

"The essence of all beautiful art, all great art, is gratitude."

SOME PROBLEMS IN PHILOSOPHY	
GREAT	NOT SO GREAT
DESCARTES: THE COGITO	THE MIND-BODY SPLIT
SPINOZA: GOD IS NATURE	NATURE IS GOD
LEIBNIZ: MONADS	MONADS DON'T EXIST
HUME: EXPERIENCE	IS THAT ALL THERE IS?
KANT: ENLIGHTENMENT	KIND OF A KNOW-IT-ALL, DON'T YOU THINK? AND WHAT THE HELL IS A TRANSCENDENTAL EGG, ANYWAY?
HEGEL: DIALECTICS, HISTORY	TOO RATIONAL — HISTORY IS BORING
KIERKEGAARD: DOUBT	A NERVOUS WRECK
PEIRCE: AMERICA'S GREATEST PHILOSOPHER? PRAGMATISM, SEMIOTICS	RIGHT PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME — AMERICA NOT IMPORTANT BACK THEN.
NIETZSCHE: GOD IS DEAD & OTHER REVOLUTIONARY, CREATIVE IDEAS	ÜBERMENSCH SOUNDING GOOD TO NAZIS AND USED FOR EVIL PURPOSES
HUSSERL: THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL REDUCTION	EVERYTHING INTERESTING BRACKETED AWAY
HEIDEGGER: DASEIN — SUCH A BEAUTIFUL, COMPLEX THING TO THINK ABOUT	NATIONALISM, ANTI-SEMITISM, AND WEIRDO-SPIRITUALISM REALLY FUCK THE WHOLE THING UP.
WITTGENSTEIN: LOGIC, LANGUAGE, THE MIND, & COLOR!	"PHILOSOPHY OF MIND" BY A GUY WHO IS PERPETUALLY IN A REALLY BAD MOOD
ADORNO: CRITICAL THEORY — & A MUSIC LOVER!	SO NEGATIVE — A DOWNER — & HE REALLY MISSED THE BOAT WITH JAZZ!
SARTRE: EXISTENTIALISM — RADICAL FREEDOM	CONCEITED + DISDAINFUL — HE HATES US!
MERLEAU-PONTY: SENSATIONS	DROPPED DEAD BEFORE HE GOT PAST THE SENSATIONS
FOUCAULT: STUDIES SEXY STUFF — & HE'S GAY!	PARANOID & PHALLOCENTRIC
DELEUZE: THE PLANE OF IMMANENCE — "ARTISTS' FAVORITE PHILOSOPHER"	MANIC FRENCH STUFF THAT SERIOUS-MINDED GERMANS CAN'T TAKE SERIOUSLY
DERRIDA: DIFFERENCE	WOULD IT REALLY UNDERMINE THE WHOLE PROJECT IF HE JUST WROTE A LITTLE MORE CLEARLY, FOR CRISSAKE?

PS.

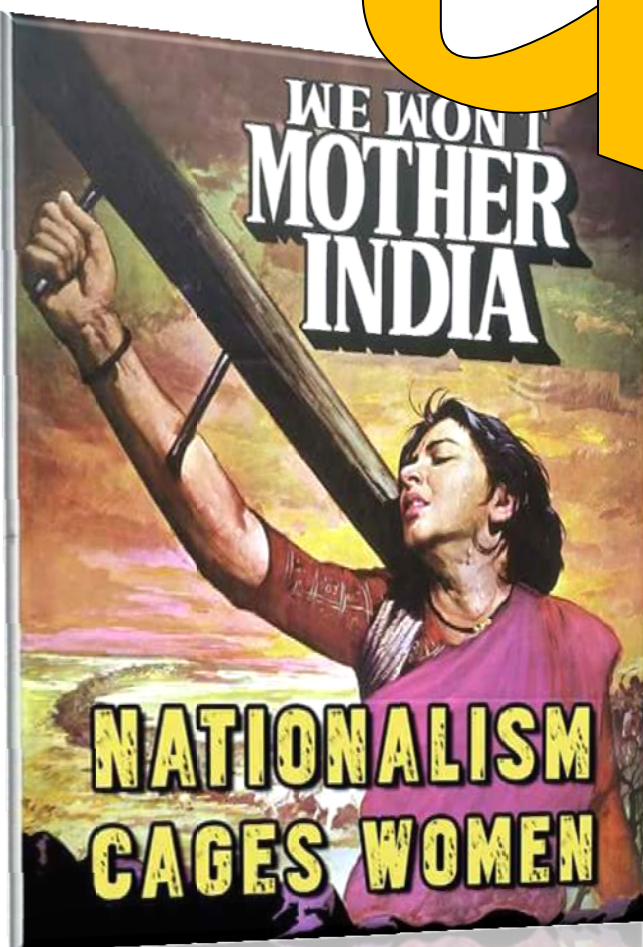
HANNAH ARENDT, SIMONE WEIL, SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR, SUSANNE LANGER, JULIA KRISTEVA, LUCE IRIGARAY, HÉLÈNE CIXOUS, JUDITH BUTLER, ELIZABETH GROSZ, ETC. —

