This book carries forward the discourse on the mind’s engagement with the world. It reviews the semantic and metaphysical debates around internalism and externalism, the location of content and the indeterminacy of meaning in language.

The volume analyzes the writings of Jackson, Chomsky, Putnam, Quine, Bilgrami and others, to reconcile opposing theories of language and the mind. It ventures into Cartesian ontology and Fregean semantics to understand how mental content becomes world-oriented in our linguistic communication. Further, the author explores the liaison between the mind and the world from the phenomenological perspective, particularly, Husserl’s linguistic turn and Heidegger’s intersubjective entreaty for Dasein. The book conceives of thought as a biological and socio-linguistic product which engages with the mind-world question through the conceptual and causal apparatuses of language.

A major intervention in the field of philosophy of language, this book will be useful for scholars and researchers interested in philosophy, phenomenology, epistemology and metaphysics.

Sanjit Chakraborty is currently a teaching faculty in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Indian Institute of Management, Indore, and has been a member of the faculty at the Department of Philosophy at Central University of Hyderabad, India. He is the author of Understanding Meaning and World: A Relook on Semantic Externalism (2016). He has also extensively published papers in journals and edited volumes on the philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, ethics, epistemology and Indian philosophy.
‘Since Descartes the relationship between mind and world has been the central problem of philosophy. There have been many attempts to soften or undercut the dualist picture that sees our public and linguistic behaviour as no more than an indication of a hidden, interior world of consciousness. None have commanded general assent, but in this ambitious and learned book, *The Labyrinth of Mind and World: Beyond Internalism – Externalism*, Sanjit Chakraborty reviews many of these attempts, and weaves a careful and rich tapestry taking insights from many of the most important writers in both the phenomenological and the analytic traditions. To do so is a major achievement, that will provide a landmark for all future work on the issue.’

– Simon Blackburn, Emeritus Professor, University of Cambridge

‘In this book Chakraborty takes a unique approach to matters of intentionality, one which attempts to combine the phenomenological method with insights from externalist philosophy of language. This will be of interest to those interested in the nature of mental representation.’

– Sanford Goldberg, Professor of Philosophy, Northwestern University
The Labyrinth of Mind and World
Beyond Internalism–Externalism

Sanjit Chakraborty
In memory of Chottosona, a dream about reality!
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The Vedic conception of *panča rṇa* (five kinds of human indebtedness) holds a significant value in my life. Personally, I adjourn my belief in the debts to the *dev rṇa* while the rest of the four (*rishi, pitri, nri, bhuta*) *rnas* certainly have a pragmatic value in my life. The *rnas* enthused me to engage with the big challenge to pursue my work on the topic of *The Labyrinth of Mind and World: Beyond Internalism–Externalism*.

My great pleasure is to remember the first *rishi rṇa* (debts to guru or mentor) to the late Professor Hilary Putnam, Harvard University, whom I not only consider as my guru (mentor) but an unvarying stimulus in my works. The impetus and the dedication for the philosophical works and thoughts of mine are highly nourished by the constant loving inspiration, encouragement and trenchant guidance of my mentor Hilary Putnam. I happily remember the philosophical inputs of Noam Chomsky, Simon Blackburn, Sanford Goldberg, Frank Jackson, Maximilian de Gaynesford, Duncan Pritchard, James Conant, Sir Richard Sorabji, Mario De Caro, Colin McGinn and Marc Hauser in my thoughts.

I would like to express my special thanks to Professor Amitabha Das-Gupta and Professor Madhucchananda Sen for their constant academic supports. I am extremely thankful to my colleagues in the Department of Philosophy, Jadavpur University and my present institute Central University of Hyderabad for their encouragement. My thanks also go to my students at University of Hyderabad for their critical discussions.

I sincerely owe my *pitri rṇa* (debts to parents) to Sunil Chakraborty and Puspha Chakraborty and my ancestral people for their love and inspiration on my endeavours. I am thankful to Soma and Murari Mohan for their care and concern about my works.

