CHAPTER II

NEO-REALISTIC CONCEPT OF CONSCIOUSNESS
CHAPTER II

NEO-REALISTIC CONCEPT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Neo-realism arose at the turn of the twentieth century in opposition to the idealist doctrines that the known or perceived object is dependent for its existence on the act of knowing and that the immediately perceived object is a state of perceiving mind. Against this, neo-realism overemphasises the object and maintains that the mind has no independent existence apart from the object. Thus whereas the idealists reduce everything to mind, this school reduced mind to objective things. For the neo-realists Nature is basic and mind is a part and parcel of it.

The problem of mind or consciousness finds a prominent place in the writings of the neo-realists and is treated in its both epistemological and ontological aspects. Because of certain developments in philosophy and animal and physiological psychology, neo-realists have to direct their attention to the problem of consciousness. In the field of philosophy William James (1842-1912) in America protested against this conception of mind as a spiritual substance and held that it is only a form of connection among objects. Animal psychology holds that consciousness is non-spiritual in character and shows that
there is no serious gap between animal and human mind. Physiological psychology also holds that consciousness is non-spiritual in character and finds a closer affinity between mental and bodily processes. Thinkers, namely, E.B. Holt, R.B. Perry, B. Russell, S. Alexander and C.D. Broad made an attempt to revise the prevailing opinion and to reconstruct it from a new angle. As regards the nature of consciousness the neo-realists are not unanimous. There is conspicuous difference between the British and the American neo-realists on this subject.

E.B. Holt and R.B. Perry, the American neo-realists, deny the distinction between mind and matter, subject and object and thus are very close to the behaviourists in psychology. Consciousness, like physical things exists in the physical world and is open to general observation. Sensation, perception, imagination and volition are all regarded as objects, as physical objects. The distinction which we find is not any distinction of kind but of relation. "A mind or consciousness is a class or group of entities within the subsisting universe as a physical object in another class or group."¹ Knowledge as defined by Holt and some other neo-realists is not a passive reception of sensations but a response. In this respect the subject is that which responds and the object is that which is responded to. Like James, they hold that "the difference

---

between subject and object of consciousness is not a difference of quality or a substance, but a difference of office or place in configuration. Thus in Cartesian dualism the opposition between mind and body can be solved.

Holt defines consciousness as a 'cross-section' of the universe. It is the environment responded to by some specific reaction by the nervous organism. It is the totality of physical objects defined by the response of the nervous organism. So to him, it is out-there in the objects, in the cross-section. Sometimes consciousness is described by Holt and some other neo-realists as a 'search-light'. This means that as light cannot modify the object it reveals, so also mind or consciousness do not change the object it knows. Most of the American neo-realists consider consciousness as "thought" and subject, belonging to the physical world. The knower or the subject is conceived as an organism that responds to the physical stimuli and is selective in its response. Holt regards consciousness as the 'specific response' to extra-organic objects which by virtue of being thus responded to become the field of objects in consciousness.

2. Ibid., p. 476
5. Cf. Ibid., p. 251
6. Cf. Ibid., p. 481.
And as we have seen consciousness is often considered by him as a cross-section of the neutral entities that subsists in the universe, the cross-section being made by the selective response of the organism. This signifies the complete denial of consciousness by identifying it with objects and placing it in space where other physical objects exist. Most of the neo-realists agree with Holt in accepting such a view, yet some of them go against the peculiar formulation of Holt's theory.

W.P. Montague does not accept this behaviouristic view of consciousness. He holds that consciousness is not a behaviour, but is the relation of self transcending implication which the brain-states sustain to their extra-organic causes. The brain-states are the effects of an object and imply the object just as any effect implies its cause.

W.P. Pitkin unlike Holt and Montague defines knowledge in terms of "projection field". According to him an object is known through the projection which it produces in the brain. It can be noticed here that the directedness of objects which is most prominent in Holt and other neo-realists is denied by them. A third factor, namely 'brain-states' according to Montague and 'projection', according to Pitkin takes place. It means that we are directly aware of these brain projections and not the objects.

outside us. This view ultimately leads to epistemological
dualism. Thus we see that according to Holt, consciousness
is not a subjective existence, but a 'cross-section' of the
universe, or collection of particular objects defined by the
specific response or behaviour of the organism. In his words,
"The mariner's searchlight is the nervous system and the
totality of objects and are illuminated is the 'cross-section'
or 'consciousness'." 8

There is another set of philosophers, called British
neo-realists. They are S. Alexander, B. Russell, C. D. Broad,
G. E. Moore. Among them S. Alexander and B. Russell are the
most prominent. Alexander raises objections in this account
and attributes subjectivity to consciousness. For him conscious-
ness is not a set of objects defined by search-light, rather it
can be called the search-light itself, though the search-light
as a physical fact can not be accounted for as consciousness.
Alexander ultimately rejects altogether the search-light theory
of Holt, 9 and regards consciousness as a quality and there are
mental acts having this quality of consciousness.

The British neo-realists differ from the American
neo-realists as regards their objectivity of knowledge. But

---

they agree on the point of directedness of knowledge and their theory can be described as epistemological monism. They also criticise Berkeleyan subjectivism. According to them in our knowledge-situation there is neither mind alone, as Berkeley holds, nor matter alone, as conceived by Holt, but they admit the existence of matter in relation to mind. Here it is to be considered that among the other realists B. Russell, though to some extent allied with American neo-realists, admits purely mental entities distinct from the physical objects. By admitting a distinction between the content and the object we have to abolish the epistemological monism. Russell modifies his theory by admitting that in sensation only, we can retain the object and in memory the retention of both content and object is necessary. As regards the neo-realistic movement of directedness of objects Alexander's view is much stronger than Russell's, for unlike Russell he admits this directedness in all cases of knowledge, not merely in the case of sensation.

As to the nature of consciousness Alexander differs from Russell by accepting it as the essence of mind. Russell points out that consciousness is reducible to the ultimate neutral entities, whereas Alexander considers it as something unique, the character is revealed in a special mode of apprehension called, 'enjoyment' which cannot be explained by description or by analysis. Their difference from American
neo-realists is more pronounced in Alexander's theory, than in Russell's. According to Alexander when the knowledge of mind is called 'enjoyment' the knowledge of object is called 'contemplation'. Our knowledge in the usual sense requires presence of both mind and physical objects. In this way according to Alexander our knowledge is a direct relation between the knowing mind and the physical object, of which one is subjective or mental and the other is objective and material. One can not be reduced to another.

The other neo-realists like G. E. Moore and C. D. Broad in their analysis of the knowledge situation differ on some minor points. They hold, that we know material objects directly although there is the mind as distinct from matter.

The influence of William James is prominent in the neo-realistic view of consciousness. The American neo-realists like Holt differ also from the British neo-realists like Moore with regard to their behaviouristic theory, and their attempt to deny the distinction between acts and objects of consciousness by reducing acts to objects and both to neutral entities. Holt strongly criticises Moore's view that "consciousness and its objects are distinct existents". 10 To him if we objectively study every reality including consciousness what we get is that

consciousness is nothing more than its object. That is why he compares it with light. When we see light, we see nothing but the objects illumined by the light so also when we think of consciousness, we have the various objects before us. Though in course of time, he sometimes used to speak of consciousness in terms of activity and called it "specific response" yet again he sometimes described consciousness in terms of objects or neutral particulars.

Thus we see that there are various dissimilarities among the views of the neo-realists in various respects. The American and the British neo-realists formulated their theory of consciousness in two different ways. So their views are to be stated in two separate ways, though comparison between them, as well as their influence upon each other is also prominent. We are discussing here some of the views of eminent thinkers whose contributions to this problem of consciousness are considerable and of vital importance.
American neo-realism:

In this present section our purpose is to discuss the views of American neo-realists concerning the nature of consciousness. We shall be primarily concerned with their account of the nature of consciousness, shall define its character and shall discuss the various modes of consciousness — cognitive, emotional and volitional. The American neo-realists have mainly confined themselves to the cognitive aspect in their account and have paid less attention to the other aspects, namely, emotional and volitional. American realism has its beginning in "The programme of first platform of six realists" which appeared in "The Journal of Philosophy" in 1910 and later in a co-operative volume "The New Realism" in 1912 by the same authors. (E. B. Holt, W. T. Marvin, W. P. Montague, R. B. Perry, W. B. Pitkin and E. G. Spaulding). We shall discuss here the theories of two of the prominent American realists, E. B. Holt and R. B. Perry. The theories formulated by them agree in fundamentals though they are different in some details.

