the streets because you think you are not treated as a native, then you have failed the test. (Harari, 2018: 123).

The root issue of this debate concerns the gap between personal timescale and collective time scale. From the view point of human collectives, forty years is a short time because in past, it took centuries to assimilate foreigners and to make them equal citizens. From a personal view point, forty years can be an eternity who knows whether one live to see them get assimilated as citizens. After all these argument Harari gives a fourth debate as the culmination of all these arguments. (Harari, 2018: 123).

**Debate 4:** After all these disagreements regarding the exact definition of the immigration deal, the ultimate question is whether the deal is actually working. Are both sides living up to their obligations? Anti-immigrationists argue that the immigrants are not making a sincere effort to assimilate, and too many of them stick to intolerant and bigoted world views. But the pro-immigrationists reply that it is the host country that fails to fulfill its side, despite the honest efforts

made by the majority of the immigrants to assimilate. And worse still, these immigrants who successfully assimilate are still treated as second class citizens even in the second and third generations. It is of course possible that both sides are not living up to their commitments. (Harari,208: 124). And the fourth debate cannot be resolved before clarifying the exact definition of the three terms. As long as we do not know that absorption is a duty or a favor. And what level of assimilation is required from the immigrants. We cannot judge the two sides are fulfilling their conditions. When evaluating the immigration deal, both sides give far more weight to violations than to compliance. If a million immigrant are law-abiding citizens, but one hundred joins terrorists' groups and attack the host country, does it mean that on the whole the immigrants are complying with the terms of the deal or violating it? Yet underneath all these lurks a far more fundamental question, which concerns our understanding of human culture. Do we enter the immigration debate with the assumption that all cultures are inherently equal, or do we think that some cultures might well be superior to others? (Harari, 2018: 124). If so, how could the weak culture can have access by way of immigration. How can the superior culture can do justice to the inferior culture? Amid these immigration crises between countries, the crises of the immigrants and their state of life has been more alarming due to covid-19, we shall be kept updated by dealing with immigrants under covid-19.

### **Immigrants Under Covid-19**

The covid-19 pandemic comes at a crucial time of international migration. Just prior to the crisis, record-high flows were recorded in a number of countries and populations of immigrants and native born children of immigrants have grown virtually everywhere.it is well known fact that people with socio-economic disadvantages are easily get affected with chronic-disease which can increase the risk of these people more exposed to the COVID-19 in present context. On 24<sup>th</sup>

March, the government of India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi ordered a nationwide lockdown, limiting movement of the entire 1.3 billion population of India as a preventive measure against the COVID-19 pandemic in India. It was ordered a 14 hours of voluntary public restriction on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, and followed by that the enforcement of series of regulations in the country's COVID-19 affected regions made a huge impact on the lives of the poor and the labours. This nationwide lockdown and sudden suspension of all transport has left millions of migrants stranded in many parts of the country and even starvation and death. The helplessness from the part of the government has gripped the most vulnerable members of our society. The migrant workers were deprived of their livelihood and left with no alternative, they were forced to start a long march back home, often being forced to walk for hundreds of kilometers, with little children and their belongings. The history repeats; the brutal action of the police and other government officials in banning the interstate travel left the people in utter helplessness and in crisis.

Looking at immigrants from globally especially the study undertaken by OCED shows that 30 percentage immigrants live in relative poverty, compared with 20 percentage of natives. The immigrants most likely live in overcrowded place and poor housing conditions which likely to increase the infection of corona. (OCED: 2020). And more specially given that immigrants are more likely to live in extended cohabiting families. Alongside poor housing conditions, immigrants are also more likely to live in higher density buildings and neighbourhoods, which makes the respect of social distancing more difficult, perhaps, the only remedy we have for covid-19. In most of the countries immigrants are the ones who do the essential occupations that cannot be

undertaken from home, not only immigrants have to go to work, in some specific sectors. They also have to deal with difficult and unsafe working conditions with respect to the covid-19 transmission. We have for example; “In Germany, for instance, a coronavirus outbreak in a slaughterhouse spread to more than 1500 employees, the vast majority of whom were EU migrants, which triggered a local lockdown. Immigrants who vacated their country due to poverty and those are in unstable situation have higher risks of covid-19 transmission.” (OCED, 2020). given the situation, government must involve and bring relief to these brothers and sisters of ours by integrating them. Having seen trauma of immigrants, it is very apt to look at the role played by church in the lives of immigrants.

