

Relations of Ideas and Matters of Fact: David Hume

Sanjay Sau

Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Shahid Matangini Hazra Government General Degree College for Women

Chaksrikrisnapur, Kulberia

Purba Medinipur

Abstract: Hume's Fork—the separation of “family members of ideas” and “matters of truth” supplied in his first Enquiry—is broadly diagnosed, yet appeared through many expert students as a simplistic discount of the tons more complicated idea of members of the family in his Treatise. However, an indepth examination of the Treatise principle well-known shows it to be a deficient reinterpretation of Locke's classification, unconvincingly associating relations with cognitive methods and supplying a muddled preferred of demonstrability that Hume later discards in Favor of his Conceivability Principle. The latter subsequently serves as the foundation for Hume's Fork, a principle that, as implicitly described by using the numerous standards he outlines, is found out to be consistent and reasonable. Nevertheless, it confronts several possible troubles, a number of which Hume could have been expected to tackle, even as others—specially referring to his inclination to associate apriority, demonstrability, and necessity—stem from enormously cutting-edge Epistemology, Philosophy of Language, and Philosophy of Mathematics. All of these factors are taken into consideration, with a few necessitating a refinement of Hume's distinction, whilst others recommend constraints. In this paper I shall attempt to explain nature of Hume's propositions.

Keywords: Relation, ideas, Fact, Hume's Fork and a priori

In the realm of philosophy, David Hume holds a sizeable vicinity nowadays. His brilliance as a philosopher and uniqueness as a logician have been identified through various philosophers with exceptional temperaments. Husserl, logical positivists, and others have acknowledged their debt to Hume. Keynes also expresses admiration for Hume's essential examination, which in reality indicates the unpromising nature of the inductive technique. However, the maximum splendid acknowledgment of recognition in all likelihood comes from no less a logician than Kant. Kant acknowledges that it changed into Hume who woke up him from his 'dogmatic shut eye'.

Hume, in his Enquiry, starts off evolved with a key differentiation among sorts of reasoning: 'Relations of Ideas' and 'Matters of truth.' This differentiation - called 'Hume's Pork' - is critical as it lays the foundation for Hume's later presentation of his unique attitude on the essence of causal relationships. It ought to be observed that this differentiation, even though clear and focused in the Enquiry, isn't always completely absent in his previous Treatise. In Section V of Book I of the Treatise, Hume makes a difference between the two meanings of the time period 'relation.' Initially, relation can denote "the feature via which standards are related within the

thoughts" by the inherent mechanism of affiliation, such that "one clearly ends in the alternative." Hume refers to those as natural members of the family and identifies 3 distinct sorts: resemblance, proximity in time or area, and purpose and effect. Hume refers to 'philosophical relations' that emerge from the evaluation of ideas, rather than herbal relations. In this 2d sense, thoughts are connected no longer thru association (as in the sooner case), but with the aid of the tendency of the mind to attract comparisons between them. Hume notes seven distinct sorts of philosophical relations, namely 'resemblance, identity, relations of time.'¹

In *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Section IV Part I, David Hume discusses the core of his philosophy, providing the quoted excerpt: "All the objects of human reason or enquiry can naturally be classified into two categories, Relations of Ideas, and Matters of Fact.

In Section IV the serious business of the Enquiry begins, and Hume presents his most celebrated argument, the sceptical argument Introduction xxxv 20 In the Treatise Hume had used the Copy Principle to dismiss a fair number of supposedly bogus ideas, for example material substance (T 1.1.6.1), existence (T 1.2.6.2–5), solidity (T 1.4.4.12–14), mental substance (T 1.4.5.3–4), and the self 'as something simple and individual' (Appendix, 11). concerning what he calls 'reasoning concerning matter of fact', but we shall call 'factual reasoning' for short. First, however, there is a vital preliminary. In the first two paragraphs of Section IV, Hume introduces a distinction of enormous importance, between 'relations of ideas' and 'matters of fact' (a distinction commonly known as 'Hume's Fork')²

For Hume distinguishes among 'family members of thoughts' and 'topics of fact,' a idea widely recognized today as Hume's Fork. It is a key difference in Hume's epistemology, and one that he employs with widespread argumentative effect. Certain pupils, inclusive of David Hume in his *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Section IV Part I, elucidate the core of his philosophy, in which we find out this quoted passage: "All the gadgets of human purpose or enquiry may also evidently be divided into kinds, Relations of Ideas, and Matters of Fact." Here we observe Hume differentiating among 'family members of thoughts' and 'matters of reality,' typically noted today as Hume's Fork.