E. B. Holt:

E. B. Holt’s theory of consciousness can be regarded as the most fundamental and extreme type of realism. Similar ideas we can find in Watson’s behaviourism in psychology. Consciousness
is conceived by Holt as the 'cross section' of the universe defined by the 'specific response' or 'behaviour' of the nervous organism. It can be pointed out that the specific response is the essential quality of nervous organism. The term 'specific' means the distinctive character of response which is distinguished from other responses exhibited by the lower level of innervation. Specific response is essential for consciousness, but it alone can not constitute consciousness. Consciousness is possible only when the organism is endowed with such quality as specific response or behaviour.

The specific response or behaviour is always directed towards the physical environment. The organism responds to certain aspects of physical environment and thus constitutes a 'cross-section' out of the total environment. According to Holt a cross-section is "any part collection that is defined by a law which is unrelated (or but remotely related) to the laws that define the whole in question." Thus a part-collection or cross-section is not related to the whole, though it may be the result of selection from a given whole. It constitutes a new relational complex different from the whole from which it is

12. Ibid., p. 170.
abstracted. Thus we get consciousness when we have the collection of objects or cross-section of the universe defined by the 'specific response' or behaviour of the organism. Therefore, Holt conceives that the 'criterion of consciousness is specific response' and 'Psychology is the science of "psychic cross-section"'. Thus Holt does not regard consciousness as identical with behaviour or specific response, nor does he equate it with the cross-section or part-collection selected from the universe. It is the cross-section or the collection of the objects defined by the specific response of the organism. Holt sometimes tries to explain consciousness on the analogy of a search light. He observes, consciousness is, 'like a search-light which by playing over a landscape and illuminating now this object now that .... defines a new collection of objects all of which are integral parts of the landscape (and remains so), although they have now gained membership in another manifold — the class of all objects on which the illumination falls.' The cross-section is not inside the search light and also the objects which constitute the cross-section do not depend upon the search light for their substance or being. Consciousness is neither within the skull, nor within the nervous system, but it is a collection of objects

13. Ibid., pp. 205-206
defined by the specific response of the organism equipped with
the central nervous system. Holt maintains, "the mariner's
search-light is the nervous system and the totality of objects
that are illuminated is the cross-section or consciousness".16

The cross-section or the totality of objects defined by
the specific response of the nervous system is assumed to
'constitute mind', and the individual members of this cross-
section are, taken to be the various contents of consciousness,
such as sensations, perceptions, ideas etc.17 These very
contents of cross-section coincide with the object of which we
can say that we are conscious. Thus consciousness is described
as the entire cross-section defined by the behaviour of specific
response of the organism and the various components of the
cross-section can be regarded as its conscious components.

This definition of consciousness involves some important
implications. Firstly, consciousness is not identical with
the behaviour or the specific response of the organism. It
is not also the action (specific response) although such
action is essential to it. Secondly it is conceived as
a collection of objects defined by the specific response or
behaviour of the organism in relation to the physical
organism. Consciousness is, therefore, conceived as group-
ings or collection of objects arranged in a particular context.

16. Ibid., p. 209
The collection of objects or the cross-section may be obtained in a variety of ways but the cross-section which constitutes consciousness is distinguished from other cross-sections because it is defined in a characteristic way by the specific response or behaviour. Consciousness, now, is nothing but the collection of objects defined in a distinctive way. Thirdly, the conscious cross-section is not dependent upon the specific response or behaviour which defines it. The object by which the conscious cross-section is being constituted will be the members of a new grouping, being defined in a specific way by the behaviour of the organism. The behaviour neither determines the existence of objects nor alters or modifies their actual character but only places the objects in a definite context. Fourthly, those objects which constitute the conscious manifold may be the members of other manifolds and thus they become the integral parts of the larger whole of physical environment. Finally, it can be said that mind or consciousness is the cross-section as a whole defined by the specific response of nervous system and the several constituent objects form the various conscious contents, such as sensations, perceptions and ideas etc. Hence consciousness is the totality and these contents are its several component parts.

We have to consider now the specific character of these conscious elements as defined by Holt. The examination of the
nature of conscious contents has an importance in that it reveals the feature of neo-realist conception of consciousness and marks it off from the traditional view. The neo-realist theory of consciousness is primarily an attack upon the theory of representationalism according to which the object of consciousness is different from the content of consciousness for their very existence. The content is immediately given to consciousness and that is why it is mental and is a connecting link between mind and the extramental object. These contents are the pictures, copies or representations of the object and correspond to the object, but are not identical with it. The distinction between the content and the object is that the content is mental which is immediately given to the mind whereas the object is non-mental, which is apprehended through the given mental content. Thus, consciousness according to this theory is not an immediate apprehension of the real object but through the medium of the content.

Representationalism is epistemological dualism, while the neo-realist view is epistemological monism. The neo-realists do not agree with the representationalists theory of consciousness. The neo-realists reject their theory because of their inability to give a satisfactory account of the knowledge of the real object. It is the mental content only and not the real object that can be immediately known by the mind. Here a correspondence is affirmed
between the content and object. But how do we know such correspondence to be real? Because correspondence, true or false, can be determined only when the two terms are accessible. Here the mental content which is the copy is given but the real object is not given. Hence we cannot compare the two as we do not know whether what belongs to the one also belongs to the other. Any knowledge of the real object thus becomes impossible. This view of neo-realists is in opposition to the representationalist's theory of consciousness. So, although, the neo-realists differ in many respects among themselves, yet they all agree on this point. They emphasise the direct and immediate character of our apprehension of reality. All the modes of our conscious experience, such as perception, sensation, imagination are essentially presentative in character and bring us into direct contact with the real object.

Holt regards the essential distinction between the mental content and the object as illegitimate. 18 Sensation and perception are not mental contents corresponding to the non-mental objects, but they are one with their objects. Holt asserts, in fact, there are not sensations, or perceptions and objects.

18 Cf. Ibid., p. 219.
But there are objects only, when these are included in one manifold called consciousness, these are called sensations or perceptions etc. According to Holt, sensation and perception are objects in their hierarchy of being, they are in the psychic cross-section when the nervous system specially responds to them. Holt rejects the existential distinction between the content and the object and regards them as numerically identical entities. Holt maintains that sensations and perceptions as contents are not existentially separate from their objects, numerically they are the same yet there is a sense in which they are distinguishable. Though, in certain senses, the objects are regarded as something more than the sensation or perception. If we regard the object as "more than the sensation or perception, it is because the nervous system is responding to some components only of the object; but such components are at one and the same time, and without any sort of reduplication, a part of the object and a part of the consciousness."19 As contents, sensations and perceptions are the integral parts of the objects, though they are only the portions selected from the objects by the specific response of the nervous system.

Sensations and perceptions as contents, are the aspects of the object, they must have their independent reality.

19. Ibid., p. 222.
in the sense in which the object is real. As features or aspects of the objects these two entities exist as independently real and when they are specifically responded to by the nervous system they become the content of consciousness. And for their reality as contents they "strictly depend on the physical organism ... or the nervous system". A conscious cross-section is defined by the specific response of the nervous system and the several entities which belong to it constitute a new relational whole. Also by virtue of such relation they are called conscious contents. But there are several components of conscious manifold which become the independent entities without this specific relation. They are strictly independent in the sense that neither the elements nor their combination are made by the mind.

Now, when Holt asserts the independent being of a sensation or of a perception, the question arises what does he mean by independent being? We know, for him, reality is neither material nor mental in character. It is neutral in the sense that the entities which compose the universe are in reality neither mental nor material. When they are specifically responded to by the nervous system, a cross-section is defined which is consciousness. Now the entities

20. Ibid., p. 208.
which are within the conscious cross-section become the members in a new manifold, still they are integral parts of the universe which is neutral. Thus several components of conscious manifold, such as sensation and perception do not lose their original neutral character after being the members of a new manifold. Sensation and perception, hence, are regarded as contents of consciousness when they are within the psychic cross-section, yet retain their character as neutral. According to Holt, therefore, sensation and perception are independent neutral processes when they are not members of conscious cross-section. This theory may be regarded as an attempt at a universal application of the theory of external relation. All relations are thus external and consciousness being one kind of relation, in which certain objects are grouped in a specific way is also a kind of external relation. The objects grouped by the relation of consciousness do not lose their primitive character previously possessed by them.

