WHY SHOULD ONE BE MORAL ? A NORMATIVE EXCERCISE IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY INDIAN SOCIETY*

The question 'Why should one be moral?' can be taken in more than one sense, and it may not be equally rewarding to ask it in all of its senses. If 'being moral' is taken to mean what one ought to be and 'should' to mean some sort of justification, then to ask why should one be moral is to ask what is the justification for being or, trying to be, what one ought to be. It is clear that there would not be much point in asking such a question. But there is another, motivational, sense in which it would mean 'What are the motives, or reasons, for one's being moral?'. In this sense it is a good question and its answer of great importance for both the individual and society.

If it is ascertained what are the chief reasons for being moral, an individual may persuade himself to be moral if he finds that there do exist some such reasons for *his* being moral, and his society also may persuade him to be moral by reminding him that there are, or by providing him with the missing reasons in case they do not exist at any point of time. Even theoretically it is important to know the reasons for being moral, since it would definitely increase our understanding of the phenomenon of morality.

In this paper I shall take the question in the above, motivational, sense. I shall first discuss in a general way the chief reasons for being moral, and then shall try to bring the discussion to bear upon the status of morality in contemporary Indian society.

Morality is a social affair in the obvious sense that leading a moral life is leading a social life. To say this is to state an innocent conceptual truth, but it is not just a conceptual truth. It is a conceptual truth because it makes no sense to speak of prescribing, cultivating, or even disregarding any one of the moral virtues like honesty, temperance, justice, friendship, conjugal fidelity, chastity, good neighbourliness, etc., unless a net-work of

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social relationships is presupposed, unless the individual who is spoken of as being obligated to lead a virtuous life, or as having cultivated or disregarded a certain virtue, is conceived of as a member of certain society. The existence of society generates as set of interpersonal demands and expectations which all of its members are, in principle, required to satisfy, thereby bringing into existence some moral code. But it is more than a mere conceptual truth because respect for the moral code of the society on the part of its members is one of the necessary conditions of preserving or procuring social stability, harmony, and even their personal happiness, that is, of the very existence of worth-while society.

Every society cherishes a set of goals which it considers worth pursuing to satisfy both individual and collective, long— and short—term, interests of its members. But, it is feared that all of them may not naturally, willingly, if left to themselves, try to seek or foster them. This is at least one of the reasons why moral rules come into existence, sometimes in a promulgated, sometimes in a non-promulgated, manner. A large part of the purpose of prescribing, or emphasising the importance of a moral rule or virtue is to offer a reason or direction to people to do, or avoid doing, certain things which they may not on their own. There would be no point in prescribing 'One ought to tell the truth' if it were already known that in any case one would tell the truth.

The meaningful survival of a society very greatly depends upon the observance of its moral rules by its members. But there is one peculiarity of this phenomenon which must not be lost sight of. It is a fact, for example, that the principle of truth-telling is a necessary one for any worth-while society, but it is also a fact that every member of it *need not* be *always* truthful. The existence of some liers in a society, as there always are some in any, does not endanger its existence. Of course, to let it survive in a meaningful manner, it is necessary that the group of people who flout the principle of truth-telling is not too large. But every society can *digest* some immoralities without much danger to its general health.

Transgression of a moral rule is injurious to general social happiness, but not to the happiness of *every member* of the society. Rather it may sometimes promote the happiness of the

transgresser. For example, taking bribe is a moral vice which tells upon social harmony and happiness, but it also (sometimes) helps one or both of the bribe-taker and bribe-giver to satisfy a desire or need and thereby yield some happiness. Therefore, in some situations at least one, and in some others, both, of the two, will have to sacrifice the prospect of fulfilling a certain desire and thereby acquiring consequential happiness if they decide to follow the principle ' It is wrong to take or give bribe.'

Every society, to preserve its existence, has to have some mechanisms for encouraging its members to follow and for discouraging them from transgressing its moral principles. Quite often expressions of social approval or disapproval, commendation or condemnation, function as such mechanisms. But sometimes some concrete modes of reward and punishment may be instituted and given codified, legalised, or conventional forms. In the latter case, the concerned moral principles also become legal or quasi-legal principles. For example, bribe-taking and bribe-giving are not only considered morally wrong and expected to arouse social disapproval, but have also become legally wrong, and there have come into being legal mechanisms for detecting, proving, and punishing acts of taking and giving bribe. But it is also a fact that even if the practice of receiving and giving bribe is not absolutely stopped, even if *some* people continue practising the vicious trade unpunished, neither general social happiness nor the happiness of *every* member of the society will be made thereby *impossible*.

But from the above it cannot be inferred that every society should permit some of its members to flourish, without incurring social displeasure or disapproval, by flouting a moral rule, say, by unhesitatingly taking or giving bribe. Why should it not do can be justified on the following grounds : (1) A person who believes that taking or giving bribe is intrinsically evil, or that the immorality of the practice is entailed by some other indisputable moral principle, can argue that even if it promotes someone's happiness, it ought not to be permitted. (ii) Whether or not one admits it to be intrinsically evil, he may argue that if not censored the practice, practice is likely to be infections and thereby to spread so widely that it would in the long run lead to large-scale social instability and produce more unhappiness than happiness.

Sometimes a society protects the inviolable character of a moral principle (or virtue) by permitting in some cases the termination of the relationship the existence of which is a necessary condition of the applicability of the principle. For example, conjugal fidelity is considered to be a moral principle in almost all societies. But it is also a fact that sometimes A, whose spouse is B, finds his fidelity to B not conducive to his happiness, and his attachment to C, who is not his spouse, so conducive. No society would in such cases or for such reasons *permit* conjugal infidelity, but many societies would permit the termination of the marital bond between A and B and A's entering into a new bond with C. The existence of the marital bond between A and B is a necessary condition for their being required to observe the principle of conjugal fidelity, and the moment it is terminated, the question does not arise. By introducing the institution of divorce society protects the inviolability - in-principle of the principle of conjugal fidelity and also allows for the transfer of fidelity from one person to another in the interest of human happiness. It would be wrong therefore to say that a society which permits divorce permits conjugal infidelity. But whether or not such a device of protecting inviolability—i.e. by permitting the termination of the relationship presupposed— can be used in the case of a principle, without any self inconsistency or undesirable effect in practice, can be determined only after examining its actual role and importance in human life and not by merely appealing to some abstract, theoretical, considerations. To make fidelity absolutely non-transferable, by making the marriage-bond absolutely non-terminable, may in some cases be very greatly detrimental to human happiness, and to make the principle of fidelity unreservedly violable may tell upon stability in conjugal life and thereby be equally detrimental to human happiness. To ensure the mean between the two extremes societies introduce the institution of divorce.

