

UNDERSTANDING KNOWLEDGE THE MIND FLASHES AND THE DICHOTOMY OF MIND - BODY RELATION: A COGNITIVE APPROACH

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Abstract: We know the thoughts or ideas the mind flashes. We impose them on the things-in-themselves inside or out and infer the later as the ontic substratum of the former. Philosophical reflections are confined to the objects the mind flashes that are confined to the thoughts or intelligible beings of the language and the meaning it expresses non-differently. Consciousness on human level is self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is understood as an organic whole of the association of Intellect (buddhi), ego (ahaṁkāra) and citta (mana). It comprises all the powers and activities of the system of intellect, ego and psychic (citta) that we call self-consciousness. By Self-consciousness we mean the awareness of itself and of the flashings of objects i.e., substances, qualities, etc. It is on the basis of differences of objects the mind flashes, sources that instrument it to flash and the analytic skill that perceives levels and divides an indivisible awareness that it is understood at different levels and kinds of consciousness like knower, knowable, knowing, representative, descriptive, emotive, rational, reflective and so on so forth. However, they all are different type of functions the self-conscious mind flashes. It is because of humans as self-conscious being that what is outside is known inside as intelligible beings. It is flashing-consciousness that being manifested through the data the senses pass reveals or expresses the objects. The whole material elements from grossest to subtlest sheaths including citta are the products of the prakṛti (the principle of matter). It is by taking the intelligible objects it expresses that mind is self-consciousness. It expresses equally the real and the unreal, existence and negation. All that it expresses are intelligible beings that we call objects-proper of knowledge. This paper is a new insight into the understanding of mind and on the basis of that the age-long controversy of nature and function of the mind and the dichotomy of the mind- body relation is resolved. Thus, the presentation here in is important not only for philosophy that concerns with the freedom of thought from our ontic, physiological, psychological and any such perspective that make our thoughts captive but in making new statements that knowledge is infused by language and hence determinate.¹

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¹ The basic reality is not one that is material or immaterial that is consciousness but both. Opposite to matter the latter is, quantityless, extensionless, action or motionless and sequenceless. Positively, both are independent, all-pervading and present everywhere unlimited or being limited by none. The former is extension everywhere and the latter by nature is extensionless is eternally present everywhere there is extension and beyond. The matter/body performs all different activities in its extensionless presence. Matter in its all forms is extension, spacio-temporal and can take different forms and function for all of its process of birth, existence, growth, increase, decrease and decay only in the presence of the latter. In other words, consciousness is ubiquitous principle but it can flash only through body and we know only its flashings that are thought or intelligible beings. At empirical level it is flashing consciousness/ thought/mind and at trans-empirical level it is knowledge-itself or pure consciousness. The flash of consciousness at both metaphysical and epistemological levels is

I. Disinterested and Interested Knowledge

Since knowledge is expressed and is infused by language it is determinate. “Knowledge is determinate” is a very general statement applied to disinterested and interested knowledge as well. However, there is difference between the two.

1. Knowledge is that the mind flashes. The mind flashes beings and non-beings as well and we know them directly as and when the language presents them so. It is what we mean “disinterested knowledge.”²

2. The disinterested knowledge when imposed on our interests and allegiances is interested knowledge.

By disinterested knowledge we mean the knowledge expressed directly by language. We by perception, practice and habit impose it on the objects of our interests, intentions and infatuations with things ontic in nature and our allegiances to them. We term it interested knowledge. In case of the former the language is expresser while in case of the latter language is representation, reference, designation or pointer to the things outside it. We are so habitual that very often we overlook the difference of disinterested knowledge and confuse it disinterested and argue about the objectivity of interested knowledge.

