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Inner Self: Features and Origin

This chapter elaborates upon the features of the modern-day inner self and supports the claim that it needs to be admitted in our everyday ontology. It questions the assumption that such a self-experience is an innate, hardwired mechanism given to human beings since the dawn of our species. There have been attempts to argue for the possibility of fundamental changes in human mentality (Jaynes, 2013; Johnson, 2003; Mithen, 1999; Oesterdiekhoff, 2016; Sleutels, 2006). Following the same line of thinking, the chapter argues that the inner self-experience is a recent emergence in human beings. The chapter begins by briefly outlining the self-reflecting and questioning nature of this inner experienced self and the difficulty of defining it with sharp-edged boundaries. The second section briefly accounts for naturalism and its various versions, from extreme to liberal. Following Lynne Rudder Baker's (Baker, 2013) way of dealing with physicalist scientific theories, it argues that inner self-experience cannot be naturalized. It also explains why naturalism gives an incomplete account of our lived experience. This section discusses liberal naturalism and supports a modified version of liberal naturalist claims to accommodate inner self-experience as a natural process that came into existence because of social and cultural conditions. The third section gives an expository account of the various features of inner self-experience. Following Miri Albahari (Albahari, 2006), this section describes the various characteristics of the self. The present-day self essentially manifests as an agent first-person perspective with a thick psychological boundary between itself and the other. Expressing this inner self takes place through language; thus, it is conveyed and encapsulated in language. Inner self-experience is selectively narrative in nature, with memories of the past, and it shows constant concern about itself. Section four shows that inner self-experience is more a matter of history and cultural conditions than a biological, innately wired mechanism. It elaborates on other theories that question the perennality of a fixed inner self. Thus, the chapter defends the claim that there is a need to admit and enquire about the origin of the lived experience in the context of our day-to-day self.

2.1 THE INNER SELF EXPERIENCE

Questions like 'who am I?' 'what am I?' etc., have been a matter of inquiry for a long time in different cultures at different periods. If "Know thyself" is the inscription in the Apollo temple at Delphi, "*Ahaṁ kiṃ āsmi*," is a question that is discussed in ancient texts in India such as Upanishads. A similar version of the question can be found in many other texts, such as *Tao Te Ching* and the *Dhammapada*. Questions centered on or about the 'I' have been a matter of research in personal, theoretical, and scientific inquiries. The linguistic term 'I' is assumed to refer to an inner experience broadly, and this is roughly called the 'self'. Self is often seen as a protean term with no fixed or clear definition or meaning.

Generally, self is assumed to be an ambiguous and hybrid term. Self is sometimes used as a synonym for 'person' (a person is what makes someone, 'the one' over a period of time and at the same time can be seen as preserving the very essence of our species), and sometimes to the soul (as distinct, independent from the body that continues even after the body dies). Some consider the self a real entity, while others treat it as illusory. No matter how much we try to define the edges of this term in philosophical discussion, every time we try to draw contours of the term 'self', we land in undefined boundaries and difficult situations. And yet we have used this term for long to refer to 'some experience'.

Consider the case of seeing a rainbow. If we want to understand what a rainbow is, we may adhere to many theories, like a scientific one that explains the rainbow as a phenomenon in terms of optical illusion, sunlight, raindrops, refraction, reflection, wavelength, etc. We might also understand it from a folk psychological perspective or from a religious, cultural, or mythological perspective. However, from whichever perspective we try to understand the rainbow, the experience of seeing a rainbow cannot be reduced to any theory of it.

Theories are at the level of explanation, whereas the experience of viewing a rainbow differs from any explanation. The experience is assumed to be given in the sense that it is how our eyes perceive or experience a rainbow; the experience of seeing seven colors making an arc-like pattern is something that cannot be denied despite being an optical illusion. Any illusion is an illusion by experiencing it first and then realizing that it is an illusion. However, before the realization part, the illusion must be experiential. Similarly, no matter how complicated and ambiguous the term self gets at the level of explanation, it is hard to claim that there exists no such experience where we feel or experience an inner entity loosely called 'self'. We can offer different kinds of explanations from various perspectives, like scientific, religious, philosophical etc. However, the experience of 'self' remains an undisputed experience. But, this does not imply that there is no selfless experience; there can be moments that do not necessarily require a

self-centered experience. Nevertheless, despite that, much of our experience, at least in modern life, is centered around an inner life roughly referred to by the help of first-person concepts (FPC) like 'I', 'me', 'myself', etc. These first-person concepts along with mental verbs such as thinking, doubting, believing, etc, refer to an inner experience that is experienced by every normal modern human being; this experience is referred to as an inner self-experience throughout the thesis.

The experience of self, in general, is an 'inner experience' because it is unlike any physical experience. It is unavailable for observation like the rainbow. It is assumed for others and experienced only in the case of ourselves. As far as the life of a modern human being is concerned, it is easy to note that an inner self is automatically assumed in everyday behavior. Moreover, many social institutions in modern life are based on the notion that human beings are not just bodies but something more than that. Humans often consider themselves capable of doing the actions that they want to do. They consider themselves to be intentional selves who understand responsibility and can bear the consequences of their actions. Without such an assumption, we would not have been able to set up judicial institutions that work because of the notion of responsibility or even institutions like marriage. All this is facilitated by an active inner life filled with mental activities' such as deliberating, doubting, believing, thinking, etc. Assuming an inner entity as oneself (rather than the body) is quite automatic (reflexive) for humans in our times. It is the center of our inner world, which can engage in an internal monologue and undertake different activities, such as planning, thinking, etc.

It is common in language to use expressions like '*my body*' '*my true self*' and various other references to the inner self as something that exists over and above or at least different from the body; this self seems to own the body and is not equivalent to the body. Further, from the philosophical terminology, the inner self possesses intentional propositional attitudes (like beliefs, desires, hope, etc,) that come out in and through language.

Further, given the centrality and deep rootedness of the inner self, it is often assumed that such a self was part of human thinking from the beginning of the species. That means it is often taken for granted that human beings always thought of themselves as essentially this inner self and acted as if they were such selves. The assumption is that human beings were always capable of undertaking introspection or looking reflectively inward; they were permanently endowed with the inner 'I' who has various thoughts and feelings or intentional propositional attitudes. Even if this assumption can and needs to be challenged, it is reasonable to hold that the inner self that appears in introspection is mostly present in all modern adult human beings.

The answer to the question ‘who am I?’ encompasses a domain that is essentially experiential in nature. This question looks closer to the problem of personal identity. Some may equate self and person at the same plane, but since the present discussion is mainly about the experiential inner self, the question is not couched in terms of personal identity. In this regard, the current work follows the distinction made by Galen Strawson (Strawson, 2004) between considering oneself primarily as an inner entity and considering oneself as a human being taken as a whole. The current work is focused on the former. What is essential to the experience of oneself as an inner entity is that of being someone. Hence, we can attempt to answer the question ‘What am I?’ by listing experiential characteristics that constitute the experience of being someone. That means the ‘self’ becomes a self by virtue of having certain experiential characteristics. This can be formulated as, ‘necessarily, X is a self at time T if and only if X is or experiences $ex_1, ex_2, ex_3, \dots, ex_n$ ’. How we fill in the blank decides how we define who is ‘self’ and what experiential characteristics we set to be essential for being this ‘self’.