WOMEN — WHO CARES WHAT THEY THINK?? DON'T EVEN BOTHER — PROBABLY MINOR STUFF —



-Shilpa

तहल

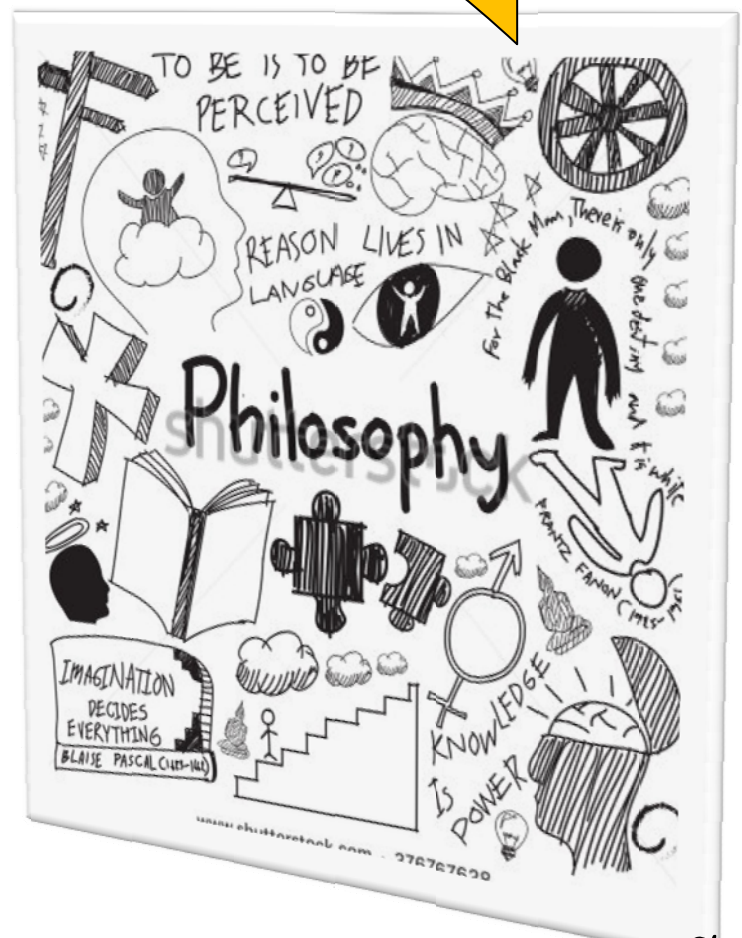


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- Descartes



"There may be more beautiful times, but this time is ours." -Satre

When Philosophy Meets Religious Custom

As the age old dictum stands in seeing women who does hijab as oppressed and without freewill. Its important to philosophically intervene in this domain as it raises certain important philosophical questions as of embodiment, self and Others, Oppression, language, alienation etc. **“Modesty comes in more than just our physical appearance. Our entire bodies, personalities and thoughts should emanate modesty.”**

WHY HIJAB?

One of the many questions that have been asked is why does Islam make *hijab* mandatory for women?

Islam has introduced *hijab* as part of the decency and modesty in interaction between members of the opposite sex. Verse 59 of chapter 33 quoted previously gives a very good reason; it says,

“This is more appropriate so that they may be known [as Muslim women] and thus not be harassed [or molested].”

Commenting on the attire of women in North Africa and South East Asia, Germaine Greer, one of the pioneers of the women's liberation movement, wrote:

“Women who wear Cortes or huipiles or saris or jellabas or salwar kameez or any other ample garments can swell and diminish inside them without embarrassment or discomfort. Women with shawls and veils can breastfeed anywhere without calling attention to themselves, while baby is protected from dust and flies. In most non-Western societies, the dress and ornaments of women celebrate the mothering function. Ours deny it.”

Note that she also specifically mentions the *salwar*, *kameez* and *jellabas* that are used by Muslim women in the East.

Feminists and the Western media often portray the *hijab* as a symbol of oppression and slavery of women. This sexist angle of viewing the *hijab* reflects the influence of Western feminists who are subconsciously reacting to the Judea-Christian concept of veil — **“the symbol of woman's subjection to her husband”**.

To look at one's own religious or cultural history and then to pass a judgment against another religion is, on the milder side, an intellectual miscalculation, and, on the harsher side, outright cultural imperialism! An interesting observation was observed in an article that when the Europeans penetrated the interior of Africa a century ago, they found some tribes who went about naked. They forced the tribes to wear clothes as mark of civilization.

“Now those advocates of ‘civilization’ are themselves discarding their clothes. One often wonders if the ‘primitive tribes’ of the last century were not more civilized than the rest of the world. After all, it is rest of the world which is now imitating the ways of the so-called primitive society.”

It's a surprise to the society which shows tolerance towards those who would like to go around topless but finds it difficult to tolerate a *lady who by her own choice wants to observe hijab!*

According to Naheed Mustafa, a Canadian Muslim, **“In the Western world, the *hijab* has come to symbolize either forced silence or radical, unconscionable militancy. Actually, it's neither. It is simply a woman's assertion that judgment of her physical presence is to play no role whatsoever in social interaction. Wearing the *hijab* has given the freedom from constant**

attention to physical self. Because appearance is not subjected to scrutiny, beauty, or perhaps lack of it, has been removed from the realm of what can legitimately be discussed.”

