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PŌR AND WAR: FROM *PUTTIṆAI*OLOGICAL AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

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I propose to show how war is not the same as *pōr*, a Tamil word often mistakenly treated as a synonym of war, and how either war or *pōr* cannot be adequately dealt with phenomenologically. In this project, my analytical tool is the concept of *mūviṭam* (*tolkāppiyam* II. 1. 28) or the personaic triad, which is central to my theory, *puttiṇai* or neo-*tiṇai* (Selvamony 2025; 2024a; 2024; 2021; 2015). The latter theory is significantly indebted to the theory of *tiṇai* dealt with in the most ancient grammatical text, *tolkāppiyam* and exemplified in the ancient Tamil anthologies of songs (the Eight Anthologies and the Ten Songs).

Briefly, *tiṇai* is the pre-state lifeway which made it possible for humans and beings other than humans to live harmoniously in four primordial land areas – the scrubland, the mountain, the riverine plain, and the seacoast. A transitional fifth is the arid land. In each of these, communities of people, and other beings coexisted harmoniously subscribing to the idea that love was the ultimate end of life of all beings. *puttiṇai* builds on this theory and explains the nature of the state and the industrialist societies which displaced *tiṇai* and why *puttiṇai* has to end the present Anthropocene (Selvamony 2015). As *mūviṭam*, the central concept in *puttiṇai*, is the critical tool for understanding war and *pōr* in this essay, it requires a brief description.

mūviṭam (Ta. *mū*, three +*v*, consonantal glide + *iṭam*, persona = *mūviṭam*, three personae) means three personae, *taṉmai* (hereafter, T), *muṉṉilai* (hereafter, M) and *paṭarkkai* (heareafter, P) (*tolkāppiyam* II.1. 28; 3. 29; 9. 31) wherein T is the agent, M is patient or the one acted upon, and P is the context where the action takes place. These three can be best understood by means of their role in a particular action. Action, according to *tolkāppiyam*, has eight causes: action (*viṉai*), agent (*ceyvatu*), patient (*ceyappaṭuporuḷ*), instrument (*karuvi*), place (*nilam*),

time (*kālam*), intention (*iṉṉaṯaṟku itu*) and end (*payaṉ*) (II. 3. 29). This means an action has to be viewed in light of its eight causes and not any one of them if a comprehensive idea of that action is the objective.

A careful look at these eight causes shows how these eight are distributed among the three personae. An action or *viṉai* involves all the three personae. If T is the agent (*ceyvatu*), who employs an instrument or *karuvi* to perform an action, what she intends to do is *iṉṉaṯaṟku itu*. Action is impossible except in a particular P (context) constituted by a particular place or *nilam*, time or *kalam* as well as the axiological ground or *payaṉ*, which is also the end or result or consequence of action. The M (patient) acted upon by T (agent) is *ceyappaṭuporuḷ*. The Tamil sages averred that action ought to be oriented to the ultimate end or *payaṉ*, namely, *aṉpu* or love. In fine, if M is that which presents itself before T, P is the context from which M emerges.

The three personae are like three musical notes in an octave, each standing in a harmonious relationship to the other not unlike the notes, C, E and G. Each is what it is only due to the interrelationship among them (Selvamony 2018). The personaic interrelationship cannot be reduced to something similar to the *avāynilai* (a sort of subaudition) of a morpheme because in the case of the morpheme, it is meaningful in itself even without its relation to the rest of the units of language.

Each persona exists as a *uyirmey* or embodied soul. In the case of T, it always exists as an embodied soul occupying a definite place and time. But in the case of M, it could exist either in an embodied or disembodied form. Place-time (*mutal*) of P is the disembodied locus whereas the natural-cultural features of a particular place-time are embodied entities. Another aspect of P is *uyarnta pāl* or the transcendental persona whose spiritual energy is *aṉpu* or love, the *mutal poruḷ* or primordial entity. The *uyarnta pāl*, in its turn, is part of P's positively teleological ground. Evidently, the natural-cultural features, which occupy P are the latter's *mey* or body, whereas the *mutal*, and *mutal poruḷ* are its *uyir* or soul.

As each persona is a *uyirmey* or embodied soul (*uyir*, soul + *mey*, body = *uyirmey*), each is capable of consciousness though M need not be an embodied persona in every micro-community of which it is a member. Though the collective mind and several material entities are part of P, it is never an agentive *uyirmey*. T alone is agentive. M could be evocative but not agentive. But all the three personae are souled beings endowed with consciousness which make them inter-epistemic beings.

It may be profitable to see how these eight apply in a specific action. Take the case of being conscious. Consciousness is usually understood as a mental faculty of the self. But the history of this word does not endorse this meaning. It is that which "knows with" (from Lat. *com*, with + *scire*, to know, "*comscire*," to know with > Eng. consciousness, a faculty with which one knows with)[1].

(https://www.etymonline.com/word/consciousness).

Both the English words, "consciousness" and "conscience" derive from the Latin "*comscire*," to know with. While conscience is attested from 1225 in Middle English, the first attestation of "consciousness" is only from the 1600s. Arguably, "consciousness" descends from "conscience." The English word "conscience" derives its meaning "sense of right and wrong" (from 13th century) ultimately from the Greek word *syneidesis*, which means "with-knowledge" through the Latin word, *conscientia* (derived from *comscire*), which also means "with-knowledge."

Until the time of Martin Luther (1483-1546), the word "conscience" (Ger. *gewissen*) meant, under the influence of Greek thought, reason that conformed with universal nature and under the influence of Christian theology, the communitarian, rational, intellectual faculty, which is a shared external moral compass. It is not just the secular world which made it communitarian but Church teaching also. But when Luther used the German word, "*gewissen*" as a direct translation of the Latin *conscientia*, though etymologically it was co-knowing (Ger. *ge-*, with + *wissen*, to know = to know with), he interpreted it as a person's

conviction born of faith and one's understanding of God's word, especially at the Diet of Worms in 1521. *Gewissen* was neither communitarian nor co-knowing anymore.

Luther's individualization of the idea of conscience impacted the meaning of the related adjective "conscious" and its cognates in the Indo-European languages also. From the first use of the latter word in 1573 up until 1641, it retained the idea of co-knowing. But at the hands of Rene Descartes (1596-1650), the Latin word *conscientia* (which meant co-knowing in a moral way) came to acquire, in 1641, a purely psychological meaning through the French noun, *conscience* (awareness, self-awareness). Now, *conscientia* came to mean self-awareness, an essential property of thinking, feeling, willing and imagining. The famous Cartesian proposition, "*cogito ergo sum*" (1641) (1968, 53-54) is based on the idea of psychological self-awareness which Descartes calls *conscius*, the adjectival form of *conscientia*. He defines thought (*cogitatio*) itself along the lines of *conscientia*: "By the term *thought*, I include everything that is within us in such a way that we are immediately aware (*conscii*) of it, in so far as we have awareness (*conscientia*) of it." (Part I, Section 9, *Principles of Philosophy*, 1644, cited in "Seventeenth Century…").

Under the influence of Protestant Christian theology which has redefined the German noun, *Gewissen* (conscience) as a self-oriented faculty, the English adjectival form of conscience, namely, "conscious" also came to acquire a reflexive sense as in the case of John Bunyan's statement: "I am conscious to myself of many failings" (*The Pilgrim's Progress*, 1678; Section 127). Twelve years later, John Locke (1632-1704) nominalized the English adjective, "conscious" in a decisively influential definition of "consciousness" as "the perception of what passes in a man's own mind" (**Book II, Chapter I, Section 19**, p. 98, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, see Locke). This definition completely disconnected the new nominalized adjective (adj. conscious > n.

consciousness) as well as the earlier noun and adjective (conscience, conscious) from their original meaning of co-knowing.