### **Church and Immigrants**

The catholic church always maintains the history in welcoming and assisting migrants and refugees. The catholic church pays an attention on the matter of the pastoral care of migrants through various documents issued from the universal magisterial service, that is our holy father’s message, apostolic letters and constitutions issued through the decades by what is now known as the pontifical council for the Pastoral care of migrants through the diocesan offices and religious orders and various Church organizations. The pastoral care of migrants is, therefore, a responsibility of the church. Perhaps that is what our Holy Father is trying to execute, From the moment he took up the charge, he has been more vibrant, and has become the voice of the excluded and marginalized. “He seriously denounces ‘Globalization of indifference’ and says a painful truth is that our world is becoming more and more elitist, crueller towards the excluded.” (O’ Connell: 2019). As Christians, we need to open wide our arms, welcoming and supporting the misery of the so many innocent people. “we cannot be indifferent to the tragedy of old and new forms of poverty” (Francis: 2019). one of the greatest commandment of Jesus is to love our neighbour

as ourselves, this means being firmly committed to building a more just world, in which everyone has access to the goods of the earth, in which all can develop as individuals and families, and in which fundamental rights and dignity are guaranteed to all. It also means being empathetic and sympathetic towards them. (O'Connell: 2019). Moreover, drawing close to them, touching their sores, and thus expressing the love of God through our acts of charity. The painful truth is, "today world is increasingly becoming more elitist and crueler towards the immigrants, the excluded of the society." (pope Francis: 2019). Developing countries continue to be drained of their best natural and human resources for the benefit of few privileged markets. War only affect some regions of the world, yet weapons of war are produced and sold in other regions which are then to take in the refugees generated by these conflicts. Those who pay the price are always the little ones, the poor, the most vulnerable, who are prevented from sitting at the table and left with the crumbs of the banquet. (O'Connell: 2019).

Today the culture of the comfort, makes us to think only for ourselves, makes us insensitive to the cries of the poor and excluded, which results in indifference to others, indeed, it even leads to the globalization of indifference. (O'Connell:2019). To combat this indifference, the Holy Father has been preaching to the humanity with the theme 'Brotherhood'. While speaking about the migrants, he often puts forward this question, "where is your brother?" Referencing the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis. I think the question continues as it is addressed to each one of us, because our migrant brothers and sisters sought 'a better place' for their families. But they sought to death. Though, the Holy Father often highlights the connections between issues like migration, Poverty, development and global power structures in *Evangelii Gaudium*, he writes;

Today, when the network and means of human communication have made unprecedented advances, we sense the challenge of finding and sharing a ‘mystique’ of living together, of mingling and encounter, of embracing and supporting one another, of stepping into his flood tide which, while chaotic, can become a genuine experience of Fraternity, a caravan of solidarity, a sacred pilgrimages. Greater possibilities for communication thus turn into greater possibilities for encounter and solidarity for everyone. If we were able to take this route, it would be so good, so soothing, so liberating and hope-filled. To go out of ourselves and to join others is healthy for us. To be self-enclosed is to taste the bitter poison of immanence and humanity will be worse for every selfish choice we make. (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 2013: 87).

The Holy Father has also discussed solidarity in the context of multiculturalism. And encourages the church to take on new commitment of solidarity, migration movements, in fact, call us to deepen and strengthen the values needed to guarantee peaceful coexistence between persons and cultures. (Kerwin: 2019). Thus, building a healthy society where everyone experiences God’s love and mercy by our attitudes. Having looked at migration from the perspective of the church, let us see what are the few laws or policies that facilitates the migrants.

