

Human Values and Professional Ethics: A Critical Appraisal

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Abstract

Everything that we see belongs to one of the four 'orders' i.e. Material Order, Plant/Bio Order, Animal Order, Human (Knowledge) Order. Material order is the most abundant in nature and exists in the form of all the soil mixtures, metal and compounds, various gases, water and other liquids etc., Plant/Bio order exists as the smallest seeds to the plentiful grass, the various plants and trees and the all the vegetarian in the ocean. There are several cyclical processes that we can see in nature. The quantity of water on the surface of earth remains conserved by itself, no need for human intervention. Breeds of plants and animals are similarly self-regulated in their environment. This phenomenon is termed as self-regulation. These two characteristics namely, cyclical nature and self regulation provide us with some clues of harmony that is in nature. When we consider humans and animals, we can understand that they are as a coexistence of the Self ('I') and the Body. If we look at the body, we find that in its fundamental unit, there is a cell. The cell belongs to the plant/Bio order. As humans, each one of us also has desires that we pursue an ability to think and the ability to make choices. In this Desire, Thought and Selection, we exhibit more activities than any unit in the animal order. As a result, humans are in a separate order than animals. Thus, in human beings, 'I' has the activities of Desiring, Thinking, and Selecting/ Tasting, with a possibility or need for Understanding and Realization. Only humans have the need to know and that is why it is called the Knowledge Order. This Knowledge, this right understanding is what we have been the process of self-verification in us, we have to start becoming more aware, and start exploring into the proposals at all four levels of our living.

Introduction

The basic human aspiration of every human being is continuous happiness and prosperity. Exploring the meaning of happiness, we found that happiness is to understand and live in harmony at all levels of living. While discussing the harmony at the level of society, we came across the relationship of human being with the rest of nature. Here, we will discuss the harmony in the nature and see how the entities in nature are interconnected and mutually fulfilling. Everything that we see around can be put into one of the four orders - Material Order, Plant/Bio Order, Animal Order and Human (Knowledge) Order. The big land mass of

the continents, gigantic water bodies like ocean and seas, mountains and rivers, atmosphere above, the helps of meals and mineral below, the dense grass & fossil fuels deep below the surface of the earth all fall into the Material Order. In fact, if we look around beyond the earth, the material order is visible even in the form of stars, planets, moon and several astronomical bodies. Our land mass is covered with grass and small shrubs and they form the lining on the entire soil. Shrubs, plants, and trees form huge forests along with the flora in the ocean. All of this is the plant/bio order and it is the next big order on our planet. The material order is far greater in quantity compared to the plant/bio order. Animals and birds form the third largest order and we call them the Animal Order. Hence again, we see that the Plant/bio-order is far greater in quantity than the animal order. Humans are the smallest order and they are referred to as Human Order. Animals are far greater in quantity as compared to the human order. Each one of us can recognize all these four orders around ourselves and see that together these four orders comprise of all the units that we see and understand around us. The first three orders namely the Material, Plant/Bio and Animal Order are interconnected. Each order is connected to each other order. And the relationship between these orders is in such a way that they all coexist with each other.