In 1712, Christian Wolff (1679-1754) came up with a German equivalent, **"*Bewusstsein*" for "consciousness" (Ger. *Wissen*, knowing; *Bewusst*, aware, conscious + *sein*, to be = *Bewusstsein*, being aware, being conscious). Almost two centuries later (in 1900), this term, from which the ghost of co-knowing has been thoroughly exorcised by Wolff, would become the cornerstone of Edmund Husserl's (1859-1938) phenomenology.**

Co-knowing involves not only T (self) but also M (the other) and P (the positively teleological context) which validates or does not validate what one knows. The Greeks called such knowing *Syneidesis* and its Latinate equivalent is *Conscientia*. *Syneidesis*, among other things, denotes a kind of knowledge of a split-person, both the self and the other which could reside in one and the same person. The other is usually a voice of other-knowledge as well as a voice of a higher or moral knowledge that could conflict or not conflict with the knowledge of the self. As the higher or moral knowledge is something common to both the self and the other, it is not locatable either within the self or the other. Therefore, it is plausible to argue that self-knowledge is that of T, whereas other-knowledge is that of M, and the common knowledge is that of P.

What is said of *syneidesis* is true of *conscientia* (Eng. conscience) too, which originally denoted "knowledge with." It implied the inadequacy or incompleteness of knowledge or feeling or awareness resulting only from the self. Consider the English cognate, "conscious," which descended from the Latin *conscientia*. It occurs in Sir John Denham's poem, "Cooper's Hill," where the speaker-persona speaks of the groves or trees being conscious ("Thence to the coverts and the conscious groves," line 277). To say that the groves are conscious is to say that the speaker's knowledge of groves depends on the knowledge of the groves themselves. It is as if the speaker knows the (presence of the) groves

because the groves know him. To put it differently, the groves make the speaker-persona know them by evoking the response of knowing from the speaker-persona. The trees (groves) cannot do such a thing without being conscious themselves. Evoking is not a mechanical act but a sentient one. In Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (1599), while Duke Senior finds himself in the forest of Arden, he found "And this our life exempt from public haunt/Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,/Sermons in stones, and good in everything" (Act II, Scene i, 15-17).

The idea that beings other than humans are also souled and therefore, conscious may not be acceptable to those who rely entirely on the modern scientific method. But the indigenous people all over the world including the *tiṇai* people of the Indian subcontinent believed and lived by the belief that every living being is constituted by a sort of hyphenated body-soul (*uyirmey*, soul-body; *uyir*, soul + *mey*, body). Though the degree of consciousness of each life form varied, all life forms to them are conscious beings (Selvamony 2012). There is evidence in the ancient Tamil songs to say that a *tiṇai* family is an interspecific one of which trees were the most valued members (*naṟṟiṇai* 172) and for that reason lent identity to the human family. In other words, a human family was known by the tree in which resided the souls of the ancestors of that particular family (Selvamony 2012a).

Not only were the life-forms that dwelt in a particular place-time are seen as living, conscious beings, the place-time itself is believed to be living and therefore conscious (Selvamony 2012). Though this belief could also be dumped as superstition by modern science, it is key to the lifeway of all the indigenous people all over the world. In a way it surfaced in the 1960s in the form of Gaia hypothesis which sought to explain atmospheric homeostasis and the self-regulative nature of the Earth (Lovelock & Margulis). As for the indigenous people like the Dongria Kondh of Odisha, what the scientists identify as energy (which is responsible for self-regulation and homeostasis) is spiritual energy they

revere. Accordingly, Niyamgiri, their home-mountain is their ancestor from whom they claim to have descended (Selvamony 2010; 2016a). They fight tooth and nail to save the mountain from the mining techno-giants because the mountain is family to them (Selvamony 2021). But, a mountain cannot become a family member, what is more, the most valued one, without an epistemology that cannot validate it. As modern science cannot, the Norwegian philosopher, Arne Naess dubbed Ernst Haeckel's ecology shallow and propounded a Deep Ecological epistemology (in collaboration with other thinkers) based on meta-scientific principles like intrinsic value.

The Deep Ecological epistemology is akin to *tiṇai* epistemology. While Naess did not speak of co-knowing, *tiṇai* philosophers did. To them, there is no *mey* or body without *uyir* or soul, and the characteristic of every *uyir* is *aṟivu* (knowledge/consciousness), all life-forms are capable of *uṭampaṭum aṟivu* or co-knowing (*tolkāppiyam* III. 3. 5) with the collective mind (Selvamony 2025). Therefore, the earth and the living beings that reside therein are all souled and conscious, and it is this indigenous belief which forms the basis of the idea of co-knowing that is found among the Greeks (*syneidesis*) and the Romans (*conscientia*) and the English (conscious). Existing scholarship avers that *syneidesis* implies secular co-knowing because it bases itself on evidences from the Greek state society. Evidences from the pre-state Greek world could show that the kind of knowledge it involved did not exclude knowledge of the spirit world also. Latin *conscientia*, under the influence of Christian theology, substitutes the spirit-knowledge with God-knowledge. To harmonize with the collective mind involves the harmonization of the minds of T, M and P, which are like the musical notes of a triadic chord.

If all actions are possible only in the triadic personaic world, that which is something other than the self or T could only be M and P. From this perspective, "to know with" could mean that T could be conscious only with the epistemic contribution of M and or P. To say that T "knows with"

is to say that T is "cognitive with," "emotional with" and "volitional with" M. The content of T's consciousness is M which could take the form of thought, or feeling or desire.

Consciousness becomes functional only when it is conscious of something and when the one who is conscious of something understands how one feels about or what one thinks of or how one values what one is conscious of. The answer to the question, "What is T conscious of?" does not lie within T. T understands M (Husserl's Object; Kockelmans 32-33) only from T's relationship to P. If so, could M be an object?

Viewed in light of the theory of *puttiṇai*, what Husserl calls "object" is the *ceyappaṭuporuḷ* or M, which is one of the causes of the act of being conscious, not what T intends, which is *iṉṉataṟku itu*. When T becomes conscious of M emotionally, cognitively and axiologically, T's idea and attitude to M are shaped by the evocative power of M also. Both P and M impact T each in its own way. If T's relation to P is referential, T's relation to M is evocative. Only with reference to P does T become conscious of M who evokes T in a certain way. In other words, T is conscious of M by means of a referential relation to P, and by responding to the evocative power of M. In other words, consciousness is an action that involves not only T (*ceyvatu*), but also M (*ceyappaṭuporuḷ*) as well as P, the context in which both T and M stand in relation.

Now, let me show how consciousness is an act that involves the eight causes of action: "To be conscious of" is an action (*viṉai*) that involves the following eight causes: **being conscious** (*viṉai*), **the one** who is conscious (T/*ceyvatu*), the mind(-body) being the **instrument** (*karuvi* of T) which makes the act of being conscious possible, **where** (*nilam*) one is conscious, and **when** (*kālam*) one is, **what** one is conscious of (*ceyappaṭuporuḷ*/M), what the agent's (*ceyvatu*'s/T's) consciousness **intends** (*iṉṉataṟku itu*), and the **end/consequence** (*payaṉ*) of being conscious. This shows that consciousness involves three personae, not just T (agent/*ceyvatu* to which pertains *iṉṉataṟku itu* or intention and

karuvi or instrument) alone but also that which T is conscious of, namely, M (*ceyappaṭuporuḷ*/patient), and P (context) constituted by *nilam* (the locus of the act of being conscious), *kālam* (the time of the act of being conscious) and *payaṉ* (ultimate end).

