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Article in *Philosophy International Journal* · July 2024

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Silent Symphony: Beauty in Life's Blank Canvas

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Essay

Volume 7 Issue 3

Received Date: June 21, 2024

Published Date: July 08, 2024

DOI: 10.23880/phij-16000331

Abstract

This essay explores the inherent blankness of life, describing it as devoid of fixed meaning, purpose, or morality. It discusses how humans struggle with this blankness, often attempting to avoid or fill it through various activities and pursuits. The essay distinguishes between natural biological activities and those driven by fear and anxiety, emphasizing how societal conditioning contributes to the latter. It delves into the role of rationality in avoiding blankness, the discomfort of silence, and the vibrancy that this blankness holds. Ultimately, it advocates for embracing this blankness as a source of freedom, vitality, and profound insight into the nature of existence.

Keywords: Blankness; Existential; Silence; Vibrancy; Freedom

Introduction

Life is inherently blank. It's blank of any meaning, purpose, rationalizations, theories and any type of fixed rule or morality. Human being is in a constant struggle with this blankness as it is not familiar with it, it is alien to it, it is like a path to where it has never gone to or travelled to. The person doesn't know what it is, so it constantly tries to avoid or fill this blank space throughout the day or most probably throughout one's life through the medium of endless pursuits and activities like being constantly involved in arguments, battles, wars, excessive thinking, getting addicted to substances and many more things. Even trying to be in a relationship with someone, trying to be friends with someone, seeking constant validation, approval or appreciation from other people, all of this comes out from the sense of trying to avoid or fill the blank or to avoid facing it, so this is what is the struggle with blankness – it is the struggle or the striving of the human to constantly avoid, fill or get away from the blankness of life by looking for some stimulation, sense-experience, pleasures or any type of an activity which seeks something or makes you to get to some place, destination or an experience which you can keep

for some time and hold onto it. But as all experiences are fleeting, so there must be a constant effort to get to another experience and then another and then another experience which is exhausting and draining.

The Nature of Avoidance

Not all activities are a way of avoidance as there are necessary biological activities which happen automatically like the pumping of the blood, the beating of the heart, the blinking of the eyes, getting hungry, getting thirsty and many more natural and organic functions of the body. So only those activities are a way of avoidance of the blankness which come from a sense of lack, desire, fear, tension or anxiety. Desire, fear, lack, tension and anxiety are an unnatural defence mechanism of the mind which it uses to avoid facing the unfamiliarity, absurdity and the unknown. Bodily desire, fear, tension and anxiety is the natural defence mechanism, which was inbuilt in our system from birth, but the defence mechanism of the mind is something which was given to us by the conditioned societal construct. The way to differentiate between the bodily defence mechanism and the defence mechanism of the mind is that the former is spontaneous and



quick to respond to the situation whereas the latter is not, it's slow to respond.

Rationality and the Fear of Silence

Biological activities like sleeping, eating, drinking water are just part and parcel of life. Rationality has been also used as a way of avoidance. By rationalizing life like - what to do? what is the meaning and purpose of life? why I am here? a human being just tries to get over his or her anxiety of the blank. Mostly all rationalizations are a way of overcoming the constant anxiety of the unfamiliar and the unknown blankness. In a group discussion you would have noticed that as soon as everyone becomes silent, the very next moment someone starts speaking something even if that topic may not be the actual topic of the group discussion. The silence makes the blankness to come in the foreground that's why there is an immediate response of speaking something just to let the blankness slip in the background, so we not have to face it.

The Fear of Silence and the Noise of Rationalization

All the fears of the human being come out from the most primitive fear of this silence of the blankness. That's why silence is uncomfortable, that's why there is a constant desire and an effort to fill the silence with words. That's why you see that the world is so noisy with superficial and hollow concepts, words, theories and rationalizations which are insubstantial and without any support or an essence. Even the words that are being written in this essay are also without any essence, they are just signposts or pointers which must be ultimately discarded. It's not to say that there is something wrong with speaking and writing about theories and rational concepts. There is nothing wrong with pragmatical way of speaking, concepts and words. For example – if I want a glass of water, then I will ask someone for water, if I don't know the exact direction to a particular place then I would ask someone for a proper direction. But the using rationality or intellectual understanding to find the meaning of life, about existence, about ultimate reality or truth is not pragmatical, it's just a way of trying to find a meaning, reason or a purpose to just avoid, or to get over the blankness.