Being some ‘one’ stands in contrast with others (whatever is not oneself); when we list characteristics or properties of being ourselves, we also identify what it is not to be ourselves. Thus, defining one’s self becomes a double-edged process, and it is precisely at this point that much problem crops up. There are formidable questions about the self, related to its origin, development and stability over a period of time. The following factors gradually develop in our mind, shaping our ‘understanding’ of the inner self.

- Sensing something that is not *merely the body* but rather different from the body yet associated or in a relationship with the body.
- The inner self appears to be a continuous entity despite transforming over a period of time.
- This inner nature of the self gives rise to a psychological boundary (that is, between the self and the other).

As mentioned earlier, the thesis is primarily devoted to the lived experience vis-à-vis our day-to-day self. However, before going ahead with our discussion of the inner self as it appears in everyday life, it is important to look into some attempts to naturalize the self briefly.

2.1.1 Naturalistic Attempts to Understand the Self

Based on Baker’s (Baker 2013) account of naturalism, this section elaborates upon different kinds of naturalism. Building upon Baker’s (Baker, 1998, 2007a, 2013) way of dealing with physicalist scientific theories. I claim that the inner self needs to be studied as it appears in our

everyday life. Generally, there are two types of naturalism: (1) Reductive naturalism and (2) Non-reductive naturalism. Traditionally, reduction has been understood as the derivability of higher-level theories from physics, together with bridging laws that connect properties mentioned in physics to properties mentioned in the reduced theory (Baker, 2013). Reduction as an approach reduces a 'higher-level' item (it can be a theory, property, law, or term, etc.), to a 'lower-level' item (theory, property, law, or term), where the lower-level item is privileged by being 'closer' to physics. For instance, when heat is identified with the motion of molecules, the property of heat is reduced to the property of being the motion of molecules, where the property of being the motion of molecules is a property found in physics (E. Nagel, 1961). Some take reduction to be an explanatory relation. A property is reducible if it is explained reducibly in terms of other causal or nomic relations to other properties (Kim, 1998, 2000). David Chalmers considers reduction as the case where lower-level facts determine higher-level facts. However, Chalmers is anti-reductionist about consciousness and does not encourage questions pertaining to self-consciousness. Nevertheless, he admits that proper names and first-person concepts such as 'I am Jack' or 'my name is Jack' may express indexical facts that may be primitive. He says "Admitting those as primitive facts would require far less revision of the materialistic world than talking about irreducible facts about our conscious experience" (Chalmers 1996, 85).

2.1.2 Reductive Naturalism

All forms of strong or complete reduction have a direction toward physics in their microform. If our mental properties (or laws and terms) are reduced to some neuronal activity, but neural properties are not reducible to microphysical properties, then it is usually considered a partial reduction. Baker (Baker, 2013) formulates a generic version of reductive naturalism as follows: "Property P is reducible iff there are Properties P1, P2, P3 in a successful theory of microphysics, such that P1, P2, P3 are (1) local and (2) P strongly supervenes on P1, P2, P3" (Baker 2013, 8). Strong supervenience is a relation between two sets of properties and is defined as follows: "A strongly supervenes on B if and only if: necessarily, for any object x and property F in A, if x has F, then there exists a property G in B such that x has G, and necessarily if any y has G, it has F" (Kim, 1993 as cited by Baker 2013,8). Strong supervenience, as Baker notes, is the claim that microphysical properties necessitate macrophysical properties. Micro aspects are local because the macro properties carry or contain the micro properties. By local, she means that micro properties are present only in the macro object. Since it is the macro object that instantiates the micro properties, micro properties depend on the spatial boundaries of the macro object.

Strong naturalism attempts to reduce the set of properties to that of physics to make the ontology more objective. The reduced properties do not belong to the ontology and, thus, are omitted from the description of reality. Natural reductionism reduces everything to the microphysical level. Individual entities like tree, table, chair, etc, are really nothing but microphysical particles. Mostly, reductivists of this variety lean towards eliminativism about higher-level properties. Baker (Baker 2013,9) construes it as: If a property P reduces to microphysical properties $Q_1, Q_2, \dots, Q_n$, then only $Q_1, Q_2, \dots, Q_n$ appear in the ontology. Reduced properties are not among those required for a complete description of reality. If, as reductive naturalists hold, all science is reducible to microphysics, then all reality reduces to the microphysical. What appears to be a single individual thing—a person, a chair—is really just an aggregate of microphysical particles, and what appear to be macro-properties of single individual things (e.g., being a person, being a chair) just reduce to micro-properties. So, if reductive naturalism is true, then it seems that the world around us, of day-to-day experience, is not real and thus lacks ontological import.

This line of thinking leads to the claim that inner self-experience is nothing but reducible to certain neurological functioning of the brain. Which, in turn, can be reduced to the fundamental physical level. Therefore such kind of reduction often leads to an elimination of the experienced world. Eliminativists, for instance, Churchland (Churchland, 1986), argue that the mind is nothing over and above the brain; thus, folk psychological ways of explanation need to be eliminated. Eliminativists do not consider concepts such as mind, self, etc, to have any reality and argue that intentions and intentional states (such as belief, doubt, etc.) need to be eliminated (Heil, 2019). All these things depend on nothing but an 'intricate neural mechanism'; thus, they can be reduced to a fundamental level of reality and so need not have any ontological import.

Eliminativism as a claim has been questioned on many grounds. First, if no intentional state, such as belief, exists, then how come we believe in eliminativism? Second, eliminativism leads to a collapse of our experienced world. Third, it can be the case that a fundamental level of reality cannot be established due to our finitude. Some, like Jonathan Schaffer (Schaffer, 2003), argue that the fundamental level of reality does not exist to which everything can be reduced. Thus, reduction of every level towards a fundamental level is not possible. Given the ordinary way of perceiving ourselves and the world, explaining the development and origin of self is not tenable through eliminativism.

Critics of reductive naturalism, like Baker (Baker 2013), hold that all that exists needs to be addressed in a complete description of reality. It needs a place in a complete picture of reality because even if we agree that there is an illusion or merely dispositional ways of experiencing the world or folk psychological ways of explaining the phenomena, the question is why, after all, it is in this very manner that the world appears to us? Further, any explanation is incomplete if it does not provide various aspects of our experience, even illusory parts. We generally make sense of reality by comparing it with the unreal; it is because of the unreal that reality gains its status and trustworthy character. Thus, even if any experience is unreal or a mere illusion, it needs an explanation to stabilize and give a trustworthy character to reality. Also, there is a difference between a mere aggregate of particles and a perceived object. For instance, a chair is a chair by virtue of ascribing the meaning of what constitutes a chair to a material thing. A chair is a 'meaningful entity' to be utilized for some particular purposes within a cultural background; it is a 'shared meaning' of what constitutes some material thing to be a chair, and it is based on this 'shared meaning' that anyone can turn any material thing into a chair like thing. Further, the meaning is not arbitrary but rather conventional and pragmatic in its usage.

Many reductivists will protest by saying that they do not deny that chairs, trees, etc., exist, but what they are—really are—is nothing over and above an aggregate of microphysical particles. However, even if we grant that macro-objects are aggregates of particles, the difference between 'being a chair' and 'being an aggregate of particles' only amounts to a difference in the description. Nevertheless, the question remains: why does the description change, or how is one description an ultimate description and no further description is yet to come? Accordingly, whether a chair-like particular object does not exist (eliminativism) or the chair is just an aggregate of particles (reductionism) is a small difference as it does not affect ontology in major ways. If reductionism is true, then, ontologically speaking, no single object, such as a chair, exists. What seems to be a difference in reality between aggregates of particles and objects is only a difference in the description. However, all that exists deserves a place in a complete description of reality.