A rider to the account of action must be stated at this point. T's consciousness of M is not the same as T's consciousness of P. While M presents itself before T for T's consciousness, P does not. If P does so, it is no more P but M. If M is foregrounded in T's consciousness, P is backgrounded. The backgrounded consciousness of P is an a priori condition for any action though it is not praxic in nature. Though P forms the background of action, without the latter no consciousness (of T) is possible.

Foregrounded in the *kaḷam* or acting area where the three personae interact, M is not defined by T's consciousness or intention. As the personaic triad is an a priori community, M is always the foregrounded persona in such a community. While T (always embodied) and M (either embodied or not) are present only within the *kaḷam* or acting area where the three personae stand in relation to each other, P is present both within the *kaḷam* as well as without as P spreads (*paṭar*, to spread > *paṭarkkai*) outside the *kaḷam* and connects with the *kaḷaṅkaḷ* (acting areas) of many other Ts (Selvamony 2025).

The relation between T and M could be either game-like or play-like. In a game-like action, T intends (*iṉṉataṟku itu*) to relate to M in a certain way in order to achieve an end (*payaṉ*), whereas in a typical play-like action, T's relation to M need not be intentional (Selvamony 2004). In Martin Buber's terminology, experience[2] is a kind of I-It orientation, whereas relation[3] (Buber 12-13) is a kind of I-Thou orientation. If the former is game-like, the latter is play-like. In Husserl also *erfahrung*, the meaning-constituting consciousness, is game-like rather than play-like.

As consciousness, to Husserl, is always object-intending, his thought system does not accommodate unintending, typical playful consciousness. To him, M is constituted within T's consciousness, and in this his phenomenology remains T-centred though he asserts that T is that which intends M. But Buber's dialogical philosophy is based on a dyadic base of which one entity is not constituted by the other; both T and M are primordial entities which constitute two modes of sociality: T-Thou M and T-It M, the latter a derivative of the former. Unlike these two, *puttiṉai* is based on a personaic triadic community, T-M-P.

When T is involved in an action in the capacity of the agent, the end T envisages for the action has to be distinguished from what T intends to achieve by means of that action. If the former is *payaṉ* (end/consequence), the latter is *iṉṉataṟku itu* (intention). Though *payaṉ* can be envisaged, it cannot be intended because it is the consequence of the action. Take for example, the act of turning the key in a lock. The end (*payaṉ*) envisaged by T while performing this act is opening a closed lock. In order to achieve this end, T intends (*iṉṉataṟku itu*) to turn the key in the lock (*viṉai*). The act of turning the key (which is the action) is distinguishable from the end (opening a closed lock) and what T intends to do (turn the key in the lock) in order to achieve it.

Furthermore, T neither participates in all actions the same way nor the same way throughout the course of a single action. It does with varying degrees of consciousness. As intention is wholly dependent on consciousness, it is neither possible to rule that all actions of T are intentional nor aver that a single action is wholly intentional. Actions such as turning the key in a lock have to be differentiated from those in which T is either semi-conscious or even unconscious (Ta. *ayarcci*, loss of consciousness) and therefore unintentional (Selvamony 2004). If the former are *viḷaiyāṭṭal* (game), the latter are *āṭṭal* (play). *viḷaiyāṭṭal* is an act in which T intends to achieve a particular end whereas in *āṭṭal*, T participates in an unconscious or near-unconscious manner and therefore unintentionally. A good example of *āṭṭal* is falling in love which involves

a boy suddenly realizing that he had already fallen in love with a girl he had chanced upon a moment ago. He did not intend to; but he did. It simply happens. What actually happens is this: a boy (T) finds himself in front of a girl (who is his M now) in a particular context (P) and all of a sudden, a new relationship emerges between the two of them. What did the boy do? His action is neither nameable precisely nor an intentional one.

What is true of such lovers is true of several situations in the realm of art also. Something presents itself (M) before an artist (T) in a particular context (P) and what emerges is a work of art or its nucleus much to the surprise of T because the latter never intended it. The art work (wholly or in part) is neither intended by the artist-T nor wholly created by her ex-nihilo. According to *tolkāppiyam*, the creator has a vision (*kāṭci*) of the work of art and there it is! (III. 9. 96; Selvamony 2025, 93-94). However, the role of intention (at some later stage of creation) cannot be ruled out even in art praxis in which the nucleus of the art work is intuited rather than intentionally made.

Significantly, a persona does not exist without the other two and they are interrelated. The normative interrelationship that characterizes *tiṇai* may be called *iṇai* or harmony which might express itself as perfect harmony as in the case of ideal spouses or as *kiḷai* (kin) or partial harmony as in the case of kin or as *naṭpu* or interrelationship between friends and also as positively teleological *pakai* or conflictive interrelationship (Selvamony 2016; 2025, 52). The harmonious interrelationship distributes power among the three personae in a heterarchic manner blending equality, authority and humility because T respects the necessary difference among the three personae. The characteristic interrelationship among the three personae in a state society is *tīppakai* or negatively conflictive interrelationship which distributes power in a homoarchic manner because T slights the necessary difference among the three personae either by augmenting difference or by eliminating it. Typical interrelationship among the personaic triad in an industrialist

society in the Anthropocene is failed *tīppakai* or anarchic *tīppakai* which involves one persona having only anarchic contact with the others and such contact is negatively teleological. Summarily, *pakai* could be either positively or negatively teleological interrelationship (Selvamony 2025, 62-67).

***pakai*, *pōr* and war:**

The classic example of *pakai*-based action is *pōr* or "match" denoting both contestatory as well as punitive action (Selvamony 2025, 62-63). Though *pōr* is a common word in Tamil, it is one of the least understood, most misunderstood and therefore, mistranslated words. Probably, lack of understanding is the cause of mistranslation. For most Tamilological scholars, the English equivalent of *pōr* is "war," which is "a state of usually open and declared armed hostile conflict between states or nations" (Webster's)[4]. The conflict involved in war is motivated by hostility which is one-sided or mutual ill will.

Now consider the meaning of "*pōr*." A careful reading of the ancient Tamil songs shows that *pōr* denotes both contending and non-contending actions. Examples of the former are *mal* or wrestling (physical *pōr*; *puṟanāṉūṟu* 80) or *ūṭal* (sulking; from *uṭal*, to contest > *ūṭal*, tiff, *tolkāppiyam* III. 1. 16) or *vātam* or debate (verbal *pōr*; *tolkāppiyam* III. 2. 19), and of the latter, sexual union (*kalittokai* 95: 21) and joining wood or other materials as in carpentry or masonry (*naṟṟiṇai* 132: 4). If victory is the immediate end of contending *pōr*, union is of non-contending *pōr* (Selvamony 2025, 62-63, 51). According to *tirukkuraḷ*, love ought to be the end (ultimate purpose) of both types of *pōr* (*tirukkuraḷ* 76). Arguably, contending *pōr* is either conflictive action on the part of a single T (of a *mūviṭam*) who tries to prevail over the M of the *mūviṭam* of which that T is a part or such action on the part of a group of Ts who try to prevail over an opposing group of Ms each T contending in a specific *kaḷam* or stage in a larger P. Having explained the idea of *pōr* in ancient Tamil sources, I will show how it differs from war.

***pōr* and war:**

Arguably, *pōr* is quite unlike war (Selvamony 2025, 18). Of war, Rupert Brooke (a British war veteran and poet) wrote, "Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour…" ("Peace," 1914, in Stallworthy 162). To him war was not only part of the divine plan but also a cleansing pool. He associated the highest values such as Love, Holiness, and Nobleness with war ("The Dead," 1914, in Stallworthy 162). Brooke's glorification was motivated by a strong commitment to nationalism. He identified himself with England when he said, "If I should die, think only this of me:/That there is some corner of a foreign field/That is forever England…" ("The Soldier," 1914, in Stallworthy 162). Of such commitment Wilfred Owen (1893-1918; yet another well-known British veteran and poet), wrote in 1917, "The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est/ Pro patria mori*" (into English this Latin saying translates: "It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country"; Stallworthy 188-189).

