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## EDITORIAL NOTE

The Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal is honoured to dedicate the present volume of **Philosophical Papers** to Prof. Raghunath Ghosh, who has made the department one of the most vibrant departments of philosophy in India by devoting most of his service as a teacher to the students and academic society of this University. He has joined this Department when he was very young and gradually developed himself as one of the most well-known Indian Philosophers in India. His popularity among students is enviable. He has lectured in almost all the corners of India and visited several countries of Asia, Europe and America for academic purpose. He has successfully run as Coordinator of SAP (UGC), Buddhist Study Centre (UGC), Ambedkar Study Centre for over a decade. He has extended his support to the University as a whole even as an administrator and took the charge of Women's Studies Centre, Department of Mass Communication, Business Management, UGC Academic Staff College etc. He was twice the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Commerce and Law. But, besides his career as a philosopher, probably his most remarkable contribution is to act as a cementing factor and lead the department as a unit. Of course in this regard, we should not forget the support of the previous and present colleagues he enjoyed.

The present volume is only a token of gratitude and love to Prof. Raghunath Ghosh from the colleagues, research scholars and students of this Department. This volume would not have been possible without the support of the contributors from outside this University. Everybody has tried to give their best out of their love and respect for Prof. Ghosh.

When we go through the different uses of the words *sat* and *asat* within the *Advaita* metaphysics, we find that they are not used in a single sense. They are used in double senses: absolute and relative. When the words *sat* and *asat* are taken in both the senses to understand the nature of different entities recognized by the *Advaita* metaphysics. **Jagat Pal** in the 'Ontological Status of Entities in *Advaita* Metaphysics:

Some Critical Reflections' attempts to show that when the words *sat* and *asat* are taken in absolute senses, they leave no ontological gap for any entity to occupy space inside or outside the categories. The reason is that because once a gap is created between being *sat* and being *asat*, that new space can be occupied by any entity different from *sat* and also different from *asat*; the new gap enhances the logical possibility of *sadāsadvilakṣaṇā* entities.

**Subirranjan Bhattacharya** considers the question of immortality of human soul following Immanuel Kant in his 'Kant on the Immortality of the Soul'. In this, he is mainly concerned about the negative aspect of Kantian argument in which Kant criticizes Rational Psychologists' view that soul is a simple substance. The point of their argument is that only composites are destructible by breaking up into parts and the simple cannot be destructed because it has no parts. Kant objects that the simplicity of the soul is proved on the basis of empirical evidences but the soul is not an empirical substance. The soul belongs to noumenon and therefore it cannot be known to be a simple substance empirically. Prof Bhattacharya concludes that the immortality of the soul is not theoretically justifiable according to Kant and he thus makes room for faith in order to demonstrate the same.

Truth does not lie either in eternalism or in nihilism as both are extreme theories. It lies in the middle position. But this middle way has been used mainly in ethical sense by the Theravādins. Nāgārjuna uses it in metaphysical sense. **Dilip Kumar Mohanta** in his 'Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamā Pratipad*' makes it crystal clear that what is meant by *śūnyatā* by Nāgārjuna is meant by *pratītyasamutpāda* is also meant by *upādāya prajñāpti*, conceptual dependence. This is, in fact, *Madhyamā Pratipad*. In ontology it means going *beyond* both the extremes of *absolute existence* and *absolute non-existence*. Psychologically it indicates a position *beyond absolute views of substantiality* and *non-substantiality*. Morally, it advocates a balanced position. From epistemological consideration, its import lies in a *balanced means* between 'no knowledge-claim is certifiable' and 'every knowledge-claim is certifiable.' In this sense it is multi-dimensional in import.

**Nirmalya Narayan Chakraborty** in his contribution ‘Psychologism, Necessity and Indian Logic’ attempts to explore the issue whether Indian logic is psychologistic in nature. With a brief account of the debate regarding psychologism in the context of Western philosophy, he tries to argue that one can give an account of Indian logic that does not succumb to psychologism. He tries to show that Indian logic could be said to involve the idea of necessity, but it must be cautioned here that this Indian notion of necessity is different from the idea of logical necessity that we find in the Western philosophical tradition. If we can make a distinction between the source and justification of the idea of necessity, then perhaps one could argue that in so far as the justificatory aspect is concerned Indian logic could be said to involve necessity but, of course, in a qualified sense.

**Kantilal Das** in his article argues for building up a world community on the basis of cross-cultural communication, because, for him, language derives its structure from culture. Prof. Das uses the word culture in a wider sense of human knowledge or world view. In his search for universal language the author considers Kuhn’s analysis to a great extent. However, like Kuhn, he is not concerned with specific artificial language, rather with the “language of world view” and has tried to overcome the problem of incommensurability.

**Koushik Joardar** is in search of an answer to the question ‘Why should we act morally?’ That is, he is looking for a moral standard. In the present article, he clearly takes a consequentialist standpoint and ‘survival’ is his answer. One may detest biological survival as a moral standard but he has tried to justify his position and banks on ‘Hormic psychology’ of McDougall for his purpose. However, he surely does not intend to say that we should act for individual survival.

**Ram C. Majhi** ascertains the moral permissibility of a right to die under special cases and physician’s obligation to honour it. There is such a right already recognised in the literature of philosophy and has been legally recognised by some countries under euthanasia. Recently India has recognised the legality of passive euthanasia. I am,

however, looking for a general right to die that covers other cases as well, especially the cases of older people who wish to discontinue their life.

The article 'Painted Veil: The Art of Rabindranath Tagore' of **Manjulika Ghosh** has two sections one dealing with the genesis of Tagore's paintings and the other is author's critical reflection on his art. Ghosh opines that probably it was failure of words as a medium of expression lead Tagore to painting. Tagore was a self-tutored artist and evolved a style of his own. She classifies Tagore's paintings into three groups: figures of animals, face-studies and landscapes. The author considers several interpretations of Tagore's Art and she suggests that his art "embraces all kinds of human meanings with no essential concept, beauty or sublime running through it". Ghosh raises an interesting question regarding the relation between Art and beauty that needs a separate philosophical discussion and we look forward to get it from her in near future.

The term 'justice' has now acquired a transnational character. But the journey of the concept of 'Justice' has started long back ever since human beings claimed themselves as civilized persons. In the *Republic*, it is stated, justice is 'to render to each their due'. After John Rawls publication of *A Theory of Justice* the term receives a new turn of appreciation and criticisms from different fields of intellectuals. As globalization has reshaped our world in an unprecedented way, it is time now to ask what effects this globalization has bring on the citizens of an interconnected world. Whether it is at all possible to get global justice or it is a myth as some intellectuals demand. **Debika Saha** tries to analyze this question as viewed by Immanuel Kant and John Rawls against the backdrop of globalization.

In defining *Upamāna*, Goutama, the founder of the Nyāya system, says that *Upamāna* is the instrument of valid knowledge of an object derived through its similarity with a well known object. No elaborate discussion about *Upamāna* is seen in the *Sūtra* of Goutama. But later on Vātsyāyana, the commentator of *Nyāyasūtra* explains it elaborately in his *Nyāya Bhāṣya*. **Nirmal Kumar** Roy in 'is *Upamāna* a *Pramāṇa*?'

Some Observations' views that *Upamāna* is nothing but a case of an inference can be refuted following the definition of *anumiti*, the inferential cognition.

**Sanghamitra Dasgupta** claims that today, not only the existence of human but of all the creatures on this planet is in question. To get rid of it varied reflections on the concept of environment are taking off from different directions. Thinkers of environment are in search of the way to move to 'eco-centrism' from 'ego-centrism.' The journey from the anthropocentric to the cosmo-centric is the other name of environmental ethics where the sense of 'ecospheric belonging' is emphasized and it is possible only by the concept of interdependence which the Norway-based philosopher Arne Naess has considered as a cognitive basis for the sense of ecospheric belonging. Interdependence is the central concept of the law of Dependent Origination of Buddhism. In her endeavour she tries to expose that from environmental perspective the law of Dependent Origination (*Patītyasamudpāda*), may provide the foundation of environmental ethics and can open a space for 'ecospheric belonging'. The Buddhist Law of Nature is known as the law of Dependent Origination or *patītyasamutpāda* teaches that everything of the earth exists interdependently; and not independently. Within this model individual entities are said to be by their very nature conditional as well as relational and therefore, none have any exclusive and separate entity. According to Buddhism, craving (*tanhā*), which itself is the effect of ignorance or lack of wisdom, is the cause of all our suffering. Until and unless we can acquire such wisdom the environmental degradation will be continued. Buddhist ethics also provides ways to acquire environmental wisdom which is an expression of connection of the decentred self with the whole universe. This paper is a humble attempt to this direction.

“What is Indian about Indian philosophy?” What is the goal of Indian Philosophy?”  
“What is the responsibility of Indian philosopher? And “What is the future of Indian philosophy?” These questions were raised some thirty years ago and are still debated.  
**D. Balaganapathi** in his essay attempts to show that all these questions and conceptions presuppose that there is a body of knowledge called Indian philosophy, which is comprehensively understood. According to him there is a monolithic

structure of Indian philosophy available in its entirety to understand, interpret and comment. This monolith has ‘frozen into a definite mould with its distinctive doctrines which have remained the same since times immemorial with no changes in them.’

For **Saswati Chakraborty**, aesthetic experience reveals the emotional mood in knowledge. It is blissfully free from all barriers and is often experienced as pleasurable and desirable. It gives life its true worth and meaning. This experience or *ānanda* is in no way related to our mundane life; rather it is supernatural or *lokattara*. A beautiful piece of art object can provide us aesthetic delight or *ānanda* which is not confined to a particular space or time. Every presentation of drama, dance, music and painting is aimed at evoking in the minds of the audience or spectator a particular kind of aesthetic experience, which is characterised as *rasa*. The aim of art is the creation of *rasa* or aesthetic experience. *Rasa* or aesthetic experience that originates from all forms of art relieves man from their mundane grief or sorrow and make them partner of *loktara ānanda* (transcendental pleasure).

**Smita Sirker** argues that traditional theories of rationality mostly engage in providing rational principles of human decision-making that reveal valuable insights into our cognitive system. If these rational principles are proven to be correct, then they would offer universal normative principles governing the cognitive system. However, situated theories of cognition would consider such a move to be faulty in terms of its incompleteness. In other words, for the situated theories, the above mentioned approach sidelines (if not ignores) the interaction of the mind (the decision maker) and environment - thereby ruling out the possibility of any measures of adaptability of the agent in consideration to the limits or possibilities that the immediate situation may offer.

**Ngaleknao Ramthing** in his contribution ‘Conflicts of Interests in Business’ deals with certain issues like, is the conflict of interest a conflict between the employers and the employees? Or is it a conflict between the professional ethics or code of conducts and the moral laws? Or still could it be a conflict of interest between the

business firms and the society at large? In a conflict of interest, either two duties conflict or a duty conflicts with self-interest; in either case one ought to determine which interest serve the best interest of all by appealing to one's own reason. It is strongly believed that duty to society or humanity in general ethically supersedes duty to stockholders. An attempt has been made to explain what conflict of interest is and how such conflict arises in business activities and how they adversely affect business behavior. It also aims to strike a balance between the welfare of the corporation and the welfare of the society at large on an objective basis.

The function of education is inevitable for giving direction to this social reconstruction that we need desperately to solve our social problems and realize our ideals. Education helps to make us strong enough to look after ourselves in any given situation. It keeps us aware of our given surrounding as well as the rules and regulations of the society we are living in. **Bimal Chandra Pal** refers to Russell and Vivekananda on the role of education and concludes that education should be pupil-centered, and hence, the educational process is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. The students need to be treated as an end in themselves and not as means to some national or religious ends. Education should aim for the happiness of each student. Children should acquire knowledge for material gain as well as knowledge for intellectual pleasure. Both the thinkers believe that education is the best means to reconstruct our society because it can reform the human mind.

The phrase 'Practical *Vedānta*' does not appear with any great frequency in Vivekananda's recorded teaching. Perhaps, it is *The Brahmavādin* that incorporated an article entitled: "The Ethics of Vedanta" asking for a 'foundation of ethical distinctions'. **Laxmikanta Padhi** tries to claim that any argument of Swami Vivekananda's moral thinking must center on his strong nationalism articulated within a rigid binary of East and West. Since the militaristic and materialistic 'West' had successfully established its supremacy in India, resistance consisted in carving out a different sphere of power for the 'East' in its spiritual resources. But the colonial encounter had also opened up native society to being questioned by

European modernity. It was important for the self-assertion of colonized subjects that the spiritual traditions they claimed as their own be capable of cleaning up the ills of poverty, caste-conflict, oppression of widows, child marriage, and the many other drawbacks in Indian society pointed out by the British. Situated in this context, Vivekananda's mission of Practical Vedanta is an attempt to make the abstract theory of Classical *Advaita* relevant for an 'enlightened' ethics and social progress.

An analysis of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy gives us a profoundly philosophical account of his idea of man. The central question of Sri Aurobindo's metaphysics is, 'Why does the world exist?' and 'What is the purpose of our existence in the world?' **Swagata Ghosh** discusses the endeavour by Sri Aurobindo and Rabindra Nath Tagore to find responses to such fundamental questions. Sri Aurobindo experiences that we are in a constant process of searching. We all are in pursuit of certain values and we feel that attainment of such values constitute the meaning of our lives. One such ideal is Perfection. In Aurobindo and Tagore, we find a deep analysis of the necessity of man's body which eventually paves the way for realizing the consciousness or the true self in man.

Generally people believe that happiness is the ultimate aim of life and they try to acquire property, money etc. for getting happiness. But some people say that property does not give happiness to man. Because, most of the rich people in the present world suffering from numerous physical and mental problems. On many occasions our attempt to attain our own happiness engages us in violence at the cost of unhappiness of others. **Samar Kumar Mandal** in his contribution refers to *Advaita Vedānta* and claims that people engage themselves in violence due to lack of self knowledge or ignorance. So we have to remove this ignorance if we want to attain free from any kind of violence and consequently, we have to remove the primal cause of it. We have seen that lack of proper knowledge is the source of all types of violence and the key to the solution of it is hidden in the ancient *Vedānta* philosophy. So, if we regulate our conduct in the spirit of *Vedānta* philosophy, many kinds of violence may be eradicated.

**Purbayan Jha** in his article deals with the existentialist concept of being human. He points out how death as a fact in others' life constitutes the facticity of my existence. The anxiety of the *dasein* as being in time towards death is well captured by Dr. Jha.

Due to the misconception of *dharma* the division and mistrust among human beings has been spread throughout the country. *Dharma* makes us blind. It is overall noticed that a man belonging to a particular sect or religion does not tolerate others belonging to another sect or religion. This situation is not found in present day due to understanding the wider notion of dharmas. **Ranjit Kumar Barman** in '*Dharma in the Sense of Morality: an Analysis*' stated that an individual without *dharma* in the sense of morality is a beast (*Dharmena hīnā paśubhiḥ samānāḥ*).

**Sushabhan Deb Barman** in his paper 'Religious Experience and Communication' cites about the problem of the communication of religious experience. Religious experience is understood as the experience of God or any other divine figure. It can range from the experience of God revealing himself to man, to the experience of being aware of God's present or even a miracle. The problem of communication of religious experience this not so much of its being personal. It is about the mystic aspect of the expression which makes it inexpressible, i.e., incapable of expression, in ordinary language. Religious experience which carries the news of another world requires special linguistic devices, like myth, parable, metaphor, etc. Religious experience is thus communicable in a special language and can be shared by those who have the sensitivity to delve in to the deeper meaning behind the apparent meaning.

While female infanticide has at times been necessary for survival of the community-at-large, there have also been instances where it has been related to the general societal prejudice against females which characterizes most male-dominated cultures. Many philosophers believe that infanticide is intrinsically wrong, and seriously so for the same reason, and to the same degree, as the killing of an adult human being.

Most, however, are content to appeal to the fact that virtually everyone feels that infanticide is seriously wrong. There is a serious question whether philosophers who make such an appeal are right about the facts. **Bhaswati De** in 'Female Infanticide is an Infantism in our Society' claims that there are a number of possible responses to the worldwide problem of female feticide.

The contribution entitled 'The Free-will Debate' by **Juhi Routh** is written from the existentialist point of view and she rightly states that human freedom cannot be discussed without explaining the concept of action. She seems to agree with Sartre that we cannot but free.

To understand the nature of aesthetic judgement we need to know what Kant understands by judgement. **Anup Kumar Das** attempts to highlight Kant's View on Aesthetic Judgement which is propounded in *Critique of Judgement*. In *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant claims that to judge is to apply a concept or rule to particulars. In the introduction of the third *Critique* Kant wishes to call that kind of judgement 'determinant' judgement. He distinguishes it from reflective judgement where the particulars are given and the rule or concept under which it falls has to be found or discovered. This distinction between determinant and reflective judgement is important because aesthetic judgements are treated as reflective judgements or judgements of reflections.

**Sutapa Goswami**, one of the young scholars of the department is in search of the Cartesian concept of human being. She followed the Cartesian methodology, i.e. the method of doubt until cogito is arrived at. The article points to the fact that the Cartesian cogito is thinking in the inclusive sense and also that body is not wholly neglected by Descartes.

**Indrani Choudhury** also one of the young scholars of the department deals with the concept of *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* as a super-normal means of knowing with special reference to Navya Nyāya. For her, it is one among the three types of super-normal connection technically called *pratyāsatti* or *alaukika sannikarṣa*.

**KOUSHIK JOARDAR**

**AND**

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### **Academic career of Prof. Raghunath Ghosh.**

(Joined the Department of Philosophy, NBU on 18.02.1980 and served until 01.02.2015)

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94. The Concept of Social Justice in the *Srutis* and *Dharmasastras*, *Philosophical Papers*, Journal of the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal, Vol-VIII, March, 2011, pp.10-16.
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96. Bio-informatics: Its Limitations and Ethical Issues in Cyber Culture, *Skepsis Vol. XXII/ii in Honour of Christopher Vasilopoulos, Proceedings of Ninth World Congress, Olympic Centre for Philosophy and Culture, Olympia, Greece, 2012, pp225-230.*
97. Vivekananda on the Concept of Fearlessness, *Philosophy and Life-World (Vidyasagar Journal of Philosophy)*, Volume-15, 2012-13, pp.16-24.

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### **International Programmes:**

1. Visited and delivered a few lectures on Indian Philosophy (Classical and Modern) at **Kern Institute, University of Leiden (Netherlands)** under Indo-Netherlands Cultural Exchange Programme in 1996.
2. On invitation visited **Maison De Sciences Del Homme (Institute of Human Science), Paris, (France) five times** for my personal research and exchanged my views on my research with the French colleagues in 1996, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2008.
3. Visited and delivered a lecture on '*Relation as a category of Real*' at **King's College, University of London, U.K.** in 1996.
4. Presented a paper entitled: '*Is Relation really unreal? A critique of Dharmakirti*' in the Third International Dharmakirti Conference held at **Hiroshima University, Japan** in 1997.
5. Under the auspices of **DAAD** (German Academic Exchange Service) visited, lectured and studied in the Department of Philosophy, **University of Saarland, Saarbrucken (Germany)** for three months in 1998 and another two months in 2003.
6. Invited and delivered a lecture on '*The Concept of Tarka (Reductio-ad-absurdum) in Indian Logic*' in the Department of Philosophy, **University of Freiburg (Germany)** in 1998.
7. Presented a paper entitled: '*Tatparya and its role in verbal understanding*' in the 20<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Philosophy held at **Boston University, U.S.A.** in 1998.
8. Presented a paper entitled: '*Methodology in Indian Philosophical Research*' in the 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science held at **Jogiellonian University, Cracow, Poland** in 1999.
9. On invitation a lecture is delivered on '*Indian Aesthetics*' in the Department of Philosophy, **University of Dhaka, (Bangladesh)** in February 2000.
10. On invitation visited **Visuddhananda Peace Foundation, Chittagong (Bangladesh)** in connection with the birthday celebration of Visuddhananda, a Buddhist Philosopher and presented a paper on '*The contribution of Vishuddhananda in the Buddhist Philosophy*' in a seminar arranged on this occasion in February 2000.
11. Delivered a lecture on '*The Concept of Relation and Tarka (Reductio-ad-absurdum) in Indian Logic*' in the Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Philosophy, **University of Tampere (Finland)** under Indo-Finnish Cultural Exchange Programme in May'2000.
12. Delivered a few lectures on '*Methodology in Indian Philosophy*' and '*Some problems in Indian Epistemology*' in the Department of Philosophy,

- University of Jyväskylä (Finland)** under Indo-Finnish Cultural Exchange Programme in May'2000.
13. Delivered a lecture on '*The Philosophy of Aesthetic Experience with special reference to Indian Music*' in the School of Art and Media, **Tampere Polytechnic (Finland)** under Indo-Finnish Cultural Exchange Programme in May'2000.
  14. Delivered a lecture on '*Some basic concepts in Navya Nyaya Logic*' jointly organized by the **University of Paris Sorbonne** and **the Institute of Indian Civilization, Paris** in May-June'2000.
  15. Presented a paper on '*The Distinction between Upādhi and Visesana: Some reflections*' in the 5<sup>th</sup> Bimal Krishna Matilal Memorial Conference held at **King's College, University of London (U.K.)** in January'2001.
  16. Presented a paper on '*Indian Music and its relevance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*' in the 15<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Aesthetics held at the **Kanda University of International Studies, Tokyo (Japan)** from the 27<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2001.
  17. On invitation from Agrasar Buddhist Association, **Chittagong, Bangladesh**, visited the Institute as Guest of Honour and delivered lecture from the 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2006.
  18. Presented a paper on '*Can there be unbiased Epistemology in Indian Philosophy?*' in a seminar organized by Department of Oriental Studies, **University of Warsaw, Poland** in May 2006.
  19. Presented a paper on '*The Concept of Culture and Its Relation to Language: An Indian Perspective*' in the Malaysia International Conference on Language, Literature and Culture (MICOLLAC) arranged by **University Putra Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur** in 2007.
  20. Delivered a special lecture on '*The Concept of Relation*' in the Department of Philosophy, **National University of Singapore** on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 2007.
  21. Visited **Maison De Sciences Del Homme (Institute of Human Science), Paris, France**, University of Paris Sorbonne and Institute of Indian Civilisation, Paris under Indo-French Cultural Exchange Programme sponsored by ICPR, New Delhi in 2007 for one month.
  22. Under the auspices of **DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service)** visited, lectured and studied in the Department of Philosophy, **University of Saarland, Saarbrücken (Germany)** for two months in 2008.
  23. Presented a paper on '*The Concept of Peace in Indian Philosophy*' arranged by the Philosophy Department, **Berlin Technical University (Germany)** in 2008.
  24. Visited and delivered lectures in the Institute of Indology, **Leibniz University (Germany)** in 2009.
  25. Visited and discuss regarding research with the colleagues of **Institute of Tibetology and Buddhist Studies, Vienna, Austria**, in 2008.
  26. Presented a paper on '*Environmental Issues in the Dhammapada*' in the Third International Conference on Applied Ethics held at **Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Japan** in 2009.
  27. Presented a paper on '*Can there be Right without sense of Duty?*' in the 8<sup>th</sup> International Society for Universal Dialogue (ISUD) Conference held at **Beijing International University, China in 2010**.

28. Presented a paper on 'Educational Methodology with Special Reference to India, in a seminar organized by *Olympia Centre for Philosophy and Culture, Ancient Olympia, Greece* from 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> July 2011.
29. Visited **Maison De Sciences Del Homme (Institute of Human Science), Paris, France, &** University of Paris Sorbonne under Indo-French Cultural Exchange Programme for two weeks in October 2011.
30. Presented a paper on 'Bio-informatics: Its Limitations and Ethical Issues', in the 9<sup>th</sup> International Society of Universal Dialogue (ISUD) held at *Olympia Centre for Philosophy and Culture, Ancient Olympia, Greece* from 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> June 2012.
31. Visited **Maison De Sciences Del Homme (Institute of Human Science), Paris, France, &** University of Paris Sorbonne under Indo-French Cultural Exchange Programme for one week in November 2013.
32. Presented a paper on 'The Advaita Theory of Contentless Cognition: A Critical Study' in the 21<sup>st</sup> International Congress of Vedanta held at Centre for Indic Studies, **University of Massachusetts (Dartmouth), USA** in 2013.
33. On invitation visited and discussed philosophical issues with Faculty members at the Department of Indology, **University of Leipzig, Germany** from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2014.
34. Presented a paper entitled: 'Morality and its Role in Human Being: An Indian Approach' in Tenth World Congress of the International Society of Universal Dialogue (ISUD) organized by **University of Craiova, Romania** from 4<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2014.

### Awards

- ❖ Received the Best Book Award for the book entitled: '*Relation as Real: A Critique of Dharmakirti*' by Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi in 2001-2002.
- ❖ Appointed National Visiting Professor in the year 2013-14 by Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi.

### Visiting Fellow/ Professor:

1. Delivered six lectures on '*Relation as a category of Real*' and '*Abhava*' as a **Visiting Fellow (U.G.C.)** in the **Sanskrit Department, Jadavpur University, Calcutta** in 1995.
2. Visited and delivered a series of lectures on different aspects of Indian Philosophy as a **Visiting Fellow (U.G.C.)** in the **Department of Philosophy, University of Poona** in 1999.
3. On invitation delivered lectures as a **Visiting Fellow (UGC)** in the **Department of Philosophy, Vidyasagar University, Midnapur, W.B.** in January 2005.

4. On invitation delivered lectures as a **Visiting Fellow** (UGC) under Special Assistance Programme in Philosophy, **Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata**, 2006.
5. On invitation delivered lectures as a **Visiting Fellow** (UGC) under Centre for Advanced Studies in Sanskrit, **Jadavpur University**, Kolkata, 2008.
6. On invitation delivered lectures as a **Visiting Fellow** (UGC) under Centre for Advanced Studies in Sanskrit, **Jadavpur University**, Kolkata, 2010.
7. On invitation delivered lectures as a **Visiting Fellow** (UGC) under Centre for Advanced Studies in Philosophy, **Utkal University**, 2010.
8. .On invitation delivered lectures as a **Visiting Fellow** (UGC) under UGC SAP in Philosophy, **University of Hyderabad**, 2011.
9. On invitation delivered lectures as a **Visiting Fellow** (UGC) under UGC SAP in Philosophy, **Assam University, Silchar** in March 2012.
10. On invitation delivered lectures as a Visiting Fellow (UGC) in the **P.G. Department of Sanskrit, A.B.N. Seal College, Coochbehar**, in August 2012.
11. Delivered a few lectures as a Visiting Fellow in the Department of Philosophy, **University of Gour Banga** in 2012.
12. Delivered four lectures as a **Visiting Professor** (ICPR) in the Department of Philosophy, **Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, Kerala** in September 2013.
13. Delivered four lectures as a **Visiting Professor** (ICPR) in the Department of Philosophy, **University of Mumbai, Kalina Campus**, in October 2013.
14. Delivered four lectures as a **Visiting Professor** (ICPR) in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, **Indian Institute of Technology, Powai, Mumbai**, in October 2013.
15. Delivered four lectures as a **Visiting Professor** (ICPR) in the Department of Philosophy, **Tripura University, Agartala** in January 2014.
16. Delivered four lectures as a **Visiting Fellow** in the Department of Philosophy, **Panchanan Barma University, Coochbehar** in April, 2014.

#### **Main Speaker in the Symposium:**

- Participated and presented a paper on '*Vedanta and Linguistic Analysis*' as one of the **main speakers in a symposium** at the Indian Philosophical Congress held at **Jadavpur University, Calcutta** in 1986.
- Participated and presented a paper on '*The concept of Beauty in Indian tradition*' as one of the main speakers in a symposium at the Indian Philosophical Congress held at **Gujrat University, Ahmedabad** in 1989.

#### **Endowment Lectures:**

- Delivered **Buddha Jayanti Endowment Lecture** on '*Nagarjuna's Critique of Doubt: Some Reflections*' in the 76<sup>th</sup> session of Indian Philosophical

Congress held in **Gurukul Kangri University, Haridwar** from the 29<sup>th</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2001.

- On invitation delivered Sri Swami Harihar Tirtha Memorial Endowment Lectures at the **Department of Philosophy, University of Madras** on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2002 on ‘ *Is Samavaya a relation? A critique from the standpoint of Advaita*’ and ‘ *The Advaita Theory of Perception: Some Problems*’.
- On invitation delivered Professor Ganeshwar Mishra Memorial Endowment lecture at the **Department of Philosophy, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar** on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2002 on ‘ *Some aspects of Advaita Vedanta*’.
- On invitation delivered Vivekananda Endowment Lecture at the **Department of Philosophy, University of Calcutta** on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2004.
- On invitation delivered on *Determinism and Free Will in Indian Philosophy* in connection with International Philosophy Day (as declared by UNESCO) sponsored by ICPR and organized by **Gauhati University** on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2005.
- On invitation delivered **Buddha Jayanti Endowment Lecture** on ‘ *Nagarjuna on the confusing nature of Pramana and Prameya: A Critique*’ in the Interim World Congress and 81<sup>st</sup> session of Indian Philosophical Congress held in New Delhi in 2006.
- On invitation delivered a **special endowment lecture** on ‘ *A Comparative Study among the Systems of Indian Philosophy*’ in the Department of Philosophy, University of Calcutta in November 2010.
- Delivered Professor K.K.Handique memorial lecture at the **University of Gauhati** in 2014.
- Delivered International Philosophy Day lectures in University of North Bengal, Coochbehar Panchanan Barma University, Dibrugarh University and Gourbanga University in 2014.
- Delivered ICPR periodical lecture at the department of Philosophy, Mathabhanga College in 2012.

#### **Administrative Experience:**

- ❖ **Head**, Department of Philosophy, NBU, 1991-93, 1999-01, 2003-05 and 2007-09).
- ❖ **Dean**, Faculty of Arts, Commerce & Law, NBU two terms (2005-07 and 2007 -10)
- ❖ Director, Department of M.B.A., Centre for Buddhist Studies, Centre for Ambedkar Studies, Centre for Women’s Studies, UGC Academic Staff College,
- ❖ Academic Coordinator, Special Assistance Programme (DRS-I and DRS-II),
- ❖ Head, Department of Mass Communication and Department of Sanskrit, (Jalpaiguri Campus) University of North Bengal.
- ❖ Member, Ethical Committee, North Bengal Medical College, Siliguri.
- ❖ Course-Coordinator, UGC’s E-Pathashala Programme.

- ❖ Member, UGC's Visiting Team in Xth plan to the H. N. Bahuguma University, Srinagar and Bikram University, Ujjaini
  - ❖ UGC's nominee to SAP in Philosophy, Magadh University, Bodh Gaya and in Guru Nanak Studies, Patiala.
  - ❖ External Member, Research and PG Board of Studies in Philosophy and Indo-Tibetan Studies, Visva-Bharati, in Philosophy, Gour Banga University, in Philosophy, Assam University, Silchar and Banaras Hindu University.
  - ❖ Awarded Indo-Netherlands, Indo-Finnish and Indo-French Cultural Exchange Fellowship in 1996, 2000 and 2007 respectively by UGC and ICPR.
  - ❖ Member, Board of Executives, International Society of Universal Dialogue (ISUD), USA, in two terms 2013-14 and 2014-15.
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## THE ONTOLOGICAL STATUS OF ENTITIES IN *ADVAITA* METAPHYSICS: SOME CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

JAGAT PAL

The ontological status of all the possible entities in *Advaita* Metaphysics is divided into four logical categories. They are:

- a. *sat* (real)
- b. *asat* (unreal)
- c. *sadāsat* (both real and unreal)
- d. *sadāsadvilakṣaṇā* (neither real nor unreal)

The objective of this paper is to show that when the words ‘*sat*’ and ‘*asat*’ are taken in absolute senses, they leave no ontological gap for any entity to occupy space inside and/or outside the categories (a) and (b) because they divide the whole universe of discourse between them collectively and exhaustively being the complimentary terms. Since they leave no gap for any entity to occupy space inside and/or outside them, the alternatives (c) *sadāsat* and (d) *sadāsadvilakṣaṇā* are not logically possible because for any entity to be in either of these categories logically presupposes some ontological gap between the alternatives of ‘being *sat*’ and ‘being *asat*’ which is completely ruled out by ‘*sat*’ and ‘*asat*’ when they are taken in absolute senses. They allow only two alternatives logically possible: being *sat* and being *asat*. But when the words ‘*sat*’ and ‘*asat*’ are taken in relative senses, they create some ontological gap for an entity to be inside and/or outside the categories (a) *sat* and (b) *sat*. The reason is that because once a ‘gap’ is created between being *sat* and being *asat*, that new space can be occupied by any entity different from *sat* and also different from *asat*; the new gap enhances the logical possibility of *sadāsadvilakṣaṇā* entities. When we go through the different uses of the words ‘*sat*’ and ‘*asat*’ within the *Advaita* metaphysics, we find that they are not used in a single sense. They are used in double senses: absolute and relative. When the words ‘*sat*’ and ‘*asat*’ are taken in both the senses to understand the nature of different entities recognized by the *Advaita* metaphysics, we find that the *Advaita* classification of all the possible entities into the logical categories of (a) *sat* (b) *asat* (c) *sadāsat* and (d) *sadāsadvilakṣaṇā* is perfectly well grounded. *Sadāsadvilakṣaṇā* entities can be ascribed some sort of *sattā* different from *sat* and also different from *asat*. Once we ascribe some sort of *sattā* to

*sadāsadvilakṣaṇā* entities different from *sat* and also different from *asat*, both (c) and (d) fall under a broader category of ‘whatever is different from *sat* and/or *asat*’. To establish these points, let me first begin with the Advaita’s different uses of the words *sat* and *asat* within its conceptual framework.

When the *Advaita* uses the word *sat* with reference to *Brahman* and says that *Brahman* is the only *sat* (real); *Brahman* and *Ātman* are one and the same; there is no difference between *Brahman* and *Jiva*, it uses the word *sat* in absolute sense. According to it, *sat* is what not *asat* is. *Sat* means true for all the times, the eternal existent. In other words, *sat* means that which is necessarily and wholly true in every logically possible world and can never turned out to be *asat* because of its eternity nature. It is neither sublated nor can it be sublated at any point of time. *Sat* has no origination. *Sat* always remains *sat* for all the times. *Sat* is uncaused, everlasting, unchangeable, pure and self-existent entity. It is in this sense *Advaitins* say that *Brahman* is the only *sat* and nothing else and put *Brahman* entity alone in the category (a). They do not include any entity other than *Brahman* under the category (a). According to them, *Brahman* is the only reality (*sattā*) which is absolute, eternal, uncaused, unchangeable, pure, wholly true, unborn and self-existent. To them, *Brahman* and *sat* means one and the same thing. There is no difference between them. “*Brahman* is *sat* and *sat* is *Brahman*” is a necessary truth. It holds well in every logically possible world. *Brahman* is truly experienced and anything which is truly experienced has the basic nature of existence. In contrast to *Brahman* when the *Advaitins* talk about the entities like a hare’s horn, a barren woman’s son and a sky-flower and say that these entities are *asat*, they use the word *asat* in absolute sense. To them, *asat* is what not *sat* is, and what not *sat* is absolutely nothing (non-existent). These entities are called absolutely nothing because they have no existence for all the times in every logically possible world. They always remain in the state of not being. Since these entities always remain in the state of not being; they are neither experienced nor can they be experienced and anything which is never experienced cannot be sublated. It is from this point of view the *Advaitins* say that the entities like a hare’s horn, a barren woman ‘son and a sky-flower are eternally non-existent and put them under the category (b) *asat*. So, when the *Advaitins* use the words *sat* and *asat* in their absolute senses and say that *sat* is what not *asat* is and *asat* is what not

*sat* is, they divide the whole universe of discourse between them exclusively and exhaustively and leave no ontological gap for any entity to occupy space inside and/or outside the categories (a) and (b) because anything which is truly *sat* always remains in the state of being for all the times in every logically possible world; it never becomes *asat* later on. So also is the case vice versa. Anything which is truly *asat* always remains in the state of not being for all the times in every logically possible world; it never becomes *sat* later on. Here ‘truly *sat*’ means wholly *sat* and ‘truly *asat*’ means wholly *asat*. Based on the absolute meaning of the words *sat* and *asat* the Advaitins reject the possibility of any entity to be in the category (c) *sadāsat* and say that the combination of both *sat* and *asat* is not logically possible. It is self-contradictory in terms because according to them nothing can be both *sat* and *asat* at the same time. Everything is either *sat* or *asat* but not both. To them, the category (c), thus, is null. No entity belongs to it. But when the Advaitins make this claim, they do it by using the word ‘or’ in exclusive sense and the words ‘*sat*’ and ‘*asat*’ in absolute sense.

When the words ‘*sat*’ and ‘*asat*’ are taken in their absolute senses, they entail that there is no entity which is neither *sat* nor *asat* nor both because *sat* and *asat* leave no ontological gap for any entity to occupy space inside and/or outside them. If *sat* and *asat* leave no ‘gap’ for any entity to occupy space inside and/or outside them, then the alternative (d) is not logically possible. Only two alternatives are logically possible: ‘being *sat*’ and ‘being *asat*’. The last two alternatives are not logically possible: (c) ‘being *sadāsat*’ and (d) ‘being *sadāśadvilakṣaṇā*’. If this view is correct, then the Advaita’s classification of the total number of possible entities into the categories of (a), (b), (c) and (d) is not logically well grounded. But if the ontological gap is to be created inside and outside *sat* and *asat*, then the words *sat* and *asat* will have to be taken in double senses to avoid the logical difficulties for accommodating the entities caused by *māyā* or *avidyā*. And this is exactly what the Advaitins have done by using the words *sat* and *asat* in double senses. They grant some ontological status to the physical, the mental and the illusionary entities caused by *māyā* or *avidyā* by using the words *sat* and *asat* in relative senses which are to be treated as being different in nature from the eternally existent *sat* and also equally different in nature from the eternally non-existent *asat*.

The Advaitins create some ontological gap between the alternatives of ‘being *sat*’ and ‘being *asat*’ to accommodate the entities caused by *māyā* or *avidyā*. They say anything that is caused by *māyā* or *avidyā* can neither be said to be absolutely *sat* nor can they be said to be absolutely *asat*. They cannot be said to be absolutely *sat* because they are sublated later on after the dawn of higher knowledge. They also cannot be said to be absolutely *asat* because they are perceived and exist so long they are not sublated. The mental entities of the dreaming state of experience, the illusory entities like snake in rope-snake illusion and the physical entities of the waking state of experience which are caused by *avidyā* and *māyā* respectively are neither absolutely *sat* nor absolutely *asat*. They hang over in between *sat* and *asat*. These entities are not called *sat* the sense in which *Brahman* is called *sat* simply because they are liable to sublation. They are sublated after the dawn of higher knowledge. These entities are also not called *asat* the sense in which a hare’s horn, a barren woman’s son and a sky-flower are called *asat* because they are perceived and anything that is perceived has existence in some sense, i.e., contingent. Its existence cannot be abnegated altogether being the object of perception. Based on this the Advaitins say that the mental, the physical and the illusory entities are neither absolutely *sat* nor absolutely *asat* nor both *sat* and *asat*. To say this, the Advaitins argue, does not mean that these entities are totally devoid of existence and non-existence in every sense of the term; they cannot even be said *sat* and/or *asat* contingently. These entities have contingent existence. The Advaitins include all the entities caused by *māyā* or *avidyā* under the category (d) *sadasadvilakṣaṇā* simply because these entities possess both the characteristics, *sat* and *asat*, contingently. They are perceived but sublated later on after the dawn of higher knowledge. When the Advaitins grant some ontological status to *sadasadvilakṣaṇā* entities, they do it by using the words *sat* and *asat* in double senses: relative and absolute. To them, to say that something is different from *sat* (*sadvilakṣaṇā*) is not to say that it is necessarily identical with *asat*; and to say that something is different from *asat* (*asadvilakṣaṇā*) is not to say that it is necessarily identical with *sat*. This statement holds well only when *sat* and *asat* words are taken in double senses. To Advaitins, the ontological status of *Brahman/Ātman* is conceptually different from the ontological status of the entities that we see and experience in our daily life which they call as *Anātman*. According to

them, *Brahman* is truly *sat* because it is never contradicted and what is never contradicted is necessarily and wholly true. While everything other than *Brahman/Ātman* that we see and experience in our illusionary, dreaming and waking states of life are not truly *sat* because they are contradicted later on by the higher knowledge. It is because of this reason when the Advaitins say *Anātman* is *sat*, they say it is contingently *sat* and what is contingently *sat* might be *asat* too in some other conditions. They never say *Anātman* is truly *sat*. Entities like a hare's horn are called as truly *asat* because they involve self-contradiction and anything which is truly *asat* is always false.

The Advaitins make, thus, a distinction between *nitya* (eternal) *sat* and *anitya* (non-eternal) *sat* within the notion of *sat*, *nitya* (eternal) *asat* and *anitya* (non-eternal) *asat* within the notion of *asat*. When we understand the words *sat* and *asat* in contingent senses, the combination of both *sat* and *asat* does not result in a self-contradiction because they are used in relative senses. Their relative meanings allow both the alternatives (c) and (d) logically possible. The law of identity, the law of excluded middle and the law of non-contradiction operate on *sat* and *asat* only when they are taken in their absolute senses because they divide the whole universe of discourse between them exclusively and collectively and leaves no gap for the logical possibility of the other alternatives (c) and (d). These laws do not operate when four logical possibilities are created or admitted by using the words *sat* and *asat* in double senses to accommodate the different kinds of entities: *nitya sat*, *nitya asat*, *anitya sat* and *anitya asat*. The qualification of *nitya* to *sat* and *nitya* to *asat* signifies their absolute meaning. The qualification of *anitya* to *sat* and *anitya* to *asat* signifies their relative meaning. When the Advaitins talk about *Anātman* and say that *Anātman* is neither *sat* nor *asat* nor both *sat* and *asat* nor neither not *sat* nor not *asat*, they push *Anātman* out of the categories (a), (b) and (c) by characterizing it as *sadāsadvilakṣaṇā*. The qualification of *vilakṣaṇā* to *sat* and *asat*, thus, signifies some ontological gap between being *sat* and being *asat* and that makes sense only when *sat* and *asat* is understood in double senses, otherwise not. When *sat* and *asat* are understood in double senses, *sat* does not mean truly *sat* only and *asat* does not mean truly *asat* only. *Sat* signifies both the values: truly and untruly. So also is the case with *asat*. *Asat* also signifies both the values: truly *asat* and untruly *asat*. 'Truly *sat*'

means eternal existent and ‘untrue *sat*’ means contingent existent. ‘Truly *asat*’ means eternal non-existent and untrue *asat* means contingent non-existent. The qualification of *vilakṣaṇā* to *sat* and *asat* signifies contingency; and *sat* and *asat* without the qualification of *vilakṣaṇā* signify eternal existent and eternal non-existent. When the words *sat*, *asat* and *vilakṣaṇā* are taken in these senses to understand the nature of different entities recognized by the *Advaita* metaphysics, we find the *Advaita*’s classification of all the logical possible entities into the categories of (a) *sat*, (b) *asat*, (c) *sadāsat* and (d) *sadāsadvilakṣaṇā* is perfectly well grounded.

## KANT ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

SUBIRANJAN BHATTACHARYA

Kant's discussions as to the immortality of the soul or the self may be divided into two parts. In one part, Kant's discussion consists in the criticism of the views of others. It appears in his first *Critique*. Thus, it is sometimes called his *critical* views of the self. It constitutes the negative part of his discussion. In the other part, Kant gives his positive view regarding immortality. This part is mainly contained in his second *Critique*, and is sometimes called his ethical view. It is the positive part of his discussion. This paper is mainly concerned with the negative part of his discussion.

In the critical or negative part of the discussion, Kant primarily challenges the views of the rational psychologists. According to the rational psychologists, the soul is a simple substance. The immortality of the soul can be inferred from the simplicity of the soul. Kant holds that there is a reason why people are interested in the proofs that a man's soul is a simple substance which remains unchanged from his birth to death. If it can be proved that the soul is a simple substance, it will follow that the soul is naturally immortal.<sup>1</sup> There are some proofs offered by the rational psychologists in favour of the conclusion that the soul is a simple substance. Kant puts their argument in the following manner: Every *composite* substance is an aggregate of several substances, and the action of a composite, or whatever inheres in it as thus composite, is an aggregate of several actions or accidents, distributed among the plurality of the substances.<sup>2</sup>

In the first argument it is said that the soul is a substance that differs from a body which is an extended and composite substance. The body is a compound substance which is formed by the combination of its parts. The destruction of a body is possible when the parts of it are disintegrated from one another. Since the soul does not consist of different parts like a body, the destruction of the soul is not possible. The generation and destruction of a composite substance are possible. The soul is a substance which cannot be generated and destroyed in the same way. Hence the soul is immortal.<sup>3</sup> Bennett explains it in a slightly different manner. He says:

...the notion of a composite – or of a thing with parts - is the notion of several items which I somehow apprehend or think as a unity by interrelating them in a suitable way. So my basic notion of compositeness is that of several items which I somehow unite, and this preresquires

myself, my intellectually or perceptually uniting self, to combine the items into a whole. So I cannot apply the notion of a composite to myself.

<sup>4</sup>

Secondly, the simplicity of the soul is asserted from its action that differs from the action of a compound substance. Its action is always a complex one. So it can be asserted that the different parts of the action are due to the different components of the substance. 'If a certain property or a certain action is ascribed to a compound substance, this must really mean that the property or the action is itself complex and that one factor in it belongs to one of this components, another to another of the components and so on'.<sup>5</sup> But in case of thoughts, as internal accidents belonging to a thinking being, it is different.<sup>6</sup> For example, 'I understand a whole sentence' - it is a complex action of the soul. Understanding a sentence involves understanding of all the words of the sentence. It means that one must perceive and understand each word in it. It can be said that one's understanding of the whole sentence is composed of the understandings of the several words of that sentence. If it is the case, then it can be suggested that the self is a composite substance. But the rationalists who claim the soul as a simple substance argue against this by saying that if the different words of a sentence are understood by different persons severally, no one would understand the whole sentence. If one word is understood by X and another by Y, still another by Z, then no one would understand the sentence. The sentence along with the different words of it must have to be understood by one and the same self. The suggestion (supposition) that the soul is a composite substance and its cognitive acts are composed of the acts of various parts of it should be rejected. The self must be a simple substance.<sup>7</sup>

Kant refutes this argument on the following grounds. First, he says that the evidence which is shown to prove the soul as a simple substance is empirical evidence. Since, the soul is not an object of our experience, the simplicity of the soul cannot be proved on empirical grounds. Knowledge of the soul is claimed to be necessary a priori knowledge. It must, then, be either analytic a priori knowledge or synthetic a priori knowledge. But Kant argues that this alleged knowledge of the soul is neither analytic nor synthetic. It is not analytic, for 'the concept of the unity of an act of thought is not contained in the concept of being the act of a non-composite substance,'<sup>8</sup> i.e. self. 'Consequently, the necessity of presupposing, in the case of a

composite thought, a simple substance, cannot be demonstrated in accordance with the principle of identity.’<sup>9</sup> According to Kant’s principle, knowledge of the self cannot also be synthetic a priori. It could be synthetic if the self were presented within the spatio – temporal framework. But we do not intuit the self within our spatio – temporal framework. Kant, therefore, concludes that the proposition ‘The soul is a simple substance’ cannot be known in any way. Kant says:

It is likewise impossible to derive this necessary unity of the subject, as a condition of the possibility of every thought, from experience. For experience yields us no knowledge of necessity, apart even from the fact that the concept of absolute unity is quite outside its province.<sup>10</sup>

Now regarding the nature of the self, the question is whether it is a phenomenon or noumenon (thing in itself). The rational psychologists are treating the soul as a thing in itself or noumenon. But to Kant the noumenon is something which is unknown and unknowable. If the soul is unknown and unknowable, then no assertion like ‘The soul is a simple substance’ can be made regarding the nature of the soul. The rational psychologists have inferred the immortality of the soul from the simplicity of the soul. So the ground on the basis of which the simplicity of the soul cannot be accepted, on the same ground the assertion ‘The soul is immortal’ cannot be accepted.

Again, the hypothesis that ‘The soul is a simple substance’ is refuted in the following way. The Idea of the self is a simple Idea, no doubt. But from this premise it does not follow that the soul is a simple substance. ‘But the simplicity of the representation of a subject is not *eo ipso* knowledge of the simplicity of the subject itself...’<sup>11</sup>

C.D. Broad in explaining Kant has criticized the second argument, offered by the rational psychologists to prove that the soul is a simple substance, in the following manner. To Broad, the argument that the different parts of a complex action are due to different components of a substance is a faulty argument. The complex action need not be due to the different elements of the substance, but may be due to the whole substance. For example, Broad considers the action of a chemical compound, chloroform, which produces the loss of consciousness. He holds that the loss of consciousness is not possible owing to the different components of chloroform, e.g., carbon, hydrogen, etc, applied separately. It can take place owing to the combination of all the properties of which chloroform is composed. Again, to Broad, the argument

that if different persons understood the different words of a sentence severally, no one would understand the sentence is completely irrelevant for the purpose. This argument would at most show that if a human soul is considered as a compound substance, it does not consist of a number of other selves interrelated in the same way in which the selves of different individual beings are interrelated.<sup>12</sup> It leaves open the possibility that an individual self is a compound substance whose components are not selves. So the argument is useless.

If the arguments of the rational psychologists in favour of their thesis that 'The soul is a simple substance' are fallacious then the view that the soul is immortal cannot stand.

Kant next considers the argument of Moses Mendelssohn. 'The standard argument for the indestructibility of the soul has been from its simplicity'.<sup>13</sup> The soul cannot be destroyed into pieces, because it has no parts. This is not, however, Mendelssohn's argument. He argues that as a simple substance the cessation of the soul would have to be a *sudden* cessation, and this is unintelligible, because it violates the law of continuity of time. '... there would be no time between a moment in which it is and another in which it is not - which is impossible'.<sup>14</sup> Hence the cessation of the soul cannot be admitted. In other words, the soul is immortal.

Broad has explained the argument in the following manner. To Mendelssohn, since the soul is a simple substance, it cannot, like a composite substance, cease gradually i. e., part by part; so if it ceases it must cease *suddenly*. But then, as Broad points out, in the moment  $t_1$  one can say 'The soul exists now', and after that in the second moment  $t_2$  it is false to say this. In  $t_2$  it will be true to say 'The soul does not exist now'. But before  $t_2$  it was false to say this. So the assertion which is true in  $t_1$  is false in  $t_2$  and the assertion which is true in  $t_2$  is false in  $t_1$ . Now the question is whether  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  are the same moment or different moments. If  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  be the same moment, then both the statements that 'The soul exists now' and 'The soul does not exist now' would be true at the same time. This violates the law of contradiction. So it cannot be said that  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  are the same moment. Now suppose that  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  are different moments. If so, then, since time is continuous, there must be a time between  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ . In this intermediate time both the propositions 'The soul exists now' and 'The soul does not exist now' would be false. But these conflicts with the law of

excluded middle.<sup>15</sup> This explains Mendelssohn's view that the sudden cessation of the soul is impossible.