Strong reductive naturalism can lead to a disenchanted attitude. Disenchantment is about a pessimistic reaction devoid of any supernatural or non-scientific phenomena, i.e., devoid of any value, mystery, love, magic, or imaginative world. According to this viewpoint, micro-physics alone tells us what the world is; everything apart from this is an illusion. For instance, Rosenberg (Rosenberg, 2012) attempts to show how fundamental particles give rise to the illusion of designs and patterns that we witness in everyday life. If disenchantment is accepted, then concepts like morality, value, meaning, and purpose in life are in need of

justification. A naturalist should explain such things about our lives in terms of physics and how such an illusion is created. If such phenomena are illusions, then it demands an error theory that can explain how such an error of illusion is produced; as Baker puts it, 'How global deception is even possible?' Further, as she points out, disenchantment leaves us with nihilism about all such phenomena. It undermines the question of 'what it is like to be a human' and reduces everything we know about ourselves to a micro-physical level.

2.1.3 Non-reductive Naturalism

Apart from those who either eliminate or try to reduce (natural reductionists) higher-level properties to microphysical properties, another view within naturalism holds that there are genuine properties that do not strongly supervene on local microphysical properties. Non-reductive naturalism holds that there are genuine properties that do not supervene on local microphysical properties. That is to say that my belief that 'it is raining today' is a genuine property that necessarily need not supervene on any microphysical facts or affairs. For instance, philosophers like Hilary Kornblith (Kornblith 1994, 41) argue that mental terms are widely used in scientific theories for the purpose of successful explanations and predictions. That means mental terms in such scientific theory, which stand for some mental state, is a good evidence to hold that they genuinely refer to some property. According to him, this is all the evidence to believe or 'reason that mental states and processes genuinely exist'. Thus, it is viable to hold that mental states and properties instantiated by material things are genuine and non-reducible. Another reason why, according to non-reductive naturalism, mental terms are ineliminable and irreducible is that they reject explanatory reductionism. They hold that explanation from a sociological, psychological, and biological perspective cannot be reduced to a lexicon of physical sciences. But still, non-reductivists are materialists because they hold that every concrete object is ultimately constituted of microphysical particles. Thus, they can be called monists when they talk about the constituents of reality, but as Baker (Baker, 2013) points out, they are pluralists in their ontological commitments. Furthermore, they agree that there are macro objects that have causal power. For instance, a tree (macro object) has the causal power to kill anyone if it falls accidentally. It is absurd to argue that a macro object like a tree, shark, or human is nothing but microparticles and has no causal efficacy as a macro object.

Some contemporary non-reductive naturalists can be called liberal naturalists because they try to settle on a middle ground between strong scientific naturalism and supernaturalism, thereby bringing a logical space between the two (Baker, 2013). De Caro and Voltolini (de Caro & Voltolini, 2010) state that supernaturalism claims that certain entities, such as God, mind, and self, might not abide by the physical laws. The claim of liberal naturalism is to stand on the

middle ground between extreme reductionism/eliminativism and supernaturalism; liberal naturalism tries to settle for the middle ground because it wishes to create justifiable ground for philosophical conceptual enquiries. It wants to claim that there can be philosophical enquiries that are irreducible and ineliminable without being supernatural in character. The crux of the contemporary naturalist claim is that nothing that does not follow the laws of nature can be acceptable. Liberal naturalists, in order to accommodate entities like mind, self, etc, have to be (1) liberal about the mode of inquiry, that is to say, those modes of inquiry that are neither scientific nor supernatural, such as conceptual analysis, imagination, speculation, introspection and (2) ready to accept the existence of an entity that does not affect the world, in order to be counted in ontology (De Caro & Macarthur, 2010).

According to Baker (Baker, 2013), though liberal naturalists wanted to show a logical space between scientific naturalism and supernaturalism, they could not exactly pinpoint that space. She points out that they fail to create a space between strong naturalism and supernaturalism. She says that allowing all entities to be reducible or ontologically dependent on scientific laws or properties becomes scientific naturalism. On the other hand, if they allow entities not constrained by science, they lose the name 'naturalism'. According to her, liberal naturalists seem to have an ambiguous use of the term 'natural' itself. First, nature is applied to anything that is not supernatural. In its second use, it applies to items connected to or derived through science. But naturalists generally take these two senses of the term 'natural' as equivalent. However, as Baker points out, just distinguishing between these two ways of conceiving 'natural' does not lead to much progress. She says that just as "naturalistic philosophy" may be read as "philosophy with no supernatural element" or "philosophy constrained by science" similarly, the liberal naturalist may put naturalist claim in two ways, but it does not make it liberal. Thus, according to her, liberal naturalists fail to construe liberal naturalism as a distinct kind of naturalism from naturalistic philosophy. According to her, they seem to use naturalism (majorly) in the second sense, as guided by or derived from science; thus, they limit the controversial entities they admit to natural sciences. They stress on allowing different modes of inquiry and ontological acceptance of non-physical entities for being liberal. But as she points out, (1) scientific naturalism already includes such modes of inquiry, speculation and conceptual analysis; they are at the heart of the scientific (physical) investigation; any hypothesis starts with speculation and conceptual analysis. (2) If non-physical entities are not causally efficacious, then it is hard to claim that they exist. Thus, it is unclear how liberal naturalism creates a space between the two extremes.

Non-reductive naturalism generally leads to and is inspired by an optimistic approach towards our day-to-day experience. Such attitude is marked by searching for consistency

between naturalism and our day-to-day lived experience. They are motivated to look for our day-to-day problems (for the betterment of humanity) after accepting entities like meaning, value, freedom, etc., to be 'existing' and non-reducible entities. These naturalists are serious about what Baker (2013) calls 'life's questions', or questions pertaining to values, morality, meaning, love, purpose, etc., and therefore look for answers consistent with naturalism. For instance, Thomas Nagel's (T. Nagel, 2010) view about religious attitudes is that they exist because of the desire for completion, connection or harmony with the cosmos or with what really exists. Since such features have great adaptive value, he suggests it is the reason why they are selected during evolution. However, his solution does not consider issues related to the ontological status of 'intentionality' and many other 'life's questions'. Philip Kitcher (Kitcher, 2011), another strong, optimistic naturalist, tries to speculate about the genealogy of normativity in general in terms of behavioral rules and regulations that help to maintain harmony. This means that rules and norms that exist in our society are accepted because they are successful in maintaining social harmony. Kitcher's argument can be seen as grounded in psychology and sociology.

An optimistic attitude is not merely limited to the concept of normativity or supernatural entities but rather to the very status of language through which we are able to raise questions and give explanations. Some theorists admit that the language in which we talk about 'life's question' is legitimate and cannot be reduced; however, it lacks an ontological import. As Baker points out, Daniel C Dennett (D. C. Dennett, 1991a, 2018) can be seen as a disenchanted reductionist; he thinks our purpose, language, and meaning are legitimate but lack ontological import. Baker calls Dennett a 'conservative reductionist'; he rejects the ontological existence of intentional states yet maintains that we cannot do in our day-to-day lives without such states.