II. Knowledge is the cause of incentive proper of our duties/action

Knowledge expressed directly by the language is the cause of proper incentive to duties/action. Here lies the honesty of our knowledge, it being the cause of incentive to duties/actions performed on the basis of the incentive proper caused by the knowledge expressed directly by language. It is dishonest if there is any deviation or imposition at any level of the three i.e., knowledge expressed, incentive cause by it and the duties performed accordingly. On the basis of this logic the former cases of

extensionless and is not limited by extension. The former is specio-temporal while the later is independent from space-and time. Matter can produce nothing without the presence of the mind and mind can flash and know the flashings only through the body that comprises forms shape, sizes, gross and subtle that is perceived by senses and serve as the instrument in the manifestation of the mind to flash. self- consciousness, mind or thought is philosophically highly important because the body/matter functions for creation only in its presence and that it serves as the cause of incentive to prompt our actions/duties as well. Being flashing – consciousness, it has spiritual significance.

² Materialist’s may say that mind is a product of mater that flashes while for the spiritualists the all-pervading pure-consciousness is eternally present everywhere that flash as the thought through the mind, the body organism. Spiritualists accept that pure-conscious Reality is not the object of philosophical reflection. However, both accept that flashings/thoughts are not material.

conducts are called morally good and the latter that involves deviation at any of the levels is immoral/bad.

That flashes by the mind are intelligible beings/objects i.e., the intelligible being of language and the meaning it expresses directly, independently and non-differently. Out of these the intelligible being of language is imposed on our articulations/writings-marks/gestures and that of meaning on the entities external to language. In the scheme interested knowledge we impose the flashings on the mind as ontic substratum of the knowledge. Unless we understand the nature of knowledge the mind flashes directly and differentiate it from the interested on which we impose the former, we cannot find out the incentive proper of our duties. We are so habitual of doing with our desires and interests that we very often overlook the incentive proper of the duties. We do not differentiate the incentive caused by disinterested knowledge and that imposed on our interests and fight on good and bad, right and wrong of incentives and the duties performed on the basis of interested knowledge.

Ubiquity and Shareability of Knowledge: It is because of being self-consciousness that humans are reflecting beings. Reflecting is an occasional activity of rare minds. When it confronts with a problem it reflects to resolve that. Philosophy concerns with intelligible objects of awareness in nature. It is a cognitive activity par excellence. Since self-consciousness is ubiquitous principle of humans, the objectivity, sociability and shareability of knowledge by language in this sense cannot be denied. After this brief note about the function of self-consciousness, mind and the objects it flashes let us shift to discuss the mind-body dichotomy.

Theories of Mind and knowledge: Is mind a bio-Machine of Knowledge: Mind is understood differently by scientists and philosophers as a bio-machine that produces knowledge, a system of innate knowledge or ideas,³ a bundle of ideas,⁴ a faculty that constructs knowledge on the basis of its apriori categories as forms and the experiences we acquire by senses as the material⁵ and likewise. Concentrating on humans as the self-conscious being we observe that mind is not a machine that produces knowledge; it is not like a factory that manufactures knowledge and knowledge is not a product. Knowledge is not a physiological, psychological or any

³ We find culmination of rationalism in Gottfried Leibnitz. For him truths are innate and the mind can directly grasp those truths.

⁴ We find culmination of empiricism in David Hume for him mind is nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions united together by certain relation and supposed, though falsely, to be endowed with a perfect simplicity and identity. Treatise of human nature, book I.

⁵ For Immanuel Kant, a critical Philosopher knowledge is constructed by the shared collaboration of mind that is the transcendental categories and the sensory data that is material acquired by sense perception. The concept without sensation is blind and the sensations without concepts are lame. *Unlike Kant the concept for us is not given. It is what the mind flashes and it flashes always in present. Sense-perception is only instrumental that helps in channelizing flashing of that is instrumented*

kind of entity as well. Humans are self –conscious beings and the mind is naturally a flashing consciousness.

Analogy in understanding flashing of consciousness or mind: We can understand the working of mind – body with the analogy of working of soft and hard wares in the presence of electric current. It is like the system of switch of/on and the fuse/defuse of the tungsten wire connected/disconnected with the bulb that in the presence of electric it burns flashes/ do not flash light. Mind is a flashing consciousness; its flashings are lights of consciousness. It flashes always in present. All flashings are new and there are no simultaneous flashings.