### **Migration and Global Justice**

Contemporary conceptions of morality and justice in political philosophy are generally underpinned by the conviction that all human beings have equal moral dignity and worth. If human beings are morally equal then it seems reasonable to maintain their basic interests, which include sustenance and other human development needs. (Valadez, 2012: 2). As human beings, we need to go beyond ourselves and support the homeless and needy. The best way to do justice to the migrants is to implement a migration policy that accounts for the basic interests. It is

important to recognize the migration is an issue of global justice, for it involves the regulated movement of people across national boundaries. And the policy which integrates the immigrants as well as does no harm to the vision of host countries. “And the governments have roughly four policy options to address this anxiety; increase restrictions on immigrant entry; reduce emigration pressure by intervening in the sending countries through development aid and other means; accommodate immigrants and work toward their integration; and address the core causes other than immigration that are triggering the anxieties.” (Kaushal, 2019: 229). Eventually, in the words of Harari, it is impossible, to completely stop immigration, no matter how many walls and fences you build, desperate people will always find a way. It is better to legalize and deal with it openly than to create a vast underworld of human trafficking. (Harari, 2018: 120).

Having studied one of the serious crises of our time, it is very much necessary for the immigrant to abide by the law. This article briefly ran through the origin of immigration is an asset to the host country and at the same time a challenge to the local people as the natives are deprived of their opportunity. Moreover, how some of the countries made use immigration to accumulate wealth and prosperity. In recent history the influx increases of immigration to European countries has threatened the natives of their origin and culture. And the modern debates whether to integrate or to close the borders. Especially, “America under Donald Trump is leading the global opposition to immigration. perhaps, the united states have the best immigration system in the world. Even as some of the countries are trying to close their doors on immigration, others are adopting American immigration policy to attract immigrants.” (Neeraj, 2019: 228) This should give pause to those who

consider immigration to be the cause of all ills and encourage them to investigate the real causes of public anxiety and then determine whether their country would benefit or be hurt by restricting immigration.

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## **Meditate: Just Observe and Be**

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**Abstract:** Based on the article, “Mediation” from Yuval Noah Harari’s book, *21 Lessons For 21 Century*, the author explores the significance of mediation in one’s life. He presents to us whether mediation is something to do with mysticism and religion. Meditation, according to Harari has nothing to do with religion. The present article counter argues with Harari, asserting that mediation has its origin in religion. Meditation is also very much part of Christian prayer. The author also shows that meditation is inward journey towards peace and freedom. Meditation is very much a gateway to knowing the threefold reality - God, World and Human Person.

**Keywords:** Mediation as Calming the Wandering Mind, Mediation as Observance, Mediation as Self-Awareness, Meditation as Awakening, through Silence to Inner Peace, Cleansing the Mind, Consciousness is a Great Mystery, Careful Observation.

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## Introduction

“Blessed is the man [whose]...delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law, he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither.” Psalm 1:2-3

The practice of mediation is not about suppressing thought, but surpassing it. (Davich, 2018)

One fine day a little grasshopper happened to across a monk who was meditating. He hopped his way around the motionless monk for some time. He was struck by how calm, still and peaceful the monk appeared but he was not really sure what he was doing. The grasshopper hopped here and there, back and forth, keeping his eye on the monk and slowly gaining courage to get closer and closer until finally he was almost at the monk's side.

“Hello little grasshopper” the monk said in a warm and friendly manner. “How may I help you?”

“I have been watching you for some time and would like to know what it is you are doing?”

“Meditation, little grasshopper” said the monk “we meditate to calm our wandering minds”.

“Wandering minds,” the grasshopper repeated. “What do you mean?”

“Our minds can be like that of a little grasshopper that hops from place to place, always moving, never still and calm”

“Oh”, said the little grasshopper, trying hard to be still for a moment. “I like that. I would like to try to calm my wandering mind, and my wandering legs, for that matter. Do you think I could learn?”

“Of course, little grasshopper. It’s quite simple. We start by getting comfortable, then sitting with crossed legs and our backs straight, we close our eyes.”

The little grasshopper immediately sits down and after spending a little time working out how to cross its little legs, it closes its little eyes. A few moments pass before the grasshopper opens one eye and looks up at the still and calm monk. “But what now?” he asks a little impatiently.