2.1.4 Can we Naturalize Inner Self-Experience?

Naturalism is primarily ontological in nature. It is fundamentally about what constitutes reality and what is not real. Physical science acts as an arbiter of what really exists or what is reality. As discussed above, reductive naturalizing can be achieved in two ways: (1) by reduction: Property P is naturalized by reduction iff P Strongly Supervene on 'appropriate' microphysical properties. And (2) by elimination: P is naturalized by elimination iff; a complete ontology does not entail that there is such a property P (Baker, 2013). Generally, reductive scientific theories undermine our lived experience and try to either reduce or eliminate the lived experience or the immaterial entities present in the lived experience, such as self-understanding, self-evaluation, agency, complicated emotions, etc. The manifest image of the inner self is

central to our day-to-day lived experience and thus does not stand a chance to appear in ontology as per reductive naturalism.

Philosophers like Charles Taylor (Taylor, 1989) also investigate 'self' from a historical perspective. He gives an elaborate description of how the self has been understood in philosophical literature. His investigation is to understand historically how the modern understanding of self emerged. His major contention to look for historical sources for the understanding of the modern-day self is to give ontological status to ethical concepts, such as good, value etc. According to him, just because these concepts do not come under the subject matter of modern science, it does not mean that they are not real (i.e., not objective) (Taylor, 1989, 56). For him, it is a reductionist attempt if we understand 'self' without a moral or aesthetic framework. According to him, the qualitative dimension is the most crucial dimension that makes us human. Taylor makes use of the phenomenological framework to support his claim. According to him, the requirements that "make sense" or give meaning to our lives are always from a first-person perspective, and all theoretical explanations, including scientific explanations, are third-personal explanations.

Further when scientific explanations do not capture ethical dimensions of our everyday life, such as experiencing dignity, freedom, responsibility, etc, they do not make a distinction between 'factual' and 'evaluative' components of 'meaning'. These concepts make us 'human beings' in our universe, and the subject matter of natural science (physics) does not cover these concepts. According to him, explaining our everyday life without terms like courage, dignity, freedom, etc., is not only an ineffective explanation but also sidelines the language in which we live our lives. These everyday concepts cannot be excluded from our explanation unless we find any equivalent terms (Taylor, 1989, 57-59).

Taylor's work is prominently devoted to mapping how, through philosophical history, we have arrived today at such a way of looking at the self (that is, thinking that the self can be explained by reducing it to some processes that can be explained through scientific theories). Taylor is devoted to argue that the understanding of self as a product of merely cognitive functions is a reductionist attempt, and this reduction is an improper reduction because all the terms from our everyday life are not reduced to equivalent terms, terms such as dignity, freedom, value, etc, cannot have any equivalent term in science because they lay outside the subject-matter of "value-neutral mechanistic" scientific world-view. According to some, such as Warren G. Frisina (Frisina, 2002, 16), though Taylor argues and creates a space for an alternative approach to understand self, he did not fully develop his own alternative way of understanding self. The present thesis is more devoted to exploring an alternative understanding of self.

To answer the question, can we naturalize the inner self-experience an attempt has already been made by Baker (Baker, 2013). Baker tries to answer the question regarding the naturalization of inner self-experience by gathering appropriate first-person data (FPD) to see whether it can be naturalized or not. FPD are phenomena that entails a first-person perspective (FPP). First-person concept: I, me, my, myself, etc., entails that someone has a first-person perspective, thus they are a candidate of being included in FPD.

According to Baker, all those phenomena that entail FPP are included under FPD. She also mentions (Baker, 2013, 31) that the first-person data that she will take (or consider for her investigation about naturalizing first-person perspective) is from a robust stage. This implies that there are chances that FPD remains unbounded by the manner in which the first-person perspective is manifested, i.e., irrespective of how the first-person perspective manifests, if any phenomena have a first-person perspective, it can be taken for investigation by marking it as first-person Data. (If It looks like an argument in circularity, then one might say how you define FPP is not restricted to any one way since it's an ever-evolving domain; one might go ahead and test one understanding of FPP, therefore what/how you define FPP is actually what you want (or which aspect you want) to investigate about it).

Baker construes the first person perspective (FPP) in two stages: (1) Rudimentary stage that manifests in mammals and human infants. (2) Robust stage: it is manifested in language users who have mastered the first-person language and is constitutive of a conception of self, which she formulates as 'self*'. The difference between the two stages or kind of first-person perspective is roughly a distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness. Robust FPP is a conceptual ability unique to humans, an ability to conceive oneself as oneself from the first person without making use of names and descriptions. According to her, robust FPP is an ability unique only to humans (as opposed to a rudimentary first-person perspective) because of the ability to use language that shows that they conceive of themselves as themselves without any other resource. She uses the phrase 'conceive of oneself as oneself' to emphasize both conceptual (linguistic) and the experiential aspect of robust first person perspective. (Baker, 2013, 31). Since a robust first person perspective is where the being 'conceive of oneself as oneself', an abstract or conceptual inner self manifestation is necessary (which she calls self* or I*). The ability to use FPC is not merely an indication of a robust first-person perspective but also a crucial aspect of experiencing robust first-person perspective.

Having a strong or robust conception of the first person is one of the crucial features of inner self-experience. FPDs that Baker investigates are from the advanced stage of language users. This indicates that language plays an essential role in a robust first-person perspective

and in first-person data (FPD). According to Baker, only those who have a robust first-person perspective can be called 'person'. Begins with rudimentary first-person perspective are not 'persons' thus, the criterion to be a person is having a robust-first person perspective, not memory, mind, body, etc.

However, it should not imply that this self-conception refers to some object like a tree, chair, mountain, etc., rather, it is an inner self-lived experience that necessarily involves expressing it through language. It is so difficult to explain, perhaps due to the limitation of words, and they (words) serve only as a pointer and cannot describe the phenomenal experience; those who experience it can only understand it. An animal, infant, or non-language user cannot have a robust first-person perspective because, to describe it, language is an essential condition. The following reasons point at the complex and hard to explain the nature of inner self-experience:

- There is hardly any experience similar to it or as 'immediate' as it is.
- Since it remains unobservable, it is hard to explain only in terms of itself, i.e., only in terms of what we are experiencing because it is not marked like other observable phenomena, it is only experienced for one's self and assumed for others.
- It is a dynamic experience; its dynamics are not merely limited to how it evolves or transforms over a period of time but rather also how novel parts of it can remain undiscovered/unknown in one's life span (in the sub-conscious realm) and yet this sub-conscious part influences the conscious self-experience. Thus, experiencing the 'self' is a unique phenomenon for humans; it is so unique that no other similar phenomena exists.

According to Baker, a robust first-person perspective is exemplified by reflexive use of first-person concepts (FPC) like me, my etc. These pronouns are embedded in sentences whose main verbs are either linguistic or psychological verbs. Thus, a self-concept is a means by which one conceives oneself as oneself, a concept of oneself from one's own point of view. She calls such sentences I* sentences. I* sentences pick out the subject from a first-person perspective, not under any definite description or any particular name. She makes a distinction between simple 'I' and 'I*' or a self-conception. She lists three reasons for using 'I*' rather than simply using 'I' (Baker, 2013, 36-38). These reasons are also constitutive of the claim why I* or a robust sense of self-conception is ineliminable.

(a) I simply refer to the self; it does not distinguish between how one refers to the self or the way or manner in which the self manifests. I* stands for a concept that picks out the manner in which the reference takes place. I* is referentially opaque, and the difference between I and I* is more apparent in terms of truth condition. For instance, if someone named 'x' says 'I am underweight', it simply means that the person who uttered it is underweight, irrespective of how the speaker conceives herself. Whereas if x says, 'I believe I* am underweight,' it picks out the manner in which she thinks she is underweight, that is she 'believes' that she is underweight; her belief might or might not correspond to the actual state of affairs. The difference between the two is making a direct self-reference and attributing the self a first-person reference with the help or means of a self-concept (which entails a psychological, linguistic verb).