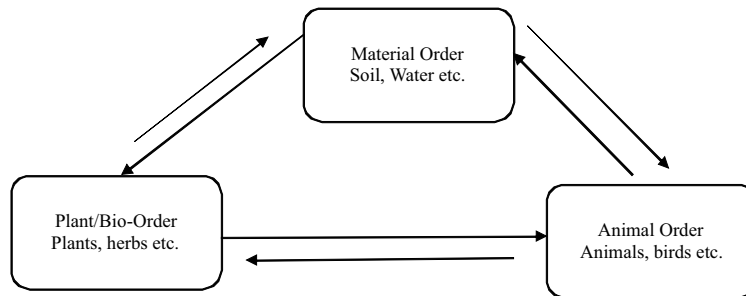


Fig. 1. Material, Plant/Bio and Animal Order

The Material Order provides the nutrients to the Plant/Bio-Order in the form of soil, minerals, etc while the Plant/Bio-Order decays and forms more nutrient, thus enriching the soil. The Plant/Bio-Order also decays to substances like oil and coal, which are stored deep within the earth as protection against the heat from the molten core inside the earth as well as the heat from the sun (today, this is the material we are removing and using as fuel). Plants help move the nutrients through the various layers of the soil. The roots of the plants hold the soil together and prevent the soil from erosion. Plants produce oxygen/carbon dioxide and thus help in the movement of the Material Order. Thus Plant/Bio- order and Material Order, naturally exist in a relationship of mutual fulfilment with each other. They also co-exist, they don't deny the other. There is a mutual interdependency and co-existence we can see here. The Material Order provides the basis for movement of all animals, birds and fishes. Water, Oxygen and other gases are necessities for both plants and animals. At the same time, the

Animal Order helps enrich the soil with its excreta and these excreta help the plants with nutrients. The Plant/Bio Order provides food for animals, birds and fishes. The Animal Order helps in pollination of the flowers of the Plant/Bio- order. The relationship across all three orders is - naturally one of mutual fulfilment. None of these orders denies the other. Now, it becomes clear that the above mentioned three orders are fulfilling to each other. When we look at the connectedness with human beings, we find that each of these orders is fulfilling to the human order. This we can verify looking at the multiple uses we are drawing out of these entities. We humans also have a natural acceptance to be mutually fulfilling to these three orders. However, we are not able to ensure this mutual fulfilment. We are dependent on the material order or soil and minerals and metals, but only end up polluting the soil and depleting the fossil fuels; we are dependent on plants for our food and holding together the larger ecosystem, but we have destroyed forests and destroyed multiple species of plants and herbs; we are dependent on animals to carry out our production and transportation activities, but have made many species animals extinct, and are today known for our cruelty towards animals.

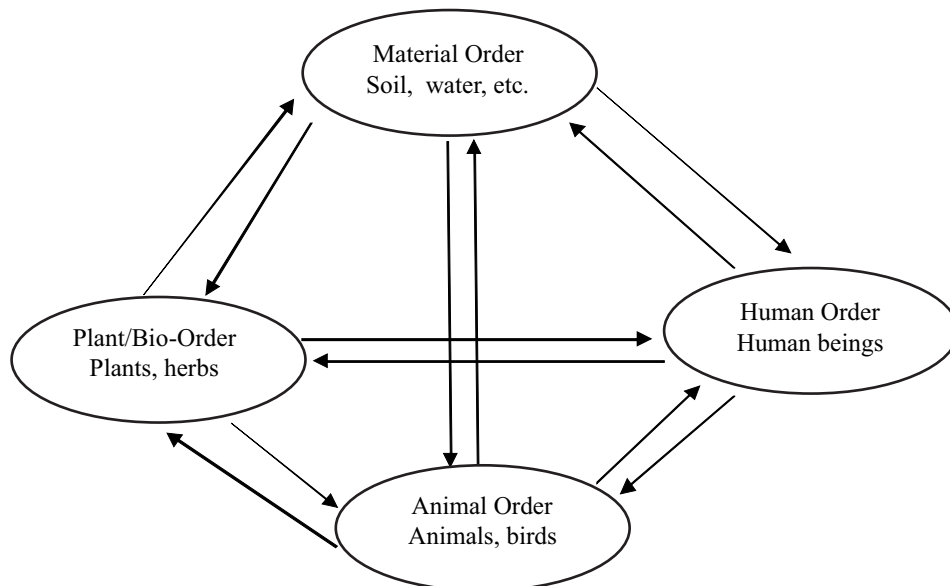


Fig. 2. Material, Plant, Animal and Human Order

We thus see that the three orders besides the Human Order are in harmony and are fulfilling to the human order. However, we as humans have not yet understood and learnt to live in