But Kant argues that even if the soul is simple, the gradual cessation of it is possible. Material objects have extensive magnitude. A simple substance must have intensive magnitude, though it lacks extensive magnitude. A sensation like light or sound has an intensive magnitude. It can become less and less in degree till at last it becomes zero. The intensive magnitude in the case of the soul would be degree of consciousness. For consciousness itself always has a degree. It is present in a high degree when one is alert and attentive and in a low degree when one is drowsy. Just as we can perceive the diminishing degrees of a sound, so we can understand the gradual loss of consciousness. In this way, through gradual loss in the degree of consciousness, the soul might ultimately cease to exist. In that case it would go out by 'elanguescence',<sup>16</sup> Kant opines: the supposed substance - the thing, the permanence of which has not been proved - may be changed into nothing, not indeed by dissolution, but by gradual loss (remissio) of its powers, and so, if I may be permitted the use of the term, by 'elanguescence'.<sup>17</sup>

Though Kant has presented the previous arguments to show the theoretical untenability of the view that the soul is immortal, still in the *Critique of Pure Reason* itself he has said that a valid argument for the immortality of the soul might be constructed if ethical facts are taken into account. To quote Kant:

Yet nothing is thereby lost as regards the right, nay, the necessity of postulating a future life in accordance with the principles of the practical employment of reason, which is closely bound up with its speculative employment.<sup>18</sup>

To Kant, the immortality of the soul is not theoretically justifiable. Still he admits that the soul is immortal on moral grounds. He has thus denied knowledge in order to make room for faith.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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**NĀGĀRJUNA'S *MADHYAMĀ PRATIPAD***  
DILIP KUMAR MOHANTA

I felt highly honored and privileged when Dr. Koushik Joardar, Head, Department of Philosophy, North Bengal University requested to write an article for the felicitation volume (*abhinandanagrantha*) of Professor Raghunath Ghosh. I know Professor Raghunath Ghosh since 1985 as a leading thinker and writer in classical Indian Philosophy in general and Navya-Nyāya in particular. Apart from giving justification for Navya-Nyāya view on Vyāpti Ghosh worked on Philosophy of Harmony and modern Indian Philosophy. Ghosh has developed a Critique of Dharmakīrti (2001) from the Nyāya point of view. His critical approach in addressing the problems of Indian Philosophy has been appreciated by scholars around the world. Keeping parity with Ghosh's contribution in interpreting the perennial issues of classical Indian Philosophy and my present interest of research in this short article for the felicitation volume of Professor Ghosh I propose to discuss the multi-dimensional implications of Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamā Pratipad* (Middle Way). Many adverse criticisms of Nāgārjuna's Philosophy, I think, owe their origin in their failure of grasping the various dimensions and implications of the core concepts of his philosophy.

Nāgārjuna identifies *śūnyatā* with *pratītyasamutpāda*. It is also called *Madhyamā pratipad*. It is thus interesting to see the specific senses in which these terms have been used in Madhyamika philosophical literature. Truth does not lie either in eternalism or in nihilism as both are extreme theories. It lies in the middle position. But this middle way has been used mainly in ethical sense by the Theravādins. For them, it means certain restrictions like avoiding taking too much food or taking too little or avoiding too much or too little sleeping etc. Nāgārjuna uses it in metaphysical sense. In *MMK* 15.7<sup>1</sup> it is said thus, "in the *Kātyayanavāda-sūtra*, the Lord who had the right insight into both *bhāva* (ens) and *abhāva* (non-ens) rejected both the extreme alternatives of 'is' and 'is not.'" (Singh, 1968:49) But what it is cannot be adequately described with the help of our knowing faculties; it refers to a state of realization. It is also called *śūnya*. Keeping away from all sorts of metaphysical beliefs Nāgārjuna has used the term *śūnya* in a very technical sense - in the mundane level it indicates dependent co-origination of things and in trans-mundane level or *nirvāṇa* it has been used as an empty concept. In this sense in Nāgārjuna's philosophy, as Candrakīrti tells us, *śūnyatā* means *pratītyasamutpāda* and understanding *śūnyatā* in this import, keeps us away from clinging to any extreme views and this is the realization of *advaya* [non-dual reality] - avoiding both (the *extremes* of *eternalism* and *nihilism*). Eternalism considers change as only a

shadow of continuity whereas nihilism advocates that the change is the basic and the continuity is mere functional feature of the world which is actually fictitious.

*Śūnyatā* understood in its two fold aspects has been described as *Madhyamā pratipad* as taught by Buddha and this is said by Nāgārjuna in *MMK* 15.7. Again, in *MMK* 24/18, Nāgārjuna makes it crystal clear that what is meant by *śūnyatā* is meant by *pratītyasamutpāda*, is also meant by *upādāya prajñāpti*, conceptual dependence. This is, in fact, *madhyamā pratipad*.<sup>2</sup> In ontology it means going *beyond* both the extremes of *absolute existence* and *absolute non-existence*. Psychologically it indicates a position *beyond absolute views of substantiality and non-substantiality*. Morally speaking, it advocates a balanced position, a position *beyond 'self-mortification and excessive enjoyment.'* From epistemological consideration, its import lies in a *balanced mean* between '*no knowledge-claim is certifiable*' and '*every knowledge-claim is certifiable.*' In this sense it is multi-dimensional in import. This is also the nature of *tattva* or *nirvāṇa*. Despite a variety of imports of *Madhyamā pratipad* it *does not advocate a different theory of the world*; rather it advises us '*to rise to a unitary world view*'. In this sense it may be called *anānārtha*, as *nirvāṇa* is also called. But Nāgārjuna is well-aware of the fact that because of the technicality involved in understanding his philosophical position there may remain *misunderstanding, confusion and error* to follow what is meant by *madhyamā pratipad*. As an additional caution and advice, he tells us that this *middle path* once adopted in the technical sense of *śūnyatā*, it continues to prevail as an empty concept and in this sense it is *anuucchedam*. This is also the nature of *nirvāṇa*. It is called *advayaprajñā* in the sense of *knowledge free from the duality of extreme views (antas, dr̥ṣṭi)* of '*absolute being*' and *absolute becoming*. But due to inveterate ignorance (*avidyā*) the faults of extreme views, we may remain under the sway of wrong implication of *śūnyatā* in its literal import. So a proper understanding of *śūnyatā* eradicates all possibility of or doing away with the veil of extremism and thus it may be called *aśāśvata*. This is also a distinguishing feature of *nirvāṇa / tattva* in negative epithet. A proper understanding of *Madhyamā pratipad* thus involves *therapeutic* consideration. According to the *Mādhyamika*, *nirvāṇa* has the characteristics of complete eradication (*ksaya*) of all figments of imagination or thought constructions. They do not have non-conditional absolute existence. Like *Nirvāṇa* as a philosophical

perspective, it also needs to be developed by a person. "As a development of such a philosophical position, it is not a transferable property; it becomes null and void as soon as the death of a person (*pudgala*) takes place. Therefore, it is characterized as *aśāśvata*."<sup>3</sup> The philosophy of *Madhyamā pratipad* advises us to keep vigilance to fight shy of any kind of inclination to any extreme or absolute position of metaphysical belief, however attractive it may be. Its proper import cannot be grasped apart from *Pratītyasamutpāda*, *Śūnyatā* and *Nirvāṇa*. In this consideration perhaps, Candrakīrti equates them as '*Nirvāṇa = Saṃsāra = Pratītyasamutpāda = Madhyamā pratipad. = Śūnyatā = Niḥsvabhāvatā*.'<sup>4</sup> To know the world as being emptied of any intrinsic nature destroys our craving for it and the fact of this realization leads to the cessation of suffering and when there is no suffering, *nirvāṇa* is realized as an *empty concept*, as a *limiting concept* to guide man's spiritual *therapeutic* direction. This leads to the realization of reality in the highest sense and this again is beyond thought-constructions, that is to say, it cannot be explained even as empty or non-empty, both or not both.<sup>5</sup> The true import of *madhyamā pratipad* does not lie in any literal sense to be a '*middle position between two 'antas'*' (extremes). Adjectives in negative epithets like 'intangible, incomparable, incomprehensible' as marks of middle path suggests that it cannot be 'combined, caged and confined' in the fourfold netting of human understanding. It is the philosophical position of *rising above all views* - it is '*catuṣkoṭivinirmukta - sarvāsvabhāvanutpattilakṣaṇā śūnyatā*.' It is the realization that nothing arises by itself, that is to say, everything is devoid of self-nature and therefore a thing that has origination is to be understood as dependently originated. Here by depending on something (*pratītya*) the rejection of eternalism is done. Again, by the word *samutpāda*, which means 'by-product', another extreme theory of annihilation is rejected. In this way, Nāgārjuna advocates, the *philosophy of Middle Way*.<sup>6</sup> It rejects exclusive and absolute claims made by metaphysicians but admits empirical validity of human know-ability and relative nature of the world. For the Mādhyamika, the problem arises only when we are blindly attached to any particular view as absolute at the complete disregard for others and the result is dogmatism (*drṣṭivāda*). From moral consideration also, it as the commitment-less denial of dogmatic assertions about the nature of reality is immensely important. Because in social aspect this dogmatism brings *intolerance, conflicts* and as such,

*suffering*. There, as we have seen earlier, with regard to things of the world which involve both 'being' and 'non-being', our dogmatic reason recognizes the role of one with complete exclusion of the other and thus absolutizes what is relative. Again, forgetting its relative, dependent nature and its legitimate limit, it tries to apply its empirical categories to interpret the *reality-in-itself* and thus relativizes it.<sup>7</sup> The purpose of Nāgārjuna's *prasaṅga* (dialectic) is thus to correct the errors of dogmatism and the *Madhyamā pratipad* - the way that goes beyond or rises above all kinds of absolute or extreme forms of clinging and exclusive *theory-making*. This is also *advaya prajñā*, (the non-dual wisdom), the highest truth (*paramārtha satya*).<sup>8</sup> The central thought of Mādhyamika philosophy is contained in the *Madhyamā pratipad*.<sup>9</sup>

In the Mādhyamika texts the conception of *nirvāṇa* is pictured not as an ontological entity but only as the change of attitude and this is completely in parity with Mahāyāna tradition. "Nothing to be added and nothing to be removed. Truth should be realised as truth and one who does so is released."

*Nāpaneyam ataḥ kiñcit upaneyam na kiñcan /*

*Draṣṭavyam bhūtatobhūtabhūtadarśī vimucyate //*

Nāgārjuna's treatment of *śūnyatā* as '*madhyamā pratipad*' has the sanction of *Buddhavacana* (as it is found in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* II/7): Nāgārjuna's treatment of *śūnyatā* as *madhyamā pratipad* has the sanction of *Buddhavacana* (as it is found in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* II/7): "Everything is: this, O Kaccāyana, is one extreme; everything is not: this, O Kaccāyana is the second extreme" ... and not accepting these two extremes, the *Tathāgata* preaches his philosophy of *Middle Path*".<sup>10</sup>

From the above exposition, it is clear that Nāgārjuna followed a unique method of philosophizing. So are the epistemic logic of *prasaṅgāpādāna* and the negation of four different pattern of 'theory-making' about reality. This is *not another metaphysical theory*. So it is said that while considering the nature of reality, one should avoid the extreme views like eternalism and nihilism. Emptiness is of the non-origination of all things having their own nature, and Reality-in-itself (*tattva*) cannot be reached by the four patterns of 'theory-making' ability of human knowing. This is the real significance of the Middle Way taught by the Buddha, according to Nāgārjuna. In mundane matters *śūnyatā* means *niḥśvabhāvatā* and that everything is

conditionally originated. It is also called *upādāya prajñapti* for the reason that as a *derived name* it does not have any ontological reference to the *named*. In the context of the ultimate nature of things (*dharmā-s*), it is to be understood as non-conceptual, beyond determination. In epistemological consideration it means understanding the true nature of things through the purification of the method of knowing. By advancing a critique of rival metaphysical theories, Nāgārjuna developed a meta-philosophical approach. The purpose of this approach lies largely on freeing us from all misconceptions about reality. It believes that when our mind becomes free from clouds of dogmatic beliefs, it would become transparent (*amalā*) and *advaya-prajñā* is then to emerge.

Now let us consider a pertinent question: Does the Mādhyamika advocate 'nihilism', 'blank phenomenalism or absolute negativism'? The underlying current that dominates the irrationalistic or chaotic interpretation of the philosophical position of Nāgārjuna seems to spring from nihilistic interpretation of the most technical concept of his philosophy verily known as '*śūnya*'. Nihilism is a philosophical theory which became popular after its origin in the nineteenth century European philosophy. In India, its counterpart is known roughly as '*sarvavaināśikavāda* or *ucchedavāda*' or *sarvābhāvavāda*.

But this is clearly a case of misinterpretation in the context of Mādhyamika philosophy. Ontologically speaking the Mādhyamika, as we have seen in our exposition, does not negate the reality of the world altogether. Nāgārjuna being a critical philosopher negates or deconditions all absolutistic theories about metaphysical beliefs. He does not hold the view that 'there is no reality', rather he through the dialectical examinations of the metaphysical theories of other only tries to tell us that nothing is non-conditionally arisen in the world.. By equating *śūnyatā* with *pratītyasamutpāda*, Nāgārjuna only insists that we should accept the relative, dependent nature of things and it is a case rather of transcending both affirmation and negation. To accommodate the relative nature of things, Nāgārjuna guides us to penetrate over and rely on the distinction of the empirical and the ultimate meaning of reality. The nihilistic interpretation of *śūnyatā* springs from the understanding of the literal sense of the word *śūnya* to mean '*stupendous zero*'. Śāṅkara thus misunderstands Nāgārjuna in his criticism. However, the word *Śūnya* is used as an

empty concept even in Mādhyamika philosophy. The negative conclusion that we see in his philosophy is only the outcome of his philosophical opponents' theses. Since Nāgārjuna does not deny the reality of any phenomenal thing and since in the level of *saṃvṛtic* truth he accommodates the conditionally originated nature of things and denies any kind of ontological difference between *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, his philosophy ought not to be interpreted as 'nihilism'. It is a case of misinterpretation. The concept of *nirvāṇa* is only an empty concept, a limiting concept formed in contrast with what is conditional. Let us take an example to explicate it. If I say, "Do not make any sound in the class": is it a sound or not? There are two aspects of this statement - the *negator* and the *negatum*. When as a consequence of the making of sound "Don't make any sound in the class" the whole class becomes silent the purpose' of mine is over. Like this Nāgārjuna's use of the term *śūnya* will become an empty concept when all false views about reality are negated. Its purpose is thus *not only logical but therapeutic too*. Again, Nāgārjuna calls his philosophy the philosophy of *middle path* and *not* a theory of *śūnya* or *śūnyavāda*. It is the name given by his philosophical opponents. Thus in *MMK*, *Śūnyatāsaptati* and in *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, with *reducto-ad-absurdum* arguments he has ruthlessly shown the hollowness of the philosophical theses of his opponents. To say something as relatively real is *not to say that it is fictitious (alika) or blatantly unreal*. Even if we analyze the word *śūnya* in the sense of 'zero' as we use it in Arithmetic, we shall see that 'zero' does not have any intrinsic value. But when the *zero* is associated with any other number say 1, 2, 3 etc. we cannot say that 'number' constituted in association with *zero* is valueless. We can only say that *zero* has only relative, dependent, conditional value. Like this, all *dharma-s* which are considered as having substantiality (*āttā*) in *Ābhidhārmika* schools of philosophy, according to the Mādhyamikas, are independently not real since they are devoid of self-essence but are real in fulfilling the conditions of being dependently arisen.

Another question needs to be considered here: Is it a theory about reality? From what has been said above, it becomes clear that although Nāgārjuna criticizes all views about reality, he himself is not advocating one more theory of reality. All so-called philosophical theories so carefully constructed by his philosophical opponents are non-sensical. In fact, Nāgārjuna himself had apprehended such an

allegation against his philosophical position. So both in Mādhyamikakārikā as well as in Vīgrahvyāvartanī in clear terms he dismissed the possibility of 'theory-making' in his case. In chapter XIII titled Saṃskāra Parīkṣā of *MMK*, he devoted the following two kārikās (i.e.7, 8):

*Yadyaśūnyambhavetkiñcitsyācchūnyamiti kiñcan /*  
*Na kiñcidastyāśūnyam ca kutaḥśūnyam bhaviṣyati //*  
*Śūnyatā sarvadr̥ṣṭinām proktāniḥ śāranam jinaiḥ /*  
*Yeṣā tu śūnyatādr̥ṣṭi stānasādhyān babhāṣire //*

[“If there were to be something non-empty, there would then be something called empty. However, there is nothing that is non-empty. How could there be something empty? The victorious Ones (i.e. the Buddhas) have taught that emptiness is the relinquishing of *all views*. Those who are possessed of the view of emptiness are said to be incorrigible” - Eng. trans. David J. Kalupahana, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* of Nāgārjuna, MLBD, 1991 (Delhi ed.) pp. 222-223.]

Here Nāgārjuna clearly says that his main purpose is to eradicate the belief in substance, quality etc. in ontologically independent sense. If we use *śūnyatā* as a feature of something substantial, then it must be admitted as 'something' in metaphysical sense. Something is called substantial if it is 'non-empty something'. Since '*na kiñcid astyaśūnyam*' - here there is nothing 'non-empty' we cannot admit something as "empty". Nāgārjuna thus gives us a caution referring *buddhavacana* that one who tries to formulate a metaphysical theory of emptiness is an '*incurable*' person from delusion. While interpreting these verses of *MMK*, Candrakīrti in *prasannapadā* refers to an observation made by Lord Buddha to Kāśyapa about *śūnyadr̥ṣṭi*.<sup>12</sup> Taking *śūnyatā* as another metaphysical theory vanishes all hopes for that person to get rid of his delusion. Here is a metaphor of the sick person. Let me quote it "Suppose someone is sick. The doctor gives some medicinal herb to him. And that medicinal herb, after removing all other 'defects' in the system, does not itself get out of the system. What do you think now, Kāśyapa? Will that person be relieved of sickness?

‘Certainly not’ O Honourable one! ‘If that medicinal herb, after removing all defects of the system does not itself get out of the system, then that person will be more sick’. The Honourable one said, "In this manner, O Kāśyapa, emptiness is the means of "getting out" of all views. But if someone takes emptiness to be a view, I

call him to be incurable" [Matilal, 2002, p.211].<sup>13</sup> When all delusions of metaphysical theory-making tendency becomes eradicated, we realize emptiness attitude becomes non-emptiness 'samsāra attitude vanishes into *nirvāṇa* attitude. Keeping the spiritually therapeutic device in consideration here, we cannot treat it as a 'simple intellectual concept but an aspiration which one can realize only through meditation on twenty varieties of *sūnyatā*.'<sup>14</sup> This is the implication of *Madhyamā Pratipad*.

### Notes and References:

1. In *MMK* 15/7, Nāgārjuna clearly says thus :  
*Kātyāyanavavāda cāstīti nāstīti cobhayam /*  
*Prativeddham bhagavatā bhāvābhāvāvibhāvina //*  
[*Kātyāyanavādasūtra* tells us that Lord who had the proper insight into both the extreme views that consist of 'is' and 'is not' rejected both the extremes].
2. *MMK* 24/18:  
*Yaḥ pratītyasamutpādah sūnyatāḥ tam pracakṣmahe /*  
*Sā prajñāpti rupādāya pratīpat saiva madhyamā //*
3. A. M. Padhye: *The Framework of Nāgārjuna's Philosophy*, Bibliotheca Indo Buddhica No. 35, Indian Book Centre, 1988, p. 144.
4. In all spheres of life Buddhism advised us to follow the *middle path*. In *Samyutta Nikāya*, IV (400-4001) it is thus said,  
*Yo cāyam kāmesu kāmasukhallikā-nuyoga hino gammo puthujjaniko anāriyo anathasamhito. Ete kho bhikkhūve, ubho ante anupagamma majjhimaṭṭhapadā Tathāgatenā abhisam-buddha cakkhukariākaraṇi upasamāya abhiyāya sambodhyāya nibbānaya samvāttāti.*  
According to *Lankāvatārasūtra* *nirvāṇa* means the removal of thought construction (*vikalpasya manovijñānasya vyāvrttirnirvāam ityucyate*, p. 126). When *vijñānas* are transformed, it is *nirvāṇa* and it is devoid of (*sūnya*) the physical dichotomy of being and non-being and of eternity and non-eternity – *Ibid*, p. 99.
5. It is well known that Buddha was not fond of metaphysical speculations and he used to remain silent when such questions had been put to him. T R V Murti translated the term '*avyākṛta*' as 'inexpressible' (*CPB*, p. 36), Jayatilleke (*BTK* p. 472) as '*unanswerable*'. Matilal thinks these questions are perennial in nature and they "have no solutions". I think, the *avyākṛta* questions have been addressed by Buddha to show the relative limited nature of human knowability; "they show us the limits of our understanding" (Matilal p. 215). *Majjhimanikāya's Culamalmakyaṣutta*, mentions the number of such questions as limited to ten whereas Candrakīrti in *prasannapadā* on *MMK* chapter 22 (*Tathāgataparīkṣā*), *kārikā* no. 12 :  
*Śāśvatāśasvātādyatra kutah śānte catusṭayam /*  
*Antānantādicāpyatra kutah śānte catusṭayam //*  
says that *avyākṛta* questions are fourteen in number. As Candrakīrti puts it.  
Is the world 1) eternal or 2) non eternal or 3) both or 4) neither Is the world 5) finite or 6) infinite or 7) both or 8) neither 9) Does the Tathāgata exist after death or 10) does not or 11) both or 12) neither 13) Is the soul identical with the body or 14) Is it different from the body?  
In the *Culamalmakyaṣutta* of *Majjhimanikāya* question nos. 7 and 8 are not included and therefore, there in the questions are known as '*daśama-avyaktani*'.
6. *Catuskotivivirmukta-sarva-svabhāvānutpaṭṭi-lakṣaṇā sūnyatā*.

*Tadāśrita-mārgoḥ madhyamah. Tattvānām vivecanā-prasange śāśvātavādasya ucchedavādasya caikangamatāni pariharanīyāni, iti kṛtvaiva madhyamakamatasya pratisthāpanam kṛtamācāryaih.*

7. The first error of dogmatic reason, that is the absolutisation of the relative is termed by Professor K. Venkataraman as "the error of misplaced absoluteness" (*Nāgārjuna's Philosophy as presented in Mahāprajñāpāramitā śāstra*, Tokyo: Charles - E. Tuttle, 1966, p. 92) Again, *thing-in-itself (nirvāṇa)* which is *vikalpaśūnya* – beyond the reach of thought constructions has become represented as distorted in dogmatic and exclusive metaphysical theories. It is the blunder of relativisation of what is non-relative in nature. Nāgārjuna speaks of three phases of *prasanga*, namely *dr̥ṣṭi*, *śūnyatā* and *prajñā* (TRV Murti; *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1960, p. 140). A dogmatic theory (*dr̥ṣṭi*) arises because of the conceptualisation of reality. A dialectical survey shows the inherent antinomies of different metaphysical claims or theories. As *Abhidharma* admits the reality of *dharma*s as independent of thought fabrications, Nāgārjuna directs here his criticism of *svabhāvātā* against this and shows that *dharma*s have a conceptually constructed existence (*prajñāptisat*) and thus are devoid of any self-essence (*niḥsvabhāva*). This is called *śūnyatā*. When all the false metaphysical theories are no more in work, there emerges the *advaya prajñā* – wisdom of non-clinging to any extreme metaphysical beliefs (*antah dr̥ṣṭi*) and it eradicates the need for postulating either exclusive view of permanence or annihilation. This is explicated by Nāgārjuna in *MMK* 18/6:

*Ātmetyapi prajñaptitam anātmetyapi deśitam /*

*Buddhairnātma na cānātma kaścidityapi deśitam //*

Almost the same idea may be gained from a careful reading of Nāgārjuna's *Ratnāvali*, I/62 (both Sanskrit and Tibetan texts in Hahn, Vol.-1, 1982]

*Dharmayautakamityasmānna-stitvā vyati-kramam /*

*Viddhim gambhiramityuktan buddhānām sāsānāmrtam //*

[Therefore, know the unique doctrine of transcending non-existence and existence, the ambrosia which is in Buddha's teaching called 'profound' — eng. trans., David Burton : *Emptiness Appraised*, Curzon Press, London, 1999, p. 40]

8. It is to be noted here that in Harivarman's. '*Satyasiddhi-śāstra*' (ed. by N. Aiyaswami Śāstri, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1975, p. 897) we may come across a resonance of similar philosophical tuning where the author referred to '*Dharmamudrāsūtra*. Here the author says that to a *yogi*, matter (*rūpa*) is impermanent and in this sense of absence of permanence it is called *śūnya*, empty, it is intrinsically impermanent. Just like a blank pot is described as emptied of water, there is no element of permanence (substantiality) in the aggregate of five *skandhas* and in this sense it is empty (*śūnya*). [*Śūnyamiti yathā ghaṇṭe jale'sati śūnyo ghaṇṭa iti vadanti. Avam pancaskandhesu nāstyatmā ityataḥ śūnya bhavanti*]

9. However, it is interesting to note here that Bhadanta Kumārlat, a *sautrāntika* understands *middle path* as a balanced way of avoiding 'too much' and 'too-less' in actual practice. He explains it with a metaphor of carrying the 'cub' by the mother cat, tigress etc. Buddha's teaching must be understood in the context of existence of self and non-existence of self-resorting to this practical consideration of life.

[The enlightened one speaks about *Dharma* in the manner in which the mother cat (i.e. tigress) carries its cub (in her mouth) – avoiding (the extremes) of being pierced by the teeth-like *dr̥ṣṭi* (wrong/dogmatic conceptions), and loss of belief in *karma*. If the instructed person thinks that there is a (permanent, eternal) soul (i.e. substantiality) he would be hurt by (the dogmatic) view (that there are non-perishable things (in the world). If (on the other hand) he thinks that there is no soul even in the (sense of changing psycho-physical conglomeration) or metaphorical sense then he would lose interest in the cub-like merit acquired through good actions.]

10. See, Mrs Rhys Davids (eng. trans. F. L. Woodward, *Kindred Sayings*, OUP, London, 1926, Vol.-IV, p. 13.
11. Professor Narain in his book titled '*The Mādhyamika Mind*' (Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi, 1997, pp. 109-110) made the following remarks: "The Mādhyamika method is to examine the various modes of being countenanced by common sense and philosophies in general and to repudiate all of them by showing that they lack logic, and hence are chaos rather than a cosmos. This is surely a chaotic or irrationalistic conception of reality... . The chaotic or irrationalistic conception of whatever is the case leads to outright rejection of metaphysics. All science, all metaphysics, proceeds on the tacit assumption that existence is law-governed at bottom and is amenable to reason and logic, which is the first casualty at the hands of the Mādhyamika."
12. *The Madhyamaākaśāstra of Nāgārjuna* ed. R. N. Pandey, Vol.1, MLBD, Delhi 1988, p. 242. *MMK: Prasannapadā* : 1988 (vol-1):242.
13. J. Singh : *An Introduction to Madhyamaka Philosophy*, MLBD, Delhi 1987 edition, p. 44; also see, Obermiller : A Study of the Twenty Aspects of Śūnyatā, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, vol. IX, 1933, pp 170-187. The twenty varieties of śūnyatā are (1) *adhyāmaśūnyatā*, (2) *ahirdhāśūnyatā*, (3) *adhyatmabahirdhāśūnyatā*, (4) *śūnyatāśūnyatā*, (5) *mahāśūnyatā*, (6) *paramārtha-śūnyatā*, (7) *samskrtaśūnyatā*, (8) *asamskrtaśūnyatā*, (9) *atyantaśūnyatā* (10) *anavarāgraśūnyatā*, (11) *anavakāraśūnyatā*, (12) *prakritiśūnyatā*, (13) *sarva-dharmaśūnyatā*, (14) *lakhsanaśūnyatā*, (15) *anupa-lambhaśūnyatā*, (16) *abhāvasvabhāvaśūnyatā*, (17) *bhāvaśūnyatā* (18) *abhāvaśūnyatā*, (19) *svabhāva-śūnyatā* and (20) *parabhāvaśūnyatā*.
14. "Those things which are dependently originated are not indeed endowed with an intrinsic nature; for they have no intrinsic nature – why? Because, they are dependent on causes and conditions. If the things were by their own nature, they would be even without the aggregate of causes and conditions. But they are not so. Therefore they are said to be devoid of an intrinsic nature, and hence void. Likewise it follows that my statement also being dependently originated, is devoid of an intrinsic nature, and being devoid of an intrinsic nature, is void. But things like a cart, a pot, a cloth, etc. though void of an intrinsic nature because of being dependently originated, are occupied with their respective functions, e.g., carrying wood, grass and earth, containing honey, water and milk, and protecting from cold, wind and heat. Similarly this statement of mine, though devoid of an intrinsic nature because of being dependently originated, is engaged in the task of establishing the being devoid of an intrinsic nature of the things. In these circumstances, your statement: "your statement, being devoid of an intrinsic nature, is void, and, being void, it cannot negate the intrinsic nature of all things" – is not valid." See, *Vṛṭṭi* on verse no 22 by Nāgārjuna, see, *Vigrahavyāvartanī of Nāgārjuna*, Eng. Trans. with text by Kamalesvar Bhattacharya, 2nd edition, MLBD, Delhi 1986, p. 108.

## PSYCHOLOGISM, NECESSITY AND INDIAN LOGIC

NIRMALYA NARAYAN CHAKRABORTY

It is indeed a matter of great pleasure that Department of Philosophy, North Bengal University has taken up a project to honour the contribution of Professor Raghunath Ghosh. I have the privilege of getting in touch with him since the beginning of my professional career. The most striking feature of his personality that attracts me is his care and concern for the academic flourishing of his younger colleagues and scholars. Anybody who has got in touch with him must have been received with sincere warmth and hospitality. I consider myself fortunate to have the opportunity of receiving Professor Ghosh's care and friendly help. Although the main research area of Professor Ghosh happens to be Nyaya and Buddhism in classical Indian Philosophy, he is equally competent in many other systems of Indian philosophy. He is a prolific writer and his contribution spans over many areas related to philosophy like Aesthetics, Feminism etc. This only shows the intellectual vigour with which the beautiful mind of Professor Ghosh engages itself in the intellectual pursuit. The way Professor Ghosh has given the leadership to the ongoing UGC SAP Programme in Philosophy at the University of North Bengal since its inception is indeed remarkable. Thanks to his stewardship the entire team of philosophers at North Bengal University has successfully turned the philosophy department of North Bengal University into a hub of academic activities. I wish him good health and sound mind so that he can continue enriching us through many more intellectual interventions and insights.

The very term 'Indian logic' is problematic. 'Logic' in the Western context stands for a theory of valid arguments. In this sense 'Indian Logic' could mean Indian theory of inference (*anumāna*). '*Anumāna*', the Sanskrit word for inference, etymologically means some knowledge that follows from some other knowledge ('*anu*' meaning follows and '*māna*' meaning knowledge). Looked at this way, a theory of inference is part of a theory of knowledge. When Frege assigns the task of discovering the laws of thought to logic, he means 1. Laws of logic are descriptive (as opposed to prescriptive) in nature and 2. Laws of logic describe not the mental processes of thinking but something Frege calls 'thought'. Frege argues in detail to show how thought is different both from mental ideas and things in the world. Thought belongs to a third realm, Frege concludes. If we look at the Indian theory of inference, we see that Indian logic is descriptive in nature, i.e. it describes the various steps involved in drawing an inference. But then what Indian logic describes is not Fregean thought that belongs to an ontological category different from mental ideas and things in the external world. Indian logic is characterised by the conspicuous absence of the notion of thought or proposition.

In order to see what Indian theory of inference describes, let us take a closer look at the Nyāya inferential process. First a person *sees* smoke in the hill. Second, assuming the person has the prior knowledge that wherever there is smoke there is fire (this is exemplified by the presence of fire in the stove in the kitchen), she *remembers* the universal correlation. Then this memory makes her *see* the smoke *as* that with which fire is present. And this leads to the conclusion that the hill possesses fire. Notice, the description of the inferential process is given in terms of mental events like seeing, remembering etc. And these mental events occur at a particular time in a particular person. On this account, there is a chain of mental events where one is the cause of another under suitable condition. There is also a discussion of the conditions that are required to be present for the inferential process to take place. This is discussed under the title *pakṣatā*. Ignoring all the minute details for present, two variables are important for the process of inference to take place viz. 1. the presence or absence of the desire in the person to infer and 2. the presence or absence of prior certainty (about the conclusion of the inference). Of the total four possible combinations of these two conditions, only one precludes the possibility of the inferential process to take place. If there is absence of desire to infer in the person and there is prior certainty in the person about the conclusion, then the person will not infer. So the suitable condition for the inferential process to take place is the absence of the conjunction of the absence of the desire to infer and prior certainty. The point worth noticing in all these is that the whole account of inferential process is given in terms of psychological conditions of the person who is inferring. Description of the mental process involved in drawing an inference is the main aim here.

Another important feature of Indian theory of inference could be seen if one looks at the five members in a Nyaya inference. It should, however, be remembered here that if one wants to draw an inference for oneself, she does not need to go through this five membered process of inference. It is only when one wants to persuade another; the most effective strategy is to go through all these five members of an inference. These are as follows:

- The hill possesses fire.
- Because, it possesses smoke.
- Wherever there is smoke, there is fire, for example, the stove in the kitchen.
- The hill is like that (possesses smoke that is universally co-present with fire).
- Therefore, the hill is like that (possesses fire).

Using *modus ponens* of Western logic, one can get the conclusion simply from 2 and 3. But in the context of persuasion other steps are also required. 1 and 5 look same, but the first cognizer herself knows the truth of 1 of which the interlocutor is not sure. After persuasive arguments the interlocutor knows the truth of 1 and 5. So for the interlocutor 1 gets asserted in 5. Also the difference between 2 and 4 is that 4 is an application of the universal principle enunciated in 3. The fourth step claims that the hill possesses smoke not *per se*, but smoke as that with which fire is universally present. On this account, all these five steps are necessary for in this chain one cognitive step facilitates the following cognitive step.

Two points stand out in this theory of inference. First, the entire account is given in terms of mental events that take place in the mind of the interlocutor. The internal consistency of the inferential process is guided by the norms of cognitive psychology. Second, this whole inferential process is taking place against the background of a dialogical context where one person tries to convince the other of the desired conclusion. The inferential process aims at proving something to some other person. This process was often followed in the cases of disputes or debates.

From the above discussion it is quite clear that Indian theory of inference is heavily couched in psychological terms. It is also evident that the account of inference that is found in Indian philosophy is different in significant sense from that one can find in Western logic. Acknowledging this distinctive feature of Indian logic, can one label Indian Logic as psychologistic? Let me say a few words about psychologism and opposition to it in the context of Western philosophy. For the past one hundred years or so the term 'psychologism' has been used to refer to a number of philosophical follies. Accordingly, this term has gained a derogatory connotation. Many philosophers have been accused of advocating psychologism. Some of those alleged psychologistic philosophers tried to prove innocent by showing that they do not entertain psychologism in their philosophies. Nicola Abbagnano<sup>1</sup> tells us that the term 'psychologism' was first used to refer to a philosophical movement that was opposed to Hegelianism, according to which, the only method of philosophical inquiry is introspection and there is no way of establishing a truth other than relating

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<sup>1</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards, Macmillan Publishing Co., New York, 1967, vol.6, p.520

it to the subjective experience of self-observation. Edmund Husserl, while explaining what the term 'psychologism' means in Brentano<sup>2</sup>, says that it means a theory which contests the general validity of knowledge, a theory according to which beings other than man could have insights which are precisely the opposite of our own. Accordingly many philosophers think that psychologism gives a subjective, mental explanation of the nature of the concepts of truth, validity and knowledge. A look at the debate between psychologism and anti-psychologism shows that this is actually a debate about the role of subjective, introspective experience in the philosophical analysis of concepts.

Among the many important philosophers of the Western tradition who oppose psychologism Frege is perhaps the most important figure. In the introduction to his *Grundlagen*<sup>3</sup> Frege mentions three guiding ideas that lead him to write the book which are: 1. not to confuse logical with psychological, 2. not to lose sight of the distinction between concept and object and 3. never to ask for the meaning of a word in isolation. From Frege's writing it is possible to construct anti-psychologistic arguments with regard to logic, meaning, mathematics and epistemology. Without going into a detail analysis of all the varieties of psychologism and Frege's opposition to each of them, the main point that Frege seems to be making is that the task of logic is to discover the laws of truth and the laws of truth are not formed out of generalizations of how we come to believe a proposition. Psychological laws may accompany human reasoning, but they are not what we aim at when we discover the laws of logic, for the psychological laws are relative to our present thought scheme and subject to change, whereas logical laws are not relative to time, place or users. Psychological laws are concerned with a person's taking a proposition to be true, while logical laws are concerned with a proposition being true. When we do logic, we do not study a person's subjective history of acquisition of beliefs in certain propositions; what we do is that we discern the laws governing the relation between those propositions. So psychologism in logic simply changes the subject matter of logic. Thus for Frege, logic does not describe the mental process of reasoning and

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<sup>2</sup> See Franz Brentano's *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, Humanities Press, New York, 1973, p.306

<sup>3</sup> G. Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, trans. J.L.Austin, North Western University Press, ILL., 1980, p.x

psychological laws are of no relevance to the discovery of logical laws. It is evident in Frege's thinking that Frege's opposition to psychologism leads him to a Platonic view of thought that belongs to a third world, neither mental nor material. But then, on the other hand, Frege's description of logic seems to be quite in tune with the way logic has historically developed. Is there any middle path where one is not forced to subscribe to some kind of Platonism and at the same time one does not lapse into vulgar subjectivism?

A reconstruction of Indian theory of inference ala J.N.Mohanty<sup>4</sup> could be of help here. In this interpretation we are talking about inference in terms of mental events, but here a mental event exemplifies a universal structure in the sense that two mental events can illustrate the same structure. When we talk of mental event or act, there is always a reference to a self where that mental act or event occurs. And of course it has a temporal reference. There is a particular point in time when that mental event/act takes place. We can also talk about the act nature and by 'act nature' I mean the act could be perception or memory etc. And last but not least there is the content of the act. This content is clearly not the object lying there outside in the world. It is best understood as the intended object of the mental act. Now the structure of the content may change according to how the external object is presented in the act. In the example '*nila ghatah*' (This is a blue jar) the primary object is jar and blue colour is the qualifier. In the example '*ghatasya nilam*' (The blue (is) of the jar) the primary object is the blue colour which is perceived as belonging to jar. The epistemic entities like qualifier, qualified etc do not belong to the objects in the world *per se*. They float in the structure of the content of the knowledge. These entities and their structures are universal in the sense that many cognitive acts or events may illustrate the same structure. In Indian theory of inference we can be said to deal with this structure of a cognitive act that is universal. On this account two cognitive acts can be said to be identical if they have the same act nature and exemplify the same content-structure. Viewed in this way, the references to the owner of the mental act and the time when the act takes place are irrelevant. Here we are giving an account of knowledge in terms of mental act but it does not land us in the realm of the subjective

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<sup>4</sup> J.N.Mohanty, *Reason and Tradition in Indian Thought*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992, p.108

that the anti-psychologistic philosophers thought it would. Thus one can very well argue that Indian logic (Indian theory of inference) does involve the idea of the mental, but nonetheless it does not lead to psychologism in the sense in which it has been used in Western philosophy.

In the light of the above brief account of Indian theory of inference we can now look at the ideas of necessary and contingent truths in Indian logic. Usually logical truths are treated as necessary truths. They are true by virtue of their forms. They are analytic. Factual truths are contingent. They are true by virtue of what happens in the world. Setting aside the question whether this distinction between necessary and contingent truth is ultimately tenable, in the present context the more significant query concerns the presence or absence of the idea of necessity in Indian logic. If Indian theory of inference is formulated in terms of mental acts, then can we talk of logical necessity, in Western philosophical sense, playing any role in such a theory? One can talk of different kinds of necessity: 1. logical necessity, 2. essential necessity and 3. causal necessity. Logical necessity is the necessity that could be said to hold between sentence-forms. This is the kind of necessity that we find obtaining among different propositions in logic in Western philosophy. One must note however that not all necessary truths are logical ones, though certainly the reverse is true. Essential necessity is expressed in the laws that are grounded on the essences of the things concerned. If one accepts this kind of necessity, then these laws are, though necessary, not analytic. One could also talk of causal necessity where the relation holds between cause and effect.

From the above presentation of Indian theory of inference it is natural to conclude that this theory involves the idea of causal necessity. In Indian formulation of inferential process causal necessity can be said to hold between the sequences of mental episodes leading to the conclusion of the inference. In Indian formulation the structure of inference for other (*parāarthānumāna*) is presented in such a manner that the cognitive episodes expressed in the corresponding sentences do exhibit a causal structure where each mental act is bound to produce the following mental act provided the required conditions are fulfilled. The important question that we face here is: Can we ascribe non-causal necessity to Indian theory of inference? One problem that arises immediately following ascription of logical necessity to Indian

theory of inference is that logical necessity is said to hold between propositions and Indian logic lacks any such concept. Instead what we find in Indian theory of inference is the division between inference for one self (*svārthānumāna*) and inference for other (*parārthānumāna*). In inference for one self, inferential process involves internal mechanism where one cognitive episode is necessarily followed by another. In the case of inference for another the external mechanism is expressed in terms of sentences or utterances of them where each of these sentences/utterances is necessarily followed by another. This leads Bimal Krishna Matilal to suggest that in the internal case “logic appears to be psychologized while in the second it is linguisticized”<sup>5</sup>. And he further claims that in either case causal necessity is superimposed on what is called logical necessity. Matilal’s argument for ascribing logical necessity to Indian theory of inference is that when it is said that if A is a sign (*linga*) of B and if we assert A of something, we must assert B of it. Internally it is viewed as a causal sequence of mental cognitive events like seeing A in a particular case combined with another cognitive episode of remembering that A is the sign of B etc. The combination of these episodes is called *parāmarśa* and it is said that if there is *parāmarśa*, then the conclusion will necessarily follow.

This causally necessary consequence is also a logically necessary consequence, according to Matilal, for to the question what would happen if the person gets distracted or falls asleep immediately after the appearance of *parāmarśa*, the answer would be that though the concluding cognitive episode would not follow, this psychological contingency would not undermine the logical necessity of the conclusion that follows from the prior cognitive episodes. The failure of the conclusion to appear is due to some non-logical factors. Even in the external mechanism of inference when it is said that if the sign (pervaded or *vyāpya*) is there, the signified (pervader or *vyāpaka*) is necessarily there, the principle is couched in non-psychologistic terms. It is true that we identify a sign as a logical sign, i.e., sign that warrants inference through empirical method, but then a sign is thus identified only if its presence necessarily signifies the presence of the signified, thus concludes Matilal.

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<sup>5</sup> Bimal Krishna Matilal, *Logical and Ethical Issues of Religious Belief*, University of Calcutta, Kolkata, 1982, p.134

There could be several responses to Matilal's attempt to discover logical necessity in Indian logic. First, one could suggest that there is hardly any opposition between causal and logical necessity. In inference for one self we find causally necessary connection and in the inference for other we find logically necessary connection and these are just two sides of the same coin. Viewed in this way, the charge against psychologism gets rather weak because there remains no unbridgeable gap between the psychological and logical. One could move further and claim that the idea of logical necessity can be derived from that of psychological necessity. Psychological necessity is the fundamental one on which other kinds of necessities rest, one might go on claiming. If one makes a distinction between source and justification of necessity, one can very well claim that if we think of the source of necessity then we will fall back on psychological necessity. But if we are interested in the justification of necessity, then we can think in terms of logical necessity for it is in logic that we take up justificatory questions regarding our inferential knowledge. Matilal, seems to me, is siding with the claim that logical necessity gives rise to psychological necessity and Matilal cites evidence for this claim from Indian theory of inference especially those of Nyaya and Buddhist.

Let me toy with a rather radical idea viz., psychological necessity is all that there is. If this is acceptable, then the very motive behind Matilal's attempt to find logical necessity behind the talk of psychological necessity in Indian theory of inference might seem to be wrong headed. Let us take a close look at the use of the word 'necessarily' in our language, preferably English<sup>6</sup>. If people thought that almost everything that happened in the world happened by necessity or if people thought almost nothing in the world happened by necessity, then we would have very little occasion to use the word 'necessarily'. Often we use 'necessarily' to talk about future events, like 'If a polluting industry is built here, then the local inhabitants are bound to be hostile' meaning thereby that they will necessarily be hostile. We use words like 'bound to', 'surely' and 'must' as synonymous with 'necessarily'. We use these necessity idioms also to talk about the past and present, like 'As a chief minister he

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<sup>6</sup> For the ideas expressed in the following paragraphs I draw heavily on W.V. Quine's 'Necessary Truth' in his *The Ways of Paradox and other Essays*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1976

must have enriched himself'- meaning necessarily did - 'for look at his earlier record as an M.L.A.'. Notice that we use the word 'necessarily' or its synonyms where we are less than sure of the facts. When we are sure, we just affirm without any intensive. This is indeed paradoxical. But then 'necessarily' is not always a rhetorical device to cover up our uncertainty. When somebody is told while looking for a leopard in a jungle 'Necessarily it will have spots', other than viewing it as a prediction this utterance could also be viewed as a conditional sentence of the form 'If it is a leopard, it has spots'. Here there is no rhetoric involved. All these examples show that necessity is a matter of connection between facts and it is not concerned with facts taken separately.

Now what does make connection a necessary one? To take the example of leopard, when the arrival of some leopard is announced, we expect an animal with spots. What is the connection? We have the knowledge of general truth that all leopards have spots. The only answer to the question why the newly arrived leopard should have spots is that all leopards have spots. One can take some more complicated examples, but I guess the answer would be the same. One must not interpret it claiming that a person is entitled to apply 'necessarily' as long as she thinks that there is *some* general truth that subsumes the present one. This would make it possible to use 'necessarily' to everything and the term would lose its significance. What is important is that the person has some one actual generalization in her mind that she thinks subsumes the present one and whose truth is independent of the particular case in hand. Two points stand out here. First, the adverb 'necessarily' applies not to particular events or states, rather to whole conditional connections. Second, the application of 'necessarily' requires an allusion to some generality that subsumes the present case.

One of the cases where the term 'necessity' comes under close scrutiny is the case where we explain the dispositional terms like 'soluble'. To claim of a particular lump of stuff that it is soluble is to claim more than that whenever it is in water; it dissolves, for the particular lump could never be in water. For a lump to be soluble we must be able to claim that if it *were* in water, then it would dissolve. Clearly what we need here is an 'if-then' formulation guided by necessity. With the knowledge gained from chemistry that gives us the details of the sub-microscopic structure of the

lump concerned we equate these explanatory traits with solubility. What is true of the dispositional terms like 'solubility' could very well be true of subjunctive conditionals like 'If x were treated like this, then it would do so and so'. One could always come up with a set of explanatory traits, sometimes with the help on an expert, to explain the conditional. These conditional sentences may or may not contain the adverb 'necessarily' explicitly; nonetheless the subjunctive form connotes it. The point worth noticing is that the necessity constructions rest on generality and the generality can be explained in terms of certain traits that the relevant theory can tell us.

How is one going to explain what is called 'logical' or 'mathematical necessity'? These varieties of truths are called necessary because they are true by definition. Imagine a physicist is confronted with an experimental finding that goes against her professed theory. She has to change her theory at some point to inactivate the false prediction. And the normal practice in scientific community is to modify or change the relevant concepts in such a manner that the apparently false prediction can well be accommodated within the theory. Definitions are not something sacrosanct that they can never be altered. They are also susceptible to changes like other sentences. As theoretical and experimental physics have the same content but differ in motivation and application, so also pure mathematics (dealing with logico-mathematical truths) and physics differ only in motivation, but not in their content. If this is true, then logical necessity is stripped of its privileged status and the only necessity that one can talk about is the necessity resting on generalization which in its turn is explicable in terms of empirical traits. So the real burden that the idea of necessity is to bear is shouldered by empirical necessity. Empirical necessity is all that we need in order to have science including Indian theory of inference. When this empirical necessity gets floated in knowledge, what we get is necessity among the different cognitive episodes. And this is precisely what we have in Indian formulation of inferential knowledge. Let us not split our hair in trying to find out the idea of logical necessity in Indian Logic.

## PARADIGM OF CROSS- CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

KANTILAL DAS

It is indeed a great privilege for me to contribute a paper in the Departmental journal that has been published in honour of our most reverent and beloved colleague, Professor Raghunath Ghosh. Since my joining as Lecturer on 10<sup>th</sup> of February, 1994, I have proceeded under his able guidance. The academic achievement I have gained so far is mainly due to his constant encouragement and inspiration. He possesses some admirable qualities and intrinsic virtues, rare these days. His dynamism, co-operation and admirable personality deserve respect. Being a scholar of Indology, Indian aesthetic, literature and culture, he visited almost every intellectual corner of the world and interacted with renowned academicians. I do reckon him as a true ambassador of Indian culture and literature. Besides being a competent teacher, he has also worked as an efficient administrator. Apart from his academic excellence he has rendered able guidance and tutelage to the Department of Philosophy which has been awarded maiden SAP of UGC in the faculty of Arts, Commerce and Law of North Bengal University. As a Director of SAP, he did stupendous work during two successive phases for which the Department of Philosophy has received a grant of Rs120 lakhs in the third phase; in fact, he deserves full credit for this achievement. He is a person with great humour; besides, he is a great orator, a great aesthetician and possesses a dynamic personality. His cheerful and optimistic nature makes him most acceptable amongst all. His metaphorical and aesthetic use in language makes vulnerable communication more acceptable and lucid. In fact, he overcomes the problem of incommensurability in language. Prof. Raghunath Ghosh possesses the rare merits of a perfect human being. It is my privilege to salute my senior colleague with the words, of George Bernard Shaw, 'What a man! Is he a man!'

As language is culture-specific and language gets its life or structure from culture, cross cultural communication would be an effective paradigm of building up a world community. What then is culture? We do not mean the term 'culture' in a specific sense; rather we conceive it in a comprehensive manner. The term 'culture' in our sense intends to "use in the sense of whatever a person must know in order to function in a particular society"<sup>1</sup>. This definition bears the same sense with Goodenough's well-known definition of culture. In this regard he says that ' a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves'.<sup>2</sup> Simplistically, it can be said that culture is the *knowhow that a person must possess to get through the task of daily living*. Culture is our *world view* and the structure of language determines the way in which speakers of

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald Wardhaugh, *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, Blackwell, 1986, p.215.

<sup>2</sup> Goodenough, "Cultural Anthropology and Linguistics" in P.L. Garvin (ed.), *Report of the Seventh Round Meeting on Linguistics and Language Study*, Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1957, p.167.

that language view the world. Thus, language we are envisaging is a world-view language (universal language). Language reflects our forms of life<sup>3</sup>, language is a mirror of human mind; language is also supposed to be the house of being<sup>4</sup>, therefore taking care of language is at par with taking care of humans. A man is known by the language he/she uses. We can solve the problem of other minds as well by taking care of language of humans. Language is the only medium, the only way through which interpersonal communication between the speaker and the hearers is made possible. Language is our form of life, our culture, our values, our ethos and above all the vehicle of humans. Inter-personal communication between the speaker and the hearer is not something *arbitrary*; rather it actually hinges on the *homogeneity of language and culture*.

Communication within the same cultural community by means of common language would not be a problematic issue. Every community or clan or caste or tribe adequately communicates among themselves by means of their respective native language. But the problem may arise in case of *cross-cultural communication* or *cross-language communication*. Now, if language is culture and gets its structure through culture then in order to know the culture of other communities, one has to have the knowledge of language of these communities either by way of knowing the language of these communities or by way of translating or interpreting or learning the language of these communities into his own language. Accordingly, it can be presumed at the very outset that any attempt of *building up a world community* actually hinges on the success of cross-cultural communication or cross-language communication. Communication within the same culture and same community by means of same language usually does not break down. However, breakdown of communication may appear between two competing scientific language communities or simply two different language communities. Kuhn and Feyerabend have attributed *communication breakdown* by using the term *incommensurability*. So long incommensurability or communication breakdown remains; it would appear as a stumbling block of building up a world community by means of language and

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<sup>3</sup> Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, 1953, p.36.