(b) The use of 'I*' makes it clear that the speaker is the producer of the sentence and the one who is talked about in it. That is, the speaker is identified as the believer, and the second occurrence of 'I' placed the speaker's self-concept in the proposition believed.

(c) However, it is redundant to suppose that we think in this manner when it comes to soliloquies or internal monologues. Thus, it seems plausible to say that we can get rid of 'I*' sentences and, eventually, the distinction between 'I' and 'I*'. Some philosophers like Geach (Geach, 1957), Schlick (Schlick, 1946), et al. argued that 'I' is eliminable or can be paraphrased and thus is not an ineliminable notion. However, Baker argues that even if simple 'I' can be eliminated in internal monologues and soliloquies, I* is ineliminable precisely because I* is a direct manifestation of the manner in which self appears or is experienced.

What makes the case more interesting is not whether we can eliminate I* or not, but rather whether we can use I without realizing I*; that is the reflexive nature we generally have, or at least in the developmental phase of our lives, have.

Therefore, we cannot reduce I* sentences as they are nothing but a manifestation of an experienced self-conception. A robust first-person perspective is a capacity to think of oneself as oneself*. This capacity to conceive oneself as oneself* is about self-consciousness (Baker excludes the mirror test results that yield the non-linguistic animals, such as Chimpanzees, as self-conscious creatures from the robust first-person perspective). Reduction of a robust first-person perspective or of a self-conception requires it to supervene on some microphysical properties. If so, then the first-person perspective must be reduced to a non-first-person or third-person lexicon or knowledge. However, first-person beliefs cannot be reduced to third-person beliefs because it is only first-person beliefs (a) that can causally explain the change in

behavior or course of actions and (b) any third-person beliefs cannot replace first-person beliefs about oneself (Baker, 2013, 50). As long as scientific naturalism is devoid of first-person belief and focuses on objective knowledge that can be understood in third-person concepts, the reduction of the first-person perspective or elimination of the first-person concept is not possible. Some, like Perry (Perry, 1979, 2002), may counter it by saying that though these first-person concepts, beliefs and modes of identification are irreducible to the lexicon of the third person, these can be merely ways of epistemically reaching oneself based on pragmatic value, where a third person account gets linked with a first-person account on the basis of identity and a realization or manifestation of first-person emerges and further it has no ontological import. Perry (Perry, 2017) also talks about how the everyday concept of self and identity can be widely applied sensibly to biology. However, according to Baker (Baker, 2013, 52), this creates the problem of how (1) third person account gets linked with the first-person account in the human mind and (2) mere identity of a first-person account to third person account cannot establish the manifestation of a robust first-person perspective. As robust first-person perspective is a *capacity* to conceive oneself as oneself. And 'to conceive oneself as oneself' (i.e. a robust first-person perspective) cannot be reduced to a lexicon or an objective third-person account. Baker (Baker, 2013, 63) points out that Searle's (Searle, 2000) position of scientific naturalism and ontological non-naturalism is inconsistent. Because if (as Searle himself argues) consciousness (rudimentary first-person perspective) is not reducible, then Baker points out it deserves a place in ontology.

According to her, if science does not distinguish between thinking about oneself and thinking about oneself as oneself*, then it leaves something important in the ontology. As to have an inner life, a robust self-conception is necessary. It is the capacity to have a robust self-conception that marks the distinction, if we fail to make this distinction, then we will never have attitudes such as beliefs (Baker, 2013,65). Further everyday phenomena (such as taking a vow or regretting) might appear mundane, but despite being mundane, these are significant phenomena that can influence further course of actions. And there is no reason why mundane yet significant everyday phenomena do not deserve a place in an ontology.

Baker points out that philosophers like Daniel Dennett (1991, 2009a) and Thomas Metzinger (2003a) attempt to eliminate the first-person perspective. According to Dennett, intentional language is only a tool for predicting the behavior of rational agents. His 'multiple draft model' is all about searching those brain functions that can explain our beliefs about our inner subjective life. However, according to Baker (Baker, 2013, 79-80), Dennett's position fails to explain how someone believes that she* is seeing, believing, experiencing, etc., something. It is not merely the experiencer who should realize the concept of self* for herself. However, the theorist studying her experience and collecting the empirical data (of a particular experience,

say seeing a dot) needs to account for this to render reality to the empirical data itself. Suppose someone believes that *she** saw a fairy. However, the theorist studying her belief does not have any reality of a fairy; thus, a fairy is not a notion that carries ontological import and, therefore, cannot be seen. If the subject did not see a fairy, then the experience is wrong. However, if someone does not believe that *she** (from a robust first-person perspective) saw a fairy, then the whole data for a theorist is wrong as there is no experience from a robust first-person perspective.

Thus, the elimination of a robust first-person perspective is not possible. Metzinger denies that there are genuine subjects of experience. He argues that our brain activates a mental model of representation (having phenomenal as well as intentional content). Intentional content depends on the part of the relation to the environment (subject-object relation in the case of inner self-experience). He subsumes the self-experience to that of phenomenal experience by saying that subjective experience consists of the activation of a model of representation where the model itself remains inexperienced; only the content is experienced. But how we come to believe that 'I*' is the subject of my experience. When we think about ourselves, it is just the phenomenal content, not the model. Thus, the conscious subject is not a part of reality but rather a part of a representational model (i.e., phenomenally modelling certain aspects of a preexisting transparent self-model, which, in Baker's terms, will be a rudimentary first-person perspective). For Metzinger, the phenomenal self-model is a real entity that will be empirically discovered someday.

Baker (Baker 2013, 92-94) criticized Metzinger's theory by saying that (1) even if this is empirically found in some part of brain functioning, brain functioning cannot replace *self** at the level of experience. (2) Pure phenomenological content cannot individuate mental states. For instance, consider these two states: 'I doubt that I can reach on time', 'I doubt I am at the right venue'; in both these cases, mere phenomenal content is not enough to individuate the state, the mental state of doubt has also changed, even the phenomenal feel of 'what it is like to be in a state of doubt' is different in both these cases. Intentional content does not represent states of affairs or facts in the world but rather a relation of my internal experience to that of the world. Baker's (Baker, 2013, 101) response to scientific physical reduction and elimination is that it seems like a change of topic as reduction or elimination both do not deal with questions that have interested humans in general and philosophers in particular for a long time. There is a need to distinguish between phenomena of our day-to-day life and the mechanism that underlines or subserves those phenomena. Just as a football match between two players cannot be eliminated or reduced with physical movements, inner self-experience cannot be physically

reduced or eliminated and deserves a place in an ontology. Therefore, ontological naturalism (here, nature is conceived as what is recognized by natural science) is false, according to Baker.