relationship of mutual fulfilment with these three other orders. This is because we have not understood the harmony that exists between these orders. We have not even understood our own needs properly nor have we understood harmonious ways to fulfil our needs. Consequently, we have disturbed ourselves and also the balance amongst the other three orders. This is evident when we see that we have pretty much plundered the body of the earth of all the heat absorbing materials like coal and oil and burnt these fossil fuels in our atmosphere causing a significant deterioration masses temperature regulation of our planet. We have significantly deforested huge forest and through it, altered the weather system of our planet. Our burgeoning cities and industries have spilled huge amounts of industrial and human waste into water bodies and even drinking water has to be now chemically treated before it can be consumed by humans. The air we breathe has become polluted; the food we grow has become chemically affected. The effect of this disharmony is now affecting our lives in the form of diseases and maladies. On the other hand, if we explore our natural acceptance, we find that we want to live harmoniously with nature. This is important for our own happiness. This is an undeniable and a very significant relationship for each one of us. This is a relationship we need to properly understand.

RECYCLABILITY AND SELF-REGULATION IN NATURE

There are several cyclical processes that we can see in nature. For example the cycle of water, evaporating, condensing and precipitating back to water giving the weather phenomena. The quantity of water on the surface of earth remains conserved by itself, no need for human intervention. We have studied cycles of carbon, oxygen and nitrogen in nature in our school. The cycles keep these materials self-regulated on the earth. Breeds of plants and animals are similarly self-regulated in their environment. In a forest, the growth of trees takes place in a way so that the amount of soil, plants and animals remains conserved. It never happens that the number of trees shoots up and there is lack of soil for the trees. The appropriateness of conditions for growth of both plants and animals are self-regulated in nature keeping the population proportions naturally maintained. We will find that the population of grass, deer and tigers remains such that all can continue. This phenomenon is termed as self-regulation. It is appreciable that in a single breed of animals, the number of males and females generated through procreation is such that the continuity of species is ensured by itself. This happens with humans too, but inhuman practices have led to disproportionate numbers of men and women. Nature exhibits self-regulation in various ways across the punt via, animal and human orders, but we humans have disturbed it due to lack of understanding. We seldom see a problem of over-population of a species in nature (some of what we see is man created! nor do we see any instance of some by-product from nature not being absorbed and becoming a source for pollution (ex: nature does not produce plastic and foam). These two characteristics namely, cyclical nature and self regulation provide us with some clues of die harmony that is in nature. These are visible signs we can

see with our eyes, and understand. But, there is also more to nature than meets the `eye'. This is something we shall explore next.

ACTIVITY

Each unit in the order can be understood as an `activity'. We will try and understand the activities that distinguish one order from the other. An activity means something that `has motion' and/or `has a result'. The material order is active in multiple ways, and the same with the plant order or animal order or human order. You are sitting in a room. But you are active. You are thinking, desiring, the body has breath running, heart throbbing. The air in the room is blowing. The walls standing constantly also have activity. Isn't it? Yes, it is! The chair in your room is also active. It may not be very visible to our eyes but the chair is still active. All units around us, including ourselves, are active, all the time. They are interacting with the environment. In the activity, there is a state or configuration and motion simultaneously. This remains all the time. We often look at units around us as a fixed and a solid `thing'. We can now see that these things are actually active each unit is made of hundreds of smaller units and all these units are active. So, when you walk on the road, it's not that the road is stationary! The road is active, very active... made of thousands and thousands of particles that are all throbbing, all active. All material things (i.e. units in the material order) can be understood as an activity of units' coining together to form a bigger unit. We call this `Composition'. For example, the chair is made of smaller pieces of wood. Bigger units can also separate from each other to form smaller units and we call this `Decomposition'. Like a wooden chair can decay after a few years. Thus any unit in the material order can be understood as an activity of Composition/Decomposition. The plant order is basically structurally made up of the material order. However, an additional activity of `respiration' is exhibited by the plant order. For example: we all know that plants `breathe'. Plants are made up of smaller cells that also `breathe' or `pulsate'. So, when we look at all the units that make up the plant/bio order we will find that they can be understood in terms of Composition/Decomposition and Respiration. Not only do plants compose and decompose, they are also breathing, or pulsating, which we call Respiration. When we explore the Animal Order, we find two fundamentally different set of activities. One set of activities is the `physic-chemical' or activity of the body and the other is the `conscious' activity of the Self. The body displays the same activities that we see in the plant. The body displays respiration, or breathing, or pulsating as we call it. We can verify this ourselves quite easily and we can see that the body indeed breathes and also decays. The body is also formed at one point in time and keeps building cells as well, i.e., there is composition in the body. Hence, the activities in the body are the same as that in the plant/bio order, which are composition / decomposition and respiration. Hence, we say that the body belongs to the plant / bio order. We have already seen that human beings are co-existence of a physic-chemical body and a conscious Self, or 'I'. The activities in the human body are similar to that in the animal body,