R.B. Perry:

We have to examine now the theory of consciousness as formulated by R.B. Perry, another eminent neo-realist in America. His theory is substantially the same as Holt's theory. Perry maintains that with regard to the nature of mind there are two modes of investigation. In the first place, there is the introspection, which is used by the religious teachers
and human psychologists. In introspection, "the investigator generalises the nature of mind from an exclusive examination of his own".21 Secondly, there is the method of general observation which is used by historians, sociologists and comparative psychologists. "Mind lies in the open field of experience, having its own typical form and mode of action, but, so far as the knowledge of it is concerned, as generally accessible, as free to all comers, as the motions of stars or the civilization of cities".22 The two modes of investigation together afford us an adequate account of the whole mind.

According to Perry the most convenient method to have the knowledge of one's own mental content is introspection. For him, 'Introspection ... yields an identification and inventory of mental contents'.23 He maintains, suppose my mind to be an object of study. In order to collect my past experiences the method of introspection is convenient and fruitful. I have myself been keeping a record of all my experiences automatically and recover them at will by the method of recollection. This does not mean that facts can not be known unless remembered by me. It is true, that a record of the contents of mind is most suitably obtained by introspection. That is, to the observer himself, his mental content

22. Ibid., p. 273.
23. Ibid., p. 275.
is easily accessible. The individual mind is most conveniently acquainted with its own experiences, past and present. But this does not mean that the person knows the earth best or that he of the present day knows the twentieth century best. He is more or less familiar with his own mental content which does not mean that his knowledge is exclusive. "It means only that we are so situated as to enjoy certain inductive advantages."

If a man were to add up his property as he accumulated it, he would always be in a position to report promptly on the past and present amount thereof; but it would not be profitable to argue that property is, therefore, such as to be known only, or even best, by its owner". 24 Perry rightly maintains that, "It may easily be that while introspection is the best method of collecting cases of mental content, it is the poorest method of defining their nature". 25

If we attempt to discover the generic character of the mental contents revealed by introspection we find that when these contents are considered distributively they do not reveal any intrinsic mental character. The quality 'blue' which introspection reveals as one's mental content is the same identical quality, which belongs to the book before me. For Perry, "......... the elements of the introspective manifold are in themselves neither peculiarly mental nor

24. Ibid., p. 276 (author's italics)
25. Ibid., pp. 276-277.
peculiarly mine; they are neutral and interchangeable." 26 It is only with respect to their groupings and inter-relations that the elements of mental content exhibit any peculiarity. The contents of mind when grouped together coincide with the contents of nature. It is not the whole of nature or of a given body but only the fragments that are taken to be the content of any mind or perceiver. Perry observes, "... the particular abstract that is in my mind does not exactly coincide with the particular abstract that is in my neighbour's mind". 27 But this does not signify any dualism of content and thing or any subjectivity or privacy of the mental contents. Firstly, a thing transcends its representation (as the representation is only a fragment of the thing) but it does not transcend its knowledge. As he says* .... the thing thought about, and the thought are both experienced. The thing transcends the thought, but it remains perceivable, or in some such manner immediately accessible*. 28 Secondly according to Perry, "the notion of privacy of mental contents rests mainly upon the fallacy of 'exclusive particularity'! He argues that my idea is exclusively mine in the sense that my idea cannot be alienated from my mind without contradiction. But this does not

26. Ibid., p. 277 (author's italics)
27. Ibid., p. 277
28. Ibid., p. 312.
29. Ibid., p. 286
mean that my idea may not be also other's idea. For example my friend is veritably mine, but may also be of other's at the same time without logical contradiction. In this connection Perry himself presses a vital point that a thing can be the object of my idea as well as of other's, but my idea itself cannot be of others. The fact that the ideas are always included within some mind and thereby excluded from what is altogether not that mind, contributes no evidence for the absolute privacy of mind. Minds are intersecting rather than exclusive systems, so it cannot be held that mental contents are the exclusive possession of someone and so these are far from being known by any other mind.30

The various elements of mind when taken distributively coincide with the parts of nature and they acquire the status of mental content in so far as they enter into the mind. Thus they thereby possess a peculiar inter-relation among them which constitutes their intrinsic mental character. Now in this connection one point should be noted that how the several parts of nature become contents of mind. What is the nature of this "form of connection" which transforms the fragments of nature into the contents of mind? How do we explain the relation which defines the nature of mental content? Perry holds that my mental contents

are the passive objects of my active perceiving, thinking or willing. The action of mind is not itself the content but is the unifying correlate of all contents. As Perry observes, "The defining relation of mind is a kind of action, and it will not be found amidst the content which it defines." 31 In this respect it should be remembered that the action of mind cannot be in any way introspectively accessible.

It is argued that, it is the activity of the self or spiritual activity which the idealists postulate to explain the mental contents. If introspection is admitted then there may be no such mental activity revealed in the immediate self-intuition. To admit that the mental activity is revealed in intuition is an instance of the fallacy of pseudo-simplicity. As regards Hume's contention the so-called mental activity is not really simple act but a complex one, resolvable into a manifold and nexus of contents. Now, "When the so-called experience of mental activity is .... analyzed, no activity-element is found". 32 Hence the question arises if the defining relation of mind is not some mental activity, is it the feeling of bodily activity as maintained by William James? According to him, introspective analysis does not reveal any characteristic mental process, rather it reveals the feeling of some bodily process, ".... for the most

31. Ibid., pp. 279-280.
32. Ibid., p. 280.
part taking place within the head". 33 But the concept of the feeling of bodily action does not solve the problem of a unifying principle, as the feeling of activity belongs to the content of mind, and so it cannot be the activity by virtue of which things become such a content. We should rather define the mental activity in terms of bodily activity itself, instead of defining it in terms of the feeling of the bodily activity. "A sound listened to' or 'heard', is, by virtue of that action, mental content. Several sounds listened to or heard jointly compose a mental unity". 34 Listening and hearing are the processes of the nervous system or the operations of the living organism which lie in the field of general observation. 35 So these are hardly able to give any account of the introspective knowledge.

Therefore, "...... mental action is a property of the physical organism". 36 The action of the nervous system is the function of the organism and like the organism it exhibits the control of interest. The content of mind is that portion of the environment which is taken account of by the organism in serving its interests. Mind is neither

34. Ibid., p. 285
35. Cf. Ibid., p. 285
36. Ibid., p. 298
behaviour; nor conduct, but it is behaviour with conduct together with the objects. The surrounding environment is pre-existent and independent of consciousness. The actual objects are selected from a manifold of possibilities in accordance with the necessities of life. Hence, "... a mind is a complex so organised as to act désideratively or interestedly .... that character which distinguishes the living organism, .... The natural mind, ... is thus an organization possessing ... interest, nervous system, and contents ... when these factors are united, they compose a whole mind".37

37. Ibid., pp. 303-305.
British neo-realism:

So far we have discussed that the American neo-realists obliterate the distinction between the subjective and the objective and come very close to the behaviourists. They consider mind as purely objective something. British neo-realistic views differ from their's to a great extent. According to British neo-realism, mind is purely subjective and cannot be open to general observation. It is not the cross-section defined by the search-light of response, as conceived by E.B. Holt, the American neo-realist. Rather it is the search-light itself in some sense, and not out there in the world. Here we have attempted to discuss some of the views of British neo-realists.

S. Alexander:

As regards the building up of a comprehensive system S. Alexander occupies a unique position amongst modern neo-realistic thinkers. According to him "enjoyment" and "contemplation" are the fundamental aspects of any conscious experience and he also draws a distinction between the two. Thus his conception differs from the objectivistic conception of mind, offered by the American neo-realists. Mind does not hold any privileged position in the scheme of things. On the other hand, mind is on the same level as other finite things.
and as mind is the highest empirical quality that we know, the difference lies in the measure of perfection it has attained. Mind is experienced by us in a significant way. This peculiar mode of experience differentiate it from other finite existents. The different modes of experience are expressed by the terms 'enjoyment' and 'contemplation'. Mind is activity or 'enjoyment' and this activity is experienced by us with other existents. In our experience, there is a relation of compresence by which the distinct existences, the act of mind and the objects are related. These two terms can be also expressed differently. "The one is experienced, that is, is present in the experience as the act of experiencing, the other as that which is experienced." In our experience, in contemplating an object mind enjoys itself. Thus the object contemplated is non-mental while the enjoyed experience is mental.