*Nri rṇa* (debts to the human beings) always bring many wonderful memories in my life and I feel a colossal contentment in remembering the names of a few who have always made remarkable changes in my thoughts and life – Prof. Mohan Ramanan, Mahamohapadhyay Dhynesh Narayan Chakraborty, Prof. Himanshu Rai, Dr. Dipak Biswas, Mrs. Rama Sen, Dr. Baniprasanna Misra, Pradip Misra, Anirban De, Aritra Samajdar, Lalan Roy and Ananya.
Dr. Shashanka Sinha, Antara Ray Chaudhary, Shloka Chauhan and Routledge teams deserve my heartfelt thanks for making my journey with Routledge more persuasive and scholarly.

My budding research tenure as a junior research fellow with *Indian Council of Philosophical Research* and their fellowship grant for me (2013–15) was an enormous academic and financial support that I really value. I want to express thanks to the authorities and workers of different libraries like Jadavpur University’s Central Library, Departmental Library, Indira Gandhi Central Library at University of Hyderabad and ICPR Lucknow Library for their significant assistance during my research.

My *bhuta r˙na* (debts to the non-humans) goes to many of my loving pets, without their enjoyable company I could not have done any fruitful work.

One more name I should not forget in the long list of my acknowledgments is Sree who taught me about a new phrase of meaningful life.
Introduction

My work finds its basis in, what may be called, some ‘background enabling conditions’, i.e. it has some background history and here my attempt is to clarify the history that I often call a journey from ontology to semantics. However, the most pressing question that has been my concern over the years is the relation between the mind and the world understood in terms of language and thought. Therefore, the ongoing debate that I focus on in my work has initially two parts.

1 How could the relation between the mind and the world be feasible?
2 What is the location of content, meaning and thought?

The core concern of the metaphysical debate regarding internalism/externalism is concerned with the further enquiries regarding what is the location and condition of possession of the content, meaning or thought that relate to language in different senses. We can portray the problem of internalism and externalism in a way where the internalists think about how an agent goes beyond the conception of external world, and how we are able to know that the world beyond us does not answer to the ideas that we structured within our mind. The externalist argues that we cannot detach ourselves from the world where we find ourselves in. Internalists comment on the analysis of externalism by arguing against their optimistic appeal to the external world. In the internalist framework since language is viewed as a mental organ it looks at the relationship between the mind and the world in terms of certain mental mechanisms. Externalism, on the other hand, approaches language from a completely different perspective and thus views language as a social phenomenon. The externalists locate the internal world in the wider boundary of the external objects viz., the external world. As a result, it envisages the relationship between the mind and the world primarily from the stance of language. The direction of relationship as conceived in internalism is thus completely reversed in externalism. The main thrust of this study is that within the format of these two fundamentally different approaches it seeks to formulate the problematic of the enquiry in its own terms.
In Chapter 1 ‘A Journey from Ontology towards Semantics’, my focus has been to trace out the Cartesian legacy, by clearly portraying a vivid dichotomy and an interrelation between the mind (mental) and the world (physical). I take up this task both from the ontological as well as from the epistemological level. From an ontological sense, Cartesian dualism claims about the world-independent existence of the mind, while the double-edged nature of this same dualism illustrates the nature of an immaterial mind that is causally interactive to the material body or the physical world. This doctrine of interaction, being ontological, is closely tied to the epistemological hypothesis of ‘cogito ergo sum’, or ‘I think, therefore, I am’.

