CHAPTER II
Critique on Early-Hick

Christianity distinguishes itself from other religions and all on the basis that resurrection is its distinctive feature. And that resurrection is the foundation stone upon which the entire system of Christianity rests. A detailed survey has been made in chapter four to establish this, and show how resurrection is vitally related to Christianity. At this point, we shall proceed on the hypothesis that resurrection is not only vital to Christianity but also that resurrection of the body after death is possible. But this kinds of an hypothesis brings along its own set of problems.

The obvious problem that would arise is the problem of identity, i.e., identity between the resurrected body and the pre-mortem body. Of, what would be the criteria of personal identity? However the discussion of the criteria of personal identity, (which we
shall discuss shortly) poses another problem, an equally pertinent one, and that is, the problem of 'disembodied-survival'.

Both these problems shall be discussed separately, however comparatively the problem of personal identity appears to be far less complex than the problem of disembodied survival.

In the first case: The problem of personal identity between the pre-mortem and the resurrected persons will have bodies like ours and there would not be any difficulty in identifying the qualities or characteristics we ascribe to both these bodies.

In the second case: The problem of disembodied survival, appears to be more complex, because the term "disembodied" survival or existence is suggestive of a being alleged to exist in a manner that had a body before death but now does not. The problem is, can the predicates we ascribe to premortem be applied to beings
without bodies? Or, can we conceive intelligibly of beings without bodies? Or, can the disembodied be identified with pre-mortem or embodied persons? And many more complexities of such like.

The discussion of these two major issues which arise in the context of resurrection is going to be our immediate concern.
I A. PERSONAL IDENTITY:

Of the various experiences in our daily life, the most common experience is that of recognizing people. Or to identify people as to whether or not they are the ones they claim to be. And to reidentify people, is equally a common experience to our daily list of activities, though we may not take note of it particularly. To reidentify someone means to say that, inspite of a lapse of time, and the changes that may have occured, he or she who we now see, is the same as the person we knew before.

Some philosophers have argued that 'sameness' and 'change' are incompatible. Especially Hume argues that it is a paradox to ascribe both change and identity to the same subject. According to the Humean thought, any ascription of 'change' is a denial of the same subject. And a strict adherence to this principle of incompatability endangers the very
possibility of recognising one another, or for that matter, our own selves.

Such a predicament led other philosophers to the doctrine, that inspite of the changingness, there is some hidden core in the subject which persists unchanged throughout, thereby providing a back drop against which the change occurs. The back drop need not necessarily be unchanging but could be subjected to a gradual change.

It is this doctrine, formulated by Penelhum, facilitates a compatability, whereby one can come out of the Humian muddle of 'sameness and change'. Thus, there is no contradiction, between, saying that a person has changed and yet remained the same, if the changes are the characteristics of that sort of a thing.

To agree with Humian principle of incompatibility is to deny ourselves of any possible solution. And hence, resort to compatability of sameness and change.
at least as a mere custom would be far better, if not philosophically, yet philosophical criticism cannot rule out the possibility of an accepted custom.

Thus a concession for our day to day affairs for a custom.3

Although there has been a concession, offered for our day to day activity of reidentification there has been much furore and debate on reidentification in the context of life-after or resurrection life, among philosophers. It is precisely in this context John Hick says:

"a major problem confronting any such doctrine is that of providing criteria of personal identity to link earthly and the resurrection life."

The criteria for personal identity, becomes vital to our discussion here, because it is based on this criteria, we can establish the validity of resurrection.
Resurrection becomes meaningful only if we are able to reidentify the resurrected bodies with pre-mortem bodies. But how do we go about reidentifying?

The reidentification of persons (that survive death) can be done by two explicit criteria offered by Terence Penehulum.

**Criterion (A):**

"One is that the criterion of identity of a person is the identity of the body which he has that it is either a necessary or sufficient condition of saying correctly, that this person before us is Smith and that the body which this person before us has is the body that Smith had."

**Criterion (B):**

"The other answer is that the criterion of the identity of a person is the set of memories which-he
has that it is either a necessary or a sufficient condition of saying correctly that this person before us is Smith and that he should have memories of doing Smith's actions or having Smith's experiences."

The problem of identification can be settled by both the ways. **Criterion A** could be termed as bodily criterion, where the concept of form and resemblance is employed for the task of reidentification. That is, after the resurrection, what remains, is the form of resemblance of the Smith who was, with the Smith that is resurrected. The basis for reidentification, then would be that even if the body disintegrates at death, the form continues or persists, in resurrected life.