The monk chuckles: “Steady little grasshopper, not so fast. When we close our eyes, we watch our breath, breathing in we are truly aware we are breathing in. Breathing Out we are truly aware we are breathing out”

“OK, that sounds pretty simple”, says the little grasshopper and does as the monk says, making himself comfortable again and crossing his little legs, he slowly closes his eyes and takes a deep in breath.

A few moments pass. “Wait!” shouts the grasshopper “I think it would be better to meditate over there on that lovely grass stalk” and off he hops. He jumps onto the blade of grass and looks around in satisfaction.

“Ok I’m ready now”

The monk and the grasshopper get themselves comfortable again, the monk crosses his legs and the little grasshopper does the same, they both slowly close their eyes and take a deep in breath.

A few more moments pass. “Wait!” Shouts the grasshopper “I think it would be better to meditate over there on that lovely rock” and off he hops. He jumps onto the rock and looks around in satisfaction.

“Ok I’m ready now”

The monk and the grasshopper once again make themselves comfortable the monk crosses his legs and the little grasshopper does the same, they both slowly close their eyes and take a deep in breath.

A few more moments pass. “Wait!” shouts the grasshopper. (Tapasa, 2020)

Our mind is like that of a grasshopper we read in the story. It is never at rest except in meditation. To control this restless mind is not an easy task. It demands a hell lot of efforts. Down through the centuries people have sat in meditation to tame this unsettled mind which they call it the, *monkey mind or mind-monkey*. Meditation is more than taming the *monkey-mind* it is becoming aware of the reality that envelopes us but most importantly becoming aware of oneself. Meditation teaches us to look within us. Since childhood, we have always been encouraged to examine things outside of ourselves; the emphasis has rarely been to search within ourselves. A meditation master and scholar who teaches all over the world, confirms that the true source of our happiness and well-being cannot be found outside of us – it comes from deep within. Meditation helps us examine ourselves gradually and methodically. As we gain a deeper sense of self awareness, we stop being strangers to ourselves and naturally develop more compassion, patience and resilience. And through meditation we imbibe the threefold reality – God/Divine, World and the Human Person.

### Coming in Touch with Ourselves

Through meditation we do come in touch with ourselves. Amidst this noisy world meditation helps us to really look into ourselves and know ourselves better. But this inward journey towards peace and freedom is rather a tough one as Dag Hammarskjöld, who travelled world-wide but still did not reach journey’s end in his inward exploration wrote, “The longest journey is the journey inward” (Hammarskjöld, 1985). Knowing ourselves better will lead us to loving ourselves and

others because we can truly love a person only when we know the person.

In and during meditation we just observe the reality without any judgement. Most of the time we are not aware of the things happening in and around us. We see things how we want to see them; we see things as they appear to be not as they are. When people ask the big questions of life, they usually have absolutely no interest in knowing when their breath is coming into their nostrils and when it is going out. Instead, they want to know things like what happens after you die. Yet the real enigma of life is not what happens after you die but what happens before you die. If you want to understand death, you need to understand life. To understand life, you need meditation.

### **Consciousness, Awakening and Self-awareness**

People sometimes turn meditation into a pursuit of special experiences *viz.*, of bliss and ecstasy. It is essential to remember that the aim of meditation is self-awareness, not a state of bliss that is free from problems and obstacles. If we simply seek ecstasy, and hope to avoid sorrow and suffering, then we are actually seeking the loss of ourselves. The ultimate aim of meditation is to remain grounded in self-awareness under all conditions of joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, gain and loss.

In truth, consciousness is the greatest mystery in the universe, and mundane feelings of heat and itching are bit as mysterious as feelings of rapture or cosmic oneness. The origin of consciousness is one of the great unanswered questions of our time. Although science has yet to come up with a definitive explanation, it is clear that we can raise our own state of consciousness. What, then, is the best method for doing this? Meditation!