I discuss primarily the post-Cartesian semantics based analytic trends introducing descriptivism and the causal theory of reference. In the area of semantics, analytic thinkers give importance to language basing on the ontological trend. Descriptivism is a thesis that imports on the descriptive properties associated with a term or word that has some psychological states to be identified by the semantic content of the term that helps to determine its reference. Though descriptivism is close to internal content, it first initiates a referential turn to the descriptive content that was lacking in Cartesian content. However, I also look from a historical and conceptual insight into how one may construe the mind-world interface by investigating Frege’s idea of semantic theory. Many philosophers have opined that the Cartesian idea of subjectivity has deeply influenced Frege and its tinges are noticeable in the Fregean notion of sense that bears a kind of Cartesianism in semantics. However, unlike this Fregean version, a new brand of descriptivism, Russellian descriptivism, introduces the expression as having what may be called meaning, whereas utterances are considered to be endowed with semantic values. Therefore, there is no question about the lack of reference regarding the singular term rather than meaninglessness of them in a sentence. The problem of lack of reference resulting into lack of meaning does not plague the Russellian programme. We may say that the Russellian theory gives us a kind of internalistic descriptivism. The issue becomes even more intricate and contentious when Fregean scholars disagree amongst each other and come up with radically different interpretations of Frege’s sense theory – some are open to internalism while a few are open to externalism, a thesis that rejects the theory of description in favour of the causal theory of reference. I shall therefore look into the Fregean notion of sense and its varied interpretations and will exhibit how this discussion sheds light on the two crucial problems – the mind-world interface; and the question regarding the location and the possession of mental contents by tracing a way to the internalism versus externalism debate. Putnam argues against the Cartesian mental phenomenon and the Mentalese approach of Frege by giving more importance to the causal theory of reference. I emphasize the internalists’ adherence to descriptivism, first person authority and supervenience in detail by depicting that these make internalism unique. Besides, externalism becomes unique, as its primordial aim is to rebuff the Mentalese museum
myth by moving beyond the internal to find out the location of mental content or meaning of the terms in the world or outside of the skin. The externalist’s (like Kripke) strategy is spinning the concept of the world or reality and to show that several descriptions that are related to proper names lead us to falsities as proper names are rigid designators capable of referring to specific individuals across the actual world and the possible worlds.

Chapter 2 “Semantic Canvas: Mind and World” represents the journey of both the strands – internalism as well as externalism. The internalist journey can be mapped out from language to thought by initiating the Mentalese approach as propounded by some prominent internalists like Chomsky, Fodor, Jackson and Devitt. On the other hand, the philosophical implication of externalism is expounded in the light of their distinctive expedition from language to the world.

I will look at how externalism can construe a causal relation between the mind and the world through meaning, language and socio-linguistic background, while internalism centres its appeals to some standing doctrines such as mental content, representationalism, conceptual role semantic, innate language and the ‘thought precedes language’ hypotheses. Their aim is to induce the conceptual competences as priori to linguistic competences. The cognitive impairment that assigns to the mental content and conceptual role semantic argue in favour of certain successful intentional actions, which are in nature detached from the external objects and the linguistic practices. The way to know language according to the internalist depends on the internalized rules of grammar, the presence of an innate hypothesis that conceptually precedes the linguistic competence. Externalism, an opponent, challenges any kind of ‘Mentalese’ appeal like semantic rules, conceptual semantic and innate hypothesis etc. Externalism considers that thoughts are language involving and language is a social phenomenon. The foundational claim of externalism is that an extension carries over the meaning because of the ‘agreed practices of the community’. However, my point is every person’s mental state may be psychologically unique, but the concepts are determined and shared publicly. The crucial part of Putnam’s externalism that impressed me highly is his stand for ‘shared paradigm’. Putnam seems right in claiming that the experts not only fixed the exact reference of the terms like ‘water’ through their scientific researches, but that an ordinary person who is ignorant about the chemical formulas can also refer to the same thing. It is just possible because of the ‘shared paradigm’ or what one can call ‘stereotype’ that remains publicly sharable. Burgean externalism demands that the constitutive determiners of the mental states are not bounded by the states themselves. Here the physical and the social elements are the genuine determiners of the constituted psychological states that are simply located in the external world, not in the head or mind of the speakers/believers. A speaker attains the conceptual account of something if and only if he/she can use or apply the conceptual account in the process of communication with others through some linguistic practices. If we admit
that our conceptual development has some biological cum internal processing, it seems true that the concepts and the contents of thoughts according to the externalist can be determined by the external world. So, the controversy of the internalism versus externalism debate continues and gets heated up in diversified forms in the next chapters.

Chapter 3 “Meaning Atomism, Meaning Holism and Indeterminacy of Meaning” construes an interrelationship between externalism and meaning holism and internalism and meaning atomism and also finds an amendment by bringing the thesis of ‘indeterminacy of meaning’ as advocated by Quine himself. It also contemplates an appreciation of meaning holism, a thesis on meaning and analysis and how it escalates beyond meaning atomism, thereby opening up a new paradigm for semantic externalism. For Quine, it did not make any sense to say ‘meaning consists in’, or ‘meaning depends on’ something as he considers meaning as a second grade notion that has no direct relation to language. Quine investigates language as a social art that shares public recognizable circumstances.