**Criterion B** could be termed as memory criterion where memory is considered as a sufficient condition to reidentify, atleast to himself, to have survived death because he continues to have memories in his
disembodied state about his pre-mortem existence, which could be checked, ratified by others who are supposed to have known him.
I B. THE CHRISTIAN NOTION OF IDENTITY:

The Christian claim is that at the time of resurrection the soul will rejoin the body it has left. The resurrection body is the same as the present body.

Even if it is, that the continuity of the body is the necessary condition of the continuance of a person through time, this condition can be met with, in the case of resurrected body which is identical with the pre-mortem body. If it is identical it has survived death or has gone through what we call as the process of 'death'. At death, the body and soul are seperated and the body destroyed, and the reversing of this destruction or recreating out of the same body by God, is resurrection.

The following metaphor explains more vividly the concept of resurrection.

"That which you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you__
do not sow that shall be, but a mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other grain..."  

This metaphor refers to the resurrection, where Paul describes, the plant that springs up from the ground is different from the seed that was planted. The living plant that springs from inert kernel is a renewal of life from death. Similarly the resurrected body will be different from what is (buried) i.e., our present body. Yet there will be similarity; as a seed so will the plant be.

The change from one body to another is not so radical that no connection between the two is discernable. Just as the plant cannot exist without the seed—there is some persisting element or a continuing link relating one to the other viz. the pre-mortem body and the resurrection body. This is a transformed state, which does not pose any difficulty
to identify the resurrected body, this transformed state refers only to the qualitative change that comes about, after resurrection, like the inert corn kernel that produces a corn stalk when planted.

There are other passages to quote in favour of "linking pre-mortem life with post-mortem life".

For instance, we have the story of the rich man and Lazarus in the New Testament where we read about a conversation that took place between Abraham and the rich man. The observations of the description reveals to us facts that vouch for the connection between bodily identity and personal identity.

The rich man who died and was buried was, able to recognize or identify Abraham, in the other world. Not only was he able to recognize Abraham, he was also able to identify Lazarus the one whom he knew in his "life-time" or in their pre-mortem existence. Further
there are ample evidences in the description that enable us to refer about the existence in the other world which could be identified with the pre-mortem.

Also, we find the rich man was begging Abraham for water to cool his tongue, cooling of the tongue is indicative of thirst, further his cry "I am tormented" speaks of the experience, which is in resemblance of the pain and suffering one undergoes in his bodily existence. So life-hereafter has resemblences of the life in this world. Or life-hereafter can be identified with lite-here.

Again in the same verse, the rich man is asking Abraham to send Lazarus to bring a drop of water. He names his because he knows him, or was able to identify Lazarus as the beggar who lay at his gate in their pre-mortem life. Abraham replies "Son remember." - The memory of the past is not drowned in the other world. In other words, there is identification of the
past life, in the other world by the agency of memory.

Towards the close of the description we find the rich man asking Abraham to send Lazarus to his Father's house i.e., to the place of his pre-mortem existence. By asking Lazarus to be sent to his father's house, he thereby implied, Lazarus knows enough where his father's house is, he also knows his five brothers and they would also in turn recognise or identify Lazarus if he was sent from the dead.

We have attempted thus far, here, to show the problem of personal identity is tenable with the Te-identification of the body or in other words, we can link the resurrected body or the body in life hereafter, with pre-mortem body, on the basis of bodily criterion.

We now proceed to elaborately discuss the memory criterion disembodied survival.
I C. DISEMBODIED SURVIVAL:

The talk about disembodied survival could best begin with the account of "Cartesian Dualism" of mind and matter. Roughly stated, Descartes position is, the soul (or mind) and the body are two distinct substances that have no common properties and have only a casual and contingent relationship with one another. The mind occupies no space, is free and indivisible, whereas the body occupy's space and can be divided. The mind or the soul is eternal while the body is temporal. And it is the body that is disintegrated while the mind survives death and continues to exist in a disembodied form. Therefore the term "disembodied" suggests that a being alleged to exist in this fashion, had a body before death but now does not.

And it is a popular belief that men survive their death and that they survive without a body. The problem of identity, of post-coortera-persons (with the pre-mortem persons) becomes more difficult in the case
of disembodied survival than in the case of "resurrected survival" (survival after resurrection). The reason is very simple and that is, the non-continuance of the body, with which we have identified the person thus far.

The belief in disembodied survival and the belief in bodily resurrection are not necessarily inter-dependent, one can believe in disembodied survival without believing in resurrection. On the assertion that the person has no form (of life) after death.