Meditation in the sense is not 'switching off the mind' it is 'switching on the mind' it is awakening. Meditation is not a mere study of the mind, nor an escape from the reality rather it is observing and becoming aware of the reality. It's a journey to the

centre of our being, a process so perfectly natural that we do not have to learn how to meditate. As of now our scientific advancement has not reached to the level of observing the ‘mind’ and its activities directly. The only mind I can directly observe is my own. Psychologists are thought to have read minds but that cannot be true. Science cannot observe the mind it can only study the brain because we can never see the mind through the microscope or a brain scanner. Microscope, Brain Scanner and powerful computer devices enable us to detect biochemical and electrical activities in the brain, but they do not give us any access to the subjective experiences associated with these activities. No one has access to another’s mind.

In the absence of modern methods to directly observe the mind, some of the tools developed by premodern cultures to study the mind is meditation. “Several ancient cultures devoted a lot of attention to the study of mind, and they relied not on collecting second-hand reports, but on training people to observe their own minds systematically. The methods they developed are bunched together under the generic term ‘meditation’. Today this term is often associated with religion and mysticism, but in principle meditation is any method for direct observation of one’s own mind...Over the millennia humans have developed hundreds of meditation techniques, which differ in their principles and effectiveness.” (Harari, 2018) One such technique of meditation, *Vipassana* meaning introspection in Pali language, is said to have been discovered in ancient India by the Buddha. The technique of *Vipassana* is based on the insight that the flow of mind is closely interlinked with body sensations. During *Vipassana* meditation the students are asked not only to observe their breath but also the body sensations. Having discussed what meditation is let us now look at the difference between science and mediation.

## Science and Meditation

Science and meditation are like digging from both the ends. Meditation does not replace the studies of brain and the mind but it complements them. It's a bit like engineers excavating a tunnel through a huge mountain. Why dig from only one side? Better dig simultaneously from both ends. If the brain and the mind are indeed one and the same, the two tunnels are bound to meet. And if the brain and the mind are not the same? Then it is all the more important to dig into the mind, and not just into the brain (Harari, 2018).

Meditation does not come into conflict with scientific research. Instead, it has been another valuable tool in the scientific toolkit, especially when trying to understand the human mind. Science cannot decipher the mysteries of the mind due to lack of efficient tools. Many people, including scientists, tend to confuse the mind with the brain, but they are really very different things. The brain is matter but the mind is form. If the brain is concrete the mind is abstract. Finally, "the brain is a material network of neurons, synapses and biochemicals. While the mind is a flow of subjective experiences, such as pain, pleasure, anger and love. Some biologists assume that the brain somehow produces the mind, and that biochemical reactions in billions of neurons somehow produce experiences such as pain and love. However, so far, we have absolutely no explanation for how the mind emerges from the brain. How come when billions of neurons are firing electrical signals in a particular pattern, I feel pain, and when the neurons fire in a different pattern, I feel love? We haven't got a clue. Hence even if the mind indeed emerges from the brain, at least for now studying the mind is a different undertaking than studying the brain." (Harari, 2018)

In recent years scholars of both mind and brain have shown increasing interest in such meditation techniques, but most researchers have so far used this tool only indirectly. The typical

scientist does not actually practise meditation herself rather she invites experienced meditators to her laboratory, covers their heads with electrodes, asks them to meditate, and observes the resulting brain activities. This method can teach us many interesting things about the brain but if the aim is to understand the mind, we are missing some of the most important insights. As we have seen science too tries to decipher the human minds. In other words, it is also a ‘looking into ourselves,’ becoming aware of the inner life. Does meditation have anything to do with religion? Can Harari be true in saying that meditation has no religious connotation? In the following paragraph we shall discuss if meditation is helpful in the religious context.

### **Meditation in the Religious Context**

Today meditation is practised all over the world without any reference to religious context but the techniques remain as they were thousands of years earlier. Y. N. Harari opines, “Meditation is a tool for observing the mind directly” and that it has nothing to do with religion. (Harari, 2018) But many religions indeed made extensive use of various meditation techniques. For some religion meditation is a means to achieve liberation or *Nirvana* from bondage, *Karma* or even *Samsara*.