Baker's own position is what she calls “near naturalism”; it is a naturalistic claim in the weak sense that brackets anything that is supernatural (like God etc.) Near naturalism accommodates the claim of first-person perspective by taking it to be a dispositional capacity or property. It is a form of practical realism (200, 2007a). It aims to give metaphysical stability to the world of our day-to-day experience and does not consider science or scientific methods to be the only candidate of being in ontology. Baker (Baker 2013, 209) propagates a modified version of liberal naturalism to accommodate a first-person perspective. In the modified version, liberal naturalists (1) need to allow the causal efficacy of non-scientific epistemic modes of obtaining knowledge, and such modes of knowledge have to be not constrained by laws of physics (2) need to maintain that there are multiple levels of fundamental reality or ontology. As for Baker, even at the level of physics, if an entity is constitutive in the P_1 manner of an aggregate of particles at T_1 , the manner in which it will be organized at T_2 will vary. Thus, even at the physical level, there is a difference between the fundamental level at T_1 , and at T_2 ; this difference accounts for multiple levels of reality even at the level of physical science due to circumstances. The role of circumstances is pressed in the liberal naturalistic claim in order to accommodate the individuation of mental states that emerge in robust first-person perspective so that these states can neither be eliminated nor be reduced to some subpersonal level and its non-occurrence in any other circumstances. Further, if we accept the first condition that various non-scientific modes of knowledge are to be accepted that are not constrained by the laws of science and have successful usage in our day-to-day life, we need to admit that there are various kinds of ontology, which are different in their very nature, for instance, a scientific one, of lived experience, etc. (Baker, 2013, 223-227) (Baker, 2007b, 236).

My work is within the framework of the modified version of liberal naturalism. I inquire into the circumstantial conditions that lead to the emergence of an inner self-experience at an individual level and at the level of our species in historic times. I attempt to analyze the role of metaphorical language grounded in metaphorical competence as one of the crucial conditions that had played an important role in the past and even today play an important role in the development of ‘conceptual metaphors’. Thus, I elaborate on the role of metaphorical language in constructing an abstract, subjective inner self entity that is based on physical bodily activities. In questions like ‘who am I?’, ‘what am I?’ etc., the self is treated as an object of inquiry. Questions about self-experience can be distinguished or spoken in terms of subject and object. We need not necessarily always resort to any scientific theory or mode of enquiry. Thus, we can

list certain characteristics or features of the 'self' based on how it manifests to us in our daily lives. What follows is a discussion of the different characteristics or features of the inner self.

2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INNER SELF

The way we understand our 'self' presupposes some conception of self or self* as an inner entity. The features of self broadly follow Miri Albahari's (Albahari 2006) account of a reflexive or automatic way of understanding self that we commonly experience in our day-to-day life in the modern world.

2.2.1 Self as Agent

Many psychological problems associated with self-experience show exceptionally interesting ways in which the inner self manifests. For instance, in some cases of schizophrenia, the patient reports that they are not in control of the process of thinking. Most reports of such patients are about someone, some voice that talks, thinks for them, and it is not their inner self who does the thinking or talking. Though they are conscious of that voice or someone doing the thinking for them, yet they strongly claim that they are not talking or thinking. Though the process of thinking is taking place self-consciously, yet they are not the one who is doing it. In this light, some philosophers like Campbell (Campbell & McMahan, 2010) and Graham and Stephens (Stephens & Graham, 2000) distinguish the self as an agent and the self as a subject. This amounts to a difference between mere ownership and authorship of self-consciousness. In such psychopathological cases, one can be an owner of self-consciousness (as a mere host of specific processes); here, the self cannot be a self-conscious author who acts as an active agent. In other words, the inner self does not author their thought but remains a mere owner of thoughts or any mental content.

The philosophical literature in the past few decades has prominently evolved, shedding light and distinguishing various concepts of self-experience in terms of self-consciousness. It has not only focused on the puzzles and problems that self-consciousness raises, but it also concentrated more on how we should go about studying it and what are the different shades or subtle distinctions at an epistemic and representational level pertaining to self-consciousness.

We consider our inner self to be an autonomous agent in the sense of being able to cause actions. We do not feel ourselves to be generally in the control of external forces. On the other hand, we believe that we have choices that are not externally determined. For the actions that we perform or what we say, it appears that we could have opted not to do it. In fact, the distinction commonly made between action and events is based on the notion of agency. Action

is performed by an agent who could have opted not to do them, whereas events simply happen. As Miri Albahari (Albahari, 2006) puts it, we are role occupiers, thinkers of our thoughts, and the doer of our actions. The notion of free will goes hand in hand with responsibility, which, in turn, gives rise to emotions like shame, pride, guilt etc., all of which presuppose agency. (Albahari 2006) Thus, autonomy is significant as far as our self is concerned. The fact that we commonly experience shame, pride etc., clearly shows that free will or autonomy is taken for granted in our reflexive understanding of ourselves. Through 'autonomy', one feels responsible for what one does. On the other hand, someone who believes in radical determinism (the view that everything is entirely determined naturally and we have no free will) would not experience emotions like pride, shame, etc. Further, it can be argued that the notion of free will or autonomy plays a significant role in giving rise to the thick psychological boundary between the self and the other because to be autonomous amounts to being separate or even independent of the rest of the environment.

2.2.2 Thick Psychological Boundary

One central characteristic of inner self-experience is the thick psychological boundary with the world. By virtue of being the center of the inner world, the outer world becomes completely distinct from the self. Here, it is not the boundary of the organism that is referred to but rather the boundary at a psychological level. All organisms must distinguish between their bodies and the rest of the world. However, the psychological boundary between the inner or mental self and the world is different. As Albahari (Albahari 2006) points out, the inner self is limited by this boundary. This boundary between our inner self and the rest of the world appears to be very clear, certain, and thick. Human beings consider themselves to be essentially a 'self' standing distinctively from all other objects, with features like autonomy, uniqueness, etc. The features of such an inner self also provide the evidence to claim that there is such a self-experience.

2.2.3 Linguistic Encapsulation of the Inner Self

The way we use language clearly reflects our conceptual set-up, having an inner self distinct from the body and the rest of the world. The first-person pronoun 'I', 'me', 'my' etc, refers to something distinct from the objects in the world, including our own bodies. Expressions like "my body" are common in language, which implies that the 'I' is distinct from the body. Further, it points to the feature of possessiveness or the ability to own things attributed to the self. Similarly, when we say, "I did it", the self is clearly referred to as something that can cause action. The notion of agency, like ownership, is another essential feature of the self. The self is capable of doing many actions, such as knowing, observing,

planning etc. Since the body itself is something owned by the self, it can be argued that the inner self, referred to by the first-person pronoun, is mental, and it is the subject that looks at everything else as an object. A sharp distinction between subject and object is integral to language. This, in turn, reflects our experience of subjects looking at objects. It is only on the basis of the first-person perspective that we make a sharp distinction between the subject and the object.

2.2.4 Autobiographical Narrative

An act of introspection shows that there exists an autobiographical narrative that goes on almost incessantly. In such a narrative, the self is the center or the subject, the agent of the story. In the case of human beings, the narrative normally takes place in a language we are fluent in, and this is commonly expressed with the help of first-person concepts and linguistic usages, like “I am thinking” and “my mind is wandering”. However, can there be a non-linguistic narrative? J. McWhorter (McWhorter, 2003) argues that whenever we say a word, the word flashes in its image, in its written form, in our mind. However, R.T. Hurlburt (Hurlburt, 2011) criticizes this approach and says even psychologist and scientist are still trying to figure out what constitutes our inner experience. Thus, all these characteristics are open-ended. More characteristics can be added to the list or as a subpart of the already-mentioned characteristics. Heavey and Hurlburt (Heavey & Hurlburt, 2008) identify five crucial elements in inner experience: inner speech, inner seeing, unsymbolized thinking, feeling and sensory awareness. Inner speech is one of the elements among others. They (Heavey & Hurlburt, 2008) argue that there are individual differences when it comes to inner speech; some talk less, some more. In an inner speech, concepts that refer to the inner self are crucial. The ‘I’ become an entity that can view thoughts as objects, and most of these thoughts can still be about the self. That is to say, the narrative is closely intertwined with the self, so much so that it is even said the self is the center of narrative gravity.