If Brooke glorified modern war in 1914, two years later, Robert Graves (another British veteran and poet) denounced it saying "War's Hell"[5] (Graves). John Stallworthy, who edited the war poetry of the Western world, addresses the issue of conflicting perspectives on war. He goes as far back as the days when war was game when he says this about the British war poems: "The early poems return again and again to the appallingly anachronistic concept of war as game…" (xxvi). Unfortunately, Stallworthy does not get to the point where the Latin word for war, *bellum* could take him -- the point where *bellum* remained a thing of beauty as in the case of the adjective, *bella*. In time, *bellum* lost its beauty and came to denote war. But the Tamil word "*pōr*" illuminates that paradoxical point best.

War is not a state of affairs but action involving the personaic triad(s). Significantly, action itself could mean war as in the sentences: "Wilfred Owen was killed in action" or "He witnessed ruthless action." This essay will approach war and *pōr* mainly as action. It is not difficult to see how

the fighter and his (rarely, her) intention could be causes, but not quite when it comes to seeing how the opponent, the particular time, place, the idea of fighting, and even the end envisaged by the contenders could also be causes. The most difficult thing for a modern is to see how value (*payaṉ*) itself could be a cause. Arguably, the end of war can never be *mutal poruḷ* or the ultimate value of love in stark contrast to *pōr* which should mandatorily be love-oriented (Selvamony 2025, 18).

Love is inseparably connected with action because it is its ultimate *payaṉ* or end. According to the ancient Tamil sages and *tolkāppiyam*, the three values, namely, happiness (*iṉpam*), ethicalness (*aṟam*) and substantialness (*poruḷ*) are the three aspects of the ultimate value, *aṉpu* or love. These three are also considered *mutal poruḷ* or the ultimate end, which ought to be the major consideration while contemplating any action. If so, the significant question will be: Will love be the consequence (*payaṉ*) of a war effort? Or will war bring about love between the two contending sides? Obviously, such a question had never been a part of diplomacy that masterminded the two World Wars or for that matter, most wars in human history. This is endorsed by the following lines from the pen of the British poet, W. H. Auden:

For the error bred in the bone/ Of each woman and each man/ Craves what it cannot have,/ Not universal love/ But to be loved alone. (lines 61-66, "September 1, 1939" by W. H. Auden; see "Auden")

The persona of this poem admits that the major casualty in war (particularly, the II World War) is love. This is true in the case of the current Russo-Ukraine war too. Russia (Russian troops; *ceyvatu*) waged a war on Ukraine (*ceyappaṭuporuḷ*) on February 24 of 2022, with the intention (*iṉṉaṭaṟku itu*) of curbing the possibility of Ukraine becoming an anti-Russian NATO country. As Mearsheimer argues, the intention of United States to make Ukraine a member of NATO, could probably be the major cause of this war (*viṉai*). Russian troops (*ceyvatu*) parachuted (*karuvi*) into Kyiv (*nilam*) on the 24th of February, 2022 (*kālam*) with the

intention (*iṉṉataṟku itu*) of capturing the Ukrainian President and his family (*ceyappaṭuporuḷ*). But their attempt was thwarted by the Ukrainian troops. The idea that capturing the President is capturing the country, Ukraine, and the various stratagems adopted by both warring parties are part of the idea of war (*viṉai*). Arguably, the ultimate end (*payaṉ*) has not been the concern of the aggressor.

3 Types of *pōr*:

***pōr* (in *tiṇai*):**

How did the *tiṇai* communities understand *pōr*? It was bilateral *pakai* (conflict) between T and M. Today the Tamil word *pakai* is used to denote enmity. But in *tiṇai* communities it meant conflict which could be either negatively teleological or not. For example, a *taḻai* or grass skirt made of vegetable material of two contrasting colors was called "*pakait taḻai*" or "contrastive grass skirt" (Selvamony 1993). A ruler of a neighboring territory who seeks to possess a neighbour's territory causes *pakai* or enmity between the people of the two territories. While the first type of *pakai* is not negatively teleological, the latter is. The type of *pakai* which is not negatively teleological is normative when it is necessary *vēṟṟumai* or difference. In any normative relationship between T and M, there ought to be necessary difference. Both excessive difference or lack thereof renders the relationship negatively teleological. For example, the Austro-Hungarian empire did not accept the territorial autonomy of the Slavic people because such autonomy implied a kind of political difference, which, unfortunately was not acceptable to the empire. In other words, political autonomy of the Slavic people meant excessive difference to the Austro-Hungarian empire and necessary difference to the Slavic people themselves. Conflicting views of difference caused the I World War. In the case of the II World War, its major underlying factor was the overemphasis of the pseudoscientific category called "Aryan." Hitler who championed this view believed that only Aryans deserved to dominate others and extend their "life space" by erasing the difference

between them and the others. These instances clearly show that though difference is necessary for existence and good life, both excessive difference and its elimination could only be perilous.

From what I have said so far about *pakai*, it is evident that it is a necessary condition in inter-personaic relationship which is love-oriented. If the difference (which makes *pakai* relationship possible) ought to qualify as necessary one, it can neither be excessive nor non-existent in order to avoid the relationship becoming negatively teleological. Necessary *pakai* underlies normative or non-negatively teleological *pōr* when it restores love between the contenders. Such types are *mal* (or wrestling; *puṟanāṉūṟu* 80), *vākai* (or verbal duel) (*tolkāppiyam* III. 2. 19) and *ūṭal* (tiff) in which both parties are ethical. But there are also other types marked by bilateral *pakai* between ethical T and unethical M, wherein T attempts to subdue M (*tolkāppiyam* III. 2. 2, 7, 10,15; Selvamony 2025, 62-63). While the former types are teleologically positive bilaterally, the latter are not; one of the two sides is teleologically negative.

Both types – that which is teleologically positive bilaterally and others in which one side is teleologically negative -- attempt to establish or reestablish the orientation of *pōr* to *mutal poruḷ*, which is love. Even in the unilaterally positively teleological type, the end of *pōr* in *tiṇai* was the reestablishment of *mutal poruḷ*. Such an orientation sustained the heterarchic status of M throughout the action of *pōr* as well as thereafter even at the risk of M's life. This was possible because love harmonizes equality, humility and even authority in the interrelationship among T, M and P.

tiṇai philosophy affirmed that the cause of love was furthered not only by non-contending actions such as friendship but also by contending ones (as between the wrestlers, debaters and lovers). This is affirmed by a *tirukkuṟaḷ* which reads: "*aṟattiṟkē aṉpucarpeṉpa aṟiyātār*/*maṟattirkum attē tuṇai*," (*tirukkuṟaḷ* 76), which translates to "Ignorant people say love sustains only ethical actions; in fact, it does those that contest ethicalness

too" (author's translation). This couplet does not mean that unethicalness is endorsed by love; it only says that love helps to tide over defeat and challenge the unethical to render it ethical. Even today, on some rare occasions, one comes across the loser shaking hands with or hugging the winner after a match. Chapter VII of the UN Charter which justifies restraining an aggressive nation is based on the type of *pōr* in *tiṇai* in which the unfair M is restrained by T.