The primary aim of meditation in Hindu terms is to attain oneness with one’s soul (*atman*) and get in touch with *Brahman*, the omnipresent and almighty Hindu god, with ultimate goal being to reach the state of *Moksha* (*Nirvana* in Buddhism). Hindu scriptures describe certain postures (*yoga*) to attain a meditative state. There are numerous references of *yoga* and meditation found in ancient Indian scriptures such as the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Hindu meditation is called “*dhyana*.” The purpose of “*dhyana*” is to become consciously aware of or investigate into one’s own mind and body to know oneself. “*Dhyana*” is a Sanskrit word.

“*Dhī*” means receptacle or the mind and “*yana*” means moving or going. Dhyana means journey or movement of the mind. According to Hindu tradition, the human mind has the creative potency of God. You become what you think. (Jayaram, 2019).

The *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali (c. 200 CE) defines *Yoga* as the restraint of the fluctuations of the mind. The application of *Yoga* allows the gradual diminishment of karmic influences, referred to as seeds (*bīja*) or residues (*saṃskāra*). *Yoga* specifies five aspects of defilement that must be controlled: ignorance, egoism, attraction, repulsion, and a desire for life to continue. By following the practices of *Yoga*, including meditation, *karma* dissipates. The practitioner reshapes his or her identity, abandoning attachment to fixed behaviours. By drawing inward, one reaches deeper self-understanding and approaches a state of lucidity and purification. Numerous meditation practices can be found in the texts of *Yoga*, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. (Jayaram)

Patañjali defines *Īśvara*, sometimes referred to as a deity, as a special soul or *purusa* (spirit) who has never been tainted by the actions of *karma*. By fashioning such an ideal through the imagination, one can then strive to emulate this rarefied being. For a *Jaina*, this state of *Īśvara* is symbolized through the twenty-four great teachers (*Tīrthankāra*). For a Buddhist, Lord Buddha serves the same function. In the Hindu *bhakti* or devotional tradition, fixing one’s attention on any one of a variety of deities can result in *karmic* purification. For the Sikhs, the highest soul cannot be named and exists outside time (*akal*). However, the ten Sikh *gurus*, beginning with Guru Nanak, serve as objects of worship because of their teachings. Patañjali, through his concept of chosen deity, suggests that the meditative procedures engaged in order to purify oneself carry more significance than the actual object of one’s meditation. (Jayaram, 2019)

Buddhist concept of meditation is closely associated with the religion and philosophy of Buddhism. It is presumption of historians

that the basic idea of meditation passed to Buddhism from Hinduism, as the founder of Buddhism himself was a Hindu, before attaining *Moksha*. The Buddhist ideology and practices of meditation are preserved in ancient Buddhist texts. In Buddhism meditation is considered as part of the path towards *nirvana*. Gautama Buddha has said to have detected two important mental qualities that arise from practicing meditation. These are; serenity or tranquillity that composes and concentrates the mind and insight which enables the practitioner to explore the five aspects that constitute the sentient being, namely – matter, sensation, perception, mental formation, and consciousness. (Napier, 2019)

References of meditation are also found in Torah of Judaism. In Genesis (24: 63) we read, “(Isaac)...went out to the field one evening to meditate” As we find so many verses in regarding mediation. In Christianity meditation is used to mean a form of prayer where the believers concentrate upon the revelations of God. In the present context the focus will be made on the differences between Christian meditation, Hindu meditation and Buddhist meditation.

It is true that Christians too meditate but slightly different from the Hindu or Buddhist or from Zen meditation. Christians do not meditate to attain liberation or *nirvana* from *Karmic* bondage. Meditation in the Biblical sense is focused on thinking about the things that God would think about. The things that would be ‘worthy of praise.’ In doing this, we would fix our thoughts on the things of God’s Kingdom. When we look at the bible, meditation is not about clearing our minds. It is about filling our minds with the presence of God, His kingdom, and what a breakthrough can look like in our lives.