By and large the members of a healthy, growing, progressive society, are sensitive to the observance and non-observance of their moral principles. Even though they may not be able to detect, or condemn, all violations, they certainly cherish it as an ideal and do not hesitate to condemn them whenever they come to light. The members of a decadent society, on the other hand, tend to become so thick-skinned that most of the violations do not

generally move them, or move only those of them whose self-interests they adversely affect. Condemnation of the violation of a moral principle ceases to be a *moral* condemnation if it is caused by the frustration of a self-interest. In such a society the social conscience of its members is extremely feeble and righteous-anger a rare phenomenon.

The concept of a morally progressive and that of a morally decadent society are scalar concepts in the sense that different societies can be put on a scale of progress or decadence, showing their relative positions. Therefore, society A can be progressive in comparison with society B and decadent in comparison with society C, or the same society in one period of its history can be called more or less progressive or decadent in comparison with what it was in an earlier period.

One of the reasons for having moral rules or principles is' thus, the hope and faith that a life lived, by and large, in accordance with them will be happier than the one lived, by and large, by transgressing them. This hope or faith is not a mere hope or faith but one based on the experience of making through centuries, and therefore it can be given the status of a well established human truth. But this truth is sometimes forgotten because of the peculiar feature of moral rules mentioned above, namely, the feature that in every society it is empirically possible that at least a few people can remain happy, or may add to their happiness, even if they transgress, or because they transgress some of the moral rules of their society. In a decadent society this forgetfullness is wide-spread and in some extreme cases the link between morality and happiness is considered to be (almost) non-existent. A decadent society is seldom forthright in the expression of commendation or condemnation, and generally ineffective or incompetent in enforcing its mechanisms of reward and punishment, in respect of morally commendable and condemn--able actions. All this not only encourages moral offences but even gives to them an apparent respectability. For example, receiving and giving bribe is not only encouraged but acquires a kind of social respectability if it is found to be a safe and quick means to accumulation of wealth.

One of the important motives for leading a moral life is therefore the desire to protect one's self-interest born out of the belief that unless one leads, by and large, a moral life, he cannot

expect to lead a happy life. In fostering this belief in the individual his society has to play a very important role. Prevalent social institutions and practices must ensure and exemplify that morality generally pays and immorality generally does not, if the faith in the felicific powers of morality is to be an important component of an effective motive for leading a moral life.

Society has to exemplify abundantly and unambiguously that immorality cannot generally go undetected and uncondemned. If it does, it is bound to generate in the minds of its members a fear of being subjected to some kind of punishment, dishonour or condemnation, direct or indirect, and thereby to suffer some curtailment of their happiness. It is a fairly established empirical truth that human beings desire their happiness and are willing to adopt the means which seem to them to procure or ensure it. Therefore if one finds or believes that leading a moral life is a generally successful means to it and also that leading an immoral one a means to its curtailment, the *desire* for happiness and the *fear* of its curtailment become important motives for being moral, i.e. for observing the rules of morality operative in his society. Leading a moral life is, as shown by the experience of mankind, a necessary condition of social stability and harmony, and therefore of personal happiness. But this truth has to be kept alive and made clearly visible in order that the desire and fear mentioned above become operative as effective motive for being, or trying to be, moral.

In addition to the two motives discussed above, one's reverance for morality, his respect for the intrinsic dignity of moral life, can also motivate and inspire him to lead a moral life. It may sometimes be strong enough to make him lead a life in accordance with his moral principles without being supported by either one of the other two motives. Further, like any other human motive, it may be stronger in some individuals than in some others. But it is expected to be generally strong in the members of a mature, progressive, society and weak in those of a decadent one. The empirical possibility of its being completely, or almost completely, absent in an individual cannot also be ruled out.

There does exist a very genuine reason for emphasising the reverence for morality, for the intrinsic dignity of moral life. Respect or reverence for one's moral principles, as commanding

obedience in their own right, is of great importance even if it may be true that leading a moral life is primarily a means to personal or social happiness. This is so because if one's allegiance to his morality is based *wholly* on his belief that it is only a means to happiness, whenever he finds, or thinks, that there is something else which can ensure happiness in an easier or quicker manner, without producing any untoward consequence, he may not hesitate to adopt it even if he considers it immoral. He can be abstained from doing such things only if there is generated in him a fear of being punished if he does not. If he can manage to outwit the agencies entrusted with the use of the mechanisms of punishment, there will be nothing left to motivate him to abstain from them. But if he has a reverence for his morality and considers it deserving obedience in its own right, the chances of his disregarding or flouting it will be lesser. He will have a good reason for leading a moral life even if he does not always find it productive of happiness, or sometimes finds something immoral, or not indisputably moral, to be a more successful means to happiness.

Respect for morality as an end in itself, as a self justifying motive, may be innate in some individuals, but generally it has to be acquired. Proper education, formal and informal, can play a very significant part in its inculcation or reinforcement. Formal education generally aims at providing to the trainee rigorous schooling in the acquisition of some knowledge or skill. But it can also play an effective moral role by instilling into him intrinsic (as well as extrinsic) respect for morality by giving him appropriate instruction, presenting to him in its own sphere inspiring examples of moral living, subjecting him gently and satisfyingly to a way of life, in the period of his schooling, which makes it indispensable for him to adopt only morally permissible methods to achieve even his professional goal, making available to him an atmosphere in which morality is respected and prized not only when it pays but also when it does not, etc., etc.

Morality is a rational affair in the sense that if one accepts that it is morally obligatory to do x, he is committed to do it, if he can, at the appropriate time, and he can refuse to do it only at the cost of being self-inconsistent or irrational. Similarly, since every moral rule applies to all relevant persons and situations, one cannot accept it for one person and reject it for another

similarly situated.   One cannot admit that bribe-taking is wrong
and continue taking bribe without being self-inconsistent or
irrational, nor can he say that it is wrong for his subordinate but
not for himself.   Therefore, one way to strengthen one's respect
for morality is to strengthen his rationality.   This may be done by
making him   conceptually clear of what it is to be rational and
what are the implications of being rational by reinforcing his sense
of pride, or generating it in him if it is not already there, in being
a rational being, by vividly depicting the practical importance of
rationality in corporate living for both the individual and society,
etc., etc. A properly conducted instructional programme in moral
education may be helpful in this regard.   However, from all this
it should not be concluded that being moral and being rational
are the same thing.   What I wish to emphasise is only that to
strengthen a man's rationality, his respect for consistency, is an
important way to strengthen his respect for morality both in its
own right and as a means to his or his group's happiness.