and we have seen this in detail as composition/decomposition and respiration. When it comes to consciousness or 'I', however, the human displays more than just an ability to 'select' or make choices as animals do. As humans, each one of us also has desires that we pursue an ability to think and the ability to make choices. In this Desire, Thought and Selection, we exhibit more activities than any unit in the animal order. As a result, humans are in a separate order than animals. We make assumptions, but also have a need to know, or a will to know. Animals just assume, humans can also 'know' or have the need to know. Thus, in human beings, 'I' has the activities of Desiring, Thinking, and Selecting/ Tasting, with a possibility or need for Understanding and Realization. Only humans have this need to know and that is why it is called the Knowledge Order. Thus, underlying every entity/unit, there are activities like physical activity, chemical activity or conscious activity ('I') and all units/entities can be understood as one of these activities or co-existence of these activities.

INNATENESS

Each unit in existence exhibits innateness an intrinsic quality that cannot be separated from it. We refer to this principle as 'Innateness'. This is intrinsic to the unit. Look at all the material order. It is possible to convert material things from one 'form or a way being' to another 'form or a way of being'. However, it is not possible to annihilate it. We cannot make it cease to exist. The particles that make up that unit continue to exist. Because the plant/Bio order is a development of the material order, it also has the innateness of 'existence'. In addition, it also exhibits the 'growth'. This principle of 'growth' cannot be separated from any units of this order. If it is of plant/Bio order, it will grow. The Animal Body is a development of the plant/Bio order and therefore this order inherits the innateness of the previous order namely 'existence' and 'growth'. This is at the level of the body, which is physico-chemical in nature. In addition, all units in this order have the 'will to live' in 'I'. Indeed no unit in this order can be separated from this 'will to live'. It is intrinsic to every unit in this order. When we look at the human being, we find that 'existence' and 'growth' are fundamentally present in the body, just as in the animal body. At the level of 'I' however, in addition to the will to live, a human being's innateness is the 'will to live with happiness'. We can all see this and verify this for ourselves. We can verify in ourselves and we can verify this in others. As long as it is a human being you cannot separate him/her from the will to live and the need for happiness. Each one of us not only wants to live but also wants to 'live with happiness'. This is the innateness of the human order and it characterises the human order. This is what we have been discussing in this course. All along, we have been exploring into ourselves and when we do, we find that just surviving is not enough for us; we also desire happiness and its continuity. We don't desire to not be happy, even for an instant. It is our basic need. So, we have been looking into the causes of unhappiness, and when we did, we discovered that the basic cause for our unhappiness is that we are living only with assumptions, only at the level of desiring, thinking and selecting/tasting in 'I'. This is

insufficient for us, since it leads to conflict and is driven by beliefs/preconditioning. Hence, we have to exercise our need to know, which is what we started with. We said that we need to have the right understanding, which is the knowledge or understanding of the harmony at all four levels of our being [Realization and Understanding in 'I']. We have been trying to ensure this through self-exploration, i.e. by establishing a dialogue between, 'what we are' and 'what we really want to be' which is essentially the verification on the basis of our natural acceptance.