***koṭumpōr* (in state society):**

There could be instances of the type of *pōr,* which are positively teleological unilaterally in the state society (as in the case of the ancient Tamil combat known as *vañci* which involves restraining a land-greedy invader, Selvamony 2025, 138-147; 62-63). But in reality, *pōr* becomes negatively teleological bilaterally wherein the unethical M is challenged by a T whose ethicalness cannot be vindicated. A striking instance is the conflict between the legendary *paṅkāḷikaḷ* or kinfolk, the Kauravar and the Pandavar, two branches of the *kuru* clan, who lived in a caste-based state society sustained by settled agriculture and farming (Patra 7). Though both branches belonged to the same *kuṭi* or family, when it was the turn of the latter to rule the kingdom of Kuru, the former did not let the latter do so because the former wanted the kingdom (particularly, the land) for themselves, and for this reason they wanted to even destroy the latter. Though the war in this case is often described as a just one between Good (Pandavar) and Evil (Kauravar), the matter is not as simple as that. According to the South Asian historian Audrey Truschke, the epic personae "sought base revenge rather than virtuous ends in the war" (85; cf. Pattanaik 117-120). This is endorsed by Yuddhishthira who saw his victory not as victory but as defeat because as dwellers of *nāṭu* (state), he and his *paṅkāḷikaḷ* were only "greedy, and deluded, clinging to arrogance and pride." They had "fallen to this state because [they] coveted a mere kingdom." Significantly, he contrasted the intrinsically unethical nature of *nāṭu* (state) with the intrinsically ethical nature of the dwellers of the forest (*kāṭu*) which is, in fact, one of the four primordial *tiṇai* habitats:

"Those who dwell in the forest always have patience, self-restraint, and honesty. /They lack aggression and envy while embracing non-violence (ahimsa) and truthfulness." (*Mahabharata* 12. 7. 4-8, cited in Truschke 86).

There are instances of the Pandavar themselves resorting to deceit, termed "*kapaṭōpāya*" in *kauṭalīyam* [*Arthasastra*] (12th *atikaraṇam*, 7th *prakaraṇam*; Selvamony 2025, 18), especially in the killing of Bhishma, Dronacharya, Karna, Jayadratha, and Duryodhana. On certain occasions, the Kauravar (though not upholders of dharma themselves) acquit themselves as more virtuous than the Pandavar. Bhishma lost his life because he valued his ethical principle of honoring a vow (of not fighting a female like Shikhandi) more than fighting Arjuna. Dronacharya was a martyr of the trust he placed in the honesty of Yudhishthira, and Jayadratha was a victim of his decision to abide by the rule that prohibited any fighting after sunset. Such type of *pōr* is bilaterally negative in its orientation to *mutal poruḷ* (ultimate value), namely, *aṉpu*. The argument that deceit is justified if it serves a higher end does not hold in this context, nor the possibility of deceitful rulers providing a just rule tenable. The higher end, according to the *tiṇai* philosophers, can only be love. Had the higher end of the Kurukshetra war was making the warring parties love each other, the ethically contestable strategies adopted by the parties could be justifiable. But that was not the case. A type of *pōr* won by deceit could only be "*koṭumpōr*" (literally, crooked or wicked *pōr*), the characteristic type of most state societies in human history. Ultimately, description of the Kurukshetra war as one between Good and Evil seems to be an oversimplistic one.

Summarily, the typical war of the state society is one in which there is a homoarchic relationship between Good and Evil where Good attempts to prevail over Evil. Such an attempt could result in Good triumphing over Evil as evident in most of the morality plays of Europe or Evil triumphing over Good as in the case of Shakespeare's tragedy, *Othello* or an ambivalent end in which it is hard to tell whether Good had really

triumphed over Evil or not as in the case of the Kurukshetra war. Despite the variety in the modes of the conflict, what is common to all these including the last one, is the affirmation of the necessity of teleology, particularly, the existence of Good and Evil despite the frequent non-affirmation of the Good. But when the state society was industrialized, its anarchic nature undermined the affirmation of teleology itself. Such anarchized war could only be designated "*alpōr*" or non-*pōr* which should be taken up for consideration next.

***alpōr*:**

The anarchic nature of *alpōr* in industrialist societies is traceable to the futility of the anarchically dominant relationship humans have with other humans and beings other than humans. That anarchy is the major characteristic of the industrialist lifeway is endorsed by several artists and thinkers. Consider W. B. Yeats's lines,

> "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
>
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world"
>
> (from the poem, "The Second Coming," 1919; Roberts 58).

Another well-known verse of the 20th century is T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land" which is also a classic creative definition of anarchy. Besides the title, several aspects of the verse endorse the anarchic nature of the modern world. Loss of identity exemplified by the protagonist (*ceyvatu*/T), Tiresias, the fuzzy nature of the location (*nilam* or place) and time (*kālam* or time) of action, meaninglessness (*payaṉ*) of action (*viṉai*) illustrated by the lack of communication between the couple in the section entitled, "A Game of Chess," the typist's meaningless tryst (in the section, "The Fire Sermon"), and the purposeless sexual encounters of the Daughters of Thames.

The anarchic nature of the industrialist lifeway is reflected in the nature of the wars these societies wage also. Typical industrialist *pakai* praxis is

a melee because it is a clash between two anonymous and ambivalently motivated forces using fuzzy means of destruction resulting in wastefulness, Wilfred Owen calls the "cess of war." Contemporary warfare differs from its counterpart of the pre-industrialist state societies with regard to the *karuvi* of T (instrument, technology, logistics) (Fuller 126)[6], *iṉṉataṟku itu* of T (strategies/tactics, logistics), type of *viṉai* of T (scale and speed), the kind of Ts and Ms (agents and patients), and *payaṉ* (end). While the earlier warfare involved destruction of men and material, it aimed at achieving certain material goals like wealth, territorial annexation, as well as non-material goals like power acquisition and reputation. But contemporary wars are more destructive despite the claim of the warring parties that they attack only specific targets to avoid any collateral damage. Modern aggressor may aver that the war is meant to discipline a rogue state or democratize a non-democratic state or gain an advantage. Even if T justifies its aggressive *pakai* praxis (which could be occupation or annexation as in the on-going Russo-Ukranian war), M may contest such justification and almost always the aggression is not teleologically positive. Angus Calder was quite explicit about the teleology of industrialist war when he said "…the problem was that most people lacked imagination to see it as evil" (xviii). The *pakai* praxis is neither strictly rule-bound nor honor-oriented as in *pōr* in *tiṇai*. Also, modern warfare technology has made available weapons (instrument) which are likely to be so fuzzy that they are hard to either avert or incapacitate. Though typical industrialist *pakai* praxis is global (as in the case of the World Wars), even bi-national industrialist war is more a melee than a war. It is such because it is anarchic action in which neither the agent, nor the patient nor the instrument is well-defined as in *pōr* or *koṭumpōr*. Such *pakai* praxis could only be *alpōr* or non-*pōr*.

It may be profitable to consider a poetic representation of the "war consciousness" of two soldiers who fought the I World War. One of them was none other than Wilfred Owen. Here is his frequently anthologized poem, "Strange Meeting":

It seemed that out of battle I escaped
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped
Through granites which titanic wars had groined.
Yet also their encumbered sleepers groaned,
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.
Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared
With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
Lifting distressful hands, as if to bless.
And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall,—
By his dead smile I knew we stood in Hell.
With a thousand fears that vision's face was grained;
Yet no blood reached there from the upper ground,
And no guns thumped, or down the flues made moan.
"Strange friend," I said, "here is no cause to mourn."
"None," said that other, "save the undone years,
The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,
Was my life also; I went hunting wild
After the wildest beauty in the world,
Which lies not calm in eyes, or braided hair,
But mocks the steady running of the hour,
And if it grieves, grieves richlier than here.
For by my glee might many men have laughed,
And of my weeping something had been left,
Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
The pity of war, the pity war distilled.
Now men will go content with what we spoiled.
Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.

