

**HUME’S IDEA OF NECESSARY CONNECTION
A POSITIVE VIEW AGAINST THE TRADITIONAL MISUNDERSTANDING**

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1. Introduction:

This paper reveals the positive view of Hume’s idea of necessary connection. Hume is the last philosopher of empiricist triumvirate. If anybody understands Hume’s Philosophy he can have ability to understand other philosophers as he explain his ideas in different ways in different context. Silbi-begie an important editor of Hume’s works states that “HUME’s philosophic writings are to be read with great caution. His pages, especially those of the *Treatise*, are full of matters, he says so many different things in so many different ways and different connections...it is very hard to say positively that he taught, or did not teach, this or that particular doctrine” (E: vii). Prichard explains that sometimes his way of expression make the readers angry as the ideas are in complexity. He says that ‘to my mind the *Treatise* is one of the most tedious of books, and close examination of it renders me not sceptical but angry. Of course, there is great deal of cleverness in it, but the cleverness is only that of extreme ingenuity or perversity, and the ingenuity is only exceeds by the perversity (Prichard: 174).

In the history of western philosophy, we consider Kant, Hegel and Spinoza are the philosophers who introduce abstruse philosophy. But for Vinding Kruse and Passmore Hume is more complex than others. For John Passmore ‘Hume is one of the most exasperating of philosophers. Each separate sentence in his writings –with very few exceptions- is admirable in its lucidity: the tangled syntax and barbarous locutions, which bedevil the reader of Kant and Hegel are completely absent (Passmore:01). Vinding Kruse is a Danish scholar who states that ‘Hume was a far more complex, versatile, and ambitious character than, for instance, Kant or Spinoza. He combined two glaring contrasts: he was not only, like theses, a great solitary thinker, knowing but one purpose, the realization of truth; he was, indeed, a man with many irons in the fire, a man with divers aims” (Quoted by Mossner in Chappell:09). I merely present these quotes in order to introduce that Hume’s philosophy can be understood with caution and view of scrutinity.

It is evitable to clear the meaning of causation and related terms for better comprehension as it confuses us. Considering the length of the paper it is described in nutshell view. Causalism or causal determinism is a doctrine and it holds that there is universal validity of causal principle. It asserts that there is nothing without cause. The other one is causal principle or causal law, which constructs law of causation. It holds that the same cause produce the same effects. The other

fundamental element is the term causation which focuses on causal nexus (Bunge, M:1962:4). This is the necessary connection from which other all ideas come out. Philosophers and scientists have disputed on this through the ages. Hume as well focused on the idea of causation and even it is being discussed. Hume attempted to discuss this based on experience and scientific nature.

As we have seen Hume's intentions are twofold in forming his philosophical sketches. One is that he has strong belief on science and its method so that he expects that all other subjects including moral sciences should have scientific base. According to him there is no such certainty in moral sciences. We cannot have the clear idea and the idea never remains the same. For Hume the chief obstacle to the improvement in the moral or metaphysical sciences, is the obscurity of the ideas, ambiguity of the terms" (E: 62)**. He agrees that there is a difference between natural science and moral science. We can perceive, without ambiguity, the same ideas and objects in the same way without any change. This is possible only in natural sciences. The terms and things are clear and determinate. Even the smallest distinction can be perceptible without variation. For instance we never confuse circle with oval or hyperbola. In some sciences like geometry we understand things by their definition or else we understand and comprehend by presenting the object to the senses. The second is refuting rationalist view that knowledge is inherent human and he has knowledge when he is born. In addition, his method is based on induction. Based on the condition and influence he attempts to form the idea of necessary connection.

2. Fundamental of his philosophical elements

Those who read Hume understand that he denies causation the cause is not the precedent of the effect and believes he denies that there is connection between the cause and effect. This what I try to deny he never rejects. His causal analysis is not about logical subtleties. The ordinary employment of the tern necessary connection is what? One event X causes the other event Y, we see these X and Y are constantly conjoined. Then we teach ourselves X is necessary connection to the event Y. Whenever we see Y, without any empirical consideration we assume that there is X as Y is considered as effect. We understand there is a logical tie between the two. I argue that Hume rejects our unreasonable expectation but he did not say the tie is impossible. It will be possible some other way. He says according to this is superfluous expectation, we make mistake. He explained this in his *Abstract* (A: 652) by exemplifying the strike of billiard ball. By all these, Hume accepts necessary connection not as logical tie, but an empirical evidence. To understand this concept we have to understand his theory of idea as he does not entertain metaphysical views of language. According to Hume terms should be considered as empirical. He emphasizes to understand what is 'idea' of certain word.