Christian meditation is a form of prayer in which a structured attempt is made to become aware of and reflect upon the revelations of God. Christian meditation is the process of deliberately focusing on specific thoughts (such as a Bible passage) and reflecting on their meaning in the context of the love of God. Christian meditation aims to heighten the personal relationship based on the love of God that marks Christian communion. Like anything, mindfulness can be misused. Meditation in its basic form has origins in the Bible. The Bible is necessary and helpful for the believer to concentrate and embed the doctrines, law, and testimony vital for our spirituality. However, Buddhist

Meditation is something that emerged from the established religion. We were invariably taught to look outside to know, but meditation teaches us to look within us and help us to realise that what we look for outside is actually within us. Thus, meditation is self-awareness, helps us come in touch with ourselves and the Divine.

meditation often involves mantras which edify the gods of either Buddhism or Hinduism. Meditating on and chanting a word or phrase praising or seeking a false deity is contrary to the principles of Christianity. However, meditation itself does not automatically contradict the Christian faith. We just need to make sure we approach it in a wise, biblical way. Meditation is very much part and parcel of religion especially in, Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism. (Heimbigner, 2020)

As we have seen meditation is very much part of the religion. Meditation has its origin in religion. In all of the religions we have discussed, the ultimate goal is to make oneself aware of the threefold reality- the God, World and Human person. While coming to know one of the three realities we come to know all the threefold reality.

## **a. Finding God in Silence**

*“Be still and know that I am God.”* Psalms 46: 10

In Christian traditions monks sat in silence mediating upon the Word of God. I have been in a Benedictine Monastery in Bangalore for two years. I have seen the daily routine of a monk's life. Meditation is part and parcel of a monk's life. In the monastery where I stayed, they meditated twice in a day. Once in the morning after the *lauds* was prayed and then in the evening after the vespers was chanted. Meditating in sheer silence is a must. I remember superior of the house who they addressed as, “Abbot” would say, “It is not enough to sit in the quiet place you need to quieten your heart and mind as well.” True, God speaks to us in many different ways but He finds it easier to speak to us when we prepare to listen to Him. This is what we do in meditation we sit in silence meditating upon the Word of God and God reveals many things to individuals as he or she sits in meditation.

## **b. A Tranquil Mind**

Under all of the mind's noise is a quiet place. By training our mind, in meditation, to be highly-conscious of just one thing — such as deep controlled breathing, great things begin to happen. The mind becomes tamer. Incessant mind chatter slows to a halt. And an incredible new mindful awareness will permeate your day-to-day activities. A tranquil mind is a recipe for a happy, full life

Mother Teresa tells us, “God cannot be found in noise and restlessness.” She then tells us, “If we really want to pray, we must first learn to listen: for in the silence of the heart God speaks.” We are reminded of the Book of First Kings where Elijah meets God in the in the “sheer silence” (1 Kings 19: 11-13). Silence is where it happens. Silence is where we learn about

ourselves. Silence is where we find God. It is through silence and meditation we find God and by coming to know the Creator we come to know ourselves better.

## Conclusion

*“May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the Lord.”* — Psalm 104:34

Meditation comprises a comprehensive system of purification that regardless of the particular theological context or philosophical point of view, serves to diminish negative *karma* and bring about states of equanimity. Meditation is one of the most effective ways to cleanse our mind. It is a sacred space that provides the opportunity to sit with oneself, your thoughts, your higher being, and just be – Be in the moment. In this noisy world we are never settled, we are never in the present moment we are either in the past or future, nostalgia or fantasy, experience or transcendence. Only a few people – mediators know how to tap the moment and live in the present. Through this meditation we begin to tame our mind, we become aware of ourselves and it gives a clarity for the purpose of our life.

*The Governor on his travels stepped in to pay homage to the Master. “Affairs of State leave me no time for lengthy dissertations,” he said. “Could you put the essence of religion into a paragraph or two for a busy man like me?”*

*“I shall put it into a single word for the benefit of Your Highness.”*

*“Incredible! What is that unusual word?”*

*“Silence.”*

*“And what is the way to Silence?”*

*“Meditation.”*

*“And what, may I ask, is meditation?”*

*“Silence.”* (D’Mello, 1985)

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