2.2.5 Witnessing Subject as A memory Weaver

Memory is central to our first-person perspective. In fact, we are able to make sense of our existence through uninterrupted memory. As Albahari points out, first-person memory involves appealing to a witnessing subject. That means unless we presuppose an inner self that witnesses whatever goes on, it is impossible for us to make sense of memory from a first-person perspective. In other words, only if we consciously witness something, we can claim to have a first-person memory of it. The memory of our experience is based on a subject-based perspective. Whenever we are asked to report an incident or give a description of something, it is always from a standpoint. The story is from *our* perspective, where the subject or the inner ‘I’

is either narrating something or is recalling some past event. In other forms, memory can exist in a computer, but they are not treated as first-person memory. They are simply the result of external intervention. A storage device does not experience anything to form memories. Further, in human beings, memories are formed depending upon the importance of the events. It can be said that human beings even select memories up to some extent depending upon various factors such as relevance for oneself. It is certainly the case that all that we experience we do not remember equally. Some memories are vivid, some are unclear, and some others are completely lost.

2.2.6 Experiential Uniqueness of the Inner Self

An inner self-experience is a unique experience. According to Gilbert Ryle (Ryle 1949, 202) “we often feel that there lives someone in the background for which this ‘I’ stands, which remains undescribed even after describing all the characteristics or features of it, as it is someone to whom these traits belong. Whatever is in the background is unique, unique in a way that anything like it cannot belong to anyone except me”. Derek Parfit (Parfit 1971) explains this *uniqueness* of the inner self-experience with the help of a teletransportation thought experiment. Assume that a new way of transportation is invented in which the machine, after scanning every detail of your personality, creates a replica of yourself, and this replica has a destination. Suppose that the unique you is left undestroyed due to some malfunctioning of the device, and you somehow get a chance to talk to your replica over a video link. The replica informs you that you will be destroyed within a week, and he will be continuing in your place and assures you not to worry about anything as he will do all the tasks you have been doing in the same manner. But this is difficult to accept. It is difficult because there remains a feeling that there is still something left out even after replicating everything that constitutes ‘me’. That is the feeling of uniqueness or, as Albhari puts it, a feeling of ‘thisness’ that cannot be captured by any trait. The difference arises because there is only one ‘me’, and everything else, including the replica made by replicating all my characteristics, belongs to the domain of things other than myself. In other words, the replica will always miss out ‘this-ness’ that is unique to the manifestation of an inner self. As Albahari points out, this happens because we identify ourselves as the subject that bears all psycho-physical characteristics. So, a replica can have all these characteristics, but the subject is something that bears all these characteristics and, therefore, will never be part of the replica. Hence, the replica will miss out on the essence of what we are. That is, our sense of self-identity is strongly based on this notion of a unique subject, and therefore, there is no way we can feel identical to our replica.

2.2.7 Persistent Self Concern

It is easy to note that there is indeed a constant concern for oneself. If we observe our thoughts, most of them are centered around 'me'. Our reactions to events are typically based on how they will affect us. When we see anything terrible happen to anyone, we may feel relief that it was not me. This is possible because the inner self exists on the basis of a sharp boundary between *the self* and *the other*. The other can include everything, including similar self-conscious beings. Most of the time, we look for our welfare, aspirations, and emotions. This self-concern even results in the question, "what will happen to me after my death?" In fact, most religions offer some kind of afterlife. It is clear that the question "what will happen to me after my death?" does not look self-contradictory to most of us because we identify our 'self' as something other than our bodies. This makes it possible to believe that we somehow survive even after bodily destruction.

2.2.8 Ownership

The feeling that 'I' own something, whether it be a body, inner states, other objects or even persons, is central to our experience of ourselves. This can be called personal ownership. As Albahari points out, there can be different ways of ownership. Ownership can be possessive in which social conventions play a significant role. I can own land, vehicles, property etc., because of the social conventions and rights established to facilitate them. There is also perspectival ownership. For instance, my toothache is something that nobody else can own. It is mine because nobody else can have it the way I feel it. It comes from a perspective that the subject holds in relation to an object. It is only the self as a subject that can own things perspectively, like thoughts, perceptions, intentions, etc.; it can appear to no other subject the way it appears to the self. Perspectival ownership refers to a specific manner in which the subject owns a particular thing. Personal ownership arises when things are owned by social convention. However, when I feel I own my children, it is not simply perspectival or decided by social conventions or rights. There can be a lot of emotional investment in personal ownership, as any threat to what I own can be seen as a serious threat to oneself. Subject's 'body', according to Albahari, involves both perspectively as well as a possessive mode of ownership. Further, feeling responsible for our actions requires personal ownership because actions are seen as the result of free choice; therefore, we are responsible for them. Thus, modern humans consider themselves unique inner selves capable of acting autonomously. Further, these selves are bounded and consider themselves to be distinct from the rest of the world. Given the mental nature of the self, this boundary is psychological. All these features are testable at an experiential level; we do not need any particular theory per se to support them. We generally behave and experience our inner lives in such a manner that these features are constitutive of

the claim that we undergo such an inner experience. When we explain what inner experience we go through, we need to cite these features.

2.3 QUESTIONING THE ORIGIN OF THE INNER SELF EXPERIENCE

As pointed out in the Introduction of the thesis, it appears to be the received wisdom that the present-day human mind has accompanied our species since its origin; however, it is challenged by some thinkers. Johnson's (Johnson, 2003) view on the assumption was briefly discussed in the Introduction. Johnson (Johnson, 2003) says many Western philosophers supposed that humans always had a tendency to think in a dualistic fashion, to separate their inner world from the outer physical world. His main argument revolves around considering the mind, mainly in the context of reason, not an innately wired mechanism but rather a product of a recent revolution in human cognition. He argues at length that humans are cultural as well as physical animals and that there is a difference between the mind and the brain. Mind is more a matter of cultural construction, and merely looking at the brain cannot yield the worldview of humans from a first-person perspective. He argues that human beings who lived before the Greek Middle Ages did not possess what we today call as mind. The ideas of (1) 'objectivity of truth', (2) 'a sharp distinction between truth and falsity', and (3) 'establishing truth on the basis of perceptible evidence' were absent in our species who lived before pre-classical Greek (Johnson 2003, pg-175).

The thesis that Johnson proposes is that the mind needs to be considered from the viewpoint of history. He says humans are cultural as well as physical animals. Mind, for him, is not an innately wired natural organ that every normal human being is equipped with at birth; it is rather a culturally determined invention. He says, "It is an invented intellectual device, routine, procedure and set of standards, that all adults, normal people now have mastered and learned to use correctly" (Johnson 2003, 134). He further does not support the idea of a sharp distinction between minded and unminded beings, vis-à-vis 'higher' primates and other 'less' animals or humans as the only minded species and other species as devoid of mind. He instead makes a distinction between minded on one side and non-minded on the other within our species to depict the evolution of the mind. Thus, he argues for defining the mind in a broader sense like Lakoff and Mark Johnson (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999) do, rather than opting for a narrow definition of the mind (in terms of the brain). He agrees with them that defining the mind in terms of certain functions is appropriate, namely generating employing and rational thinking. However, he does not agree with them on the matter of considering the humans' conceptual system as either universal or universally widespread across language and culture.