<sup>4</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, tr. Macquarrie, J & Robinson, E. New York: Harper Collins, 1962, p67.

literature. Therefore, in order to build up a world community by means of language and literature, one has to overcome the problem of *incommensurability or communication breakdown* between two or more different languages or two or more different interpretations of language.

### **Call for Universal language**

Thus, one may call for a universal language or global language through which a world community can be built up. Each and every regional language can be translated or interpreted into universal language. Therefore, one can build up a universal community just by knowing global language. How do we formulate a universal language? Translation manual perhaps is the most effective means available at our hand on the basis of which universal language in the desired sense can be formulated. But the problem of translation manual is that of its indeterminacy. No translation is perfect in the strict sense of the term and it has been pointed out by Quine. According to Quine, translation is indeterminate. Of course, Quine immediately claims that even though translation manual is indeterminate, it is radical. The point that needs to be taken care of what makes translation manual radical even though it is indeterminate? Is it really for the reason that there is no other alternative means through which we can have a sense of universal language? Or is it for the reason that indeterminacy is *sui-gensis* for any sort of translation and interpretation. To me both of these are relevant and the second one is more apposite as far as our approach towards building up a world community through cross- cultural (language) communication is concerned.

### **Indeterminacy and incommensurability**

Arguably, when we talk about cross-cultural communication, we have to keep in our mind two important concepts, such as, *the concept of indeterminacy* and the *concept of incommensurability*. One should not confuse indeterminacy with incommensurability. The term *incommensurability* is coined from mathematics which literally means that there is no common measure between two irrational numbers. It has been used metaphorically by Kuhn<sup>5</sup> and Feyerabend with the strong intuition that communication breakdown between two scientific communities is due to lack of

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<sup>5</sup> Kuhn, 'Commensurability, Comparability, Communicability', PSA, 1982, Vol.2 p. 670

*some common measure* between the two languages used. For them any successful communication between two language communities requires *some appropriate common measures* between the languages used; otherwise communication would be incommensurable. This has exactly been the same of later Wittgenstein's philosophical position of 'family resemblance' or 'language - game'. According to Wittgenstein even though every member of a family (brothers and sisters of the same parents) differs from others, but each of them has some sort of similarities, dissimilarities, and criss-cross and overlapping features with others. Likewise, even though each game is different from other, say for example, the game of football differs from the game of cricket and the game of cricket differs from the game of swimming, but each of them belongs to the same generic class Game because they have some common overlapping properties. Initially, Kuhn has outlined the common measure as a *shared Paradigm*.<sup>6</sup> However, his view of shared paradigm has been severely criticized on account of its ambiguity and vagueness. Kuhn later on realized it. He accordingly concentrated on the essential part of the paradigm, namely, exemplars and similarities relationships (family resemblance of Wittgenstein) among items determined by exemplars. According to Kuhn, the phrase 'no common measure' becomes 'no common language'. He says, "The claim that two theories are incommensurable is then the claim that there is no language, neutral or otherwise, into which both theories, conceived as set of sentences, can be translated without residue or loss."<sup>7</sup> As Kuhn's requirement of *common language* based on shared paradigm is too broad and vague, he gave it up and began to focus solely on one *essential aspect of a language*, i.e., its *taxonomic (grammatical) structure*. As a result, his understanding of the phrase 'common measure' became 'shared taxonomy or shared lexical structure' between two competing scientific languages. Thus, Kuhn's main objective is to find out a significant and effective paradigm of making *cross cultural communication or cross language communication* successful. Kuhn reveals it very well that the breakdown of cross-language communication actually invites incommensurability. Thus, for Kuhn any two scientific theories, in our case

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<sup>6</sup> Kuhn, *Structure of the Scientific Revolutions*, Second edition, The University of Chicago Press, 1970 a. P.53.

<sup>7</sup> Kuhn, "Commensurability, Comparability, Communicability", op. cit. p.670.

any two languages whatsoever, would be incommensurable if there falls short of a necessary or so to speak minimum common measure (shared taxonomy).

This paper, however, is not confined with any specific language like Kuhn has outlined, rather it deals with a general form of language or more specifically the language of world view. The point that needs to be taken care of at this juncture is to show how such a kind of language that would reflect the world-view or world culture can be materialized? Translation manuals are the only available means through which we can approach towards the language of world-view. In this regard I do fully agree with Quine that any form of translation would be indeterminate in terms of degree. It is equally true to say that translation of a theory would loss the originality of the theory (residue or loss in the sense of Kuhn). There is no point of denying the fact that indeterminacy is *sui-gensis* of translation manuals. This does not, however, make sense say that the sort of indeterminacy arising out of translation manuals inevitably leads to incommensurability. Indeterminate translation in most cases, I do reckon, is commensurable. If two or more translators translate a theory within the purview of natural or ordinary language, the translations would be slightly different and there we find some overlapping, criss-cross similarities and dissimilarities in these translations. This is natural. Rabindranath Tagore initially wrote *Gitanjali* in Bengali language and it has been translated in many languages. Even many translators have translated it in the same language, for example, in English as well. If we go through two English translations, we do not find point to point similarities between them; rather there we find some overlapping characteristics between these translations. Translation is not a mere translation; rather it would be an outcome of interpretation as well.

Let us make this point more clear. Suppose there are two languages, such as, Bengali and Nepali. If we presuppose that language is culture-specific then Bengali language gets its structure from Bengali culture and so does the Nepali language. Let me further assume that there are no appropriate *common measures* between these languages in Kuhn's sense. Accordingly, if a translator translates both the languages into English, then it would certainly be the case in Kuhn's sense that the interpretations would be incommensurable. I do not reckon incommensurability in this sense. To me when the languages of Bengali and Nepali are translated into

English the person having the mastery over English comes to know about the culture of Bengali as well as Nepali just by way of going through the translations. Moreover, I think that within the purview of natural languages, there must remain some common share measures or share beliefs among different linguistic communities. When two languages in the strict sense of the term would be incommensurable, then there is no point of saying that they are indeterminate. Indeterminacy is relevant only in the case of commensurable language. Indeterminacy does not mean communication breakdown. The point that I intend to make here is that here we are dealing with the kind of language where the question of incommensurability in the strict sense of the term does not arise. Here we must take note from later Wittgenstein's metaphors of 'language-game' and 'family resemblance'.

Indeterminacy thus is an altogether different concept from incommensurability. Translation manual, even if it is indeterminate, may not lead to incommensurability. There is no possibility of communication breakdown in translation manual even if it is indeterminate. Incommensurability is applicable between *two competing scientific language communities* and if there arises any vagueness of the explanation of incommensurability it is partially due to the fact that we are dealing with a complex historical-anthropological phenomenon deeply rooted in the basic mechanisms of *cultures, forms of life, language and social institutions*. Incommensurability has its multi-dimensional aspects which are no longer relevant in the context of this paper. The only aspect of incommensurability that is particularly relevant in the context of this paper is *to envisage whether we have adequate notion of translation to work with it*. Thus, the point of contention of this paper at this juncture is to look at and take care of whether the notion of incommensurability or communication breakdown is associated with the notion of indeterminacy arising out of translation manual. Translation again may have different forms, such as, intentional translation mainly focusing on meaning (sense) and extensional translation focusing on reference. Quine elsewhere says that translatability is a *fragile and flimsy notion*<sup>8</sup> unable to live up with its *overloaded promise* of distinguishing alternative languages and also 'to unfit to bear the weight of the theories of cultural

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<sup>8</sup> Quine, "On the Very Idea of a Third Dogma" included in *Theories and Things*, Harvard University Press 1981, p. 42.

incommensurability'. Quine himself has adopted different notions of translation manual. At times, he has adopted a very strict notion of translation to measure the conceptual remoteness of two alternative languages. At other times, he allows obstinate and baffling translation between language embodying alternative or relative conceptual schemes<sup>9</sup>.

Like Quine, Kuhn also makes a distinction between liberal versus literal translation while exemplifying his notion of incommensurability. According to Kuhn, the main objective of a translator very similar to Quine's radical translator or interpreter is *to have a better understanding of an alien text*. In order to do this, the translator, Kuhn opines; "must find the best available *compromises* between incompatible objectives". Translation, according to Kuhn, always involves compromises and appeasements which alter communication. Thus, translation manual based on better understanding is supposed to be a relentless revision of one language into another language. Or it is process of constant revision within the same language and linguistic community. As there are many perceptible alterations in translation manual, translator must take note of what alteration is acceptable.<sup>10</sup> This sort of translation is called *liberal translation* by Kuhn. He then spells out some basic features of this sort of translation. These are as follows:

- The target language is allowed to be altered by introducing new concepts by subtle changing more or less the old concepts.
- It does not require a systematic replacement with or mapping of words or word groups in the source language to the corresponding words or word groups in the target language.
- The translation is not an exact one; rather it would be a matter of degree.
- The translation in the real sense of the term is strictly linked with the process of language learning and thus involves a strong interpretative component.

Liberal translation, according to Kuhn, is the inventiveness practiced by historians and anthropologists. In order to make the source language available, the translator or the interpreter has to learn the source language in the process of translation and in turn looks for the closest counterparts of expressions of the source

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* p. 41.

<sup>10</sup> Kuhn, "Reflections on My Critics", in *Criticism and Growth of Knowledge*, edited by I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1970b, p.268.

language in the target language.<sup>11</sup> If liberal translation is taken into account then it is possible to translate any different text no matter how alien is it to the translator's home language. As a result, there would be no incommensurable texts.

Unlike the liberal translation, Kuhn takes literal translation in a strict sense where the translator systematically substitute the appropriate expressions in the target language for the corresponding expressions in the source language in order to produce an equivalent text in the target language. Here the target and the source languages remain unchanged in the sense that no new kind-terms are permissible. The translation is mapped to a concept with exactly the same semantic values in the source as well as in the target languages. The translation between two languages is either possible or impossible. The translation is a totally different linguistic activity from language leaning or interpretation. The purpose of literal interpretation is to make an alien text intelligible and we can accomplish this by language learning. In this regard one has to emphasize more on to identify semantic values of the expressions in the source language and then formulate semantic equivalents of these expressions within the target language. Translatability is the only source one can do it. It actually hinges on the potential ability of the target language to produce semantic equivalents of the expressions in the source language without changing its taxonomic structure. Thus, a translation may fail 'if formulating the semantic equivalents of the expressions of the source language in the target language requires either change of the target language's taxonomic structure or an extension of its semantic resources by semantic enrichment.' How do we come to know that literal translation constitutes semantic equivalence? In this regard, one has to emphasize on the sameness of sense or intention, sameness of references or intentions of shared kind-terms, sameness of truth-values of shared sentences and more on some pragmatic aspects of language, such as, the speaker's intentions, meaning and reference and contexts. Notably, Quine has said that there can be many mutually incompatible systems of translation consistent with all possible data. We have to determine which one is relevant in the context of a particular translation. However, many would say that Kuhn's literal translation is too strong and too complicated that it would be very difficult to employ.

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<sup>11</sup> Kuhn, "Commensurability, Comparability, Communicability", op. cit., pp.672-73.

As a result, many would like to say that the two types of translations that have been comprehended by Kuhn do not help us to clarify the notion of incommensurability as if we introduce literal translation then it would make commensurable incommensurable and if we introduce liberal translation then it would make incommensurables commensurable. According to Wang, “Either way, the thesis of incommensurability would turn out to be an illusion.”<sup>12</sup>

Whatever the nature of translation may be, one thing must be kept in mind that translation must be *truth-preserving*. The traditional notion of translation, Quine’s indeterminacy of translation, and Davidson’s notion of radical interpretation all start from the very idea that an adequate translation must preserve the truth-values of the sentences of the target and source languages. However, Wang does not agree with truth-value preservation as he thinks that truth-preserving translation is irrelevant to the incommensurable texts because what really matters, Wang contends, is not ‘redistribution of truth-values’. Wang then concludes by saying that “there is no tenable and integrated notion of translation that can be used to clarify the notion of incommensurability.”<sup>13</sup> However, there is perhaps another way through which one may connect the notion of translation with the notion of incommensurability as communication breakdown. Many would like to say that translation would be either necessary or sufficient for effective cross-cultural communication and understanding. Here an interpreter can understand an alien language through the relation of the translated language to the interpreter’s own home language. If it does, then surely the failure of mutual translation between the source and targeted language would surely lead to the breakdown of cross-cultural communication between the speakers of two languages and as a result of that the two languages would be incommensurable. This actually identifies commensurability with translatability and incommensurability with untranslatability. In this regard, Davidson’s concept of interpretation is particularly relevant. According to Davidson, the meaning of sentence in a language is determined by the essential role of the sentence in the language as a whole. A theory of interpretation for a language does help us to understand the language. Davidson

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<sup>12</sup> Wang, *Incommensurability and Cross-Language Communication*, Ashgate, 2007, p.44.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p.45.

then equates a theory of interpretation with a theory of understanding. A translation manual, Davidson contends, actually tells us that certain expressions of the translated language mean the same as certain expressions of the translating language. For Davidson, it may theoretically be possible that to know of each sentence of a given language means the same as some corresponding sentence of another language, without knowing at all what meaning any of these sentences has. As a result, it can be said after Davidson that a translation manual does not constitute a theory of meaning or understanding; rather it leads to an understanding of the translated language only via the translating language. Simplistically, it can be said that, a translation itself is not sufficient for understating. Understanding or interpretation is altogether a different constraint in compare to translation.

It thus reveals after Davidson that translation is altogether a different prototype. The genesis of understanding is surely not translation, but *interpretation or language learning*. Interpretation is a different linguistic activity from translation. By interpretation we generally mean the sort of inventiveness particularly practiced by historians and anthropologists when they try to understand an old text or break into an alien culture. It is undoubtedly true to say that an interpreter has the mastery and authenticity over his native or home language. The source language perhaps is unknown to him. The main task of an interpreter is to make an interpretation *so as to make an unknown alien text intelligible*. Thus, it has been suggested by saying that the most effective means of an old or alien text intelligible is to learn the language or to understand the language instead of translating it. Arguably, it can be said that interpretation or understanding is the hallmark of making cross-cultural communication successful. Translation does not have a role to play. It may even be the case that the translator at the very outset may have the mastery over the source and target language. In such a case the purpose of translation is to formulate semantic equivalents of expressions of the source language in the target language. As a result of that translation would be *comparatively genuine*. However, if it would be the case that the underlying descriptive principles, taxonomic structure or the modes of reasoning of two languages are substantially different, the translation in case of such languages would no longer be genuine. Translation whether alien or non-alien languages would be indeterminate, there is no question of doubt. But translation of

two different languages would be incommensurable if nothing is common in such languages. As translation manual is indeterminate and does not resist the problem of communication breakdown or incommensurability in the true sense of the term, it may be suggested by saying that translation can best be treated as a *desideratum*, but *not a sine qua non necessity* for understanding. Instead of translation, interpretation in the real sense of the term can function impeccably well in understanding. As a result, it can be said that translation is neither necessary nor sufficient for understanding. Understanding is at par with learning. To understand is to learn. Even at times understanding is being obstructed by translation. It has been revealed through linguistic studies that the best way to learn an alien or foreign language is not to learn it by making word by word translation, *but by living in the community of native speakers ( forms of life of later Wittgenstein) and by way of leaning the language from abrasion like a child does*. In this way one can gradually acquire the mastery over alien or foreign language by way of forgetting his own native language.

Thus, as far as the paradigm of cross-cultural communication of language is concerned there we have some key concepts, such as, incommensurability, indeterminacy, translation manual, interpretation, understanding and the concept of learning. Incommensurability in the true sense of the term is untranslatability. Commensurability means translatability with certain preconditions. Translation manual is in some sense or other associated with commensurability in most general cases rather than incommensurability. Translation manual thus all without exception does not overcome the problem of incommensurability. As translation manual does not overcome the problem of incommensurability, a proposal has been laid on in favour of interpretation, understanding and learning. Accordingly, it can be said that one can build up a world community through cross-cultural communication where interpretation and understanding of language have played the vital role. Having said this, the problem of incommensurability still remains obscure and mysterious to us. In our case incommensurability, if there be any, would be *relative and ad-hoc*. While building up a world community, we cannot survive and live up within incommensurability but of course we have to live up within indeterminacy.

### **Conceptualism and cross-cultural communication**

What helps an interpreter to make interpretation cognizable? Is there any underlying structure or scheme on account of which cross-cultural communication or more simplistically, communication in general made possible? In this regard it can be said that conceptualism is the key of making our understanding or interpretation possible. What then is conceptualism or conceptual scheme? Seemingly, conceptual schemes are all about *concepts* even though the notion of concept is notoriously murky and dicey. Conceptualism is particularly relevant to the context of cross-cultural communication because the two primary functions of concepts, such as, categorization and conceptualization are intimately associated with language. Conceptualization being a thinking process is essentially a linguistic activity. Thinking with regard to language actually helps one to have a better understanding about concepts. That is why conceptualists, such as, Carnap, Whorf, Quine, Wittgenstein, Strawson have outlined conceptual schemes along with linguistic line. The relationship between conceptual schemes and language actually hinges on two factors, such as, linguistic counterparts of concepts and kinds of language. As concepts are associated with meanings, linguistic meaning would be the primary bearer of a conceptual scheme. However, with the appearance of reorientation of semantics as developed by Frege, Russell and logical positivism, we notice an altogether radical ontological shift where sentences take or occupy the place of concepts as the primary elements of conceptual schemes. As a result, conceptual schemes become more closely connected to language. That is why instead of saying conceptual schemes, philosophers such as Carnap intends to speak of *linguistic framework*. We notice further impulsion in Quine's philosophy. For Quine, a conceptual scheme is not merely associated with a language; rather it is identical with language.

According to Quine, a conceptual scheme is a set intertranslatable sentential language. "It is", Quine says, "a fabric of sentences accepted in science as true, however provisionally".<sup>14</sup> A conceptual scheme or language is like an interconnected 'web of beliefs', 'a man-made fabric which impinges on experience only along the edges', so much so that 'the total field is so undetermined by its boundary conditions,

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<sup>14</sup> Quine, "On the Very Idea of a Third Dogma" op. cit. p. 41.

experience.’ For Quine, our statements about the external world face the tribunal of sense experience not individually, but only as *corporate body*. As a result, the unit of linguistic meaning, Quine contends, is nothing but the whole language. Conceptual scheme is a tool or a linguistic device for working a manageable structure into the flux of experience. A conceptual scheme eventually becomes a set of languages that share the same conceptual make up. More interestingly Quine while advocating that conceptual scheme is identical with language does not talk about a technical language, not he advocates in favour of ideal or logical or scientific language, rather he envisages ordinary sentential language and thereby allowing the possibility that more than one language may express the same scheme.

Having said this, conceptualism again appears as a philosophically knotty issue. In fact the root of conceptualism in our desired sense is entrenched in Kant. Kant conceives conceptualism with regard to concepts and categories. According to Kant no human experience is possible without the two basic kinds of mental schemes, viz., sensibility and understanding. As for Kant, mental schemes are universal and unchanged; there are no distinct mental schemes. Kant actually was in favour of a fixed unified conceptual scheme based on trampled object-content distinction. The Kantian conceptualism has further been drawn-out by Strawson. Like Kant, Strawson conceived of a *unified core of human conceptual scheme*. However, this sort of conceptualistic web first collided with Quine’s conceptual relativism. Unlike Kant and Strawson, Quine is a proponent of conceptual relativism. For Quine, ‘no sentence, not even the logical rules, is immune to revision’.<sup>15</sup> A continuous revision is going on in our belief system. I reckon Wittgenstein’s ‘riverbed’ metaphor has a close proximity with Quine’s non-fixed contextualized form of conceptual scheme. Wittgenstein tells us to imagine our worldview as a riverbed, where the bed of a river actually characterizes certain ‘hardened propositions’ which is the essential core of the world view. The river running on the bed represents the mass of our ever

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<sup>15</sup> Quine, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” in his *From a Logical Point of View*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Harvard University Press, 1980, p.42. (Quine was in favour of a non-fixed, relative, contextualized belief. He says that we are more ready to revise everything in the light of experience. He denies Kantian rigidity between analytic-synthetic distinctions. For Quine without Kantian dogma, one can have a sense of non-fixed analytic-synthetic distinction.)

changing belief systems. The river- bed of thoughts may shift just like our beliefs as the rushing water of the river could slowly change the shape of the riverbed and alter the course of the river. Whatever the nature of conceptualism, whether unified (universal) or relative, may be, it plays a significant role in making cross-cultural communication possible. More importantly, it can be said that a translator enables to translate a script with the background of conceptual scheme. Thus, in one sense conceptualism of any sort would be treated as the *Criterion of Intelligibility*.

Conceptualism, I do reckon, whether fixed or relative, is a state of mind. If conceptualism is supposed to be a universal core of human thinking along with the line of Kant and Strawson, then one can assess it because of its objective nature. However, the problem may arise in the case of extreme conceptual relativism where cross-cultural communication between those schemes is unattainable because in order to identify an alternative scheme, it has to be somehow intelligible to us to the extent that we recognize it *as a state of mind*. If we do not have any sense of an alternative conceptual scheme then how do we justify or believe that there, in fact, exists a state of mind. According to Davidson, an alien conceptual scheme within the purview of extreme conceptual relativism as expounded by Quine would be extremely remote from ours to the extent of being 'mutually unintelligible'. As a result, it has been criticized by saying that cross-language understanding between those schemes is unattainable in principle. Wang denies the position of Davidson as he thinks that even if there exists an alien human language that cannot be made intelligible through interpretation by our semantic and conceptual apparatus, but still we can make it intelligible if the language under consideration has been qualified as a human language. I think in the context of this paper it is our general presupposition that when we are envisaging the paradigm of cross-cultural communication we are primarily concerned with a kind of language that would be qualified as human language. Following Wittgenstein it can be said that human language is rule-following and following a rule is a practice in our community or society, i.e., in our forms of life. A language is human language if one can learn it from *abrasion just like a child does*. Any sort of human language is learnable in principle. As a result, it can be said that if a language is not learnable in principle, it would not be treated as human language in our desired sense.

It should equally be kept in mind that different conceptualists have approached different types of language. For example, Kuhn and Feyerabend are in favour of scientific language and Quine, Wittgenstein, Whorf are in favour of ordinary or natural or sentential language. I think the problem of incommensurability or communication breakdown very much persists in case of scientific language. Scientific language is artificial in nature and in most cases it ignores the cultural aspects of human life. It emphasizes more on reduction instead of baptismal ceremony or historicity in the true sense of the term. However, the problem of incommensurability in the case of natural or ordinary language or sentential language does not arise in most general cases. Ordinary or natural or native language though ambiguous in nature because of its versatile and multifarious uses, but one can ensure common shared beliefs or a common form of life among linguistic community taking part in ordinary language. Thus, our view of language is a world view (a language view is a world view) contains cultural tradition associated with language. Just like the rays of the Sun warm every part of the world, the language that we talk about as the vehicle of world view would be the participation of the world community and as a result of that it would be the reflection of global culture. Gadamer says, "If every language is a view of the world, it is so not primarily because it is a particular type of language (in the way that linguists view languages) but because of what said or handed down in the language."<sup>16</sup>

### **Concluding Remarks**

Let me revisit what the paper initially promises to do and how far it has been shaped. Initially, the paper engages to find out the paradigm of cross-cultural communication towards building up a world community. In doing so, the paper runs with a few philosophical backgrounds. First it has assumed that language is *culture specific* and *language gets its structure from culture*. This assumption is not universal in nature and it cannot be accepted without question begging. However, it is a forceful philosophical perception on the basis of which the paper has been developed. The other important precept is that of the concept of *incommensurability* or

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<sup>16</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, second revised edition, trans., by J. Weinsheimer and D. Marshall, Continuum, New York, 1989, p.441.

*communication breakdown*. Incommensurability is a mathematically operational jargon and philosophers like Kuhn and Feyerabend in particular have used it in scientific language. Even though this paper borrows this concept from Kuhn and at length concentrated on Kuhn's position of incommensurability as ready reference, but the paper actually reads the concept of incommensurability neither in the mathematical sense nor even in the sense predominantly concerned with scientific language, rather it takes it in the case of natural language or ordinary language which appears as a world-view. Thus the point of contention of this paper is to have a kind of language that would be appeared as a *world-view*. Certainly, artificial or constructed language does not appear or functions as a world view. Similarly, there are as many as innumerable types of language like as there are as many as innumerable types or communities all over the world. However, scientific or artificial language differs from community language of any sort in the sense that the language of community is native and natural and it is intimately associated with culture, ethos, and historicity or the baptismal ceremony ( Putnam) or charity ( Davidson). This paper has attempted to unearth the path through which one can build up a world community by way of visualizing a language that would appear as a world view.

In this regard, the paper has explained and examined three basic concepts, such as, *incommensurability*, *indeterminacy* and *translation manuals*. It claims that translation manual is the ready reference on the basis of which one can attempt to have a language of world view towards building a world community. By translation, it does not mean a mere form of translation. While translating a script, the translator has to fulfill certain important conditions, such as, he has in depth knowledge about the original script (the source language); he has the mastery over both the languages (the source and target languages). Having said this, the paper claims that indeterminacy is *sui-gensis* of translation manuals. Translation of any sort must be indeterminate and it should be measured in terms of degree. It is indeed true to say that any two translations of a particular script would not be exact in nature. There must be some overlapping and criss-cross linguistic symptoms that would certainly be appeared in these translations. This would happen in the case of same language. The ground reality would further be different in case of cross-cultural communication or cross language communication. The paper intends to say that translation manuals is

the most effective path through which one can have a sense of world community by way of formulating universal language.

What then is incommensurability? This paper even though has coined the concept of incommensurability and at length discussed it with regard to Kuhn and Feyerabend, but it differs from their position on a few accounts. First, Kuhn and others used it in the case of scientific language. The author of this paper claims that as scientific language is artificial in nature, two or more scientific language may differ from other and there is a possibility of incommensurability in the cases of scientific languages. As the paper deals with a kind of ordinary or natural language with the philosophical precept that language is culture and language gets its structure from culture, it encompasses everything from holistic point of view. Language as a means of communication must be treated as an all pervasive tool or instrument which constantly touches upon the *stream of human life*. It is a form of life in the sense of later Wittgenstein where everyone takes part and nobody is excluded. The form of life functions and functions very well on the basis of some shared beliefs or some common measures (family resemblance in the sense of later Wittgenstein). Even though native language differs from community to community, from clan to clan, from country to country, but there must underlie some common measure or common beliefs (may be some conceptual concepts in the sense of Immanuel Kant or some basic particulars in the sense of P.F.Strawson). As the credibility of this paper actually hinges on this philosophical precept, interpersonal or cross-cultural communication is held within indeterminacy. Does it then lead us to assume that indeterminacy leads to incommensurability? This paper almost rules out the problem of incommensurability within the purview of indeterminacy arising out of translation manual. This has been justified on the basis of *a unified core of human thinking*, i.e., on the basis of conceptualism (either universal or relative or radical). Thus, language develops on the basis of cultural heritage and there underlies some shared or common measures or beliefs among linguistic community in general irrespective of their caste, creed, clan, nationality. The core of human thinking remains the same whatever the language they use, whatever the cultural heritage they have; whatever the geographical location they occupy. Thus, the paper strongly addresses that incommensurability may appear as a glimpse in cross-cultural communication, but it

would not be lasted for a considerable length because the translators with their sheer understanding and interpretation eventually overcome the problem of incommensurability within the linguistic environment of indeterminacy towards building up a world community. The all-important conclusion that the paper draws is to boil down the possibility of incommensurability within the regime of natural language that would appear as a world view. Secondly, translations of any sort whether within the same language or in different language would be indeterminate. In this sense it can be said that indeterminacy is *sui-gensis* in translation manuals. Indeterminacy arising out of translation manuals in natural language by no means invites incommensurability is the real sense of the term. Even if incommensurability arises, it would not be lasting within the regime of natural language.

The readers or viewers of this paper may be interested to take note about the insight of this paper that would meticulously boils down the possibility of incommensurability or communication breakdown on non-relative basis within indeterminacy. As language is culture-specific, a house, human beings do not live in the objective world alone or alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, rather they survive at the very mercy of the particular language as the medium of expressions for their respective society. Language as the house of being controls the world-view. As one's own language controls one's own world-view, naturally speakers of different languages will, therefore, have different world-views. But how do we synthesize individual's world view towards holistic world view is a matter of question that has been well addressed in this paper. This actually recalls the metaphor of "language-game" of later Wittgenstein. Under the generic term Game, there are innumerable games and each game has its own world-view that neither game can survive without Games. There is a family resemblance among games and in turn all games belong to Game. Similarly, there are innumerable sub-languages as like as there are innumerable sub-communities. Having said this, there underlies some common features or common overlapping conceptual characteristics on the basis of which all languages can function within the purview of Universal or World-language. In this regard, we can adopt translation manuals along with the background of conceptualism of any sort, human understanding, interpretation and the capacity of language learning. All these are taken together can help us to build up a world

community by conceiving a world-language. There remains indeterminacy in this language but there cannot remain incommensurability on non-relative basis.

## WHY SHOULD WE ACT MORALLY?

KOUSHIK JOARDAR

Professor Raghunath Ghosh is a well-known *darshanik* with a spirit of a philosopher. What I mean is that in spite of his command over all the schools of Indian thought, *mokṣa* seems to be his less concern than knowledge itself. And this makes him to ask questions continually, a seeker at heart. He is my teacher, colleague, elder brother and above all, one of my dearest friends. It will be my great honour if my quest for a moral standard in the form of this present article pleases him.

We love ourselves and we cannot avoid loving our own-selves - we are so constituted by nature. Some philosophers hold that we seek our own pleasure by nature, and therefore we ought to act for our own pleasure. We are not on the same boat with those hedonists, rather we say that we act for our own protections and our instinct of survival moves us in that way. Should we say then ‘We ought to act for our own survival?’ Many will raise their eyebrows if self-love is proposed as a moral standard. They need not to, because no one is going to set self-love or self-protection as the end of morality. But there is nothing wrong in loving one’s own self. There is a prejudice among some moralists that self-love is condemnable and only love for others is worthy of praise. But is not self-love is the foundation of love for others? “And you must love your neighbour just as much as you love yourself.”<sup>1</sup> The Gospel does not condemn self-love but you have to love others as much as you do to you. However, Self-love cannot be a moral standard because of two things:

1. It does not carry any sense to say that we ought to do something which we do by nature.
2. And, morality is a social institution. A Robinson Crusoe need not to be moral, although he may need to protect himself. It is natural that an individual would strive for his own survival or protection but morality is not self-love. But morality starts with self-love; it is the self that initiates the institution of morality.

Let me cite an example to make my stand clear. This is the famous story of Captain Scott which I quote from an article by Mr. ValsonThampu, published in “The Statesman”, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 1999:

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<sup>1</sup> *The Gospel according to Luke*, (The Bible, New Testament) verse No. p. 816

On 18 January 1912, Captain Scott and his four Companions reached the South Pole. On their return journey, Petty Officer Evan fell ill. Captain Scott now faced a painful dilemma. Either he could carry the sick man along and risk the lives of the rest of the party, or he could let Evans die alone and ensure a better chance of survival for the rest. Scott took the first course; they carried Evans along until he died. The delay proved fatal to the rest of the group, too. The blizzards overtook them. Their frozen bodies were found six months later only 10 miles from the next depot which they had been unable to reach.<sup>2</sup>

Now, for our purpose, it is interesting to note Mr. Thampu's interpretation of the above story. His view represents the view of many of the intellectuals of our society. Mr. Thampu of the Department of English, St. Stephen's College, Delhi, writes - "Captain Scott, in the agonising dilemma he faced, rejected a way of life based on the instinct of self-preservation. Exclusive pursuit of self-interest creates a culture that undermines social cohesion and imperils human security and well-being. Captain Scott rejected expediency as a paradigm of human conduct." But in the previous paragraph, he states "... Captain Scott's choice seems quixotic only as long as the situation is not viewed from the perspective of Evans. All the more so because Captain Scott, or anyone else, could also be in Evans's predicament. As a rule, those who would vote in favour of abandoning Evans would vehemently condemn this decision if they were to be the victims of such a choice". I have every respect for the spirit Mr. Thampu expresses. The title of the article is "Morality must be the basis of politics". But I must say that he expresses a typical moral reasoning like most of the educated intellectuals. His observation that expediency should be rejected in morality is Kantian. But the later part of his comments contains the elements of hypothetical reasoning. In fact, it needs courage to acknowledge the hypothetical nature of morality. We think it bad to act in terms of self-expediency although we act consciously or unconsciously in terms of it. It was because of expediency that society came into existence. It is not that one fine morning a "social contract" was signed, but the difficult and intolerable situations paved the way to the forming of a society for the survival of greatest number of people. Extremely cohesive and close-knit life of the primitive people can be explained in this light. Is morality then to be built upon biology? Yes it is to be. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) felt that a moral code which could not meet the tests of 'natural selection and the struggle for existence' is from

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<sup>2</sup> "The Statesman", 19<sup>th</sup> May, 1999.

the beginning doomed to lip service and futility. Spencer claims that the principles of ethics have a 'natural basis' for, moral conclusions follow the general law of evolution".<sup>3</sup> All of us, as did Captain Scott, carry the experience of evolution or the history of formation of society. Selfishness is a tendency within human nature. Morality supervenes on the myriad roles and relations in which man finds himself in society. In fact, the life of a human being from childhood to adulthood is the history of development of morality. "As a matter of fact, a young child has practically no consciousness of morality at all. The sense of morality grows with the development of men in association with society. The young child lives in a universe mostly of appetites. The development of its personality goes on in proportion as his association with other fellow-beings continually grows."<sup>4</sup> Thus Captain Scott did not reject "a way of life based on instinct of self-preservation" as Mr. Thampu says. Scott did not reject expediency. But, that he should carry Evans along, rather than abandoning him is a moral conduct learnt from the social environment. For me, I am important. But for the society, it is not the individual but the greatest possible number (it may mean the hundred per cent) that is important. The emergence of the spirit of self-sacrifice is not smooth one; it has its ups and downs. Every one of our actions implies struggle between self-interest and other-regarding interests. Each time the outcome means victory for one or the other.

What has been discussed above can also be discussed from the point of view of moral sanctions. The rational or the teleological view of morality allows one to ask "why should I be moral?" The question has actually two parts:

- What could I gain by being moral? For what consequence should I be moral?
- What could happen if I don't?

As to the former of the two, answers are many: that you may get salvation or happiness or pleasure, or that you will be secured etc. In answer to the second, concept of moral sanction comes. Bradley, the deontologist would say that these sorts

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<sup>3</sup> *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Western philosophy and philosophers* (ed. Urmson and Ree), London, Unwin Hymann Ltd., 1989, page 302.

<sup>4</sup>S.N. Dasgupta, *Philosophical Essays*, ("International morality"), Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1990, p. 31.

of question are illegitimate in morality,<sup>7</sup> but Mill rightly says that all standards in morality must have to answer such questions.<sup>8</sup>

Sanction is a penal term with a controlling character implying the penalty that will be imposed by a public authority on a convicted wrong doer in respect of his breach of the law. Sanctions are either external or internal, says Mill. He accepts external sanctions offered by Bentham. Bentham, in his *Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Chapter 3, distinguished four types of sanction:

1. 'Physical Sanction', which is in Bentham's terminology, the natural imprudence, as when a man's house is set on fire because he failed to put out his candle.
2. If God set the man's house on fire because of a sin he had committed, this would be the imposition of a 'religious sanction'.
3. If the house was burnt down as a legal penalty for a crime, this is the imposition of a 'political sanction'.
4. And if the house burns down because the owner's neighbours will not help him to put it out on account of some dislike to his moral character, this is a punishment of 'moral sanction' or 'popular sanction'.<sup>9</sup> In Mill's language, "They are the hope of favour and the fear of displeasure, from our fellow creatures or from the Ruler of the Universe ..."<sup>10</sup> And "The whole force therefore of external reward and punishment, whether physical or moral, and whether proceeding from God on from our fellow men ..."<sup>11</sup>

The internal sanction or the conscience, which Mill describes as a feeling in our own mind, is a very complex phenomenon. It is an acquired faulty - a feeling of pain which we suffer when we fail to do our duty.<sup>12</sup> According to my opinion, this feeling is the essence of conscience. James Mill, John Mill's father, argued that a conscience gets built up in the individual by means of the association of ideas through

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<sup>7</sup> Mary Warnock, *Ethics since 1900*, London: Oxford University Press, 1976, page 2.

<sup>8</sup> J. S. Mill, *Utilitarianism, On Liberty, Considerations on Representative Governments*, London: Everyman's Library, 1992, page 27.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 452.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p. 28.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p. 29.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p. 29.

parental punishment and approval.<sup>13</sup> This internal sanction, I think, cannot be looked at as being totally separated from the external ones. In fact, it is the effect of the external sanctions on the mind for many years. The complexity of the internal sanction cannot be described in an easy way but the undated past of its origin gives morality a mystical sort of character. Mill too has no doubt in his mind that moral feelings are acquired and in no way innate.<sup>14</sup> Mill is not interested to pursue the theory of the nature, or origin of conscience. For him conscience as the ultimate sanction is a subjective feeling in our mind. Thus, all our common principles of morality like ‘telling the truth’, ‘keeping promises’ etc., are based on the shared experience of human beings over untold thousands of years.

If sanctions are answers to the question ‘what if I don’t be moral?’, our rational activity tries to answer the quest ‘how to be moral?’. Reason can clearly see that a moral man is a social man. Reason or our rationality, ultimately serves the purpose of our self-preservation. As to the rational activity, Karl Popper mentions two: (i) Utopian engineering and, (ii) Piecemeal Engineering. According to Utopian engineering any rational action must have certain aim and it determines its means according to this end. Choice of the end is the first step to act rationally. There are some intermediate or partial ends which are actually likely to promote the ultimate end. We must be able to see in this manner otherwise we will fail to act rationally. There is another kind of rational activity, namely, piecemeal engineering. According to it, it is very “...difficult to reason about an ideal society. Social life is so complicated that few men or none at all would judge a blue print for social engineering on the grand scale...” And further, perceptions differ from person to person. Thus instead of searching for greatest good, the piecemeal engineer will adopt the method of locating for the greatest and most urgent evils of society. Thus, we should go for better health care or educational reform etc. Popper opts for this piecemeal engineering and declares this as the only “rational one”. Popper thinks that blueprints for single institutions are less risky because if they go wrong, the damage is not great and a readjustment can be made easily. Popper, thus, rejects holism. “Popper, though maintaining that scientific method is applicable to the study of

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<sup>13</sup>*Ibid*, p. 453.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid*, p. 31.

individual aspects of social systems, has rejected holistic attempts to formulate laws holding for social wholes ...”<sup>15</sup>

But I wish to differ from Popper on the type of social engineering to be adopted. The philosophy behind piecemeal engineering is not acceptable at all. True, that perceptions vary, but there are common interests in society e.g., health or education. And if there is no ultimate practical end, or at least an idea of that, how could one recognise ‘evils of society’ as evils? Why is health-care good? Without knowing or answering this, how and why should one fight against “the greatest and most urgent evils of society”? An unprejudiced probing will show that health or educations etc. are good, for they serve the ultimate purpose of human survival. Thus, a social engineer must adopt to accomplish the ultimate purpose of security and survival of members of the society. But the question “why survival is good” cannot be asked because it is the inherent disposition or property of life itself.

In *An Introduction to Social Psychology*, McDougall defines instinct as innate or inherited tendencies “which are the essential springs or motive powers of all thought and action ...”<sup>16</sup> In this book, McDougall criticizes all other theories like hedonism (page 314), ideao-motor theory of action (page 323) and intuitionist theory (328) etc., and defends only ‘instinct as end of our actions’ - theory. “We may say ... directly or indirectly the instincts are the prime movers of all human activity ...”<sup>17</sup> An instinct moves our actions towards its satisfaction. McDougall does not mention any instinct like ‘instinct of survival’. But there are instincts of food seeking, instinct of escape, instinct of pugnacity, reproductive and parental instincts, sex instinct, instinct of acquisition and construction, gregarious instinct etc., etc. Instinct of survival may be said to be common to all these instincts or serves as the real purpose underlying their operations. McDougall disfavours any mechanistic model of psychology and defend a purposive psychology. The word ‘instinct’ indicates an urge to action, an impulsion to strive towards a goal which is *sui generis* in nature, says McDougall.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Popper “Aestheticism, perfectionism, utopianism” in *The Philosophy of Society*, page 212 ff.

<sup>16</sup> William Mc Dougall, *An Introduction to Social Psychology*, London: Mathuen Co. Ltd., 1950, p. 17.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 38.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, p. 407.

This purpose or goal is certainly self-preservation or survival. Thus, McDougall is an exponent of Hormic psychology.

**The Hormic Psychology of McDougall:** McDougall is an exponent of the teleological theory of action. We have already seen the inadequacy and fallacies of hedonistic theory - a variety of teleological theory. There is the other alternative, - the hormic theory of action, which McDougall says is “the only alternative teleological theory of action”.<sup>19</sup> The essence of the theory may be stated very simply as the following: “To the question - why does a certain animal or men seek this or that goal? - it (the hormic theory) replies: Because it is his nature to do so.”<sup>20</sup>

But what does ‘hormic’ mean? McDougall quotes from Sir P. T. Nunn’s book *Education, its data and First Principles* : The “... element of drive or urge, whether it occurs in the conscious life of man and the higher animals, or in the unconscious activities of their bodies and the (presumably) unconscious behaviour of lower animals, we propose to give a single name - *horme*. In accordance with this proposal, all the purposive process of the organism are hormicprocesses ...”<sup>21</sup> But one must not confuse it with conative process for “... conative process being the subclass whose members have the special mark of being conscious”.<sup>22</sup> Again, this “Horme ... is the basis of activities that differentiate the living animal from dead matter, and therefore, of what we have described as the animal’s characteristic attitude of independence towards its world.”<sup>23</sup> I must mention here, that in addition to Dr. Nunn’s view, McDougall regards the subconscious hormic process not as entirely blind but rather as involving something of that foresight (however vague) which is the essence of our most clearly purposive activities.

This is a standpoint which is clearly not Darwinian but speaks out for a Lamarckian flavour. The real issue is not then between rational and voluntarism. The issue is, or the antagonism is between mechanism and teleology. Thinkers like Democritus, Galileo, Spinoza, Darwin etc. argue for a mechanistic model and

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<sup>19</sup>*Ibid*, p.458.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid*, p. 458.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid*, p.491.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid*, p. 491.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid*, p.491.

thinkers like Anaxagoras, Aristotle, Leibnitz and Lamarck etc. argue for a teleological theory of actions. McDougall takes Lamarck's side. But, I want to mention one name here, who, even before McDougall had argued for a Lamarckian teleology and that is the forgotten name of Edward Von Hartmann (1842–1906). William McDougall writes "... Von Hartmann ... may be said to have first written psychology on purely hormic basis ...".<sup>24</sup> According to Hartmann "All thought begins with instinct, which is nothing else than purposive action without consciousness of purpose or even conscious willing of means to an unconsciously willed end."<sup>25</sup> Von Hartmann struggled against Darwinism in his attempt to establish a vitalistic interpretation of the phenomena of life. He opposes the purely mechanistic interpretation of the phenomenon of life, as the Darwinian-Spencerian formula of the struggle for existence and all that it involves seem to represent. Hartmann draws the conclusion that the theory of Darwin has nothing positive to offer us.<sup>26</sup> The problem is - is it really a mere 'chance', as with Darwin or an evolutionary tendency guided by a plan through inner causes that determines the evolution. I still believe with Hugo de Vries that new species can but not must arise through minimal variations. What Darwin's formula would and should do, namely, explain purposive results from mechanical causes, seems to be incapable of being done. At least in the micro level, Darwinian formula has already been proved to be unsatisfactory. However, Hartmann was closer to reality by introducing purpose into the theory of instinctive actions, but he is unintelligible when he stresses on the "unconscious". Hartmann's theory, as McDougall writes is "...marred by the extravagance of his speculations on the unconscious."<sup>27</sup> The hormic theory of McDougall also rejects the Darwinian assumption that mechanistic categories are sufficient in biology. By stressing on the intelligent striving of the organism as the creative activity to which evolution is due, hormic theory points to the reality of the Lamarckian transmission.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>*Ibid*, p. 490.

<sup>25</sup> Ludwig Stein, *Philosophical Currents*, Calcutta University Publications, 1919: page 243 - 244.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid*, p. 255.

<sup>27</sup>*An Introduction to Social Psychology*, p. 490.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid*, p. 481.

Let us now turn to the hormic theory of McDougall to find a scale of values in moral philosophy. We are in need of a 'value' which is in consonant with human nature. One virtue of the hormic theory is that it outlines an intelligible, consistent, and tenable story of continuous organic evolution, evolution of bodily forms and mental functions in intelligible relation to one another. "Of all forms of psychology the hormic is the only one that can give to philosophy the psychological basis essential to it."<sup>29</sup>

Now what function does reason play in this world of instincts? 'Reason' is sometimes used to mean a 'mental cause' or it may mean a special kind of capacity or faculty of human mind (ultimately, the two senses are like the two sides of the same coin). But in neither sense reason can create an activity or desire to act. Take this example from McDougall:

"Suppose a hungry man to be in the presence of a substance which he does not recognise as food; by the aid of reason he may discover that it is edible and nutritious, and he will then eat it or desire to eat it; but if he is not hungry, reason will not create the desire or impel him to eat".<sup>30</sup>

McDougall also adds to the above that "... in the moral sphere, the function of the reason is the same. Reason aids us in determining what is good ..."<sup>31</sup> My understanding of reason is that it is our faculty of anticipating the consequence. Reason serves the practical purpose of our drives for survival and in this sense; it is really "the slave of our passion", as Hume puts it. Passions or emotions arise when our instincts are thwarted. The real purpose of instincts is survival or self-preservation and human beings have reasoned out that they could survive only by forming a society and being in it. Reason comprises memory of experience, and experiences itself in deducing propositions from other propositions prior to the experience corresponding to the propositions deduced. For instance, the primitive man discovered that he did not succeed in killing wild animal when he went alone for hunting, but the result was different when he went with a group. Thereafter, none went alone. "If I go alone, I will not succeed" could be deduced by them without relevant experience. In this way, human beings realised that it is only through living

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<sup>29</sup>*Ibid*, p. 482.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid*, p. 325.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid*, p. 325.

in a society, only through joining hands with one other, sharing food and roof that they could survive. And they survived without further bodily evolution. Thus the rational realisation in morality is:

“Just as in developed animal organisms the individual cells have an independent life to live but yet they cannot do so without the co-operation and co-existence of other living cells, so each individual social being has a double life, a life that he has to himself and a life he leads in co-existence and co-operation with the lives of other selves. Yet the very independent life, which the cell or the man may be said to have as different from the life of other cells in the organism or of other men in the society, would not have been possible except for the co-presence of these other cells or men.”<sup>32</sup>

Can we then say that moral values have evolved biologically? It would not be outlandish if we are inclined to answer in the affirmative. There is no one notion of value which is ubiquitous. The trinity of truth-goodness-beauty represents the norms of our cognitive, volitional and affective experiences respectively. But there is a subset of values which are founded upon satisfaction of our basic needs, providing security for the future. In other words, there are values based on instinctive urges. In the absence of a better word we have called such values ‘biological values’. We should not say that since these values are biological they are devoid of moral sense. Many of the moral agreements are extensions of biological values—agreements which we enter into with our fellows for security. Spencer held that “the new morality must be built upon biology”.<sup>33</sup> Although the Darwin-Spencerian approach has lost much of its strength, we may quote from S. N. Dasgupta in support of Spencer:

“... the teleological value ultimately manifests itself for its satisfaction in the same direction as the moral value. Two values may not be exactly identical but they would not point to two different poles; and in tending to be normally good one would find a supreme satisfaction of what is biologically good in the highest degree. If this is so, the biologically good should have to be acknowledged as being in some sort of unity with the morally good...”<sup>34</sup>

I would like to conclude the present article by stating that the institution of morality started with the impulse of self-preservation, but it did not stop at individual survival.

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<sup>32</sup> S. N. Dasgupta, *Philosophical Essays* “International morality”, page 43.

<sup>33</sup> *The Story of Philosophy*, page 385.

<sup>34</sup> S. N. Dasgupta, *Philosophical Essays* “International morality”, page 40.

## PHYSICIAN'S OBLIGATION TO HONOUR THE RIGHT TO DIE

RAM C. MAJHI

I came to know Prof. Ghosh in a seminar on *Krayakaranbada* in November 2000 organised by Sri Bhallabhacharya Trust at Baroda. Stalwarts in Indian philosophy like, Prof. N. S. R. Tatacharya, Prof. Dr. Prahaladachar, Prof. Siddheswar Bhatt, Dr. Baliram Shukla and Dr. Prabal Kumar Sen were present in that seminar. After a brief interaction with Prof. Ghosh I was impressed to know that he had visited foreign universities. My presence in that seminar was like an apprentice, trained in Western philosophy of language but curious to know what is going on in current research on Indian philosophy. Needless to say, I learned a great deal from these erudite scholars including Prof. Ghosh. They were not only profound in their scholarship, they were admirably humble, a similar trait that I had found in Prof. David Lewis whom I had met during my PhD research in the University of Rochester.

I met Prof. Ghosh second time in a seminar on *Swaraj, Culture and Education* sponsored by UGC, ICPR, at Assam University, Silchar, in 2010. There I could realize Prof. Ghosh's passion for Indian thought. I presented a paper entitled "The Logic of Swaraj, Culture and Education". Dr. Prasanjeet Biswas from NEHU was very critical of the title. He thought that the term 'logic' was inappropriate there. Immediately Prof. Ghosh came forward in my defense and told that it was not necessary to assume the meaning of the term 'logic' as it is assumed in Aristotelian and modern symbolic logic as the sole meaning of the word. The relation among the concepts which could be considered as logical in a broader sense of the term 'logical' is the core meaning of the term 'logic' which is present in the discussion of metaphysics, epistemology and logic both in Indian and western traditions.

For the third time I met Prof. Ghosh in his university, the University of North Bengal, March 2011. I was surprised. I had four more years to go (I will retire in 2015), but he looked younger than me! I could sense the vitality the department was showing partly came from his presence in the department. He usually carries a small bag that he can carry while going to a seminar. He does not bother about what to wear in a seminar. Generally, I have seen professors changing their clothes every day of a three day seminar. Prof. Ghosh reminds me of our ancient saints on pilgrimage; with scant belongings they moved from one place to another in search of knowledge and share their ideas.

Last time I saw Prof. Ghosh in my university In a workshop on *Methods and Ongoing debates in Philosophy*, in 2013. He was supposed to get down at Cuttack railway station around 5 am in the early morning. One of my students was waiting at the station. I got a call from my student that he could not find Prof. Ghosh and that his mobile sounds out of reach. I was concerned. After half an hour or so Prof. Ghosh called me and apologized for the inconvenience made. He had arrived at the Bhubaneswar railway station! The forgetful professor!! He told me that he will return back to Cuttack by a down train and that I should not worry. Since I was staying in Bhubaneswar, I went to the railway station. He was standing with that lone luggage, the carry bag that he could carry. I am glad that I met Prof. Ghosh.

The objective of the paper is to ascertain the moral permissibility of right to die under special cases and physician's obligation to honour it. There is such a right already recognised in the literature of philosophy and has been legally recognised by

some countries under euthanasia. Recently India has recognised the legality of passive euthanasia. I am, however, looking for a general right to die that covers other cases as well, especially the cases of older people who wish to discontinue their life.

Let us first see the compelling reasons for euthanasia. A terminally ill patient with no hope of recovery from ill health and no chance of leading a normal life again wishes for an end to her life. The state or its agencies assist her in fulfilling her legitimate wish. The state may have consequential or utilitarian reasons for such a decision to assist her die. What comes heavily in her favour is the respect for autonomy and recognition of a right to a life with dignity. The life with pain and suffering and dependency (living on a ventilator for example) considerably reduces the chances of leading a life with dignity. Here, the much emphasised principle of the sanctity of life, either secularly or divinely interpreted, loses its significance.