An act of mind or enjoyment cannot be found as a single existent as a present mental state is continuously united with other mental acts. Each mental act as well as each moment of mind is continuous with the preceding, remembered moments and with the expected one. Here we are not conscious of the mental act but of a mind to which the act belongs which is enjoyed synthesis of many mental acts.

"A mind is the substantial continuum of certain processes which have the conscious quality". 39

The thing in the same way is the synthesis of its appearances which are contemplated by the mind. This synthesis of appearances is not the workings of mind rather it is objective and belongs to the things themselves. In our conscious experience, the mind is compresent with the selection of things, that is, its partial appearances though from this partial contemplation we are aware of the other appearances connected with it.

According to Alexander all objects of knowledge are non-mental and thus independent of mind. Mind is an activity or enjoyment and it can never be converted into a non-mental object. Mind enjoys itself but contemplates the non-mental object. Contemplation is possible in cases of lower order of existence. It is not possible for mind to contemplate its own passing states from outside. Mind, on the contrary can only be enjoyed from within. In this connection it should be noted, that it will be a mistake if we think that introspection can give us the knowledge of our mind by making it an object of contemplation. As he observes, "I do not in introspection turn my mind upon itself and convert a part of myself into

an object. I do but report more distinctly my condition of enjoyment." 40

It does not give us any knowledge of sense, percepts, or images but can make possible the experiences of mental acts, such as sensing, perceiving, and imagining. Introspection is to be distinguished from enjoyment in the sense that it is also an enjoyment but makes us better aware of mental act than is possible in ordinary enjoyment. 41

Hence one question may arise that if we cannot reduce mind or self to an object then how is self-knowledge or self-consciousness possible? Here we should note that Alexander's notion of self-consciousness differs from our ordinary notion of it. As we have already seen Alexander accepts two modes of knowledge — knowledge by contemplation and knowledge by enjoyment. He also points out in both cases of knowledge there is the term "of" which indicates the knowledge-relation, yet in different senses. In cases of contemplation or knowledge of object, the 'of' means reference to the 'other' or not self and in cases of enjoyment or knowledge of self, 'of' means 'apposition'. According to Alexander, "My self-knowledge is knowledge consisting in myself". 42 Thus self-knowledge is knowledge itself. Consciousness and consciousness of consciousness are identical. There is no question

40. Ibid., Vol.II, p. 89.
41. Cf. Ibid., Vol.I, p. 19
of consciousness of consciousness because consciousness itself is self-consciousness. According to him, if we accept consciousness of consciousness then it leads to an infinite regress as there will be no stopping place. Again if consciousness is to be taken as an object of knowledge in the form of presentation, it cannot be differentiated from other sensible objects and consequently losses its essential character as an activity or a process. Consciousness cannot be the object of my knowledge, but I can be simply aware of or conscious of an external, non-mental object. External things being the object of our knowledge are non-mental and are related to consciousness. But consciousness can never be related to consciousness. It can be object of knowing, not to another consciousness but to a being who belongs to higher order of existence. The lower order of beings can be the objects of knowledge to the higher order of beings. As Life and Matter, according to Alexander belong to the lower order of being they can be objects of knowledge to consciousness. But as consciousness is not a physical thing it can never be the object of knowledge. The only way in which we can be conscious of ourselves is by enjoyment. In enjoyment mind is not divided into two parts — one as constituting the object and the other as the knower. It is the immediate apprehension of the mental act or consciousness in the act of contemplating

a non-mental reality. Alexander thus identifies self-consciousness with consciousness. For him the two elements of any conscious experience, namely, the act and the object are not interchangeable. Consciousness being the mental act can never be converted into the non-mental object. He adds also that in contemplating a non-mental object we are not enjoying a simple mental act but an act as my mental act or as the activity of myself. In this connection, criticising Holt's 'cross-section' theory Alexander declares that no conscious experience is possible without the unique reference to the self. Thus knowing and knowing that I know are one and the same thing. 45

From above analysis it becomes clear that a mental act is enjoyed and cannot be the object of contemplative knowledge. Self-knowledge or self-consciousness is the same as enjoyment. It is easy to understand the conception of enjoyment when it applies to the present mental state. But difficulty may arise in case of apprehension of past mental states. In this respect Alexander differs from the usual conception that a remembered mental state is retrospected as an object. He points out the circumstances and events which we apprehend as external objects must be connected with a mental state, and have the character of pastness about them. But the mental state itself being a present event is enjoyed in the same

sense as a present mental act. He observes, "our mental state in retrospection is no more an object to us than it was in actual experience ..... The remembered state is a present state, just as much as the actually enjoyed state". In this connection the memory of one's own self is to be contrasted with the memory of a past event. In the memory of a past event two elements are involved. In the first place there is memory of the event which is presented as a past object, and secondly, there is present mental act of apprehending which is not felt as past. But when I am remembering a past event happening to myself I become aware of it as the past object which can be clearly distinguished from those objects which are really present. But that which is present here, is my past self. "The memory of myself is a present action of myself, which, by its transitional tendency, renews the past condition". The memory of my past self is the extension backwards of myself and that extension has got the note which enables us to say that it is an extension backwards in time and not forwards. The self cannot be brought back it is, rather, the renewal of past experience. The object of the past event is brought back as past and cannot be renewed. According to Alexander my remembered self is the part of my present condition and contained within it.

46. B.N. Roy, Consciousness in Neo-realism, p. 84.
According to Alexander the conative side of our experience is the only thing which is mental, that is the mental activity is conation. The term 'act' does not signify any special form of activity of the mind, but it includes passive acts of sense as well as processes of volition. The term, conation is not used in its restricted sense, but it includes all the mental acts in its extended sense. If we try to understand the nature of cognition we find that it is not a separate kind of action from conation, also not a separate element in a mental act which can be distinguished from the conative element of the act. Cognition is nothing but a conation which is compositive with and refers to an object.

Consciousness, then, Alexander contends is identical with conation which is nothing but a mental activity. From this we can infer the nature of consciousness, that it occupies time and occurs in time and also has its direction which varies with the change of the physical object to which the activity is related. Consciousness, also has the different degrees of intensity with pleasure, pain and other emotional excitement. Though the direction of consciousness changes with the variation of the object, its complexity and nature, yet consciousness itself remains the same as a quality. Thus the quality does not change with the differences of its objects.

Alexander also draws a distinction between consciousness, and motor processes. The motor reactions are nothing but the sensa and physical processes of the body are distinguished from consciousness, though it can be said that consciousness finds its expression in such motor-reactions. They are part of the objects of mind but not the mind itself. Hence mind or consciousness is nothing but a system of efforts in various directions corresponding with the object which is non-mental.

So far we have discussed the nature of consciousness as conceived by Alexander. Defining it as a system of efforts in various directions and, therefore, as sensation, he refers to the dynamic character of consciousness which is related to an object, that must be non-mental in character. The object of mind is always non-mental, whether it is sensum, perceptum, idea or an image, and what is regarded as mental is the act of sensing, perceiving ideating or imagining.

Like American realists Alexander declares that knowledge is the relation between two elements, mental and non-mental and also it is immediate, that is, without mediation of any third entity. But their difference lies in the fact that American neo-realists are out and out objectivists. They do not recognise

anything as mental act and obliterate the distinction between
the act of sensing, perceiving and imagining with the object
sensed, perceived and imagined. Consequently they are reducing
the concept of consciousness or the mental act to the level of
objects. Such conception is expressed in E.B. Holt's "cross-
section" theory. Here Alexander emphasises the element of
mental act which must have to be present in all cognitive
experience and the one cannot be reduced to the other. Thus
Alexander does not accept the objective view of consciousness,
held by the American realists, as cross-section of the universe,
which annuls the distinction between the act of awareness and
the object of awareness. On the other hand, according to
Alexander consciousness is subjective and mental which can be
enjoyed only, while the percepts, images, sensa are the objects
of mind and are contemplated as the non-mental objects. He
maintains that it would be merely a confusion if we identified
mind or consciousness with the illumined cross-section of the
world. Consciousness is the search-light\(^{51}\) which illuminates
the objects of knowledge which are non-mental.