Hijab is not a symbol of oppression. Women are oppressed because of **socio-economic** reasons even in countries where women have never heard about *hijab*. On the contrary, the practice of displaying pictures of almost naked women in the commercials, billboards, and in the entertainment industry in the west is a true symbol of oppression as it's a part of capitalist patriarchy. Neither does the *hijab* prevent a woman from *acquiring knowledge* or from contributing to the betterment of human society. Historically women have also greatly contributed to Islam.

Few silent voices which were raised in Islam; ***Lady Khadijah, the first wife of the Prophet***, Her acceptance and faith were a great source of emotional support for the Prophet. She stood by her husband in the difficult days of early Islam, and spent her wealth for the promotion of the new religion. The first Muslim person to be martyred in Muslim history was ***Sumayya, the wife of Yasir and the mother of ‘Ammar***. She was killed along with her husband for refusing to renounce Islam. ***Lady Falimatu 'z-Zahra', the daughter of Prophet Muhammad***, was a beacon of light and a source of guidance for the women of her time. ***Zaynab***, Husayn's sister who had a great contribution in event of Karbala, which was a protest led by Imam Husayn against the tyranny of Yazid. She continued the social protest and was very influential in bringing about the awakening among the people to stand up against the tyranny of the rulers.

The Qur'an and Hijab

Islam has strongly emphasized the concept of **decency and modesty** in the interaction between members of the opposite sex. Dress code is part of that overall teaching. There are two verses in the Qur'an in which Almighty Allah talks about the issue of decency and *hijab* as defined earlier.

The First Verse

In Chapter 24 known as an-Nur (the Light), in verse 30, Allah commands Prophet Muhammad as follows: **مَنْ يَفْضُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ قُلِّ لَّهُمْ أَرْكَى ذَلِكَ فَرُوجَهُمْ يَحْفَظُوا وَ أَبْصَارُهُمْ**.

“Say to the believing men that: they should cast down their glances and guard their private parts (by being chaste). This is better for them.”

This is a command to Muslim **men** that they should not lustfully look at women (other than their own wives); and in order to prevent any possibility of temptation, they are required to cast their glances downwards. This is known as “*hijab* of the eyes”.

Then in the next verse, Allah commands the Prophet to address the **women**: **لِّلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ قُلِّ لَّهُمْ أَرْكَى ذَلِكَ فَرُوجَهُنَّ يَحْفَظْنَ وَ أَبْصَارُهُنَّ مِنْ يَغْضُضْنَ**...

“Say to the believing women that: they should cast down their glances and guard their private parts (by being chaste)...”

This is a similar command as given to the men in the previous verse regarding “*hijab* of the eyes”.

This *hijab* of eyes is similar to the teaching of Jesus where he says, **“You have heard that it was said by them of old time, you shall not commit adultery. But I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.”** So if you see a Muslim casting his/her eyes downwards when he/she is talking to a member of opposite sex, this should not be considered as rude or an indication of lack of confidence — he/she is just abiding by the Qur'anic as well as Biblical teaching.

After “*hijab* of the eyes” came the order describing the **dress code** for women:

يُخْمَرْنَ لِيُضْرَبْنَ وَ مِنْهَا ظَهَرَ مَا إِلَّا زَيْنَتُهُنَّ بُيُوتِينَ لَا وَ جُيُوبُهُنَّ عَلَى...

“...and not display their beauty except what is apparent, and they should place their *khumur* over their bosoms...”

There are two issues about this sentence.

(1) What is the meaning of “*khumur*” used in this verse?



Khumur خُمْرٌ is plural of *khimar* خِمَارٌ , the veil covering the head.

So the word *khimar*, by definition, means a piece of cloth that covers the head.

(2) Then what does the clause “placing the *khumur* over the bosoms” mean?

According to the commentators of the Qur'an, the women of Medina in the pre-Islamic era used to put their *khumur* over the head with the two ends tucked behind and tied at the back of the neck, in the process exposing their ears and neck. By saying that, “place the *khumur* over the bosoms,” Almighty Allah ordered the women to let the two ends of their headgear extend onto their bosoms so that they conceal their ears, the neck, and the upper part of the bosom also.

Finally the verse goes on to give the list of the *mahram* — male family members in whose presence the *hijab* is not required, such as the husband, the father, the father-in-law, the son(s), and others.

The Second Verse

In Chapter 33 known as al-Ahzab, verse 59, Allah gives the following command to Prophet Muhammad:

اَلْمُؤْمِنَاتُ نِسَاءٌ وَ بَنَاتُكَ وَ لَأَرْوَاجُكَ قُلِّ النَّبِيُّ اِيَّهَا يَ اَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ... جَلَابِيبُ مِنْ عَلَيْنَهُنَّ

“O Prophet! Say to your wives, your daughters, and the women of the believers that: they should let down upon themselves their *jalabib*.”

What is the meaning of “*jalabib*”?

Jalabib جَلَابِيبُ is the plural of *jilbab* جِلْبَابٌ , which means a loose outer garment.

This means that the Islamic dress code for women does not only consist of a scarf that covers the head, the neck and the bosom; it also includes the overall dress that should be long and loose. So, for instance, the combination of a tight, short sweater with tight-fitting jeans with a scarf over the head does not fulfill the requirements of the Islamic dress code.