It is the right to a life with dignity, an offshoot of the principle of autonomy that I would appeal to in order to provide a justification for the right to die. When I speak of the right to die, I mean the right to a dignified death. Let us first see what constitutes a life with dignity before we speak about the features of a dignified death. The first and the foremost element is the ability to procure one's own food directly or indirectly, either harvesting it or getting it in exchange of service or money and able to take it. Possession of a reasonably good health of body and mind is another element. Freedom of movement and speech is the third one. The fourth is the Lack of prohibition on consensual sex. One may wonder how this could add to the dignity of life. Before rejecting it just think for a while what would be the condition of a person who is denied of a sex life. If a state prohibits all of its citizens from having sex with their legitimate partners, that would be an outrageous law. It is because the law infringes upon one of the vital needs of one's life. One also must have a desirable purpose in her life without which the life is like the life of an animal. There is nothing bad inherently in an animal life, but human life is more than just a life of living mechanically. It must have a sense, a purpose and a direction and a possibility to achieve that end.

If someone takes away these features of a good life, he will be blamed for taking away those. That shows the worthiness of those factors for a life with dignity. Now suppose that one who takes away these important dignified life elements is not a

person or a state but nature. Does that make the dignified life element less significant? If not, then those are the essential elements for a life with dignity. No one is allowed to infringe upon the right of a person to possess and hold such benefits. Every human being ought to possess it and those who are in a position to provide it ought to offer it.

A person who used to have such goods of a good life and loses those or anticipates that she would lose those goods will consider her life worthless without those goods. Anyone in her situation will have similar evaluation. Given the fact that people value their life in this way; will she be entitled to make a decision that her life be ceased in such a situation? Ought a physician assist her implementing that decision? The former not necessarily imply the latter. One may argue that lack of the good elements of a dignified life are good reasons, but they are not the compelling reasons for ceasing one's life, still less for assisting her cease her life. Why? First of all, one may argue that lack of dignity in life demands that dignity be restored; where that is not be possible, that does not necessarily imply an undignified life. Moreover, cessation of a life though leads to an end to the lack of dignity, life is lost with it. One is terminating the life itself. That makes the reason less compelling.

Such an argument is based on a presumption that life of any kind is worth living. This presumption needs to be questioned. Unconditional sanctity of life is a myth. Human life or any other kind of life is considered fundamentally valuable because it is thought to be God given or secularly understood it is given to us, it is a gift of nature. Since humans cannot give life, they cannot take it. This kind of reasoning assumes that those who give some thing have a moral right to take it back. But there is nothing special about the morality of this principle. This way talking suggest that one is different from her life and that it is like a property that can be owned and disposed off if she chooses do so and the argument is that since she is not the owner of her life, she is just a trustee of it , she cannot decide to cease it. Now accepting such a reading a counter argument is that if my life is given to me, I am taking the burden of carrying it and if carrying it is too much a burden for me, am I not entitled to decide whether to continue to carry the burden or forgo it? Do I not have a right to do so?

If someone has a right implies that someone else has an obligation to not to interfere with the exercises of that right. If her right is taken away, she is entitled to a restoration of that right or compensation for the permanent loss of that right. If the dignity of life is lost due to old age no one is responsible for that. Hence award of compensesation or restoration of right does not make sense here. Hence, right based approach to loss of dignity in life will not be much help here. In normal circumstances it is not permissible to force one to lead a life without dignity. But if life has no charm for me any more and I decide not to have that kind of life and I am not allowed to cease my existence, my principle of autonomy is infringed. My life is my own. I am the sole arbitrator of what I do with it as long as I do not infringe the rights of others while exercising that autonomy.

In case of old age, a person with extraordinary disability such as absence of goods of life mentioned earlier cannot be said to have lost the right to live with dignity due to infringement of that right by someone else. Right in the sense mentioned above does not make sense for we cannot hold nature for the lapse. So instead of looking at the issue as special case of right to life, it will be useful to look at it as an ideal situation for application of the principle of autonomy. This is a kind of umbrella right under which many other rights come in. The principle of autonomy may be understood as the right to self rule or self-determination. What is problematic is to claim that this right entitles one to decide for self elimination. It is important to note that the cessation of the self is not same as the cessation of the life. These kinds of cases that are under discussion involve disintegration of the self. The issue then is whether a person with disintegrated self due to extraordinary disability has right to cessation of her life under the provision of the principle autonomy. One possible objection to the right is that if the principle is interpreted as the privilege for self rule or self determination it presupposes the existence of self that decides what is good for her under reasonable circumstances. How can the self have the privilege of annihilating itself? Thus the moot question is- can a person with extraordinary disability negate her own existence under the provision of the principle of autonomy? I think that it is possible.

One possible objection to the right to die under the provision of the principle of autonomy is that the moral significance of the principle lies in that it makes one's

life worth living. Since the principle presupposes a life that is to be made worthy of living, the principle can not be said to allow the axing of the very foundation on which it can be exercised. A principle that is supposed to enrich life cannot be appealed to take that very life. In contrast, there is the alternative point of view that the principle, in fact, is respected by terminating the life! A painful and suffering life is a miserable life. Letting that life continue is to disrespect the person who is forced to continue with such a life. Now coming back to the objection I say that it is based on a narrow and closed reading of the principle. The principle of autonomy is a moral tool that the moral community offers to a person so that she leads a worthy life. This is the positive aspect of the moral significance of the principle. The negative aspect of the moral significance of the principle is that it protects the person leading a wretched life. This objective of preventing a person having a wretched life can be achieved by two ways- one possible way is that others are prevented from making her life wretched; the other way is that the very person who is suffering from that miserable life ceases to exist. The first alternative should be preferred first. Where that is not available, the second option should be available without which the moral significance of the principle is overlooked. The very objective of the principle is lost in such cases.

If I am unable to eat my food that would sustain me, if my sense organs fail me, if my limbs cannot take me out of my bed, if I am unable to distinguish my wife from a stranger, if I lose the sense of location, if I lose the sense of my 'self' because of the loss memory and perceptual abilities, what more is left with my life that I should continue with it? If it is morally proper that I discontinue my existence, I cannot do it myself. I am unable to make decision; what to speak of executing that decision by myself. Someone has to help me here. The physician should help me provided that I have given an informed consent for cessation of my life while I was normal. If the physician refuses, the family members are reluctant and the state supports them, where is my freedom to choose how I live? To live or not live?

Now suppose that I have not made explicit my wish while I was normal that if I lose control over my life due to the onset of those extraordinary disabilities, I should be allowed to die. Does that imply that I would have decided to continue to exist in that nonhuman state? Nothing determinate can be said about the probable decision. But there should be some objective criteria of evaluating life's worth and

possible outcome of the exercise of the principle of autonomy. This may sound very tricky. What the person would have decided- would she have decided to exist or cease to exist? If we cannot say for certain, we may treat it as problem case at present due to the present state of our knowledge about the predictability of human decisions. But that should not deter us from considering seriously the explicitly mentioned decision of a person to not to exist in a situation where she loses control over her life.

## **PAINTED VEIL: THE ART OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE**

MANJULIKA GHOSH

It is so many years ago and yet it appears as if it is the other day. In the onrush of memories I still remember the winter afternoon when my colleague, Chinmoy Goswami (alas! He is no more) ushered a tall and lean young man in my room and introduced him as Raghunath Ghosh, who, Chinmoy told me, had just joined the Department as a lecturer. The cursory acquaintance was slow to develop into a friendship - slowness, as Helen Cixous saw it, is the very essence of friendship. Yet, once developed, it is cherished and valued till today. Meanwhile Raghunath has distinguished himself as a scholar in Classical Indian Philosophy within India and abroad. Not only that, he has also proved his mettle as an administrator, as the Dean of the Faculties of Arts, Commerce and Law and as Director of Centers. Yet, academics was always his first love, the indefatigable scholar that he was and I believe he felt the most at ease in it. Looking back, I recall many occasions of critical, academic discussions with him as well as amused moments of jokes, humours and teasing sentences interchanged over a cup of tea. What becomes all the more remarkable is that despite his erudition, he hardly donned the mantle of a grave and stern "pundit" and was open to all that is good, beautiful and joyous in life. I wish Raghunath will keep that up in the years to come. Keeping in mind Raghunath's interests in art and aesthetics I have chosen to contribute an extract from a paper read in the XVIth International Conference in Aesthetics held in the University of Tokyo in the year 2002. Raghunath was a fellow participant in the same Conference.

### **I**

"Painting is not my forte. Had it been so I could have shown what I could do", so wrote Rabindranath to daughter Mira from Japan.<sup>1</sup>This remark was prompted by a sense of despair and exasperation when he viewed the artistic works of the best contemporary Japanese artists which perhaps suggested a comparison with the delicate and sentimental works and style of the Bengal School of art, the forerunner of which was his nephew, Abanindranath Tagore.

The poet did dabble with pen and ink in his adolescence and youth but it was not, in the poet's own words, "any serious endeavour." It has been observed that Rabindranath's emergence as a painter is not at all accidental but is the culmination of a long period of preparation.<sup>2</sup> In his reminiscences he mentions his habit in his youth of sitting on a mattress in a corner of his room in the afternoon and whiling away his time sketching on an exercise book.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps he prefers to look at them as juvenilia. There are also the three sketches of his wife, Mrinalini Devi, in her state of pregnancy, reclining against a pillow. The year could be 1986. He also drew and

painted during his stay at Shelaidah, the Tagore's family estate. But he had no illusion of his limitations and did not continue his early efforts as serious and worthwhile. This is evident from his letter to Jagadish Chandra Bose from Shelaidah in 1900.<sup>4</sup> Hence, when Rabindranath, in the Introduction to the albums of his own paintings seeks to trace the origins of his paintings to his doodles he was not creating a myth about himself. Actually in those days he hardly painted; he made some sketches and drawings mostly. Further, we do not identify there any preoccupations with the themes that occur in his mature works.

It was around 1924 that Rabindranath turned to painting seriously. Why is it that Rabindranath with his unquestioned eminence as a poet, novelist, essayist and lyricist took up painting? Perhaps he was bound to acknowledge the creative urge felt within, an urge which he was not able to give adequate expression to through words – prose or verse. And this urge manifested quite capriciously – out of the crossing out and filling up lines in the pages of his manuscripts.(Figure1) After a pause, the pretext of erasure – criss-crossing and overlapping lines of his voyaging pen - was abandoned, and closed, self-contained, resilient shapes devoid of gestures began to appear, dominated by an original, pure, liquid calligraphy. By 1930, rhythmic vitality came to be increasingly overlaid with uninhibited, indiscreet emergence of recollected images. This strangely-characterized phantasmagoria revealed an astonishingly capricious private world in the very process of taking on shape and substance. There started a ceaseless stream of abundant creation as if the artist's creative potentiality was ready to erupt "like volcanic lava", to borrow the words of Abanindranath.

His contemporaries misunderstood his art and jeered at it in private. This was not at all surprising as the artist stood apart from the accepted canons and tastes of his time; from the declared values, codes and conventions of art. His art may as well be seen as a critique of conventions of art based on the rational code of constituted rules and techniques, in vogue in India and the West. His works have been linked with those of German expressionists.<sup>5</sup> It is true that Rabindranath had the opportunity to view the works of the expressionists during his visit to Europe. Sometimes in 1924 he was instrumental in organizing an exhibition of the paintings of expressionists, Paul Klee, Kandinsky, Nolde, etc. at Calcutta. But whether he was consciously

influenced by the expressionist art form is difficult to say. To dub his art as expressionist *simpliciter* will be hazarding a hasty generalization. Again, his artistic creations are likened to primitive art. Ratan Parimoo says:

The heads of the creatures in a page of the *Purabi* manuscript resemble very closely the fish-headed idols from Easter Island. Another pair of comparison of the similar kind is the page of *Raktakarabi* and that from British Columbian carving.<sup>6</sup>

However, his art cannot be described as primitive art either although it contains elements of it. He was completely self-tutored, following his own artistic intuition and evolving a style solely his own. He walked his own path. It is, perhaps, because of this that there is no school of *Rabindric* art although he had opened up liberating doors for a lot of people. There are instances of literary persons turning to painting as did Victor Hugo, Goethe, Baudelaire and William Blake. Excepting Blake, the works of none of the others bear a stamp of originality. The merit of their creations appears commonplace compared to their literary genius. Rabindranath's paintings deserve attention independently of his literary work. They are, by any standard, remarkable.

Rabindranath has produced about twenty-five hundred paintings of various sizes, in various mediums, on papers, bamboo, plywood, rejected window panes, panels of almirahs and on earthen pots, in other words, whatever he could lay his hands on. And this was accomplished within a period of sixteen years, between 1924-1941, a period, when the poet was aging, intermittently sick, had various obligations and commitments at his Santiniketan Ashram and above all, when he was ceaselessly prolific with his pen. His visual creations are aptly called "The Last Harvest".

Rabindranath's visual creations laid bare strange, non-chalant, linear rhythms and assertive, disquieting, fantastic images. The phenomenon was apparently an eruptive rebellion contradistinguished from all the profound and serene values carefully tended and developed through time. There appeared in terms of two thousand and several hundred paintings (almost of the same number as his songs) the irresistible onrush of a variegated aggression of projected images: unfurling, animated ribbons; composite flower-birds; nameless, archaic beastliness; ambiguous, sardonic imps; contorting primitive reptiles; proliferating monster-vessels, oddly sensuous nudes on extravagant furniture; improbable protagonists in a mysterious melodrama, distraught angular pilgrims on an unreal quest eternal; romantic dream

houses; illustration to lost stories; lovers silhouetted; incandescent evening landscapes; murderous enactments; characters and portraits; masks of sarcasm, masks of terror; delicate oval faces of silent lips – all freshly formed, rampant and iridescent. Categorical frontiers are dissolved, and the nascent inner world came to be populated with self-generating entities belonging as much to the state of awakening as to that of dreaming.

Rabindranath's art works can be broadly grouped into (1) figures of animals, (2) study of faces including self-portraits and (3) landscapes.

1. Animals are quite prominent in the first phase of Tagore's paintings. Creatures of the earth, water and reptiles as well as creatures of the underworld have found their way in his creations. We can only identify a few of them anatomically, for example, as a goat, a crocodile, a cock, a donkey and fox and crane from the fable. The rest is a mixture and arouses the sense of the grotesque. The forms of the strange birds and animals appear as if they come from another planet (figure 2). Many of these strange and fantastic creatures are infused with life and animation. The dynamism and life-force make them realistic if not real. Clearly, the poet's aim was not to represent facts but to seek his version of truth by his own means.
2. Among his study of human faces particularly memorable is a group of female faces whose form and pallor impart a peculiar mystery to them. Indeed, these paintings of the later phase are revelations of the unending mystique that he ever found in women. Their faces are often dark, not easily readable, with smiles half-hidden and half-suggested. The profound mystery they convey is heightened by a sense of silence, vibrant with drama. The faces are serene and yet melancholy, their dramatic sense enhanced by their being encircled by braids of hair encircling the faces or by veils covering a large part of the faces – oval or cylindrical in shape. The eyes often have contemplative, amusing yet piercing looks, the lips holding evaporating smiles (figure 3). Right in the midst of this second world of paintings and dominating it quite stridently stands the "Dark Lady" of this cluster.<sup>7</sup> It is not one lady's face, in point of likeness, but many, variations of the same, creations of the original, or the archetype of the many moods and expressions. The portraits

are not really beautiful in the conventional sense. Yet they are arresting, and engage us in a way that makes it impossible for us not to notice them. It is futile to argue whom the archetype designates. It is more urgent to note here the expression of the moods, the passions and contemplation of the human condition.

Among his study of faces must be classed his self-portraits. All of us are familiar with this or that pictorial representation of the poet, his Aryan countenance. In some of the self-portraits we encounter a twisted, almost tormented expression in harsh, restless lines, acknowledging in art a life not susceptible to harmony and rhythm, rather expressing the inner recess of the psyche. In at least some self portraits of the later years can be detected a mingling of distrust, anger and hurt feeling, the poet's Sun-god-like appearance disfigured by being mercilessly scratched in deep, dark lines, covering the face and coming straight down to the chest, as if the artist is struggling to express in darkness and layers of shadow, his real self behind the apparent one (figure 4). A problem of personal identity is in order here. Some others betray a retreating and at the same time an agitated look or an intense urge to keep the agitation completely under control. Rabindranath's self-portraits are not many in number. Yet in at least ten self-portraits of his last years, one can detect this building up of the dramatic pressure between the opposition and the intensity. This is how Sankha Ghosh has preferred to evaluate them.<sup>8</sup>

There are many instances of artists indulging in self-portraits. We may mention Van Gogh and Rembrandt. Near at hand there is also the deeply moving self-portrait of Jyotirindranath, Rabindranath's elder brother, done during his solitary stay at Ranchi. But none contains the anguished look of Rabindranath's self-portraits.

3. In the paintings of **landscapes** the use of dark colours – black, brown, yellow-ochre – in silhouetted trees and hills and cloud- and- waterscape is immediately noticeable. The only bright colours used are yellow and orange for shading the sky in the fading light and darkening shadow of twilight (figure5). Nature is immersed in the darkness of either early daybreak or of

twilight. The poet's dear nature loses its brightness and joyousness in bleak uneasiness. The colours and the shadows that emerge from the technique of use of the colours are described as "surreal", bringing out what nature ordinarily fails to yield. His nature paintings are not mirror-images of nature.

## II

The poet of light, when painting, has black as his favourite colour. Humans, animals, trees, flowers, creepers, everything is soaked in black. The dark and disturbing features of Rabindranath's paintings have led some critics and commentators to link them to the inner universe that the artist held in his unconscious depths. In his Foreword to the Catalogue published on the occasion of the exhibition of Rabindranath's paintings in America, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, the noted art historian, characterized them as "modern". He wrote with great sensitiveness about Rabindranath's paintings and long before William Archer<sup>9</sup> and following him, Sibnarayan Roy<sup>10</sup> has detected anything "libidinous" in those disturbing series of paintings, Coomaraswamy said that Tagore's painting was "comparable to the publication of a private correspondence." Indeed, the drawings and paintings of Rabindranath richly trace the extraordinary inner, even at times, libidinous (*pace* Archer and Sibnarayan Roy) journey of a complex individual through the ecstatic affirmation of existence, manifest as rhythm - articulate, inherent in form, self-referent - towards the convinced cognition of individuated imagery as dramatic characterization of concepts and associations, being the total fantasy of the emotional world.

The question may be raised as to whether Rabindranath's paintings can be described as "beautiful". Ratan Parimoo, whom we have quoted before, says:

It was not the case that he was not interested in a beautiful face. But on the whole it can be said that he was not primarily interested in the beautiful but in the grotesque.<sup>11</sup>

What we are rather inclined to say is that Rabindranath's art effectively undermines the placidity and repose that often typify beauty. In other words, he was, perhaps, trying to show the connection between beauty's surface and deep structures - the deep having elements that often appear to be inimical to beauty at the surface level. Beauty is one among many features that art works may have - such negative aesthetic qualities as shocking and grotesque being among them. His paintings are not

beautiful in the conventional sense, neither are they ugly or disgusting. They are fantastic, whimsical and as such disquieting and even disturbing.

In the West, the separation of beauty and aesthetics in the sense of a challenge to beauty's hold upon art took the shape of a movement of the post-First World War, Dadaism and Surrealism, e.g. Dali's *Un Chien Andalou*. The former signifies anti-aesthetic creations and war-resisting protest movements. Perhaps the most famous and controversial Dada artwork of all was Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* which consisted of a urinal put upside down. It powerfully affected conventional artistic standards. The second means *An Andalusian Dog*. It is a silent short film of 17 minutes by the Spanish director Luis Bunuel and artist Salvador Dali. Some parts of the film are grotesque and shocking. Obsessed with death, decay and violence, the film assaults the old and unconscious habits of movie-making and irrevocably alters the aesthetics of film.

It would be too rash to say that Rabindranath was consciously or wilfully motivated by any such urge to preclude beauty from his drawings and paintings. His portrayals of "lady faces" are not wanting in gracefulness, though in a deviant way. There is, in his art, as Ratan Parimoo notes, "... vivacity yet combined with dignity", "the tremendous feeling for pattern, for rhythm and for colour matching."<sup>12</sup> Yet, such properties may not be suggestive of beauty. We wonder whether Rabindranath was sceptical of beautiful appearance, because they can be deceiving. Beauty in reality, beautiful objects at the base of artistic work is sensuous, and fails to express man's deeper experiences. His art also does not treat beauty as mere surface.<sup>13</sup> It is related to the inner being of man which is mystically and philosophically addressed by Rabindranath as *Arup Ratan*, suggestive of a passage from the form to the formless. Perhaps his paintings suggest that art embraces all kinds of human meaning with no essential concept, beauty or sublime running through it. His paintings can be evaluated in another way, namely that Rabindranath was deeply concerned with the deep experiential issues relating to the socio-historical-cultural space of his time, and with how far his paintings could express these issues. Straying back to primitivism, to the elemental, though not in a conscious way, could be a signal of art free of beauty.

To summarize then: We have followed the background of the genesis of Rabindranath's paintings and attempted to understand, in several different ways, what could be his treatment of beauty in the content of his art. We surmise that an explanation of the internal tension in it is bound to remain conjectural and hence, unresolved, until further scrutiny regarding the purported "alienation" of art from the beautiful is undertaken. That would require an answer to the primary question; "what is art?" To work that out, however, remains the subject matter of another project.

### Notes and References:

1. Rabindranath Tagore, *Japanyatri* Somendranath Bandopadhyaya, *Rabindra Chitrakala: Rabindra Sahityer Patabhumika* (in Bengali), Kolkata: Dey's Publication, 2009 (originally published in 1972).
2. *Ibid*, p. 34.
3. *Ibid*. p.28.
4. Expressionism is a term of wide meaning. In a general sense it described the form of art which conveys something of the personal mood of the artist – an excitement, a disturbance or agitation of mind and may be detected in the distortion of form or violence of colour which results from the state of tension.
5. Ratan Parimoo, "The Sources and Development of Rabindranath's Paintings" in Ratan Parimoo, ed., *Rabindranath Tagore*, New Delhi: Lait- Kala academy, 1989, pp. 21-97.
6. Asok Mitra, "the Dark Lady of Tagore's Paintings", *The Statesman*, May 9, 1983.
7. Sankha Ghosh, *Nirman ar Sristi* (in Bengali), Visva-Bharati, Bengali Era, 1389.
8. Archer met among other artists, Rabindranath when he visited India and was captivated by Rabindranath's paintings. According to him, " many of his pictures glowed with subtle colours but none of them had conscious subjects and all had sprung up from some hidden source of inspiration." William G. Archer and Mildred Archer, *India Served and Observed*, London: 1994 reprint, p. 30. Archer also realized that his art "was spontaneous and unconscious – the product of forces beyond rational control." *Ibid*.
9. Shibnarayan Roy, *Rabindranath, Shakespeare O Nakshtrasanket* (in Bengali), Papyrus, Calcutta, 1987.
10. Ratan Parimoo, "The Sources and Development of Rabindranath's Paintings", *op.cit*.
11. Many of Rabindranath's songs seek to bracket beauty's allurements. We may also mention his dance-dramas, *Shapmocana* and *Chitrangada*. The theme of *Chitrangada* is the short-lived electric charms of physical beauty and the weariness beauty's charm produces in Arjuna.

## **A JUST WORLD: MYTH OR REALITY**

DEBIKA SAHA

I feel honored to be able to contribute a paper in this special issue of our departmental journal. Prof. Raghunath Ghosh is not only my esteemed colleague, he is my family - friend too. As a guide, friend and well-wisher his guidance is always precious. I wish him a long and healthy life.

We are living in an interconnected world. And as a global citizen it is not possible now to be indifferent to the problems of the world. Even the Western World with its affluence cannot keep away unaffected to the rest of the world. But the question at issue is, whether it is possible to achieve global justice or it is simply a myth. The present paper will try to analyze this question as viewed by Immanuel Kant and John Rawls against the backdrop of globalization.

In 'Perpetual Peace' Kant wrote: "The Peoples of this earth has entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point where a violation of rights in one part world is felt everywhere. The idea of cosmopolitan right is therefore not fantastic and overstrained; it is a necessary compliment to the unwritten code of political and international right, transforming it into a universal right of humanity."<sup>1</sup> What Kant wrote long back is applicable still in the present context. We are all global citizens.

Whenever one talks about globalization, it is a common trend to talk about economic globalization. And in case of justice, people talk more about global poverty rather than anything else. It is no doubt true we need food first, but it must also be borne in mind how we are and what we are also count not less. The point that is to be emphasized is the following: globalization is a social phenomenon where the questions of culture, ethnicity, and migration are all related factors. And global justice has two related aspects: one social\political and another economic. These two aspects cannot be separated.

Kant's 'Perpetual Peace' perfectly fits with this globalization theory, though there are critics who may present a different picture here. Written in 1795 Kant formulates three definitive articles for perpetual peace among states. These are: "The Civil constitution of every state should be Republican"; "The Law of Nations shall be founded on a Federation of Free states" and "The Law of World Citizenship shall be

limited to condition of Universal Hospitality. “The term ‘hospitality’, while explaining Kant remarks that “it is not a question of philanthropy but of right”.

Following Syela Benhabib this point may be illustrated as follows. “In other words, hospitality is not to be understood as a virtue of sociability, as the kindness and generosity one may show to strangers who come to one’s land or who become dependent upon one’s act of kindness through circumstances of nature or history: hospitality is a right which belongs to all human beings in so far as we view them as potential participants in a world republic.”<sup>2</sup>

Kant writes: “Hospitality means the right of a stranger not to be treated as an enemy when he arrives at the land of another. One may refuse to receive him when this can be done without causing his destruction; but so long as he peacefully occupies his place, one may not treat him with hostility. It is not the right to be a permanent visitor that one may demand. A special beneficent agreement would be needed in order to give an outsider a right to become a fellow inhabitant for a certain length of time. It is only a right of temporary sojourn, a right to associate, which all men have. They have it by virtue of the common possession of the surface of the earth, where as a globe, they cannot infinitely disperse and hence must finally tolerate the presence of each other.”<sup>3</sup>

Now Rawls’s Law of Peoples overturns the Kantian heritage of liberal cosmopolitanism and counts liberal nationalism. In choosing bounded political communities, and in particular the modern-nation state as the relevant unit for developing a conception of domestic and international justice, Rawls was departing significantly from Kant and his teaching of cosmopolitan law. If Kant’s major aim was to articulate relations of justice which were valid for all individuals considered as moral persons in the international arena, independently of their political membership, Rawls’s The Law of Peoples individuals are not the principal agents of justice but are instead submerged into unities which Rawls names ‘peoples’. For Kant, the essence of cosmopolitanism was the thesis that all moral persons were members of a world society in which they could potentially interact with one another. By contrast, Rawls sees individuals as members of peoples, and not as cosmopolitan citizens. To Rawls international justice is for peoples and their representatives not as individuals, carries as units of equal moral respect and concern in a world society. Rawlsian

peoples are ideally defined as “liberal peoples” and have three basic features: “a reasonably just constitutional democratic government that serve their fundamental interests; citizens united by what Mill called ‘common sympathies’; and finally a moral nature”. The Law of Peoples is developed in two steps, first from the perspective of liberal societies and subsequently from the standpoint of “decent non-liberal peoples”.

People have to meet two conditions to be recognized as decent: (1) they respect political and social order of the other societies and honour rights of peaceful conduct. (2) their legal system secure for all their citizens basic human rights, impose duties and obligations on all persons within its territory and are legitimated by their citizens (recognized as consistent with the common good and idea of justice. (Rawls, *The Law of Peoples* pp. 64-67.) The main aim of the law of peoples is to offer a duty of assistance to the so-called burdened societies that experience unfavourable conditions. According to the “principle of assistance “rich peoples have a duty to assist those burdened societies which, due to natural calamities or an impoverished political culture, are not able to comply the minimal conditions of legitimate government. But Rawls has no intention to narrow the economic gap between richer and poorer countries. As soon as the society become self-sustained and self-guided, it is no longer necessary to transfer any resources, that is, no requirement is there for permanently redistributive, much less egalitarian, international institutions.

Here some questions arise. It seems that Rawls does not care about persons in “Law of Peoples”, but only cares about societies and favours common good over individual rights. And as there is no global government the question remains open, what kind of institutions are responsible for enforcing this assistance. Moreover the “burdened societies” remind an old system of the “white men’s burden “the slogan, used to educate the coloured peoples during the British rule in India.

Sen in one of his essay “Justice across Borders” is critical of Rawls’s exclusive focus on peoples and argues that a normative treatment of transnational justice must take into account of different commitments and obligations grounded in memberships in groups other than the peoples or nations. He admits Rawls’s point about the application of the contractualist approach to all human beings everywhere, whatever their group membership on the ground that the present system is not capable

to handle the universal principle that is necessary to tackle the global political institutions. But at the same time he rejects the particularism of the law so peoples, which restricts its areas to relations between whole societies(whether these are conceived as peoples, nations, or states).Not only Rawls, Sen discusses Kant's theory and labels Kant's Writings as "Grand universalism". Sen writes: "Grand universalism: The domain of the exercise of fairness is all people everywhere taken together, and the devise of the original position is applied to a hypothetical exercise in the selection of rules and principles of justice for all, seen without distinction of nationality and other classifications."<sup>4</sup>

Though grand universalism has an ethical stature that draws on its comprehensive coverage and nonsectarian openness yet it is hard to adopt in working out the institutional implications of Rawlsian justice as fairness. As Sen suggests that this mode of reasoning is difficult to apply to the whole of humanity, without an adequately comprehensive institutional base that can serve to implement the rules hypothetically arrived at in the original position for the entire world.

Though Rawls has formulated the 'law of peoples' but it restricts its purview to relations between societies and fails to take account of the full scope of the multiple identities and the full range of interconnections between borders. Sen suggests that instead of the grand universalism of one comprehensive "original position" "encompassing the whole world, a kind of 'plural affiliations' may be adopted. He states: "The exercise of fairness can be applied to different groups (including, but not uniquely, the nations), and the respective demands related to our multiple identities can be taken seriously (there may be different ways in which their conflicting claims are ultimately resolved)."<sup>5</sup> It is no doubt true that both Rawls and Sen are sincere enough to bring out the measures to implement global justice in their own preferred way. But the question still remains whether we get our desired "global justice" "in the true sense of the term."<sup>6</sup>

### **Notes and References:**

1. Kant, Immanuel. *Kant: Political Writings*, trans. H.B. Nisbet & Hans Reiss, (edit.) Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991, pp.107-108.
2. Benhabib, Seyla, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents and Citizens*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004.pp.27.
3. Op, cit., pp-93-130

4. Sen, Amartya., 'Justice across Borders' : *Global Justice & Transnational Politics*, eds, P. D. Greiff & C. Cronin, The MIT Press, 2002, pp.39.
5. Ibid.,
6. Rawls, John. *Law of Peoples*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1999.

## IS UPAMĀNA A PRAMĀṆA? SOME OBSERVATIONS

NIRMAL KUMAR ROY

This article is dedicated to Prof. Raghunath Ghosh, who is the friend, philosopher and guide not only for me but also for our department. This humble attempt is a token of my gratitude, reverence and admiration to Prof. Ghosh.

Whether *Upamāna* is a *Pramāṇa* or not is a controversial issue in Indian Philosophy. Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta, only these three schools recognize *Upamāna* as a *Pramāṇa* but the rest ones do not. Some schools hold that *Upamāna* is a case of perception; some think that *Upamāna* is a case of verbal testimony; some maintain that it is nothing but a case of recognition; some again observe that *Upamāna* is a case of inference. Besides, the three schools who admit *Upamāna* as a *Pramāṇa* deviate one from another at least on two points - one is *Karaṇa* and another is the resultant knowledge of *Upamāna*. So, it is really very difficult to resolve these controversies. In this paper an attempt has been made to establish that *Upamāna* is neither a case of perception nor a case of inference but a case of separate and independent *Pramāṇa* as it is maintained by the Nyāya school.

The most important position has been accorded to *Upamāna* by the Nyāya school. *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna*, *Upamāna* and *Śabda*, these four *Pramāṇas* have been admitted by the Nyāya school. In defining *Upamāna*, Goutama, the founder of the Nyāya system, says that *Upamāna* is the instrument of valid knowledge of an object derived through its similarity with a well known object (*Prasidhasādharmaśādhyasādhanam*). No elaborate discussion about *Upamāna* is seen in the *Sūtra* of Goutama. But later on Vātsyāyana, the commentator of *Nyāyaśūtra* explains it elaborately in his *Nyāya Bhāṣya*.<sup>1</sup> Vātsyāyana says that *Upamāna* is definite knowledge (*Prajñāpana*) of the object sought to be definitely known (*Prajñāpanīya*) through its similarity with an object already well-known.<sup>2</sup> From this definition given by Vātsyāyana it is understood that *Upamāna* is the means of knowledge through which the cognition of the denotative relation between a name (*saṃjñā*) and the named (*saṃjñī*) is attained. From the definition it is further understood that the knowledge of the similarity between the thing to be known and the thing previously well-known is one of the leading conditions to establish the resultant knowledge. *Upamāna* has been explained with the help of an example in the following way. Suppose a city-dweller having familiarity with cow intends to know

the animal called *gavaya*. One day he comes across to a reliable forest-dweller who is well familiar with both the cow and the *gavaya*. The forest-dweller tells the city-dweller ‘as the cow so the *gavaya*’ (*gourevaṁ gavaya*) subsequently, he happens to go to the forest and comes across an animal having the similarity to the cow. Immediately he recollects the statement uttered by the forest-dweller and comes to the conclusion that the animal before him is denoted by the word *gavaya*. This whole method is called *Upamāna* (comparison). More clearly to explain the same Vātsyāyana cites two more examples. A person having no familiarity with the medicinal harp, *Mudgaparṇi* and *Māṣaparṇi* is said by the doctor that *Mudgaparṇi* is like *Mudga* and the *Māṣaparṇi* is like *Māṣa*. Afterward’s the person goes to the forest and comes across two herbs resembling *Mudga* and *Māṣa*. Then he remembers the statement of the doctor and concludes that the herbs before him are nothing but *Mudgaparṇi* and *Māṣaparṇi* respectively.

It is important to note that Uddyotkara, the author of *Nyāyavārtika* says that sometimes *Upamāna* is based on the knowledge of dissimilarity (*Vaidharma*). He points out that the term ‘*sādharma*’ in *Śūtra* is symbolic and includes *Vaidharma* as well.<sup>3</sup> In the former cases of *Upamāna* the object is known through the knowledge of similarity of it to well-known object but here the object is known through the knowledge of its dissimilarity to well-known object. Suppose a person having no knowledge of horse asks one having knowledge of the same about the form of horse. In reply the person asked tells him that horse is an animal having the dissimilar hoofs to the cow. Afterward the person happens to come across an animal with the dissimilar hoofs to the cow and recollects the statement of the person met. Then he comes to the conclusion that the animal before him is horse.

So far as our discussion is concerned it is seen that *Upamāna* according to Nyāya school, is a separate and independent *Pramāṇa*. But some other schools observe that *Upamāna* cannot be regarded as a separate and independent *Pramāṇa*, rather it is a case either of perception, or inference or verbal testimony. Let us explain and examine these views one by one.

The Philosophers like Kumarilabhaṭṭa Śrīdhara, Śrinivāsadāsa, Purusottama and so on, think that *Upamāna* is a case of perception. Kumarila says that in the process of *Upamāna* the knowledge of denotative relation is attained through the perception

of similarity accompanied by the remembrance of the authoritative statement. Remembrance, he states, is not valid knowledge. Thus it is easily understood that *Upamāna* is nothing but perception.<sup>4</sup> Any one can understand that here the knowledge of denotative relation is derived through perception only. The arguments produced by Puruṣattama to establish that *Upamāna* is a case of perception is to some extent different from and stronger than that of Kumārilabhaṭṭa. Kumārilabhaṭṭa observes that denotative relation is perceived through the perception of similarity, while Puruṣattama holds that similarity is not perceived, it is remembered, what is perceived is the denoted object itself. Puruṣattama maintains that if *Upamāna* is considered as a case of independent *Pramāṇa* on the ground of the addition of one element of similarity, it would lead to the undesirable contingency of admitting separate means for the cognition of an object which is perceptible but is not perceived at that time.<sup>5</sup> To stand the same Puruṣattama has given another argument based upon *anuvyabasāya* which determines the nature of knowledge. Here, he says, the form of *anuvyabasāya* stands thus 'I know the object as denoted by certain word'.<sup>6</sup> Thus he shows that here, in the case concerned, the denotative relation is known through mental operation as is the case with the denotative relation of the words like Madhukara. Diñnāga, a Buddhist Philosopher, also includes *Upamāna* under perception or verbal testimony, as he thinks the knowledge derived through it can be attained either through perception or through verbal testimony. So, it is useless and unjustified to admit *Upamāna* as a distinct means of knowledge.

But this view has been vehemently criticized by the Naiyāyikas. The Naiyāyikas maintain that particularly Diñnāga hopelessly misunderstands the real purpose of *Upamāna*. Due to this misunderstanding he does not recognize *Upamāna* as a separate and independent means of knowledge. Diñnāga thinks that what is known through *Upamāna* is either the resemblance to the cow or the existence of *gavaya* as qualified by the resemblance to the cow. But as far as the Nyāya-View of *Upamāna* is concerned none of them is attained through *Upamāna*. The purport of the *Śūtra* of Goutama is that through the instrumentation of *Upamāna* one realizes the denotative relation through well known similarity. Jayantabhaṭṭa in this regard says that opponents consider *Upamāna* as a case of perception only because the similarity of *gavaya* to the cow which stands for *karāṇa* in *Upamāna* is perceived. But they fail to

understand that the perception of the mediate fact does not turn the concerned instrument into perception. To explain this point the case of inference may be cited. We all are well conscious about the fact that in the case of inference the mediate fact is perceived. Say for example, we infer the existence of the unperceived fire in the hill on the basis of the perception of the smoke in it. But here inspite of the perception of the mediate fact (smoke) inference is regarded as an independent and separate means from perception. Likewise, the perception of the similarity of *gavaya* to the cow, the mediate fact of *Upamāna*, does not turn *Upamāna* into perception.<sup>7</sup> The Naiyāyikas have forwarded another argument to stand their view. They hold that there is a basic difference between perception and *Upamāna*. In the case of perception the stress is laid upon the cognition of an object, whereas through *Upamāna* the knowledge of denotative relation is attained in the case of object which was not perceived earlier.

I think some other arguments can be produced to substantiate the *Nyāya* view. The whole process of *Upamāna* consists of some units- 1) verbal statement, 2) perception of similarity, 3) remembrance of the verbal statement and 4) knowledge of the denotative relation. But the process of Perception does not consist of such units. Secondly, though there is a controversy among the philosophers regarding the *Karaṇi* of *Upamiti* but they unanimously agree about the fact that it is either the verbal statement or the perception of similarity. But neither the verbal statement nor even the perception of similarity is treated as *karaṇa* of perception, rather it is either the sense organs (*indriya*) or the contact between the sense organs and the object which is considered as *karaṇa* of the same.

Some philosophers are of the opinion that there is no justification for considering *Upamāna* as a separate *pramāṇa* as it can very well be included under inference, though the grounds of its inclusion under inference sometimes are seen to vary from philosopher to philosopher. Among the Vaiśeṣikas, Praśastapāda says that in the stock example of the Naiyāyikas the cognition of the denotative relation is grounded upon the use of the word *gavaya* in the sense of animal *gavaya*. Śrīdhara also observes that *Upamāna* is nothing but a case of an inference. But the syllogistic form he suggests is something different. This form stands thus: the object (present) is denoted by the word *gavaya*, because the word *gavaya* is used with reference to it.

The word denotes an object in the sense of which it is consistently used. The word *gavaya* also is used so in the sense of an animal *gavaya* by the forest-dweller. So, the animal is denoted by the word *gavaya*.<sup>8</sup> Śālikanātha also holds that *Upamāna* can be reduced to inference and the syllogistic form of it can be shown as: the term *gavaya* denotes the animal *gavaya* because it is used in the sense of the latter. The word denotes an object with reference to which it is used. In this way one knows the denotative relation.<sup>9</sup> Vācaspatimiśra also agrees with the philosophers like Śrīdhara and Śālikanātha in maintaining that *Upamāna* can be reduced to inference but he shows its syllogistic form addressing a new point in the following way: the word *gavaya* denotes the animal *gavaya*, because it is used in the sense of the latter by experienced person when there is no function other than direct denotation. In this case the term used by the experienced person in the sense of a particular object is considered as denoting that object just as the term cow. The word *gavaya* is used in the sense of an object similar to cow. So, it should be accepted as denoting the animal *gavaya*.<sup>10</sup>

Here the Naiyāyikas leave no stone unturned to refute the view that *Upamāna* can be reduced to inference. Shiv Kumar, in his *Upamāna in Indian Philosophy*, beautifully presents the arguments produced by the different Naiyāyikas in this regard. Goutama, the founder of the Nyāya system, says that the philosophers who think that *Upamāna* can be included under inference may argue that like inference in the case of *Upamāna* also an unperceived object is known through the perceived one.<sup>11</sup> But Goutama points out that they fail to understand what actually is known through *Upamāna*. Through *Upamāna* no unperceived object like *gavaya* is known.<sup>12</sup> Vātsyāyana, the commentator of *Nyāyaśūtra*, in refuting their view says that in the case of an inference an unperceived object is known through the perceived one but in the case of *Upamāna* the knowledge of the denotative relation between the term *gavaya* and animal *gavaya* is attained when both the cow and the *gavaya* are perceived. Thus, it can be shown that *Upamāna* can not be a case of inference.<sup>13</sup> Besides this, Vātsyāyana produces some other good arguments to stand his own view. He says that in *Upamāna* the resemblance must be pointed out by some authoritative person but in inference the ground of *vyāpti* may be attained by one's own experience.<sup>14</sup> Vātsyāyana further says that inference may be both for the sake of one's

own (*svārthānumāna*) and for the sake of others (*parārthānumāna*) but *Upamāna* is necessarily for the sake of others. Another sound argument has been shown by Goutama to refute the view of the opponents. He says that *Upamāna* is always expressed in the form ‘as...so...’ but inference is never expressed in this form. Therefore, *Upamāna* cannot be identical with inference. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa produces a good argument to show that *Upamāna* cannot be reduced to inference. He says that knowledge derived through inference necessarily presupposes the knowledge of invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*). But this is not true in the case of *Upamāna* since the knowledge of denotative relation arising through *Upamāna* does not depend upon the knowledge of *vyāpti* either positive or negative. The invariable concomitance called *vyāpti* between the words and its denotation was not yet ascertained before deducing it through *Upamāna*. Thus it can easily be understood that denotative relation is ascertained through *Upamāna* independently of the knowledge of *Vyāpti*.

I think the view that *Upamāna* is identical with inference can be refuted in a different way too. In the case of an inference the three different terms—subjects (*pakṣa*), probans (*hetu*) and probandum (*sādhya*) as well as the necessary concomitance (*vyāpti*) are necessary pre-requirements. An inference consists of these three terms and here conclusion of the existence of probandum is established on the basis of the knowledge of the necessary concomitance. Keeping these in view let us examine whether *Upamāna* can be treated as a case of an inference. Through *Upamāna* the Naiyāyikas claim to ascertain the knowledge of the denotative relation. So, denotative relation stands for the probandum if *Upamāna* is regarded as a case of an inference. In the case of the stock example of the Nyāya school the denotative relation between the term *gavaya* and the animal *gavaya* is the probandum. But what is about subject term of it? As long as the definition of the subject (*pakṣa*) given by the Nyāya school is concerned subject term is one which is characterised by the doubtful existence of the probandum (*Sandigdhasādhya*). Here both the term *gavaya* and animal *gavaya* are characterized by the doubtful existence of the denotative relation i.e the probandum. As the probandum is a relation it must be held in between two terms. So, here both the term *gavaya* and the animal *gavaya* taken together stand for the subject term. Now let us enquire about the probans. Probans, in an inference, is one which helps to establish the existence of the probandum. This can

be explained with the help of an example usually cited by the Naiyāyikas. ‘There is fire in the hill, because there is smoke in it’ in this inference hill is the subject, existence of fire is the probandum and smoke is the probans. Here the perceptual knowledge of the smoke helps to establish the existence of the fire in the hill. Keeping this in view it can be understood that in the case of the stock example of *Upamāna* the knowledge of the probandum, i.e. the denotative relation is attained on the basis of the perceptual knowledge of similarity of *gavaya* to the cow accompanied by the statement of the authoritative person ‘as the cow so the *gavaya*’. So, here the perceptual knowledge of similarity and the authoritative statement taken together stand for the probans. But what is important to note here is that probans, in an inference, is in a position to establish the existence of the probandum only because it is characterized by the invariable concomitance between it (probans) and the probandum. In the above example of inference the existence of the probandum, fire, is established on the basis of the perceptual knowledge of the probans, smoke, only because here the probans is characterized by the invariable concomitance called in all the cases where there is smoke there is fire. But so far as the *Upamāna* is concerned the probandum is established on the basis of the probans which is not characterized by the invariable concomitance like ‘in all the cases where...’ because here one is going to attain the knowledge of the probans and the probandum for the first time. More clearly to say in an inference there are two helping conditions, one is the knowledge of the existence of the probans in the subject (*pakṣadharmatā*) and another is the knowledge of invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*), on the basis of which conclusion, the probandum, is drawn. *Upamāna* lacks the second condition of invariable concomitance. Here conclusion is drawn solely upon the probans. Thus, it can be shown the *Upamāna* cannot be identical with inference.

The view that *Upamāna* is nothing but a case of an inference, I think, can be refuted following the definition of *anumiti*, the inferential cognition. The definition of *anumiti*, according to *Nyāya* school, runs as, ‘*Parāmarśajannam jñānam*’ (the knowledge which is produced out of *parāmarśa*). *Parāmarśa* is the knowledge of the existence of the probans in the subject characterized by knowledge of the invariable concomitance (*Vyāptiviśiṣṭa pakṣadharmatā jñānam*). On the basis of our foregoing discussion it can be said that *Upamiti* is a kind of knowledge which is not produced

out of *parāmarśa*, it is produced solely out of the knowledge called *pakṣadharmatā*. Thus it is seen that *Upamiti* is *pakṣadharmatā jannam jñānam*, it is not *parāmarśa jannam jñānam*. So, *Upamāna*, in no way, is a case of an inference.

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5. *Anyathā yagyānupalabdherapi manantarabapatteḥ. Prasthānaratnākara*, p.148
6. *Taduttarametatpadabācayatvenainam jñānamityanuvyavasāyena manasā mānasatvaniścayacceti. Ibid.*
7. *Taddindriyajānitamapidhumajñānamiba tadagacaraprameyapramitisādhanātramāṅtaram. Nyāyamañjarī. Part-I, p.129*
8. *Nyāyakandalī. P.534*
9. *Pramāṇapaddhati. P.271*
10. *Sāmkhyatattvakaumudī. 5*
11. *Pratyakṣeṇpratyakṣasidheḥ. Nyāyasūtra. 2.1.48*
12. *ibid*
13. *Nyāyasūtra. 2.1.48*
14. *Nyāyabhāṣya 2.1.48*

**THE TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA AND THE FEELING OF  
ECOSPHERIC BELONGING**  
SANGHAMITRA DASGUPTA

I record my deep sense of gratitude to the members of the Department of Philosophy, especially to its Head of the Department, for extending me an opportunity by inviting me to write a paper for the felicitation volume of Professor Raghunath Ghosh, a distinguished scholar of Indian Philosophy of our time. In late eighties of the last century I joined the Department of Philosophy of North Bengal University as a part-time researcher for my Ph.D programme and I was fortunate enough to work under the supervision of Prof. Ghosh. This short article is the revised version of my paper discussed in the 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference held in Colombo from September 6-8, 2013 organized by Sri Lankan Association for Buddhist Studies and I consider this as my humble tribute to my teacher Prof. Raghunath Ghosh.

Today, not only the existence of man but of all the creatures on this planet is in question. To get rid of it varied reflections on the concept of environment are taking off from different directions. Thinkers of environment are in search of the way to move to 'eco-centrism' from 'ego-centrism'. Today we are earnestly in need of a space where we can inhale pure air. But day by day it becomes hard to get. Not only air but the environmental degradation in all respects is going on and threatening the existence of all creatures living or non-living on this planet. Armed with the knowledge of science and technology man has massively misused the environment and has exploited Nature for the sake of his narrow interest. The consequence goes against him. His own existence is now questioned. The most knowledgeable race on the earth lives such an eco-unfriendly life that it is surely a suitable example of 'human folly' what Russell said in his Lloyd Robert Lecture 1949 and forecasted that "it would make human survival doubtful"<sup>1</sup>. To get rid of it new ways of thought, new theories are being developed. Some thinkers of environment have emphasized on the development of a sense of belonging which they call 'eco-spheric belonging' and advocated a new branch of philosophy called 'Eco-sophy,' the core of which is Environmental Ethics. Their viewpoint gets inspiration in the findings of the science of ecology, the study of interrelationship between animals, plants and their inorganic environment which are considered as the conditions for their struggle for existence. On the basis of this fact followers of eco-sophy realize the need to extend our moral conscience to non-human world too. They have questioned the traditional

anthropocentric view of ethics which does not acknowledge the intrinsic value of creatures other than man and is responsible for divorce of human being from Nature. The proponents of ecosophy want to move towards a morally 'deep world' from a 'shallow' human-centered morality, to search a way which lead away from anthropocentric to cosmo-centric, from 'ego-centrism' to 'eco-centrism',

However, a question may arise here: "In what sense are we reasonably led away from the anthropocentric to the cosmo-centric value stance?" Professor Borouah (2005) of IIT Kanpur in his paper titled "Environmental Wisdom" has tried to answer this question by introducing the concept of "interdependence" which, according to him, is the key concept for introducing such an ethics. For him, it may be the foundation of distribution of values irrespective of human, non-human and non living being.<sup>2</sup> Arne Naess (1973) also emphasized on the principle of interdependence, which he considered, as a cognitive basis for a sense of ecospheric belonging. I think, teachings of the Buddha can easily accommodate to such a modern approach. From environmental perspective the law of Dependent Origination (*Paṭṭiyasamudpāda*), the central principle of Buddhism may provide the foundation of environmental ethics and can open a space for 'eco-spheric belonging'. This paper is a humble attempt to this direction.

The theory of dependent origination may provide the foundation of environmental ethics in two ways. Firstly, it says that the interconnectedness, the interdependence and conditionality of all which is the key concept of ecospheric belonging. According to this law, everything comes into existence depending on another. Since the existence of everything is conditional and dependent, it implies that the beings and objects of the world exist interdependently, but not independently. Definitely an ecological vision which vitiates all species of the planet is integrated as a whole are found its room within this principle. The Buddha laid emphasis on this principle. While addressing to the *Bhikshus* he said, "Whoever beholds the *paṭṭiyasamudpāda*, beholds *dharma*. Whoever beholds *dharma* beholds the Buddha". The term *dharma* means the system of faith which is rooted in the teachings of the Buddha. The interconnectedness of all beings and non-beings of this planet which derives from the law of dependent origination also implies the fact that nothing in the world is static and can have an exclusive separate unity. Within this model individual

entities are to be said by their very nature conditional as well as relational. Therefore, the law of dependent origination may be acceptable as a foundation of what the modern environmentalists want to introduce to stop the ecological degradation. Moreover, following the four noble truths which are the logical consequence of the law of dependent origination we may feel that the present environmental degradation is the effect of our greed. From the perspective of environment we may reconstitute the four noble truths of the Buddha in the following way: I) there is environmental degradation for which we are suffering and our existence on the earth is in question, ii) our greed is the cause of such suffering, iii) there is cessation of such degradation and finally, iv) there are ways of this cessation. Let us analyze.