HUMAN BEINGS – A LOOK ON THE STATE TODAY

We can't do away with our need for continuous happiness, because it is our innateness, it is intrinsic to us it is inseparable from us. So, surviving alone is not enough for us, we want to live with happiness and its continuity, and this is not possible without having the right understanding/knowledge. We can't live with cruelty or just avoiding to be cruel, and *still be happy* because, that is not our natural characteristic, it not our *nature*, it is not our natural acceptance, it is not naturally acceptable to us. Our natural acceptance is for perseverance, bravery and generosity, and this is our *nature*, this is our natural acceptance. Unless we are according to our natural characteristic, we are not according to our natural acceptance, we cannot be happy. We can *try* many things, but it is not possible for us to be happy. Our basic need is not just physical facilities, but relationship and right understanding/knowledge as well. To live as in the left is called living in animal consciousness and to live as in the right is called living in human consciousness. Unless we exercise our need and capacity to know, we shall continue to create problems for ourselves and the rest of the orders in nature, since we have far greater faculties and the ability to have a large impact on our environment. This is the difference between "*what we are*" and "*what we really want to be*". If we as human beings do not exercise our capacity to know, then we end up being more like animals, and hence we get defined as social animals. We become worse than animals since we have more faculties and greater impact over everything. No lion in his lifetime can kill sixty lakhs people, but there have been some human beings in history that have done exactly that. Just living is not enough for human beings. We want to know, and live with happiness. We can see in human beings that this will-to-be-happy is related to this will-to-know; this is why human being is said to be in Knowledge *Order*. This Knowledge, this right understanding is what we have been discussing all along. We need to start the process of self-verification in us; we have to start becoming more aware, and start exploring into the proposals at all four levels of our living. Today, we don't know *what we are*, we don't know *what we want*, hence we don't know *what to do*, we largely only learn *how to do*. We don't know 'what to do' and are busy working out 'how to do'. Irrespective of how much you know of 'how to do', as long as you don't know 'what to do', you end up getting dissatisfied. Thus, before producing something, we don't see if it is really needed, and what use it is for us, and what impact it will have on the environment ("*what to do, why to do*"). Instead, we end up producing more and

more of it, in different varieties, shapes, sizes and packages! Technology deals with the latter part 'how to do'. It's to do with *technique*. Technology does not give us the answers of *why to do*, and *what to do* this answer comes from right understanding and the *values* we understand on this basis. Thus, it is only with right understanding that we identify and understand what is *valuable* to us, what is of *value* to us, and we can then use technology as a means to ensure what is valuable to us.

WAY OUT!

Now, the way out would be largely clear to us. We need to work in the direction of development of mankind from animal consciousness to human consciousness. And this entails working for the right understanding. We have been talking about it throughout the book. We saw how due to lack of right understanding, the human order, though it wants to be fulfilling to one and all, fails to fulfill the human order itself. It fails to take care of its own body, what to talk of other units in nature. Knowledge is the basic need of the human order, and it needs to get on to the focus of its every thought and action.

SUMMARY

There are four orders in nature material order, plant/bio (order, animal order and human order. There is interconnectedness among all the orders. The first three orders are mutually fulfilling to the rest three orders, only human order is not able to be fulfilling to the other orders. There is recyclability and self-regulation in nature. We can understand the four orders in terms of the things, under the group, their activities, the innateness, the natural characteristic, the basic activity and the *conformance*. The table provided in the chapter gives a comprehensive look at each of these aspects. A critical appraisal of where we stand today shows that human is largely living like animals. The way out is consciousness development of mankind.

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