Mind Flashes always in present. Even memory and predictions flash so only in present. The nature of synchronizing function or happenings of self- consciousness is such that it flashes only in the present and the next flash of which the earlier becomes the past, is a part of memory. Memory becomes a part of its braininess only because of mind being self- consciousness. Mind does not exhaust in one or many of its flashings. Even memory is known so only when it flashes in present. Future predictions flash also in present. The objects that it flashes are intelligible beings of awareness in nature.

Difference between the knowledge and the objects of knowledge. It is because of being self-conscious that humans are called minded-being. We are using the term mind for self-consciousness that in brief is flashing consciousness. *Self-consciousness is awareness of the objects it flashes and of itself as well* because of which we make a distinction between knowledge and the objects of that knowledge. There is no ‘otherness’ in the knowledge while the objects of that knowledge may be the object in some other knowledge as well. No simultaneous flashing is possible and no two flashings are common and the same. All are new, discrete and determinate flashings. It is by taking the objects it flashes that it is self-consciousness.

Difference between the objects of sense-perception and intelligible objects. The objects the mind flashes are intelligible beings to which our cognition is confined. Mind as bio-organ is the object to which bio-scientists occupy. Philosopher’s task is confined to objects the mind flashes and to which our knowledge is confined. In between the two level – objects i. external or things-in themselves the senses perceive and ii. the intelligible objects the mind flashes the later is imposed on the former and is known by inference as the ontic substratum of the latter that is expressed by the language/word. We perceive things-in-themselves but do not perceive the intelligible objects and we know the intelligible beings and infer the things in-themselves. Our knowledge is confined to the intelligible objects the mind flash and the sensory perception of the external objects serve only instrumental in the flashing of intelligible objects the language expresses.

Production of articulate utterances, need of cultivation of mind and senses: Philosophy perceives i. the intelligible being of language that flashes directly and it is the nature of awareness and ii. the articulate utterances/gestures/written marks/signs and symbols that are material in nature and are perceived by senses. The former is concept because those flashes only in present while the latter is only instrumental in

flashing of the latter and the knowledge is expressed always by the former. The latter has convention and history while the latter is awareness that is always present.

Since the sense- data acquired by all the senses including verbal- articulations (dhvaniyān) and written- marks (lipiyān) are instrumental in making the mind flash the specific thought they instrument to flash; we emphasize the cultivation of senses and verbal- articulations⁶ also. For instance, unless the throat (kanṭha) of the child is not matured he cannot speak and similar is the case with working of other senses.

⁶ An account of the popular theories on the controversy of Mind -Body Relation follows

i. Interactionism is the theory of Rene Descartes according to which the mind and the matter are substances having opposite characters. The matter is extension and opposite to it the mind is extensionless consciousness. Pineal gland is its seat in the brain through which the mind and body acts and reacts or interacts on each other. Body acts mutually on mind as sensations and the mind acts on body as volitions.

ii. Occasionalism: Nicolas Malebranche thinks that having opposite character the mind and the body cannot interact with one another despite that there is correspondence between them and that is by God. If there is some change in body the God creates sensations corresponding to that change in body and the vice versa.

iii. Parallelism: for Benedict Spinoza thinking substances (mind) and the extended substances (matter) are one and the something comprehended now through this and now through those attributes. There is perfect correspondence in between the two parallel attributes of the same substance. Following theories very close to parallelism response the dichotomy in their own way.

a. Psycho-physical parallelism of G.F Stout does not accept any cause –effect relation between sensations of mind and the movement of the body. Both of the events happen simultaneously. There is mental activity with all sorts of brain movement.

b. Matter stuff theory of William K. Clifford is close to Stout theory. Each atom of matter stuff is combined with atom of mental stuff.

c. Double –aspect theory of H. C. Warren that is known as identity theory believes that neural and mental processes make a sequence of events. They are the two aspects of the same thing. The neural process is external and the mental is internal.