There is the threatening of human existence posed by the major environmental factors most of which are caused by man. They are like deforestation, ozone depletion, loss of bio-diversity, heat emissions from industrial installations into the atmosphere, danger of applications of chemical fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture, establishment of nuclear plant etc. Their contribution for deterioration of environment cannot be denied. A close observation of modern development will reveal that the present system of modernization is built upon the exploitation and colonization of nature. To satisfy the desire (especially, the desire of capitalist country) man ignores the interconnection of human being with nature and is likely to think that man's freedom and prosperity comes from "an ongoing process of emancipation of nature, on independence from, and dominance over natural processes by the power of reason and rationality" (Vandana Shiva & Maria Mies, 2010, 6). Therefore, for which the humanity is going to suffer immensely are of our craving which leads man to dominate nature.

We find, according to the Buddha, that the cause of suffering is thirst (*taṇhā*). Thirst is originated from our wrong conception of self which is ego-centric. This concept of self leads us to think our self as a separate independent unit and creates our firm belief on the idea of insular, independent individuality. On the basis of such belief the most knowledgeable race on the earth considers himself as a distinctive feature with independent moral status and ignores the intrinsic value of other nonhuman being and denies their rights to live on the earth. The dominant ethical tradition which is human-centered has been developed on this wrong belief and

denies extending our moral concern to other being than man. This egocentrism is because of ignorance, what the Buddha repeatedly pointed out. Ignorance means lack of proper knowledge. It is the root cause of all our suffering. Knowledge means knowledge of wisdom. Knowledge divorced from wisdom is not considered knowledge in true sense, rather it increases our suffering. Addressing the august audience Bertrand Russell in his Lloyd Robert Lecture 1949 has warned that unless man increases his wisdom his knowledge and competence combined with folly will increase his suffering. According to him, knowledge without wisdom is only a 'power for evil'. The Buddha in his teachings emphasized on right knowledge (*sammāditthi*) and the concept of *Bodhisattva*, the highest state of being can be attained by a person only when he / she takes resolve to win enlightenment. The third noble truth of the Buddha leads us to the way of light by which we become aware of the third noble truth of the Buddha that the environmental hazard can be stopped if the cause of it can be uprooted. We realize that a journey from ego-self to eco-self only can lead us to environmental upgradation.

Finally, following the fourth noble truth of the Buddha we may say that there is a path to reach a state free from suffering from environmental degradation. The path recommended by the Buddha to be free from suffering is also applicable here. The paths are as follows: i) Right views (*sammādiṭṭhi*), ii) Right resolve (*sammāsankappa*), iii) Right speech (*sammāvāca*), iv) Right conduct (*sammākammānta*), v) Right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*), vi) Right effort (*sammāvayāma*), vii) Right mindfulness (*sammāsati*), and viii) Right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*). The eight paths constitute three principles, such as conduct (*śīla*), concentration (*Samādhi*) and knowledge (*prajñā*). Among these *śīla* consisting of five precepts are applicable to common people. Among these five precepts we can directly associate the precept the *prāṇatipāta virati* (restraining from killing of any living being) with environmental wisdom. Only the person exercising this particular precept can acquire environmental wisdom, which according to the environmentalist, is 'the principle guiding force' of developing the sense of belonging. The precept *prāṇatipātavirati* encourages us to practice of non-violence. It not only does mean abstention from killing but also from any kind of injury to others which in turn move us to recognize the value of others - both physical and non-physical. 'It is interesting

to note that by 'All living being' the Buddha wanted to include all kinds of living beings born and yet to born.<sup>3</sup> In this connection we may refer to the use of unborn infant of lamb for making the most fibulas hat for the sake of man, without considering the right to live the animal. Again in *Suttanipāta* the Buddha says, "know ye the grasses and the trees... Then know the worms, and the worms, and the moths, and the different sorts of ant... know also the four-footed animals small and great, the serpents, the fish...the birds...know the marks that constitute species are theirs, and their species are manifold (*The ocean of Buddhist wisdom*:151). This is the result of realization of total connectedness of all. Restraining from all kinds of violence includes both physical and non-physical of all creatures. In *vinaya* it is advised that the monks should not pollute water or green grass with urine or excrement (1964: ii). In the *Dighanikāya* (1.11) doing any harm to seeds, plants and trees is strictly prohibited. Similarly *Bahmajālasutta* considers setting fires to field, seed and woodlands as sin (*Dighanikāya*-1). All these clearly shows that the Buddha's teachings tell us to live with Nature which the modern thinkers of environment call as 'eco-sophic belonging'. Two concepts named *Mettā-bhāvanā* and *Karuṇā-bhāvanā* in Buddhist ethics are essential to live with Nature. *Mettā-bhāvanā* (loving kindness) is that attitude of mind through which we can extend our love to all living being. It is a way of moving to eco-centrism from egocentrism. The feeling of pity for all beings who suffer and the determination of eradication of suffering is called *Karuṇā-bhāvanā* (compassion). The cultivation of these to eradicate the negative aspects of our mind, like ill-will, hatred, fear, selfishness, greed etc. and we feel a first person experience to others which restrain us from doing harm to others.

From what has been said, it follows that the teachings of the Buddha take us away from the ethos of egocentrism which is based on our false belief of individuality and can relate to life as it actually is. In other words, the law of dependent origination shows that the idea of insular, independent status about our being is a myth. Everything is interdependent. Realization of this law may lead us to environmental wisdom which develops the loving-kindness and compassion in our mind and can able to stop the present environmental degradation by connecting our decentered self with the whole universe. The Buddha taught us that we create as well as destroy our own environment by our mind. The cultivation of our negative aspects of mind makes

a road block between the kinship of human being and nature whereas the cultivation of loving-kindness and compassion leads our mind to the world of eco-spheric belonging. We are in urgent need of such a theory which can rationally establish the extension of ethical scope from anthropocentricity to cosmo-centricity.

#### NOTES& REFERENCES:

1. In his Llyod Robert Lecture on November 29, 1949, Bertrand Russell said, "...We are in the middle of a race between human skill as to means and human folly as to end.... The human race has survived hitherto owing to ignorance and incompetence, but given knowledge and competence combined with folly, there can be no certainty of survival" ("Environmental Wisdom" by Bijoy H. Boruah in *Readings in Environmental Ethics: 2005:23*)
2. B. Borouah has written, "The survival of anything in the universe is a matter of its vital dependence on other things, including the whole system of things, biosphere and ecosphere included. ...Perhaps this is cosmic interdependence, which I consider to be the foundation of the distribution of values over the cosmic order as a whole, without any hierarchical discrimination."(*Readings in Environmental Ethics: p-26*)
3. *Ye keci pāṇabhūṭathi tasā va thāvāra vā anavasesā, Dīghā vā ye mahantā vā majjihimā rassakā aṇukathūlā. Dīghā vā ye ba adiṭṭhā ye ca dūre basanti avidūre' Bhūṭā va sambhavesī vā savve sattā bhavantu sukhittā.* (Sukamal Choudhury:1997:56)

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## **READING THE HISTORIES OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY: SOME REFLECTIONS \***

D. BALAGANAPATHI

Prof. Raghunath Ghosh, who is known for his simplicity in appearance and sharpness in scholarship is a well-known scholar among the contemporary philosophical academia for his contributions to the broader framework of Indian Epistemology and Contemporary Indian Philosophy. Though I had only two brief interactions with him, I should admit that, I had become an admirer of his scholarship. Recently, I met him in a UGC workshop on *e-pāthśāla* at Hyderabad, where he was dealing with the course on Indian Epistemology. His presence, observations and interventions in to the other themes have made a significant impact on the success of the workshop in enriching the theme-notes of e-pathasala programme. I consider myself to be privileged to contribute to the special issue of the journal 'Philosophical Papers' which is coming up in the honor of Prof. Raghunath Ghosh.

Following Robin Winks (1999: xiii) historiography can be described as 'a study of how a subject has been written about, how trends and interests in research have changed' and more importantly 'how and why a people have come to comprehend themselves in a certain way'. Thus, historiography, for Winks, is more than a record of what has been written and is an examination of why a body of writing has taken the shape it has.

Different opinions were put forth in the recent times to depict Indian philosophy i.e., classical Indian philosophy variously. These opinions were expressed sometimes in the form of questions and sometimes in the form of conceptions. Starting from "What is living and what is dead in Indian philosophy?" there were questions raised like - "what is Indian about Indian philosophy?" what is the goal of Indian Philosophy", "What is the responsibility of Indian philosopher? And "What is the future of Indian philosophy?"

These were raised some thirty years ago and are still debated. Along with these questions, certain conceptions such as "death or mummification"

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(Dayakrishna), “Captured by West”<sup>1</sup> (Kalidas Bhattacharya) and “Blanketed by West” (Micheal Dummet)<sup>2</sup> were attributed to Indian philosophy.

All these questions and conceptions presuppose that there is a body of knowledge called Indian philosophy, which is comprehensively understood. These further imply a monolithic structure of Indian philosophy available in its entirety to understand, interpret and comment. This monolith, it is said, has ‘frozen into a definite mould with its distinctive doctrines which have remained the same since times immemorial with no changes in them.’ (Dayakrishna, 1997: ix) Some of the characteristics of this monolith are spirituality, authority of Vedas, categorization of schools, pessimism, mystic-intuitionism etc. There are also attempts in the recent past by scholars like Dayakrishna to break the monolith and to provide alternative, counter perspectives. Without going into the evaluation of the monolith and alternatives, our endeavor now is to look where, when and how this monolith is constructed.

This monolith is an outcome not of a continuous philosophical engagement with the perennial issues of human intellect, rather an interest in the historicity of the system of Indian philosophy. Historical interest in Indian philosophy began with the Orientalist interest in the Indian past. Orientalist interest is not a genuine interest in the historicity of Indian past but, it is something that is loaded with Eurocentric ideology.

### **Background**

On the way towards historiography of Indian philosophy, let us first examine why and how the body of writing (Indian philosophy) has taken its shape (monolith) it has now. The history of Indian philosophy extends at least for about 2500 years. This lengthy period of history has witnessed the growth of a rich variety of philosophical thought presented in incalculable number of works written by

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<sup>1</sup> Kalidas Bhattacharya says, “The picture altered with the Britishers consolidating their hold on this country. They some how captured the Indian mind, primarily through science (and technology) and, secondarily through three human values – equality, fraternity and love. The Indian mind – at least the mind of the mainstream that was Hindu – being thus captured.”

<sup>2</sup> Dummet says that the massive impact of Western culture upon the East has been all the more crushing because political hegemony accompanied the cultural imperialism. As a result, he says, indigenous traditions have been not killed, but blanketed. By blanketing I mean that the tradition did not die; it was and still is, preserved... It was being handed down, without alteration, but not being added to; the creativity had gone. (1996:14-5)

innumerable number of scholars. This is acknowledged by Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya (1976:1) when he said;

The first fact to be noted about Indian philosophy is the accumulation of an enormous amount of philosophical material in its general fund resulting from a more or less continuous philosophical activity of two thousand five hundred years, if not more.

This vastness of the period and the literature exhibit the depth and richness which further complicates the attempts to draw a comprehensive picture of the history of Indian philosophy. Notwithstanding this complexity there were attempts in the modern period to represent the history of philosophy that was produced in India in a particular way as a monolith. This particular conception is an invention of the colonial ideology. This particularity has not only influenced but also structured the future course of discussions on Indian philosophy. In order to understand how this 'monolith' is constructed we need to look into the historiography of Indian itself. History in India, points out Neeladri Bhattacharya, began its modern career implicated in projects of colonial knowledge. The colonial conceptions of history embedded in the sources that were collected and stored, the institutions of research that were built up have become part of our commonsense.

Orientalist ideas were the earliest structured historical representations of India's past which were began in the late 18th century and early 19th centuries. Inspired by the romanticism and classicism of the time, Orientalists like William Jones, H.T. Colebrooke and Max Muller returned to the ancient past, discovered its greatness and defined a specific notion of a glorious classical age. The Orientalists saw themselves as the mediators who would define this relationship between the past and the present. As codifiers and translators they would be the ones to discover the ancient texts and ascribe to them their true meanings. As researches into ancient texts and projects of translation proliferated, and institutions and journals for Asiatic researches were set up, modern history in its colonial form began to take shape.

By the early 19th century, with liberalism gaining ground, Orientalist histories were questioned from within the fold of imperial thought. If Orientalists had glorified India's past, the liberals condemned it. From a veneration of classicality there was a move to a phase of arrogant deification of modernity. While Orientalists had discovered in India's past a succession of golden ages, liberals like James Mill

and Thomas Macaulay could see only shades of darkness. For the liberals the dynamism of historical time in the modern West contrasted with the static time of the Orient. This immobility, they underlined, could only be broken with the intervention of an external temporality – the civilizing power of the West. Structured by racial, climatic and evolutionary theories, historical explanations focused on the innate inferiority of Indians, the degenerative effects of Indian climate and the problems of a diseased landscape. The myth of the lazy native and the idea of the ‘tropic’ as a debilitating space emerged as framing tropes of historical analysis. Later, nationalist histories developed in opposition to imperial frames, which depicted the inferiority of the Indians and their culture, history and hijacking of their civilization. While doing this, they have taken hints from the Orientalists who have glorified their past. This limited their opposition only to the imperialist frames.

This is the general historical background in which the histories of Indian philosophy are initially written, which in a way determined and structured the whole conception of it. In other words, this background - Orientalist-Liberal Utilitarianist-Nationalist - has structured how Indian philosophy was written about, how trends and interests in research have changed and how and why people have come to comprehend themselves in a particular way. Let us now probe into the background by investigating the history of the Indian philosophy as it is understood now.

### **Indian Philosophy: Label and Concept**

Indian philosophy as we understand it now is an outcome of the dialectics of Orientalist-Liberal utilitarian-Nationalist discourses. It is not just an imposed one but a moderated and negotiated one. It is a product of continuous contestations and negotiations - but all this, within its own framework developed during the early colonial depictions. It would be an interesting study to take up, if one investigates whether one is going far from the Indian Philosophy itself as a result of these negotiations. However, such an investigation should not intend to discover the original or essential or pure Indian philosophy, but rather should attempt to see the possibility of looking for alternative ways outside the framework of the Orientalist-Nationalist construction of Indian philosophy. To understand the Orientalist-Nationalist discourse let us first investigate how Indian philosophy has developed from label to concept. This provides an opening into the historical discourse.

Interestingly, none of the Dictionaries or Encyclopedias of philosophy has any reference to the development of the term 'Indian philosophy'. These works have either taken Indian philosophy for granted to be Orientalist-Nationalist construct or pretentiously ignorant of this fact. It is Halbfass (1988) who has made some investigations on this front. But his investigation is broadly related to the terminological equivalence discourse of '*Darśana, Anvikṣiki* and philosophy'. Though there is no indigenous word or concept corresponding to what is understood to be philosophy in the Western sense of the term, mostly the word *Darśana* is accepted to be equivalent both in India and outside. Halbfass expresses his surprise about 'how little has been done to examine and clarify the traditional role and background of *Darśana* and to trace and explain the hermeneutical processes of interpretation and re-interpretations which have lead to the adoption of *darśana* as a terminological equivalent or analogue of philosophy. (1988:261)

However, Halbfass points out that it is the familiarity with the word *darśana* in the Indian doxographic literature that substantiated its equivalence to philosophy. Doxographies such as Haribhadra's *Ṣadarśana Samuḥaya* (8<sup>th</sup> C) and Madhavacharya's *Sarvadarsanasangraha* (14<sup>th</sup> C) support this conception. However, it should be noted that though the term was familiar to the scholars of earlier to, contemporary and later periods of Haribhadra, it was not a dominant one, and is used only along with the other terms such as *tantra, mātā, vāda, sidhānta* and *śāstra*. After a careful analysis of the use of the term *darsana* in the Indian doxographies, Halbfass observes that, *darśana* "as used in the doxographies, is a fundamentally retrospective concept. It refers to what others have thought in the past, to views and systems which have been inherited from the past. There is no suggestion of progressive future-oriented thought, and there are hardly any methodological implications in the doxographic usage of *darśana*" (1988:273).

There exist numerous terms such as – *tattva, mata, vaada, sidhanta, sastra* along with *darśana* and *anvikṣiki* for philosophy in India. The problems that Halbfass explicated in finding the terminological equivalence can be because of the essential dialectical nature of the Indian philosophical systems themselves. The terms that were used in different periods for philosophy can be due to the dialectic nature of the philosophical discourses, which left them always to look for a better comprehensive

term than the existent one. However, this essential nature is sidelined and only the term *darśana* is utilized to depict Indian philosophy which refers only of views and systems of past. This doxographic representation of Indian philosophy is initiated by the Orientalists. In our way to exploration into the colonial construction of the concept Indian philosophy, so far we only looked at attempts to find the terminological equivalent of philosophy in ancient Indian literature. This whole exercise is to look whether there is Indian philosophy in the western sense of the term and construct the Indian philosophy in those terms.

Let us now see when and how the term philosophy is applied to Indian thought. Most of the depictions of traveler-historians of India did not make note of philosophical thought in India, even if they did, it was termed as a religious one. India has been projected as a wealthy and a mystic religious country in the pre-colonial times. This impression was carried forward with some modifications by the Orientalists and Indologists. Along with the material wealth there was found a literary wealth.

The term Indian philosophy is used either as a mere label or as another term for the mythology or religious mysticism of India in the early colonial period. William James, who is responsible for the establishment of the Asiatic society of India, fascinated by the Sanskrit literature, though written about the history and culture of Hindoos, we do not find mention of philosophy in relation to India nowhere in his writings. It is HT Colebrook who has written about 'On the philosophy of Hindus' the six philosophical systems of India called *Nyaya-Vaisesika*, *Samkhya-Yoga* and *Purva-Uttara Mimamsa* (*Uttara Mimamsa* is also known as *Vedanta*). His purpose, in his own words is not to exhibit a contrasted view of the tenets of different philosophical schools, but to present a summary of the doctrines of each set. (1997:228).

By his time the *Sarvadarśana Sangraha* of Madhavacharya is translated and the philosophy of six systems is available for the Orientalists. The label Indian philosophy might be getting strengthened during his time. In the writings of Max Muller the skeleton - label of Indian philosophy completely strengthened with flesh and blood provided by the colonialist and Eurocentric structuring. This would be

elaborated a little later. For the time being let us explicate the language politics involved in the Orientalist constructions of Indian philosophy.

**Language:**

Language has played a very crucial role in the colonial construction of Indian philosophy. Understanding and interpreting a knowledge system existent in one language through another language structured with another knowledge system always poses a problem. The problem accentuates when the interpreting language is loaded with an ideology as it happened in the Indian context. The problem of language of the colonialists not just the issue of terminological equivalences between Sanskrit and English, though it is also a big barrier in carrying the cultural load of the terms and concepts. It is rather also the ideology with which the language operates, which allows the interpretative language to construct Indian philosophy to suit their prejudices and idiosyncrasies.

Significant outcomes on the way to construct the Indian philosophy that have played a pivotal role are philology and comparative studies. These two, helped the Orientalists to look for not only the similarities in words and thought, but also in positing and further developing the theories of origin of languages and philosophy. These theories situated the origins of language and thought outside India through the propagation of the theory of Aryan invasion. To understand the features of the ideology of colonialism let us look at the depiction of Indian philosophy as constructed by a very significant Indologist, Max Muller. Significance of his place in the history of Indian philosophy lies not just in his translations of the ancient Indian Sanskrit literature, but also in ideological construction of Indian philosophy with certain characteristic features.

**Max Muller: The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy**

After his first contributions to the study of Indian philosophy as early as in 1852 published in German, Max Muller has written *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* in 1899. The gap between these two periods is filled by publication of the translation of Rgveda and the Sacred Books of the East. It is in the depictions of Max Muller that we see a clearly formulated set of Eurocentric traits which tried to construct the Indian philosophy in a formidable way. It is in his writings that we see the terms, Indian philosophy, National philosophy along with Hindu philosophy and qualifying it as a universal philosophy. In these depictions, there exists an underlying

ideology of constructing a national philosophy or universal philosophy which can be thrust upon the people of India. There is a difference between this National philosophy and the Nationalist thought developed in the subsequent period. In a country where there exists a complex diversity and plurality of not just cultures and languages but also philosophical positions, construction of a National philosophy which can be accepted by all the people is a part of the process of the unification of the country which can be controlled in a centralized way.

He explicates his objective in publishing the results of his studies in Indian philosophy to be “not so much to restate the mere tenets of each system, so deliberately and so clearly put forward by the reputed authors of the principal philosophies of India, as to give a more comprehensive account of the philosophical activity of the Indian nation from the earliest times, and to show how intimately not only their religion, but their philosophy also, was connected with the national character of the inhabitants of India...” (vii) Max Muller while attempting to give a comprehensive account of Indian philosophy, cleverly points out a defect (not limitation) of his work. His cleverness lies in attributing the defect of his work to the whole of Indian philosophical tradition. The defect pointed out is lack of chronological framework. This led to the later conceptions of ‘existence of past but lack of history’ of Indian tradition.

In his construction of National philosophy of India, Max Muller intentionally leaves out certain particularities and places excessive stress on certain other specificities which have resulted in stereo-type depictions of later colonial scholars. He claimed appreciation for omitting whatever is ‘less important’ and ‘not calculated to appeal to European sympathies’ in the history of Indian philosophy when he says “if I can claim any thanks, it is for having endeavored to omit whatever seemed to me less important and not calculated to appeal to European sympathies”. This intentional omission of so called ‘less important’ and ‘non-appealing aspects to European sympathies’ is guided by an ideological agenda.

Max Muller is popularly understood to be one who has glorified the ancient India specifically philosophical literature embedded in Sanskrit literature with much appreciation and admiration. But if his statements are read with a closer examination then his ideological agenda can easily be traceable. His reading of Indian philosophy

is a 'sympathetic' one, as he himself claims. How appreciation and admiration can go along with sympathetic reading? Sympathetic reading presupposes a certain kind of pre-conceived hierarchical structure. This sympathy is consolidated with the following depiction of the ancient India which gave birth to the philosophical knowledge. He says;

It was only in a country like India, with all its physical advantages and disadvantages that such a rich development of philosophical thought as we can watch in the six systems of philosophy, could have taken place. In ancient India there could hardly have been a very severe struggle for life. The necessities of life were abundantly provided by nature... What was there to do for those who, in order to escape from the heat of the tropical sun, had taken their abode in the shades of groves or in the caves of mountain valleys, except to meditate on the world in which they found themselves placed, they did not know how or why? There was hardly any political life in ancient India....and in consequence neither political strife nor municipal ambition. Neither art nor science existed as yet, to call forth the energies of this highly gifted race. ....Literary ambition could hardly exist during a period when even the art of writing was not yet known.... But at a time when people could not yet think of public applause or private gain, they thought all the more of truth. (1984: vi-vii)

Political life, political strife, art, science, literary ambition, public applause, private gain – all the modern western categories are found absent in the ancient Indian life. Appreciation is always qualified by pointing out some lacunae by Max Muller in his writings. For instance, he says, "however imperfect the style in which their (Indian) theories have been clothed may appear from a literary point of view, it seems to me the very perfection for the treatment of philosophy." (1984: x) Yet other place he says "... it cannot be denied that the Sacred Books of the East" to publish which he has spent much of his life time, "are full of rubbish."<sup>3</sup> But he further adds 'that should not prevent us from appreciating what is really valuable in them'. This dichotomous representation- imperfection and perfection; rubbish and valuable - shows a kind of ambivalence in the mind of Max Muller.

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<sup>3</sup> Max Muller says, "I am no promiscuous admirer of everything that comes from the East. I have again and again expressed my regret that the Sacred Books of the East contain so much of what must seem to us mere rubbish, but that should not prevent us from appreciating what is really valuable in them." Elsewhere he states, "It cannot be denied that the Sacred Books of the East are full of rubbish."(1985:113) He also remarks, "I know I have often been blamed for calling rubbish what to the Indian mind seemed to contain profound wisdom, and to deserve the highest respect." (1985:112)

The depiction of the Vedantic philosophy, especially the Sankara Advaitata Vedanta, as the culmination of all Indian philosophical thought which has continued to dominate the western understanding of Indian philosophy for centuries is sowed by the Max Muller. He considered the Vedanta-philosophy to be ‘a system in which human speculation seems to have reached its very acme’ and written specifically on this system with lot of appreciation and admiration. Number of characteristic traits listed below attributed to Indian philosophy have their seeds sowed in the works of Orientalists especially in Max Muller. Some of them are listed below.

- Indian philosophy is spiritual.
- Indian philosophy is intuitive and mystical.
- Indian philosophy is authoritative.
- Indian philosophy is motivated by a practical concern.
- India philosophy is pessimistic.
- Indian philosophy is otherworldly.
- Indian philosophy is concerned with salvation (*moksha*).
- Indian philosophy is subjective
- Indian philosophy is static and unprogressive.

These traits exhibited an epistemic distinction between India and the West. The opposite of Western traits were located in India. Now let us take up another history of Indian philosophy written by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan representing Nationalist historiography to see how the Orientalist depictions of Indian philosophy were countered from within the imperialist framework.

### **Radhakrishnan: Indian Philosophy**

Radhakrishnan’s Indian philosophy written in two volumes (first one published in 1923 and the second one in 1927) appeared in print nearly 25 years after the work of Max Muller. The gap between these two works consolidated the Orientalist conceptions of Indian philosophy. This consolidation was contested by Nationalist historiographers. At least two scholars were prominent among the Nationalist historians of Indian philosophy at that time; one is S. N. Dasgupta (who has written multi-voluminous history of Indian philosophy) and the other is S. Radhakrishnan. Without going into the details of the differences among the two scholar’s approaches, let us focus on the work of Radhakrishnan in contributing to the Nationalist histories and thus participating in the Orientalist-Nationalist discourse.

Radhakrishnan straight away in his preface to Indian philosophy opposes the earlier existent colonial notions of Indian thought by stating; “Ignorance of the subject of Indian thought is profound. To the modern mind Indian philosophy means two or more “silly” notions about *māyā*, or the delusiveness of the world, karma, or belief in fate, and *tyaga*, or the ascetic desire to be rid of the flesh.” “Even these simple notions,” he further adds, “it is said, are wrapped up in barbarous nomenclature and chaotic clouds of vapour and verbiage, looked upon by the ‘natives’ as wonders of the intellect”. (1923:7) He labeled against the ‘silly’ notions propagated by the colonialist framework which dismissed the whole of Indian culture and philosophy as ‘pantheism’ ‘worthless scholasticism’ ‘a mere play upon words’, ‘at all events nothing similar to Plato or Aristotle or even Plotinus or Bacon.’ (1923:7-8)

After criticizing the existent notions, Radhakrishnan goes on to explicate the glory of Indian thought by stating, “There is hardly any height of spiritual insight or rational philosophy attained in the world that has not its parallel in the vast stretch that lies between the early Vedic seers and the modern Naiyayikas.” (1923:8) In saying this he was obviously getting into a dialogue with his contemporary colonialists and asks them to study Indian thought ‘in a true scientific frame of mind, without disrespect for the past or contempt for the alien’, which may prompt one towards a ‘sympathetic reading’ adopted by the Orientalists.

He is aware of the fact that Indian philosophy as rendered in English is a colonial construct, and therefore finds a strange alienness to it. According to him, “The special nomenclature of Indian Philosophy which cannot be easily rendered into English accounts for the apparent strangeness of the intellectual landscape.” (1923:8) He smells the strangeness of the intellectual landscape though it is of Indian philosophy, since it is developed in English. Thus Radhakrishnan is aware that the Indian philosophy rendered in English is a colonial construct and has attempted to enter into a dialogue with colonialists both to disprove their ‘silly notions’ and thus to project a system of philosophy of India in tune with the Nationalist ideological demands of his time.

While saying that he is not attempting to write a history of philosophy, Radhakrishnan intentionally discusses the characteristics that should be there to a

historian of philosophy in general and Indian philosophy in particular. In his opinion a philological or linguistic or historical approach to the history of philosophy is unprofitable. A linguist or philologist will regard the views of ancient Indian thinkers as 'fossils laying scattered throughout the upheaval and faulty strata of the history of philosophy; and would dismiss 'any interpretation which makes them alive and significant as far-fetched and untrue'. (1923:671)

History, according to Radhakrishnan, is more than just a collection of facts and the accumulation of evidence. The historian, he says, should be a critic and an interpreter and not a mere mechanical 'ragpicker'. "He must", points out Radhakrishnan, "pay great attention to the logic of ideas, draw inferences, suggest explanations, and formulate theories which would introduce some order into the shapeless mass of unrelated facts".(1923:672) He should, in fact be a philosopher, 'who uses his scholarship as an instrument to wrest from words the thoughts that underlie them', and should realize 'the value of the ancient Indian theories which attempted to grapple with the perennial problems of life and treat them not as fossils but as species which are remarkably persistent. (1923:671) These views of Radhakrishnan on historians of philosophy implicitly criticize the colonialist histories of Indian philosophy. Since most of them have used either philological or linguistic approach stated above, or have condemned Indian philosophy for lack of historicity. It should be noted that none of the colonial historians of Indian philosophies are philosopher, but were either philologists or historians with imperialist motives.

Though the nationalist prerogatives instigated Radhakrishnan to reject the imperialist notions, his understanding of history is a clear example of how he is still entangled to the colonialist framework. He accepts the Eurocentric conception of the notion of history as linear and joins hands with colonialists in arguing for the lack of historicity in India. According to him "In the absence of accurate chronology, it is a misnomer to call anything a history" (1923:8). As against the native notion of cyclic notion of time, Radhakrishnan opted to adopt the linear notion to denounce any attempts to call his work a history of philosophy. In contrast, S. N. Dasgupta (1922) who calls his work *A History of Indian Philosophy* published one year before the work of Radhakrishnan, does not give any importance to chronological placement of the various philosophical systems and their philosophers. "I have never considered it

desirable that the philosophical interest should be subordinated to the chronological” states Dasgupta. Without getting into the debate on the necessity of chronological data for the construction of Indian philosophy, it is sufficient for us, from the above, now to note that Radhakrishnan has accepted the Western conception of history and tried to look for it in Indian tradition.

Radhakrishnan accepts the essentialities of the ‘India and the West’ conception that was naturalized by the colonialists and constructs his Indian philosophy within that framework. He explicitly states that his aim has been not so much to narrate Indian views as to explain them, but to bring them within the focus of Western traditions of thought. (1923:10) While attempting to address the West in explicating the depth of the Indian thought. Radhakrishnan has a tough task of bringing Indian philosophy within the focus of Western thought. In other words, his attempt is more to bring the Indian thought within the West’s focus than to explicate Indian thought as existent in the classical period. In doing so, the Indian thought that he was dealing with is the one developed by the Orientalists. Being within the colonial framework he tried to contest and thus negotiate with the Orientalist conceptions. On his way, he has even carried forward certain Orientalist conceptions such as – culmination of all Indian philosophy in Advaita, essentially spiritual nature of Indian philosophy, a-historicity, and soteriological orientation of all systems of Indian philosophy.

He is also aware of the charges against Indian philosophy in terms of pessimism, dogmatism and indifference to ethics and upprogressiveness. (1923:54) These are the imperialist charges forged on the Indian thought to prove its inferiority to the West. The development of human thought in general, depends upon the dialectics of pessimism and optimism, dogmatism and openness to change. In these dialectics sometimes pessimism or dogmatism would be dominant and at other times optimism or openness. Branding a particular tradition, to be ascribing to only one of the alternatives is to unrecognise the growth of its development. By branding this way, the imperialists, not only attempted to demean the growth of rich Indian tradition, but also kept the Indian thinkers in defense in criticizing, and rejecting this branding. It is also politically motivated, as it has started the discussion on Indian thought by drawing its framework. Charges such as pessimism, dogmatism,

indifference to ethics and non-progressiveness were labeled, so that the subsequent discussions would be centered only around them either in contesting or rejecting or modifying. Radhakrishnan, while criticizing and rejecting these views has only become a part of their politics.

Though Radhakrishnan written the history of Indian philosophy in opposition to the imperialist framework, he remained tied to the framework which he sought to transcend. The assumptions and terms invented and imposed by Max Muller and others became part of the accepted commonsense and shaped his nature of reasoning. By arguing within the frames of the colonial assumptions, he inscribed their truth and reaffirmed their taken for granted status. The Orientalist notions of India's past – the idea of classical golden ages and the corollary myth of a subsequent civilisational decline – were also accepted by Radhakrishnan, and in looking at past and present he operated with Western modernist ideas of what constituted progress, and what was to be criticized as primitive, backward and irrational.

To conclude, the paper taking hints from Robins Wink's conception of historiography tried to study how Indian Philosophy is written about and why a body of writing called Indian philosophy has taken the shape it has. Indian Philosophy is largely comprehended as a monolith and is declared dead & mummified, captured and blanketed by the recent philosophers. It is argued that investigations into these declarations would lead us to a larger canvass of the phenomenon of writing histories initiated by the colonial scholars. I argued that the construction of Indian philosophy as a monolith is a product of negotiation between Orientalism and Nationalism with the mediation of liberal utilitarianism. How the seeds of the monolith are sowed by Max Muller which were negotiated and taken forward after modification by Radhakrishnan comes out of the readings of the histories of these two scholars.

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## **CREATION OF RASA OR AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE: THE AIM OF INDIAN ART**

SASWATI CHAKRABORTY

Prof. Raghunath Ghosh is one of the great teachers I ever came in contact with in all my life. He joined the Department in 1980 when I was a student of the Department. He is not only a brilliant scholar and a nice person, but also a great teacher always extending his helping hand to his students. In fact, during his long, chequered career as a teacher, he proved very helpful to all his students and colleagues alike. I feel fortunate to have a great and brilliant teacher like him in the journey of my academic life. I have done my PhD under his supervision and without his invaluable guidance it would not have been possible for me to complete the work.

Aesthetics is the philosophy of the beautiful. The beautiful in all its forms, - graphic or musical, dynamic or static; whether it is divine (or natural) or human creation; from solid architecture and sculpture to the finest nuances of abstract art and poetry, - involves an element of perceptual experience. Everyone is fond of beauty. When we are attracted by the majestic beauty of the snow capped Everest or Kanchenjunga or the sublime beauty of the Taj Mahal; when our mind is pacified by music or fascinated by dance and beautiful paintings, we feel a special kind of delight or *ānanda* which has been characterized as *rasa* or aesthetic experience. Aesthetic experience, which reveals the emotional mood in knowledge, is free from all barriers and is often experienced as a pleasurable and desirable experience that gives life its true worth and meaning. This kind of sublime experience is transcendental in nature as it not only takes one beyond the world of senses but also brings in proximity with the ultimate reality (*Brhamānubhuti*). This experience or *ānanda* is not related to our mundane life; it is supernatural or *lokattara*. The ultimate reality (*Brhaman*) is pervaded in the universe as delight or *ānanda*. His delightful entity is omnipotent. He Himself is truly *ānanda* (*Rasasvarupa*). For that very reason it is said in the *Upaniṣad*, “*Raso vai saḥ*” (*Taittiriya Upaniṣad*: 45)

In India, music, dance, painting and drama are considered as divine art. Indian art can be compared with a vast ocean. It has both depth and dimension of an ocean. In what sense is Indian art “Indian”? Does the word “Indian” stand here merely for a geographical boundary, or is there a deeper sense in which it is used? Coomaraswamy maintains: “Indian art is essentially religious. The conscious aim of Indian art is the intimation of Divinity.”<sup>1</sup> To put it a little differently, art, like religion, is a way of looking at life. It has a definite aim, function, and value both for the artist

and the spectators. Thus the western idea of “art for art’s sake” has no place in Indian art. From the Indian perspective, artistic creativity is an intense inward journey to the ultimate reality, - a journey characterized as ‘*sādhana*,’ towards self-realization. Indeed, in the Indian tradition of *Rasa* theory, aesthetic experience or *rasa* is identified with that ‘feeling’ when the self perceives the Self. Linking art to spirituality is a thrust that may well be traced to the Indian tradition in which the key term *rasa*, - that stands for aesthetic experience, - is regarded quite akin to the experience of the ultimate reality (*Brhmānubhuti*).

Scholars of Indian Aesthetics have been basically concerned only with the theories of literary form of art and not with the application of other forms of art. Aesthetic experience or *rasa* is not confined to the literary form of art only, rather it is possible from all forms of art, - visual, literary and performance. Literature and poetics aim to express truth through metaphorical language and arouse the aesthetic pleasure of the reader and evoke certain emotions. Music is the sweet and soothing sound which creates an aesthetic experience in an individual. The sound vibrates nicely and soothes the heart of a man. On account of this his mind moves to a higher, sublime state from the personal sorrows and sufferings. Not only music but all forms of performing arts can produce aesthetic experience. Similarly, when we visualize any form of art whether it is a painting or sculpture or architecture, our heart becomes saturated with aesthetic experience or *rasa*, - “A thing of beauty is a joy forever”. Thus the theory of beauty is not only confined to literary forms of art like poetry, literature and drama but is also applicable to other forms of art like music, dance, painting, architecture and sculpture. In *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, Vol.III, there is beautiful dialogue between Varja and Sage Markandeya as to “what the *citra-sutra*” is? How can one be proficient in the art of painting? asks Vajra. Markandeya replies that unless one is proficient in the art of dance, one cannot be an expert in the art of painting (III.2-2.3). Then Vajra requests him to “explain the method of dance and also to talk about *citra-sutra*”. Markandeya replies that both these arts go hand in hand, both of them are *anukriyā*. Markandeya further adds that one who does not know how to play on a musical instrument, cannot be an expert in dance. Vajra then asks something about musical instruments. Markandeya replies that without knowing vocal music, one cannot be proficient in playing an instrument. This shows that they

regarded that the forms of fine arts were interrelated and any of the arts could not be practised in isolation. This indeed is a very important insight. But nobody seems to have worked out the actual relationship among these arts. In *Nāṭya-Śāstra*, there is a reference to all these arts together and in *nāṭya* practices, they are used. In the sixth *adhyāya* of *Nāṭya-Śāstra* Bharata gives the following verse:

*Rasabhavahyabhinayah dharmivrtti-pravrttayah I*  
*siddhisvarastathatodyam ganam rangasyasamgrahah II*

The ancient Indian critical texts had concentrated more on theory. They did not dissociate philosophy from literary criticism. The Vedas are the earliest pieces of recorded literature. As these were considered sacrosanct, the *śūdras* were denied access to them and a fifth *Veda* i.e. *Nāṭya Veda* was created for their enjoyment. It is said that *Brahmā* created the *Nāṭya Veda*, the fifth scripture to save humanity from deterioration of moral values. He created this *Veda* by taking elements from the other four Vedas. He took Speech from the *Rig-Veda*, *Abhinaya* (the entire gamut of speech, body, dress and facial expressions) from the *Yajur-Veda*, music from the *Sama-Veda* and aesthetic experiences or *rasa* from the *Atharva-Veda*. He revealed this *Veda* to sage Bharata. The sage went to Lord *Śiva* to learn and add dance movements to the drama he had created, according to the *Veda*. And thus dance and drama were created. Sage Bharata's *Nāṭya-Śāstra* is the most exhaustive text on theatre art. It is the oldest in the world and is the common basis for the Indian classical tradition of music, dance, drama and iconography.

Indian art evolved with an emphasis on inducing a special spiritual state in the audience. The fundamental basis of Indian culture is firmly rooted in its spirituality which puts emphasis much more on the soul than the body. So from the era of *Upaniṣdas* down to the philosophical fields of discussion, pleasure seeking consciousness of Indian mind has been searching for transcendental happiness. In order to find out a convincing source of this kind of blissful spiritual happiness, Indian philosophy, from time immemorial, has undertaken a long passage of journey from material to immaterial, from mundane to spiritual ending in the realization of the Supreme Being. At the flag end, the philosophers have been able to find out that the Supreme Being is Himself the blissful spirit and the eternal entity.

A beautiful piece of art object can provide us aesthetic delight or *ānanda*, which is not confined to a particular time and space. The aim of all Indian art is to

produce aesthetic experience or *rasa* in the spectator or audience. The theory of aesthetic experience or *rasa* is mainly found in the literary form of art. In ancient India, other forms of art like music, dance, painting etc. were equally appreciated and it is possible to apply such theory to other forms of art also. It is the contention of the *Alaṃkārikas* that the theory of aesthetic experience or *rasa*, though invented in connection with the literary form of art, can be extended to other forms of art. It has been rightly pointed out by Anandavardhana that an individual, though conversant in respect of word, meaning and their relation, cannot understand literature until and unless his heart is saturated with aesthetic experience or *rasa*. He explains this phenomenon with the help of an example taken from the world of music. He adds that an individual, though expert in the science of music, cannot understand melody and pleasure arising from it if his heart is not saturated with *rasa*.<sup>2</sup>

The same theory is also applicable to the pictorial form of art. In the phrase of Abhinavagupta, any type of creative art presupposes *rasaveśa* (involvement in aesthetic experience) in an individual for its generation. Various experiences in our life are represented in the art objects like literature, music, picture etc. In order to represent reality one should need a deep concentration which is echoed in the *Bhagavadgītā* – ‘*Na cayuktasya bhāvanā*’.<sup>3</sup> This abiding emotion or sentiment must exist in an artist, dramatic characters and spectators in the case of literary art. In case of music there must exist such sentiment among artist, musical presentation and the audience. In case of pictorial form of art there must exist such sentiment among artists, pictorial presentation and the critics. *Rasa*, Indian concept of aesthetic experience, is an essential element of any work of visual, literary or performing art that can only be suggested and cannot be described. Indian art seeks to discover and suggest the idea behind sensuous appearance. In painting, sculpture, literature, music and dance, we have the importance of expression clearly and cleverly revealed and utilized. There is a broad suggestiveness of expression in these fine arts. Literature aims at evoking certain emotions, which are universally present in men and thereby leads them to catharsis. In order to accomplish this purpose, the poet makes use of the unique process of suggestion. Poets do not communicate emotions through ordinary language. They only suggest them through metaphorical language. In dance, different postures represent different thoughts through the path of suggestion.

Different *Mudrās* of a dance, different patches of colour or lines of picture have specific suggestive meaning. Even a particular note creates a particular suggestion in music too. *Rasa* is expressed through suggestion. It reveals a charming sense over and above the described ones. It is like the chime of a bell, whose resonance continues vibrating in the air even after the bell stops. It is like an atmosphere of a powerful fragrance, which pervades the atmosphere entirely with its presence. “It is a kind of contemplative abstraction in which the inwardness of human feelings suffuses the surrounding world of embodied forms.”<sup>4</sup> The pleasure derived from art is a kind of spiritual joy, transcendental and super sensuous. This is a concept difficult to be proved or disproved by reason because the existence and conception of soul are matters of never ending controversy. If I do not have necessary scientific data to prove the existence of soul, I do not, at the same time, have any unimpeachable evidence to disprove it. Visvanatha has eulogized the transcendental nature of aesthetic experience after considering its true manifestation. To him such a nature of aesthetic pleasure is not a defect, rather it is an ornament (*Alaukikatvametesam bhuṣaṇam nā tu duṣaṇam*).<sup>5</sup> The factors generating aesthetic pleasure are also taken to be ornamental (*bhuṣaṇam*). In other words, they are efficacious for the manifestation of *Rasa* just like ornaments (*Bhuṣaṇavadupakarakam rasabhirbhavanukulamityārthaḥ*)<sup>6</sup> are.

*Rasa* is the supreme delight produced in the mind of the appreciator by a work of art. The word *rasa* is derived from the root *rasaḥ* meaning sap or juice, taste, flavour, relish. The extract of a fruit is referred to as *rasa* which itself is the essence of it, the ultimate flavour of it. The *Rasa* theory originates with Bharata in *Nāṭya-Śāstra*. It was developed by the rhetorician and philosopher Abhinavagupta. Bharata, the first announcer of the theory, gives the most comprehensive analysis of its sources, nature and its categories. Bharata served to compile the meaning of the multifaceted word ‘*rasa*’ in a single sentence. “*Rasyate anena iti rasaḥ (asvadyatva)*” (Bharata, *Nāṭya-Śāstra*, 28). Bharata’s maxim in connection with the theory of *rasa* goes thus, “*vibhāvanubhava vyabhicāri samyogad rasnispatiḥ*”.<sup>7</sup> That is, *rasa* is accomplished as a result of the conjunction of *vibhava* (stimuli), *anubhava* (after-effects) and *vyabhicāribhāva* (transitory moods). The term *bhāva* means both existence and a mental state and in aesthetic contexts it has been variously translated as feelings,

psychological states and emotions. In the context of the drama, *bhāva* is the emotions represented in the performance. *Rasa* and *bhāva* can be considered as Siamese twins: one without the other would not have a sensitive life. *Rasa* cannot be generated without *bhāva* and vice-versa. If *bhāva* does not promote the relative *rasa* then it is basically fruitless. Thus we can say that both *rasa* and *bhāva* are the most important factors in art. *Rasa* provides with an emotional experience and *bhāva* is the emotional experience. Bharata in his *Nāṭya-Śāstra* mentioned eight *sthāyibhāva* (permanent mood), they are *rati* (love), *hasa* (humour), *śoka* (pathos), *krodha* ( anger), *utsāha* (energy), *bhaya* (fear), *jugupsā* (disgust) and *vismaya* (wonder) <sup>8</sup> and from these *sthāyibhāva*, *śṛṅgāra* (beauty), *hāsyā* (laughter), *karuṇa* (sadness), *raudra* (anger), *vira* (bravery), *bhayānaka* (dangerous), *vibhatsā* (obscene) and *adbhuta* (miraculous) *rasas* are generated respectively. <sup>9</sup> A ninth *rasa* was added later by Abhinavagupta; and it is *śānta* (peace or tranquillity). This addition had to undergo a good deal of struggle between sixth and tenth centuries, before it could be accepted by the majority of the *Alaṅkārikas* and the expression *Navarasa* (the nine *rasas*), could come into vogue. These *rasas* comprise the component of aesthetic experience.

*Rasa*, however, is not a static fact; it is a dynamic process. The artist, it is said, transfers the *rasa* that he experiences and fructifies in his soul to the audience. He shares it with them. He lives the process; he throbs under its integrating unity. He has no life apart from his creative subject. The aim of art is the creation of "*Rasa*" or aesthetic experience. Every presentation of drama, dance, music and painting is aimed at evoking in the minds of the audience or spectator a particular kind of aesthetic experience, which is characterised as *rasa*. Beauty in Indian art is usually equated with *rasa*. It is the essence of experience. The study of aesthetics deals with the realization of beauty in art, its relish or enjoyment, and the awareness of joy that accompanies an experience of beauty. *Rasa* has no equivalent in word or concept in any other language or art of the world hitherto known to us. The closest explanation can be aesthetic experience or aesthetic relish.

Aesthetic theory in India is comprised of a long and complex trajectory beginning with its origins in Vedic times. There is considerable evidence that the roots of Indian aesthetics are embedded in Vedic literature such as the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* from the *Rig Veda*. However, according to Indologists, there was no

systematic treatment of aesthetics until Bharata's *Nāṭya-Śāstra* was composed. As to why this treatise was written, scholars such as Dr. S. S. Barlingay point out that the *Nāṭya-Śāstra* was aiming to present one cogent, coherent theory of art in general and drama in particular.<sup>10</sup>

The aim of the *Nāṭya-Śāstra* is centred on a very important philosophical question, that is: 'what is the link between art and aesthetic enjoyment?' The arts mentioned in the treatise include dance, music, drawing, acting, architecture and sketching. However, the *Nāṭya-Śāstra* is not primarily interested in descriptively explaining each of these arts, but rather in giving a detailed analysis of their potential to induce certain states of mind in the audience or spectators.<sup>11</sup> Thus, the link between art and these particular states of mind is referred to as *rasa* which is the operative principle of Indian aesthetic theory.

Shyamala Gupta points out that the concept of *rasa* is as old as the earliest Vedic literature; but its application to drama and poetry is a revolutionary discovery ushered in by Bharata.<sup>12</sup> In addition, Bharata mentions two processes relevant to stage-drama: the process of creation on the one hand and the process of appreciation on the other. For Bharata, the stage-drama existed as a type of temporal continuum where the dramatist, the director and the actors create the drama, which is then appreciated by the spectators. It is said that *rasa* should arise at the end of the first process (creation) and the second process (appreciation) should begin with the tasting of *rasa*. Thus, *rasa* is the object of both processes and is manifested in the form of *natya*.<sup>13</sup>

The influence of the theory of *rasa* was not confined to dramaturgy alone even though it was explicated by Bharata in the context of *nāṭya*. It has been observed that aesthetic experience (*rasa*) is the cornerstone in all forms of art visual, literary and performance. Genuine great art cannot be made out of one's cleverness. It is rather a spontaneous emanation from *rasa*-filled heart - "*Rasaveśavaiṣādyā-nirmāṇakṣamatva*", i.e., an individual becomes endowed with the power of creativity arising from the expertisation achieved through the heart filled with aesthetic enjoyment. In other words, an individual saturated with the aesthetic pleasure is endowed with the expertisation of creating something original. This *rasa*, which arises from all forms of art, can be appreciated only by the *sahṛdaya* (connoisseur).

When a reader or audience shares the feeling of the hero or heroine, he or she becomes sensitive due to having his or her heart saturated with aesthetic pleasure generated within him through his or her self-involvement (*ekātmata*). This situation being conditioned by *rasa* (*rasaveśa*) enjoins the individual with the power of creativity (*nirmāṇakṣamatva*). This aesthetic pleasure that comes as a result of sharing the pathos of others in a novel or drama, endows him with the power of creativity. On the other hand, pathos arising out of the sad demise of his dear one makes him handicapped instead of conjoining him with the power of creativity, which is called *kārayitri pratibhā*. An individual can enjoy aesthetic pleasure by sharing his own self with the character of the novel or drama as he shares some common feeling existing in the novelist and the character of the novel or the dramatist and dramatic characters. This common experience is possible due to having the same feeling, because they are *sahṛdaya* (literally, having common heart or sensitivity).

The process of appreciation of *rasa* became far more significant than the creation of *rasa*. The real appreciator of an art form is a connoisseur (*sahṛdaya*). A *sahṛdaya* possesses the capability to identify his own feelings with those of the artists. The artist creates a piece of art. *Sahṛdaya* realises it and he recreates those arts in his own self. As fire covers the dry wood, the aesthetic pleasure arising in one's heart engulfs his whole body. This aesthetic pleasure is produced if the object is appreciated by heart (*hṛdayasamvādi*). (“*Yo'rtho hṛdayasamvādi tasya bhāvo rasodbhāvaḥ / Śariram vyāpyate tena śuṣkam kāṣṭhamivagninā.*”).<sup>14</sup>

If the above mentioned view of *sahṛdayatva* is accepted, the aesthetic experience would be regarded as universal. The success of an art-object depends on its universalisation (*sadhāraṇikāraṇa*), which again depends on the concept of *sahṛdayatva*. If each and every reader or audience or spectator has got the same sensitivity or feeling, there is a correspondence regarding the fact that is going on in all the hearts of the audiences or readers or spectators (*Sakala-sahṛdaya-samvādasalitā*). It may also be called transparency of experience. This phenomenon is otherwise described as ‘one pointed concentration of all the readers, audiences or spectators (*Sarvasāmājjikanām ekāghanatā*).<sup>15</sup> Universalisation (*sadhāraṇikāraṇa*) is one of the characteristic features of aesthetic experience or *rasa* that leads a man to the world of creativity. After perceiving the separation of the curlew-couple, Valmiki

became very much moved and out of his grief, he created a *Śloka*. He had intense feeling of pathos in which he had lost himself. Due to this complete loss of personality, he had a sense of joy out of grief. This joyous experience of pathos provided him with the power of creating a *Śloka* spontaneously. Valmiki's grief was not this worldly. If it were so, he would have some sympathy with the birds from which the creation of *Kāvya* would have been impossible. This worldly grief makes a man handicapped. When a poet's vision becomes very deep and clear, he will surely get an inspiration from within and the materials for writing a *Kāvya* (like characterisation, plot etc.) would follow automatically just as water overflows automatically from an over-filled jar. Thus, a poet's genius depends on the absorption of the aesthetic enjoyment and this absorption is endowed with capacity of creating a *Kāvya* spontaneously. When a poet's heart is filled with emotion, it spontaneously emanates itself in metrical form. The same theory is also applicable to other forms of art. This spontaneity is one of the vital characteristics of aesthetic experience or *rasa* from literature and it can be applied to music and dance also. How far the performance of dance and music is artistic can be inferred from their spontaneity along with other factors. If the performance of dance or music is not spontaneous, they may seem to be artificial. As spontaneity comes from within, it belongs to an artist whose heart is absorbed in aesthetic pleasure or *rasa*. If a musician or a dancer is absorbed in such enjoyment within himself, which is usually called mood in ordinary language, he cannot help dancing or singing. At this stage only spontaneity comes. Music and dance forms begin and end in aesthetic experience. This spontaneity comes only when there is no impediment for the realisation of aesthetic experience. This spontaneous emanation of poetry, music and dance from a man, who was otherwise idle before having aesthetic absorption, shows the mystic character of aesthetic pleasure.

