PREFACE

The title can be read with a question tag. This question is whether Stephen Stich, one of the two major eliminativists, makes a passage from folk psychology to Cognitive Science, as he often claims to be, along with Churchland. The above question is answered by critically evaluating the three-pronged attack he has set out to do in three of his major books (From Folk Psychology to Cognitive Science: The Case Against Belief (1983) The Fragmentation of Reason (1990), Deconstructing the Mind (1996). They are distinguished as three major steps for the wholesome project called eliminativism.

The first major step: Stich’s Case Against Belief.

The second major step: The Second Major Step in Eliminativism.

Third major step: Naturalism and its Kins.

The question itself is answered by holding that Stich takes a major effort to rechristian folk psychology as scientific psychology slowly transforming some of the major traits which are acting as blocks to the project.
Such a transformation is executed by looking at the way we integrate the self-ascription and other ascription into one single theory. In Stich’s sense, this single theory they called theory of Mental Mechanism (used in the external sense) is poised to accommodate the internal sense (TT) which together form an eclectic model consisting of two components. This model lies more on the side of simulationists and reject TT (mind reading) so folk psychology in a sense is rejected and folk psychology in yet another sense (intra mental sense) is preserved for science. A curious turn in Stich’s reasoning is found in his transforming folk psychology into a project that aligned to deconstruction. Folk psychology (theory-theory) is a posit: it cannot be rendered into science; and hence it has to be treated as false. Now this original argument is somewhat not adequately valid. What is needed is a premise about semantics (reference/truth). So, we add that semantics is indeterminate (all theories of semantics are indeterminate) but there are a plurality of semantic theories (just like plurality of folk subjects) and hence we need a device of deconstructing the deconstruction (plurality). This is the theme that informs much of Stich’s theorizing. The question whether Stich takes it beyond is answered in the positive. Certainly, he takes it beyond this awful sense of deconstruction (may be to the post-post-level) in which he becomes interested in cultural diversity (all cognitive systems are not functioning in the same uniform way) and uses the dictum that reference itself
is culturally determined. So in a sense Stich is an echt-eleminativist and echt deconstructionist.

After mapping the varied positions of FP in an effort to obtain a thorough review of the past literature on FP, with whatever amendments it needs for completion, we are moving to consider the three major steps in the next three chapters, where our efforts lie in the scheme within which, we are not able to miss a single strand of his reasoning. The above map is completed by looking at the exact relation between instrumentalistic and revisionist (Bermudez) account of FP (Clark, Dennett). This follows the positive defense of FP especially in two forms namely Fodor’s, Intentional realism and Carruther’s Folk psychological realism, which is waiting for a final draw with Stich. In fact, they espouse rival paradigms, as it is clear from the state-of-the-art-reviews and discussions. The instrumentalists hybridize. The revisionist, Bermudez offers the greatest challenge to all these accounts and its not without justification. We find it necessary to extend the map given in the Companion Volume on the philosophy, which according to our view, is out dated.

So, in a sense Eliminativism collapses in to deconstruction, but the latter is not collapsing in to social constructivism as alleged by some critics (Tim Crain) who provides an escape hatch for Stich. But in our view, he does not use the escape hatch. If he is understood to be so, then he may share
views of folk psychology which are typically social-scientific. In our understanding Stich has to face a final challenge from Bermudez, who models social co-ordination on folk psychological grounds, while at the same de limits FP on experimental grounds. It may be hypothesized that if he cannot face the challenge, he has to come to terms with it. This is our conclusion in the through shake-up where we draw the lines of argumentation in such a way as to offset a theory of self- ascription it- self.