They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress.
None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress.
Courage was mine, and I had mystery;
Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery:
To miss the march of this retreating world
Into vain citadels that are not walled.
Then, when much blood had clogged their chariot-wheels,
I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,
Even with truths that lie too deep for taint.
I would have poured my spirit without stint
But not through wounds; not on the cess of war.
Foreheads of men have bled where no wounds were.
"I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
I knew you in this dark: for so you frowned
Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.
I parried; but my hands were loath and cold.
Let us sleep now…" (1919; Owen)

This poem is a dialogue between two soldiers of World War I. The first-person narrator is the one who had just killed an enemy soldier who rises from the dead and engages in a conversation with the narrator. How does this strange meeting between a soldier who had died in the war and another who is alive translate into their consciousness of the war they both fought? By way of answering this question, the reader may turn to the word "Hell" in the poem (line 10). When the living soldier steps into a tunnel, why does he call it "Hell" and sees what he sees? He is not only conscious but also conscious of the presence of others, surprised, filled with wonder, and also pities the dead he sees around him and he is also interested in finding out how they came to be there. Here, what the living

soldier is conscious of is his M, initially, all the dead people, but a little later, the one who rises from the dead.

But how the living soldier (T) is conscious of M depends more on his P than on T or M. This is so because (emotion), *eṇṇam* (thought), and *poruḷ* (value/importance) derive from P (Selvamony 2025). *meyppāṭu* or emotion is T's response to a kind of spiritual energy flowing from P into T (Selvamony 2024a). Just like how the spiritual energy of emotion resides in P, the meaning of T's thought is part of the collective mind, which is an aspect of P. Similarly, value, being a part of the axiological aspect of P, like emotion and thought is inter-personaic rather than intra-personaic. T is able to recognize M as so and so, feel happy and have an idea about M and value the appearance of M in a certain way only in reference to M's relationship with P and T. T's consciousness of M is coterminous with T being conscious of the nature of M which is understood only in relation to P, and T's own emotional, cognitive and axiological response to the presence of M which are all possible only due to T's and M's primordial interrelationship with P. In short, T's consciousness of M cannot be explained away either by saying that T's consciousness intends the "object" M or T's consciousness is defined by the object M.

As T's consciousness is inter-personaic, without the consciousness of M and P, T's consciousness cannot be understood properly. Some actions in which T is agent prima facie appear to be more intra-personaic than inter-personaic. But a closer look reveals that no action is intra-specific. Consider the word "escaped" in the first line of the poem. It is part of the utterance of the living soldier. One might like to think that escaping from something is wholly the experience of T. But what one calls T's experience of escaping (from the war) is inseparable from M's (could be a higher officer or that which had bound T to war) consciousness of T's escape, and the consciousness of the entities which constituted T's situation from which T escaped.

If “escaped” falsely appeared to be T-centric action, “killing” is misconceived as dyadic action involving only T and M, the killer and the killed. Consider the dead soldier’s statement: “I am the enemy you killed, my friend” (line 40). Apparently, the locus of the earlier action, “escaped” seemed to be T, the addresser (*ceyvatu*), whereas the locus of the latter action, “killed” does not seem to be T but M (*ceyappaṭuporuḷ*). One may object to identifying “killing” as the main action in the dead soldier’s statement by pointing out that the main action is uttering and not killing. True. But the statement is not about uttering but about killing. Moreover, what the dead speaker desires to draw attention to is not the fact that he says something but what he says. He wants to be correctly identified by the living soldier and recall the relationship they both had in the past and point to a possible relationship in the future.

If the agentive locus of the action, “killed” is the M rather than the speaker-T, the experiential content of “killed” cannot be confined to the speaker-T. The consciousness of getting killed is at once the consciousness of the one who got killed (the speaker-T, the dead soldier), of the one who killed (the listener-M, the living soldier), and the reason for the living soldier killing his opponent. The consciousness of getting killed also includes the way the dead soldier was killed, which is neither wholly attributable to T nor M but to the P they both shared. The kind of killing involved in this context is unique; one that is part of a war in which both parties consider each other enemies. As war justifies the killing of an enemy, the killer performed an action that was justifiable from a perspective which is contested by both the living and the dead soldier at this point of time. However, when they both fought against each other, they both shared the ideology of war and the one who was lethally wounded knew until his last breath that the killer’s action was a licit one. Similarly, the manner of killing was also not an illicit one.

Though both the soldiers participated in the licit action of killing, one as killer and the other as the killed, the consciousness of the loss of life was not the same for both. It does not make sense to say that both were

conscious of the termination of life involving a terminator and the terminated. Nor is it sensible to say that the killer's consciousness was only the act of pulling the trigger of his gun, which is quite different from the consciousness of the targeted person who had to suffer the pain caused by a bullet and lose his life. In a war, being conscious of killing cannot be just being conscious of mere pulling of the trigger of a gun. One has to shoot only an enemy who is a threat to the objectives of the side one fights for. When the dead soldier said "I am the enemy you killed, my friend," his consciousness of being killed was defined not only by his own consciousness but also by that of the killer and that of the war-context. Obviously, while the consciousness of the T and M were quite evident, that of P was not quite because the latter was not embodied in the way the other two personae were. A careful reading of the poem does point to how the context had also borne the brunt of war both materially and non-materially. If the war consciousness of the material context is summed up in the phrase, "the cess of war" (which includes not only bloodshed, and wounds but also turning useful entities into rubble and rubbish), that of the non-material context is described by the phrase, "the pity of war" (which includes "groaning," "distress," deviating from "progress" "undone years," and "hopelessness"). The poet purposely put this statement at the end of the poem because he wanted the reader to understand the meaning of this statement in light of everything that is already said about the war which constitutes the P of the speaker-T. Both the M (the living soldier) as well as the reader understand the killing (of the dead soldier) not merely as the consciousness of the speaker-T, but also as the consciousness of the wastefulness which has been P's consciousness of war. Without P's consciousness, M cannot understand the meaning of the word "friend" in the statement of the dead soldier. The speaker-T could have only meant that despite the attempt on the part of war to antagonize people for wrong reasons, the normative relationship between one human and another can only be friendliness. Further, the response (experience) on the part of the

M (the living soldier) to T's self-disclosure of identity is a bag of mixed feelings – wonder, fear, guilt, remorse, pity and probably others. M's consciousness is also tempered by what war meant to P both T and M. For instance, had T not entertained the idea that war is wasteful, futile exercise ("the cess of war"), he could have tried to kill again the soldier he thought had already died.

So far, the discussion focused on the act of being conscious about the actions, namely, escaping and killing. More than the latter two actions, the act of being conscious of strangeness is the thematic centre of the poem. It is also the central praxis, a meeting marked by strangeness for many reasons. The strangeness in this case is of varying degrees. That this is a conversation with a dead person is the least strange one. The living soldier's discovery of something other than his own consciousness and the world he had been conscious of so far is the strangest. Between these two extremes lie more than one thing that is strange to the living soldier – the consciousness of the paradoxical nature of the relationship between one human and another, of the subversive ideology of war, of the religious dimension of war, of war being a metaphysical experience among, probably, others. Though it is possible to argue that Owen purposely used "strangeness" as an instrument (*karuvi*) to convey what he wanted to about war, it does not invalidate his central thesis – that modern war is anarchic.

This essay will neither elaborate on the consciousness of conversing with the dead nor the living soldier's new consciousness of war that subverts everything his predecessors and contemporaries had believed about war, nor of how hell and heaven are inseparable from the war effort nor of the imbrication of the non-material or metaphysical in war despite the perverse attempt on the part of the moderns to reduce war to sheer materiality.