Understanding and Embracing Life's Silent Gaps

So, you may be wondering what is this blankness that I am talking about, what is it actually? This blankness is just the space between two thoughts, between two sounds, between two appearances, between two perceptions. The struggle is just to keep filling this gap of space so that you may not have to face it as we are only familiar with the thoughts, appearances, perceptions and we have absolutely

no clue or an idea about the gaps and we are not familiar with it either. To familiarise with this blank gap is one of the goals of human life. In deep sleep we have a glimpse of this blankness in an unconscious way, when we go to a new place where we have not gone before, then also we have a glimpse of this silent blankness for some moments, but it's not permanent because a part of us struggles with this blankness so it does everything to distort it, to hide it, to throw it in the background. But a part of us also loves this blankness because we all love to sleep, to just extend the silent gaps in the morning by stopping our alarm clocks in the morning, we also enjoy going to new places to just get a taste of this intoxicating and vibrant blankness.

Navigating the Paradox of Blankness

So, the constant struggle of being a human is the constant effort or desire to get to blankness from one part of us and another part of which is fearful and afraid of it. The journey of the life of a human being is to just decrease the fearful part of us which is afraid of the silent blank and to increase and intensify the part of us which wants to have a taste of blankness. The one who is restless to speak, gets addicted to a substance, has an intense longing for some moment to manifest is the part of us which is fearful of this silence or muteness and the one who is still and calm in us, who wants to just observe things like a child is the part of us which wants to get in touch, have a taste of this unfamiliar and untrodden path of this blankness.

You would be surprised to hear that even the thoughts, the appearances, the perceptions are also this blankness. It's not that the blank vibrancy disappears when the thoughts arise, the appearances, the perceptions happen. It's the substratum or the source of the thoughts, the appearances, the perceptions. The words on this blank sheet of paper may give a sense that the words are filling the blank spaces, but the filled spaces are also blank spaces because without the substratum or the source of the blank spaces, the words could not be written on the paper. When there is a realisation that the appearances, the perceptions and the thoughts are also made from blankness, then the craving or the desire to get or want more appearances, more perceptions can cease and subside slowly and slowly. To have access to the knowledge or the experience of the substratum of this thought, feeling, emotion or the appearance is to be free of the constant struggle to avoid this blankness.

The Vibrant Essence of Blankness and Human Struggle

This blankness is not an empty, nihilistic, dull and boring nothing. This blankness is full of everything, it's full of vibrancy, colours, appearances, love, perceptions and it

also exists without any perception, without any appearance, without any thought. It is the substratum or the source from which the entire universe arises. Nature, animals and trees are constantly in harmony with this blank source as their system is not so complex, it's just pure biology, but in case of human beings, the pure biology is mixed with the additional rationality which is the main cause of the struggle with blankness. The complex instrument of a human being tries to find ways of making the simple biology of life more complex by trying to box or fit in everything into a fixed structure notion, concept or a theory. It's trying to fix this already innocent blank board of life by trying to fill or avoid the blank. If you ask yourself a simple question – What activities throughout the day are natural or coming out of pure organic or natural biological needs and what activities are coming out of the fearful and anxious unnatural defence mechanism of the mind? You would be shocked to find out that most of your activities are unnatural or coming of some restlessness to avoid something or to acquire something.

The struggle with blankness only arises when there is either an effort to avoid or to acquire any situation or an object. Without avoiding or acquiring, there cannot be any struggle or suffering with blankness. Without the subtle desire to either acquire or avoid any situation, perception or an object, a human being comes face-to-face with this expressive blank source and understands it to know it or capture it completely and finally his or her fear of it, of trying to avoid or get away from it vanishes resulting in peace of mind, tranquillity and harmony.

Rediscovering Childhood's Innocence

A child is a perfect example of someone who is in complete touch with this vibrant, vast, energetic blankness. If you look at his or her eyes it's innocently blank, it's not yet filled with rationalizations, concepts, and ideas of this conditioned cultural construct, even its way of smiling and crying is pure, innocent and represents freedom, so at the start it's just an empty and innocent blank canvas, but slowly and slowly as the child grows it is covered with the superficial additions of understanding and ideas, it's as if it has put up many lenses which makes everything make to appear distorted and blurry to it and the clear, lucid and transparent blankness which was there in the foreground of experience previously gets lost in the background as it grows older and older. That's why it constantly feels as an adult or a grown-up person that I have lost something that I had in my childhood days – that loss is the loss of the innocence, spontaneity, sensitivity, the ability to just observe, look and feel life without any additional layover of conceptual muddling created by the formation of fixed and hard-wired beliefs.