d. Neural Monism In world there are things on which the organism does not react and those on which it specifically reacts. The former is material and the later is called mental. It means the physical is called mental in relation to neuro -system that reacts on that. But this theory like other theories does not make a difference between the mind and matter.

iv. Pre-established harmony of G. Wilhelm Leibnitz accepts monads are conscious atoms of different levels from super to unconscious. However, all are of the same nature they are independent and they do not interact to each other. Like the expert technician who fixes a harmony mechanism because of which all independent watches indicate same time, God, the Super monad in the beginning of the world pre-established a harmony of correspondence because of which the body and the mind monads correspondence each other.

v. Epiphenomenalism: Materialists accept that mind is a by-product of function of brain and that in no way the mind affects or re-acts the physical movements.

vi. Idealists accept the conscious principle as the absolute substance of which everything in the world including our mind and body are manifestations. It is because of same substance that the effect of the mental proves its effectuation on the physical.

Controversial views on the Dichotomy of relation between the Mind and the Matter. The problem of relation of mind and body has been made a very critical and controversial issue in Indian and Western Philosophy. The interactionism of Rene Descartes, parallelism of Spinoza, pre-established harmony of Leibnitz, occasionalism and other solutions of mind-body relation differing from each other have made the issue more controversial.⁷ This has led the rationalist to accept that mind is innately empowered with all knowledge and opposite to them empiricist to accept mind as tabula rasa that is constructed only as the bundle of impressions acquired by sense-experiences and ideas formed on their basis. Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant accepts knowledge a synthesis of the apriori categories that are transcendental to sense experience and the sense-experiences. According to him the mind though it is transcendental or apriori categories are the forms that construct the knowledge from the empirical experiences that are materials of knowledge. However, as we have observed that mind does not work as a construction company and the knowledge is not a constructed product of it. Philosophically theories given so far to solve the problem of knowledge by solving mind-body dichotomy are attempts to understand the role of mind and body for knowledge. They are deviated views based on overlooking the independence and all-pervading nature of the mind (thought) and body(extension). It is all a waste of time and labor rooted in misperceiving and misunderstanding of the nature of mind and body.

Logic of independence of thought (non-extension) and the body (extension): Mind is extension-less and body is extension. Both are independent and at the sometime all pervasive. We take mind in a sense different from its Western

vii. Theory of emergence: Gradually the organization of atoms produced matter and the organization of matter produced life. The organization of cells of the life formed neuro-system and then the mind emerges from life. Thus, the mind and body are not at the same level of development. The fruition or perfection of body is called mind. Mind is something which the body achieves or which nature achieves by means of body (Introduction to Philosophy, Patrick, p.299). Mind governs the body that is governed only. Mind comperes the bodily actions.

⁷ How do utterances (dhvaniyān) emerge from bodily effort and incentive from intelligible -being of language (sphoṭa)? Our answer to this issue accounts to the teachings concerning emergence of verbal-noises/utterances as given in Pāṇini-śikṣā according to which the intelligible-object the mind flashes cause the incentive to give expression. By the incentive caused by sphoṭa the intellect strikes at the digestive energy center (Jātharāgni) that prompts to set the breath in motion. Stirred breath moves upward fast from the navel to the head through the throat. Knocked down from the top of the head the air vibrating the vocal organs by their friction takes a turn down to the mouth from where it is externalized in sequence. Vibrations are externalized in sequence through the mouth. Distinction of centers of speaking organ that produce vibrations by the friction of them with air is the basis of making the distinction of verbal utterances/noises. Vibrations when externalized by speaking organs reaches to the ears of the hearers and the ears transform them into verbal- noises. As we are so accustomed and habitual in the act of speaking and hearing that we do not mind these cognitive subtleties operative in the emergence of verbal-noises/utterance. Pāṇini-śikṣā verse 6-7.

counterpart. Mind is not a machine or genetic part of the body (brain) that produces or that constructs knowledge and the knowledge is not a product or constructed item. Consciousness is the light, the awareness by nature having no extension and is all pervasive at the same time.