To be more particular, he disagrees with them that reason depends in a direct manner on various bodily characteristics and dispositions that are present to all humans everywhere and at all times (Johnson 2003, pg-9-10). If the mind has undergone substantial change in the past, then it is plausible to admit that changes might have occurred in how we conceive ourselves. The present-day modern mind has the feature of an inner self-experience (some characteristics of which have already been elaborated).

Thus, David Martel Johnson (Johnson, 2003) rightly points out that by considering the mind as merely physical, we define it narrowly, thereby limiting the methods of enquiry only to the methods of physical sciences. However, when we define the mind as a 'cultural invention,' we define it broadly, thereby opening up new methods of enquiry that are not limited to methods of physical sciences. Johnson (Johnson, 2003) does not support the traditional categorical distinction of mental contents into cognitive, conative and sensitive because it undermines the information and a realistic picture of how people actually talk and think today. According to him, it needs to be studied by drawing a distinction between the 'centre' and its 'outskirt' of the mind. He argues that reflection on Western history convinced him that the distinction between mind and body is a recent distinction, i.e. it is only a historical distinction and was absent in pre-historic times. If such a possibility exists, then a dualistic approach seems to give a misleading picture of our inner self-experience. Further, it can be explored that it is not the case that human beings lived experience at all times was divided between the mental and the physical realms.

Recently, Felix ó Murchadha (Murchadha, 2022) attempted to explain in detail how the self has been conceived in the philosophical literature, specifically how Modern philosophers such as Descartes, Hume, Kant have described the self. He argues that the concept of self as we understand it today, i.e., as an individual in contrast to the collective, has only come to our understanding with the advent of modernity. When modernity evolved against the background of salvation, divinity, religion, etc., a new image of self being individual and free emerged.

Further, as already pointed out, according to Oesterdiekhoff (Oesterdiekhoff, 2016), before the 1980s, it was held by theorists, especially psychologists, that the modern human mentality was different from what existed before the modern age. However, this way of looking at ancient minds changed after the 1980s, though empirical findings of cross-cultural psychology still show that the IQ level in the past hundred years has been on the rise (Irvine & Berry, 1988; Raven J.C. et al., 1993).

According to Jan Sleutels (Sleutels, 2013), two significant approaches can be taken to understand the mind: eliminativism and expansionism. The eliminativist approach eliminates

the concept of mind and self because it is motivated by strong scientific reductive naturalism. It encourages us to reduce psychology to neuroscience. This approach is not of any use when it comes to understanding the ancient human mind and self because there exists nothing that can be called mind or self, as whatever really exists needs to abide by the laws and outlook of physical sciences. Thus, it fails to accommodate our lived inner self-experience. It favors elimination and fully embraces biology or neuroscience, and prescribes not to take day-to-day understanding of mind and self seriously. As eliminativism proposes that there is no mind and self, this approach proves to be futile in studying the development of 'mind' or 'self'. As opposed to eliminativists, the Expansionist approach ascribes the concept of Mind or Self to infants, early hominids, and some intelligent non-human animals. For instance, Alison Gopnik calls small children 'little genius', and D Premack and Woodruff's (Premack & Woodruff, 1978) work on chimpanzees' 'theory of mind' are examples of the expansionist approach. In such attempts, the word 'mind' is expanded to include anything that resembles the modern human mind. However, as Sleutels (2013) points out, expansionism presupposes that the mind (as in human beings) has remained the same throughout and is equally there in other animals. Various features of our inner self-experience as mentioned before (such as uniqueness, thisness, linguistic encapsulation, first-person concepts, autobiographical narrative, beliefs, or propositional attitudes, etc.), are ascribed equally to those who are in the developing stages or have ill-formed minds. However, expansionism can be dangerous because it begins by ascribing the concept of mind first and then looking for similarities between a well-developed human mind or self and an undeveloped or developing mind or self. Thus it projects our way of understanding mental concepts onto other species' minds or minds in the developmental stage. As Sleutels (Sleutels, 2013) aptly puts it we do not begin from a fair premise, giving the equal probability to two possibilities: It can be similar to us; it cannot be similar to us. Instead, it starts from the premise that P: It is similar to us until proven otherwise. Most of the time, theories try to study the ancient human self through an expansionist approach. However, the expansionist approach leads to the issue of the 'Fringe mind'.

According to Sleutels (Sleutels, 2006, 2013), the problem of fringe minds arises when we try to know the conditions under which we can ascribe the concept of the modern-day mind (or self) in the pre-linguistic stage both from a developmental and evolutionary perspective. There are minds and selves that are in the process of becoming modern-day minds or selves, but they are on the fringes and, therefore, cannot be called mind or self in the modern sense. As Donald Davidson (Davidson, 2003) points out that, the difficulty of ascription arises because there is a gap in our vocabulary, as there are neither concepts to describe minds in pre-developmental stages nor there exists satisfactory vocabulary for describing the 'intermediate steps' in a

developing present-day adult human mind. This lack of vocabulary exists because we have no idea of how our mind was in the past depicting its initial phases (from evolutionary and developmental perspectives); the starting point given to us is our own present-day mind or self. The lack of vocabulary does not refer to any lack of words but rather to the absence of lexicons to describe the very process of the emergence of concepts and thoughts associated with a first-person perspective. Before the emergence of the modern mind or self, there must have been a stage where no attribute of it existed if it is not a given entity. Therefore, we face conceptual difficulty in explaining the intermediary stage that comes just before the emergence of it. Julian Jayne's (Jaynes, 1990) bicameral hypothesis, as Sleutels (2013) points out, can be seen as a constructive attempt to address this issue of fringe mentality in our ancestors.

Theorists like Henri Frankfort (Frankfort et al., 1949) and Julian Jaynes (Jaynes, 2013) engage in speculative accounts of how or in what ways our distant ancestors were different from us. Jaynes's account did not fall into the problematic situation that an expansionist approach leads to, as he admits a pre-modern-day self-mentality. Following the same line of thinking, the innateness of the inner self-experience can be questioned. Therefore, the origins of the inner self-experience is explored. The question of how we have such an inner self-experience and its origin is explored in the next chapter.

2.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, 'self' is considered from the perspective of 'lived experience'. After outlining the reflective nature of this inner self-experience, the chapter shows how scientific accounts of reducing such an inner experience fail. Reduction is criticised as an approach to studying inner self-experience that reduces a 'higher-level' item to a 'lower-level' item, where the lower-level item is privileged by being closer to physics. It argues how reductive naturalism fails to accommodate and retain the first-person perspective of our lived experience. Reductive naturalism fails because it leads to eliminativism, which in turn leads to a collapse of our experienced world. Further, it undermines questions pertaining to morality, value, meaning, responsibility, etc. However, if we understand 'self' as not merely a product of physical conditions, we can save our everyday experience from being reduced to mere physical sciences.

The chapter supports and favors a modified version of liberal naturalism. According to modified liberal naturalism, abstract and metaphorical entities such as self, mind, etc., need not be constrained by laws of physics and must be admitted in our everyday ontology. Inner self-experience emerges under certain conditions, and these conditions are not merely physical but also social and cultural. Considering the social and cultural conditions, the chapter elaborates

upon various features of inner self-experience. The self is an agent with a thick psychological boundary between itself and the other. Self has an autobiographical narrative, is a memory weaver and experiences a persistent concern about its existence. It is a 'unique' experience associated with a feeling of owning things. Such an experience, in general, is common to modern human beings. However, it need not be the case that this experience has always been there in our species. The chapter discusses theories that argue that such experiences have gradually developed during historical unfolding. The next chapter discusses theories like dualism and embodiment to explore the origin of inner self-experience.

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