I shall also inquire in this chapter into how much it is justified to call Quine a philosopher who accepted the indeterminacy of meaning but inclined towards meaning nihilism. What I will follow from Putnam’s stance is that Quine was neither a confirmation holist nor a meaning holist. Quine’s position on meaning can well be regarded as ‘meaning nihilism’ that tries to reject confirmation holism in the Fodorian sense.

Quine’s naturalism looks for the evidential checkpoints and believes in the tenet of intersubjectivity that escalates all observational sentences towards objectivity. Quine’s indeterminacy of translation because of behaviourism turns towards the holistic standpoint as for Quine the sentential meaning of a particular language is derived when we decipher it into another language. Though Quine is interested in the evidential acquisition of the scientific knowledge, language as a vehicle of thought (in the sense of knowledge) takes a significant role in his regimented naturalistic epistemology that is actually anchored in a scientific framework. There is an interesting shift from epistemology to language as Quine considers that a person who is aware of linguistic tricks can be the master of referential language. Another important question is how Quine’s radical translation thesis reduces into semantic indeterminacy, which is a consequence of his behaviourism. The amenability of the native’s behaviour makes our speech disposition indeterminate, as the expression of the native can express different things in different situations that intend to accept the ‘inscrutability of reference’ too. Other translators can challenge even the translation manual. Therefore, the notion along with the analysis of meaning becomes hopelessly vague. I further argue on Quine’s position of meaning that I call, following Hilary Putnam, ‘meaning nihilism’.

I agree with Quine’s plea that no doubt our statements that face the tribunal of sense experience in terms of corporate body or whole can have a holistic background. However, it sounds uninteresting to accept that in the case of a child learning, a learner can grasp the total related body of sentences
in order to learn the meaning of a sentence in the communicating language. I strongly consider that the learning process of language does not depend merely on the ‘knowing that’ hypothesis, but also on the ‘knowing how’, a thesis that gives importance to the skill and social practices. However, in the next chapter, I look forward to an alternative possibility of the combination approach of the processes of ‘knowing that’ and ‘knowing how’.

Chapter 4 “Self-Knowledge and Externalist Appeals” endeavours to re-evaluate the ongoing appeals of reconciliation between self-knowledge and externalism particularly from two major standpoints – from the perspectives of Davidson and Bilgrami. Here my major concern is to analyze how first person authority and the privileged access of self-knowledge can go together with externalism. This chapter outlines the fascinating manner where one can see that though the meaning is in the head of the speakers, what the speaker means may rely on the things outside of the speaker’s skin or body. Self-ascription is one of the fundamental features of privileged access that Davidson and many others renovate from the perspective of Tarskian disquotational truth, whereas Burge’s dexterous conceptions of ‘ability of quoting’ and ‘bi-conditional’ for considering a thought as self-knowledge introduces a new thought that I admire mostly. Besides, it looks relevant to mention the arguments of Williamson who renews knowledge as action and tries to vindicate a relation between the mind and the world. The residue of belief may be possible because of the maladaptive use of mind to the world. The standard debate comprises the claim as to whether externalism can mingle with self-knowledge. Though Davidson emphasizes that a special authority depends on an immediate knowledge rather than necessary causal connections tied with the public meaning, he believes in the process of self-knowledge in the sense that an object authority can determine the content of the speaker’s beliefs that strictly depends on the agent’s knowledge. Davidson argues in support of the claim that externalism can well be compatible with the first person authority. For him, mental states can be well intrinsic in terms of the physical states. We know that Putnam rebuffs the idea of objects of thoughts in the case of externalism to elucidate external constituted contents, whereas Davidson tries to abandon the object of thought from the account of self-knowledge to pursue reconciliation between self-knowledge and externalism. Besides, Burge relooks at the debate from his view of ‘basic cases’ that is also associated with the ‘conceptual explanation’ that Bilgrami later challenged in support of the ‘constraint theses’, a thesis that offers a unified content theory by rejecting the bifurcation of content hypothesis. His constraint hypothesis emphasizes that not only there is meaning at the theoretical level but also there are fine-grained concepts that can be shared by people through an action explanation, a public centric way to look at meaning. Bilgrami argues that in ordinary cases, the local attribution of drinking water would be like ‘water will quench thirst’, where the person does not give any attention to the chemical formulas (meaning theoretical level) of the associate term ‘water’. Actually, in this case, the behaviour and the
attribution of the content can be determined by local levels where the psychological realities of the deliverance concepts in a theory of meaning have been prevented. The procedure that turns towards the transcendental self-knowledge induces him to admit that the mental content does not rely on the social world, but also construes content as unified. I stress in this chapter how Bilgrami’s constraint thesis could bring to our attention towards the external determining items that are to be suited for the beliefs of the agents. His thesis may be regarded as an individualistic externalism because it denies the role of social contents and hence becomes individualistic, and it is regarded as externalistic as it accepts the public nature of contents. In the case of studying languages, an individual learns his/her idiolects more connected with the intentionality of beliefs closely related to the meaning and content. In the last section, my effort is to see whether we shall go beyond the claim or not. Bilgrami argues that Putnam’s externalism can be fitted with the self-knowledge thesis, but Davidson and Burge’s thoughts are highly unsuited. Bilgrami, who looks forward to see ‘how the agent’s content and concept can be fixed’, becomes stern concerning the conception of the locality of the contents. A reformed outlook that I am searching for, here is nonetheless a peripheral diagram that has a holistic origin and argues in favour of phenomenal avowals to a certain extent in the case of first person authority, but mainly emphasizes on the socio-linguistic background of language.