The aesthetic enjoyment is mystic and transcendental.<sup>16</sup> From another stand point, aesthetic experience may be considered as mystic. Each and every type of experience must be either determinate (*Savikalpaka*) or indeterminate (*Nirvikalpaka*). Such type of experience is not indeterminate because it gives rise to bliss (*Ānanda*). In the indeterminate stage, one has the feeling of indifference; but in the case of aesthetic experience, there is a feeling of bliss and hence it is not indeterminate. It

cannot be described as determinate either (which is definite and related to name, quality etc.), because the experience, though blissful, is beyond the reach of direct expression. After having enjoyed reading a novel or listening music or seeing a painting or a dance performance, one may have blissful experience that cannot be explained with the help of description (like name, quality etc.) like any ordinary pleasure. So it is not determinate. As the experience does not come under the purview of both the types of knowledge, it is considered as mystic.<sup>17</sup>

It has been observed that aesthetic experience or *rasa* is transcendental or *lokattara*. This pleasure is transcendental as because this originates from man's *pratibhā*. The Indian artists make fullest use of the imagination, the faculty that is called *pratibha* without which the ideal form of reality cannot be apprehended. According to Gopinatha Kaviraja, *Pratibhā* literally means a flash of light, which reveals the objects. The light is 'the wisdom characterised by immediacy and freshness'.<sup>18</sup> In fact *pratibhā* is such a wisdom as having capacity to illuminate the objects newly again and again.<sup>19</sup> *Pratibhā* is described as 'suprarational apperception'.<sup>20</sup> It bears some similarity with Aurobindo's philosophy. He says, "It comes out from something deep within which calls down the world-vision, the light and power from a level above the normal mind (i.e., over mind)".<sup>21</sup> In Western Philosophy such type of vision is also accepted where it is described as intuition. Croce says that this intuition is a distinct species differing from intuition-in-general by something more.<sup>22</sup> In this world there are many mystic things that cannot be perceived or known by our ordinary sense organs. Nevertheless, there is some faculty in a man that is capable of revealing that unknown or mystic world. This faculty is known as *Pratibhā*.<sup>23</sup>

Generally all forms of art arouse aesthetic pleasure, which is the product of *Pratibhājñāna* or intuitive cognition. This can be argued that a connoisseur relishing literature transcends his own personal interest. The same taste of infatuating impersonal disinterested feeling can also be traced in dance, music and painting. It generally happens that man forgets his personal grief for the time being while enjoying beautiful paintings or performance of music or dance. As this pleasure transcends the limitation of personal interest, it is disinterested universal pleasure.<sup>24</sup> As such pleasure is mystic in nature, it must be caused by *Pratibhā* or intuition,

which is described by Abhinavagupta as a dwarf image of *Brahman*.<sup>25</sup> For this reason *rasa* or aesthetic experience originated from all forms of art relieves man from their mundane grief or sorrow and make them partner of *lokttara ānanda* (transcendental pleasure).

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## **CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS IN BUSINESS**

NGALEKNAO RAMTHING

This article is especially dedicated to Prof. Raghunath Ghosh, who is retiring from our Department in February, 2015.

Keith Davis<sup>1</sup> rightly says business is not something self-enclosed world but its activities have profound ramification through society. Business, though an economic institution, cannot exist in isolation with society because a society in which business functions is equally important as it is integrated with the rest of a society. A society is a network of human relationships that link people together through various elements including ideas, values, cultural habits, geographical proximity, and various institutions. Business activities are socially related activities having various stakeholders within the realm of society and, thus, create a certain world view that requires to establish a norms or principles by defining what is generally considered as conducive, good, right which may be acceptable to all the stakeholders in guiding and coordinating different business activities that involves variously different interests. Businesses are bound to have interests variously different from one another which are conflicting and antagonistic if not utterly paradoxical. Taking this point in mind, this paper attempts to examine issues related with conflicts of interests with an object to bring new insight from the Kantian perspective.

This paper deals with certain issues like, is the conflict of interest a conflict between the employers and the employees? Or is it a conflict between the professional ethics or code of conducts and the moral laws? Or still could it be a conflict of interest between the business firms and the society at large? In a conflict of interest, either two duties conflict or a duty conflicts with self-interest; in either case one ought to determine which interest serve the best interest of all by appealing to one's own reason. It is strongly believed that duty to society or humanity in general ethically supersedes duty to stockholders. However, it does not mean to depreciate the significance of duty one has towards the employing firm. There are duties or obligations to be observed and performed in accordance with the interests of the employing firms but such adherence to duties ought to be rooted in right motives. Conflicts of interests appear to have been associated with various elements such as

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<sup>1</sup> Shaw, William, H., (1990) *Business Ethics*, Wadsworth Publishing Company, Canada.p-158

moral laws, legal laws, professional codes of conduct, etc. There are possibilities of having conflicting opinions, ideas, beliefs, etc. To this end, an attempt should be made to explain what conflict of interest is and how such conflict arises in business activities and how they adversely affect business behavior. One should try to strike balance between the welfare of the corporation and the welfare of the society at large on an objective basis.

Business as an economic institution is conglomeration of different groups of individuals from different culture, religion, language, nationality, race, etc., and hence, it is not devoid of issues. Different groups of individuals are often (if not always) confronted with conflicts of interest. Sometimes one's own personal interest conflicts with one's professional obligation. The decisions on which humans act upon do not go without any effect on others; be it positive or negative. Conflict of interest often presents itself in the form of self-promotion and can occur in any form and in any setting, be it in government, society, business, etc. Therefore, the extent to which conflicts of interests can occur must be viewed in a wider perspective in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the concepts and its effects thereto.

In the words of Boatright, "a conflict of interest is a conflict that occurs when a personal interest interferes with a person's acting so as to promote the interests of another when the person has an obligation to act in that other person's interest."<sup>2</sup> It is not untrue to state that a conflict of interest is not just merely a conflicting interest but rather it is a conflict that arises due to intentional divergence of interest purposely for some personal or group selfish benefit contradictory to one's actual obligation. It is important to take a serious note that an agent having an obligation as agreed upon to do an assigned instruction commits a conflict of interest in case of deviating away from performing the main principal's obligation. In short, it is a breach of obligation. Conflict of interests need not necessarily be associated with only pecuniary issue but it can also be non-pecuniary issues. It is to be stated that accepting bribes, actions of fraud, and unauthorized distribution of confidential information are not conflict of interests, but considered as improper acts. Hence, conflict of interest can be viewed

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<sup>2</sup> Boatright, R. J., (2003) *Ethics and the Conduct of Business*, Pearson Education Inc., Delhi, p. 152

from different angles. The most common forms of conflicts of interests can be briefly stated below as follows:

1. With respect to direct financial interests of public servants whose fortunes may be affected by a decision that he or she has a role in making.
2. With respect to personal conflicts of interest pertaining to non-financial issues such as personal relationships, business associations, and membership in political or other groups which might make it difficult for an individual to consider policy questions without bias.
3. With respect to ideological conflict which include conflicts on many work related issues among different perspectives of management and labor.

Conflicts of interests need not be necessarily financial but it may be conflicts of interest which are not necessarily financial and thus conflicts of interests can be categorized in two ways, namely, financial and non-financial. Financial interest or pecuniary interest<sup>3</sup> can be understood as an act that involves an actual or potential financial gain at the cost of the interest of others. They may result from an employee taking or accepting gifts or kickbacks. For instance, there is a potential conflict of interest if a person makes a donation before the board of selection committee for a job along with an application because such donation may influence the members and thus created a risk that the committee's interest in the organization could conflict with their public duty to assess the application on its merits.

Non-pecuniary interests do not have a financial element in the sense that the act is done with an intention to influence others in the decision making body in order that his chosen candidate be a choice of the body. The most obvious example of this is family interest - for example, the recruitment officer may have an interest in influencing hiring procedures to secure a position for his closest ones or relatives, without ever benefiting financially. Moreover, there are also other interests which are not directly personal yet may be subject to conflict of interest. With the idea of reelection in mind, elected officials generally pursue the interests of their constituents and of their party, and attempt to influence the relevant administrative process which is usually against the public interest.

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<sup>3</sup> ICAC Practical Guide, 1996, <http://www.icac.nsw.gov.au/files/html/pub2i27cp.htm>.

According to Garrett and Klonoski, “conflicts of interest may be actual or potential.”<sup>4</sup> A conflict is actual when a personal interest leads a person to act against the interests of an employer or another person whose interests the person is obligated to serve. Mr. X is in an actual conflict of interest with the employer if his personal interest directed his acts in performing certain duties against the interest of the management because his acts is not in agreement but rather antagonistic with the purpose for which Mr. X has been appointed for. Mr. X by virtue of having a duty to serve the interests of the management has failed to comply with the obligation he has to the management. What can be expected of an employee whose mind is divided between two crucial decisions? Can a servant serve two masters equally? It is hard to find an affirmative answer to the question. A servant whose loyalties towards two masters cannot possibly be balanced will either do more favor to the one in exclusion of the other. In a situation like this where one is placed in a dilemma a decision taken in favor of one affects the others because one’s loyalty is being divided between multiple groups.

On the other hand, a conflict is potential when an interest or motive of an individual or professional or employee is likely to or is sufficient enough to influence or appear to exert influence in the working of business transaction which may be contradictory to the best interest of the employers or owners. However, a potential conflict of interest is something which is merely a sort of motivation or temptation that is yet to be actualized in the real sense of the term and hence can be taken care of. Now, as far as conflict of interest is concerned, self-interest plays a paramount role. It is the motive that drives an individual to performing certain thing in consonant with what has already been thought of. But, it is to be noted here that conflict of interest may not be necessarily bad or unethical. The reason being that a conflict of interest may be directed towards leading a substantial improvement or refinement of ideas or plans or it may be for worse and therefore, conflict of interest in itself is neither completely unethical nor completely ethical.

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<sup>4</sup> Garrett, M. T., and Klonoski, K. J., (1986) *Business Ethics*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliff, NJ, p. 55

Conflicts can also be in the form of personal and impersonal conflict of interest. This type of conflict arises when a professional, for example, a legal consultant who works for two different companies is in a conflict of interest when he is obligated to act in the interest of the two conflicting interest. It can also be in the form of either individual or organization. In the agency relationship, an agent is a hired employee or an organization who is obligated to act in the interest of the principal. For example, Arthur Anderson accounting firm offers multiple services to companies. The firm provides management services to the companies and also does audit of the same companies.

Boatright<sup>5</sup> in *Ethics and the Conduct of Business* made relevant distinctions in understanding the concept of conflict of interest in terms of actual and potential conflict of interest, personal and impersonal conflict of interest, and individual and organizational conflict. He states that the concept of conflict is complex as it encompasses various distinct moral failings that are run together. He classifies conflict of interest into four kinds in order to have full understanding of the definition and of the reasons that it is morally wrong for a person to be in conflict of interest. The classifications are as follows:

1. Biased judgment
2. Direct competition
3. Misuse of position
4. Violation of confidentiality

All the professions irrespective of any field have certain rules, principles, standards and guidelines which govern the professionals in the professional duties in order to perform the specific job. Professionals are experts in their particular areas, for example, lawyer. A lawyer is a trained professional who has the theoretical knowledge of the concerned area and has the mastery over using the skill in a practical situation. Their knowledge and judgments are reliable and trustworthy by virtue of being an expertise in that particular area. Similarly, business professionals like MBA's are experts in the domain of business. It is expected that professionals working within a particular firm or business must support their own company's codes of conducts as they are to be followed by all the professionals. Professionals go

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<sup>5</sup> Boatright, R. J., (2003) *Ethics and the Conduct of Business*, Pearson Education Inc., Delhi, p. 151

above and beyond what is required both by the law and by their professional code of ethics. Duty to the community, or social responsibility, is a common professional responsibility. Performing a profession can lead to a situation when the regulations are not sufficient to make decisions to which the professionals have to use their knowledge, competence, skills and experience. In other words, they have to exercise their professional judgment. The exercise of judgment is characteristic of professionals whose stock in trade is a body of specialized knowledge that is used in the service of clients. Not only are they paid for using this knowledge to make judgments for the benefit of others but also part of the value of their services lies in the confidence that can be placed in a professional's judgments.<sup>6</sup> They are expected to be transparent and sincere in making a decision in order to avoid bias judgments. They are expected not to involve in accepting bribes, kickbacks, etc., because such acceptance can exert influence on their decision making or making judgments. Purchasing agent, for example, often have considerable latitude in choosing among various suppliers of a given product.

The judgment of purchasing agents in all matter, however, should be used to make decisions that are in the best interests of the employing firm. For a purchasing agent to accept a bribe or kickback in return for placing an order constitutes a clear conflict of interest. The reason is simple. Bribes and kickbacks are usually intended to induce an employee to grant some favor for a supplier at the expense of the employer. Other factors that could influence the judgment of an employee include outside business interests, such as an investment in a competitor or a supplier, or dealings with businesses owned by family members.<sup>7</sup> There are many situations when experts express their opinion without the possibility to argue their decision. To ensure both business and social welfare confidence and security, the professional should develop himself or herself professionally by seizing business opportunities and using them to improve his or her personal expertise as well as to showcase his or her efforts. Professionals must be dedicated, passionate, and knowledgeable about their jobs because consequences of an incorrect application of the professional judgment can

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<sup>6</sup> Boatright, R. J., (2003) *Ethics and the Conduct of Business*, Pearson Education Inc., Delhi, p. 156

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 156

lead to serious problems with negative economic, financial and social implications. We have had little to say about the second, technical competence, what makes honest judgment professional. We have, it seems, simply taken it for granted. Yet, an engineer without engineering judgment, a lawyer without a lawyer's judgment, or any other professional without the particular form of judgment distinguishing his or her profession from all others, would be an incompetent "layman" who could not honestly practice the profession in question. A professional who does not follow the company code of ethics may be punished by management.

Conflict of interest may likely to take place when there is a conflict between primary interest and secondary interests in any activity or profession. Primary interest is concerned with the principal goals of any profession or activity. For example, the protection of customers, health of patients, integrity of research, and the duties of public office are primary interests. Secondary interest is concerned with seeking financial gain, desire for professional advancement, favoritism for close relations, etc., which are considered objectionable when secondary interests have greater weight over primary interests. The imbalance between primary interest and secondary interests can be, thus, defined as conflicts of interests.

Conflict of interests when detected in any activity or profession that breaches a person's duty of loyalty to his profession is unethical and punishable in some cases; while in other cases it is not considered as unethical. For example, in the practice of law, a judge can be disqualified if his judgments are found to be prejudicial. In the case of corporation, for example, if a director makes a decision for the corporation that profits his interest over that of the corporation then he will be subject to legal liability because such partial activity impairs his ability to perform his duties and responsibilities objectively. On the other hand, in some cases although someone is accused of a conflict of interest, he or she may deny that a conflict exists because he/she did not act improperly. This shows that a conflict of interest can exist even if there are no improper acts as a result of it. For example, a person with two roles—an individual who owns stock and who is a government official may experience situations where those two roles conflict. The conflict can be made less severe but it still exists. In and of itself, having two roles is not illegal, but the different roles will certainly provide an incentive for improper acts in some circumstances. Another

example of such kind exist in the realm of the private sector providing services to the Government, where a corporation provides two types of services to the Government that have conflicting interest or appear objectionable (i.e., manufacturing parts and then participating on a selection committee comparing parts manufacturers). Corporations may develop simple or complex systems to mitigate the risk or perceived risk of a conflict of interest. These risks are typically evaluated by a governmental office to determine whether the risks pose a substantial advantage to the private organization over the competition or will decrease the overall competitiveness in the bidding process.

Competition is one of the important characteristics in business externally as well as internally. Externally, in the sense that most business companies are in competition with at least one other firm over the same group of customers and, internally in the sense that competition inside a company is usually stimulated for meeting and reaching higher quality of services or products that the company produces or develops.

Within a market businesses are often encountered with direct competitors. The direct competitors are those firms that produce the same or very similar goods that appeal to the same group of consumers, for example, soap. The crucial question here is: is it unethical to engage in direct competition with his/her employer? According to Boatwright, for an employee to engage in direct competition with his or her employer is a conflict of interest; the reason being that the employee has divided his or her loyalty and thus the quality of the employee's work might get reduced by the time and effort devoted to other activities. An employee who works as an agent of an employer is obliged to abide by rules and regulations and the principal responsibilities of an agent is to proceed in agreement with the interest of the employers. But it does not by any means endorse that an agent does not have any rights to disagreement in case of unethical interest from the employer. Both employer and employee (agent) have rights and obligations as the relationship between the two are based on expertise and trust.

As far as direct competition is concerned, it is prohibited by companies even though it is being informed and there may not have been any foreseeable danger of

impaired judgment or reduced quality performance. Boatwright cites a case taken from a policy statement issued by the Xerox Corporation which goes thus:

“The wife of a Xerox tech rep inherits money. They decide it would be profitable to open a copy shop with her money and in her name in a suburban city. The territory they choose is different from his. However, there are several other copy shops and an XRC (Xerox Resource Centre) in the vicinity. She leases equipment and supplies from Xerox on standard terms. After working hours, he helps his wife reduce costs by maintaining her equipment himself without pay. He also helps out occasionally on weekends. Her job’s performance at Xerox remains as satisfactory as before. One of the nearby competitive shops, also a lease of Xerox equipment, writes to his manager complaining that the employee’s wife is getting free Xerox service and assistance.”<sup>8</sup>

Is the act of the employee unethical thus amounting to direct conflict of interest with his employer? Isn’t he morally right in supporting his wife as such brings no adverse effects to his performance as an employee of the Xerox corporation? Is the act a clash between husband’s responsibility towards one’s wife and the responsibility he has towards the employer?

Firstly, it is to be noted here that, direct competition is generally prohibited by companies even though it is being informed and there may not have been any foreseeable danger of impaired judgment or reduced quality performance. An employee who works as an agent of an employer is obliged to abide by the rules and regulations and the principal responsibility of an agent is to proceed in agreement with the interest of the employers. Now, in the case given above, the conflict of interest consists mainly in the fact that the employee’s investment and work outside of his employment at Xerox place him in direct competition with the company. Though, his service as an employee remains unaffected and uninfluenced by his wife’s business. Nevertheless, on the assumption that the husband benefits from his wife’s business venture, the employee who also happens to be a husband who runs the business is competing directly with the employer for the reason being that Xerox operates an XRC in the vicinity and such free service rendering outside of his

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<sup>8</sup> Boatright, R. J., (2003) *Ethics and the Conduct of Business*, Pearson Education Inc., Delhi, p. 156

employment in and within the vicinity where XRC operate brings a direct competition with his employer. Secondly, the employer is also harming the interests of Xerox Corporations by upsetting the relation between the company and other lessees of Xerox equipment and moreover, by maintaining the equipment in his wife's shop himself, the employee harms the company by depriving it of the potential for additional business.

In business setting, more than often issues are related to misuse of position surface. A person of position or authority could be a friend, family members, service personnel or a company employee but he/she is not expected to use his/her position for one's own private gain or for that of persons or organizations with which he is associated personally. Boatwright in his book, *Ethics and the Conduct of Business* quotes in the newspaper's code of ethics that reads as follows: 'It is not enough to be incorruptible and act with honest motives. It is equally important to use good judgment and conduct one's outside activities so that no one- management, or editors, an SEC investigator with power of subpoena, or a political critic of the company- has any grounds for even raising the suspicion that an employee misused a position with the company.' It implies that to be a good and trusted employee not only demands doing one's assigned duty but also doing one's duty continuously out of a sense of duty with sincerity, honesty, integrity and commitment by taking into account the ethical aspects of his profession devoid of favoritism or acts against his profession or employer.

Let us take an example. Supposing, an employee of the business firm AB was asked by a friend to determine why his firm's leasing license had not yet been granted by another office within the department. If an employee who has a position and authority raised the issue as a matter for official inquiry the delay in approval of the particular license at an official business meeting and asked that the particular license be expedited. Such act amounts to violation or misuse of position or authority as the employee used his/her official position in an endeavor to benefit his/her friend and, in acting as her friend's agent for the purpose of pursuing the leasing license with the business firm.

Does the professional or employee in a position and authority reflect morality of commitment and integrity towards himself/herself and the employer? It is quite

obvious that such act of misusing position and authority is a conflict of interest because he/she is advancing his/her personal interest while acting in his/her capacity as an official of the employing firm. An employee's position should not be used to coerce another person into providing a benefit to the employee or others; to endorse any product, service or enterprise; or to give the appearance of governmental sanction to personal activities. An employee or professional should as much as possible avoid taking bribes, kickbacks, etc., as these may exert influence in the process of taking decision which in turn may conflict with the best interest of the employing firm. The duty of a professional or any agent working as a representative, be it a lawyer, accountant should maintain and sustain the confidential information acquired from his/her client. Supposing if a lawyer who has promised to represent as defended of his/her client uses the acquired information from his/her client to advance his/her personal interest is a breach of violation of confidentiality even though the interest of the client is unaffected.

The conflict of interest that Boatwright talks about is not a kind of conflict which is merely a conflicting interest between two or more individuals but rather a conflict coupled with an obligation to serve the interests of another. For example, an agent who has an obligation to carry out the interests of the principle by virtue of being an agent even though the duty to perform is not in consonant with the interest of the agent because he has the fiduciary duty towards the principal. Agents have a duty to abstain from conducting business, financial or other interests or relationships that may be antagonistic to the interests of company or conflict with the interests of the Company or that divide the employee's loyalty to the Company. Any activity or business transaction which seemingly appears to present a conflict must be averted unless company determines the activity is not harmful to their business or otherwise wrong. It arises in a number of situations, such as taking or offering commercial and personal bribe, kickbacks, gifts and insider information for personal gain. However, it is difficult to identify conflicts of interest because it may not always be clear-cut and easy to define.

Now, the issue here is the possibility of having conflicting interests because of having the dual functions of providing management services as well as auditing of

the same firm. Briloff<sup>9</sup> apprehends that there is a great concern in the profession that this dual function endangers the independence and objectivity of accountants.

Is conflict of interest always negative? It is important to distinguish between conflict of interest in the negative sense and conflict of interest in the positive sense. As mentioned above, there are conflicts of interest which are not harmful or the existence of it does not deteriorate the existent condition of a situation. For example, an employee working in company X faces a conflict of interest with the manager in the matter of disclosing the fact finding about the account of the company that the employee who is responsible for the accounting is willing to expose the anomalies present in the account as it thought to be in the best interest of the company as a whole. Whereas the managers are firm in its decision that the said anomalies found in the account should not be exposed as it can imprint an impression of mistrust in the mind of the shareholders or employers which ultimately may harm their future relationship. This kind of situation can have a potential conflict which may bring negative aspect but does not rule out the possibility of the other, that is, positive aspect. Conflicts can bring wonders and do wonders; it can also do heinous distortions.

The conflict between the two, that is, the accountant and the managers can be positively taken as a step to proactively deal with issues that people or groups need to be addressing rather than keeping beneath the carpet. Dealing with the issue in an ethical manner may bring more positive result and such initiative can be a beginning to a new perspective, can initiate change, promote understanding among themselves, foster self-esteem, and also reinforce abilities and adaptability towards new challenges. On the contrary, conflict of interest as just stated can bring more harm than good such as creating more confusion and conflicts, loss of confidence in the credibility of morals, create distrust and loss of respect, skeptical in decision making, destabilize the entire business set, etc., if such conflict is not remedied in a positive ways. A person with integrity and dignity would normally try to resolve the conflict by looking into the possibility for pacifying the matter rather than making the issue as

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<sup>9</sup> Briloff, J. A., (August 1987) "Do Management Service Endanger Independence and Objectivity?" *CPA Journal*, 57, p. 22-29

it is, if not make it worse to the point where eventual leading to a serious ethical and legal issues.

Why be so concerned about a conflict of interests? The concept of conflict of interest is complex as it covers several issues such as social, political, economic issues. It is not an issue to be wished away without attempting to pacify because it involves failing of integrating what is moral in human activities in relation with different individuals, groups, society, etc. Although conflicts of interest do not ineluctably lead to unethical conduct, they raise the probability that it will occur. A conflict of interest expresses conditions favorable to unethical decisions. Interests conflicting in a conflict of interest oppose an obligation against either another obligation or self-interest. It is the question of how a selfish motive can eventually erode the whole system of a business firm, social relation and also political stability if not properly dealt with. It is a concern to explore how and when an individual's private interests compromise or unduly influence their public decision-making, creating the possibility that such selfish interest motivated actions may bring conflict that may pose ethical and social issues such conflicts tend to involve deontology and egoism. Conflicts of interest as has been mentioned above raise an ethical dilemma when the private interest is sufficient to influence or appear to influence the exercise of official duties where possibility of creating a conflict or having the potential to create a conflict which may bring deterioration to the best interest of the company.

Kant believed that morality in all spheres of human life should be grounded in reason. His categorical imperative states that people should act only according to maxims that they would become universal norms and should never treat another human as a means to an end. The categorical imperative can be understood and demonstrated. It would be unethical for an employee to commit himself in gaining selfish personal profit against the best interest of the employing firm, because if everyone does the same business, he cannot run successfully.

Kant's theory emphasizes the necessity of trust, adherence to rules, and keeping promises. When people fail to be committed, they risk being punished by the business community or by government enforcement of laws as there are rules and regulations maintained and implied in all the professional code of conduct. Kant suggested that human beings are rational beings and have the capacity to reason and

the possession of which make them to rise above purely animalistic behavior. By virtue of being a rational being having the rationality to distinguish between good and bad one has to make a choice as to whether they will or will not follow universal norms. As far as Kant is concerned there is a logical contradiction in the conflict of interest because one cannot represent both at the same time. One has to either vote for one or the other. An employee A who is representing his/her employing firm cannot just promote his selfish personal interest because he/she stands as a representative of the employing firm and hence, endorsing his/her selfish personal gain stands against with the best interest of the employing firm and thus unethical. Kant held that one's maxim is ethical only if it can be universalized without logical contradiction. In trying to determine how conflict of interest is unethical, it is important to refer back to Kant's Formula of Universal Law. Kant<sup>10</sup> says the Formula of Universal Law is a test of the sufficiency of the reasons for action and choice to motivate a rational being which are embodied in our maxims. Kant's ethical aim is to prove that perfect rationality includes conformity to the categorical imperative. For a maxim to be ethical, it must be founded with reason, which is necessary and thus capable of being held universally. Rational nature assigns values, including ethical values, and such assigning cannot take place outside of the domain of reason. Hence, maxims that are ethical must be capable of being universalized.

There is no doubt in it that in any business enterprises there are bound to be both employers and employees. Over the years, the relationship between employer and employee was governed by the assumption that employers were like kings, and were free to offer any terms of employment and treat their workers in any way they desire, and the employees were free to either accept or reject those terms. However, the old system no longer prevails in the contemporary business economy. Both employers and employees have certain responsibilities towards each other and the society. Success and achievement of business enterprises depend on how they co-exist, co-operate and mutually understand one another. When employees do not trust, show respect and not fair to the company, several problems occur. Loyalty to the

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<sup>10</sup> Kant, I., (1964) *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Moral*, trans. H.J. Paton, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, p. 88

company obviously reduces in such business environment. Farnham<sup>11</sup> says that several negative effects result from the trust gap, including employee cynicism about whether management understands or cares about employees or their opinions and comes to a conclusion that there is very little common ground between the average worker and top management, a situation that tends to produce a disconnect and cynicism between the two. He has also provided examples in which applying the tenets of trust, fairness, and a basic respect for the individual has worked to the advantage of companies. The acknowledgements of Preston Trucking and Southwest Airlines that practicing fairness and respect led to company loyalty, which produced employee behaviour above and beyond the norm. Robert A.P. and Ferrell C.O. also hold the similar view. They say without trust, cost typically goes up and efficiency often goes down; but with trust, cost are likely to go down and efficiency usually goes up.<sup>12</sup>

So, employees must exercise reasonable care and skill in the performance of his work; must be loyal to the employer and obey all reasonable orders and directives; must report for work as appropriate; must not reveal confidential information to outsiders, such that they could use it to the disadvantage of the employer; and employees must not be negligent and dishonest in handling the employer's assets. Employers are the group individuals or firms that hire men or women to work for the employers' firm. Basically, the main concern of the employers is to have the right to manage, the ability to plan for the future in order that the firm can continue to sustain and prosper, make profit for its shareholders, and to keep its employees 'motivated'. Though employers have objectives of their own they too are not devoid of responsibility and obligation towards employees. Employers must provide work for his employees; must remunerate employees in accordance with the contracts of employment; must allow employees right to basic and necessary freedoms; employees must ensure the safety of the employees in the work place, etc. The gap between the two arises when both neglect to comply with their respective obligations.

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<sup>11</sup> Farnham, A., (1989) "The Trust Gap" *Fortune*, December 4, p. 56-78

<sup>12</sup> Robert, A. P., & Ferrell, C. O., (2007) *Business Ethics: New Challenges for Business Schools and Corporate Leaders*, Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited, New Delhi-110 001

The relationship between employer and employee in the United States has evolved from the employment-at-will doctrine. The employment-at-will doctrine asserts that, when an employee does not have a written employment contract and the term of employment is of indefinite duration, the employer can terminate the employee for good cause, bad cause, or no cause at all. Employment-at-will means that an employee can be terminated at any time without his/her consultation or explaining the reason for which he/she is being terminated. It also means that an employee can quit without a prior notification or offering a reason for quitting the job. Employers are not required to give notice while terminating an at-will employee. The employment-at-will doctrine reflected the belief that people should be free to enter into employment contracts of a specified duration, but that no obligations attached to either employer or employee. If a person was hired without such a contract, employees were able to resign from positions they no longer cared to occupy; employers also were permitted to discharge employees at their whim. Under this legal doctrine: "any hiring is presumed to be "at will"; that is, the employer is free to discharge individuals "for good cause, or bad cause, or no cause at all," and the employee is equally free to quit, strike, or otherwise cease work."<sup>13</sup> Both the employers and the employees seem to have equal right but the appearance is not always what the fact lies beneath the principle. Both employers and employees have rights, duties and obligations to each other. The employers are obligated to give employees fair wages, safe work place environment condition, etc. Employees are also obliged to reciprocate by fulfilling their responsibilities to the employers by following the goals, procedural rules and work plans of the employers. However, the working environment and condition keep fluctuating in a market economy and moreover, employer/employee rights and obligations are based on contrasting and conflicting assumption of values and thus in the relationship between the two conflicts of interest are bound to arise and in such situation more disadvantages can be posed especially to the employees whose job securities are not at all certain and is bound to have uncertainties as far as employee's job security is concerned.

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<sup>13</sup> Rothstein, A., Mark, Knapp, S. A., & Liebman, L., (1987) "Cases and Materials on Employment Law", *Foundation Press*, New York: p. 738

As far as the nature of the relationship is concerned the employee's principal duty and responsibility is to work towards the goals of the business firm as they have been employed or hired for carrying out the tasks that have been aimed for. The employees in a business firms are expected to avoid any activities that might harm those goals or conflicts with the interest of the employers. Business firms have a shared set of values, beliefs, norms, goals and codes of ethics which guides and regulate the activities in the work places. Employees do not operate in a vacuum and therefore their decisions and activities and also personal values are affected by the environment in which they work. There are possibilities that an employees might have opinion differed from the officially approved opinion or interest of the employers. But this is not to say that the differed opinion of the employee is unethical just because it conflicts with the interests of the employers; the reason being that the employee's opinion or interest of an employee might have a better ethical factor and the induction of such opinion may have more constructive prospects. From the employee's point of view, wages are the principal means for satisfying the basic economic needs of the worker whereas from the employer's point of view, wages are a cost of production that must be kept down lest the product be priced out of the market and thus the two seems to have a conflict. Every employer faces the dilemma of setting fair wages. Can it be taken as a conflict of interest as the opinion of the employee varies from the opinion generally and officially adopted by the employers? What makes an interest ethical and unethical? The presence of varying ideas or opinion alone is not sufficient to be called a conflict of interest. What then is conflict of interest all about?

#### **MANAGING CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

How do we manage conflicts of interest? Are there any models which can take care of conflict of interest? Boatwright<sup>14</sup> gives seven approaches to deal with conflict of interest such as, objectivity, avoidance, disclosure, competition, rules and policy, independent judgment and structural changes. He states that conflict of interest is not merely a matter of personal ethics. A person in a conflict of interest,

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<sup>14</sup> Boatright, R. J., (2003) *Ethics and the Conduct of Business*, Pearson Education Inc., Delhi, p. 160-162

either potential or actual, may be in the wrong, but conflicts usually occur in the course of being a professional or a member of an organization. Often these conflicts result from structural features of a profession or an organization and must be managed through carefully designed system. In order to deal with conflict of interest a commitment to be objective serves to avoid being biased by an interest that might interfere with a person's ability to serve another and such attitude towards objective commitment, avoid actions that may influence in one's decision making, keeping oneself transparent in one's behavior and business dealing etc. But manifestation of such acts which can be acceptable to one or the other simply does not happen by itself. It has to be nurtured with continuous commitment towards achieving those virtues. It is to be rooted in the right motive or goodwill in Kantian sense. In a conflict of interest, either two duties conflict or a duty conflicts with self-interest; in either case one ought to determine which interest serve the best interest of all. A duty to society or humanity in general is considered to ethically supersede a duty to stockholders. However, it does not mean to defy the significance of the duty one has towards the employing firm. There are duties or obligations to be observed and performed but such adherence to duties ought to be rooted in right motives. Morality's general requirements are based on what reasonable and "conscientious" agents would support.<sup>15</sup> Kant develops this point by arguing that it is the nature and orientation of one's will that confers moral value on her actions rather than the rewards, outcomes, social approval or happiness that they produce. Kant says that everything in nature works in accordance with the laws. But only a rational being has the power to act in accordance with his idea of laws, that is, in accordance with principles and only so has he a will.<sup>16</sup> The will is a faculty of choosing only that which reason, independently of inclination, recognises as practical necessity. For Kant having two contradictory interests itself is contradictory because one cannot represent both at the same time, one has to either vote for one or the other. An employee who is representing employing firm cannot just promote his selfish personal interest because he/she stands as a representative of the employing firm and

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<sup>15</sup> Hill, T. E., (2000) *Respect, pluralism and justice: Kantian perspectives*, Oxford, New York

<sup>16</sup> Kant, I.,(1964) *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, trans. H.J. Paton, Harper & Row Publishers, New York, p. 80

hence endorsing one's selfish personal gain stands against with the best interest of the employing firm and thus unethical.

## **CONCLUSION**

Business enterprise as an integral part of the modern society has a crucial role in provisioning and meeting the needs of the people. Hence, business is expected to have public responsibility and accountability. Pursuing private interest at the cost of profit for themselves undermine public interest and trust. They make the public lose faith in the integrity of business transaction. Conflicts of interest involves a conflict between public duty and private interests, whereby a private interest which could improperly influence the public interest, activities and decisions. In conflict of interest, private interest includes any advantage to himself or herself, to his or her family, close relatives, business firm with whom he or she has or has had business or personal relations. It includes also any liability, whether pecuniary non-pecuniary. Making sure that moral agents are well attuned to the circumstances in which they render practical judgments is undoubtedly important. This is no less true for business ethics as any other area of applied ethics. Moral judgment is necessarily an endeavor tied to a careful awareness and assessment of the complicated features of specific situation like conflict of interest. As stated above conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual in a position of responsibility and power has personal interests which conflicts with the interest of his/her professional duties. In relation to professional's expertise service, a conflict of interest involves a conflict between the professional duty and the private interest in which the professional's private-capacity interest could improperly influence the performance of one's duties. An improper influence of the public official due to his/her private interest may result in corruption any way. Essentially, in a conflict of interest situation, the private interest of the public official can or could influence the objective and impartial performance of his/her official duties.

Moral agents ought to be well attuned to the circumstances in which they render practical judgments as it is undoubtedly important. Moral judgment is necessarily an endeavor tied to a careful awareness and assessment of the complicated features of specific situations. Thus, although it is job of business ethicists and practitioners to identify principles of business conduct pertaining to

honest contracting, limitations on deceptive communication in sales, transparency in financial reporting, prohibitions on bribery and corruption, fair treatment of employees, respect for human rights and the like, they inevitably recommend or make decisions based in large part on the particularities of actual cases. Kantian morality demands that agents detach themselves from their various personal motives, relationships and commitments in answering moral questions in favor of an appeal to general principles that enforce rational uniformity in all human activities. What justifies moral rules is that having them is in everyone's interest and not only for someone's interest and this makes moral rules significant.

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## HOW IS OUR RATIONALITY SITUATED?\*

SMITA SIRKER

It is an honour to contribute in a volume dedicated to Professor Raghunath Ghosh, whose prominence as a philosopher within the Indian community is so pronounced. One is inspired by his contribution to the discipline of philosophy in general and Indian philosophy in particular. His exposure to the world of philosophy is both at the national and international level. Personally, one has to appreciate his contributions to our community and this opportunity given to me is very humbling. I sincerely believe that he continues to inspire young minds to contribute to our discipline with sincerity and perseverance.

A recent theory of ecological rationality holds that the accuracy of decision making strategy largely depends on the “structure of the environment” in which the strategy is used. Ecological theory strongly focuses on the structural properties of the environments and takes a structure-specific, situated approach to the study of cognitive processes (Brighton and Todd, 2009). Adaptive choices are employed by the decision maker, which are in tune with the specific environmental characteristics. So, in a way, ecological rationality addresses the concern of how and in what ways the environment influences the contents and the processes of the mind. Ecological rationality is said to depend on “agents deploying their various decision strategies in particular situations, sensitive to the structure of the environment in which they are embedded” (2009).

In this paper, we explore the dimensions of ecological rationality with respect to the use of an ‘adaptive toolbox’ (Gigerenzer), where people can be effective decision makers by using simple heuristics which are appropriate to the structure of the environment. These theorists hold that intelligence is not only in the mind but also in the world, captured in the structures of the information around us (Todd and Gigerenzer, 2012).

### **Introduction:**

Research on various dimensions of problem solving and decision making of human beings have been going on for quite a long time and has offered many ways of understanding the cognitive processes involved in human decision-making and

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problem solving. Decision-making and problem solving are too prevailing in our lives in the sense that almost every one of us cannot do without it. These two functions - problem solving and decision-making are considered as higher-order cognitive functions – for these are assumed to be constitutive of complex cognitive processes (both in terms of complexity in information handling and processing).<sup>1</sup> Decisions may appear simple - but the processes involved need not be likewise. So there is a lot of debate on what goes on in such cognitive acts; what leads to either proper decision making or to decision biases and errors.

Given the vast extent of researches, that has been devoted during the last many decades, on human reasoning, problem solving and decision-making we can discern at least three varieties of approach to understand the phenomena:

- a. Theories of rationality, forwarded by philosophers, which have almost a unidirectional tone in their explanation of how human reason is expected to perform - often overstepping to accept an ideal rationality.
- b. Theories forwarded by cognitive psychologists and cognitive scientists expanded the outlook to include within their explanation the fallibility of human reasoning and problem solving - not just as exceptions. They were interested in inquiring about the cognitive structure and the processes involved in reasoning and problem solving as higher-order cognitive functions. This has led to either a normative theory of reasoning and problem solving or a descriptive one with fundamental differences at the core of how decision making and problem solving function cognitively.
- c. Theories of rationality and problem solving have been influenced by researches on embodied cognition and situated cognition. This research approach, known as ecological rationality aims to explicate the mind-world interactions underlying (good) decision-making. There is a shift in this approach, with respect to the earlier two, in terms of how the environment and body plays a constitutive (causal) role in our cognitive processing. Ecological rationality addresses the concern of how and in what ways the environment influences the contents and the processes of the mind.

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<sup>1</sup> These would further involve many other structural and functional complexities of the human cognitive system.

Ecological rationality is said to depend on “agents deploying their various decision strategies in particular situations, sensitive to the structure of the environment in which they are embedded” (Todd and Brighton, 2009).

We will discuss the claims of ecological rationality - claims as to why decision making and problem solving accounts must be inclusive of the constraints of human body and its interaction with the environment.

## I

### **The Shift in Approach from Traditional Cognitive Science to Embodied Cognition:**

Embodied cognition<sup>2</sup> is considered to be a departure from traditional cognitive science<sup>3</sup> with respect to how cognition is understood and also the relation between an organism’s cognitive processes and its body. In the traditional cognitive science framework, cognition and cognitive processes are comparable to the functioning of a computer or a computational machine. The sense organs of an organism are instruments of data/input reception, thereby serving as input devices, translating stimulation from the environment into syntactic codes that the nervous system can manipulate based on various rules that are either innate or learned.<sup>4</sup> Within this framework, *cognition* is understood as nothing more than the above kind of *symbol manipulation*. The output of these cognitions is *additional symbols*, some of which might be translated into a form that causes *bodily motions or other sorts of behaviour*. Thus, traditional cognitive scientists have predictively claimed cognition to be computational. So the computational minds are software programs that run on the hardware, called the brain. Larry Shapiro observes:

... this description of traditional cognitive science is the insular nature of thought. Cognition is cut off from the world in the sense that cognitive processes operate only on symbolic deliverances from the sense organs. ... Because cognition begins and ends with inputs to and outputs from the nervous system, it has no need for interaction with the real world outside it.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Embodied cognition is seen as an emergence from phenomenology, robotics, ecological psychology, artificial life and ethology.

<sup>3</sup>According to Shapiro, traditional cognitive science embraces the idea that thinking is a process of symbol manipulation, where symbols lead both a syntactic and semantic life. The syntax of a symbol comprises those properties in virtue of which the symbol undergoes rule-dictated transformations. The semantics of a symbol constitute the symbol’s meaning or representational content. - Larry Shapiro, “The Embodied Cognition Research Programme”, *Philosophy Compass*, 2/2, 2007, pp. 338-346.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 339

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 339

According to Shapiro, the challenge most acute for the cognitive scientists is about the origin of mental content. How do the symbols in the head acquire their meaning? Embodied cognition approach puts less emphasis on the importance of representation, for understandable reasons. For them, it is not clear why organisms must produce a representation of the world around them in order to navigate if the world is right in front of them? For Shapiro, embodied cognition has three distinct and yet related goals:

1. From a traditional perspective, the steps in a cognitive process are attributed to symbol manipulation; whereas from the perspective of embodied cognition, they emerge from the physical attributes of the body.
2. The content of cognition<sup>6</sup> may be accounted for by appealing to the nature of the body containing the brain, rather than the brain alone in isolation from its host body and situated environment.
3. Cognitive processes or states might extend into the environment in which the organisms live and not just be confined to the neural level functioning of the human brain.

According to Anderson<sup>7</sup>, the doctrine of embodied cognition treats cognition as a set of tools that are evolved in organisms for coping with their environments and adapting to them. He points out some of the basic features of embodied cognition are:

- a. Cognition is like any other adaptation having an evolutionary history;
- b. Cognition evolved because it was *adaptive* (with effective coping with the environment);
- c. Cognition evolved in specific environments and the solutions to survival challenges can be expected to *take* advantage of the concrete structure or enduring features of those environments.

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<sup>6</sup> For understanding the contribution of human body to the contents of cognition, one has to look into Lakoff and Johnson's work on concepts and metaphors. According to them, human beings *make essential use* of metaphors in their conception of the world. For example, understanding love in terms of a journey which highlights the nature of the former with respect to the characteristics of the latter. Love is like a journey implies that love has a beginning but perhaps no end.

<sup>7</sup> Michael L. Anderson, "How to Study the Mind: An Introduction to Embodied Cognition". ([http://cogprints.org/3945/1/bes\\_ec.pdf](http://cogprints.org/3945/1/bes_ec.pdf)) downloaded on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

- d. Cognition evolved in organisms with specific physical attributes, bodies of certain type with given structural features, and can therefore be expected to be shaped by and to take advantage of these features for cognitive ends.
- e. Cognition evolved in organisms with pre-existing sets of behavioural possibilities, instincts, habits, needs, etc.

Thus, interestingly cognition can be seen as a set of tools constitutive of specific, complementary and cooperative functions. I think that the analogy through which we can understand the main thesis of embodied cognition is that of shaping and designing our tools in accordance with the functions that they are expected or likely to carry out. These functions in turn are related to ways how we handle the different objects of the world. Thus tools are moulded in ways they are supposed to function in the world. Cognition, likewise, evolved like a tool which got shaped according to the challenges that has been presented by the environment. Thus cognitive adaptation involves the process in which human cognitive systems have learnt to deal with the given environment.

Now the question is - whether this new insight about cognition as primarily being embodied and with adaptive interactions with the external world, has cast any influence on ways we have understood the cognitive processes involved in reasoning, decision-making and problem solving. Before we go into the discussions of ecological rationality, it may be appropriate to glance through three models of relationship between mind and environment that is proposed by Shepard, Brunswik and Simon respectively.

## II

### **Models of Relationship between Mind and Environment:**

We do not live our lives devoid of surroundings. We are situated in midst of them. Thus, if we are to describe our ways of life, we cannot do that without including our interactions with the given surroundings and people. Therefore, it becomes primary to investigate how our decisions are shaped by the environment. In other words, it is crucial to consider the environment in which the mind (the agent) performs its different tasks and acts accordingly to the given situation. This lends a further understanding of how the mind has evolved. This ecological and situated

perspective was promoted by Richard Shepard.<sup>8</sup> Shepard holds that much of our perception and cognition are achieved, as if, with mirrors, and he proposes that the key aspects of the environment are internalised in the brain by natural selection in order to provide a veridical representation of the objects and events in the external world. This is known as the Mirror Model.

The Lens Model was proposed by Egon Brunswik.<sup>9</sup> The lens model approach proposes that the mind reconstructs a representation. In other words, the mind models and projects the world more than just reflecting it like a mirror. Herbert Simon recommended the Scissors Model which metaphorically depicts the coupling between mind and environment. According to him, Human rational behaviour is shaped by a scissor whose blades are the structure of task environments and the computational capabilities of the actor.<sup>10</sup>

He observes that bounded rationality is similar to a scissor whose two blades stand for (i) the task environment (structure of the environment); and (ii) the computational capacities<sup>11</sup> of the decision maker respectively. Mind has limited capacities like, time, knowledge, and other resources; and it can exploit structures of the environment to its advantage. When these cognitive limitations get coupled with certain characteristics of the environment, then they can complement one another. Todd and Brighton observes that:

Rather than the mind reflecting or projecting properties of the environment, Simon's scissors metaphor highlights a very different kind of relationship in which the properties of mind are viewed as fitting properties of environment in an exploitative and complementary relationship.<sup>12</sup>

In one way or the other, all these proposed models of relationship between mind and environment posit a strong bearing of the environment on the agent who acts within the given, that is, the given choices and constraints of the given.

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<sup>8</sup> R. N. Shepard, "Perceptual-cognitive universals as reflections of the world", *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, 24:4, 2001, 581-601.

<sup>9</sup> Egon Brunswik, "Representative design and probabilistic theory in a functional psychology", *Psychological Review*, 62, 1955, pp. 193-217.

<sup>10</sup> Herbert Simon, "Invariants of human behaviour", *Annual Review of Psychology*, 41, 1990, pp. 1-19.

<sup>11</sup> Computational capacities refer to sensory, neural and other mental characteristics that may impose cognitive limitations (on memory and processing).

<sup>12</sup> Henry Brighton and Peter M. Todd, "Situating Rationality: Ecologically Rational Decision Making With Simple Heuristics", in *Cambridge Handbook of Situated Cognition*, Cambridge University Press, USA, 2009, p. 234

Before concluding our discussion on what forms of coupling are proposed between mind and environment, I will touch upon in brief on how embodied cognition has been understood by Varela et.al and Thelen in their respective expositions. The purpose is to highlight some important aspects of their theories which I believe helps us in considering why ecological rationality has grown to embrace the embodied thesis.

Varela, Thompson and Rosch conceives of cognition as “embodied action” -

By using the term *embodied* we mean to highlight two points: first, that cognition depends upon the kinds of experience that come from having a body with various sensorimotor capacities, and second, that these individual sensorimotor capacities are themselves embedded in a more encompassing biological, psychological, and cultural context. By using the term *action* we mean to emphasise once again that sensory and motor processes, perception and action, are fundamentally inseparable in lived cognition.<sup>13</sup>

According to them, perception and action are fundamentally inseparable in our lived cognition. The contents of perception are to some extent determined by the actions an organism undertakes and these actions in turn are guided by the perception of the world.<sup>14</sup> Esther Thelen et al. observe that:

To say that cognition is embodied means that it arises from bodily interactions with the world. From this point of view, cognition depends on the kinds of experiences that come from having a body with particular perceptual and motor capabilities that are inseparably linked and that together form the matrix within which reasoning, memory, emotion, language, and all other aspects of mental life are meshed.<sup>15</sup>

### III

#### **Theory of Ecological Rationality: Adaptive Toolbox**

Traditional theories of rationality mostly engage in providing rational principles of human decision-making that reveal valuable insights into our cognitive system. The positives of such an approach are that given these rational principles are

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<sup>13</sup> *Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience*, MIT Press, Mass, Cambridge, 1991, p. 173

<sup>14</sup> Varela et al. posits that different body types give rise to different environmental perceptions for the organisms. For instance, consider two organisms with different body types. Org<sub>A</sub> is twice the size of Org<sub>B</sub>, the former walks vertically, whereas the latter walks on all four limbs. Org<sub>A</sub>'s sensory organ faces forward, whereas, Org<sub>B</sub>'s sensory organs provide a 270° view of the world. As a result of these differences in body and perceptual systems, the sensorimotor capacities of the two organisms will differ. Given the difference in what the organisms perceive, there will be differences in the actions that the organisms choose to undertake.

<sup>15</sup> Thelen, E. et al., “The Dynamics of Embodiment: A Field of Infant Perseverative Reaching, *Brain and Behavioural Science*, 24, 2001, 1-86, p.1

proven to be correct; they can offer universal normative principles governing the cognitive system. Thus, a universal structure can be posited to human rationality. However, situated theories of cognition would consider such a move to be faulty in terms of its incompleteness. For them, the traditional approach sidelines (if not ignores) the interaction of the mind (the decision maker) and environment - thereby ruling out the possibility of any measures of adaptability of the agent in consideration to the limits or possibilities that the immediate situation may offer.