According to Hume nothing is possible without impression. He argues that if we really want to talk about necessary connection, 'we must find some impression'. When we talk about a relation of cause and effect, what actually happens in the

phenomenon and what happens in the thinking? In order to explain this and to comprehend this principle, we have to reveal two realms. One: We observe numerous instances as pairs of events, in which one come after another. Our mind immediately comprehend the as cause and effect. If one event precedes the other we call, in spatiotemporally, the first as cause and the others effect. Hume's strongest position is that we are unable to go further to our senses or we cannot find the third invisible idea from one or two instances. How do we come to know the idea? We see numerous sufficient instances where I can find such objects of being in the relations of contiguity and succession. We can find only the repetition comes in the instances and we can find now new idea. He argues that he is able to find that the every particular instance is not the same. But he is able to find that this collection of perception produces 'a new impression', the idea of necessary connection. That is to say that by this habit 'the mind is determined by custom to consider its usual attendant, and to consider it in a stronger light upon account of its relation to the first object. 'Tis this impression, then, or determination, which affords mew the idea of necessity (T: 15)***. Here we are unable to understand properly or we understand wrongly something due to the obscurity of the ideas and ambiguity of terms. Because Hume believes 'disputes are multiplied, as if everything was uncertain; and these disputes are managed are managed with the greatest warmth, as if everything was certain' (T:xvi). Hence he attempted to find elements in ideas, which is certain.

Hume's intention, as we hold, was to refute Cartesians' innate ideas from which they posulate the idea of necessary connection. Idea of necessary connection is one, of which philosopher disputes and confronted. Most of them, according to Hume, misinterpreted it and mislead us. He denies the philosophers in the way they interpret. These philosophers, mainly Cartesians held the view of entailment theory, which called the view that there is a logical tie between cause and effect. The tie is permanent and it is the necessary connection with the cause. It seems like a logical connection in syllogistic mode. If men are mortal then if A is a man he is mortal. Therefore this kind of explanation is arbitrary and misleading. Necessary connection does not ever exist logical tie. He denies this type of connection. He holds the view that we reason beyond our immediate impression, and conclude that such particular causes must have such particular effects. (T:155) He believes only the sense perception. Though he denies this connection and relies only on sense perception, he affirms that " we must find some impression, that gives rise to this idea of necessity" (T155) we can see how he interprets it.

As we know, he puts forward three elements in connection with causation. Hume believes that there is no single quality (which universally belongs to all beings) to designate them as cause and effect, he concludes that idea of causation must be derived from some relation among objects. (T :75) These relations are contiguity, priority in time and necessary connections. According to Hume an object may be contiguous and prior to another, without being considered as cause. There is a NECESSARY CONNECTION to be taken into consideration; and that relation is of

much greater importance, than any of the other two above mentioned. (E 77) Hence he is relating that necessary connections is more important than other two for the exact interpretation of causation. Even there is some textual evidence, we can understand his idea by understanding his whole philosophy. As Bauchamp mentions (Bauchamp:5) by taking nontextual considerations we can reduce the tensions of the disputes.

Hume attempted to alternative instead of logical tie between cause and effect as he is very confidently holds the view that the idea of necessary connection is not ever-existing logical tie. Therefore we can conclude that he accepts that we have a belief that there is a connection between the cause and the correspondent effect. How does it happen? This happens in spacio-temporal basis. In these circumstances, he attempts to find 'what is our idea of necessity, when we say that two objects are necessarily connected together' (T: 155). Hume additionally gives emphasis on internal senses, which, as he considers, can have freedom to think without any bound. With these senses and the complex ideas, he intends to find the 'power'. He argues that we can have chances to think about the 'power and efficacy' by complex ideas, by which we can find some 'hints'. When we analyse within the mind about these ideas, we find impressions with great certainty from which it may be possibly be derived.

At the outset of his *Treatise* and even in his *Abstract*, Hume expresses his antipathy on abstruse philosophers, and in the matter of necessary connection, he expresses the same. For Hume, the terms *efficacy, power, force, energy, necessity, connexion, and productive quality, are all nearly synonyms* (T: 157). If we define one of them, it will be applicable to the rest. According to Hume, philosophers, previously, have defined the terms like efficacy and power without finding their respective impressions. Especially Locke, as Coventry states, (Coventry.A: 90) causal power make us to think the connection. This is impossible according to Hume's idea of impressions. If these terms are complex the meaning should be derived from complex impressions and if they are simple, they should be derived from simple impressions. But we are unable to show any impressions of these ideas. For Hume, having the idea of logical tie is meaningless or misconception unless we find any kind of impression.