    That informal education and general social atmosphere play
a very important role in strengthening motivation for morality
is too obvious a fact to be expressedly emphasised.   A society in
which morality is not prized, in which it does not pay, or in
which immorality pays or goes uncondmned, is sure to weaken
its members' motivation.   It is a fact of life that generally one
learns to be moral and he would learn it well if he discovers
through his own or through others' experiences that leading a
moral life is *sine qua non* for leading a happy life. Social
policies and practices are bound to play a very important role
in this matter.   Sometimes, as has been shown earlier, one may
find that the adoption of an immoral means offers better. chances
of obtaining some happiness than that of a moral means.   To
distroy or minimise the charm or hold of such possibilities on
its members society has to generate, through its policies, principles,
and practices, in them, if it is not already present, the discrimin-
ative awareness, the value-orientation, that happiness obtained
by the use of morally permissible means is preferable to that
obtained by the use of morally impermissibe ones. Formal and
informal education can of course be of some help in this matter.
But such fundamental or basic convictions are acquired or
sustained mostly as a result of one's reflection over and admira-
tion for the paradigmatic examples of moral living available in

his society. He imbibes or inhales them from the moral atmosphere of his society. For example, if he finds that a person, who is in a position to use morally impermissible means to make himself or his group happy, abstains from doing that and is satisfied only with what he can have in a morally commendable manner, it can go a great way to encourage him in his moral struggle.

Man is both rational and irrational, selfish and non-selfish. He does want to do sometimes wrong things if he expects them to serve some of his self-interests, and in doing such things he may be preferring some momentary pleasures to some relatively more stable, non-momentary ones. Preferring the moral to the immoral or the morally indifferent is at least to some extent a rational concern and in doing so one may have to sacrifice, or postpone, the satisfaction of an impulse or desire very strongly felt at the moment. This means that the moral person may have to make sometimes some of his impulses yield to his reason, and lesser the conflict between the two, greater the cohesion in his moral efforts. His society and social atmosphere can help him a great deal in realising the utility and propriety of preferring reason to unreason, or in strengthening his propensity to prefer reason if it is already present in him. In fact it is one of the marks of a healthy society that its style of life is oriented towards making its members more and more rational.

The more rational a person is, the more likely he is to realise that he cannot fulfil his self-interest if he does not generally observe the moral code of his society, and also that it is generally in his interest to avoid opportunities which might cause him social punishment in any form or even produce in him tormenting feelings of guilt and shame. Therfore, in all likelihood he would accept his society's moral code and try to abide by it to a more or less extent. But since it is possible sometimes to disregard a moral principle without sacrificing any major self interest, or incurring social disapproval in any seriously hurtful manner, one may feel tempted to do that. At such moments if he has a great reverence for morality, he may be able to overcome his desire to go against the moral principle concerned. A demonstration to him that what he would be doing by going against the principle would also be self-inconsistent or irrational, may work if he is a fairly rational person with genunine respect

for self-consistency as an additional counter-force motivating him to abstain from the contemplated flouting of the principle

From the above one may conclude that rationality has a limited role to play in the sphere of morality as far as its motivation is concerned. It has been said that developing one's rationality can be a means to strengthening his motivation for acting in accordance with a moral principle by drawing out the implications of having accepted it. If I accept the principle that it is wrong to receive or give bribe, it can be shown to me that I cannot receive or give bribe without myself doing something wrong and, if I do, what I shall be doing would be inconsistent with my acceptance of the principle. But this can be demonstrated to me only after I have accepted the principle. My rationality may help me to accept a principle, as already stated, by bringing out to me certain prudential or expediential considerations. But all this shows that its role is only to bring out or make clear certain implications or consequences of accepting a moral pinciple. This is definitely an important role as far as moral motivation is concerned. But, one may ask, can rationality or reason perform only this role, or some more basic one? For example, can it play the role of motivating one to accept a moral principle in its own right, without reference to any prudential or expediential consideration? That is, can it generate unconditional reverence for a moral principle, a moral code, or morality as such? If it can, then it will be performing not just a subsidiary role of making clear what is prudentially or expedientially important, or what is implied by accepting a principle. But since I am presently concerned primarily with the problem of moral motivation, this question which is really a very large and fundamental one, can only be raised but not answered here.

A society can thus help its members to strengthen their motivation for being moral by enunciating and implementing appropriate policies of social change and development, based on a balanced and realistic understanding of people's needs, styles of life, and material resources, by instituting effective mechanisms of reward and punishment, sometimes even by enforcing some moral principles by legislation, by helping them to develop their rationality and honour it, by having such men as its policy makers, as, in the Platonic sense, its statesmen and rulers, whose ways of living can be cited as exemplers of morality, by having a system

of education which provides training in the art of moral living and in the inculcation of the right kind of values, etc., etc.

To conclude, the chief motives for being moral, therefore, are: (1) the desire for personal or social happiness accompanied with the belief that leading a moral life is a necessary means to the latter, (2) fear of incurring direct or indirect punishment, social condemnation or disapproval, etc., as a result of flouting or disregarding a moral rule, code, or ideal, and (3) respect for the intrinsic dignity of moral life. It is possible, and quite often a fact that all the three motives are not equally effective or operative in every society.

But against the position taken here it may be urged that only one of these three motives, namely, reverence for morality, is a genuinely meritorious motive and the other two are only prudential or expediential considerations. A person can, or rather should, get the credit of leading a moral life only if he does it out of reverence for morality and not if he does it for ensuring personal or collective happiness, or out of fear of punishment. In fact, the affairs of any society should be conducted with the ultimate aim of making its members respect morality for its own sake.

I do not wish to question the superiority of revence for morality, as a motive, over other motives. But, of the chief motives for being moral, to say which one is superior to which other is to make a comparative evaluation or grading of the motives which is not what I intend to do here. My main objective is to characterise what they are and how they function. It seems to me that the motives claimed to be the chief motives in the foregoing discussion are in fact a person's chief (or common) though not the only, motives for leading a life in accordance with his moral code, and that a life so led can practically satisfy all, or almost all, of the needs to satisfy which a society considers it necessary to have that moral code as sincerely and seriously as possible.

It is really utopian to wish or hope that any society will ever attain the state of moral development in which its members will always observe their moral code out of sheer respect for it. It is true that the more the members of a society are guided by this motive, the easier will be the job of conducting its affairs. But till it reaches such a stage, it would have to

remain satisfied with its members' observance of morality effected by the operation of any one of the three (or even some other possible) motives. And, to ensure the reality of even such a society would be in no way an easy affair. But if such a society is made real, it would be, by and large, a good, happy society.