The focus of this discussion will be the consciousness of something other than his own consciousness and the world as the content of that

consciousness, which validates the truth conveyed by the central thematic but paradoxical line of the poem, "I am the enemy you killed, my friend." A careful reading of the poem shows that the meaning of the paradox resides not wholly in the dead soldier though he is the one who says it. The proposition which underlies what the dead soldier wants to convey – "the enemy is a friend" is validated not wholly by the dead soldier who advances it, but by the living soldier as well as the teleological context they both share. In other words, all the three personae, the T, who says it, the M, who is the listener, as well as the P, which is the context will have to conjointly validate the proposition if it should be a true one. To put it differently, the living soldier's consciousness of listening to the idea that the enemy is, in fact, a friend is not wholly his own experience. When the dead soldier expresses this strange idea (which is now the content of his consciousness), the living soldier tries to understand it (or experience it as understanding). But the situation the paradoxical idea foresees cannot be reduced to the understanding of either of the two parties engaged in the conversation. The envisaged situation is a new relationship between the two parties (T and M) which must be their shared consciousness which derives its deeper meaning not just from what the dead soldier said, but what he did not. The non-dit refers to the normative friendly relationship (between people who inhabit two different territories), which temporarily turns into enmity when these territories are at war with each other. The enmity war creates has to be understood in light of the nature of war which, according to the dead soldier, is wasteful. Having wasted much of their spirit by pouring it into "the cess of war" (line 38), they need to salvage the situation by restoring the original normative friendly relationship between them. Apparently, the word "cess" is an abbreviated form of the word "cesspit," which makes it evident that the type of *pōr* in which the soldiers of the First World War were engaged was *alpōr*, a typical anarchic and negatively teleological one. But these ideas are more unsaid than said. But without them what the dead soldier says is not meaningful.

The generic idea of war and the particular war itself in which they wasted their spirit is now part of the P (context) they both share, which should make the envisaged situation friendly, must also be part of the consciousness of both T and M in order to realize the truth of the paradoxical idea.

Whether being conscious is what T does or has done, or the knowledge or skill T gains from doing something, it is all basically action. What happens to T is the latter's M; what T does or has done is also M, and what T thinks about and what T is skilled in or with is also the M involved in the action. As action involves all the three personae, the act of being conscious or experience is not wholly subjective but communitarian. It is communitarian because it involves all the three personae – T, M and P – who constitute a primordial micro-community. All actions are possible only within this micro-community.

As action involves all the three personae – T, M and P – T's involvement in action or how T regards its involvement in it alone is not the same as the action itself. As T is necessarily involved in action, being conscious of action is an inevitable part of the action itself. But when "being conscious" is seen as an independent category, outside its relation to action involving all the three personae, one is guilty of reductionism, which could be negatively teleological. Being conscious (in the form of memory or a strong feeling about something from a past action, or a prejudice or some such thing) is a part of the larger whole, namely, action, and one has to contextualize it and be empathetic so that one can account for M's involvement in it as fairly as possible. Discounting the involvement of M and P and regarding T's involvement as the action itself is tantamount not only to reductionism but also to falsification of the nature of action.

When the dead soldier expresses the idea that he and the living soldier (who had killed the former) are friends, the living soldier is involved in this action/conversation as the listener-M (of the speaker-T). This

involvement is the living soldier's (M's) experience, which complements the experience of the dead soldier's (T's). Without M's experience of listening to and validating what T says, T's experience of saying what he does is neither meaningful nor complete. As I tried to show earlier, validation requires not only M and T, but also the role of P, especially its teleological aspect – that everyone normatively enjoys friendly relationship even if they belong to different territories. This shows that the expression of the idea that even those who are made enemies by a war are, in fact, friends a priori is an action constituted by the experience of T and M as well as the P (context) they share. To say that the expression of this idea (which is, in fact, the action performed by the personaic community) is the subjective experience of T alone is to falsify the nature of the action or its experiential form or the nature of the act of being conscious at a particular time in a particular place.

The idea of normative friendliness between enemies in *alpōr* is a strange idea because the P of this type of *pōr* does not accommodate a value higher than survival. The destruction of the opponent, which is the objective of *alpōr*, cannot be legitimized by a value higher than survival because even such things as nationalism (Stallworthy 162) or progress are only illusory values of the warring parties. The conversation between the two soldiers clearly shows that industrialist war (*alpōr*) is wholly unjustifiable, futile and destructive inter-state activity. In such a scenario, the real motivation for war is destruction of the opponent and survival of the destroyer. Ironically, in light of the prioritization of the value of survival, the dead soldier's reconciliatory exhortation can only be meaningless. If the exhortation should be a meaningful one, one should postulate a value higher than survival. The strangeness of the exhortation of the dead soldier lies in sidestepping the overly prized value of survival and evoking a higher value, namely, friendliness.

Part of the meaning of the reconciliatory exhortation is conveyed by the gestures, postures, facial expressions and emotions of the speaker and the listener. Besides other things, the dead soldier's act of springing up (line

6), staring with piteous recognition in eyes (line 7), distressful hands, his gesture similar to *abhaya mudra* (line 8), his smile (line 9), and fear (line 11) contribute to the meaning of the envisaged future act of lying down and sleeping peacefully beside his former enemy. One cannot ignore the roles of tone**,** and emphasis in the truth-statement, "I am the enemy you killed, my friend." (line 40) and the accompanying physical expressions which colour the meaning. All of these and other such make the exhortation and the envisaged act of lying down to sleep the climactic scene of the drama of strange meeting that unfolds in an eerily multisensory manner -- at once visual, auditory, olfactory (blood and wound) and tactile (due to contact with the floor of hell, line 44).

Exhorting (and being exhorted by) an enemy to become one's friend and lie down beside himself (peacefully) is as much physical (particularly gestures and other such), and mental (an idea, a strange one though!) as axiological. While the physical and mental aspects of the exhortation are locatable to a great extent in the consciousness of T, and to some extent in that of M, the axiological aspect is primarily locatable only in P. Further, without the axiological aspect (of P), the other two could not only fail to make any sense but also miscommunicate the meaning they are expected to convey.

The proper locus of meaning and value is *va̲lakku* (or noble convention) which is a part of the collective mind of a community and such a mind is neither a part of T nor M but P. Even neologism (of T) is comprehensible or incomprehensible, and communicative (language) errors made by T are corrigible because any linguistic or semiotic attempt (of T) is understood only in relation to the semiotic (particularly, linguistic) conventions such as grammar and usage which are part of the collective mind. Similarly, the values that underlie any action involving the three personae (T, M and P) can be interpreted by T and M only in relation to the axiological aspect of P, not in terms of the individual interpretation by T or M. Just like how meaning is comprehensible and validated only in relation to the collective mind, which is a part of P, values are also

interpreted only in relation to the axiological part of P, which is commonly shared by both T and M. Because meaning and values are commonly shared, T and M could comprehend or not comprehend and validate (or not validate) meaninglessness, incorrect meaning, wrong prioritization and non-prioritization of the ultimate value. For example, both the soldiers engaged in conversation could comprehend each other and value friendliness as a normative and worthy value which can give a new direction to their relationship, and that is why the living soldier could validate the reconciliatory exhortation on the part of the dead soldier.