This distinction is vital to Hume's concept of expertise and is one he employs with enormous persuasive impact. It is much less commonly a term once in a while used for the dilemma that both our movements are predetermined or that they rise up from random occurrences. Certain students similarly increase this difference to wider domains of his philosophy, categorizing them all inside the framework of Hume's Fork. They contend that his fork's description aligns with three wonderful distinctions that maintain significance in analytic philosophy. Although not stated virtually, Hume's fork reveals three differences:

¹ Cf. Chakrabarti, Tapan Kumar, *Humes theory of causality*, University of Calcutta, pp. 2-3

² Peter Millican, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, Oxford University Press, pp-xxxv-xxxvi

analytic/synthetic, necessary/contingent, and a priori/a posteriori. The importance of Hume's fork is living no longer simply in its clear exposition, however also occupies a principal function in Hume's philosophy. It is the root of Hume's skepticism, which specifically outlines the limits of the extent of deductive reasoning that had formerly been evident. Hume's good judgment advancing from the fork is in reality prepared. After stating that the proof we possess for actual topics is extensively extraordinary from what we've got for relationships among ideas, he continues to explain that our conclusions regarding Authentic subjects are derived from that proof via causal reasoning. This offers a greater thorough description of what exists on each aspects of this important comparison, and what Hume presents here surpasses any previous rationalization.

Let us take a moment to observe what Kant refers to with the terms Relations of Ideas and Matters of Fact. In his *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Section IV, Part I, Hume asserts that “the first category includes the sciences of Geometry, Algebra, and Arithmetic; and, in precis, every statement that is both intuitively or demonstratively positive. The assertion that the square of the hypotenuse equals the sum of the squares of the 2 aspects describes a dating between these shapes. That 3 instances five equals fifteen, that's 1/2 of thirty, indicates a relationship amongst those values. Such propositions can be uncovered completely via the act of wondering, independently of whatever that exists in the universe. Although circles and triangles do now not exist in nature, the truths established via Euclid will continually maintain their fact and validity.

The Matters of truth, which are the second items of human purpose, cannot be reached in the equal way. However, this does not imply that the problem of truth is unfeasible; alternatively, it's far totally viable and does no longer entail a contradiction. The thoughts have the capacity to recognize it honestly and rather. The opposite of each truth can nonetheless arise without being incongruous. The instance beneath is referenced by using Hume to clarify his definition of Matters of truth. “The sun will now not rise day after today” does now not gift a contradiction compared to the declare that “The sun will upward push day after today.” Therefore, any try to refute it will likely be deemed unnecessary because it isn't always eight in reality unfaithful. Therefore, we examine on this instance that “The sun will no longer upward thrust the next day” is similarly a count number of fact as its contrary is. Hume asserts that any examination referring to the Matter of reality need to be founded on the relationship among cause and effect, as this relation is what transcends our sensory reports and recollections.³

According to Hume, the understanding of cause and effect is not acquired a priori but instead stems from experience. For example, an individual who discovers a watch or a comparable item in a remote desert would instantly assume that there were individuals residing in that area. A link exists between the current reality and our deductions derived from it. The inference becomes invalid if there is no common element linking them, meaning causes and

³ Cf. Chakrabarti, Tapan Kumar, Humes theory of causality, University of Calcutta, pp. 4-5

Results are revealed now not thru reasoning but via enjoy. This leads us to finish that every effect is a separate prevalence from its cause and is thus autonomous. We have previously located how the principles are connected to each other and that a relationship exists among them. Hume questions the affect from which the idea of causation arises. To start with, the so-called 'reasons' can not function the supply of the idea of causation due to the fact we cannot become aware of any characteristic this is shared among them. Therefore, there is no belief that aligns with the concept of causality. If that's the case, wherein does this belief of causality originate inside the thoughts? Hume argues that the idea of causality emerges within the thoughts whilst we take a look at precise connections among items. When we discuss motive and impact, we mean that 'A' results in 'B'. What type of dating does this advise exists among 'A' and 'B'? Hume condenses this precept of affiliation between them into three. The initial kind of relation that Hume discusses is Contiguity, indicating that 'A' and 'B' are continually close to each other. By this, Hume does not imply that the gadgets we regard as reasons and outcomes are always closely adjoining.