Body/matter by nature is extension; it pervades the whole body that is cosmos/space. They by nature cannot limit each other. We view that even in case of pervasiveness of both it is justified to accept that they are independent to each other. Consciousness has no extension and not confined to any boundary of the extension. The conscious-light is not dependent on matter but at self-conscious humans it can flash through the bodily gestures/language that is only instrumental in manifestation. It channelizes the flashing of the object instrumented so by material entities. If the idea or thought 'let me up by right hand up' flashes I keep my right hand up. Flashing of the mind are thoughts because of which it is self-conscious that is everywhere pervading the extended bodies and extensionless beyond. Thought is not a part of body that is extension. It is non-extension that is not limited by any extension.

The logic of all pervasiveness of two independent realities: The extension nature of the matter and extension-lessness of the consciousness may be opposite but do not contradict each other. Consciousness by nature cannot be limited and the body being extension is not limited by any extension or non-extension because that too will be an extension and there is no question of limiting by an extensionless conscious reality. It is because of its pervasiveness that the presence of the light is not restricted or limited by the body and so is body/extension by the extensionless thought. Thought has no extension that is the reason all thoughts are independent and thus they do not limit each other. The matter has no thought and the consciousness or thought has no extension. Thus, the logic of all pervasiveness of thought/consciousness and that of matter pervading all that is extended does not affect the independence and presence of both at a time and space. The thought being extensionless cannot limit the extension/body and the latter cannot limit the former because of two reasons i. the body is extension by nature and ii because the thought is extensionless by nature. Thus, the pervasiveness of both neither limits any not the question of dependency of one on the other arises. They are not dependent on one another. There is no question of their relative existence because both are independent from each other by nature.

Does mere presence of consciousness/thought without reacting or corresponding with body serve as relation between the two independent and pervasive realities? Both are real and all-pervasive. By their own nature they do not limit to each other and thus are independent. The later is awareness by nature that by nature cannot and need not be channelized and the former that is matter/extension by nature is channelized only in the presence of extensionless light that is consciousness. This channelizing of the body-principle (prakṛti) produces citta a subtle body comprising of intellect, ego and psyche that has flashing nature and is popularly called mind. Mind is self-consciousness/thought are its flashings. The mind does not exhaust in one or many of its flashings because of its own self-conscious nature that flashes

through the body when confronts with any problem. Self-consciousness is awareness of itself and the objects it flashes.

III. Metaphysical position of Self-consciousness in Sāṃkhya Philosophy

We can interpret the issue from metaphysical perspective as well. Like conscious-principle, the matter-principle is also eternal but unlike the former it by nature is dynamic; its qualities are channelized in the presence of light that is knowledge (jñā-puruṣa in Sāṃkhya System). Through the bodily organ we call scheme of flashing for which mind may be a product of matter (extension), is flashing consciousness. It flashes the thoughts that are extensionless. Taking its flashings of the object that consciousness becomes self-conscious that is actually extensionless. Mind is radiance of the brain that is originally subtle matter the flashings of which are thoughts that are object of awareness or conscious and as such it is extension-less.

Metaphysical position of Self-consciousness in Advaita Vedanta: Advaita Vedantin's metaphysical scheme of all elements in the gradual growth of material-principle from grossest annamaya (sensory-consciousness), prāṇamaya (vital-consciousness), manomaya (intelligence), to subtle vijñānamaya (self-conscious) and ānandamaya (blissful) sheaths (kośas)⁸ are excellent indications to understand the relation between mind and matter. Self-consciousness and blissful sheaths of the body are not all pervaded Brahman-consciousness but developed subtlest forms of matter that flash extension-less thoughts.

The perspective of Advaita Vedanta and Sāṃkhya system on dichotomy of mind-body relation. Only in the constant presence of pure-conscious- Brahman in case of Advaita Vedanta and jñā-puruṣa in Sāṃkhya-system that the prime- matter acts on for its creativity. The material principle involves in its creative process that begins with birth, growth, Change and death and the same process from death to birth continues till the dawn of discriminate pure- knowledge.