Theory of ecological rationality (Gigerenzer et al. and ABC16 Research Group at the Max Planck Institute, Germany) holds that the effectiveness of decision making strategy largely depends on the “structure of the environment” in which the strategy is used. Ecological theory strongly focuses on the structural properties of the environments and takes a structure-specific, situated approach to the study of cognitive processes.<sup>17</sup> The adaptive choices that are employed by the decision maker are in harmony with the specific environmental characteristics. So, in a way, ecological rationality addresses the concern of how and in what ways the environment influences the contents and the processes of the mind.

Ecological rationality sees human rationality as a result of an adaptive fit between human mind and environment. It highlights how decision mechanisms can produce useful inferences by exploiting the structure of information in their environment. Gigerenzer, Todd et al, speaks of the “Adaptive Toolbox”<sup>18</sup> which is referred to as a collection of specialised cognitive mechanisms (including fast and frugal heuristics) shaped by evolution, learning and culture for specific domains of inference and reasoning. However, it is not claimed that all cases of human reasoning is ecologically rational, because if a person has ample time and training, then he may apply more general methods of reasoning (like tools of logic or probability theory) to make decisions with little concern for adapting their reasoning to the specific structure of the current task environment. Gigerenzer et al. propose that much of our

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<sup>16</sup> Center for Adaptive Behaviour and Cognition at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin

<sup>17</sup> Henry Brighton and Peter M. Todd, “Situating Rationality: Ecologically Rational Decision Making with Simple Heuristics”, in *The Cambridge Handbook of Situated Cognition*, eds. Philip Robbins and Murat Aydede, Cambridge University Press, USA, 2009, pp. 322- 346.

<sup>18</sup> This metaphoric toolbox (adapted from the environment) contains several classes of simple heuristics for making different types of decisions in a variety of domains.

decision making is ecologically rational, guided by typically simple decision heuristics that exploit the available structure of the environment to make good decisions. An outcome of this theory is that:

“a single all-purpose decision-making system is no longer the appropriate unit of study, as different tasks call for different simple mechanisms. The idea of the adaptive toolbox leads us to consider a collection of simple mechanisms drawn on by the cognitive system. We view these mechanisms as structure specific rather than domain specific. In contrast to the concept of domain specificity, structure specificity is the ability of a process to deal effectively with informational structures found in environments that may or may not be encountered in the multiple domains. ... These mechanisms are built from basic, cognitively primitive building blocks for information search, stopping the search, and making a decision based on the search’s result.”<sup>19</sup>

According to Todd, there are two kinds of constraints that generally arise from the nature of the environment: (i) the external world is uncertain and thereby unpredictable; and as a result we never face exactly the same situation twice. Therefore, our mental mechanisms must be robust enough to generalise well from old instances to new ones; (ii) since the world in a sense is competitive, our decision mechanisms must generally be fast. In other words, to maintain a reliable speed of decision mechanism, we must minimise the information or alternatives we search for in making our decisions. That is, the external world also constrains us to be frugal in what we search for. Thus simplicity, frugality, speed, and robustness go together with exploiting the structure of information in the environment. These characteristics are the foundations of the conception of ecological rationality.

Fast and frugal heuristics are simple heuristics, using both little time and little information. Simple heuristics are the building blocks that control the search for information in the environment (or in memory), stop that search, and use the information found to reach a decision. Since these heuristics are precisely defined, their ecological rationality can also be precisely defined - we can say just what information structures in the environment will enable a given heuristic to make good decisions. Gigerenzer observes:

The adaptive toolbox is a Darwinian-inspired theory that conceives of the mind as a modular system that is composed of heuristics, their building blocks, and evolved capacities. The study of the adaptive toolbox is descriptive and analyzes the selection and structure of heuristics in social and physical environments. [The study of ecological rationality is prescriptive and

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<sup>19</sup> Brighton and Todd, 2009, p. 326

identifies the structure of environments in which specific heuristics either succeed or fail. Results have been used for designing heuristics and environments to improve professional decision making in the real world.]<sup>20</sup>

Ecological rationality implies a two-way relationship between simple heuristics and their environments. The success of simple heuristics is defined with respect to pragmatic goals in a particular environmental context, and the success of simple heuristics is enabled by their fit to environmental structure. Exploiting the information structure of environments, and thereby letting the environment do some of the work of decision making, is what allows effective heuristics to be simple. Different environment structures can be exploited by -and hence call for - different heuristics, just as different tasks call for different heuristics. Let us consider two such heuristics:

**a. Paired Comparison Using *Recognition* heuristics:**

This heuristic decides between two available options. It searches for cues in order of their validity, stopping when the first cue is found that distinguishes the options, and selecting the option indicated by the higher cue value. Given the task of deciding which of two objects in the world scores higher on some criterion of interest, the recognition heuristics provides a quick and robust decision procedure by exploiting lack of knowledge or minimum knowledge. If one of the objects being considered is recognised and the other is not, then the recognition heuristic tells us to judge the recognised object as scoring higher on the criterion. For example, given the names of two tennis players, the recognition heuristic simplifies the task of deciding which of the two tennis players is most likely to win the next Grand Slam tournament: if we only recognise only one of the players and not the other, then the recognition heuristics tells us to pick the players we have heard of.

**b. Paired Comparison Using *Take the Best* heuristics:**

When both the objects are recognised and knowledge of several cues about each object is available to aid the decision, then many possible decision processes exist. Take the Best heuristic is a simple heuristic built from three building blocks where (i) cues are searched in order of their ecological validity; (ii) search stops at the

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<sup>20</sup> Gerd Gigerenzer, "How Heuristics Work", *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, Vol. 3, No. 1, From Philosophical Thinking to Psychological Empiricism, Part I (Jan., 2008), pp. 20-29

first discriminating cue; and (iii) the object selected is the one indicated by the discriminating cue. Ecological validity is a property of a cue, which indicates how frequently in the past the discriminating cue picked out the object with the higher criterion value.

Going back to the same example with the two tennis players (who will win an upcoming tournament?), the first valid cue can be from – has this player won a Grand Slam competition in the past? If this cue discriminates (if true for one player and not the other) then Take the Best heuristics will stop information search and select the previous winning player over the other player. If the first cue does not discriminate, then other discriminating cues will be searched for.

Now the question of how does heuristics work becomes important. How does the mind select a heuristic from the adaptive toolbox or construct a new one? Gigerenzer says that it is reinforcement learning, with the unit of learning being heuristics rather than behaviour. In general heuristics selection can be guided by (a) individual reinforcement learning; (b) social learning (as in medical training in which physicians are instructed on what cues to look up in what order; and (c) evolutionary learning (as with rules of thumbs).

#### IV

##### **Ecological Rationality as a Form of Situated Cognition:**

B. C. Smith observes “The situated movement -- situated language, situated cognition and learning, situated behaviour -- views intelligent human behaviour as engaged, socially and materially embodied activity, arising within the specific concrete details of particular (natural) settings, rather than as an abstract, detached, general-purpose process of logical or formal ratiocination.”<sup>21</sup> Todd and Brighton consider the following six characterisation of situated cognition by Smith:

1. Located: The significance of being located arises when we adopt the view that context-dependence is a central and enabling feature of human endeavour. Understanding the characteristics of the environment is important in order to apply any heuristics.
2. Concrete: Concreteness mainly refers to constraints. Ecological rationality considers two degrees of concreteness: (i) Computational Level: what can be

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<sup>21</sup> Brian Cantwell Smith, “Situatedness/Embeddedness”, in *MIT Encyclopedia of Cognitive Science*, 1999.

achieved by the computationally tractable processes<sup>22</sup>; (ii) Cognitive Limitations (e.g. memory)

3. Engaged: This property considers how “ongoing interaction with the surrounding environment is recognised as primary”. Heuristics are adjusted to specific environmental contexts. The adjustment of the decision mechanism is contingent upon the structure of the task environment which demands that a decision maker consider the inference task as an ongoing activity rather than a static activity. The heuristics are always engaged with the environment in search for information, like running to catch a ball. The player has to constantly re-calculate his body alignment and running speed based on his perceptual information of the trajectory of the moving ball.
4. Specific: Specificity refers to the fact that “what people do is seen as varying, dramatically, depending on contingent facts about their circumstances”. For ecologically rational inference, the given circumstances are crucial to the decision maker. Subtleties and minute differences in the specific nature of the task can lead to quite different cognitive tools being used. Circumstances where subjects are required to act under time pressure show how the choice of decision strategy changes as a result, displaying a strong tendency by the decision maker to prefer simple sequential cue-based decision mechanisms.
5. Embodied: The importance of embodiment refers to the fact that “material aspects of agents’ bodies are taken to be both pragmatically and theoretically significant”. The Gaze heuristic for ball catching is a process that relies on a particular morphology: an eye and a bipedal locomotion system. An agent with a different morphology (with wings and echolocation) will apply a different process for the same task.
6. Social: Being social means “being located in humanly constructed settings among human communities”. Ecological rationality must acknowledge that a significant part of environment structure will often be made up of other individuals and the results of their actions, whether choosing a mate;

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<sup>22</sup> It refers to those processes that cannot be achieved in polynomial time.

selecting a parking space, deciding how to communicate important information.

## V

The central claims of the doctrine of embodied cognition may make one wonder why environmental context/situation did not highlight in previous theories of human rationality. To be fair to the traditional theories, one point of defence can be that the paradigm in which cognition was understood was computational. Failures in decision making and reasoning tasks were seen as performance errors of certain kinds. Thus, inherently, our cognitive system was expected to be computational. So we were expected to have the competence, but in certain typical conditions we committed performance errors. These conditions varied from our cognitive limitations, like memory limitation, limited processing speed; to even context variation. Initial experimental studies to investigate the nature of human reasoning (where logicality of reasoning was challenged) showed that performance varied depending on the context of the task. Wason Selection Task was one such experiment performed by Peter Wason, which went on to become one of the most tried experiments to test the logical performance in a reasoning task. Some posited the performance variations in the Wason Selection Task was due to the fact that “real-life content” in the same format of the task led to better understanding of the problem. The question is, what was in the real-life content that made the decision-maker see through the problem better and come up with a solution. The correct, logical response to the problem was attributed to the presence of real-life context in the problem. It seems strange that logical performance depends on the ‘content’ of the logical problem being presented.

May be we did not probe deep enough. We were constrained by the computational paradigm, which made us emphasise more on some aspects while ignoring others. We ignored why the real-life content made the problem easier to understand. Familiarity of context within a given problem does simplify our ‘seeing through the problem’. Thus, we may exploit “stable environmental features” or “context features” to simplify cognitive tasks. Furthermore, the information flow between our minds and the world is so dense and continuous that any meaningful analysis of the cognitive processes behind any cognitive act must take note of the impact of such transactions.

We must be careful to note that ecological rationality also talks about rules; there are computational aspects in cognitive processing. But to consider these rules only as innate is a mistaken position. Rules may be innate in the sense that they have been learned (evolved within us through our exposure to nature and in overcoming various kinds of challenges in our evolutionary history). In the current paradigm of situated cognition, if cognition's being situated means that cognition is adapted to serve needs of survival and would take advantage of stable environmental structures to simplify and speed cognitive processing, then why can we not assume that cognitive rules of reasoning may have similarly adapted? Decisions are rational if they are able to solve the problem at hand – which also must be in sync with the external reality. Embodied approach to cognition does open a relevant approach to comprehend human rationality as a mechanism evolved and adapted in an environment which constitutes an integral component in the matrix of our life.

## **RUSSELL AND VIVEKANANDA ON THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION**

BIMAL CHANDRA PAL

In every society the function of education is to realize the ideals of manhood. This realization is possible only in human society. No society is static. It is in a state of change and hence reconstruction is necessary. It is only because of a great disparity between the ideal and the factual, between the unrealized potential and the realized situation, there arise a conflict and crisis in society. In such a crisis situation the society badly needs a way out of a solution to that crisis. The role of education then is very urgent in this situation.

The function of education is inevitable for giving direction to this social reconstruction that we need desperately to solve our social problems and realize our ideals. Education helps to make us strong enough to look after ourselves in any given situation. It keeps us aware of our given surrounding as well as the rules and regulations of the society we are living in. It's only through knowledge that we can be able to question authority for its negligence or discrepancies. It is only then that we can avail our rights as a citizen and seek improvement in the structural functioning of governance and economy. Education helps us to understand ourselves better, it helps us to realize our potential qualities as a human being. It helps us to tap into latent talent, so that we may be able to sharpen our skills. In this paper I want to explain the role of education for changing ourselves and at the same time our society also. In this respect a special reference of Vivekananda and Bertrand Russell's views on education is discussed here.

### **Russell's view on education:**

The greatest task of education is to reform the human mind. It is the key to the new world. It is the unfolding the divine nature in man. In the same tone Vivekananda also says that education is the manifestation of perfection already in man. Education is misnomer unless it trains the will of man. It aims at the reformation of attitudes of each and every individual in our society.

Russell also believed that right education can play an enormous role in developing the right type of individuals. The right outlook of the individual will help to reconstruct the society in which they live. According to Russell man is the Centre

point of everything. The development of good society depends upon the good individuals.

Russell is not agreed with Rousseau's view of education. The view of Rousseau is that children are born good, but society spoil them. But according to Russell children are at birth neither good nor bad. After educating them they may either be good or bad. In Christian view of education, children are born sinners and that the school have the duty to purify them. But Russell does not agree with such a view. According to him, either healthy or harmful characters may be formed with the help of education. Moreover he says that, man is driven by both positive and negative instincts. Positive instincts are called constructive e.g. play, love, co-operation, sympathy and negative instincts are called destructive instincts e.g. fight, jealousy, rage, competition, etc. The role of education is to cultivate the positive instincts and connects the negative instincts to positive outlet like sports, discovery and adventure to construct the positive attitude of life.

The above nature of education turns a man polite and gentle. It widens their scope and he becomes a helpful citizen of the universe. His kindness will be extended to the whole world. According to Russell, these qualities are helpful to form the ideal character of an educated person.

#### **Individual freedom and education:**

Education should aim at creating intelligent and free individuals. Nothing will be imposed upon them. The good of the individual should not be ignored. And natural growth of man is required for the good society. "Men, like trees, require for their growth and right soil and a sufficient freedom from oppression"<sup>1</sup>. Students should provide wide scope to express their inner-quality which will help them to fit themselves in the external world. That is why Russell says, education should be pupil-centred, individually oriented. Students should be treated as ends in themselves and not as means to some national or religious ends. Hence, the present educational system is not matched with Russell's view of education.

The aim of education is the growth of individuality. "The object of education ought not to make all men alike but rather to see that each person attains the fullest

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<sup>1</sup> Russell Bertrand, *Why Men Fight*, Indian Edition, 2010. P- 12.

expression of his personality”<sup>2</sup>. The teacher should treat each pupil as an end in himself with his own rights and his own personalities. Reverence for the human personality is the beginning of wisdom in every social question but above all in education. So, each and every pupil’s individuality should not be suppressed but as far as possible it should be encouraged to develop.

The education helps us to make us creative and inventive. In the light of education man began to think freely and not only to believe what is being told. Everything will be accepted after experimentation. The scientific temperament makes people inquisitive and more educative. Now people should not be concealed by blind faith. He wants to accept anything after verification. It is the positive result of education.

### **Religion and Education:**

The discovery of new knowledge acts as a weapon in the reformation and reconstruction of society. It was the cause of the decay of the dogmatic religion. Religion, according to Russell, snatches the power of the individual so that they cannot think or act freely. “The mediaeval theory of life broke down through its failure to satisfy men’s demands for justice and liberty.”<sup>3</sup> Man’s religion will not be determined by authority, but must be by the free choice of each individual. A man must be free to choose his religion.

Any external influence on religion is discarded by Russell. He finds some inadequacies in religion. So, he is not in favour of traditional religion which is governed by authority. His objections against religion are as follows:

1. Religious beliefs are put forth dogmatically.
2. Religious teaching involves superstitious belief.
3. An orthodox person cannot tolerate the opinion of others.
4. In commenting on Gospel Russell says that he did not find even one word in the praise of intelligence. So, Religion praises virtue but not intelligent at all. All intelligent people are agnostic. Religious people cannot tolerate agnosticism.

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<sup>2</sup> Russell Bertrand, *Education and Social Order*, 1932. P-42

<sup>3</sup> Russell Bertrand, *Why Men Fight*, Indian Edition, 2010. P-13

Due to these inadequacies Russell put the above charges against religion and finally says that education can prosper only when it is freed from any influence.

**International outlook and Education:**

The proper function of education is to lead a good life. That is why it is essentially constructive and requires some positive conception of a good life. Russell wants education to be international in character from the political point of view. According to Russell patriotism should not be taught in the school because it makes us feel that mutual hatred and mutual murdering are our sacred duties.<sup>4</sup> The aim of education is not to increase conflict and hatred but to spread and cultivate the international awareness. The people should be educated to remove the wickedness, ignorance and folly from the world. If man wants to survive in the world they should fighting against chaos from without and darkness from within. The truly human activity will be international in character and it should be the scheme of education.

**Vivekananda's educational philosophy:**

According to Vivekananda the aim of education is man- making. He prepares the scheme of this man-making education in the light of his philosophy of Vedanta. According to Vedanta, the essence of man lies in his soul, which he possesses in addition to his body and mind. Through this philosophy, he defines education as 'the manifestation of the perfection already in man.' The aim of education is to manifest in our lives the perfection, which is the very nature of our inner self. He thus realizes his immortal divine self, which is of the nature of infinite existence, infinite knowledge and infinite bliss.

Hence education, in Vivekananda's Philosophy, enables one to comprehend one's self within as the self everywhere. The essential unity of the entire universe is realized through education. So, man making for him stands for rousing mans to the awareness of his true self. However, education is not only the development of the soul in isolation from body and mind rather man making for him means a harmonious development of the body, mind and soul. Therefore, in the scheme of educational Philosophy, Vivekananda insist on physical health because a sound mind resides in a sound body.

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<sup>4</sup> Russell Bertrand, *Fact and Fiction*, Indian Edition, 2010. P-63

### **Education and social reconstruction:**

Vivekananda's View of Education is mainly a man- making education. His aim is to unite all section of the society. So he wants a new system of education on the strength of the Vedantic ideal. In the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Indian society was facing a very great cultural crisis. Vivekananda realized that there was an urgent need to spread education throughout the country for uniting and reconstructing the scattered races and wanted them to think of India as a whole. He uses education as a weapon for that purpose. He taught the people of India that they should have faith in themselves. He not only stood for spiritual freedom but also wanted the external freedom of man. Besides talking about political freedom and social justice, he talked about the concept of strength and fearlessness. He justified his theory of fearlessness on the ground of philosophic Vedantism. He firmly believed this strength must come to the nation through education.

Education plays an important role to mend the nature of man. So, education is not only the information that is put into the brain. It is a creative activity of man. We must have life building, man-making, character making education in our life. Vivekananda suggests that education should give proper emphasis on creativity, originality and excellence. To him the aim of education is to unveil the divinity in man. Real education means to cultivate the sense of humility. This sense of humility is the basis of man's character, the true mark of a balanced personality.

### **Education and Religion:**

Vivekananda takes religion as the innermost core of education. However, by religion, he does not mean any particular kind of it but its essential character, which is the realization of the divinity already in man. He also advocated that religion does not consist in dogmas or creeds or any set of rituals. A true religious man for him who leads a life in such a way that he manifest his higher nature, truth, goodness and beauty, in his thoughts, words and deeds. All impulses, thoughts and actions which lead one towards this goal are naturally ennobling and harmonizing, and are ethical and moral in the truest sense. It is in this context the idea of religion, as the basis of education should be understood.

Vivekananda believes that education with its religious core can invigorate man's faith in his divine nature and the infinite potentialities of the human soul. It

helps man to become strong, yet tolerant and sympathetic. It will also help man to extend his love and good will for others. According to Vivekananda the basic aim of education is to establish universal brotherhood of man through mutual love and respect. Unity in variety is the plan of the universe and religion alone can lead mankind to that unity. Education in the right line will lead man to the true sense of religion and help him to acquire knowledge about the perishable nature of human body and the eternity of the soul in it. That is why Vivekananda relates education with religion. He suggests the techniques of self-religion through 'Raja –Yoga' for concentration and meditation because for him the very essence of education is concentration of mind, not the collecting of facts.

### **Yoga and Education**

Education is the learning process which requires the deep concentration of mind. The more the power of concentration, the greater the knowledge is acquired. According to Vivekananda the science of *yoga* helps us to strengthen our power of concentration. From the lowest man to the highest *yogi*, all have to use the same method to attain knowledge. It is the great practical things and the secret of all education.

The practice of *yoga* requires a high degree of concentration. When a man tries to concentrate on a particular object then thousands of undesired impulses may rush into the brain and disturb the mind. Hence to check the impulses and control the mind *Rajayoga* is the most perfect way. Vivekananda says that this *yoga* will help the student to develop his inner qualities like fearlessness, love, sympathy etc., and equip him to lead an ideal life.

### **Universal religion:**

The practice of *yoga* makes a man holy or a saint. These holy men sustain the world by their conduct. That is why Gandhi says that politics must be spiritualized. Saints are the path finder of the society. They are of three categories. Meditative saints are those who ponder in isolation over the infinite and seek their own personal salvation. Devotee saints are in love with god and they bother neither about their own salvation nor about that of the society. But there is a third variety of saint who preaches religion and strives for the salvation of the society. Vivekananda is one of those missionary saints of India.

He believes in the unity of religion and hence advocated the ideal of a universal religion. His outlook was rational. He believed not only in reason but also in the freedom of thought, expression and action. He remarks that the same method of investigation which we apply to science and knowledge outside should be applied to the science of religion. Vivekananda realized that due to misunderstanding among different religions more blood is shed in the name of religion in human history. That is why; there is greater need of religious tolerance or the integration of all religions. The integration of all religions is possible only when we realize the true sense of religion i.e., oneness of all religions. Vivekananda took this idea from his master sage Ramakrishna. According to his master, to realize the infinite or God is the mission of human life. The many names of God and infinite forms of religion are the different paths to lead us to know the supreme reality.

The basis of universal religion is not conversion to one faith or creed, but the acceptance of every religion as the path to the same Truth, as every religion as a true path for self-realization, can alone be the basis of universal religion. According to him, truth is one. It can be expressed in a hundred thousand ways, and each of these ways is true. Hence we formulate a harmonious religious creed to make all religions come together in love. Religion is realization, not talk, not doctrine, nor theory. Professor R.D. Ranade also believes in this idea of religion being self-realization. This is the ideal of universal religion preached by Vivekananda. He practiced this universal religion throughout his life.

#### **Education and international understanding:**

Vivekananda wanted the gradual and peaceful changes through good system of education and by enlightening the people. He always insisted on the absolute conquest of fear. Being a spiritual monist he was essentially an internationalist. The creed of nationalism was not narrow and fanatical but was only a necessary stage in the social and political evolution of man. If man is guided by the divine, if he perform his duties with a total sense of detachment then nationalism will not be an obstacle towards internationalism. The self-expansion is possible only when a man renounce actions even after his realization of supreme knowledge. A man's duty is to do good for others. He preached the principle of Gita that only duty is the concern and not the

fruit. Finally the ultimate aim should be to establish international peace and security by strengthening the spiritual foundations of different nations.

**Conclusion:**

According to Russell, education should be pupil-centred, i.e., individually oriented. Hence, the educational process is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. The students should be treated as an end in themselves and not as means to some national or religious ends. Education should aim for the happiness of each student. Children should acquire knowledge for material gain as well as knowledge for intellectual pleasure. Education should have both utility and humanity as components. Education must not be a way of controlling children for specific purposes. Rather, it must encourage the children's natural inquisitiveness and help them to solve problems and gain happiness on their own initiative. So, through the education each person attains the fullest expression of his personality, which is conducive to the reconstruction of society.

On the other hand Vivekananda believes that by uniting *karma* with religion he could enlighten the people to think of religion in the right way. He reconciled life and religion. Religion signified to him the eternal principles of life and death and of spiritual progress. True education means training of the soul and it requires a master. It is not only worked out by reading of books. That is why he relates education with religion.

Religion helps people for his spiritual development. It is a misinterpretation of Vivekananda's philosophy of education to think that he has overemphasized the role of spiritual development to the utter negligence of the material side. Vivekananda, in his plan for the regeneration of India, repeatedly presses the need for the eradication of poverty, unemployment and ignorance. He says, We need technical education and all else which may develop industries, so that men, instead of seeking for service, may earn enough to provide for them-selves, and save something against a rainy day. He feels it necessary that it is not wrong to take from the Western nation all that is good in their civilization. However, just like a person, every nation has its own individuality, which must not be deformed. The individuality of India lies in her spiritual culture. Hence in Vivekananda's view, for the development of our nation, we have to combine the scientific attitude of the West with the spirituality of our country.

True education should equip the youth to contribute to the material progress of the country as well as to maintaining the supreme worth of India's spiritual heritage.

Lastly, we can conclude that both the thinkers are common in certain aspects of educational thought. They believe that education is the best means to reconstruct our society because it can reform the human mind. In Russell's words we can say that education is a key to the new world. It has an international and universal outlook.

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## **PRACTICAL *VEDĀNTA* AND ITS ETHICAL MISSION\***

LAXMIKANTA PADHI

For Vivekananda, *Vedānta* is the most ancient religion of the world; but it can never be said to have become popular. With all its emphasis on impersonal principles, *Vedānta* is not opposed to anything, though it does not compromise the truths which it considers as fundamental. Until 1896, the relationship between the set of ideas relating to the welfare of humanity and the theory of Practical *Vedānta* was not expanded by Vivekananda. It was during the period from 1891 to 1893 that Vivekananda discovered his personal appeal, life and mission the outcome being a planned programme of Practical *Vedānta*. Practical *Vedānta* received its fullest exposition in a series of lectures given in London in 1896. In all these lectures the basic theme was the practical relevance and ethical and social applicability of the Vedantic metaphysics of nondualism. The phrase ‘Practical *Vedānta*’ however, does not appear with any great frequency in Vivekananda’s recorded teaching.

One may say that *Vedānta* is the Upanishadic wisdom that is found at the end of the Vedas. But the question is: How can this Vedāntic wisdom become practical? *Vedānta* obviously appears very abstract to all of us in the present globalized world. It is quite natural that it should appear abstract because when we talk of ‘practicality’ in the modern world, we talk about being successful in life and how to succeed in life as a person, how to earn a lot of possessions and money. Therefore, it is the sense of achievement; sense of conquest, sense of establishing oneself in society is what we call ‘practicality’ in modern life. Vivekananda addressed this thought in his two famous lectures that was included in his ‘My Master’<sup>1</sup>. The first was delivered in the USA and the other is in England. Addressing to the Western audience he said:

You have your own ideas of practicality and we have ours. You think it is very impractical for a person to talk about the soul and God and the other world and so on. But in India, if you go and say, ‘Come, enjoy the world, I will give you all the best things in the world’, then all the doors will be shut to you. But if you say, ‘Come, go to the top of that distant mountain and look at the tip of your nose for the rest of your life so that you can achieve liberation’, there will be thousands of people to follow you with food and clothing and all that you need. That is the kind of ‘practicality’ which we

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\* Earlier version of this paper was presented in a seminar in the Department of Philosophy, Jadavpur University, in 2012.

<sup>1</sup> Swami Atmapriyananda, *Harihara Tirtha Memorial Lecture* on 13 July 2007.

possess. Anything which concerns Spirit, anything which concerns God, anything which is related to the other world, we take that to be the most practicable thing in life and we want to experiment with it even to the point of death. And you are 'practical' in your own way. Suppose someone says in the West, 'I would look at my nose on top of the mountain and I am going to beg my alms', you see, all the doors will be shut to you. You may even be jailed for it. But if you say, 'Come, I want to enjoy the world', then there would be thousands of opportunities for enjoying the world. That is your practicality. That is not our practicality.

According to *Advaita* philosophy, we all are one and the cause of evil is the perception of duality. As soon as we begin to feel that we are separate from this universe then first come fear and then misery. Vivekananda claims that such self-realization leads to moral action. Behind everything the same divinity is existing, and out of this comes the basis of morality. Do not injure another. Love everyone as your own self, because the whole universe is one. In injuring another, I am injuring myself; in loving another, I love myself. From this springs that the *Advaita* morality which has been summed up in one word: self-abnegation. The Advaitins say the individualized self which makes us different from all other beings, brings hatred, jealousy, misery, struggles and all other evils. And when this idea has been got rid of, all struggle will cease, all misery vanish. So this is to be given up. We must always hold ourselves ready; even to give up our lives for the lowest beings.

The ethical dimension of *Vedānta* is explained in terms of the oneness of human being's nature which provides the basis for universal love, justified by *Iśa Upaniṣad*, and the beneficial consequences of action undertaken in a spirit of detachment and selflessness, as taught by *Bhagbadgītā*. In this dimension, a doctrine of the necessity of actions was maintained but no connection is made to a necessary performance of *sevā* or service to humanity.

Vivekananda's ethical mission was geared towards revitalizing the effete, middle-class babus of Bengal and helping them gain confidence to counter the humiliation of British oppression. His famous project of 'man-making'<sup>2</sup> consisted of reminding a subject race of their true ethico-spiritual nature and their consequent

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<sup>2</sup> Chowdhury, I. *The Frail Hero and Virile History: Gender and the Politics of Culture in Colonial Bengal* Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1998, p.135.

capacity to love. Masculinity and ethicality come together with the softer emotions<sup>3</sup> in his statements like: ‘Be moral. Be brave...Cowards only sin, brave men never, no, not even in mind. Try to love anybody and everybody. Be a man and try to make those immediately under your care... brave, moral and sympathizing’. And again, more succinctly, ‘Try to be moral, try to be brave, try to be sympathizing.’ (CWSV, V: 3)

There are two different senses of ‘practical’ in Practical *Vedānta*.<sup>4</sup> The first and foremost is practicality, suggests *engagement with life or the world* and hence is consistent with Vivekananda’s ethical ideal of ‘work as worship’. Secondly, it may imply direct apprehension of non-dualism in opposition to a mere theoretical understanding of it. This is evident in Vivekananda’s later lectures where he highlights that *Vedānta* is not simply an intellectual or propositional understanding that reality is non-dual but is a spiritual realization of Oneness.

The term Practical *Vedānta* occurs explicitly in an article published by *The Brahmavadin* in July 1897, which discusses the way to self conquest through purification of mind. The article refers to the great number of people ready to moderate human being’s physical suffering and asserts that mental and spiritual needs also need to be addressed through meditation<sup>5</sup>. The basic principle and imperative of Practical *Vedānta* is to serve humanity; to remove the sorrow and misery of others with a feeling of oneness with them. The practical nature of *Vedānta* is apparent in its claim to be more than “a merely intellectual system, devised for the practice of mental gymnastics. It is a plain and practicable path blazed by the brave, self-sacrificing pioneers”<sup>6</sup>. This is very much in line with the concept of practical religion. Vivekananda established a connection between the affirmation that ‘love itself is God’ and an ethical standpoint in his lecture ‘*Parābhakti* or supreme Devotion”. He argued that if we love this sum total, we love everything. Loving the world and doing it good will then come easily.”

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<sup>3</sup> V. Dalmiya, *The Metaphysics of Ethical Love: Comparing Practical Vedānta and Feminist Ethics*, SOPHIA, 2009: 48, p.222

<sup>4</sup> Beckerlegge, G. *Swami Vivekananda’s Legacy of Service: A Study of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission* Chap.12, Oxford University Press, New Delhi 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Anon, ‘*Practical Vedānta*’ Vol-2, No. 23, 17<sup>th</sup> July 1897 p. 271.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, P.272.

From 1895, references to *Vedānta* becoming prominent in Vivekananda's teaching in spite of his earlier negative responses to this philosophy. Hacker has described Vivekananda's ethical teaching as a distortion of 'traditional Advaitism coloured by exposure to positivism. Yet, for many critics, like Hacker,<sup>7</sup> Vivekananda's interpretation of Advaitin principles in his theory of Practical *Vedānta* confirms that his special ethics were shaped by the progressive westernization of his ideas, achieved only at some considerable cost in his treatment of Advaitin tradition.

A theoretical conciliation between Advaitic ontological non-dualism (that transcends plurality) and morality (that makes sense only within such plurality) is brought about by distinguishing between *pāramārthika* and *vyavahārika* realms. In other words, Reality is ultimately One, but until the realization of *mokṣa*, the world of many-ness with its ethical codes is 'as real' as the terror caused by the illusory snake that is superimposed on the rope until a light is switched on.<sup>8</sup> Thus, ethics is relegated to the domain of the *vyavahārika* level and Oneness to the higher *pāramārthika* level, thereby resolving the tension between *Vedānta* metaphysics and commonsense morality by plotting them at different points in the 'Order of Being.' However, Vivekananda may not be satisfied with such weak co-existence. Given the distinction of the levels of Reality, metaphysical non-dualism is not a resource for ethical reform: morality could continue to be grounded in conventional *Dharmaśāstras* because *Advaita* non-duality manifested itself at an entirely different level.<sup>9</sup> However, for the kind of political resistance that Vivekananda was interested in, the metaphysical dictum of '*tat tvam asi*' needed to do real ethical work and actually motivate ethico-social change. Hence, Practical *Vedānta* tried to carry non-dualism itself 'into our everyday life, the city life, the country life, the national life, and the home life of every nation' (CWSV, II: 300).

In October 1895, *The Brahmavādin* included an article entitled "The Ethics of *Vedānta*" which asks for a 'foundation of ethical distinctions'. The discussion of

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<sup>7</sup> Hacker, P. *Philosophy and Confrontation: Paul Hacker on Traditional and Modern Advaita*, edit. W. Halbfass, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995, P.293.

<sup>8</sup> V. Dalmiya, *The Metaphysics of Ethical Love: Comparing Practical Vedanta and Feminist Ethics*, SOPHIA, 2009: 48, p.222

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p.224

the question is woven almost entirely around the *Iṣa Upaniṣad*, which is said to give a clear account of ethics, acceptable equally to all the three branches of the Vedantin school of thought. Having claimed that human beings are not the mere creative of God; they are God themselves, the article affirms that it is the perception of the oneness of human nature, which is for the Advaitin the ultimate basis of universal love, and hence ethical conduct. We can find limited references in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* that *Vedānta* has not neglected ethics. *The Brahmavādin* returned to social ethics in 1896 in an article entitled: 'The Social Ideal of the *Vedānta*', that touched one caste and referred to the *Iṣa Upaniṣad* and *Bhagavadgītā*.

Vivekananda's expectations of Practical *Vedānta* are mirrored at the outset by the authors writing in *The Brahmavadin*. There is concern to show that *Vedānta* offers more than the exercise in intellectual gymnastics and can cover the whole field of life. (CSWV II: 291). It was worked out not exclusively 'in the forest', but by individual rulers in the midst of the management of everyday affairs and *Gītā* is the best commentary upon this practical philosophy. Its practicality is seen to stem from its power to generate the realization of truth. Vivekananda locates the essence of *Vedānta* in the affirmation 'you are divine. This is oneness in which difference is a matter of degree but not of kind and in which love for ourselves means love for all, love for animals, love for everything. It is the great faith which will make the world a better place. Consequently, *Vedānta* beings with the glory of the human soul and of an ever-present reality that is concealed by ignorance but not sin (CSWV II: 294). Thus, everything is already within us and human beings can do anything and everything, as we are almighty. This is the first thing that those who want to be practical should learn. (CWSV II: 302)

Expanding on his famous slogan '*daridrādeva bhava, mūrkhādeva bhava*' (The poor/the afflicted and the illiterate/the ignorant - let these be your God), Vivekananda says, 'What is more practical than worshipping here, worshipping you? 'I see you, feel you, and I know you are God' (CWSV II: 320-21). What is suggested here is that the transitions between 'seeing' the other, 'feeling' or loving the other, and 'knowing' the other as God, spells out the practice of Practical *Vedānta*.

Ethical systems, which take the authority from the will of a particular being revealed in a particular source, are criticized as 'partial' generalizations. Vivekananda

asserts that the monistic principle provides the basis for ethics and ventures to say that we can not get any ethics from any where else (CWSV II: 334). He refers to those born out of ‘love and sympathy for suffering humanity in order to teach others the way, but argues that an embodied state can never be the goal of ideal from the Advaitins standpoint, because the body represents limitation (CWSV II: 349). The idea that loss of our little individuality will undermine morality and concern for others is dismissed as a common misapprehension (CWSV II: 351). He maintains that the highest ideal of morality and unselfishness goes hand in hand with the highest metaphysical conceptions (CWSV II: 355). Thus, the doctrines in Practical *Vedānta* might communicate an imperative to engage in what is known as the *sadhanā* of social service.

The practicality of *Vedānta* is explored entirely in terms of self realization. Though it could be argued that the selflessness engendered by self realization implicitly directs the individual to an active concern for others, no explicit connection is made between this and the very specific form of service to humanity. This is quite surprising that the theory of Practical *Vedānta* is often assumed to provide the necessary philosophical rationale for the *sadhanā* of social service, while service to humanity is held to be the practical outworking of this philosophy.

Following his return to India in 1897, Vivekananda offered a further account of his understanding of the *Vedānta* at Lahore where he stressed that “*Vedānta* is not restricted to *Advaita*”. He wrote “I will go further and say that what we really mean by the word Hindu is really the same as Vedāntist” (CWSV III: 396). In the lectures on Practical *Vedānta* he argues that the concern of religion is not at odds with science, both are in search of unity in the midst of diversity; the theme of the *Upaniṣad* is to find an ultimate unity of things (CWSV III: 397). The ‘That thou art’ formula of *Chhāndogya Upaniṣad* is introduced to show that ‘The Immanent One’ is at last declared to be the same that is in the human soul’. This leads Vivekananda to conclude that *Advaita* has done for religion what modern science has done for cosmological theories namely; it has taken the universe out of the hands of an extra-cosmic deity.

Vivekananda repeated in Lahore the claim made in Practical *Vedānta* that *Advaita* and *Advaita* alone explains morality. And the scriptural reference provided as

the basis for the Advaitins is *Gītā*-13, 28: he who sees everyone in himself, and himself in everyone, seeing the same God living in all, he, the sage no more kills the ‘Self’ by the ‘self’. The root of strength and the dispeller of the weakness, according to Vivekananda, is the knowledge that the same Self is in all beings. Addressing the practicality of *Vedānta* he reduced its teaching to ‘believe in yourself first and then believe in anything else’. He lamented that one defect of *Advaita* was its being worked out too long on the spiritual plain only. Now the time has come when we have to make it practical and it shall no more live with monks in caves and forests. At this juncture his concern was to encourage all- whether a *Śūdra*, Woman or a Beggar - to work out Advaitin teachings in their everyday lives, explicitly stating that the belief in the self fostered by *Vedānta* will add the individual in commercial, intellectual and spiritual undertakings (CWSV III: 427).

*Vedānta* holds that no individual can be completely free unless every one else is also free (from oppression). In other words, we as individuals are obliged to act for a better society. Vivekananda was able to move beyond the prevalent dogmatic caste system which characterized Indian society and propose a theory of action which necessitated that each of us consciously acts towards bettering the lot of our fellow humans, if our goal is to ultimately liberate ourselves and become enlightened.

The ideas of the ethics of *Vedānta* have to be worked out in detail, and, therefore, we must have patience. As Vivekananda asserts, we want to take the subject in detail and work it up thoroughly, to see how the ideas grow from very lower ideals and how the one great ideal of oneness has developed and become shaped into the universal love; and we ought to study these in order to avoid dangers. It is feeling that works, that moves with speed infinitely superior to that of electricity or anything else. Do you feel? That is the question. If you do, you will see the Lord: It is the feeling that you have today that will be intensified, deified, raised to the highest platform, until it feels everything, the oneness in everything, till it feels God in itself and in others. The intellect can never do that. “Different methods of speaking words, different methods of explaining the texts of books, these are for the enjoyment of the learned, not for the salvation of the soul” (*Vivekaśūdhāmaṇi*, 58).

The *Vedānta* system begins with tremendous pessimism, and ends with real optimism. We deny the sense optimism, but assert the real optimism of the super-

sensuous. That real happiness is not in the sense organs, but above it; and it is in every human. The sort of optimism which we see in the world is what will lead to ruin the world is through the senses. Abnegation has the greatest importance in *Advaita* Philosophy. Negation implies affirmation of the real self. It is pessimistic as far as it negates the world of the senses, but it is optimistic in its assertion of the real world. Vivekananda says “If I am God, I am beyond the tendencies of the senses, and will not do evil. Morality of course, is not the goal of man, but the means through which this freedom is attained. The *Vedānta* says *Yoga* is one way that makes man realize this divinity. The *Vedānta* says that this is done by the realization of the freedom within, and that everything will give way to that. Morality and ethics will range themselves in their proper places”.

Any argument of Swami Vivekananda’s ethics must center on his strong nationalism articulated within a rigid binary of East and West. Since the militaristic and materialistic ‘West’ had successfully established its supremacy in India, resistance consisted in carving out a different sphere of power for the ‘East’ in its spiritual resources. But the colonial encounter had also opened up native society to being questioned by European modernity. Thus, it was important for the self-assertion of colonized subjects that the spiritual traditions they claimed as their own be capable of cleaning up the ills of poverty, caste-conflict, oppression of widows, child marriage, and the many other drawbacks in Indian society pointed out by the British. Situated in this context, Vivekananda’s project of Practical *Vedānta* is an attempt to make the abstract theory of classical *Advaita* relevant for an ‘enlightened’ ethics and social progress. To quote Vivekananda:

All the powers in the universe are already ours. It is we who have put our hands before our eyes and cry that it is dark. Know that there is no darkness around us. Take the hands away and there is the light which was from the beginning. Darkness never existed, weakness never existed. We who are fools cry that we are weak; we who are fools cry that we are impure. Thus Vedanta not only insists that the ideal is practical, but that it has been so all the time; and this Ideal, this Reality, is our own nature. Everything else that you see is false, untrue. As soon as you say, “I am a little mortal being,” you are saying something which is not true, you are giving the lie to yourselves, you are hypnotising yourselves into something vile, weak and wretched.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Lectures on *Practical Vedanta* Part - I, (delivered in London, 10<sup>th</sup> November 1896.)

If we consider civilization as manifestation of divine in human beings, as Vivekananda conceived it to be, no society has made much progress so far. This is why we find that mildness, gentleness, self-control, tolerance, sympathy and so forth - the signs of a healthy civilization - have not taken root in any society on an appreciable scale, although we prematurely possess of a global village. The lack of basic necessities among the underprivileged all over the world is no less striking than the lack of morality among the educated privileged ones. For Vivekananda:

No church ever saved by itself. It is good to be born in a temple, but woe unto the person who dies in a temple or church. Out of it ... It was a good beginning, but leave it. It was the childhood place... but let it be ... Go to God directly. No theories, no doctrines. Then alone will all doubts vanish. Then alone will all crookedness be made straight... In the midst of the manifold, he who sees that One; in the midst of this infinite death, he who sees that one life; in the midst of the manifold, he who sees that which never changes in his own soul - unto him belongs eternal peace.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Lectures on *Practical Vedanta* Part-14, The Goal, (delivered in San Francisco, 27<sup>th</sup> March, 1900)

## **SPIRIT OF MAN: REFLECTIONS ON SRI AUROBINDO AND TAGORE'S VIEWS\***

SWAGATA GHOSH

From the days of my inception in the Dept. of Philosophy at the University of North Bengal, the one who bestowed his heartfelt blessings upon me is none other than Prof. Raghunath Ghosh (under whose repeated insistence I feel honored to call him Raghunath *da*). I have no words to express my regards and the depth of my indebtedness to him for his unstinted help and cooperation in any and every matter that I can recall. I have been able to learn, teach and think over Indian philosophy from new dimensions, greatly because of the teachings I received from him in the course of our numerous academic rendezvous. It is believed in Indian tradition that one can never repay one's parents debts. I believe mine is the same for Raghunath *da*, who is no less than a father-figure for me and yet one whom I can admit to be my *friend* in the truest sense of the term. As a mark of that reverence in my heart, I dedicate the present article to Prof. Raghunath Ghosh.

The main contention of the philosophic traditions through ages has undoubtedly been anthropocentric. This is obvious yet significant, since the very idea of philosophising existence in the world is considered to be man's absolute monopoly. Man asserts his existence in the world and to his own self as well, through his 'search'. This search, however, has got a pyramidal structure. At the base level, there is the search for basic necessities in order to sustain one's body. Then as we gradually move higher up the pyramid, we find our search being concentrated towards things which are meta-worldly. In other words, we search for the ideals; we search in order to attain self-actualisation. This constitutes our ultimate pursuit, and hence, it is situated at the apex of the pyramid.

Regarding the above theme, the views of many great thinkers shroud the mind. Of them the theses of two immensely significant thinkers, - Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath Tagore, require special attention. An analysis of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy gives us a profoundly philosophical account of his idea of man. The central question of Sri Aurobindo's metaphysics is, 'Why does the world exist?' and 'What is the purpose of our existence in the world?' In his endeavour to find responses to such fundamental questions, he experiences that we are in a constant

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process of searching. We all are in pursuit of certain values and we feel that attainment of such values constitute the meaning of our lives. One such ideal is Perfection. We all want to be perfect. The Supreme Consciousness being the perfect, our search for perfection implies the search for the Supreme Being. Again, we want to know the eternal Truth. We are in constant search for Knowledge. No one wants to remain immersed in falsehood forever. Men strive to rise above all sorts of *mithyā* or illusion, and be enlightened by the beam of wisdom and truth. However, this is not all. Men aspire to have pure Bliss or *ānanda*. *Ānanda* is not mere pleasure (*sukha*) or avoidance of pain (*duḥkha parihāra*). It is an eternal state and consists of tranquillity. It is pure and unwavering, and is thus, referred to as bliss. Men are often unaware of such a state within themselves, but Sri Aurobindo claims that it constitutes the real nature of man. It is the divine in man.

Again, men aspire to be free. We all crave for Freedom. We want freedom from bondage of all sorts, from all our limitations, including our physical ones. And most importantly, we want Immortality (*amṛtatva*). Man desires to maintain his existence forever. Such aspiration of human beings has a significant impact. It has led to the immense development of science through ages. In Sri Aurobindo's words, "science itself begins to dream of the physical conquest of death, expresses an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and is working out something like a terrestrial omnipotence for humanity".<sup>1</sup> However, we do find that the various works of art, literature, philosophy and others have made their creators immortal, even after their physical existence ceases to be. Thus, Sri Aurobindo claims that the search for these ideals or these values constitutes the meaning of our lives.

Now, it is interesting and intriguing to note that there is a stark contradiction between the 'given-self' and the 'ideal-self'. The ideal self has never been experienced. Man is imperfect, fallible and we constantly encounter sorrow and pain. No matter how free one might consider himself to be, yet he is at least bound by the natural laws. Moreover, no being has ever been able to be immortal in the literal sense of the term. Thus, all the ideals lie outside our realm of experience. It,

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<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondichery, 1970, p. 14. Henceforth, *The Life Divine*.

therefore, poses a question before us that how is it possible for us to be in constant pursuit of these values? Is there any definite basis of such aspirations? Or, are these simply our mental constructs? Sri Aurobindo says that all these indicate that we are not just the beings that we find ourselves to be in our ordinary life. There is much more within us.

These values are strived for due to an inner urge or a revolting attitude we experience in us, when we feel that we are compelled to be under these shortcomings forever. It is through such pursuit that our true self demands manifestation. Again, it might be asked that are these values at all real? Rather, is the constant pursuit of such ideals an impediment to our practical life? According to Sri Aurobindo, such a relation of opposition between the actual and the ideal self essentially helps in our advancement towards our ideals and in our practical life as well. However, we all are aware of our limited self and it is undeniable. We can seldom transcend the barriers of our physicality. We, thus, lead our everyday life with the given self. Yet, we can assertively claim that we do hear certain inner voices, receive certain messages from within which invite us or lead us towards these ideals. Sri Aurobindo claims that it is that inner voice which motivates us in our search, and the root of that inner being lies in the fact that we all have a 'life divine'. Thus, we find in Sri Aurobindo's metaphysics, a unique attempt to synthesize eternal immortality with the transient, mortal life.

Further analysis of Sri Aurobindo's theory furnishes the details of his views on man's nature in greater depth. Tracing the general course of evolution in Sri Aurobindo's theory, establishes the fact that evolution takes its final leap into the realm of the pure consciousness.<sup>2</sup> The path depicts the passage from the state of complete inconscience to the grade of the supramental, with matter, life and psyche as the successive intermediary stages. In man, the mental grade is best represented, and in him therefore, resides the highest potency of transition to the supramental level. Sri Aurobindo claims that the man that is known to us, or is at least evident to our experience is not the real man. Rather, our senses cannot capture man in his true perspective, that is, the complete man remains the ideal. This is, however, due to the incomplete, bizarre and inadequate knowledge of our given self. Essentially, there are

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<sup>2</sup> *The Life Divine.*, p. 257

two aspects of man's being - the external and the internal. The external is apparent to us. It is that aspect of our being which constitutes our waking-conscious existence.<sup>3</sup> There may even be a subconscious aspect of our life, where there is no waking consciousness. Though, that does not constitute our inner aspect of being. It is distinct from the inner or subliminal<sup>4</sup> parts of our being consisting of the inner physical, inner vital and inner mental aspects. These are not obscure, but the surface consciousness is not always aware of the subliminal self or the *Caitya Puruṣa*<sup>5</sup> as it remains veiled from it. Now, in the *Caitya Puruṣa* or the inner being of man is revealed the *Central Being*,<sup>6</sup> which *Vedānta* terms as the *ātman*. Sri Aurobindo explicitly states his view of man as, "the being of man is composed of these elements, the psychic behind supporting all, the inner mental, vital and physical, and the outer quite external nature of mind, life and body, which is their instrument of expression. But above all is the central being (*Jīvātman*) which uses them all for its manifestation, it is a portion of the divine Self..."<sup>7</sup>

Sri Aurobindo again divides the central being of man into two aspects – the *Jīvātmā* and the Psychic Being. These two aspects demand distinction. The *Jīvātmā* is conceived of as the spark of the Divine, as the humanisation of *Paramātmā*.<sup>8</sup> It transcends the individual expressions of life and mind in man; whereas, the Psychic Being appears to be a representative of the *Jīvātmā* expressing itself in individual life and existence, and sustaining it. Thus, Sri Aurobindo admits the Psychic Being to be involved in the evolutionary process, but *Jīvātmā* is beyond such. Sri Aurobindo distinguishes between these two aspects of man in yet another way. Everything being an expression of the Divine, both the Psychic Being and the *Jīvātmā* are also manifestations of the Divine. However, as there can be the relation of identity-in-

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* P.733

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* P.86

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* P.225

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* P.898

<sup>7</sup> *The Integral Yoga, Sri Aurobindo's Teaching and Method of Practice, Selected Letters of Sri Aurobindo*, compiled by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives and Research Library, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1993, 6<sup>th</sup> impression, 2010, p.56. Henceforth, *The Integral Yoga*.

<sup>8</sup> *The Psychic Being, Soul: Its Nature, Mission and Evolution, Selections from the Works of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother*, compiled by A.S. Dalal, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1989, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2008, 2<sup>nd</sup> impression, 2012, p. 15. Henceforth, *The Psychic Being*.

difference between the Psychic Being and the Divine, the *Jīvātmā* can merge itself *in identity* with the Divine. This brings forth a highly illuminating and novel interpretation of the Vedāntic utterance - '*Tat tvam asi*' or 'Thou art That'.