Thus we see that Alexander lays stress on the point of
his denial of subjective or mental character of sensa as main-
tained by the representative theory of cognition. Unlike repre-
sentationalists Alexander maintains that the sensa are

\(^{51}\) The American neo-realists declare consciousness as
'search-light' in the sense of physical organism, thus
differ from Alexander's use of the term. I have discussed
this point in the previous section.
the partial appearances of the various physical objects, besides this they have no separate existence. The various physical objects which are different in character are revealed to us by various attitudes of mind. Thus there are various ways in which the non-mental object exists in relation to the apprehending mind. 52 Alexander recognises the fact that if sense are regarded as mental existents, then we are led to subjectivism and shall be living in a world of hallucination as we cannot make a difference between veridical and illusory appearances. Alexander contends, therefore, that the sense are physical in the sense that they are the actual appearances of the physical things themselves.

Regarding the nature of images Alexander's view is to some extent different from that of the common-sense view. He upholds the view that imaging of an external physical thing is mental, but the image itself is non-mental in character. He openly calls it as physical. 53 By calling the images as physical he means that images possess all the qualities of physical object. The memory of my friend is a physical appearance of a mere complete physical thing, namely, my friend. He may not exist, yet it does not mean that his image has ceased to be physical. Images have the spatial properties and like other sensible appearances, they are sometimes too vivid. A memory image is not the representation or the picture of the object

but it is itself, the object which is past. In fancy, dream, and all other forms of constructive imagination we do not create anything which has no existence in the real world. Here the materials by which we construct, exist in the physical world, we only arrange the already existing real elements in a new combination. 54

Now we make an attempt to interpret the non-mental character of images in the light of perceptual experience. 55 He makes no difference between the perceptual experience and the imaginative experience. In both the cases reality is revealed to our mind, in one case it is the percept, in another case it is the image. The difference between them lies, only with regard to their degree and mode in which the reality is revealed to our mind. In perception we have the direct contact with reality and the reality stimulates our sense-organ in a certain manner and evokes a certain form of mental reaction, and we perceive the real. But there are cases when we are not directly confronted with the object. Here we have the image of the real and not the percept which occurs as a result of some brain-processes and similar mental action. The reality revealed to us in imagination is the same as it is revealed in perception. There is no difference between the two modes of experience as in both the cases the mind is compresent with the

54. Cf. Ibid., pp. 16 ff.
non-mental reality. The only difference lies in the fact that whereas in perception we have the direct connection with the reality, in imagination we are confronted with the reality indirectly, with its imagined form. Imagination, according to Alexander, grows out of perception. "The image and the percept are........ the same objects appearing in different forms. The one is physical in the same sense as the other. Hence the image of memory or imagination is tested or verified by reference to the percept." 56

According to Alexander's theory, knowledge by contemplation is nothing but "compresence" or togetherness which is the most universal of all relations between empirical existents whatsoever. He observes, "whenever a mental process exists in compresence with some existent of a lower order, it is aware of that existent which is its object. It experiences itself as an enjoyment, and it is compresent with its object which is contemplated." 57

So cognitive relation is not something that is unique, but it is the particular species of the general relation of compresence or togetherness which exists between any two objects existing in the 'Space-Time' world. But here one thing is to be noted that knowledge by contemplation is distinguished from the relation of mere compresence between two physical

objects, by the fact that in contemplation there is the term "mind" which performs the act of knowing. Hence in contemplating a non-mental object, we not only enjoy our own mental act, but at the same time enjoy the relation of compresence or togetherness of the mental act with the non-mental object.58

Thus for Alexander, knowing is the simple relation between mental act or consciousness and the non-mental reality. These two are totally distinct from one another and one cannot be reduced to the other. The non-mental object stimulates the mind in a certain way, and the mind reacts and apprehends the object as it is in accordance with the power of apprehension. As a neo-realist Alexander realises the mind-independent existence of the Spatio-temporal universe and also disregards mind as occupying a privileged position among all empirical existents. On the contrary the mind is a thing among other things and it belongs to the highest order of finite empirical existents, thus occupies the prerogative position in the scheme of things. In this respect some uniqueness attaches to it which is absent among other lower level existents. In fact the mind is derived from space-time, which according to Alexander is the matrix of all being. That is why the mind cannot be regarded as absolutely unique or sui-generis as we find that it has some empirical basis. In this connection this conception of mind is

is distinguished from the idealistic view, that mind is the supreme principle of all existents. Also according to idealistic system, there is one Absolute Mind, the highest reality, and the other existents as life, finite mind, matter are all its particular determinations. Idealists seek to interpret all other finite existents in the light of this assumption of highest reality. They assign supreme position to the mind, which differentiates idealism from realism. Unlike idealism realism does not recognise the fact of dependence of the object on the mind. Realism reduces the mind to the level of objects and asserts the independent reality of the Spatio-temporal universe. In comprehending reality we should start from the object and not from the mind. The method of philosophy should be empirical, not rational. Thus epistemology as a science independent of metaphysics which is recognised by the realists, leads to the denial of the idealistic postulation that being is dependent upon knowing, that reality is dependent upon consciousness. Almost all neo-realists deny the subjective aspect of experience and reduce everything to the level of objects. Alexander in his theory avoids the extreme radicalism of Americans, and introduces the subjective side of experience in the philosophical scheme.

The neo-realistic theory is not only an attack upon subjective idealism but also is opposed to the dualistic system of philosophy, of which cartesianism is one type. In
dualism the mind is conceived as a substance static in nature and is separated absolutely from the conscious processes. The American neo-realists, on the other hand, abolish the substance theory of mind and are going to accept the opposite extreme of reducing mind to a non-entity. They equate it with objects in their "cross-section" theory. They have denied the substance theory of mind as well as theory of mind as an activity or process. According to them experience does not give us any ground for belief in the existence of the mental act as distinct from the awareness of our bodily action. In this connection they resemble William James who also failed to recognise the distinction between mental action and the bodily action.

The American neo-realists do not recognise any other form of activity than physical response and necessarily interpret knowledge as a physical affair - a transaction between the physical organism and the external environment. And as we have emphasised that in such transaction one of the terms must be mental in character, without which knowledge relation can hardly be explained.

So far we have seen that Alexander, with the American realists rejects the substance theory of mind as conceived by the older thinkers, but unlike the American realists he maintains the notion of psychical acts as distinct from the physical acts. He admits the facts that the neural or bodily acts are not only
continuous with the mental acts but are also identical with them. 59

The same neural action when it is viewed from outside, from the point of view of physiologist, is neural, and, therefore physical; and when it is enjoyed or viewed from within, it is the mental action. So the same act when it is contemplated as an object is neural and non-mental in character. Alexander recognises the character of consciousness as essentially mental.

Alexander's view is similar to the American realists in so far as he accepts the direct and immediate character of perceptual consciousness. But unlike them he also admits the distinction between mental act or awareness and the object of awareness. This recognition of the distinction between subjective and objective elements of a conscious experience seems to be an improvement upon the views of extreme neo-realists in America. All the British neo-realists except B. Russell admit the existence of a mental act.

Thus, for Alexander mind is a continuum of mental acts. But being a rigorous empiricist he overlooks in the mind anything which lies beyond the reach of experience. The mental act or consciousness is revealed in an enjoyed experience and the mind is conceived by him as a system of such

enjoyments or psychical acts. As an empiricist the account of mind which he offers may be empirical but the question may arise whether it gives us a satisfactory explanation of the nature of mind. We may not admit mind as merely a system of conscious acts unless we ignore the difficulties arising in the theory of Hume. Hume rejected Berkeleyan conception of the self as a spiritual substance. We can hardly accept the conception of a bare mental act apart from the conception of an agent. It is true, that the self is inclusive of our conscious life without which it has no existence. But at the same time we have to conceive the self as transcending the series of conscious experiences and make a distinction between the act and the agent or the self as the source of all the activity. But from this it should not be inferred that we are subscribing to the substance view of self or that we regard it as a transcendental entity beyond all human apprehension. The self is dynamic, it changes, grows and develops and yet it retains its identity. It is continuous yet it is a unity pervading its manifold changing experiences. Here we can refer to Kant's view of the "noumenal self" by which he means the Transcendental self which lies behind and beyond all mental phenomena - an abstract principle of unity which is unknown and unknowable. According to him understanding always seeks to interpret things by means of categories or concepts but the nature of self can never be apprehended
by means of conceptual understanding. He refers to this unifying function of the self as the synthetic unity of apperception. And therefore concludes that the self is unknowable in the sense that it lies beyond the scope of conceptual understanding.