It is in this context we are expected to discuss disembodied survival. The discussion can be a quite an elaborate and varied one, but we shall confine ourselves to discuss only to that which pertains in the context of "problem of identity". How do we identify the disembodied person with the pre-mortem person?

Upon the belief, that a post-mortem person has no body, one would say that many predicates we ascribe
to persons here can be no longer ascribed to disembodied persons. A disembodied person cannot walk, sleep or frown or turn his head etc. Though the disembodied person might perceive, imagine, form intentions, think thoughts, have memories, and even sense experiences of seeing, hearing etc., but without sense organs.

For example, can a disembodied person be said to see? If one says "yes" to this question, one is obliged to give an explanation. And before one could give any explanation concerning seeing and what is seen, the question that confronts him is, whether the disembodied person is in space?

And if he is in space, he must be somewhere and, where is that? The only answer that is plausible is an arbitrary one, that the disembodied person is at a place from which a normal person sees the objects, with your visual field but the survivor is not seen by you.

But a better consideration, perhaps would be that
the disembodied person sees clairvoyantly, since this kind of seeing does not involve being in a certain place to see something and the seeing is not limited to one's visual field. Or in other words the disembodied person has special powers by which he does the functions of a normal person. Functions like seeing, hearing, etc. However, the disembodied person cannot have perception of his own bodily states, for obvious reasons.

To sum up: Consciousness survives but consciousness in itself cannot link the disembodied survival with the pre-mortem life. It is memory that links between the two states of survival.

If a person survives death, he must have the memory of his state before death without which even the alleged disembodied survivor himself is at loss to link with his supposedly pre-mortem existence. Memory therefore, is an important criterion of personal identity, here in disembodied survival.

However, memory alone is not a sufficient basis
for personal identity because memory often fails and diminishes, i.e., there are lapses in memory. It could be the case, that the disembodied survivor is in fact remembering doing things that he has not done; or perhaps wanted to do, and has imagined himself doing it.

The criterion of memory for personal identity cannot occur in isolation, because memory presupposes someone to do the remembering or memory experiences must be some one's experiences and thus memory as criterion of identity does not stand by itself but as an appendix of personal identity. Memory cannot exist by itself any more than colours exist by themselves (in relation to shapes).

It is true - that the disembodied existence can no longer stand by itself. But it does not in any way rule out the logical possibility of linking earthly life with post-mortem life.
I D. CHRISTIAN NOTION OF DISEMBODIED SURVIVAL:

According to the Christian notion, death separates the soul of man from his body and while body is buried, cremated, embalmed or whatever, awaits the day of resurrection, the soul or the spirit goes to its "place". And the spirit or soul by its very nature is a conscious being and therefore is conscious of what goes around.

The description of Lazarus and rich man in Luke 16; which we have seen earlier, tells us that the souls of both these men after death, were conscious of what was going around them. Further they were able to recognise one another.

Like wise in Matthew 17: 3 and 4, which concerns the transfiguration of Jesus Christ, on the occasion when two people who had left this earthly life a long time before Moses and Elijah, appeared before Jesus and his three disciples.
"And behold there appeared unto them
Moses and Elias talking with him."

We therefore infer that man's spirit thinks and
speaks after death or in its disembodied existence.

Yet another case in favour of disembodied existence
in the O.T., is the case, where King Saul visits the
12 witch of Endor, who had a familiar spirit. All that
the king wanted of the witch was to bring up one from
the dead. It was necromancy, but the point that comes
out is, disembodied survival. If Saul wanted a conver-
sation with Samuel who had lately died he must have
gone to the sepulchre.

Our enquiry started with the two basic problems
concerning resurrected life, namely the problem of
personal identity and disembodied survival. We have
tried to show that these problems have been acknowledged
and accounted for, within the Christian tradition. Fur-
ther, it may be pointed out, that our enquiry reveals
the possibility of what may be described as the Chris-
tian notion of personal identity and disembodied survival
I E. IMMORTALITY (OF THE SOUL):

In the earlier section, we have assumed that resurrection is vital to Christianity, and considered the consequences of such an assumption. In the first place, we have considered the problem of identity, and resolved it with the help of bodily criterion, where the notion of form is employed for the task of re-identification. In the second place, we have considered the problem of disembodied existence, which was resolved with the help of memory criterion. These views serve as a basis for linking earthly life with post-mortem life. At this point, it would be appropriate to admit two more concepts for our consideration, viz., immortality and eternity, since the talk about Immortality and eternity have their place within the context of resurrection, for immortality and eternity are closely connected with the idea of overcoming death.

