

I-7. Processing Reality

I needed a criterion for figuring out not just those things that appear to be filled with wonder, but those things that appear to be filled with wonder and are real.

- Ted Schultz on his fascination with biology

There is no force without matter. There is no matter without force.

- Ludwig Buchner

Representation is as much about the potential as about the content. There has been much philosophical debate about the nature of the representational and abstract reality. We will not enter into it. However, it is worth speculating about how we empirically process the observed and experienced. For example, we are often startled when we hear thunder. Presumably it is from the perception of being struck by lightening although most of us have has no such experience. Two simple facts of reality are important here to develop a rational perception: Sound travels slower than the lightening; and lightening associated with most thunders does not ever reach the ground. What are the practical consequences of these two facts?

First and foremost, if you are not already hit by lightening, thunder is unlikely to hurt you. On the other hand, thunder and lightening are the warning signs of what may be happening and could happen. This brings in a third fact. The thunder-lightening events come in chaotic spurts. By noticing one event we can be reasonably sure, but never 100%, that more is to follow. Yet we do not know when and where will it strike. Are these considerations part of in-born instincts, or just the part of nurtured perceptions.

Here is another look at generalization. On an outing with

a friend he spotted a green leaf popping out of decaying winter leaves. He said here is a colony of this particular rare orchid. I asked how can you say there is a colony if you see only one leaf. He did not say much. We kept looking within half an hour we found 30 plants spread over an area of several hundred square meters. Where I had seen only one, based on prior knowledge of the habits of the plant my friend expected many more of its kind.

Understanding is a measurement problem

Representation is measured and evaluated (#A2-7) through evidence (*paman*). All that can be represented on the basis of criteria or can also be understood by others, examined and validate. A representation does not validate itself. The same holds for imaginary constructs that do not adhere to the real world criteria.

Independent evidence for validation is gathered through tools, measures, standards and other means of verification.

Assertions, inference and generalizations take a measure of the overall understanding. Such generalizations are often built into the representation as we grasp the unobservable by peering "behind the door" of what is built into definition, axiom, assertion, common notion, premise and assumptions. Often we know of the open doors. Sometimes we even come across closed doors.

However, human potential (*bhaviye*) to access and understand the real world lies in knowing and in opening the doors that exist but we do not yet know.

Related questions

What is at Issue? Secret of right and wrong has puzzled philosophers, baffled all the men of business, and ruined most of the artists. Scientists continue to struggle with the distinction between the "is" of their results and "ought" of their wishes.

What is potential? In about a million years humans have evolved from the use of stone-age tools to the cyber age. Ironically, both the technologies rely on silica, the same basic ingredient found in sand and rocks! Forms of silica are also the bases of glass, porcelain, and ceramic technologies, as well as the silicone for the breast implants. Detailed understanding of the forms of silica as well as carbon (charcoal, graphite and diamond) is the result of knowledge based on verified evidence.

What is Proof? Proof builds on the observations and experiments. Its practitioners avoid getting side-tracked by their own cleverness and believing things to be true because humans would like them to be so.

Proliferation of words: We explore and share the universe through word representations. Proliferation of words to represent an idea is a natural consequence of the fact that its concept space and boundaries have to be constantly readjusted. Human progress of the last 8000 years is essentially based on the proliferation of such tools, devices, and technologies.

Potential of two cows in global market place (*an exercise*)

Opportunities for the realization of potential lie in the way reality is perceived. It is generally recognized that social and cultural factors influence perceptions and therefore the choices one makes.

As an exercise in appreciation of relevant alternatives (*Anekant*) consider the choices while faced with a decision of the sort "if you have two cows and still do not know what to do with the cows:" Choices in Globalized world will depend on where you are as below:

Great Britain: Buy meat from Argentina to sell in the European Union. With the hope of putting back the "Great" sell your mad-cows: one to Singapore and the other to Nigeria. Do not leave any

evidence, do not admit, and if caught red-handed with stiff upper lip deny culpability. Send agent 007 to cover up the mess and blame it on the natives.

Peoples Republic of China: Hire 300 people to milk two cows. This will increase production and nobody will be unemployed. Jail the reporter who divulged the secret of this great-leap-forward.

Cuba: Don't worry, cows belong to Fidel.

France: Stop traffic to ask the government to give you a third cow.

Germany: Re-engineer them as butter-cow to increase the fat content of French cheese.

India: Adore your two cows and hope for calves.

Israel: The chosen-cows are critical for the preservation of your people and their cultural identity. Sell bonds in New York and give back the tax loss in depreciated currency.

Japan: Sell the cow and produce Walkman.

Netherlands. Use that mountain of butter as foreign aid to those who will also take away the droppings of cows and pigs.