Alexander wrongly identifies self with mental acts. He does not differentiate between consciousness and self-consciousness, between self and its acts. The self as he conceives it consists in the acts of consciousness, and the consciousness of self is the knowledge itself. Here it may be commented that the usual sense of the expression self-consciousness is being degraded to the level of mere consciousness, rather than that all consciousness, is elevated up to self-consciousness. If it were the case then we could say that there is at least some form of conscious experience without an accompanying act of self-consciousness. Mere consciousness can hardly take the place of self-consciousness. We can remember, in this connection Kant's conception of 'I think' or the unity of self-consciousness as accompanying all conscious determinations. Anything which enters into our experience has the essential reference to the self. Now it seems doubtful, whether mere enjoyment of a mental act can constitute a knowledge unless this enjoyment also be the self-conscious enjoyment. Alexander maintains, like contemplation enjoyment also can be regarded as a mode of knowledge; yet a bare enjoyment apart from
accompanying self-consciousness can hardly be called a valid mode of knowledge. Self-consciousness involved in the enjoyment may not be always explicit, but it must be there in an implicit form. Considering all these, it becomes quite impossible to accept Alexander's identification of consciousness with self-consciousness and self as the series of conscious acts.

We have seen that Alexander reduces mind to mental or psychical acts and all other entities, such as image, thoughts etc. to the level of non-mental objects. Representationalists hold sense and percepts are psychical existents distinct from the real. Whereas, according to Alexander there is real presentationism in both sensation and perception. But whether in imaginative experience presentationism can be maintained with certainty, and whether the images as objects of the acts of imagination are non-mental in character, are disputed questions.

Considering Alexander's theory we have to take into account the physical character of images. Mind is essentially an activity or process of enjoyment and images being its content which are to be contemplated can never be a part of mental process and therefore are non-mental. Here he overlooks the difference which lies between sense and images. Images appear to us as essentially psychical, mental or subjective and are within our volitional control. Whereas
sensa seem to be non-mental and objective. It can be pointed out that Alexander's distinction between enjoyment and contemplation seems to be too rigid. And as a result of this contention Alexander conceives character of images as non-mental, which seems to be quite absurd. While we are admitting mind as activity, it is natural to regard at the same time, the results or the products of such activity as something mental. In constructive imagination, the elements of construction are drawn from the physical world, yet the mode or the way in which they are arranged is far from being mental. The images in artistic creation are the products of constructive imagination, here the inseparability from mind can hardly be questioned.

The notion of compresence as conceived by Alexander does not adequately describe the conscious situation. 'Compresence' is a universal relation which takes place between two empirical objects. As compresence the relation between the chair and the floor does not really differ from the relation between the mental act or consciousness and the non-mental object. The distinction is that whereas in the former both the terms of relation are physical entities, in the latter at least one term is mental. In our cognitive situation the relation of compresence gives merely a description of the features, but cannot reveal its essential nature. It explains nothing but the togetherness of the mental fact with the non-mental object and does
not explain its essential nature. Thus we see that Alexander lays an undue stress upon the relation of compresence when he describes the cognitive situation.

Further it should be noted that in Alexander's theory the act of consciousness in relation to the non-mental object is always selective. The mental act is appropriate to the non-mental object with which it is compresent and its function consists in selecting the features of the non-mental object to which it responds. There is hardly any case of exception so far as the cognitive relation is concerned. In sensation, perception and in memory-knowledge this selective character of mental act is prominent yet it cannot be accounted for in all forms of consciousness. As it cannot hold good in constructive thinking though the processes in constructive thinking are based upon and emerge out of perception. In constructive thinking there is absence of the fact of Spatio-Temporal compresence with the non-mental object, and this independence imparts to our thinking process an unlimited field for construction. Thus the selective character of mental acts is absent in some forms of consciousness, such as thinking.
Bertrand Russell:

Bertrand Russell is an eminent representative thinker of British neo-realism and his contribution to the problem of consciousness is considerable and of vital importance. The problem of mind and consciousness finds a prominent place in the writings of neo-realists though they are not unanimous as regards the nature of it. There is conspicuous difference which is more pronounced between the British and the American neo-realists on this subject.

The best course to deal with Russell's theory of consciousness seems to be to consider it in relation to Alexander's theory. The fundamental point of difference between the two theories lies in the fact that whereas Alexander insists on the element of mental act and non-mental object and rejects the notion of third something in the form of content, Russell rejects the conception of mental act and accepts only the content and object in our conscious experiences. This conception brings Russell close to the American neo-realists' conception of consciousness, in so far as the abandonment of the mental act is concerned. But in his acceptance of content element in conscious situation the important difference which lies between them can be found out.

In his rejection of mental act Russell is chiefly influenced by the views of William James on the one hand,
and the American realists and behaviourists (like J.B.Watson) on the other. 60 He at first discusses the ordinary conception of consciousness which makes a distinction between the three elements - acts, content and object as described by Meinong. Russell tries to explain this distinction with a concrete example. For example, when we are thinking of St. Paul's. Here according to Meinong's analysis, we have first the act of thinking which would be the same whatever the object of thinking might be. Then there is the content, the character of this thought as contrasted with the other thoughts. And lastly, there is the object of this thought, that is the St. Paul's Cathedral. Hence for Meinong, Russell says, these three elements are necessary to constitute the one single event. 61

Russell does not accept the above analysis, though he thinks that it is very useful in affording a schema in terms of which other theories can be described. He declares, "Empirically, I cannot discover anything corresponding to the supposed act; and theoretically I cannot see that it is indispensable." 62 He says our thoughts are usually expressed in the form "I think so and so, and this 'I' always refers to the act of that person. It can be held that thoughts can

61. Cf. Ibid., p. 17
not alone come and go, but need a person to think them. Consequently, thoughts are collected into bundles and one bundle is 'this man's thought', and the other is "that man's thought". Russell thinks that the grammatical form such as, 'I think', 'you think', 'John thinks' are misleading and it would be better to say, 'there is a thought in me', 'there is a thought in you'. The previous grammatical forms of expression have helped to admit the superstition that in every conscious experience there is an active agent. There is neither empirical nor logical justification for the conception of an act. So it is better to banish this mode of expression from the domain of philosophy. Here we find a close similarity with W. James' way of thinking. The latter also denied the conception of 'I' or the thinking self and his mode of expression is 'it is thought which thinks in me'. Thus Russell seems to be considerably influenced by him.

Russell, thus accepts the notion of the content and the object, rejecting the notion of 'act'. According to him some of the neo-realists suppress the content element and maintain that the thought contains either an act and object (eg. Alexander) or an object alone (eg. the American neo-realists). He admits that those who retain the 'act' feel no difficulty in explaining the remembering of a past event. In the act of remembering there is an essential
relationship established between the present act with the past event with which it is necessarily connected. But a difficulty arises to a realist who accepts only the object and denies both the 'act' and the 'content'. Though the act theory solves, according to Russell, the problem involved in memory-knowledge, yet he cannot accept it. He has to admit the content element at least, so far as the explanation of memory and thought is concerned and his theory of memory is more akin to idealism than to realism, because the latter as a rule suppresses the content. In his expression, "I have been in the past a realist as regards sensation, but not as regards memory or thought". With regard to sensation Russell finds it necessary to retain the object, and in the case of memory and thought only, there is need for the retention of both content and object.