IMMORTALITY:

A consideration on immortality philosophically.
can never begin better than to refer Plato's *Phaedo* where Plato puts forward a demonstration of immortality, when Crito asks Socrates, "How shall we bury you?" Socrates replied,

"However you please, if you can catch me and I do not get away from you,"

And he laughed gently, and looking towards us, said: "I cannot persuade Crito, my friends, that the Socrates who is now conversing and arranging the details of his argument is really I: he thinks I am the one whom he will presently see as a corpse, and he asks how to bury me. And though I have been saying at great length, that after I drink the poison, I shall no longer be with you, but shall go away to the joys of the blessed, he seems to think, that was idle talk uttered to encourage you and myself."

The passage brings out quite forcefully, the
doctrine of immortality of the soul, that which continues to exist even after death. This summarizes the Greek thought, that man is essentially a duality of the mortal flesh and the immortal soul or more plainly stated, the corporeal element, the body and incorporeal element, the soul.

The body is thought of as a prison within which, the soul is somehow imprisoned, for the duration of a life. And at the dissolution of the body, the soul continues to exist, free from all the former restrictions.

The notion of immortality is ascribed to the concept of soul, which has been there, in all possible languages acquainted by man. Yet there has always been unclarity and indeterminacy concerning this key term, soul. And this very concept has been questioned and debated in modern times. The general usage of the term soul has been used along with the term.
immortality, and that is how men always spoke of the 'immortality of the soul', in contrast to the decaying body.

However, the concept has been used quite interchangably and often substituted with concepts like mind and human personality. For instance, Gilbert Tyle in his "Concept of Mind" uses soul as an equivalent of mind, with a marked emphasis that it is not a substance as opposed to the Cartesian notion of the soul being a separate entity, on equal footing with the body.

In Plato, we find the notion of the soul being substituted for person, "we are our souls". We are our soul, or I am my soul is justified, in Plato by saying, I cannot be my body because I use my body (my hands, legs, nose etc.) and the user is different from the thing used. Therefore it follows, that I am my soul and not my body.

Although my body is empirical, my soul is not
empirical, therefore, the notion of soul is not to be examined and used, as one would do with my hands or legs or nose. At best, one can talk of the state of one's soul, reflecting moral and religious considerations. That's how we often see the usage of the term soul, in contexts like, 'destiny of the soul', or the "salvation of the soul", which is considered as immortal, compared to the mortal body.
I F. CHRISTIAN NOTION OF IMMORTALITY:

The material and immaterial natures in man are commonly referred to as mortal in the man within the Christian framework. However, immortality also refers to the body.

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

Mortality and immortality are two sides of the same coin, referring to the body of man. Mortality is used for man's body in relation to time, and immortality also for man's body, (resurrected body) in relation to eternity. Immortality though refers to man's body, is not man's present condition. Immortality, means death-less-ness.

But men do die, but man's soul doesn't die. This is the principle that is not subject to the
decaying, which is called the **immortal soul**.

Immortality, within the Christian framework is an attribute of the resurrected-body, it is the resurrected body which has the quality of immortality or deathlessness. The body in time is mortal but the body in eternity is immortal.

This brings us to the necessity for distinguishing between time and eternity.
I G. ETERNITY AND TIME:

Death is the intersection of time and eternity. The words eternity and eternal, which mean "ever", have their roots in Latin aeternus, which in turn has its root in aevum, both meaning the same as our English words, 'ever' and 'aye'. The notion of eternity has other meanings like 'everlasting' and 'timelessness', which are like various facets of a diamond.

The idea of timelessness, is seen in Parmendies, where it is written,

"it neither was at any time nor will be, since it is now all at once, a single whole."

The notion of timelessness or rather, eternity, can be better understood in comparison with time.

Time has been defined as "the consideration of
duration, the measure of it, as set out by certain periods, and marked by certain measures." Time is the essence of everything in the physical universe. Time consists of past, present and future. Man finds it difficult to grasp eternity, since he is in time, and in order to understand eternity, he ascribes time to eternity by saying, "eternity past" and "eternity future". Whereas eternity has no past or future.