Russia: Count your cows: One with one eye and then one with the other: you have 11 cows. Now count again: both with one eye and then both with the other eye. Now you have 22 cows. Count again you have two cows. Open another bottle of Vodka before counting again.

Saudi Arabia and Middle-East: Trade your two cows for four wives who can work in the field, or for one blond who can take care of your foreign account. Anyway, who can afford cows in the desert?

Spain: Sell your cows because there is no tomorrow. Go to a *tasca* and enjoy.

Switzerland: Sell your cows. Take care of the other 5000 ill-gotten cows and charge a fee.

Venezuela: Put your cows with the chicken on the rooftop of your corporate headquarters in Caracas. Your private jet can be claimed as a business expense to take care of the hacienda in the pasture land 3000 miles away. If the Government has already taken away your farm, ask for the subsidy for your apartment in Miami.

USA: First read the following disclaimer (fine-print). It is not for those who are smart enough not to have read this far.

[Disclosure: The following advice is only for those who do not have two green American cows, or at least have two-bits worth of wits about them. If you do not have any of this, there are other choices: If you are at least 6'10" and weigh 280 pounds and your brain does not hurt if rocked around you have a future in the spectator sports. If you can be productive by having a baby or two, go on welfare. If you cannot even do that, do something that will make you a guest of the state without parole. If you do not have any such attributes, you do not deserve to live your un-examined and un-scrutinized life in the land of capitalism with, free enterprise and opportunities.]

If you have two green American cows here the options:

USA-1. According to the original model of Western capitalism: If you are a rustler on the public lands, on your next visit to the town shoot the Sheriff first. In the ensuing chaos steal some of the cows from the town and sell them as soon as you can. This way cows headed for the slaughterhouse multiply fast.

USA-2. If you dropped out of high school with big dreams and believed in the Adam Smith version of Western capitalism taught in the eighth grade. Sell one cow. Use the money to buy semen of a good bull and propagate your herd on public lands for two-cents a year.

USA-3. If you can also afford a lawyer patent the use of BS (another name for cow droppings) as your intellectual property.

You and your lawyer can make a killing if you can package BS attractively for the pronouncements by the Government departments, corporations, lobbying groups. Politicians use their own.

USA-4. Be creative if you also have your college degree in accounting: taking loans from a bank. Fly checks between accounts; talk your uncle to buy into your success; rent your cows to a farmer for a fee

USA-5. If you also got your Harvard MBA, you own a dairy farm. With smoke-and-mirror nobody will know that the dairy-farm has only two cows. Get a big loan to start a corporation with some hair-brained idea. The concept does not have to have a product and certainly not a profit. Do not involve your uncle. He will see through your ploy.

USA-6. If you also have two bits of silver to pay for a congressional candidate and your "horse" wins, you have an International Farm as a model that has to be subsidized by the State Department as a show-case for the visiting dignitaries.

USA-7. If you also have two bits of gold to pay for a Presidential candidate and your "horse" wins, your herd is critical for the national security. This may require bombing all other cows. Just the idea will raise the price of your cows, or at least depress the price of other. Make a pitch for "healthy" (read weight, cholesterol, obesity mental retardation) red-meat for your compatriots. With connections in the Commerce Department supply the minced Mc-Cow to Mc-Globe chains established in countries run by oligarchs. State department can put pressure on other for your expansion plans by listing other countries as human-rights violators.

USA-8. If you also have two wits about you, start incorporating other farms. Hire a Vice President to juggle the numbers to show paper profit. Sell your options and declare bankruptcy after you

have moved your capital offshore.

USA-9. Study the MCI-WorldCom models for the end-run (or is it *Enron*) capitalism. Sell two cows, and buy three cows. With the profit start a corporation. Make promises to the overseas believers in Free-markets to give you the capital. Some arm-twisting from the State Department local government would also relent or at least look other way. With the proceeds buy five cows, and option for one more. Take the internal company public, buy nine cows to show 50% growth rate. Give options to CEO and CFO. They will show 50% growth for another two or three years while all your friends cash in. Sell your high-flier to some stodgy company that does not know what to do their cash reserves. With the proceeds CEO will be elected as the Vice-President. CFO can retire in Switzerland. If caught, take the "fifth" (some people call it amendment, but it is really a good-ol-Whisky or Bourbon. A 140 proof moonshine works better for dealing with your own doings. Deny culpability as long as you can pay your lawyers to drag the case in the civil courts. In the worse case you will get 2 years. It is almost like a long-due vacation from the all that hard work. It could even be pleasant if your girl-friend can still bring you the weekly package of your favorites. That is not bad deal for two cows.

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