The Sunna and Hijab

The *sunna* —the sayings and examples of the Prophet Muhammad — is the second most important source for Islamic laws. It is impossible to truly understand the Qur'an without studying the Prophet's life that provided the context in which the holy Book was revealed. Almighty Allah says,

“And We have revealed to you (O Muhammad) the Reminder (i.e., the Qur'an) so that you may clarify to the people what has been revealed to them, and so that they may reflect.” (16:44)

“Sunna” is that “clarification” mentioned in this verse.

There is a tendency among the so-called progressive and liberated Muslims to claim that they only follow the Qur'an and ignore the *sunna* of the Prophet. Responding to such Muslims, Drs. Murata and Chittick write, “We are perfectly aware that many contemporary Muslims are tired of what they consider outdated material: they would like to discard their intellectual heritage and replace it with truly ‘scientific’ endeavors, such as sociology. By claiming that the Islamic intellectual heritage is superfluous and that the Koran is sufficient, such people have surrendered to the spirit of the times. This is a far different enterprise than that pursued by the great authorities, who interpreted their present in the light of a grand tradition and who never fell prey to the up-to-date—that most obsolescent of all abstractions.”

***hijab*, as a decent code of dress for Muslim women, is part of the Qur'anic teachings.**

This is also confirmed by how the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) understood and implemented these verses among the Muslim women. This is further confirmed by how the Imams of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), and the Muslim scholars of the early generations of Islam understood the Qur'an. It is an understanding that has been continuously affirmed by Muslims for the last fourteen centuries. And, strangely, now we hear some so-called experts of Islam telling us that *hijab* has nothing to do with Islam, it is just a cultural issue and a matter of personal choice!

Muslim Culture & the Style of Hijab

It is quite probable that these so-called experts of Islam and of the Middle East have confused the basic order of the Qur'an with the style of *hijab* worn by Muslim women of various ethnic backgrounds. The requirement of *hijab* is a Qur'anic command. The basic requirement is that a Muslim woman should cover her head and bosom with a *khimar* (a head covering), and her body with a *jilbab* (a loose over-garment). Of course, she can leave her face and hands open. When it comes to the style, colour, and material of the *khimar* and *jilbab*, each Muslim ethnic group can follow the Qur'anic injunction according to their own cultural background. The variety in styles of implementing the same Qur'anic law is so because Islam is a world religion, it is not to be confined to one region or tribe or culture.

Therefore we see that the Muslim women in Arabia use ‘*abaya*’; the Persian Muslim women use *chador*; the Afghani Muslim women use *burqa*; the Indo-Pakistani Muslim women use *niqab* or *purdah*; the Malaysian/Indonesian Muslim women use *kerudung*; the East African Muslim women use *buibui*; and now in the West, the Canadian Muslim women use mainstream clothes worn with a bigger scarf over the head and a loose outfit. Islam is not concerned with the style as long as it fulfills the basic requirement of *khimar* and *jilbab*. This is where the religion and culture interact with one another, and therein lies the dynamic aspect of the Islamic *shari'a*; and this interaction might have confused some of the so-called experts of Islam who erroneously believe that *hijab* is a cultural tradition and not a religious requirement.

Conclusion

To those who very harshly and quickly judge *hijab* as a symbol of oppression of women, I ask: When you see a nun in her habit, what do you think of that—is that a symbol of oppression or a dress that demands dignity and respect? The *habit* of a nun is a complete *hijab*. Why then the double standard? Is this not cultural imperialism? When a Catholic nun dresses in that way, she becomes dignified, but when a Muslim woman dresses in that way, she becomes the symbol of oppression? In Islam, we want that dignity and respect for each and every Muslim woman, not only a few selected ones who have decided to serve the cause of their faith.

I salute those Muslim women who have found the courage in themselves to observe *hijab* in non-Muslim society, and I strongly urge their male-counterparts to appreciate women's great contribution in being at the forefront in the struggle to carve out a niche for Islam in the multicultural society. One last thing that I must say is that in spite of all the talk about suppression of rights of women in Muslim societies, we have had three countries in the world of Islam—Turkey, Pakistan and Bangladesh—which have had female Prime Ministers. Against this track record, the United States of America or Canada have not yet shown that openness for the advancement of women where a lady could be elected for a full term as a President or Prime Minister. I think that says a lot about Islam and the Muslims.

-Sagari Sahu

Objectification of women in media

THE LIMITS OF MY
LANGUAGE
MEAN THE LIMITS
OF MY WORLD.



Ludwig Wittgenstein
Austrian-British philosopher
1889 - 1951

QUOTEHD.COM

Taking our point from all scenarios the objectification of women in media was previously didn't got noticed and if it is or was it was overlooked by our male counterparts. But philosophically it's important to analyze this issue as it raises so many important philosophical question like free will, self, identity, and many more. For many of us it's a way of entertainment but it's actually personifying a women into a thing. Media has always been an inseparable part of our life. It's no longer treated as a sense of entertainment but has reach for more important place in today's world, as 85% of all urban household have television and is growing at an annual rate of 10%. Media is everywhere itself is playing a strong role in one's life but the way it has portrayed women has not only created their false and stereotyped image but also helped this society to create a society which is full of barriers and boundations. Lives of women are deliberately silenced and a mere object is presented in all the forms in media; may it be advertisements, movies, songs or the daily T.V soaps. The advertisement which are strong reason for the market value of the

product is designed in such a way which is quick sleek and affect everyone subconsciously. Only 8% of its part affect the conscious mind rest affect our mind subconsciously which further holds to form our perspective and the way we perceives others. Women are looked as tools in a men's world.