From what I have said so far about the nature of consciousness involving the three personae, the consciousness of T alone does not adequately represent what T underwent. Firstly, a single event need not impinge on the three personae who participate in it in the same way. Secondly, each persona's consciousness of the event is only a part of the whole consciousness which transcends the conscious horizon of each. If one were to take into account only T's consciousness (of something in the world) severing it from its organic relationship with the consciousness of the other two personae, T's consciousness could misrepresent the content of the consciousness. For example, the dead soldier's statement (made at the particular moment when it was made) could be misread as a threat rather than as a reconciliatory self-disclosure of identity. In other words, T's consciousness at this point of time could be misperceived as contemplation of revenge rather than reconciliation. That T means reconciliation rather than revenge is evident only when the reader understands the meaning of M and P (or what M and P are conscious of). This means that the nature of T's consciousness at a particular point of time is defined only by the nature of the consciousness/experience of M and P. Therefore, analysis of T's consciousness/experience alone is inadequate and futile.

The possibility of M's endorsement of how T is conscious of the situation hinges on P being the common axiological ground for both T and M. If

the living soldier should accept the invitation of the dead one to lie down peacefully, such acceptance will be determined only in reference to P. Unless both agree that the war they fought was *alpōr* (as it was a wasteful one), they cannot exonerate themselves from their past misguided life-choice. Now, their interpretation of the *alpōr* (which wasted their spirit) is based not on *alpōr* itself but on what *pōr* ought to be. Both understand the normative friendly relationship between the parties who engage in *pōr* not in terms of *alpōr* but how *pōr* could impact their normative relationship. They cannot understand the fact that friendly relationship does not rule out positive *pakai* (or conflictive relationship) without seeing inter-personaic relationship in relation to *mutal poruḷ* (love) which is an aspect of P. As love is the end of T's action, it cannot be reduced to T's experience.

In all the types of *pōr*, the *pakai* between T and M is neither wholly subjective nor subjectively plural (or intersubjective as in phenomenology) but communitarian involving the ontically continuous three personae, T, M and P. Therefore, war cannot be reduced to a phenomenon as it appears in the consciousness of T or T and M, or more than one T. This does not discount T's experience whether it is *pōr* or war. As *pōr* or war is action, it has to be understood in terms of all the causes of action – action (*pōr* or war; reconciliatory exhortation in "Strange Meeting"), agent (T), patient (M), instrument (a part of T), place, time, (T's) intention and end (ultimate end being love). I have tried to show how M's reconciliatory exhortation in "Strange Meeting" cannot be reduced to how T or M internalizes it. The exhortative action becomes meaningful and valuable only when it is understood (rationally), appreciated (emotionally) and accepted (volitionally) by both T and M. It is not enough to merely know that there was an exhortation; both parties have to emotionally welcome it without any apprehension, and have faith in the worth and (future) goodness that should unfold. As meaning, and value reside in P of the praxic community, without reference to P, either the reconciliatory exhortation itself or how one

internalizes it is meaningless, untrue and valueless. Further, action, particularly an exhortation, being interaction among the three personae, the meaning and value of the action cannot be located within a single persona such as T (the agent) but within the personaic community. Therefore, only an interpretive method that can account for the communitarian realization of action can adequately account for it; the phenomenological method is not one such.

NOTES

[1] In 1573 John Foxe seems to have first used the word “conscious” (*Acts and Monuments*) in English writings. As his use of the word retained its genealogical connection with the earlier word “conscience,” it means “awareness of one’s action or motive, especially, guilt. Subsequently, Archbishop James Ussher used the word “conscious” in 1613 in the phrase, "being so **conscious unto myself** of my great weakness" the word meant “knowing with.” In this case, the two knowing parties are the self and the spiritual authority. In 1642, Sir John Denham’s first loco-descriptive English poem, “Cooper’s Hill” used the word “conscious” in the sense of awareness of beings other than humans in his phrase “conscious groves” (“Thence to the coverts and the conscious groves” line 277). It is not difficult to see how Denham recaptures the original meaning, “knowing with” (Latin *conscientia*). In Hobbes’s *Leviathan* (1651), the word reappears thus: "Where two, or more men, know of one and the same fact, they are said to be conscious of it one to another" (shared knowledge sense; Hobbes, p. 50).

[2]experience, Ger. ***erfahrung***, literally driving through; *er*-, to attain, reach + *fahren*, to drive; attaining something by going through something, experience.

[3]relation, Ger. "***beziehung*****,**" from *beziehen*, to relate to, refer to, draw + *-ung*, a German suffix that changes verbs into abstract nouns = to draw toward, connect, relation.

[4]The English word “war” derives from Old High German *werran*, German *verwirren*, to confuse, to perplex, but ultimately from the PIE *wers*, which means ‘“to confuse,” “to mix up,” suggesting the original sense was to bring into confusion.’ (https://www.etymonline.com/word/war). The Germanic war word is the source of the Spanish, Portugese, and Italian war words. But the Latin *bellum* has a different history. Though it is related to the form *bello*- which means “beautiful,” such English words as “belligerent” and “bellicose” which derive from *bellum* do not retain the original association with beauty. Considering the paradoxical meanings of the old Tamil word “*pōr*,” which means both union and conflict, and that of the Latin *bellum*, all languages could have had such words.

[5]Robert Graves, “A Dead Boche”

To you who’d read my songs of War
And only hear of blood and fame,
I’ll say (you’ve heard it said before)
”War’s Hell!” and if you doubt the same,
Today I found in Mametz Wood
A certain cure for lust of blood:
Where, propped against a shattered trunk,
In a great mess of things unclean,
Sat a dead Boche; he scowled and stunk
With clothes and face a sodden green,
Big-bellied, spectacled, crop-haired,
Dribbling black blood from nose and beard. (1916).

[6]Simon Fuller’s book, *The Poetry of War* has a section entitled. “The Semantic Field of War” (page 126) in which he lists the different types of *karuvi* (instruments, strategies, contending mode) that were used in different periods of English history. This list could help understand the difference between the three types of *pōr* I discuss, I reproduce the information Fuller provides.

Anglo-Saxon: Bow, arrow, sword, shield, spear, fight, weapon

Middle-English: castle, army, navy, battle, war, peace, enemy, fighter, ambush, armour, artillery, cross-bow, lance, pike, pole-axe, hauberk, buckler, mace, gun, admiral, skirmish, archer, soldier, spy, chivalry (cavalry)

c. 1500-1549: trench, longbow, ordnance, redcoat, cannon, armada, harquebus, salvo, hussar

c. 1550-1599: mortar, bomb, bombardier, pistol, petard, infantry, fireship, calibre, volley

c. 1600-1649: grenade, musket, missile, rocket, carbine

c. 1650-1699: bayonet, blunderbus, shell, recruit, grenadier

c. 1700-1749: armament, howitzer, salute (artillery), blockade, press gang

c. 1750-1799: uniform, civilian, manoeuvre, grapeshot, rifle, martinet

c. 1800-1849: guerilla, torpedo, shrapnel, diehard

c. 1850-1899: balaclava, cardigan, raglan, jingoism, Gatling gun,

machine gun, mine (naval), magenta, solferino, war widow, Maxim gun, mauser, Red Cross, Tommy (Atkins), battleship, submarine, hand grenade

c. 1900-1949: concentration camp, khaki, mafick, submarine, destroyer, sam browne, tank, air-raid, bomber, fighter, strafe, depth charge, anti-aircraft, aircraft carrier, D-day, atomic bomb, camouflage, zeppelin, U-boat, flame-thrower, poison gas, rocketry, Hitler, scorched earth, total war, blitz, flak, ack-ack, prang, fire bomb, doodlebug, guided missile, ground/air-to-air missile, bren, sten, snafu, napalm, nuclear bomb, warhead, ground zero, paratroop, G. I. Joe, holocaust, Quisling, Resistance

c. 1950-1989: Cold War, Iron Curtain, bazooka, silo, defoliation, air support, pacification, Exocet, hear-seeking missile, neutron bomb, chemical warfare

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