In all these chapters, I have attempted to follow an analytic style that offers contemplation to a critical analysis of language and theoretical clarity. Here my understanding is close to the Wittgensteinian method of ‘conceptual based analysis of language’ that is allied to the explanatory based understanding of the mind and the world (Chakraborty 2017a, 70). The central concern of philosophical analysis is to set the parameter of clarity in our explorations of the notion of thought and language. The study outlines a joint venture when I bring the idea of phenomenology, an approach also concerned about language centric conceptual analysis of the phenomenal world interconnected with the concept of subjectivity.

Accordingly, in Chapter 5 ‘Comeback to Phenomenology from Language’, I move towards the debate from a phenomenological perspective. Phenomenology is not only a subject that deals with intentionality, seeing and external phenomenon etc., but its neutron nuke approach scrawls down subjectivity by entangling with the phrase of the objective world. I take up Husserl as one of the foremost thinkers from the realm of phenomenology who withdraws psychologism in defence of the ‘theory of meaning’ by bringing the idea of content, meaning and the mind-world relation etc. Some Husserlean interpreters consider Husserl’s approach as ‘Mentalese’ that ends towards the mental acts rather than the mental entities. There is a long controversy about whether Husserl is representationalist or non-representationalist, but indubitably, it sounds true that Husserl’s theory of meaning has taken a good linguistic turn in the world of phenomenology. Husserl’s incredible decision is to continue a breakup with Brentano and
invent ‘meaning intentionality’. Husserl considers that intentionality that causally encounters with the external world cannot accord with the conception of meaning that Brentano once preserved. However, the prominent part of Husserl’s theory of meaning bestrews two different levels of meaning in his thesis – general meaning-function and respective meaning. In the use of uttering the word ‘I’, here, two different persons who uttered the word may express the same general-meaning function, but the referent or respective meaning of the word would be different as it refers to two different individuals. Believing in the respective meaning that determines the external referents induces Husserl to accept externalism. Two expressions that share the same meaning may refer to the same objects. The debate comes down to the point when we relook at the Husserlean conception of ‘transcendental epoche’, a thesis that gives precedence on the intentional content by focussing on the shed of internalism, paving the way for mental acts that refer to the external objects, but in reality, the objects are absent there. The semantic role in the sense of intentional content can be quite similar to Husserl’s thoughts on the general meaning-function as it context independently explains the behaviours of the agents psychologically.