The success mantra adopted by several forms of media is "Woman" BODY SELLS

Women are portrayed as a commodity and an object of male domination in many television soaps which are seen as all time entertainment program and further are awarded for presenting such stereotyping images of women. Although the picture is not always of a same color, if its black on one side, there will be white on the other side, i.e. women's are being portrayed independent self confident. But when their roles are presented with taglines such as, "perfect women ka match catch" or "kitchen meri pehechaan" then the doubt arise, are they really portrayed independent self reliable confident? Or do these words have different meaning for women?

Advertisements like of a popular brand LEVIS which has portrayed a women in an independent role only focuses on the lower body part of a women, which again leads to the same end " women is objectified by media".

This scenario can be more promptly understood by the survey reports. According to a survey conducted by our team (among few students of our college) there are almost 70 percent females who don't know that they are being objectified. 15 percent who know about this says that they enjoy the content or the tunes and thumps of a woman objectifying song or any kind of other media. The remaining 15 percent who are able to raise their voice for such contents either their voices are slow down or else they are considered to be outdated and people start "isolating them"

On asking several students that whether they feel objectified by the songs of popular singers like honey sing, fazilpuria, neha kakkhar or any other to which a student bluntly replied that these songs are catchy and ear pleasing. Another peer of mine said that she knew these songs are embodied to women but they like these kinds of songs just because of their tunes and music and not the lyrics. There were some who said that its not effecting their lives so it's none of their concerns.

But what about those who are being affected daily? Aren't they enough privileged in this world to raise their opinion, to shout at the top of their voices that the songs and soaps are their biggest male centric enemy. Due to these capitalist patriarchy women are highly objectified in a certain manner, just to earn some money they are targeting their opposite sex thinking them to be weak in their so called patriarchal world. But in this so called men's world there is a bigger section of women; "A WOMEN'S WORLD", which has to be dignified and valued not just for their body but also for their mind, their work their contribution in media and all over the world but in a right and noble manner.

-Akanksha Chandra and Pooja Singh

Objectification of
Women
in Advertisements



"We do not escape into philosophy, psychology, art- we go there to restore our shattered selves into whole ones!"



Poems

MY PHILOSOPHY IN MY WORDS

My philosophy in my words is my story in this world, life is full of ups and downs where we smile and sometimes frown. Our nature is to be rational but still we do believe in miracles.

We live in the world of goods and bads with a hope deep inside our hearts
We live in the world of truths and lies with a hope deep inside our hearts.

We live in the world of mercy and joy with a hope deep inside our hearts
Our world is a place where we believe in unseen but still are called of modern generation.

We live with the people with different perception with a hope of reaching the same destination.

We live in the world of science lover where history is still valuable.

We live in the world where humanity loses its essence but we still do talk about being human.

We live in the world where death is certain and matter of doubt is our destination.

Philosophy of life is as simple as finding yourself in this world.

-Pooja singh, (philosophy 3rd year)

जिन्दगी का एक नया रूप

एक जिन्दगी ने मुझे ऐसे चौराहे पर ला खड़ा किया
जहां सच और झूठ, अच्छा बुरा इनमें कोई अन्तर न रहा

हों था तो बस इतना फर्क, सच अच्छा था तो झूठ बुरा

जैसे –जैसे जिन्दगी बदलती जा रही थी, वैसे-वैसे ही इंसान बदलता जा रहा था, पहले जहां इंसान की पहचान उसके कर्मों से होती थी,

अब वहीं उस इंसान की पहचान उसके पैसों से होने लगी

जिन्दगी ने ऐसी करवट ली जिसका मुझे अन्दाजा न था।

पर सामान्यता तो बस इतनी रह गई थी कि सच अब भी अच्छा था और झूठ अब भी बुरा।

पूजा सिंह, दर्शनशास्त्र, तीसरा वर्ष

vtleh vkl

, d vtleh vkl usek l s i nk
yMdh gweh D; k gsejk gd
ek us vka[kka l s vka wfxjkrsgg cksyk
rps gsejuk] bl ea ugha gsdkbz 'kd
ml vtleh vkl uscki l s i nk
yMdh gweh D; k gsejk gd
cki us ml l s eg ekMrs gg dgk
rjk ejk dN ugha r wfl QZ l keku gsjk[k
ml vtleh vkl us cM\$ Hkbbz l s i nk
Nksh cgu gweh D; k gsejk gd
cM\$ Hkbbz us xq l s l s dgk
gd rks ugha r wfl QZ > a V gsc l
ml vtleh vkl us ga rs gg l cl s dgk
e[kz gsnfu; k tks [kq k g\$
jko.k dks i shk djds Hkmy x, l c
D; kfd jko.k Hkh yadk ea jgrk Fkk
l hrk l s Mj dj
vkdka[kk l rh]

दर्शनशास्त्र, तीसरा वर्ष

ये सारा जिस्म
बोझ से झुक कर
दोहरा हुआ होगा
मैं सजदे में नहीं थी
आप को धोखा हुआ होगा

TO THE ENDLESS ENDS OF "THE THOUGHTS"

Here it comes, to an ever flow
To the end , it never goes.
From a drizzle to flood, it can be called its
thoughts,
my friend, which never -----
From mind to mind, it always knocks.
But may arrive at different clocks,
In a way, tantalize you
Strong enough that can mesmerize you.
Some time felt like throttles
Some time be it like battles
Thoughts within though
Wobbles a lot
If faded a lot, its never fine
To be good in all, it's a better mind
Makes you... builds you...
Takes you...holds you...
What a thought... what a thought!!