Eternity is not a duration, duration is a length of time. Therefore, eternity cannot be conceived as innumerable lengths of time put together. If eternity would be made up of endless succession of lengths of time, then eternity would be gradually running out of time. Eternity could be best expressed as "the whole thing at once".17

Eternity and time differ. Time has both beginning and ending. Eternity has neither. Time moves to the future, through the present, to the past, whereas eternity is constant, and does not flow past, or else, some of it would have been used up by now. Or as
Spinoza would put it, "eternity is existence par excellence, an infinite existence." Eternity refers to that which is eternal. For the distinction between these two is no more than, one being a noun form (i.e. eternity) and the other being an adjectival form (i.e. eternal) of the same term, constancy.
I H. CHRISTIAN NOTION OF ETERNITY:

The immortality about which we have seen in the earlier section on Christian notion of immortality, becomes meaningful in the light of what we said thus far concerning eternity. Eternity is affirmed in the New Testament as time-less-ness. And the notion is widely used in the context of rewards and punishments that await for man at the eschatological judgement. The eschatological judgement is based on the individuals choices and decisions made in this life in relation to God, i.e. whether one by faith, was aware of God or has rejected God totally in this life. The reward refers to the eternal or everlasting life, while punishment refers to the eternal damnation. The former referring to heaven, and the latter referring to hell. In other words, heaven and hell are eternal and everlasting, according to Christian notion.

The contrast between the rich man and Lazarus
after death, (which we have referred to earlier) speaks of an eternal state of both, one in eternal bliss, the other in eternal torment. Though there are various contrasting features there, one thing is common to them both, and that is — they both are in eternity.

The New Testament is replete with references concerning eternity, except that the usage has been substituted between eternal and everlasting. In any case, whether it is eternal or everlasting, the essence in all the cases has been the same, i.e. 'endlessness'. This is true either of heaven or of hell.

Christ speaking on this subject says,

"Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire." 19
"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."  

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

We have the same notion used in other places in the New Testament like:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son. That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."  

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Nowhere in the New Testament do we find an "aeon or age" as a substitute for eternal, as Hick suggests
it, when he says, "the punishment of hell is not eternal. for it does not have a secure basis in New Testament".  

Hick’s attempt to capitalize on the meaning of ainos as "age", to deny death is rather misconceived or prejudicial. Although aeon in Greek may be translated 'age' it is never used in the New Testament merely in the temporal sense. The force attached to the word is not so much that of the duration of time, but that which has no end. The word consistently denotes indefiniteness as regards duration. The word in the singular (aeon) is never used by itself, to denote eternity or something eternal. It is always used in its plural (aionis) or adjectival or idiomatic combinations to designate something eternal or non-temporal. Therefore, by giving a new meaning to one concept (eternal). Hick is calling for the change of meaning of other concepts as well, for instance, without the notion of eternity meaning, endlessness or timelessness, the notion of immortality becomes meaningless.
For each is the necessary corollary of the other. If 'eternal' (or eternity) means something limited, what happens to the immortal? If there would be no 'eternity' then there will not be 'immortality' as well, for both these concepts go hand in hand.

Further why should only the state of bliss, (heaven) be eternal? And the punishment of hell be temporal (not eternal)? Whereas hell is the necessary corollary of heaven and both the states have been referred by exactly by the same word aloonios, meaning unending, rather than just continuing to exist a certain period of time or one aeon or an age. Therefore one state cannot be eternal while the other is temporal.

By changing the meaning of the terms 'eternal'. Hick is falling into a two-fold inconsistency. On the one hand, there is the descriptive inconsistency by withholding the correct description of the term 'eternal', and on the other hand, there is the logical
inconsistency on the part of Hick, because logically, immortality and eternity are interdependent. It becomes logically difficult to conceive of one without the other.

This is a paradoxical situation in Hick, specially because of logical inconsistency (if not because of the descriptive inconsistency). This paradoxical situation in Hick, can be concluded as Hick, is trying to play the 'game' (game of Christianity) without following all the rules, as Wittgenstein would put it.

Hick may be welcome, to be biased to a system as a whole but not to a concept alone, the concept being, eternal or eternity. Thus if eternity means an aeon or an age, it is anything but eternity.

Let us briefly retrace our steps. We have considered the meaning of immortality and eternity and have pointed out that both these concepts are by and
large interdependent. And is logically difficult to conceive of one, without the other. In our discussion in this section, we have also considered the Christian notion of immortality and eternity. Special effort was made to bring out the correct meaning of the term 'aeon' which means eternal or endlessness or timeless-ness and not an 'age' as Hick suggested.

With this we now proceed to the third chapter, where our focus is going to be on later-Hick, where later Hick, asserts the immortality of the soul, which again i.e a paradox in Hick because thus far he has been denying the true meaning of eternity, and he also questioned the possibility of resurrected life. But the assertion of immortality of the soul is not free from difficulties. The difficulties raised here again, are denial of the basic tents of Christianity, which as we have noted earlier, was his frame-work, to work with.