II

The question 'Why should one be moral?' can thus be answered by saying that one should because being moral has an intrinsic dignity of its own or that it is a necessary condition for having personal happiness, social harmony, etc. But this general answer may not remove the perplexity of one who asks it in the context of contemporary Indian society. In the context of the latter, before one may proceed to reflect upon this question, another question must be answered, namely, 'Need one be moral in contemporary India?'. The answer to this question seems to be an obvious 'no'. It seems to be a fact of contemporary Indian life that morality does not generally pay and for obtaining anything, material sources of happiness, social respectability, academic laurels, official positions, political leadership, etc., morality is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition. Some, or all, of them, are generally obtainable by the use of immoral means and consequently a faith in the felicific powers of immorality has been generated in the minds of the majority of the Indian population. Perhaps there never was any period in the history of the country when people so strongly or so pervasively got convinced that some immorality is indispensable for attaining success in any field of life. Thrasymachus' standpoint that 'the unjust is lord over the truly simple and just,' and 'that the just is always a looser in comparison with the unjust' in private or public matters (Plato : Republic, p. 608) seems to be vindicated by the facts almost everywhere.

In the context of the Indian scene, therefore, it is very important to ask 'Why should one be moral when he does not have to be?'. In such a situation the only proper answer, one may think, would be to appeal to the intrinsic dignity of moral life. One should be moral not because one needs to be but because leading a moral life, even if unhappy, is intrinsically better than leading an immoral life, even if happy. An appeal to one's desire

for happiness or fear of punishment is not likely to be very effective because the facts of life do not seem to support the indispensability or utility of morality for a happy life, or even to generate a fear of punishment potent enough to be deterrent.

But the facts of life do not seem to be favourable to one's faith in the intrinsic value of morality either. This faith is generally feeble in the members of a decadent society, and, by all means, from the moral point of view, contemporary Indian society presents the picture of a decadent society. It is no wonder then that most of modern Indians neither have an effective faith in the intrinsic value of morality, nor in its extrinsic value as a means to happiness, personal or social.

It is very difficult to find in modern Indian life instances of people thriving and flourishing *because* of their leading a morally admirable life, though instances to the contrary can be very easily picked up from any walk of life. This is the reason why moral preachers generally mention names of mythological figures, or of persons from the ancient, or not too recent past history of the country, as exemplars of morality. And, most of them when they preach classical moral gospels, they reproduce them like parrots without having made them guiding principles of their own life. This again is a decisive mark of a decadnent society. Only a decadent society has to turn back to its past for lofty, ennobling, examples, since its present and future do not seem to offer a picture of life as good as what its past seem to do. In a progressive society the later is generally or on the whole better than the earlier while in a decandent one the reverse is the case.

The most important reasons for the decay of morality in modern India are (1) the over-all supremacy of political power in almost all walks of life and (2) the predominantly immoral tone of the Indian political life. Political power dominates all walks of life because one who wields political power can achieve almost anything. Instances of having obtainend high positions in administration, academic and scholarly recognition, of having been honoured as social, spiritual, religious, leaders as innovative thinkers or creative artists, what to speak of having amassed wealth disproportionate to one's deserts, on account of wielding political power or on account of being supported by one who wields such power, can be found galore. There has come to

exist a very close and almost unbreakable relationship between political power and money power; each one depends upon and strengthens the other. The immorality or morality of the means to attain either one has ceased to be of any importance. The domination of political power is so pervasive that even a genuine social worker cannot get necessary material resources unless he manages to get some political support. For example, of two persons interested in running a charitable hospital for orphanes the likelihood of his, who is selfishly motivated but has political influence, getting the necessary supprt is greater than that of his companion's who commands no such influence even though his motive is pure benevolence.

Plato in his *Statesman* offers a strong plea for the supremacy of the statesman in the life of a nation. But his picture of a statesman is very different from the one presented by the Indian politician one generally comes across. His statesman is one who *knows* what are his obligations to his people, *has* the ability to fulfill them and the good will to exemplify into action, without any extraneous consideration, the principles he thinks he is committed to abide by. But these are not the qualifications which the Indian politician exhibits, nor is he willing to accept them as the necessary qualifications of a politician. As things stand today, none of the moral virtues like truthfulness, disinclination for personal aggrandisement, clean sexual life, love for justice, preparedness to pay back one's debts and dues, even a tolerable sense of duty to fulfil one's commitments and promises, etc., is taken to be a necessary condition for being a politician. To preserve a semantic propriety, the common Indian politician does not aim at becoming a (Platonic) statesman.

Gandhi, quite early in the history of his struggle for India's independence, realised that political life abundantly provided opportunities for the supercession of moral considerations by prudential or selfish ones, for the use of immoral means for personal or party's ends. He was, therefore, very insistent that politics must never be indifferent to morality. The qualifications, which he considered necessary for a satyagrahi, are all basically moral qualifications. His lone principle of ahimsa can be shown to include in a capsule form almost all the good, moral, qualities. But his insistence on morality in political life could not become an active principle of post-Gandhian Indian political life.

In actual practice the place of genuine morality has been taken by a kind of group morality which I prefer to call spurious morality. We find it illustrated when we notice political or other types of rewards, or punishments, given to a person by his party— or group—bosses on account of his observing, or flouting, what is taken to be the party's or group's moral code and almost never on account of his leading a genuinely moral or immoral life. The good of the party or the group quite often supersedes the human, the moral, good. If one swindles his party's funds, or works against its candidate's plan of capturing polling booths, he is likely to be divested of his position or influence in the party, but not if he is a sex maniac or habitual offender of non-payment of the dues he owes to some private citizens. All this is a sign of decadent political life.

Spurious morality consists in a code of conduct applicable within, or valid for, only an artificial or conventional group of people, e. g., a political party, a religious group, a caste-group, a trade-union, a smugglers' group, etc., and the objective of enunciating, enforcing, or following, the code is primarily the good of the group. It is possible that the good of the group is not also the good of those who do not belong to the group and that what is required to achieve this good is not always morally desirable or unquestionable. For example, ' One ought to support his party's candidate in an election' is an important principle of a political party's ethics and to follow it is necessary for the good of the party, i.e., to enable it to come to power. But to do so may be morally undesirable since the candidate may be a corrupt person even though he is a prominent figure in the party. Similar is the case with the principle 'one ought to follow the leader of the party '. If every member of a party follows its leader, the party is likely to be very disciplined and its prospect of success very bright. But it may be morally wrong to follow the leader always since some of his dicisions may be morally bad. The code of conduct which a gang of thieves prescribes for its members is a paradigmatic example of spurious morality. When a member of the gang refuses to reveal the names of his associates, or the whereabouts of his leader, even at the cost of his life, he exhibits, in one sense, exemplary devotion and commitment to the moral code of his gang. But this would be an instance of spurious morality since what is considered to be

the good of the group, its goal, is a morally perverted or highly undesirable one, since not to reveal the names of the associates or the whereabouts of the leader even at the cost of one's life, though commendable from the point of view of the gang's morality, is highly condemnable from the point of view of the larger social interests and welfare.