Russell does not believe that the relation to object constitutes an ultimate or irreducible characteristic of mental phenomena as held by the idealists or some neo-realisists like, S. Alexander. Here he is convinced of the untenability of his earlier view when he admits the objective reference to be the essential character of all mental phenomena except pleasure and pain. He thinks that the relation of thought to object is not simple and direct, it is rather indirect and derivative involving certain beliefs, i.e. what constitutes

63. Ibid., p.20.
the thought is connected with various elements which together make up the object. 64 Take for example when we try to think of a well known town which we had occasion to visit some time ago. Now we recall the images of buildings, streets, temples, trees and various other things with which we were previously acquainted. It is believed that if we again visit the same town we would see the same things, as we saw in the past and these present thought-images are connected with our past experiences of the actual things themselves and refer to them. But these things to which our present thoughts refer are not merely some thoughts of us but they stand in relation to our present thought and we are aware of it. The awareness of this relation is a further thought and constitutes our feeling that the original thought had an object. Hence it is held that the relation of our thought to a remembered object is not a simple and direct relation but is mediated by other acts of awareness and also a feeling of belief. 65 Russell in this connection holds that in pure imagination we have thoughts without these accompanying beliefs. In these cases our thoughts do not have objects and we have content

64. Cf. Ibid., p. 18.

65. Later, we shall find Russell regards belief as a feeling and also as a mode of activity. And although he rejects act in thinking, yet he has to admit act in believing.
without the object. But in the case of sensations it will be less misleading if we say that here we have the object only and not the content. But in memory both the object and the content are necessary. Hence it is difficult to say that our thought always refers to the objects, since content and object can hardly be regarded as the characteristic of all forms of consciousness.

It is supposed, according to Russell, consciousness does not constitute the essential feature of mental phenomena. To him, it is not a simple, rather a complex quality which is far from being a universal characteristic of mind. For this view Russell gives here two reasons. Considering behaviouristic psychology he feels it necessary to accept the position that something analogous to knowing and desire exists among the lower animals, though knowing and desire can hardly be brought under the name consciousness. Again it can be maintained that animals also possess minds and in the evolutionary development there is no serious gap between man and amoeba. Russell believes, that the lower animals possess minds in the same sense in which the human beings are endowed with them. Considering all these we can say that consciousness is not the essence of mind. Secondly, by some researches of Sigmund Freud

it has been pointed out that there are unconscious contents of mental life, i.e., there may be regions of mind unexplored by consciousness. Russell concludes, then, that there may be minds where consciousness is inoperative, which leads to the further conclusion that mind is only a matter of degree. 67

Consciousness, then, is a complex quality, consisting of elements such as images, meaning, belief, and an objective reference. To define the nature of consciousness, Russell analyses its various modes, such as, sensation, perception, imagination and thought.

Sensation- As regards sensation Russell holds, "sensation is the sort of thing of which we may be conscious, but not a thing of which we must be conscious". 68 Again, "sensation itself is not an instance of consciousness, though the immediate memory by which it is apt to be succeeded is so". 69 This is why, he maintains that it is neither mental, nor material but neutral in character. Sensation, when it is an object of consciousness assumes the role of an image which is the copy of the original sensation. The mere existence of the image does not, however,

67. Cf. ibid., p. 393.
68. Ibid., p. 288.(author's italics)
69. Ibid., p. 292.
constitute consciousness of the sensation. There is an accompanying belief along with the existence of image which makes us feel that the image is a sign of something other than itself and refers to the original sensation. This belief constitutes the objective reference, past or present. An image together with the belief constitutes the consciousness of the prototype of the image. The consciousness of sensation must be expressed in the words, 'this occurred' and not in such way as 'I am aware of this occurrence', because there is no act here in such apprehension. The content is the image which is believed, the object is the original sensation to which the content refers. 70

Perception- According to Russell "a judgement of perception, we may say, consists of a core of sensation, together with associated images, with belief in the present existence of an object to which sensations and images are referred in a way which is difficult to analyse." 71 In perceptual consciousness belief refers not so much to any present existence but it is of the nature of expectation. For example, when we perceive an object we expect some sensations to result if we proceed to touch it. "Perception, then, will consist of a present sensation together with expectations of future sensations." 72 Such type of

71. Ibid., p. 289.
72. Ibid., p. 290.
expectations are liable to be erroneous because they are based on correlations which are usual but not invariable. For example, when we attempt to touch the reflection in the mirror under the impression that it is 'real' though it is not something real. Similar difficulty arises in the case of consciousness of past objects since memory is fallible. For Russell, "It would seem odd to say that we can be 'conscious' of a thing which does not or did not exist. The only way to avoid this awkwardness is to add to our definition the previso that the beliefs involved in consciousness must be true." 73

Imagination - Sensations are distinguished from images not because the sensations possess the character of vividness which imagination does not possess, but because they are different on account of their causal laws. Sensations are governed by physical laws, which are external to them, on the other hand images are governed by mnemonic laws, i.e., habit and past experiences. Sensations are neutral whereas images are private and mental. Besides these there is no basic difference as to the nature of ultimate stuff because images are nothing but the copies of sensation.

The question arises then, can there be any consciousness of images? Russell distinguishes the consciousness of images.

73. Ibid., p. 230 (author's italics)
from the consciousness of sensation through images. In consciousness of image we have image of images distinct from images of sensation which we have in consciousness of sensation. But is consciousness of image in this sense possible? Russell admits that there is only one way by which the possibility could be explained. Meaning is defined by him by means of association. A word or an image means an object when it has the same association as the object, though this definition is not universally applicable. There may be a case when an image has certain associations which its prototype does not possess, but which another image of the same prototype may possess. In such a case an image means an image instead of meaning its prototype. As for example an image A may be connected with another similar image B (both the images having the same prototype) by certain associations, but not with its prototype or with other images of the same prototype. That is, in thinking of the image A we may be led on to the image B only because these two images are connected by some associations but not with its prototype or other images of the same prototype. 74 In this way we are conscious of images and such consciousness can be differentiated from the consciousness of sensation.

From these considerations it is clear that there is no such thing as the stuff of consciousness. It is neither a

74. Cf. Ibid., pp. 290-91.
simple quality, nor does it constitute the essence of mind. It is a complex something composed of habits, past experiences, images, beliefs, etc. instead of being fundamental or unique or something unanalysable. Here we can compare Russell’s view with that of Alexander. According to Alexander it is something unique, its character can be revealed only through a special mode of apprehension called, 'enjoyment', which is beyond any description and analysis. Unlike Russell he regards consciousness as the essence of mind. For him, where there is enjoyment or consciousness there is mind. 75

In Russell’s theory of consciousness certain peculiarities arise regarding the problem of belief. His theory of belief contradicts his view that there is no such thing as mental act. According to him, believing seems the most "mental" thing we do, the thing most remote from what is done by mere matter". 76 The analysis of belief, for him, reveals three things - believing or the act, what is believed or the content and the object. He further argues that, "the objections to the act (in the case of presentations) are not valid against the believing in the case of beliefs, because the believing is an actual experienced feeling, not something postulated, like the act." 77 There is distinction between believing and what is believed. Bare assent, memory and expectations are the three different kinds of

77. Ibid., p. 233.
belief which are different from what is believed, and each has a constant character which is independent of what is believed.

Russell holds that beliefs are characterised by truth and falsehood just as words are characterised by meaning. It is the 'fact' which makes a belief true or false. This fact is called by Russell as the objective and the relation of the belief to its objective is the objective reference of the belief. Further both the believing and what is believed are the present occurrences of the believer, whatever may be the object of the belief. The object may be the events of the past since the event is not occurring now but the believing is. 78

Regarding memory Russell maintains that memory involves images but it cannot be explained by the images only. The images of memory are accompanied firstly by the feelings of familiarity and then by the feelings of pastness. "The first lead us to trust our memories, the second to assign places to them in the time-order." 79

Besides familiarity feeling and the feeling of pastness, memory also involves belief. The images which are

accompanied by belief feeling may be expressed in words, 'this occurred'. The mere occurrences of images without this feeling of belief constitute imagination. There are three kinds of belief-feeling, the memory-feeling is one, and the other two are the expectation and bare assent.

We may point out some inconsistencies in Russell's analysis of mental act. Regarding the notion of mental act he points out firstly there is no act involved in thinking, such an act is neither observable, nor deducible from what is observed and is, therefore mythical. Secondly, for him in belief there is an immediately observable and not merely postulated quasi-act which on analysis turns out to be a sort of feeling, a belief-feeling or believing. Again thirdly beliefs are constituent elements of all cognitive experiences. For according to Russell, "The whole intellectual life consists of beliefs ......." These three propositions regarded in relation with each other would be contradictory. Because it seems clear that it is maintained that there is no act involved in thinking, at the same time there is an act involved in it. For beliefs are involved in all cognitive processes, and in the case of beliefs, 'believing' as something separable from the content is observably present. In spite of all these an act of thinking should be banished as a gratuitous assumption.