-Shilpa (Philosophy 3rd year)

ख्वाब

ख्वाबों को अपने सितारा समझो
चमके तो अपने दम यह
मंजिल को अपनी किनारा समझो
पाएं तो अपने दम पर
इच्छाओं को समझों दूर वो चमकता
चाँद
जिसका अस्तित्व ही नहीं बिना तारों
की पहचान,
खुद बनों इस काबिल,
की भीड़ में भी बन जाए तुम्हारी
पहचान

पूजा सिंह, दर्शनशास्त्र, तीसरा वर्ष

बदलते हालात

कभी अच्छे, कभी बुरे, कभी सच्चे, कभी झूठे
कैसे होते हैं यह हालात?
इंसान की निराशा का कारण भी, कभी बनते है
यह हालात
तो कभी इन्ही के कारण चेहरों पर आ जाती है
मुस्कान
कोई कहता है हालात का मारा हूँ
तो कोई कहता है मेरे बस में नहीं हैं यह
हालात
पर कभी ने सोचा नहीं मंजिल तक पहुंचाते भी
हैं यही हालात
इंसान के दुख के भागीदार भी बनते हैं यह
हालात
पर खुशी में कभी नहीं कोई करता इन्हें याद
तब तरस खाते हैं यह हालात
सोच कर बस एक ही बात
हर मुसीबत का कारण बनाता है मुझे इंसान
पर शायद इंसान ने कभी सोचा ही नहीं
मुझे बनाने वाले भी तो हैं यह हालात

पूजा सिंह, दर्शनशास्त्र, तीसरा वर्ष

“Once you label me you negate me” – SOREN KIERKEGAARD

The Cracked Mirror: An Indian Debate on Experience and Theory

Gopal Guru and Sundar Sarukkai

This volume explores the relationship between experience and theory in Indian social sciences in the form of a dialogue. It focuses on questions of Dalit experience and untouchability. While Gopal Guru argues that only those who have lived lives as subalterns can represent them accurately, Sundar Sarukkai feels that people located outside the community can also represent them. Thematically divided into five sections, the first discusses the problems associated with theory in the social sciences in the Indian context. The next makes inquiries into the nature of personal and collective experience. The third explores the larger connection between ethics and theory in India, both in the natural and social sciences. The fourth examines the ontological and epistemological nature of experience itself and the politics of experience, and the last focuses on the experience and theory of experience in India. The authors invoke the image of a cracked mirror to suggest a more complex and distorted relation between experience and theory.

The concerns of this text are twofold. The first is to challenge Indian social scientists' impoverished understanding of caste and untouchability. How do we understand a stratification system of unparalleled sophistication, that is also radically undertheorized outside scriptural and colonialist perspectives (and the reactions to these)? Why have powerful perspectives on what caste looks from its outside, or under-side, received little attention within the academy though they have predominated public discussion and activism? A second and related set of issues arises from The Cracked Mirror's explanation for this conceptual impoverishment. Guru and Sarukkai argue, albeit from different intellectual and political positions, that existing theories of caste cannot do justice to its complex lived reality. Rather, caste is a category marked by a history of failed comparison (and attempted commensuration) with categories of thought denied from European and American experiences of inequality, exclusion, and serial stratification.

- Sagari Sahu

Knowing Philosophy of Art

A definition of art would help to identify what art is in order for individuals to recognize and appreciate it, but there is controversy as to how to define art or whether art can be defined at all. It will become clear that features of what it takes to be art are not particularly simple to pinpoint. For example, the aesthetics would suggest that good art must look good, but it is not enough to say that something is art if it has the quality of being aesthetically pleasing. Beauty may apply to a large number of things that are not readily accepted as art, or on the contrary, not all art may be aesthetically pleasing at all. Furthermore, the aesthetic standard of art will only please a certain class of people.

There are many conceptual definitions of art that attempt to outline the necessary and sufficient conditions required for something to be considered a work of "art", though I will focus on the concept of expressivism as it proves to be the most convincing to me. I will set out to define art as understood by the expressivists Tolstoy and Collingwood, through which it will become clear that it takes much more than external features such as beauty to define art. Tolstoy makes some important contributions to the nature of expressivism, but exacerbates his views as he emphasizes the significance of religion in defining art. It is here that Collingwood seems to have the edge, and the more appealing definition seems to be a combination of the benefits of both theories. I will therefore argue for the importance of having a definition of art, as although conceptual ones are tricky in themselves, it is equally as troubling to omit the use of a definition altogether. I will set out to define art as understood by the expressivists Tolstoy and Collingwood, through which it will become clear that it takes much more than external features such as beauty to define art. Tolstoy makes some important contributions to the nature of expressivism, but exacerbates his views as he emphasizes the significance of religion in defining art. It is here that Collingwood seems to have the edge, and the more appealing definition seems to be a combination of the benefits of both theories. I will therefore argue for the importance of having a definition of art, as although conceptual ones are tricky in themselves, it is equally as troubling to omit the use of a definition altogether.