Genuine morality, on the other hand, consists in a code of conduct applicable within, or valid for, any relevant group of people and the good it aims at is the social good, the good of mankind, which also includes the general good of individuals. In the first part of the paper I discussed some of the general features of the principles of morality and they are those of the principles of genuine, not spurious morality. That is why they need not be discussed again here.

A modern Indian does consider it neessary to observe some moral code in his group in order that he be allowed a peaceful co-existence with other members of the group, or may get as many of his personal goals fulfilled as possible. Following the ethics of his group an officer sometimes shares fairly his bribe with other concerned members of the group and sometimes even fulfills his promise to return it in full or part, as previously agreed upon, to the bribe-giver if the work for which it was taken is not done, an academically poor university teacher when helped by a politically influential professor in getting promoted exemplifies his gratitude to his benefactor by inviting him to give highly paid extension lectures which he does not deserve, a voted-in candidate fulfills his obligation to the men, who captured some important polling booths for him, by procuring for them some highly lucrative sinecure jobs, a businessman offers in return his car to be used by a bank-manager on the occasion of his son's marriage because he has arranged for the grant of loan to him while knowing full well that his is a fake firm, a temple-priest allows the donor of a big sum of money to see the deity even at an impermissible time, a party-worker exhibits his loyalty to his leader by voting for his corrupt policies, etc., etc. On the face of it the behaviours exhibited in such cases seem to be the observance of some moral principles like those of fulfilling promises, expressing gratitude, or doing acts of beneficince in return of benefits received, etc. But because the primary motivation and objective therein are immoral

or, at least, selfish, they really exemplify spurious morality and ultimately lead to the erosion of genuine morality.

The kind of groups or associations mentioned above are formed for selfish, parochial, ends and therefore observance of moral principles inside them is subsesrvient to the fulfilment of the latter. An individual member is conscious of what he ought to do as a member of a certain group, but he very often forgets to ask himself whether or not he ought to do it also as a man, whether or not it is morally right to be a member of the group. Even political parties generally do not give to such issues of group morality the critical attention they deserve.

The basic question, 'What kind of life I (morally) ought to lead as a human being?' has ceased to be a living question, and those few who discuss it are considered to be people with nothing important on their hands to do. This attitude is due mainly to the fact that in the modern Indian society group-membership pays more than acquisition of moral merits. It has also become difficult, or almost impossible, to form or preserve a group on sheer moral bases. Why should I join, or remain, in a group if it is not assured, or at least likely, that the group will further my self-interests and protect me when I do things which otherwise are likely to put me into trouble ? This is a natural question for an individual to ask and in a decadent society like ours his attitude towards it can very easily be imagined. In a society intellectually and morally mature and progressive, one of the important reasons for joining a group, or preferring one to another, is its ideology which, to be a viable ideology, must have a strong moral component. Gandhi did make a pronounced moral code an important or perhaps the most important, component of his ideology. This was clear from the importance he gave to ahimsa. But in modern India the moral component of the ideologies of various groups or parties is either not well-pronounced, or not given in practice the importance it deserves. In effect one's decision to join, or remain in a group is largely determined by personal, or political, considerations. This feature of our modern society is posing a great potential danger to the Indian variety of democracy which permits a multiplicity of political parties. If the choice of party is primarily determined by personal or political, and not ideological or moral consider-

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ations, a party-based democracy is not likely to be a genuine or successful democracy.

Man has both selfish and altruistic motives, and in a healthy society there should be an amicable balance between the two. Generally the satisfaction of selfish motives is found to be pleasing in the short run while those of the altruistic ones in the long run, though unless the members of a society are willing to sacrifice at least some of their selfish, short-term, goals for some long-term, altruistic, ones, that society is not likely to prosper as a society. In the modern Indian society the propensity to sacrifice one's selfish goals for altruistic ones has become very weak largely because, to repeat, altruism, observence of moral principles, have ceased to pay as much as they should to retain their attractiveness. Definitely morality pays, or at least should pay, in the long run, but even in the short run its effects must be visible quite often, and the long run should not be too long. In our society the effects of morality in the short run have become almost invisible, so much so that one becomes pessimistic about its having any salutary effects in the long run as well. As a corollary, when he finds that the pursuit of selfish goals, on the other hand, does pay in the short run, he feels tempted to make the run as short as possible.

It has become difficult to form and sustain a group which requires of its members the observance of a genuine moral code as a necessary condition for membership. But unless groups, specially political groups, try to do that, i. e., introduce in their ideology a strong moral component and insist on adherence to it by its members, they cannot function as agents of real social progress and happiness.

One of the basic conditions of leading a genuinely good moral life is the readiness to honour man as man, and not simply as one occupying a certain rank or position in the social or official heirarchy. But in the contemporary Indian society man as such has no place; he has a place only in virtue of his status. Therefore, when he has to figure as a mere citizen, and quite often he has to so figure, he finds himself helpless or in difficulties. The same person who, as a railway reservation clerk, finds himself powerful enough to extort money from a passenger, feels helpless at the ration shop when the shop-keeper obliges the sales-tax inspector and not the reservation

clerk simply because he is not then in a three-tier railway coach.

The modern Indian has ceased to respect a fellow-citizen as a citizen, as a human being. He has also forgotten that an Indian is first an Indian citizen, a human being, and then the holder of this or that social or official position. In not acknowledging the glory and dignity which belong to other members o his species, he has forgotten even the glory and dignity which are his in virtue of his simply being a member of that species. He has alienated others from himself and himself from others leading to the inevitable alienation of himself from himself.

All this has told upon the general work-ethics in all spheres of life. One's membership of any society implies that he should do certain things which can be called his duties. But that doing x is A's duty has almost ceased to be, or become a very feeble motive for A's doing x. If B is the beneficiery, there can be any probability of A's doing x for B, in most cases, only if B is going to reward A directly or indirectly, or atleast if B establishes a personal link with A. The entire work-ethics of an average Indian has thus become personalised, and one who cannot establish a personal link or rapport with the man at the other side of the counter, in some way or other, is very likely to suffer and to be denied what is his due from the latter. Since almost everyone is going to meet with such misfortunes more or less frequently in his life-span, the sum-total of national unhappiness is bound to be very great. But the faith in the long-range effects of a dutiful, morally upright conduct, has become so weak that an individual tries to improve his lot by using the same type of (immoral) methods which when used by some one else has caused a great deal of unhappiness to him. A technocrat, who is harrassed by an income-tax inspector, tries to compensate for his losses by extorting money from an industrialist. An office-worker complaints of injustice when he is detained at the efficiencey bar but takes pride in not paying his house-rent to the house-owner. A politician who accuses his opponent of having distributed old saries to poor peasant woman to get their votes makes prompt use of the opportunity of giving huge sums of money to members of his or some opposite party to build his clear majority, etc., etc.

