

BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY & SCIENCE, PILANI

First Semester - 2023-2024

Applied Philosophy

GS F312 (Close Book)

Comprehensive Examination

Room No. 2201/2203

Max Marks 80

Date: 15.12.2023

Duration: 3 Hours

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- Attempt All Four Questions.
  - All Questions Carry Equal Marks.

1. Discuss three questions regarding Aristotelian perspective of Virtue in living a good human life: What does it mean to be good? What the function of a human being is supposed to be? How are human beings supposed to use their rationality? You may conclude the answer with a critical assessment.
2. Write a brief note on philosophical perspective of crime and punishment. State and discuss the nature of three normative theories of punishment with a critical assessment of their distinct emphasis on the victim, the society, and the wrongdoer. You may use theoretical details of C.L. Ten's article, "Crime and Punishment."
3. "The essential provisions of the just war theory are conceived of in the justification of the cause for the war and the three requirements of the war." State and discuss the details of this quote with help from Jeff McMahan's article "War and Peace."

4. **I feel therefore I am: An AI Case Study**

Irina Raicu

A company called Cogito sells AI software to companies that use it to gauge the emotional content of voice interactions between their employees and customers. For example, the insurance company MetLife uses Cogito: the software monitors phone conversations when call-center agents interact with people over the phone, and places notification icons on the agents' screens to alert them about the mood of their conversation partners, as well as about their own patterns. As Wired reported in 2018, a "cartoon cup is a helpful nudge to sit up straight and speak like the engaged helper MetLife wants [the agent] to be. The voice-analysis algorithms also track customer reactions. When call agents see a heart icon, they know the software has detected a [caller's] heightened emotional state, either positive or negative."

The software analyzes other elements, too; it lets agents know, for example, "if they start speaking more quickly, a caller is silent for a long time, or the caller and agent talk over each other."

While callers are notified when calls are being monitored and recorded, there is no additional disclosure explaining this layer of analysis of their voices, tone, or conversation patterns.

In June 2019, in a New York Times article, reporter Kevin Roose notes that at MetLife the Cogito software serves as "a kind of adjunct manager, always watching [agents]. At the end of every call, ... notifications are tallied and added to a statistics dashboard that [the agent's] supervisor can review. If [the agent] hides the Cognito window by minimizing it, the program notifies his supervisor."

The stated goal of software programs like Cogito is to make workers more effective by providing "live behavioral guidance to improve the quality of every interaction." According to Roose, several MetLife employees he spoke to "said they liked getting pop-up notifications

during their calls, although some said they had struggled to figure out how to get the ‘empathy’ notification to stop appearing.”

The New York Times article cites the head of global operations at MetLife, who states that the software “changes people’s behavior without them knowing about it. ... It becomes a more human interaction.”

MetLife representatives have noted that customer satisfaction has increased by 13% since their call centers first began to use the AI program.

Do you believe that the AI software mentioned above is beneficial to the company? Does it enhance quality of life of users? Does it raise philosophical questions?

[You may answer the questions regarding the case considering your understanding of philosophical perspective(s) and the topic "Impact of Information Technology on the Quality of Life" in the theme Social and Value Dimensions of Technology.]