INTRODUCTION

Philosophy aims at both explicit and implicit resolution of the fundamental issues that face man. And one of the fundamental issues that philosophy seeks resolution is the nature of philosophical inquiry. This inquiry sometimes called 'metaphilosophy' concerns itself with the methodological issues of how and why of philosophizing.

Two different kinds of metaphilosophy are possible: the aggressive and the defensive. Aggressive metaphilosophizing consists of finding faults with much or all of current philosophical practice within one's intellectual community. The defensive option in metaphilosophy consists in seeking rationale for some or all widely dominant philosophical practices within the relevant philosophical community. It is this second option that is attempted while reflecting on "Perspectives on Mind And Consciousness: A Critical Evaluation".

Philosophical issues have the nature of being perennially controversial, even when the number of adherents and critics may not be considerable. It is neither the number of philosophers involved nor the recentness of the controversy that make the philosophical disputations noteworthy. It is the logic of argumentation, coupled with theoretical and empirical evidence that is the focal point of any philosophical controversy. One such issue that attracted attention from the beginnings of history to date is the problem of mind. Recent studies seem to be equally exciting to philosopher's mind as had been the problem at the beginning of the modern period. "Perspectives..." makes an
effort to understand the debate in the new form that it has acquired. This is particularly so when empirical evidence has been increasingly used to boost philosophical argumentation regarding the nature of mind.

The present dissertation is historically post-Rylean. But as Wittgenstein and Ryle are inseparable from this debate, both find a detailed treatment - as it is only on this canvas that the recent debate can be painted. Further, any general survey of literature on mind reveals that dualism in some form or other seems to be still a philosophical relevant position, whether neo-scholastic or Popperian interpretation. It is felt necessary that a consideration of dualistic interpretation in general is necessary as a take-off point before detailed and critical studies of the various contemporary positions is undertaken.

The canvas is so broad that some sort of selective and restrictive dealing is inevitable. The selection or restriction is however not arbitrary. Although there may be important philosophical contributions that the researcher may not be aware of and hence find no mention, there are some authors whose relevance is unquestionable, but are deliberately excluded for theoretical reasons. Philosophers inspired and influenced by phenomenological method have been excluded from the present study on the ground that meaningful comparisons are possible only in the climate where there is restriction on 'laissez faire' interpretations. And 'phenomenological method' seems to have in its very methodology, the possibility of solipsistic interpretations. May be on some other occasion, one may be able to grapple with similar philosophical monologues.
The present study is a critical evaluation of the recent arguments regarding the nature of mind and subsequently that of consciousness. And as it is well nigh impossible to pay attention to all philosophers of mind, one has to select a few for both theoretical and practical reasons. The theoretical justification for selecting a few philosophers lies in the fact that there has been too many repetitive lines or arguments with no insights to deserve separate and exhaustive consideration.

The researcher in the present study has attempted critical studies of arguments for dualism (Chapter I: **Ontological Inadequacy of Dualist Interpretation of Mind**); Wittgenstein's 'complex of mental concepts' (Chapter II: **Complex of Mental Concepts: An Analysis**); Gilbert Ryle's 'dispositional behaviourism' (Chapter III: **Dispositional Behaviourism Reviewed**); Smart-Armstrong's 'reductionism' (Chapter IV: **Physical-Mental Identity**); Strawson's 'dual predication' (Chapter V: **Dual Predication or Dual Language?**); Davidson's 'anomalous monism' (Chapter VI: **Minimal Materialism - Overcoming Anti-Reductionism's Failures**); Popper's 'psycho-physicalism' (Chapter VII: **Dualism Re-admitted-Psycho-physical Interactionism**); Kripke's anti-identity theory arguments (Chapter VIII: **Minimal Mentalism-A Case for Dualism**); Peter Smith's and O.R. Jones' 'functionalism' (Chapter IX: **Eliminating Dichotomy-An Aristotelian Framework**); and Rorty's 'hermeneutised science' (Chapter X: **Going Beyond the Debate-Eliminative Reductionism**). In the concluding chapter (Understanding Perspectives: A Synthesis) a review of all the studies in terms of a three-fold perspective is attempted. After
a brief review of the critical studies that preceded, a comprehensive and methodological study of the perspectives on mind is undertaken. The issues raised and the questions posed by the thinkers in this study reveal three different perspectives: ontological, conceptual and epistemological. The ontological perspective is an inquiry into the existence or reality of entity called mind. The conceptual perspective inquires into the reducibility or irreducibility of the concept of 'mind'. The epistemological perspective is an inquiry into the satisfactoriness of explanation of 'mind' in mentalistic terms.

In conclusion, one tends to believe that given a perspective and framework, the position adopted by each modern contributor to the understanding of mind, has been noteworthy. It (the position) has contributed to the understanding of mind. Notwithstanding the inconsistencies and confusions in the individual positions, the discussion has contributed to a new perspective or a new line of argument in a perspective. The bane of the individual perspective has been the attempts at rejecting philosophical positions falling outside the specific perspective or framework.

In a world of divergent perspectives and conflicting lines of arguments, which position is acceptable? Taking a cue from the discussions on theory in philosophy of science, the researcher concluded that 'functionalism' is the best available theory to explain the complex human activities commonly attributed to 'mind'. In a world of conflicting theories in the varied perspectives, the theory that has greatest explanatory power at the ontological level, seems to be most acceptable one.