The average Indian has ceased to respect any law of the land.

His sense of political obligation has become very weak, and an important reason for this is that transgression of a law is not sure to result in some punitive or painful consequences to him. Since one can transgress a law of the land with impunity if he is clever, politically influencial or monied, even though the mechanisms for determining and inflicting punishment for such an offence are most often well-defined, it is easier or more tempting for him to flout or ignore a moral principle because the latter sort of mechanisms in this case are seldom well-defined. Naturally, therfore, his motivation to do something morally right simply because it is morally right is not likely to remain very strong.

The appropriate response to one's having done an act of immorality is a feeling of shame and repentance. But it is a fact that this feeling is not aroused in many, and instead, they express pride, even publicly, in having done something obviously immoral with impunity and benefit, or in having achieved something, which they do not deserve, by adopting undesirable means. It is not difficult to find a student bragging for having got a first class by the use of unfair means, an officer for having manouvred to get a lucrative assignment by bribing his boss, a businessman for having successfully smuggled dutiable goods by concealing them in his medicine chest, a politician for having won an election by means of fake votes, a professor for having manouvred to get his name recommended for a visit abroad to lecture on a topic he is not competent to, etc., etc.

The values of an individual are very much influenced by the values prevalent in his society. For example, if he considers honesty to be a highly commendable moral virtue but finds that in his society, in actual social practice, it is very seldom highly prized, that very often the honest is denied his due and the dishonest allowed to enjoy the benefits he does not deserve, his own conception of the value of honesty may also change. In due course his respect for it may greatly diminish and, unless he is an unusually morally strong-willed person, he may conclude that it is not so commendable a virtue as he thought it was. He may then decide that he needs to be honest only as a matter of policy and not at all as a matter of principle. It is a fact of life that the common man learns to adjust his value system to the value-system operative in his surroundings. To think that something is (or is

not) commendable because it is (or is not) in fact so regarded by one's society may not be a formally valid logical deduction, but it is a very natural psychological inference and many people make it by adjusting their value-systems, their preferences and prizings, to those of their society.

The prevalent social practice not only motivates one to adjust his value-system to that of his society but also prompts him to believe that the adjustment he is making is necessary for his urvival in that society. This belief has a very significant theoretical implication insofar as it (seems to) offer him a (pseudo-) justification for making the adjustment. Such adjustments sometimes tend to make an individual less and sometimes more moral than what he was before the process of adjustment began in his life. In a decadent society it is the former which is more likely to happen, and when it happens on a large scale, it is definitely a catastrophe for genuine progress and happiness, personal as wall as collective.

Whether or not such a catastrophe has occurred or is about to occur in contemporary Indian society, the above process of adjustment or thinking can be very easily noticed in almost all spheres of life. It has become a very common mode of reasoning to justify a moral compromise, loosening the rigour of a relevant moral principle, or even an obvious immorality, on the (so-called) ground that it is in some sense necessary for one's own or his party's survival, or for the solution of some social or political problem. The fittest alone survive in the struggle for existence, the reasoning goes, and, in modern Indian society the fittest are those who are realistic enough to adopt the best means to their goals even when they are not the most moral means, who know when and how to compromise their moral principles in accordance with circumstantial requirements. 'Unless I pay the bribe to the court clerk, I cannot get my document in time,' 'Unless I exploit the caste-feelings of my voters I cannot win the election,' 'Unless I have black money I cannot make donations to political parties', 'Unless I arrange for a good honorarium for the proposed expert's poor lectures, I cannot get my name recommended by him for a national or international conference,' 'Unless I teach, without remuneration, my supervisor's son, I cannot get my Ph. D. degree', 'Unless I agree to take the corrupt but politically powerful Mr. A in the cabinet he might defect

with his followers to another party, thereby ruining the chance of my party's coming to power', 'Unless I agree to withdraw all criminal proceedings against those who burnt to death the dutiful manager of the factory, I cannot get the strike called off and factory start working again,' 'Unless I agree to add 5% grace marks to the total marks obtained by each student, the students will not let university function', etc., are examples of reasoning one very often hears from relevant persons. Each one of them is a veiled or unveiled attempt to justify making an adjustment between some moral principle and some need or needs of the moment, and may also be called an attempt to justify some immorality on some expediential ground. Each one of them is an enthymem which, by supplying the unmentioned premise or premises, can be formulated as an argument defending a moral lapse. Such statements or arguments have become so common that neither their hearer nor their giver takes them to be in any way odd or objectionable; he who does is not only accused of being imprudent, but also of being ignorant of important social realities.

Adapting a remark of Thrasymachus (*Republic*, p. 609), it can very truly be said of most of modern Indians that they censure injustice only ' fearing that they may be the victims of it and not because they shrink from committing it. '

In this sordid state of affairs it is the politician again who finds himself in the most advantageous position. As a result of a series of historical misfortunes, no walk of life has remained impervious to political influence. Therefore, he finds himself successful almost everywhere, equally successful in law-courts and universities, in business-centres and centres of art and culture, in bureaucratic enclosures and (so-called) learned societies of national or inter-national importance. The cult of the politician has thus become so prestigious because of the power he wields that his spirit has reincarnated itself in almost all spheres of national life, making available to us such specimens as teacher-politician, student-politician, poet-politician, swami-politician, etc., etc. Therefore, the domination of politics in Indian society does not simply mean the domination of the politics of a professional, full-time politician, a member of a political party; rather it also includes the politics of his reincarnations in other spheres of life. It is a well-known fact that a politician-academician is more

powerful than one who is a pure academician even when th former is much poorer than the latter as an academician.

It is largely a consequence of the general domination of political power, or of the politicisation of the general atmosphere, that even non-political issues—e. g., academic issues like those of a national language, governmental efforts to promote literary and cultural activities, moral issues like condemnation of a sexual crime like rape, pleading for the uplift of the down-trodden, etc.—are presented and discussed in a manner or context which give the impression that their importance lies in their being political problems and not in their being national or human problems in their own right. As a natural corollary, the practice of seeking, or being satisfied with, a political solution to non-political—academic, moral, administrative, financial—problems has come into vogue and become respectable.