I also attempt to make a critical study on ‘What is Being’, another intersubjective standpoint exposed by Heidegger to bring out the ‘Being-in-the-world’ hypothesis. Here my key purpose would be to exemplify the mind-world interdependency by rejecting the understanding of the world that goes behind the subject centric belief systems. The intersubjective transcendental sociality exposes the way in which the involvement of ‘others’ can ensure the rejection of the primordial question of the phenomenological reductionism (close to ‘methodological solipsism’ to an extent) from a Husserlean sense. This approach fosters not only others as co-subjects, but also critiques the era of bland objectivism that is not adequate for curving out a meaningful place for the ‘lifeworld’. Heidegger himself ingeniously articulates an ‘a priori existential’ position of ‘Dasein’ that intends towards a ‘Being-in-the-world’ hypothesis in a primordial way of equipment, disclosing and public world. My point in this chapter is to draw an intersubjective turn by bringing the Husserlean idea of ‘lifeworld’ and Heidegger’s ‘Being-in-the-world’ hypothesis to illuminate that the mind and the world entangle with each other.

In Chapter 6 ‘Beyond Internalism–Externalism’, the concluding chapter, I propose to go beyond the debate between internalism versus externalism by revisiting the phenomenological and the semantic approaches that endorsed the mind and world interface in different ways. Mainly the Husserlean phenomenological approach ensures the world (object) as the act of thinking about, while the contents (mind based) are the act of reflecting on. The ‘directly apprehended inspection’ thesis stands for the subject that tries to signify own self (I) to the others. However, another interesting thesis called ‘comprehensive representation’ construes subject (I) as a social being where ownness integrates with the external world and others. We find quite
similar views in the semantic approaches of Davidson and Bilgrami in the analytic philosophy. Bilgrami invents the theory of unified content to reject the bifurcation theory of content. He highlights the external determining items under the agent’s beliefs that I discussed in Chapter 4.

From a different angle, I have adopted Davidson’s and Quine’s approaches on thought and language. Davidson’s appeal makes it clear that the intentional nature of thought can be possible just because of language and the theory of meaning that have two basic ingredients – holistic method and building block method. For him, language, thought and rationality rest on the communicators in an intersubjective world – ‘an intersubjective world is the concept of an objective world, a world about which each communicator can have beliefs’.

Under such a framework here, my whole task is to explore and portray the method of going beyond that persists against the argument of the skin in (mind centric) and skin out (world centric) a way to look at internalism and externalism from a rigid sense. The ongoing debate centres on the productivity of language, location of content, language of thought, innate hypothesis, conceptual capacity, linguistic capacity, socio-linguistic paradigm and so on. Internalism and externalism, two belligerent philosophical groups, intend to segregate the content and thoughts in two extremely different ways for admitting the mind-world bifurcation strongly. The contribution that I instigate is actually a method of going beyond by defending in favour of ‘thought’ that plays a decisive role here. Thought as an inter-reliant relation construes a tie between the mind and the world by hooking a causal referential directness to the reality through the conceptual insight of the agent.

There is a constant interaction that we find between the subject and intersubjective ways on relooking at thought. We cannot detach the content of a meaningful thought from the external world. My thoughts are a part of the language community where I am. One’s need to articulate the content of the thought that has some socio-linguistic background as it relates to the reality i.e., world, but the point is that here we cannot dismiss the contribution of the intension based conceptual role of a thought that intends construing a propositional structure in our linguistic communication. My appraisal is to argue in favour of the view that thought is not only an idiosyncratic process that precedes language, but that thought is a language centric process, which has the holistic framework embedded in a socio-linguistic background. To my mind, it may well be possible that thought can hook a causal referential directness to the reality in connection to the conceptual schemata of the agent. In the sense of a mental act, thought is considered as subjective, but being content-directed, thought is ensnared with the world or linguistic community. The whole of this endeavour comes out effectively in the pages of my book.
References

1 A small part of the section is a conceptually revised version of the chapter (1.2) of my earlier book Understanding Meaning and World: A Relook on Semantic Externalism (2016). I am indebted to Cambridge Scholars Publishing for permitting me to reuse the material in this book.

2 I am personally indebted to Frank Jackson for the valuable note.

1 The linguistic notion of content tells us about the intentional state (belief, desires, etc.) that represents things to be. Contents are carried relations between mind and world as our mental states are represented something that are causally (externalist claims) or conceptually (internalist claims) related to the external world. Kim wonderfully claims, ‘Content has a lot to do with what is going on in the world, outside the physical boundaries of the subject’ (Kim 1996, 29).