Expressivism largely deals with the fact that art connects with people via their senses. It defines art through the expression of emotion that is entailed by the artist in their artwork and the emotional impact that it has on the audience. To Tolstoy, something is art if it creates an emotional link between the artist and its audience, uniting them in such a way that the emotion portrayed through the artwork affects the viewer. It is true that every man has the capacity to receive, through hearing or sight, another man's emotions and feel those feelings himself, just as each man has the ability to affect another man through his expression of feeling, and Tolstoy infers that this is the heart of which the activity of art is based. But more specifically, the infection is characteristically indirect, in that it begins when one person, the artist, expresses through his artwork his emotion, which is communicated to the viewer through the artwork as a medium by which one encounters a wolf and feels fear. On experiencing this, he describes the experience to others in such a way as to arouse the fear that he experienced in himself and infect the avid listeners with the particular emotion. This analogy shares with art three distinct characteristics: individuality, clarity and sincerity. It is individual because it focuses specifically on one emotion, creating emphasis and increasing infection. It is clear because the emotion portrayed is pure and communicated without distraction, making it all the more infectious. Lastly, it is sincere because the stronger the artist or storyteller feels when communicating the emotion, the more infectious the feeling will be to the viewer. All three are important contributors to the quality of art, as "the stronger the infection, the better is the art as art".

Tolstoy notes that many inaccurate definitions of art arise from that fact that they consider the pleasure that art gives, rather than the purpose that it serves in life and in humanity. Hence, Tolstoy maintains that the concept of beauty when looking to define art simply confuses matters, and in order to define art accurately, it is necessary to avoid considering it as a means of pleasure, but rather as one of the conditions of human life that we use to interact and to communicate emotion between one another. So far, these discussions seem plausible as they allow for the objectivity of art and the basis of the definition to be intelligible and clear, rather than plainly aesthetic. Intelligent and clear expression of emotion enables us to grasp what is or is not art and maintains the meaning of art, otherwise any such expression of emotion could be defined as art and the definition steadily loses its meaning until it simply becomes a meaningless concept.

As Hegel (1770 -1831) stated on the Philosophy of Fine Art

Art can serve many purposes, and even be a pastime, but we want to examine the kind of art that is free in its aim and means. This is the only true art. Its highest function is only served when it has established itself in a sphere which it shares with religion and philosophy, becoming thereby a mode and form through which the Divine, the profoundest interests of mankind, and spiritual truths of the widest range, are brought home to consciousness and expressed. It is in works of art that nations have deposited the richest ideas they possess, and often art serves as a key of interpretation to the wisdom and understanding of peoples. Philosophy and religion also do this, but art appeals to the senses and is nearer to Nature and to our sensitive and emotional life.

Art is the primary bond of mediation between the external world of the senses and the medium of pure thought and understanding. It could be objected that art was unworthy, being of the world of appearances and its deceptions.

Another philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889 - 1951) stated;

Wittgenstein has said that in his opinion the subject of aesthetics is very big and entirely misunderstood. The use of the word "beautiful" is even more apt to be misunderstood.

He would like a book on philosophy to contain chapters on words, and confusions that come up with them. He compares language to a tool chest; words are used together in a family of ways - yet the tools could be very different.

- Vandana Basor

Philosophy as motherless discipline

Philosophy the word itself states that it is a subject which is not bounded to limitation as it is “love of wisdom”. We cannot have one single definition for it, as our canvas is full of beautiful and diverse colors under this name, still we can say it is a subject which is a residue and persistent attempt to understand and appreciate the universe as a whole. Under this name many great philosophers like Thales, Socrates, Aristotle, Descartes, Plato, Spinoza and many more belonging to different origins have contributed with their great works. But the question arises here that is, it is a subject which has never studied by women and was not of their concerns. So, that they have not contributed with their works under this name or we need to see the other side of picture which was never before under the spotlight, that yes, there were female philosophers which have equally contributed with their great works which were never taken into consideration, their voices were deliberately silenced and their presence from history were washed off, their positions were made position less with so much of beautification which has turned our recorded history of philosophy into a Andocentric discipline that we never felt anything wrong in it.

Within philosophy, this seeming gender disparity has good bit of head scratching. But the larger views of the picture is that there were female philosophers like Sarasvati Chana Shekaram, Nilima, Roop Rekha Verma, Shefali Moitra, Chaya Raj, Gurpreet Mahajan, Beena Gupta, Asha Dubey Mukherjee, Uma Narayan, Meena Dhanda, Bharti Puri, Bindu Puri, Sajata Miri, Vrinda Dalmia, Swati Bhattacharya, Bhargavi (Philosophy of psychoanalysis) and many more. When we trace back in history and when we can have a vision of philosophy as a subject which is not prone to Sexism disparity in future.

So, the larger view of the picture is that philosophy is not a motherless disciple but only the voices of female philosophers were never heard with equal importance, and it is the need of hour to have those. Voices to know the other aspect of our history. Which is equally important as because we are talking about the subject which is “ LOVE OF WISDOM”

- Pooja Singh.