It seems quite reasonable to conclude therefore that unless the grip of the politician on Indian society is broken, or adequately loosened, the average Indian's respect for morality is bound to be superficial and his propensity to lead a moral life extremely subdued.

It is true that never in human history the causal link between morality and happiness has been found to be absolutely unexceptionable. But sensitive thinkers have also felt that morality ought to be accompanied with happiness, and Kant went to the extent of calling it an important truth. It can even be said that one of the objectives of all social planning and government is to ensure that morality and happiness at least generally, or in the long run, go together. When Kant found that they did not in fact always go together, he postulated God and the immortality of the soul. His reasoning was something like the following : Since morality and happiness ought to go together, the moral man must be happy, and since he is quite often not happy in his life-time, his soul must be immortal in order that at some point of his existence he will gain the happiness which his morality has earned for him. But it is not within the power of the individual soul to combine happiness with morality, though it is within his power to be moral, and therefore there must be God who can effect the combination, if not in this life, at some future point of time in his immortal existence.

Even if the logical defects in this mode of reasoning are ignored, it is not likely to be effective in providing motivation to a modern Indian (and perhaps even to the modern citizen of any other country) for leading a moral life. His faith in God and in his soul's immortality is not strong or effective enough to sustain his faith in the felicific powers of morality when the facts of life present a contrary picture. Such tenuous beliefs cannot ordinarily provide natural motivation to an average human being. If they are made to do so by propaganda or education, a simple-minded individual may also thereby be very easily exploited and duped to live a miserable life, letting the political manoeuvrers, the men in power, the affluent, to enjoy their earthly existence, encouraging the unhappy moral person live on the hope of a happy life, attainable through the courtsey of an omnipotent God, in some distant future. The classical Indian beliefs in the laws of Karma and re-birth can also be used in such an exploitative manner. Even the philosophy of the Bhagvadgita can be so used. It seems to me that it is quite right to wish to get the legitimate, reasonable, results or consequences of one's actions. It is quite fair for the moral person to wish to get happiness as a reward of leading a good moral life. It may be creditable if he does not have the wish, but it is definitely not wrong if he has it. The teaching that one should not have such a wish is an expression of a pessimistic awareness that morality cannot bring happiness and therefore there is no use wishing for it. But morality's inability to bring happiness is the sign of a decadent, immoral, or morally indifferent, society. Moreover, if one believes that no society can ensure happiness to the moral person, then not only the individual's motivation for morality but even the societal motivation making necessary efforts to ensure that morality pays will loose one of their most important bases. And, if no society can ensure happiness to the moral person, one can argue, there is no point in saying it ought to. But if this corollary is accepted, the controllers of society's resources and powers can get a justification to disown what should be their basic objective, and the happy few who are fortunate to obtain most of the important things they desire an instrument to exploit their miserable homo sapiens who are not so fortunate : what is the point in wishing to be happy by leading a moral life when no

individual or society has the powers to make morality necessarily linked with happiness? The best way, therefore, is not to wish for it and thereby to feel happy in one's unhappiness. A lofty ideal, or blinding pessimism ?

It is the society which has to ensure the togetherness of morality and happiness in this world and this life. Their togetherness may not be fully ensured by any society for all of its members, but it must be its goal. And, it must be ensured to the fullest extent possible for the majority of them, and serious efforts must be constantly made in that direction. A society which does not realize all this cannot survive for long and can very appropriately be called decadent. In the modern Indian society the delinking of morality and happiness has become very obvious, and the most deplorable thing is that people have forgotten, or are in the process of forgetting, the important truth that the moral individual ought also to be a happy individual and that ensuring that he is, is the major responsibility of any society.

Moral values can regain their place in contemporary Indian society if the motivation of the average Indian for leading a moral life is adequately reinforced, and moral life is made much more attractive than what it is to-day. This can be done successfully mostly by making morality pay, and in this the politician can play a very effective role, since power is weilded by him. Even the bureaucracy cannot do much as it is by and large under the ontrol of the politician. Political power in the country must therefore be purified in order that it may become an agent of moral reinforcement. To make people attracted towards leading a moral life, society has to make available in abundance examples of happy, moral, individuals, examples of morality paying in terms of personal and collective happiness. This is really a very difficult task to perform, and it can be done with some noticeable success only by those who have the power, and not merely the pious intention, to help the emergence of a social order in which virtue and happiness generally go together. Whether we like it or not, and whether they do or do not deserve it, it is the politicians who have acquired this power much more than any other segment of the Indian society. That is why the purification of the politics of the country is of paramount importance.

Religious or moral sermonizing is not likely to be of much

help in strengthening the average Indian's moral motivation. There is no dearth of such activities even to-day. One may think of a change in the economic structure of the society as a viable agent in this regard. But although it may have some desirable effects, we cannot expect it to be very successful when the politics is corrupt. The corrupt politics may control the economics and use it for its own ends.

At this point one may ask : How can the politics of the Indian society, or of any society for that matter, be (morally) purified when immorality is said to be reigning supreme in almost all sectors of it ? An immoral society cannot foster any moral politics, nor can an immoral politics a moral society. But since the politics of a society is an outgrowth of its own institutions and practices, it may be easier to begin with its purification than to begin with over-all purification of the entire societal apparatus. One must not, however, forget that the purification of both is equally necessary and that the purification of either one will contribute to that of the other. Like the hen and the egg situation, one can try to make either one of the two healthier by trying to improve the health of the other. And one can begin his work with any one, or both simultaneously depending upon his own resources and capabilities.

Purification of politics is, it must be admitted, a very difficult job requiring largescale, persistent efforts of several groups of morally sensitive members of the society. But there are certain specific things which the intellectual community can do and which, if sincerely and seriously done, would at least prepare the proper ground for the restoration to the moral values of life the dignity they have lost in contemporary Indian society. I shall describe below two of such schemes, the fist of which is of a general nature while the second of a fairly technical and academic nature. The first may be described as a proposal to make a Socratic revolution in thinking about morals and the second as one to construct a dystopia of immoralities available in the Indian society.

By an intellectual I mean one who has an alert, critical, mind and the necessary equipment and training to think and reflect over complicated, basic, issues of life, though he may or may not be a specialist in some technical field of knowledge.