The Unseen Strength of Innocent Blankness

The society is fearful of this innocent blankness, so it has created a structure whereby it just constantly tries to cover up the unique blank source which is there in each of us by the robotic and monotonous rules, concepts, hierarchies, levels and understandings. To mention again that there is nothing wrong with the pragmatism or ideas. The people who operate from the open, spacious and free state of the blank canvas or the blank source instead of operating from the societal norms and cultures are seen as unorthodox, mad and weird because they don't follow the pattern of the society, they are unique. And society is fearful that it's fixed hierarchy, rules or methods that it has kept secure from the past till now will collapse, that's why it challenges and mocks these people who act from the unfamiliar and absurd blankness. The blank source is dangerous for the survival of the cultural rules, norms and concepts. But quite importantly, the practical and matter-of-fact methods, ideas, norms, rules and theories remain in this vibrant source, it's only the superficial or additional conceptualizations and rationalizations which fall away.

The vital blank source or blankness is, has and will remain forever existent. It gives rise to the universe; it remains in the foreground and the background when the universe is in existence, and it will also remain when the entire universe collapses. It is what makes your body move, the eyes to blink, the flower to bloom, the trees to grow, the water in the oceans to flow, it's the cause, the source, the substratum, the energy producer, the energy provider of everything and the at the same time it is the effect of itself. You don't need to go anywhere to find it, it's just what is immediately present, the walls, the clouds, the sensations – it's just the immediate experience, the immediate moment. A contact with it, or a meeting with this blank source relieves all sufferings, tensions and anxieties. It's the gaps and it's also present where the gaps are not there. It's the sounds and it's not the sounds, it's present when there is the appearance and its present when the appearance is absent. It's the cause of the presence of sounds and the absence of sounds both. It's so blank that it's full of itself and it's empty of everything else. It's intoxicating, relieving, fresh and energizing. It doesn't have any needs, it doesn't need to be maintained, it doesn't have any need. An awakened human being is someone who has understood it, has had a glimpse of it, and is constantly dwelling or living in it. And the good news is that you don't need to understand it or rationalize it in any way to get close to it as it is already the immediate experience, moment, this presence. To find it is just to look and be open like a child. Be like a child, hear like a child, see like a child, like a blank canvas for just one moment and you realise it and see it instantly. All that is required is a bit of openness and sensitivity to receive its never-ending signal.

Living in Harmony

When there is a contact with this blank source and a human being starts dwelling in it, then nothing is taken seriously as such, everything becomes lighter and playful in a way because the blank canvas or the blank source has been cleansed of the additional dust of culturalism, beliefs, viewpoints and perspectives. Everything becomes pragmatical, open, cheerful, enjoyable, even the sadness and tensions start to feel lighter and not that intense, it starts feeling as if one is in a lucid dream exploring every spectrum of this dream moment-by- moment. When the blankness is ignored in the background, instead of being in the foreground of experience then everything seems as if it is heavy, rigid but when the blankness comes in the foreground, then everything becomes elastic and full of possibilities in a way, a human being is able to be much more efficient in his or her daily life because the baggage of past rationalizations and cultural or societal constructs are left aside. It's just a constant dance of blankness playing or expressing through the body and the world as the movements, and as the sounds. The body and the mind become like a powerhouse because the energy, which was expended in trying to figure out life, trying to find its purpose, trying to box it have subsided and stopped to happen, so the energies can be used in much more fruitful activities. The blank canvas or the vibrant blankness makes the body and the mind charged with the energy of the environment and then it explodes with full potentiality and possibility. It is also free to take on any form, shape or a structure at any point of space and time.

Conclusion

The Beautiful Paradox of Blankness

As the blankness is cause of all phenomena so even the act of avoiding or trying to fill the blankness through activities is also the blankness, the entirety of the appearance is it. All the perceptions, the thoughts, the emotions, the feelings are it only. It is not standing behind or apart from the appearance, it is the appearance. There is no difference between it and the appearance. So, you cannot find it as it's already present everywhere, in every particle of this universe. The largest and the smallest particle of this universe contain it and are made from it. The struggle with the blankness comes to an end when a human being sees clearly that it's unavoidable as it's already the entire appearance and there is no need to fill it as it's full already – full of possibilities, full of energy, vitality, life, vibrancy, lucidity, clearness, everything. The desire to fill the moments with activities becomes less and less when it's realised that the moment is already perfect without or without any activity. The desire to search for more appearances, more perceptions, more experiences becomes less and less when it's realised that the appearance, the perception, the experience is blankly whole, complete, free and perfect. The blankness of life gives complete freedom to life. A blank canvas is much fuller of possibility, much more alive than a canvas which is already coloured, but quite paradoxically the coloured canvas is also the blank canvas. Both are the same. Life begins with blankness, moves through blankness and ends in blankness, that's the beautiful, wonderful, and the mysterious nature of this life which constantly surprises us with the most surprising experiences, moments and sensations.