For example, if we examine Cause 'A' and its impact 'Z', then 'A' and 'Z' aren't at once adjoining; as an alternative, we are able to discover that 'A' and 'B', 'B' and 'C' are adjoining. This process will hold, allowing us to realise the connection among Cause 'A' and effect 'Z'. The 2nd type of dating that Hume discusses is the 'Temporal precedence'. This suggests that the motive, 'A', is continually timewise before the effect, and the cause and effect cannot arise simultaneously. If all consequences take place simultaneously with the purpose, then there's no manner to speak about one component happening after some other. This takes place due to the observation that 'A' is continually succeeded by 'B'. The second sort of reasoning, especially regarding factual troubles, Hume attributes to the connection between purpose and impact. The truths related to this, but, differ from those about members of the family of thoughts; first of all, these truths aren't a priori but as an alternative a posteriori. They can best be found or determined out via experience and not just via 'the easy functioning of our motive without experience.' Additionally, in evaluation to the previous, the alternative of each depend of reality can be imagined by means of the thoughts with 'ease and readability.' Their opposites, as Hume himself notes, do now not entail self-contradiction, "That the sun will now not upward push tomorrow is just as understandable a announcement and entails no extra contradiction than claiming that it will rise." What Hume aims to convey here is that stating the sun will not rise tomorrow does not involve any logical contradiction.⁴

Hume's Fork—his differentiation between “relations of ideas” and “matters of fact”—is rightly renowned and commonly recognized as a significant precursor to the well-known modern analytic/synthetic distinction. Considering Hume's inclination to regard ideas as the sources of meaning, the phrase “relations of ideas” implies something akin to “truth based on meaning”. The logical positivists, drawing from Hume to develop this contemporary idea of analyticity, regarded it as the sole valid basis for necessity or apriority, making Hume's Fork seem like a

⁴ Cf. egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/38466/1/Unit-3.pdf p. 7

clear and sophisticated precursor to the linking of the three concepts: Relations of Ideas that are either intuitively or demonstratively certain. Such propositions can be found simply through the act of thinking, independent of anything that exists in the universe. Matters of fact, the second objects of human reason, are not determined in the same way. The opposite of each fact remains possible; as it can never suggest a contradiction.

The final sentence indicates that Hume employs this distinction by and large to outline the boundaries of what may be established or, in current language, proved deductively. However, this well-known excerpt is from the Enquiry concerning Human Understanding posted in 1748, and Hume's Fork isn't always articulated in something akin to those phrases in his Treatise of Human Nature from 1739. In that context, a complicated concept of "philosophical family members" serves a comparable characteristic, although it differs substantially in specifics. This brings up a vital interpretative problem: is Hume's Fork, as outlined in the Enquiry, an alternative to his Treatise principle of philosophical family members, or merely a simplification.

As indicated by the ultimate sentence, Hume employs this difference to serve the crucial characteristic of defining the quantity of what may be established, or in contemporary language, deduced. However, this well-known excerpt originates from the Enquiry concerning Human Understanding published in 1748, and Hume's Fork is not articulated in similar terms in his Treatise of Human Nature from 1739. In that context, a complicated principle of "philosophical members of the family" fulfils a similar characteristic, even though it varies appreciably in specifics. This results in a widespread interpretative inquiry: does Hume's Fork, as mentioned within the Enquiry, serve instead for his Treatise concept of philosophical connections, or is it a simplification? Hume starts off evolved his discussion of members of the family by means of highlighting a large ambiguity, distinguishing among "relation" interpreted in a natural or a philosophical context: The term relation is frequently hired in two meanings which are quite wonderful from each other. Either due to that exceptional thru which ideas are linked within the thoughts, wherein one naturally ends in another as defined earlier; or because of the precise scenario wherein, even with the arbitrary aggregate of two thoughts in the imagination, we can also find it appropriate to compare them.⁵

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