Therefore, he need not be a teacher in any university. A group or groups, of such people which may include creative thinkers, professional experts working in centres of research and instruction, journalists and others concerned with the public media of information, can cooperatively try to bring about what I have called a Socratic revolution. What I mean is that by raising, in a serious and persistent manner, controversies, debates and discussions about what kind of life one ought to lead as a viable citizen, they can make people seriously think about the worth-while goals of human life and remove at least the conceptual blocks or hurdles which stand in their way of seeing clearly the granduer and dignity of a genuinely moral life. Such discussions are much more needed in India today than they were in ancient Greece. The urgency of convincing Indians that they ought to lead moral life is greater today than it ever was as I have said earlier, the average Indian has ceased to think seriously about the morality or immorality of the kind of the life he is leading and what kind of life he morally ought to lead is no longer for him an important question. By provoking him to think about such matters with the seriousness they deserve, one can hope to remove, or at least to lessen, his insensitivity to the distinction between morality and immorality, his thick-skinnedness which does not let him feel the damages the prevailing immoralities are causing to personal and societal existence.

A primarily academic research in the field of morals, if conducted in a certain manner, can also very well, it seems to me, play a significant role in changing the moral outlook of the people. But research in moral philosophy or ethics in contemporary India has not yet taken the direction which it should have in order to be relevant to the moral needs of the people. Quite often it is meta-ethical. Research in normative ethics is very meager and most of the works available are either historical or collections of opinions. Even those on classical Indian moral philosophy are in no way better. Almost all of them are by and large uncritical, unreflective, catalogues of moral views allegedly held by some ancient Indians. It would be too much to expect such studies to have any noticeable effect on people's moral outlook.

However, even genuine, high-level, creative, research in ethics may not play an important role in the moral re-awakening

of the Indian people (or any people) if it is a purely or merely philosophical research. What needs to be done cannot be done by philosophers alone, or by those who are only philosophers. It seems to me that a worth-while, morally relevant, study of Indian morals can be done only by a cooperative group of researchers consisting of moral philosophers, conceptual analysts, social scientists, and historians of ideas. With the help of modern methods of social, empirical research, used by social scientists, the moral views and opinions actually held by important individuals, policy-makers, executives, certain socially important sections of people, or certain sections of some communities, first must be ascertained with the objective of giving a comprehensive description of the moral ideologies actually operative. The opinions actually held, the goals actually considered desirable, must be distinguished and demarcated from those which are accepted only in principle or theory, or only to provide a cloak to conceal the actual ones.

Like other nationals, modern Indians also have in their possession some ethical ideologies, value-systems, or views and opinions about what codes of conduct they ought or ought not to follow. Since even loosely organised views and opinions can quite well serve most of the needs of day to-day living it generally happens that the common man's ethics is not a well structured. cohesive system. In collecting his data about the prevalent ethical norms and guide-lines, the empirical researcher has to depend largely upon these unorganised views and opinions when he has done his task, the conceptual analyst has to bring out, by logical analysis of the data collected, their inner, visible or concealed, inconsistencies, implications, inter-relationships, etc., and a system or systems, as logically or conceptually neat as possible, should be drawn out of them. One of the objectives of this exercise should be to ascertain the basic, most fundamental, ideas, opinions, principles and values. The historian of ideas can help the conceptual analyst by his studies of the development of dominant moral ideas, the influence on the latter of classical heritage, non-moral opinions, and views and opinions imported from other cultures, etc. The normative moral philosopher would contribute to this venture by distinguishing between the normative and non-normative components of these views and opinions, assessing their justifiability on moral grounds, drawing out their

implications for a healthy, progressive, social life, for the genuine happiness of individuals and groups, by presenting imaginatively the likely future effects of a life lived in accordance with them, by assessing their desirability, extrinsic as well as intrinsic, for the Indian nation as a member of the community of nations, etc. etc.

As stated above, this kind of research can be undertaken not by isolated individuals, but only by a group of researchers. But a likely misunderstanding must be warded off at the very outset. What I mean is not a research project in which several experts individually, atomically, contribute their shares to be compiled together in a volume. Rather, it should be a cooperative, inter-disciplinary, not just multi-disciplinary work, one in which each one co-operates with and possesses the ability to appreciate the insights of his other colleagues. Therefore, a philosopher with no interest in or understanding of empirical research, or a social scientist with no logical sensitivity, or a historian of ideas who does not have the critical ability to decipher the logical or developmental links among the ideas he studies, will be a misfit in this venture.

One of the primary aims of the project should be to present a full-blown, flesh and blood, picture of the prevalent Indian moral ideology or ideologies, a kind of dystopia which makes every fibre of the adopted ideologies clearly visible. The academicians working on the project may have to adopt some constructive or reconstructive devices to make the picture speak. It is not unreasonable to believe that when the picture is made to speak, at least those whose have healthy ears will listen to it and realise the implications of the moral ideology or ideologies they have actually adopted, and then, hopefully, they will make at least some efforts to modify their life-pattern in accordance with their perceptions. Everyone is not competent to construct such a picture and very few have the time to see imaginatively what are the implications of their styles of life for their own real welfare, for general social welfare, and for the future of the nation. The academicians, by drawing out the dystopia, can help them a great deal in this regard. The presentation of the dystopia in an im-pressive form is likely to influence one's approach to life as is the X'ray picture of a broken bone to influence his decision to undergo a surgical operation. He may not otherwise realise how greatly has the bone been broken, but when the picture exhibits

that it is irrepairable, or not likely to be again normal without being subjected to orthopaedic surgery, he would in all likelihood agree to undergo the recommended surgery and even to the replacement of the broken bone by a steel tube. The various aspects and elements of contemporary Indian morality seem, to be more amenable to being used in the construction of a dystopia than in that of an utopia. It is not too much to hope that the dystopia may motivate those who understand what it connotes to make sincere efforts to modify their style of life and persuade others also to do that in a morally healthier direction, or that it may at least make them mentally prepared for such a modification. Even the latter would be no mean an achievement. It seems to me that the Socratic revolution, combined with the construction of the dystopia, will at least lead to a change of attitude towards the prevailing immoralities in the society. By generating or strengthening a sense of repulsion against them, they can create a powerful internal force to move people to change their life-style into a morally better one.

Any theoretical venture may not by itself wholly achieve its practical objectives. It has to be also supported by those who are concerned with social planning and its implementation. But when the academic people have done their share of the work, they can justifiably ask the planners and executors to do theirs. The latter have to supply the necessary impetus to people to lead a morally desirable life as possible. They can do it only if they take necessary steps to ensure that (i) social planning and policy-making are done with adequate understanding of people's genuine needs, aspirations, and prevalent modes of living and (ii) the procedures of their implementation are designed in such a manner that the adoption of immoral means does not become unavoidable. There is a wide-spread feeling that our present policies and procedures pertaining to elections, public distribution systems, examinations, etc; are such that the adoption of immoral means does become at least sometimes unavoidable. But even if the social planners and rulers do not do their job, it is worth while to complete the academic one because it may influence the latter and motivate them to make at least some efforts to fulfil their obligations.

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