2 I am indebted to Hilary Putnam for this noteworthy suggestion.

3 Personally, I am grateful to Hilary Putnam for this valuable comment.

4 I am indebted to Hilary Putnam for his helpful notes that stimulated me.

5 The small part of the section on Tyler Burge is a conceptual revised version of the chapter (3.4) of my book Understanding Meaning and World: A Relook on Semantic Externalism (2016). I am indebted to Cambridge Scholars Publishing for permitting me to reuse the material in this book.


2 My thanks go to the Editor of Philosophical Readings for giving me permission to include my paper “Quine’s Meaning Nihilism: Revisiting Naturalism and Confirmation Methods” (Philosophical Readings, Vols. 9–3, 2017, 222–230) in its revised version as a separate section of the book.

3 I am personally indebted to Hilary Putnam for this discussion.

4 Hilary Putnam once wrote to me that ‘I have been writing to you that Quine is not a meaning holist, but a semantic nihilist. He does not believe that there is any such thing as “meaning” in the semantic sense. The term “empirical meaning” is widely used in philosophy of science, but does not refer to anything semantic. In Quine’s version, the empirical meaning of a theory is the “observation categorical” it implies. “Empirical meaning” is holistic by definition, trivial, but it is not what anyone calls the meaning of sentences and words. Fodor sometime paints Quine as a meaning holist by pretending that what Quine says about the holism of empirical meaning has to do with the holism of “meaning” in the semantic sense, but that is a mistake. There are no meaning and no semantic nodes – no semantic anything – for Quine. Semantic talk is heuristic and not to be taken seriously in metaphysics, according to Quine’. I am indebted to Hilary Putnam for this note.

5 My thanks go to Hilary Putnam for his valuable discussion.

1 There may be hidden beliefs and desires of our mind, which is well portrayed by Freud.

2 Self-awareness (in this case awareness of particular states of minds) and self-ascription may not always go hand in hand. You may have experience of particular mental states where you are in a way unaware of yourself. Like in deep aesthetic experience, one loses oneself.

3 A small part of this section is a conceptual revised version of the chapter (3.5) of my book Understanding Meaning and World: A Relook on Semantic Externalism (2016). I am indebted to Cambridge Scholars Publishing for permitting me to reuse the material in this book.

1 Husserl’s idea of ‘lifeworld’ is strongly differed from Habermas’ conception of ‘lifeworld’. Elsewhere I wrote, ‘One of the significant aspects that must be taken into consideration in dealing with Habermas’ communicative action is that the
communication among the participants takes place only in a “lifeworld”, in which we are located. Three components are crucial in a “lifeworld” – society, culture and personality. The “lifeworld” is reproduced through communicative action and it changes over time’ (Chakraborty 2018a, 373).

1 Colin McGinn argues that animals have propositional structure in their brains. He also believes that “human children also innately have conceptual structures in their brains before they learn to speak; language cannot create these structures – it is just sounds. Animals also have perceptual structures innately”. Personally, I am thankful to Colin McGinn for this discussion. But my query is can a human baby who has a conceptual innate structure construe propositional attitudes without any linguistic communication? Language helps one to construct the thoughts and belief systems, so animals that have no language can seldom construct the thoughts. For them, the concepts are the proto-concepts and similarly the thoughts are the proto-thoughts that are related to the behavioural expressions and the biological instincts.

2 Wittgenstein 1961, please see, 2.2, 2.16, and 4.023.

3 I elsewhere wrote that ‘I do not think, like Bilgrami, that there is a unity of contents. For me, contents are in general unified in our thought, but a division is made by natural language, like wide, narrow, external and internal, in favour of our communication. My concept of internalistic externalism can be best understood in the realm of thought; it is not in the natural language, because in natural language, there are so many vague concepts, like “this” and “that”, used as indexical terms, and also certain inferential concepts which raise problems regarding the conception of unified contents. . . . In this case, the content of my belief is not so easy to point out from the perspective of internalism or externalism. But for internalistic externalism, it is not difficult to understand the problem, as I believe that, from the internalists' point of view, we can fix the meaning of concepts, and from the externalist point of view, we can fix their references’ (Chakraborty 2016, 106).

4 My thanks go to Frank Jackson for his notable point.