Why should we accept the constant presence of pure consciousness if we are better situated with materialistic response of dichotomy of thought and body/matter? A simple response is that if there is no constant presence of pure-consciousness, the body/ matter (prakṛti) even though it is dynamic, it cannot perform its creativity in a way to permit the light or flashing of consciousness like the rotating of earth that permits/prevents sun light. Not only that we observe a teleological scheme in the gradual development of matter that is directed towards in sequence of annamaya, vital (prāṇamaya), conscious (manomaya), self-consciousness(vijñānamaya) and blissful conscious (ānandamaya) sheaths.

⁸ Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, Śāṅkarācārya, Verses 156-213 are a precise description on these sheaths.

IV. Self-consciousness is Cultural Consciousness

Mind is taken by us as self-consciousness that flashes extension-less thoughts. We do not need any logical device for explain objectivity, sociality, and shareability of knowledge. Self-consciousness is ubiquitous-principle of humans and it flashes through the structural body-organism comprising of annamaya, prāṇamaya and manomaya sheaths and therefore the objects of knowledge it flashes is inbuilt cultural and thus self-consciousness is cultural - consciousness as well.

For us mind is self-conscious organism that at human level is fit naturally to flash/express all that is there outside cultural diversity and inside creativity. It is flashing consciousness. Cultivation of the flashing consciousness or mind by training and education makes its self – conscious adequately mature for flashing whenever it confronts with any problem. Laziness is the lacking of cultivation of senses and the mind that gives rise to copying and all sorts of dishonesty.

Conclusion

Metaphysically, there is no trouble in accepting that both the mind and the matter are similar so far, they are independent existences and all pervasive. They are dissimilar in the sense that conscious-principle is totally void of the extension, change, creativity and the qualities of matter- principle. Philosophically, it is a wonderful realization to observe that body organism is the medium through which the self-consciousness flashes. Self-consciousness or mind is inferred as the ontic substratum of the flashings/thoughts and thoughts are not metaphysical entity; it is cognitive being of awareness in nature. Bodies are material while the thought it flashes is spiritual. We know the thoughts as the mind flashes and the bodies are inferred as the ontic substratum of the thoughts. For Materialist's mind is a product of mater that flashes while it for the spiritualists is all-pervading pure-consciousness. It is eternally present everywhere that flash as the thought through the mind, the body organism. Spiritualist's accepts that pure-conscious Reality is not the object of philosophical reflection. However, both accept that flashings/thoughts are not material. In the light of above observation, we found that not only the Western theorists' solutions to the problem of duality of the mind and the matter but also all the aphorism of Vādarāyaṇa in Brahmasūtra⁹ and their interpretations given by Advaita Vedanta and other schools

⁹ From Aphorism 1 to 10, Adyāya 2, Pāda 2 of Brahmasūtra, sage Vādrāyaṇa argues against Sāṃkhya theory of creation of world by the material principle (pradhāna). All his arguments in aphorism aim at refuting the possibility of creation by the prime-matter and relation between the differences between two substances namely mind and matter having opposite character. In his mission he has completely overlooked the two types of puruṣa i. the transcendental or pure consciousness (Jñā-puruṣa) and ii. Phenomenal or self-conscious humans (puruṣa). Great commentators have justified the stand of the sage. Throughout arguing for refutation of creation they missed to perceive that Puruṣa that is Minded or phenomenal being is a product of the

for refutation of dualists' arguments about relation between the mind and the matter stand baseless.

Prime-matter. Like Brahman of Advaita Vedanta pure conscious puruṣa of the Sāṃkhya philosophy is eternal, independent of any creation. However, we are of the view that the process of creation by the prime matter can take place only in the eternal presence of the transcendental puruṣa. With the infatuation of their own theory of creation by God Vedantins overlooked that Jñā-Puruṣa is different not only from the minded -puruṣa but from the matter-principle also. Any attempt to unnecessarily involving a linking power like God for solving a dichotomy of relation between mind and matter is not just with the problem.