Reading the Diaries of A Student: Re knowing Simone de Beauvoir

In the monuments to the dead that study my history, it is I who am buried! - Simone de Beauvoir

The concept of Self has always been an intricate and essentially contested concept in philosophy. At the diverse perspectives from which innumerable of self have been approached, it continues to remain a puzzle to be disentangled afresh. In Existentialism, this relationship is widely examined and analyzed, though its shades vary as differently as various philosophers have seen it differently. Whereas French Feminist and Existentialist Simone de Beauvoir, considers the very existence of others as essential to the self. Concepts centric to her philosophy amalgamate both literatures as well as philosophy; The Ethics of Ambiguity, The Second Sex, The Prime of Life, The Coming Of Old Age all are few exemplars of her works. Moi holds that “Simone de Beauvoir is the emblematic intellectual woman of the twentieth century.”

I aim to establish the veracity which would help me in the future discourse in reference to Simone de Beauvoir as a philosopher as well as the ingenuity in her philosophy. It is in this association that I would deal with Diaries of A Student, which she wrote as a student during 1926- 1927. To see her evolution of thoughts from the student days to her conceptualized works these diaries serve the foremost way. These diaries reflect the originality of her thought and independent nature of her philosophy as these writings belong to the period prevalent before she met Sartre. So the myth that Beauvoir's philosophy was basically an outcome of Sartre's works shall be demystified now by drawing on evidence contrary to the widely held belief that Beauvoir was not an independent thinker but was only a protégée of Sartre. As this is one of the popular maxims which still exists which considers Beauvoir as inferior to Sartre as well as her philosophy being derived from Sartre's.

In her 1926 diaries she is trying to disclose and elucidate the relationship as it exists between philosophy and fiction and how readers perceive and understand it. This was the first break which bolstered her to engrave her philosophy which could be seen in her works of autobiography as well as fictions. Her 13th August 1926 diaries says

“First I want to point out the pleasure of being able to establish the connection between an artist, a poet, and a philosopher. I thought about Barres in terms of language, about Tagore in terms of the two forms of the self, about Alain- Fournier, etc. What one encountered by chance, the other explains scientifically. There is a joyous astonishment in nothing that these mysteries of the soul suggested by the artist have more than a subjective existence, and reciprocally that the abstract formulas of philosophy begin to live when they are clarified by quotes which resituate them in them in the current of individual consciousness.”

Her diaries accentuate her struggle to establish and maintain her own philosophy in this male dominated world. Bergson's influence can be readily seen here in the way she tries establishing it. As she critiques as well as renounces that philosophy which talks and withholds abstract intelligence. She created a philosophy which has a place for reason as well as for emotions. Her August 1926 diaries are full of Bergson's quotes. Then her 1927 diaries embark by Bergson's quote, “the metaphysician is a mystic who restrains him. It is perhaps not normal to philosophize.” Beauvoir writes in her 17th August 1926 diaries:

“I am so moved when I dream that I too will become a woman... Oh! I wouldn't not have wanted a youth full of illusions that would have been only a continuation of my childhood, the young girls from yester year for whom the age for all novelties brought love, and even then love synonymous, for them, with happiness. I passionately wished to be a young man because of the suffering that I knew young men experience.” She even writes at the age of 23, “I did not think of myself as a ‘woman’: I was me”

There are many themes such as self, other, gendered self, reciprocity, ambiguity, inter subjectivity, friendship, love, reciprocity, recognition, companionship, which her diaries cover extensively. She sees the problem of existence on three different levels: i.e. situation, body and identity all of these three shouldn't be considered separately.” The body is inter-linked directly with existence it is a synthetic unity, that itself is to be understood through the situation, its relation to the world, where by the situation is not something given but reveals itself as the act of existence.” “Gendered roles are consistently a theme of her 1926- 1927 notebooks.” Her diaries bear the witness of the story of a young girl who is deeply in love with someone but is not able to accomplish it, she also imagines of a love which has mutual fondness as well as moral independence for whom she is ready to unconstrain herself in that love. It shows her continuous effort to re-think about herself as well as the relationship between the selves. The notion of gendered self which later on she converse in The Second Sex, very clearly draws its footnotes from her diaries itself so the point of getting her philosophy derived from Sartre's sounds as an allegation. For her the question was between what is a woman? And what it is to be a woman? She conciliated both the questions while deliberating about gendered self. Her 1926 diaries gives two instances when one could see her malign interest in them. In September 6 1926, she explains of a soul who would like to be and who must resign itself to appearing. This later on became one of the central themes in her work She Came to stay. Her diary highlights the situatedness of a girl who carries in herself love, and she thinks she is in love because others have said so. She is skeptical about her marriage, but still gets married. These situations were also later on have developed in her works.

Quoting one of her interviews would be interesting where she says as:

“Oh! No absolutely not. The ideas about women are my own. Sartre has never been interested in the question of women. As, a matter of fact, I had a dialogue with him published in L'Esprit two years ago in which I asked him why he had not interested himself in the question. No, these ideas are my own, indeed. I was never influenced by Sartre because I was writing from my lived and felt experience.” This question is important to be raised here as why every time and everywhere Beauvoir is seen as a shadow of Sartre, I see this nothing apart from the misogynistic attitude in philosophy as a discipline which even fail to consider and take into accountability the works of such a great feminist philosopher. Moi writes: “Even in the 1990's women who set out to become intellectuals have to face personal, social and ideological obstacles not generally placed in the way of aspiring male intellectuals. This is why I am convinced that Simone de Beauvoir still has much to teach us, for better and for worse.”

- Richa Sh

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