80. Ibid., p. 231.
If we inquire we find that the main contradiction lies in the very method of approach. According to Russell mind is not a system of experience rather it is an aggregate of various types of mental phenomena. Viewing mind in such a way and reducing those mental phenomena to as few basal types as possible he seems to think that each of these elements separated from each other can be adequately described. But we find that this differentiation will not be a hard and fast one. Russell himself also was unable to keep them in absolute isolation from each other. In actual field the different mental phenomena are found inter-penetrated. Thinking and believing may be treated as discrete entities yet we find that thinking is a way of believing and again believing is a way of thinking. So these various mental processes merge into each other. Mind is essentially a system and its several experiences are so intertwined that they can hardly be separately described.

Russell considers mental action as neither empirically discoverable nor theoretically justifiable. Now the question arises, what does he mean by the term empirically discoverable. If by this term he means that the act of thinking must be given as an object, as in sensuous experience, then certainly he would be right in his point, because the act of thinking can not be known in such a way. But mental action can also be known by a special mode of apprehension. This we find in

82. Cf. Ibid., p. 116.
Alexander's distinction between 'enjoyment' and 'contemplation'. Mental action may not be contemplated as an object but may be given in enjoyment or in a sort of immediate experience different from the experience which involves duality of subject and object. If the term 'empirical' used by Russell is not to be taken in a narrow sense implying only sensuous experience then there is no reason why we should deny the knowability of mental action. 83

Russell also does not feel any theoretical necessity to retain mental acts. But he finds it difficult to explain memory-images without these acts. The distinction between the act and the object, the awareness and the object of awareness which is vital to all conscious experiences has been rejected by Russell. 84 It would appear that mere content and the object together with the elements of belief-feeling are hardly sufficient to explain the nature of a conscious experience. For example, looking at a tree from a distance we observe the shape and size of the tree, the colour of its leaves and these impressions constitute the sensations of the tree. But perception is not merely an aggregate of sensations. The actual sensations of the tree are inter-penetrated by memories of past experiences and then we have to transcend the present sensational data and expect

future sensations. There is also an accompanying belief which assures us that the sensational data mean a real object. But above all, the most important factor for the recognition of the tree is the belief-feeling that there is a real tree which is being perceived.

This belief-feeling must be an act of mind, it is not belief merely, but believing which enables us to refer the content to the object. But the mere act of believing as such cannot make possible the recognition of the tree. It must be the act of some person and must have an essential reference to the self. Otherwise there is no meaning in saying that the tree is perceived. Again according to Russell perception of a tree is expressed as 'the perception of a tree has occurred' and not that 'I perceive the tree'. But this explanation can hardly be a true explanation because bare occurrence without an observer to observe can hardly constitute a perception. Thus there is an act and also subject of that act without which no conscious experience is possible.

Further, Russell is right in denying content in the case of sensation, but he is wrong in making it purely objective. Sensations cannot be explained as a mode of consciousness, unless the duality of the act of sensing and the object sensed is recognised. As a mode of consciousness

it is identical with the act of sensing and arises as a result of the response of the living organism to certain aspects of the objective environment.\(^6\)

In Russell's analysis of mental phenomena belief plays the most important part. But he is quite inconsistent in his account of its nature. He often regards it as a kind of sensation, and sometimes as a feeling which is inconsistent with his conception of it as an act. If it is an act how can we regard it as a "complex phenomenon consisting of sensations and images variously interrelated"?\(^7\) Thus we see that the whole treatment of belief is inadequate. We do not know whether it is mental, physical or neutral. If it is a sensation it cannot be called mental. But he calls it as mental when he says, "believing seems the most "mental" thing we do ......."\(^8\)

From the account we have given of Russell's theory of consciousness it seems clear that it cannot be considered as an improvement upon that of Alexander. Greatly influenced by the American neo-realists he has rejected the notion of mental acts. For him it consists simply of content and object and many other ingredients such as, images, meaning, belief enter. Consciousness, therefore, is a complex built-up out of these mental particulars and cannot be regarded as fundamental or essential to mind.

---

\(^6\) Cf. Ibid., p. 118.
\(^7\) B. Russell, The Analysis of Mind, p. 300.
\(^8\) Ibid., p. 231.
It seems clear from our discussions in the previous sections that neo-realism originated largely as a protest against idealism and the different forms of substance philosophy and was mainly critical in its result. Now it has developed into a constructive philosophical system having some distinctive contribution to the problem of knowledge and reality. Neo-realists generally restrict their enquiry to the solutions of certain specific philosophical problems and do not attempt system-making.

Neo-realists are primarily concerned with the vital defects of traditional dualism as formulated by Descartes and some form of idealism as formulated by Berkeley. Consciousness is regarded by both the dualist and the idealist as a simple substance which is further unanalyzable. Against such a view, the neo-realists urge that mind and matter are not any simple substance or primordial stuff from which other existents are derived. They here introduce the method of analysis and discover the fact that the difference between mind and matter is not one of substance or of stuff, but is one of relation and organization. Reality in its ultimate nature is neither mind, nor matter, but some kind of neutral entity. The theory of neutral entities distinguishes neo-realism from dualism on the one hand and idealism and materialism on the other. Neutralism assumes a variety of forms and accordingly it is either monistic or pluralistic. Among the neo-realists,
Alexander's position may be described as neutral monism whereas that of the American neo-realists and B. Russell as pluralistic neutralism.

Neo-realism has rendered another valuable service to philosophy by exposing the weakness of the conception of mental substance which vitiated idealism. In the systems of Descartes and Locke mind is conceived as a substance permanent and immutable amidst its diverse changing conscious states and processes. In our immediate experience, we are aware only of the continuous flux of conscious processes, but the knowledge of the soul which is their permanent background remains almost beyond the range of possibility. This soul-substance theory is finally discarded by Hume. For him, nothing can be regarded as real which is not sensibly given. Later we find in Kant, this conception of soul in the form of a metaphysical subject. This conception of transcendental metaphysical subject was developed by Post-Kantian thinkers until it reached its culmination in Hegelian conception of the Absolute. William James in his article, entitled "Does consciousness Exist?" emphatically denies the existence of any such reality as soul-substance of the older metaphysicians. Against this conception he formulated his doctrine of Pure Experience. For him mind and matter are different patterns or arrangements into which the portions of Pure Experience enter. He not only denies the existence of mental substance but denies mental action as well, and identifies it with bodily action.
The American neo-realists were influenced by these speculations of William James. Their acceptance led the American neo-realists to formulate their 'cross-section' theory of consciousness. For them, it is not an entity or substance but is the behaviour of the physical organism in relation to certain aspects of the objective environment. Consciousness, then, is entirely objective in character.

The British neo-realists take up a more reasonable view concerning the nature of consciousness. They admit the distinctive characteristic of consciousness as something subjective which can be given to us either in introspection or in some kind of immediate experience. This experience is designated by Alexander as 'enjoyment'.

Besides their attack upon the ontological dualism they have also rendered another valuable service to philosophy by their rejection of epistemological dualism. The theory traditionally known as representationalism advocated this epistemological dualism. Locke was the champion of this theory and for him conscious experiences are mediated by the representations which are the copies of reality. Thus epistemologically they have created a gulf between mind and the real object. The neo-realists reject this theory and maintain that all forms of conscious experiences are direct and immediate.

In this connection the difference between the points of view of the British and the American neo-realists should be
clearly recognised. The American neo-realists repudiate the distinction between mental act and object and admit the objective character of consciousness. It seems to us that they are wrong in so far as they ignore the act and object as basic elements of conscious experience. Except Russell, all the British neo-realists admit the distinction between subject and object as fundamental to consciousness. Russell's view seems to be unsatisfactory in so far as he rejects the element of mental act and introduces the mental content. Alexander's theory appears to us as more satisfactory and his view is shared by other British neo-realists. Hence it is more reasonable to admit with Alexander that the distinction between act and object is fundamental and this position avoids the gulf of dualism created by the representationalism and escapes the difficulties raised by the cross-section theory of identification of consciousness with the object.

Hence it seems clear to us that this theory is a challenge to subjectivism and phenomenalism. Also we accept this conception, as its application helps us to get rid of all forms of epistemological dualism which prevent a direct access to the real object. Thus the assertion of the direct nature of conscious experience is a significant contribution of the neo-realists to philosophic thought.