Hume gives this in a simple positive way. 'Suppose two objects to be presented to us, of which the one is cause and the other the effect'. We never see the tie, from this single instance, by which they are united. So 'we should never be able to form any such ideas'. But again; suppose we observe several instances, in which the same objects are always conjoin'd together, we immediately conceive a connexion betwixt them and begin to draw an inference from one to another' (T: 162-163). From these several instances Hume attempts to find the power. He asserts that this multiplicity of resembling instances. Constitutes the very essence of power or connection, and is the source from which the idea of it arises' (T: 163). But we want to know the very essence of power from multiplicity. Suffice the first principle- the

copy thesis- this idea is not a new original idea, like in the copy principle. 'The repetition of perfectly similar instances can never alone give rise to an original idea'. But he holds the strong view that this repetition either discovers or produces something new. This new essence is the source of the idea of necessary connection.

Hume explains how these events make us to think about the efficacy or necessary connection. He gives a flow of steps how 'we perceive this idea'. In the first instance he postulates that the simple view of any two objects or actions, however related, can never give us any idea of power, or connexion between them. It arises only from the repetition of union. But this repetition neither discovers nor produces anything new in the objects. Despite we assert that there nothing is discovered, something happens. This repetition has influenced the mind, by that customary transition it produces. He concludes that this customary transition is the same with the power and necessity. This power we derive from the customary transition is not the matter of objects, but of mind, that is 'quality of perceptions, not of objects'. These perceptions are internally felt by the soul. Human being has the habit of astonishing things. Astonishment changes our mind to accept or refute a certain thing. In the act of getting the idea of necessary connection it does work.

For Hume mental propensity is a foremost element in the act of forming idea in the soul. He argues that 'the mind haws a great propensity to spend itself an external objects, and to conjoin with them any internal impression' (T: 167). Whenever the similar act is performed, this propensity functions in the senses. It discovers the idea in the objects by collecting the qualities of the object. Suppose, we sometimes, state that these things are there exist before inventing because of respective (co-existing) smell and sound are exist. We do, because we have already conjoined with them with some 'visible objects. We, in this regard, naturally imagine a conjunction between the objects and the qualities even though there is no such a conjunction, and really exist nowhere'. But we, naturally, take the propensity as a sufficient reason for such apprehension because of the similarity in qualities and contiguity in place and time. We, here, suppose the necessity and power to lie in the objects, not as in the mind. Whenever we find this conjunction, our mind carries the idea from the apprehension to the object.

We see many instances as singular ones and sometimes-complex ones. We observe, among the objects, one object follow the other. We never conclude that one is the cause and the other which follows the first, is the effect form the single instance. If it is a permanent tie, it should be, we could be able to understand it in the first instance. Hume exemplifies that 'the impulse of one billiard-ball is attended with the motion in the second. This is the whole that appears to the *outward* senses. The mind feels no sentiment or inward impression from this succession of objects (E:63). Based on this example, he concludes that singular instances – do not make us to comprehend idea of power or necessary connection. From the first appearance, we never predict the effect. If the power is discoverable in could foresee the effect.

The nature is not like this. We cannot foresee anything like necessary connection by a mere dint of thought and reasoning.

Hume intends to find the alternative way to find the 'internal structure' of the mind, which supposed to produce new idea. He attempts by his definition of cause. Because, we have fault in finding this since we use mere inference, which seems to be in 'preposterous manner'. By giving exact definition, we can correct the error and find the new idea of what it is. As we know, he presents two definitions. He replaces the second definition in order to fill the gab in the first definition. For Hume, the first definition is based on external objects and drawn 'from objects foreign to the cause'. Hence he definitely expects that this definition is defective since it covers only the external phenomenon and appearance. Hence, he substitutes the other. It is actually, for Hume, suitable to understand the idea of necessary connection since it relates the mental realm. We observe objects seem as pairs several times as in the same relation in order of contiguity and succession. We find 'constant conjunction' as a common element in the process of observation. This is not a matter of mere reasoning but a mean of custom, 'which determines the imagination to make a transition from the idea of one object to that of its usual attendant, and from the impression of one to a more lively idea of the other' (T: 170). Hence, this mental process of making idea brings the new idea, which we call 'the idea of necessity'.

When we see things, we derive a common feature and consequently we find the existence of the said connection. But we fail to see actually what is in real nature. For Hume actually there is no 'part of nature', which never 'discover any power or energy, or give us ground to imagine, that it could produce anything, or be followed by any other object, which we could denominate its effect' (E: 63). Though some qualities like motion, solidity and extension are complete in themselves, they never point out 'any other event, which may result from them'. We all know the universe is in continuous function and there are some functions in its order as one follows the other. Bu we cannot see any power, or any energy, which operates the succession. He argues that 'we know, that, in fact, heat is a consistent attendant of flame; but what is the connection between them we have to room so much as to conjuncture or imagine. It is impossible, therefore, that the idea of power can be derived from the contemplation of bodies, in single instances of their operation; because no bodies ever discover any power which can be the original idea of this idea' (E: 64). Hume's such denial is not his ultimate conclusion of his idea. Mainly, scholars take up this claim as the final conclusion and interpret that Hume denied the idea of necessary connection. He denies the way by which we attempt to conclude. Instead, he intends to substitute the alternative method to prove this concept.

As he assented, the only reliable mean is experience. He has proved that by experiencing the external objects, we cannot see any connection, or this habit of seeing external objects 'give us no idea of power or necessary connection. Hence, he thinks to see an alternative that 'whether this idea be derived from reflection on the operation of our own minds, and be copied from internal impression' (E: 64).

We, for clear understanding, have to see, how we get this internal impression and its correspondent idea and how our mind works. This explanation is very important to understand Hume. According to Hume, ‘we are every moment conscious of internal power. We have a command of will and by that we direct our mind. Hence, “An act of volition produces motion in our limbs, or raises a new idea in our imagination” (E: 64). We can understand this will, by our consciousness, we acquire the idea of power or energy and we possess this idea of power. Hence, “this idea, then, is an idea of reflection, since it arises from reflecting on the operations of our own mind” (E: 4). This comes, according to Hume, by ‘our organs of the body and faculties of the soul’. This is Hume’s finding of inter-factions in the soul and the exposition its effects.

Hume’s total argument with regard to power is this: it is true that we derive ideas of many things such as soul, causal power and the so forth. For him, things like soul are production of something out of nothing. Some similar ideas also generated by the mind based on its will. Causal connection as well, is not generated by reasoning but by experience. We know that we can study well in the morning than in the evening. The sick man can work less than the man in good health and the like. We should understand how we comprehend such ideas and also we should know is there any fixed norm which make us to think as such. These are come to our mind only by experience. This is appropriate to the idea of power or causal connection. Our mind consists of mechanism to think in such way. The cause and effect and its ‘connection’ is wholly depend on a “secret Mechanism” which is entirely unknown to us. These circumstances make us to think and comprehend the power by our sole empirical understanding.

When we analyse how we get this experience and on what this function depends, we can get an answer, according to Hume, is volition. “Volition is surely an act of mind, which we are sufficiently acquired. As we understood this volition functions, not solely on reasoning, it also requires empirical base. From the experience, it is capable of creating new idea. We observe number of instances in the external world, and synthesise these instances. For these syntheses, the mind takes the common features that appear in objects. The mind, in its volition, creates the new idea from the features. Because of volition, mind produce the idea of necessary connection. According to him ‘frequent *conjunction* of objects which we perceive through our long experience, we are able to comprehend anything like *connexion* between them’ (E: 70). Any two objects seen constantly, we perceive these as impression of reflection from which we perceive idea of necessary connection

3. Conclusion:

1. Pervious philosophers ascertained, including Cartesians, knowledge in inborn and ideas are innate. According to their philosophy necessary connection is one of the ideas, which inhere as logical tie. He refutes the idea that necessary connection is not a logical tie derived by intuition or demonstration. But he accepts that there is connection between cause and effect.

2. If any idea is coming to exist there must be an impression of it. If there is no impression, there is no idea. Basically he did not say directly there is impression of necessary connection. He states that 'the idea of necessity arises from some impression. There is no impression conveyed by our senses, which can give rise to that idea. It must, therefore, be derived from some internal impression, or impression of reflection (T: 15).
3. Hume affirms and accept that necessary connection does exist (E:77). In an action we seen this productive of one from other in the context of contiguity and succession. But it cannot be explained by intuition or demonstration.
4. Necessary connection in the objects is a function of regular patterns of behaviour. This happens as the collectives of constant conjunction. We can't conceive any causal necessity in the behaviour, but we believe. The regular patterns are not accidental, hence there is permanent tie.
5. The repetition in action makes to think about a power, which produce something new. This power is possible due to customary transition, which produce the connection. This connection is possible and exists.

4. References:

HUME'S works:

*'A' in the parentheses refers *An Abstract of the Treatise of Human Nature*. In the text it is mentioned as '*Abstract*' which is in Selby-Bigge edition, revised edition: David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, edited by L.A.Selby-Bigge, revised by P.H.Nidditch, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989.

**In the parenthesis E stands for the *Enquiry Concerning Human understanding* In the text it is mentioned as '*Understanding*' which is in Selby-Bigge edition, edited by L.A.Selby-Bigge, revised by P.H.Nidditch, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1975.

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