Now, from the above, we can claim that there are three aspects of man according to Sri Aurobindo - the surface or the outer soul, the inner soul or the *Caitya Puruṣa* and the Divine soul or the *Jīvātmā*. The first is related to our physical being, while the second and the third talk of our spiritual existence. The second one refers to that kind of spirituality which gets evolved and transformed; whereas, the third indicates the potential to exist as the Divine. It is, thus, evident that the question of birth and decay can only be raised in the arena of the outer self. The *Caitya Puruṣa* is the subtle soul and, hence, beyond birth or perish. Its function is to lead man to spiritual heights by awakening what is already there in him. It is beyond destruction, endures through births and is ever active in expediting the divine transformation.<sup>9</sup>

Further, it is interesting to note that both Sri Aurobindo and Tagore talk of such an inner self or pure consciousness which has to be attained and realised through our bodily or worldly self. In this context, Sri Aurobindo brings forth a unique procedure which explains not only the world and its creation, but also maps the uplift of man towards divinity. He claims the occurrence of two contrary processes, namely, evolution and involution.<sup>10</sup> Through involution the *Brahman* or *Saccidānanda* eventually transforms into matter. The first product of *Brahman* is the Supermind which retains its unity with the Divine. The Supermind then fragments itself into many and thus, the mental world comes into being which involves only man. This is the level of *individual consciousness*. The subsequent level is that of the vital consisting of all kinds of life forms and is called the *subconscient* level. Finally, the level of *Inconscience* is reached, and there is existence of matter. This entire journey from the level of pure consciousness, that is, *Brahman* to Absolute *Inconscience*, that is, matter is due to its gradual veiling by *māyā* or ignorance. According to Sri Aurobindo, the state of ignorance, that is, the material level is not at state of no-knowledge. Rather the consciousness, here, is in such a concentrated state that it

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14

<sup>10</sup> *The Life Divine*, p. 139

appears to be oblivious of all that is around it. The consciousness is there but it is without any manifestation.<sup>11</sup>

Now, evolution represents just the reverse process. As we go higher up the order, starting from the inactive material state, we reach the level of vitality characterized by feelings and emotions like, affinity, anger, fear etc. This level includes both human and other living beings. Next is the mental level which is distinguished by the individual self-awareness or self-consciousness in man. Men, essentially evolving from matter, remain bound to some extent, that is, at least by the physical principles. However, the self-awareness in man which gets gradually expressed by the removal of the veil of Ignorance inspires him to transcend the limitations. He then completely frees himself from the enwrapping of Ignorance and reaches the level of Supermind. There the revelation dawns upon him that there is unity between him and the Divine - *Saccidānanda*. Once this state is attained, the individual consciousness gradually merges with the ultimate pure consciousness, - the *Brahman*. Thus, it may be characterized as the home-coming of Consciousness. Hence, the entire structure of transformation and development of the consciousness depicts that through this upward and downward movement of evolution and involution, that is, through this dual journey man attains his true actualization by being existent (*sat*) as pure consciousness (*cit*) in the state of absolute bliss (*ānanda*).

The journey towards self-actualization of man grasps the central theme of Tagore's philosophy as well. There it acquires a linear form and it is inward directed. It involves the same pursuit for ideals but within one's own self. It is the journey from the worldly or the finite self to the Divine or the Infinite Self. Thus, on one hand, as if we find an upward movement towards divinity transcending our bodily limitations, while on the other, we find an inward motion towards own self to find divinity within. However, the striking harmony that runs through the thinking of the two great philosophers is that, - plurality is real yet Reality is one. In this voyage from the real to the Reality, maintaining one's individuality yet unifying in love (*amṛta*), and admitting plurality yet aiming to arrive at the One reflect the deepest stratum of philosophical insight ever.

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<sup>11</sup> *The Integral Yoga*, p. 45

Rabindranath Tagore starts from our conspicuous worldly existence and states that man and nature can never be in complete unison. They can never move together in perfect harmony. Due to this, wherever man is present, even if he avoids even the slightest movement, or does not make the slightest noise, yet his very existence is conspicuous. Man considers this distinct individuality from nature to be very important. He adheres to and maintains this individuality or distinctness from nature. However, there is a discomfort in man. According to Tagore, such discomfort or the incoherence between man and the rest of nature is due to the incorporation of ego or *aham* in man. The *aham* ascribes individuality to each one of us. However, the individual coherence always awaits a universal coherence or equilibrium. Thus, none of us are satisfied with our mundane life. We all strongly desire harmony. One way of realizing such aspiration is through cultivation of the creative power in us. We create art, literature, music. Monuments are built and societies are formed. We also develop political and religious outlook and several others. The sole aim of these entire endeavours is to produce unison, a harmony among nature, man and his fellow beings by perfectly arranging the various egos of separate individuals.

One, who is segregated, always craves to transcend the distance in between. Tagore claims that this is because we yearn for unity, and in unity alone, we find love. Without love our existence appears futile. This love refers to the divine union with God (*amṛta*).<sup>12</sup> It, however, presupposes prior detachment or distancing. This is because union cannot be meaningful while remaining in union. Here, it might be explored that in order to attain *amṛta*, do we need to give up our *aham* completely? And if it is, then is man really craving for such self-eradication? Tagore asserts that it is never so. Had it been so, man would always have been delighted by any sort of elimination or eradication. On the contrary, men despise eradication and losses. It is most natural to man that he tends to cling to whatever is there with him. So, we might claim that man neither wants incoherence nor wants loss; he wants nothing but love. When equilibrium is attained between detachment and union, man attains love. Tagore, however, emphasises that if the detachment destroys the union or the union

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<sup>12</sup> Tagore, Rabindranath, *Personality, Lectures delivered in America*, The Macmillan company of India Limited, New Delhi, 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1917, Macmillan Pocket Tagore Edition, 1980, p. 106. Henceforth, *Personality*.

overpowers the detachment that is not the true sense of love. It is only when both exist and exist in harmony, complementing one another, love is realised.<sup>13</sup> We want to achieve coherence between separation and union, - we desire both simultaneously. This is indicated in all our efforts. Our creations are nothing but endeavours to achieve unity, retaining the individuality.

Now, Tagore sheds light on another important aspect of the *aham* or ego. He holds that the ultimate aim of our life is to realise the true nature of our soul, and the nature of the soul is identical to that of *Paramātmā*. *Paramātmā* is never the receiver, he is always the giver. He is the Creator and he only creates. Creation, however, means giving away. He gives away unconditionally. It is the very essence of joy to always give away. We all experience that, and thus, we are forever ready to devote ourselves completely in the delight of love.<sup>14</sup>

The soul of man, being essentially similar to that of *Paramātmā*, attains bliss only by giving or donating, and not by taking things for one's self. However, man often fails to realise that the tendency to only acquire and never give away leaves us with pain and sufferings. So, one must realise that our joy resides in being able to give away. Thus we must cultivate the blissful essence of our soul. Now, this requires us to curb the uncontrolled desires of our ego. The *aham* always wants to acquire things for its own self. It never gives away. Rather it always tries to grasp more and more. So we must try to detach ourselves from the ego and develop the feeling that the ego is not 'our self', it is something foreign or external to us. Again, the nature of *aham* is to attract things towards itself, whereas, the nature of the soul is to give away. If we are caught in between, we face great difficulties. Tagore says that in order to prevent such situations we must never identify ourselves with the *aham*, rather remain separated from it. It is our duty to perform actions responsibly, but never hanker after the results (*phala*) brought to us by our ego.

Now, Tagore mentions a positive aspect of this acquiring tendency of *aham*. When we gather something, the ego produces a sense or a feeling in us that the object

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<sup>13</sup>. *Ibid.*, p. 97-98

<sup>14</sup> Tagore, Rabindranath, *The Religion of Man, Introduction* by Andrew Robinson, First published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Great Britain, 1931, First published in this edition, 1961, Published by Indus, An imprint of Harper Collins Publishers India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1993, 2nd impression, 1994, p. 30. Henceforth, *The Religion of Man*.

belongs to us. One can give away only that which he possesses. So the ego produces in us the sense of being a possessor, which entails the sense of being a giver. When we know something as our own, then only we can give it away. This hints at a much deeper realization. It says that we have to gather, but our purpose of gathering is for giving away. Hence, if we realize the divine purpose of *aham* being there in us, then we can make proper implementation of it. In other words, *aham* constitutes the basis of our being a giver. Thus, the ego has positive effects on us too, but only if we use it appropriately.

Next, Tagore points out certain characteristics in man which gives him the place he acquires today in this world. The erect body structure of man is the gaudiest proclamation of his freedom from the established rule of nature and also marks his attitude of insubordination<sup>15</sup> to any conventionality. This upright posture gave him a certain freedom of movement. It made easy for us to turn on all sides and realize our selves at the centre of things. Physically, it symbolizes the fact that while animals have for their own progress the prolongation of a narrow line,<sup>16</sup> man has the wide circumference of a circle at the epicentre of which he finds himself. One freedom brings about another freedom, and in this way, man's eyesight acquires greater power.<sup>17</sup> This, however, does not mean enhancement of the physical power of his eyesight; rather, from the apical position of a "watchtower"-like body<sup>18</sup> man attains a panoramic perspective which is not merely information about the location of things, but their interrelation and their unity as well. However, the best expression of man's physical freedom is through his hands.<sup>19</sup> In our entire body, it is through the hands that we perform our most creative and most useful works. Thus, the greatest respect for skill, grace and purposefulness is rightfully due to our hands. Now the freedom of view and that of action have been perfectly complemented by the mental freedom in man through his imagination.<sup>20</sup> Thinking or imagination is the most distinctly human of all our faculties. Such freedom is so natural to man that even those who are denied

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33

of any institutionalized education, or have never been tutored or disciplined in any form, are blessed with such divine gift.

Tagore refers to these as the surplus in man<sup>21</sup> which give him the extra edge over other beings in the world. He highlights another significant aspect of man in this context and provides us with a novel interpretation. He says that man has endless cravings from nature, but that does not diminish his image. Rather it reflects his capacity to take in more and give out proportionately. Moreover, the extra capacities that man has been bestowed with indicate his greater responsibilities.

Further, Tagore discusses certain dualisms in man's nature which are characteristic to man. One such dualism is observed in his physical life. Man's needs are greater in number, and hence, require larger field for search. They also require deeper knowledge of things. This enlightens him with a greater consciousness of himself. The mind also has its positive and negative aspects of separateness and unity. On one hand, it separates the objects of knowledge from the knower and then again unites them through the relationship of knowledge. Thus, to the vital relation of the world of food and sex is added another relation of prime significance, - which is mental, that is in the epistemic or cognitive sense of the term. We then make the world doubly our own by inhabiting it and by knowing it.<sup>22</sup>

There is, however, another dualism in man which does not involve his physical aspect. Rather it is a dualism in his consciousness which concerns *what is* and *what ought to be*. Such conflict is absent in case of animals because their concern involves *what is* and *what is desired*. In man the tussle is deeper. It is between *what is desired* and *what should be desired*.<sup>23</sup> *What is desired* dwells in the heart of the natural life which we share with animals; but *what should be desired* belongs to a life which lies far beyond it. So, man takes a second birth. Though he retains certain habits and instincts of his animal life, yet his true life lies in the region of *what ought to be*. The necessity of the incessant fight with own self has built in man what we call 'character'.<sup>24</sup> From the life of desire it leads man to the life of purpose. This life is in the realm of morals. This moral world essentially signifies the world of humanity.

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31

<sup>22</sup> *Personality*, p. 79

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80

Thus, from the world of nature we enter into the world of man where we participate in the life of the *Universal Man*.<sup>25</sup> In Tagorean terms, we lead the life of *Viśvamānava* or *Jivanadevatā*.<sup>26</sup> Tagore refers to this moral world as the world of the *Infinite One*. When we internalize our existence with the *Infinite One* we attain the feelings of joy and perfection. We then realise that the good-ness that is there in us leads us to perfection, and thus, the self attains its actualization. At that time, we also experience the feeling of love (*amṛta*) that constitutes the ultimate essence of the Divine.

Finally, Tagore emphasises on such features of man which signify his greater self. He asserts that from the time man became really conscious of his own self, he also became aware of an inexplicable spirit of unity which gets manifested in the society through him. It is a fine medium of relationship between individuals which does not involve any utilitarian end but for its own ultimate truth. Man realizes that the all-embracing spirit of unity has a divine character, and in it only one can find the highest meaning of life transcending his limited self. Again, with such expansion in the consciousness of human unity, man's God gets revealed to him as *one* and *universal*. Thus, it establishes that the truth of human unity is the truth of man's God.<sup>27</sup> Tagore here again brings in the vision of the *Supreme Man*<sup>28</sup> or *Viśvamānava* to stress on the idea that it is not just a fiction or a mental construct; rather it is more real than individual man. His transcendental personality permeates all.<sup>29</sup> We attain our true religion when we consciously participate in His life form, and then do we find our unbound Joy through suffering and sacrifice. Our love for Him makes us aware of the great love that radiates from His being, - the *Mahātmā* or the *Supreme Spirit*.<sup>30</sup> However, the most significant aspects of our life continue to be those which represent eternal humanity. This is manifested through knowledge, sympathy, deeds, character and creative works. All these are aimed at actualizing the immortal in us, so that even when our mortal existence ceases, man does not perish.

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<sup>25</sup> *The Religion of Man*, p. 94

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90

From the entire discussion above, it is thus evident that the very idea of man makes us aware of a being with a body and the power of thinking, that is, consciousness as its essential attributes. However, we know that the general trend in Indian philosophy has always been to create a hierarchical discrimination between consciousness or the self and the body, where the self has got greater significance than the body, and the body supposedly being the seat of all our worldly desires is to be looked down upon as something not integral to us and to be renounced eventually. Thus, all tasks of philosophical importance are solely centred on consciousness. This, however, presents a partial view of man only. If 'man' is to be understood in the actual sense of the term, neither the true self in man nor humanity can be cognized completely leaving aside the body. So the concept of body in man should acquire immense significance in understanding man and humanity.

We have seen in our above discussion that this idea attained great significance in the philosophies of Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath Tagore, beside other noted philosophers, and thus, we find a deep analysis of the necessity of man's body which eventually paves the way for realising the consciousness or the true self in man. The ideals or the ultimate values which man tries to attain, as mentioned by Sri Aurobindo, all lie in the meta-worldly sphere. However, the interesting position is that man being bound in this material world, and also being in the limits of material body, tries to attain the meta-worldly ideals like, perfection, freedom, immortality which one never experiences in this world. This indicates an immensely significant aspect of man; it shows that the body apparently binds or delimits him but that binding actually propels him to transcend it. Moreover, it is through this body that he strives to attain the Infinite. Sri Aurobindo, in fact, emphasises that it is through such dualisms that man truly realises his manhood. It is through both body and thinking that man retains his individuality, yet becomes one with *Brahman*. Tagore also makes a similar claim, as we have found, but from another perspective. He says that it is through our body and the proper usage of each of its parts, we can create our own place in the world. Our body structure gives us advantages over other animals. Thus, man emerges as superpower in the world and combined with that our consciousness expands our existence. We then no longer reside as limited beings, we participate into the life of the Infinite and realise the true self- the greater self in us.

## VIVEKANANDA ON THE GENESIS AND CONTROL OF VIOLENCE

SAMAR KUMAR MONDAL

We know from the Hindu Epics and Mythology that god or goddesses were involved in fight with the Demons. There was no supreme court for the judgment regarding right and wrong. The right or wrong were established by power. The people at that time did not realise that the establishment of right and wrong by power was a sort of violence.

In the Vedic era, the saints were involved in different oblations and they sacrificed goat, horse etc. on the oblation. At that time there was a custom of killing of cows for entertaining distinguished guests. Violence was present in different stages of life. *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata* and other scriptures prescribe different types of violence. In *Mahābhārata* the superiors or the elders like Dronacharya, Vishma, did not raise their voice against violence. The blind king Dhritarastra did not realize the need for preventing the war even after hearing the loathsome form of the war from Bidura. Only one person was against violence who tried to prevent the war and he was Arjuna. But the war of *Kurukshetra* took place and dignity of *Ātman* or Self has been dishonored, but no one preached for non-violence, because the war was regarded as a fight for truth or justice.

Everyone wants to understand the meaning of life. Generally people believe that happiness is the ultimate aim of life and they try to acquire property, money etc. for getting happiness. But some people say that property does not give happiness to man. Because, most of the rich people in the present world suffering from numerous physical and mental problems. On the other hand, the poorest man who has learnt to have pleasure may enjoy their lives far more than the richest people. Dharmananda Kosambi says, "The aim in life varies among individuals. An artist may aim to paint masterpieces that will live long after he is gone. A scientist may want to discover some laws, formulate a new theory, or invent a new machine. A politician may wish to become prime minister or president. A young executive may aim to be a managing director of a multinational company. However, when you ask the artist, scientist, politician and the young executive why they aim such, they will reply that these achievements will give them a purpose in life and make them happy. Everyone aims

for happiness in life, yet experience shows time and again that its attainment is so elusive."<sup>1</sup> On many occasions our attempt to attain our own happiness engages us in violence at the cost of unhappiness of others.

*World report on violence and health* (WRVH) defines violence as "The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation."<sup>2</sup> The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy records four types of violence as follows:<sup>3</sup>

1. Physical Violence: physical violence may be directed against persons, animals, or property. In this case the force is used to cause physical harm, death, or destruction.
2. Psychological violence: psychological violence applies principally to persons. This type of violence causes severe mental or emotional harm through humiliation, deprivation, or brainwashing, whether force is used or not.
3. Illegality or illegitimacy violence: this type of violence involves profaning, desecrating, defiling or showing disrespect for something valued, sacred or cherished.
4. Environmental violence: it is extreme physical force in the natural world, as in tornados, hurricanes and earthquakes.

Human being is the highest product of evolution. Only Human beings can understand the true meaning of their life. It accepted that, no human being likes pain or suffering and everybody tries to remove it from life. Most of the time we accuse others for causing our suffering, but rarely we try to understand the real cause of our suffering, and on most occasions we do not want to understand why our sufferings originate. But if we look for a deeper understanding of the origin of our suffering, we shall find that in most of the cases the appropriate place to look for it is our inner life rather than social, cultural, political reality.

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<sup>1</sup> Kosambi Dharmananda, *Leading A Buddhist Life, Milemishe*, 2011, p.-228-9

<sup>2</sup> © Copyright World Health Organization (WHO), 2013, Website.

<sup>3</sup> Audi R., *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, Cambridge Univ. Press,1999, p.-959

People usually believe that virtue, wealth and happiness are good for us. Man searches for happiness everywhere, but they do not really know that happiness is within us, and this is because the lack of self-knowledge. *Upaniṣad* teaches us that *Ātman* is eternal, consciousness and pure bliss. That is why it is said that *Ātman* is *Vijñāna* and *ānanda* -“*vijñānamānandam Brahman.*” Again in *Taitteriya Upaniṣad* it is called *Ānandarupatā*- “*Ānando brahmeti bajanātha.*”<sup>4</sup> It is also treated as *rasaswarupa*, the people be joyful for getting this *rasaswarupa*. So nobody wants to live in the world if this *rasaswarupa* is absent. *Ātman* is knower and cannot be treated as object. It is self-explanatory, it explains everything but it cannot be explained by anything. It is pure bliss. That is why it is dear to us. Everything is loveable because love is in it.

According to *Advaita Vedānta*, people engage themselves in violence due to lack of self knowledge or ignorance. If we want to remove violence from the world, we have to remove the primal cause of it. First of all we have to remove the ignorance from *Ātman* and consequently reveal the real nature of the self or *Ātman*. Hindu philosophy or religion preaches that liberation is the ultimate aim of man. Vivekananda opines:

There is to be found in every religion the manifestation of this struggle towards freedom. It is the groundwork of all morality, selfishness, which means getting rid of the idea that men are the same as their little body. When we see a man doing good work, helping others, it means that he cannot be confined within the limited circle of “me and mine”. There is no limit to this getting out of selfishness. All the great systems of ethics preach absolute unselfishness as the goal<sup>5</sup>

Vivekananda was the only person in his time who did think that religion was not responsible for the failure to construct science and technology based society, rather, lack of application of highest essence or fundamental truths of religion in our daily life is responsible for that. Indian philosophers always used religion as a way of liberation from bondage. But Vivekananda wanted to use religion for solving our daily life problems. He regarded religion as a tool for changing the economic and social sphere. He traveled India and invented a new India with the conversation with highest aristocrat society to lower level society. He observed that religion was not

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<sup>4</sup> *Taitterio Upaniṣad*, 2/7

<sup>5</sup> Vivekananda Swami, *Karma Yoga*, Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata. P.-119

responsible for the distress of Indian people. He claimed that there were so many problems in India such as caste, superstition, social and economic inequality, lack of education, poverty etc. of which we could not apply the highest ideal of Indian scriptures in our practical life.

Swamiji was the first person who asked the question: is religion able to give empirical enrichment? His answer in this regard with sarcastic way that, the religion which is not able to remove widow's tear, which is unable to give a bread to the orphan child- that religion is not believable at all. So long as there is even a dog unfed my religion would be to provide some food to it. That is, according to Vivekananda, a religious person should always be engaged to love the living god who is present around us in various forms of living beings.

Vivekananda's philosophy of action is an outstanding idea regarding socio-economic standpoint. Every action which takes place in this world is the expression of the human desire. Vivekananda's *Karmayoga* is very much relevant to the present society as well as to ethics. According to *Karmayoga*, the action one has done cannot be destroyed until it has borne its fruit. There is no power in nature which can stop it from yielding its results. If one does an immoral action, he must suffer for it, there is no power in this universe to stop or stay it. Similarly if one does a good action, there is no power in the universe which can stop its bearing good results. The cause must have its effect and nothing can prevent or restrain this. Freedom comes through unselfish work and freedom is the goal of all human nature according to *Karmayoga*. Every selfish action, therefore, retards our reaching the goal, and every unselfish action takes us towards the goal and for this reason definition of morality can be given in this way: "That which is selfish is immoral, and that which is unselfish is moral".<sup>6</sup>

The goal of human being is to achieve freedom and this freedom can be attained only by perfect unselfishness, and every thought and deed that is unselfish takes us towards the goal. That is why it is called moral. This idea of morality usually finds a place in every religion as well as in every system of ethics. Swamiji's opinion in this regard *Karmayoga* can help to attain freedom. He says-

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<sup>6</sup> Vivekananda Swami, *Karmayoga*, Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata. P.-120

*Karmayoga*, is a system of ethics and religion intended to attain freedom through unselfishness and by good works. The *Karmayogi* need not believe in any doctrine whatever. He may not believe even in God, may not ask what his soul is, nor think any metaphysical speculation. He has got his own special aim of realizing selfishness; and he has to work it out himself. Every moment of his life must be realization, because he has to solve by mere work, without the help of doctrine or theory.<sup>7</sup>

According to him, any action which can help to express our internal divinity is treated as the religious action or *karmayoga*. He explains a religious action as the expression of ultimate knowledge and devotion. As every religious action is the expression of internal divinity of man and that is why no religious action can alienate the agent from soul. We can say that a religious action or service is the medium by which we can associate ourselves with God. On the other hand, when a man does any wrong or immoral work, that time the internal divinity is covered and that is why it creates alienation from soul or *Ātman*. This alienation takes place when we detach our mind from the soul. So man does not face any dejection, failure etc. until and unless he is detached from soul or *Ātman*. That is why; we have to keep in mind the above philosophy of action which can give meaning to our life.

We have to mention here that the Sanskrit term *Ātman* and the English term 'soul' are different in meaning. Sometimes the term 'soul' refers to what we call mind. But mind and *Ātman* are not the same entity. *Ātman* acquires different bodies in different births. *Ātman* is infinite and blissful consciousness; no gender can be ascribed to it. It is neither man nor woman.

The Vedāntist does not call it either He or She - these are fictions, delusions of the human brain- there is no sex in the soul. People who are under illusion, who have become like animals, see a woman or a man; living gods do not see men or women. Everyone and everything is the *Ātman*- the self-the sexless, the pure, the ever-blessed.<sup>8</sup>

The *Vedānta* says that the soul is in its nature absolute Existence, absolute Knowledge, and absolute Bliss. These are not qualities of the soul but the essence, According to Vivekananda,<sup>9</sup> there is no difference between them and the soul and the three are one. We see the one thing in three different aspects. They are beyond all relative knowledge. The eternal knowledge of the self percolating through the brain

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., P.-121

<sup>8</sup> *Complete Works*, vol.-II, p.-248-9

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p.-460

of man becomes his intuition, reason, and so on. Its manifestation varies according to the medium through which it shines. As soul, there is no difference between man and the lowest animal, only the latter's brain is less developed and the manifestation through it which we call instinct is very dull. On the other hand man's brain is much finer than the lowest animal. Consequently, the manifestation is much clearer, and in the highest man it becomes entirely clear. So with bliss, that which we call love or attraction is the reflection of the eternal bliss of the self. With manifestation comes limitation, but the unmanifested nature of the soul is unlimited bliss. But in love there are some limitations. I love you one day, but I may hate you the next day. My love of one day may decrease the next, because it is a manifestation.

Now the question arises: why does human action be selfish or immoral? We can say that morality exists in human life in different forms. The highest standard of morality means unselfishness for the sake of unselfishness. It considers goodness as a value. It teaches universal love without any distinction of merit, colour, status, etc. In Vivekananda's *Vedānta* philosophy, spirituality leads to the highest morality. When spirituality guides a human action, it becomes free from the evil of the egoism which is the cause of all conflicts. His opinion is that the spirituality generates love which unites mankind into a single society. Spirituality is a reflection of our love towards God. Work that is inspired by love of God is work without desire and when you work without desire you work both for your salvation and for the salvation of the world. According to him only the *Vedānta* Philosophy of ancient India is in a position to give a satisfactory explanation of the principles of morality and reveal its true nature. Application of *Vedānta* may offer a permanent and lasting solution to any kind of violence. He shows that the solutions to all these violence may be derived from ancient *Vedānta* Philosophy. Our ultimate goal of life is to realize ourselves as *Brahman* which is ultimate. *Brahman* is immanent in all beings as the *Ātman* which is man's true self and source of all happiness. But owing to ignorance, we identify ourselves with our body and mind. For this reason we run after bodily pleasures. This is the cause of all evil and suffering. That is why Vivekananda says-

The evils that are in the world are caused by none else but ourselves. We have caused all this evil; and just as we constantly see misery resulting from evil actions, so can we also see that much of the existing misery in the world is the effect of the past wickedness of man. Man alone, therefore, according to this

theory, is responsible. God is not to blame. He, the eternally merciful Father, is not to blame at all. 'we reap what we sow.'<sup>10</sup>

So if we remove the ignorance, the *Ātman* reveals its true nature and the individual self realizes that enjoyment of bodily pleasures is not the goal of life. The removal of ignorance and manifestation of inner divinity leading to God realization and this is achieved through *Yoga*.

Vivekananda says that the solution of all these violence is hidden in the Vedāntic thesis of identity between the individual self and *Brahman*. He emphatically says - each individual soul is a part and parcel of that universal soul, which is infinite. Therefore by injuring his neighbor, the individual actually injures himself. This is the basic metaphysical truth underlying all ethical codes. This theory too, is based on the Vedāntic thesis that all individual self (*jivātman*) are identical with *Brahman*. As shown by him unselfishness is an outcome of the realization of identity with the universal soul, while egoism is an outcome of the loss of this identity. In order to eradicate egoism Vivekananda recommended *Karmayoga*, performance of self-loss activities which would ultimately eradicate egoism and bring liberation. These activities as laid down by Vivekananda include socio-political activities.

According to Vivekananda,<sup>11</sup> many Indian Philosophical schools have discussed in different ways regarding liberation as well as violence. The dualist sects in India are great vegetarians, great preachers of non-killing of animals. Their idea about it is quite different from that of the Buddhist. If one asks a Buddhist, why do you preach against killing any animal? He will answer, we have no right to take any life, and if one asks a dualist, why do you not kill any animal? He will say, it is the Lord's. So the dualist says that this 'me and mine' is to be applied to God and God alone. He is the only 'me' and everything is His. Again, the qualified non-dualists make the statement that the effect is never different from the cause. The effect is reproduced as a cause in another form. If the universe is the effect and God the cause, it must be God Himself-it cannot be anything but that.

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<sup>10</sup> *Complete Works*, vol.-II, p.-242

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.-245

According to Hindu scriptures, *mokṣa* is far superior to *dharma*. But Vivekananda says<sup>12</sup> *dharma* should be finished first of all. The Buddha were confounded just there and brought about all sorts of mischief. Non-injury is right; ‘Resist not evil’ is a great thing- these are indeed grand principles. But the scriptures say, ‘Thou art a householder, if anyone smites thee on thy cheek, and thou dost not return him an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, thou wilt verily be a sinner’ For Manu, when one has come to kill you, there is no sin in killing him, even though he be a *Brāhmaṇa*. Swamiji’s advice to all his co-religionists that, do not do any wrong, do not injure over anyone. But try to do well to others as much as you can.

If we seriously conceive that do not injure others, we cannot live and every morsel of food we eat is taken from another’s mouth, our very lives are crowding out some other lives. That is why some monks always tried to drink without boiled. “They all knew that if you boiled water these animals were all killed. So these monks, if they died of thirst, they would never kill these animals by drinking water. But if a monk stands at your door and you give him a little boiled water, the sin is on you of killing the animals- and he will get the benefit”<sup>13</sup>

We have to do our works as a duty and it will do for others. Our duty to others means helping others, doing well to the world. Why should we do well to the world? Apparently it seems to help the world, but really to help ourselves. We should always try to help the world, that should be the highest motive in us but if we consider well, we find that the world does not require our help at all. This world was not made that you or I should come and help it. Though Vivekananda’s suggestion is that, we must do well, the desire to do well is the highest motive power we have. If we know all the time that it is a privilege to help others. Do not stand on a high pedestal and take five cents in your hand and say, ‘Here, my poor man’, but be grateful that the poor man is there so that by making a gift to him you are able to help yourself. It is not the receiver that is blessed, but it is the giver. Be thankful that you are aloud to exercise your power of benevolence and mercy in the world, and thus become pure and perfect.

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<sup>12</sup> *Complete Works*, vol.-V, p.-448

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, vol.-III, p.-523

The man whose heart never cherishes even the thought of injury to any one, who rejoices at the prosperity of even his greatest enemy, that man is the *Bhakta*, he is the *Yogi*, he is the *guru* of all, even though he lives every day of his life on the flesh of swine. Therefore we must always remember that external practices have value only as helps to develop internal purity.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, we have seen that lack of proper knowledge is the source of all types of violence and the key to the solution of it is hidden in the ancient *Vedānta* philosophy. So, if we regulate our conduct in the spirit of *Vedānta* philosophy, many kinds of violence may be eradicated. So, we have to know our duty and its proper application as explained above otherwise we may invite many dangerous situations in our life resulting in violence and that may percolate in the next generation too.

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<sup>14</sup> *Complete Works*, vol.-V, p.-68

## **DEATH, TEMPORALITY AND INDIVIDUALITY: AN EXISTENTIAL OUTLOOK**

PURBAYAN JHA

Professor Raghunath Ghosh has been an epitome of scholarship and humility. I still remember his gesture of love and fatherly attitude towards his students when he addressed us for the first time in our M.A. class; he encouraged us to study being far away from our home, enjoy the beautiful atmosphere of the NBU campus, and also told that it would be very hard for us to leave the campus after the post graduation. We have seen him acting like a pillar of strength for further development of the department, be it either by successfully running the UGC-SAP programme as coordinator under the aegis of UGC. In addition, he was quite successful as Dean of Arts, Commerce and Law faculty of the University of North Bengal. As a person he is jovial and his sense of humour and warmth certainly make him a centre of attraction among others. He is widely regarded as a brilliant scholar of Navya Nyāya and Vedānta; he has extensively travelled various parts of the world to lecture as visiting fellow. I am deeply grateful to him for being so kind and supportive every time I looked for some advice. It is a privilege for me to write an article here in his tribute and I am thankful to Dr. Koushik Joardar for giving me this opportunity. I pray for the good health of Professor Ghosh and hope he remains as youthful as he is now and continues to produce his creativity through his writings and talks in future.

Human beings are the most powerful and rational ones, they try to capture every moment of happiness and excitement. In doing so, man essentially drives himself towards creation as well as destruction. The superiority of man plays in him, he eventually turns out to be a victim of his own deeds. Man is driven by his motivations to achieve more success in future; often it leads towards another level of realization which may not be related with happiness. This is the realization of a kind of individuality; a sort of aloofness plays a role in this realization of his self. It is the temporal existence of human being that marks his existenz but he cannot avoid it. We are always in a hurry to go further; our temporality becomes our obsession as well as a source of angst. I would try to explore a view of this temporality along with the concept of death down the lines of existentialism. Heidegger's notion of Dasein is a great way to understand the idea of individuality along with the concepts of death and temporality. Death is the most obvious possibility through which a man realizes his individuality and aloneness, death is such that leaves a long-lasting impression on the others who exist. When someone loses the life of his near and dear ones, a sort of loneliness continues to bother him. I would say it is also a kind of death of a part of his life which may well be found in literatures. A very interesting outlook of death could be taken into account if we consider it an experience through the death of others that could relate a self to the self of one who has extinguished from the lived

world. We may find that an individual self is being merged with the 'other' through the death of other and his conception of 'I' is reopened through this experience. This paper offers some fragments of thoughts on the issue of death, temporality and individuality; neither it is very conclusive in nature nor does it claim to give a substantial outlook of existentialism on this issue. What it suggests is to have a reflection on it, taking death as a mirror of human finitude.

The human experience, to a large extent is bothered by the agony as well as triumph of others. Yet it is occupied by the loneliness, conceived as a life of the individual who realizes his being-with-himself with such profound intensity that becomes his way of finding a new meaning of life. Man is individually driven by his motives and desires, at the same time he is associated with other beings. His association or dissociation is either driven by his own will or by the will of others. Existentialists hold that existence precedes essence; my being is dependent on my existence. Life is a continuous effort of moving ahead through activities and achievements, there is a constant motivation for further development. According to the existentialists, life cannot be fully understood by reason. Every individual is unique in his own right and there is inconsistency in life that goes beyond the parameter of reason and still is very much the pinnacle of human being. Rationalistic trend overlooks this factor and creates an obstacle to understand the meaning of human life. I do not claim that existentialism is the best way to understand this, but one must appreciate that its endeavour has been a boon for realizing the inconsistent aspect of human beings. In diverse ways existentialists understand the problem of being, its individuality and the anxiety associated with the individual. The individual's passion, sadness, solitude and anxiety are integral to his personality which cannot be dissociated. Existence of the individual is the highest truth according to existentialism. Essence fails to find out the individuality, its uniqueness. There is a totality of experience and it is expressed through action. There is always a danger of being indecisive before a human being; he has many paths to approach his goal but he suffers which one to choose.

The individual therefore turns out to be bound to some rules; he is free but never beyond a limitation. He is situated in his choices but his thought, imagination and effort drive him to another situation. In comes the conflict in his being and his

life takes another shape. Heidegger thinks that it is not possible for man to realize his existence in the everyday life; he has to live a separate life detached from everyday activity and should take responsibility of all his actions.<sup>1</sup> Thus he moves forward towards a life of realization. One good effect it has that the individual is always on his toes and any sort of trouble he faces poses a question to his tryst with the realization. But he is framed and bound in temporality, in a helpless manner. The projection of possibilities makes man attracted toward a goal with lots of passion, since he thinks that whatever he has to accomplish is limited within a time-frame. So, he is never really associated with his essence, rather his essence is split to a great extent in achieving his goal. It is the Being-in-the-world that bothers him; the Dasein is all about his existence in the midst of the world. We may be tempted to think that it is one sort of becoming of his essence, though here our understanding of Being takes an existential conjecture, as Heidegger puts it that “the ‘essence’ of Dasein lies in its existence.” Because man is essentially driven toward a life of individuality, it becomes more important for him to understand his being, to question his own existence, to realize the anxiety in his being in spite of living an everyday life with others. There is an unwritten threat to man to be attached with the demand of others, to be merged with the crowd and thus to become anonymous they. Despite the invitation from the mass, he has to be detached to give himself an opportunity of realizing his existenz; otherwise he would be falling into prey of becoming a *das Mann*. Even then, Dasein’s everydayness is an integral aspect, though not merely an ‘aspect’ according to Heidegger. He says, “Dasein’s average everydayness, however, is not to be taken as a mere ‘aspect’. Here too, and even in the mode of inauthenticity, the structure of existentiality lies a priori. And here too Dasein’s Being is an issue for it in a definite way; and Dasein comports itself towards it in the mode of average everydayness, even if this is only the mode of fleeing in the face of it and forgetfulness thereof....”<sup>2</sup>

Our contention on Dasein can never be exhausted unless we can relate the ‘individuality’ factor with ‘death’ and ‘temporality’. The interesting factor with

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<sup>1</sup> M.K. Bhadra, *A Critical Survey of Phenomenology and Existentialism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (New Delhi: ICPR, 2004), p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Heidegger, “The Question of Being”, in R.C. Solomon (ed.) *Phenomenology and Existentialism* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1972, 1980), pp. 308 – 309.

individuality is the angst towards finitude that a man faces along with the temporality. The existential question to a man could be thus, “What future does a man have in such a small life?” Temporality is itself the being of Dasein, Dasein is temporality according to Heidegger. While space is the existential mode of Dasein, time is Dasein itself.<sup>3</sup> Existenz, facticity and fallenness all the three existential structures refer to temporality in the form of future, past and present respectively. Time is finite in Heideggerian Dasein as the projection of possibilities looks for the end which is death. It is the structure of Being-towards-Death where no one can take the other person’s dying away from him, it is the individual that has to face it no matter how close others are to him, and none of them will die on behalf of the individual who is dying.<sup>4</sup> We can extend this factor to Orhan Pamuk’s *Snow*<sup>5</sup> where the journalist Ka’s death moves his journalist friend to the extent to lead him visit Kars where Ka had an eventful life. Although Ka dies in Frankfurt, the significance of his life rests in Kars, a Turkey city where he faced a fundamentalist and a lady named İpek with whom he fell in love. The misunderstanding between the two related to the fundamentalist leader’s death led Ka leaving the city of Kars where he could never return. He left a solitary life in Frankfurt remembering the lady and died after four years. He had the desire to return to Kars to marry İpek that he never could fulfil and his projection comes to an end with his death. So there are dreams and projections a man has, yet it is not always possible to accomplish them, in fact there is the void factor he can never get away. Unfulfilled dreams, plans and projects talk about the temporality of the individual who is ultimately helpless to his death, and this understanding makes Dasein anticipating his individuality. Death is the ownmost possibility of Dasein. What is important to understand here that one encounters death in many instances, be it death of a friend, death of a very near one, death of mass; this brings an individual to realize his being-with-others. Man is essentially a relational self since he cannot detach himself totally from the relation with the ‘other’ in any existential form. We need to contemplate that in many ways the death of other human beings affect man. As man lives in temporality, he tends to take deaths coming in the way of his future

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<sup>3</sup> M.K. Bhadra, p. 317.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 318.

<sup>5</sup> Orhan Pamuk, *Snow*, Tr. Maureen Freely (London: Faber and Faber, 2004).

projects which he wants to fulfil. In another way death of near ones bring in a sense of anxiety in him as he feels his life closer to perishing, he starts to believe that part of his life is already perished when he loses a nearest one. Being-with-others makes a man habituated to live in a comfort zone that he never wants to leave. Although he is then vulnerable to lead an inauthentic life, since he does not bother to ask questions about his potential abilities, it becomes intolerable for man to find himself in the world of deep sorrow. A kind of angst is involved when he perceives death of his close one, a sense of hollow disturbs him, unsettles his Being-in-the-world. Eminent Bengali poet Sankha Ghosh wrote a poem named 'Aayu'; the term 'aayu' means lifetime, it defines the period of life one has spent. Then one can also say that it demarcates the duration of life, the ultimatum is just after the living period is over. Joy Goswami, another famous contemporary Bengali poet, analyses the poem of Sankha Ghosh in his book Roudrachhayar Sankalan in a deeply philosophical manner which I consider is worth noting here. I find the following lines of the poem very significant:

*Sroter bhitore ghurni, ghurnir bhitore stabdha Ayu*

*Lekho aayu, lekho aayu Chup karo, shabdaheen hao.* ('Aayu', Sankha Ghosh)

The wave is always in motion, whirlwind is there, beneath is the clogged lifetime. Joy Goswami views that the term 'aayu' or lifetime is both static and moving. The existence is integrally related with this, time is moving forth and at the same time it is eternal. 'Aayu' means the existence, yet it defines the limit of existence, reminds us about death. Therefore, the poet thinks that it is not only the lived existence is what to be written; the death is to be written as well. Either it is the death of mass due to terrorism or due to the mistake of state policy and society, or the death of near or dear ones, we are struck by these. Joy Goswami observes that these could be taken as the extension of our death in the sense of the pain or anguish or persistent poignancy. This is annihilation of the person from our life, but on the other side of the coin part of them is still existent in our memory, in whatever form – vibrant or gloomy. So, the nothingness and existence both reside in the term 'aayu' or

lifetime as I call it.<sup>6</sup> When the existence comes to an end, then there is eternal silence; a sense of void fills the heart of man as there is nothing known beyond death. It defines the human finitude in the physical world as the achievement of the person comes to an end, he has nothing more to do or nothing that he can do to revive the possibility of coming into existence.

In conclusion I consider the existential issue in question regarding death as a point of demarcation between the lived experience and its disappearance. Dasein's existence lie in its realization of being an authentic individual, but this insight takes its comprehensive form in the sense of temporality. Everyday existence of us is struck immensely when we see the other dying in front of us. It makes us vulnerable to the extent of being in the fear of annihilating at any point of time, thus arouses the feeling of being individual – being-alone-in-the-world and takes human beings to another level of understanding, which demands a meaning of life. The individuality cannot be understood in isolation of the discourse with others, and death poses a kind of discourse which I think is critical in the understanding of individuality. This automatically brings in the question of Dasein being temporal as its existence is not infinite. The totality of existence is not the proposition here; rather our contention could be limited to the fragments of lived experience which are encountered with the death of others. Therefore, I think that death is the meeting point of individuality and temporality of Dasein from the existential point of view.

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<sup>6</sup> Joy Goswami, *Roudrachhayar Sankalan* (Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, 1998), pp. 14 – 16.

## ***DHARMA IN THE SENSE OF MORALITY: AN ANALYSIS***

RANJIT KUMAR BARMAN

It is a well known fact that the human beings are different from animals. This difference is implicated by '*Dharma*'. But what is *Dharma*? Is *Dharma* something ritual which is offered for the satisfaction of God or to have the grace of Him, or something others?

Generally the term *Dharma* bears various meanings. Bankim Chandra in his article *Dharmatattva* has given six meanings of the term.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes it means some religious activities. Sometimes it refers to the essential character of an object. In this paper an effort has been made to investigate the original meaning of *Dharma*, which makes a man actually distinguished from an animal, and also to examine in what sense *Dharma* is relevant in present day society, especially in a secular country like India. If we carefully go through our traditional texts in order to determine the actual meaning of the term *Dharma*, we find that this term has basically been taken, in these texts, in the sense of morality, which is its real meaning, I think. *Dharma* in the sense of morality is the basic significance of the term. The other meanings of the term are centered on this. I consider that this sense of *Dharma* is relevant for present situation of the society in order to remove the religions violence.

The role of religion, in the history of the evolution of human thought, is very important. From the very beginning of time religion has occupied the central position in human life. It would not be exaggerated, if we say after following Max Muller, that the true history of man is the history of his religion'.<sup>2</sup> We may ponder over the wellbeing which is achieved through religion in society. A historical account says that many conflicts have been occurred in the earth, the major cause of which is religious sentiment. As a result, we have witnessed the different awful violence of the riot and even of the war including murder, bloodshed, women-torture, hampering the chastity of women, burning the house, destruction of the temple, mosque and the church etc. *Lajjā*, a novel, by Taslima Nasrin, is the testimony of such kinds of religious conflicts. In the novel, Taslima has shown, just after the destruction of the Bavri mosque in India, how the naked violence is spread over the Hindus in Bangladesh. This novel, I think, is the vivid picture of violence arising from religious intolerance. Taslima says:

The passionate and insane Hindus have destroyed the Babri mosque. Now the Hindus of the Bangladesh will have to expiate of their (the Indian Hindus) sin. The man belonging to the minority community like Sudhamay was not released from the torture of fanatic Muslims in the year 1990, so why would they be released in the year 1992? In this year, also, Sudhamay(s) will hide them in the cavity of mouse. Is it due to the fact that he belongs to the Hindu community, or as the Hindus have destroyed the mosque in India? <sup>3</sup>

Due to the misconception of *Dharma* the division and mistrust among human beings has been spread throughout the country. Religion or *Dharma* makes us blind. It is overall noticed that a man belonging to a particular sect or religion does not tolerate others belonging to another sect or religion. This situation is not found in present day due to understanding the wider notion of *Dharma*. If we go through the history, we come to know about the crusade war which is declared by the Christian to recover Palestine, the holy land of Christian being related to Jesus Christ's life, from Mahommedans. The Brahmins did not accept the emergence of Buddhists and Jainas in India. In eleventh century the Hindu king Harse of Kashmir destroyed the Buddhist temples and killed thousand number of Buddhist. Jainism was attacked and their books were burnt. After all, the reason behind this is that there is contradiction among different religious sects. Division of the country on the basis of religion is crude reality.<sup>4</sup>

One thing is worthy to mention here that although the term *Dharma* is translated into 'religion' in modern time, yet these two do not convey the same meaning, i.e. the meaning conveyed by the Sanskrit word *Dharma* is not the same with that of the word 'religion'. In English, usually the word 'religion' means the custom of a group of people.

'Religion is a set of common beliefs held by the group of people often codified as prayer and religious law. There are as many different types of religion and there are different types of people in the world.'<sup>5</sup> The English word 'religion' is derived from the Middle English 'religioun' which came from the Old French religion. It may have been originally derived from the Latin word 'religo' which means 'good faith,' 'ritual' and other similar meanings. Or it may have come from the Latin 'religãre' which means 'to tie fast.'<sup>6</sup>

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary expresses the meaning of the word religion in the following way: i) The belief in the existence of god or gods, and

the activities that are connected with the worship of them. ii) One of the systems of faith that are based on the belief in the existence of a particular god or gods. The New Collins Dictionary gives the meaning of religion as any formal or institutionalized expression of the belief in a supernatural power(s) considered to be divine or to have control of human destiny. In Bengali we arbitrarily say: '*jaler dharma tr̥ṣṇā nivāran karā*' i.e., the *dharma* of water is to quench thirst and '*āguner dharma dahan karā*' i.e., the *dharma* of fire is to burn. Now rendering the word *Dharma* with the word religion, if we translate the above two sentences that the religion of water is to quench thirst and the religion of fire is to burn, would it be right translations of these two sentences? In Sanskrit, the meaning of the term *Dharma* is different from what we normally understand. The term *Dharma* is constituted with the Sanskrit root verb '*dhṛ*' adding with the suffix *man*. The word *dhṛ* means upholding. Hence, the derivative meaning of the term *Dharma* is something upholding, something sustaining. That, which sustains it, is its *Dharma*. In the case of an object, the essential property upholds it. Hence, the essential property of an object is its *Dharma*. For, this property bears the identity of it. *Dharma* is the essential character of an object through which it is known as such. In the like manner, the essential property of a man which upholds him, distinguishes him, is the *Dharma* of him.

Though actually the meaning of the term *Dharma* is something upholding, i.e. something that sustains an object, an individual, a society and the whole universe harmoniously, yet it is not taken as a similar manner. Now-a-days, we see that many things are being practiced by the name of *Dharma*. Some think that worshipping the idol of goddess is their *Dharma*. Some consider that the imposition of their own faith to others is their *Dharma*, fighting for this is also considered as *Dharma*. Some think that *Dharma* is meant for chanting and dancing besides a tree after smearing it with oil and vermilion. Some feel that to paint the body with ashes or to wear a particular dress is *Dharma*. Indeed, at present, the picture which comes to our mind, at first, for representing the phenomenon of *Dharma* is what is just said above due to the unaware of the real meaning of the term *Dharma*. Keeping the idea in view, it is essential to know the exact meaning of the term *Dharma* as described in our ancient texts.

It is stated that an individual without *Dharma* in the sense of morality is a beast (*Dharmena hīnā paśubhiḥ samānāḥ*). But why are human beings, in spite of being more intelligent and more advanced, considered as animal? The answer from the stand point of the scriptures is that there are four instincts in both men and animals. These are eating, sleeping, fearing and enjoying of the sex life. A dog eats; a man also eats. It may be in the case of man that it is well cooked foods. A dog sleeps, gets fear and takes the enjoyment of sex; a man also adopts these, but in complicated way. It may be the case that he or she sleeps in a well decorated room and takes the enjoyment of sex in association with a beautiful lady. He saves himself in making the weapons. The above said differences do not mean that human beings are different from animals as the purpose remains the same in both cases. The following verse tells us that one is taken to be distinguished from an animal if one holds *dharma* in one's day life. (*āhāra nidrā bhaya maithunañca sāmānyametata paśubhir narāṇām; dharma hi teṣāmadhika viśeṣa dharmena hīnāḥ paśubhiḥ samānāḥ*).<sup>7</sup>

Let us consider some traditional texts. If we first consider the first verse of *Bhagavadgītā*, we can see that Dhritarastra asked Sañjay what his sons and the sons of Pandu had done being assembled in *Kurukṣetra* which is also known as the field of righteousness. The verse is as follows: '*Dharmakṣetre kurukṣetre samavetā yuyutsavaḥ; Māmakaḥ pāṇḍavās cai va kimakurvata sañjaya*'.<sup>8</sup> Here the term '*Dharma*' in the word '*Dharmakṣetre*' has been used in ethical sense. There is another verse where it is stated that whenever *Dharma* (justice) is demolished as well as *Adharma* (injustice) is increased. Krishna appears on this earth to establish *Dharma* and to protect the honest persons.<sup>9</sup> In this verse also the term '*Dharma*' is taken in the moral sense.

The ethics of the *Bhagavadgītā* is to attain the knowledge by which one can perform one's duties without the hope for the fruits, which is called *Niṣkāma Karma*. Krishna says that this technique of rendering duties to the society will save a man from the material danger. (*svalpam apy asya dharmasya; trāyate mahato bhayāt*).<sup>10</sup> The significance is that this type of *Dharma* is nothing but moral consciousness which is to be attained through its practice in everyday life.

This view is also found in *Śrīmadbhāgavatam*. It is stated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> verse of the first canto that one should abandon the so called *Dharma* which is not associated with

good and it is needed to become clean for performing *Dharma* (*dharmah prajjhita kaitavoh'atra paramah nirmatsarāṇām satām*). Here the word '*nirmatsarāṇām*' (mentioned in the *sloka*) is very important with a view to performing *Dharma*. *Nirmatsarāṇām* means one whose heart is completely free from dirty.<sup>11</sup> It is one of the moral virtues. This verse also suggests that *Dharma* means to become advanced in moral status.

Now we consider the term *Dharma* in the view point of *Mahābhārata*. It is stated that to think the welfare of all living beings is *Dharma*. This feeling is not taken only for the welfare of human beings, but also for that of all living entities in the world. Friendly attitude to others is also considered as *Dharma* in the eye of this scripture.<sup>12</sup> In this epic justice to human beings is taken so emphatically that for the sake of the good of the human being it is permissible to say false words (*Satyājyāyonṛtamvācah*).<sup>13</sup> This is the uniqueness of this scripture that to speak false is accepted here to ensure the good.

The same view is again substantiated in the *Manusmṛhitā*. According to Manu, *Dharma* is that by which one can attain the highest good. He considers that *Dharma* can be performed by honest and intellectual persons who do not have malice. This feeling of *Dharma*, after Manu, comes from our conscience (*hṛdayenābhyanuñātā*).<sup>14</sup>

It is also stated in *Manusmṛhita* that a person who is *dhārmika* in the true sense of the term must have thirteen qualities, which are as follows: service to other (*aparopatāpitā*), non-jealous to others (*anasūyatā*), softness in temperament (*mṛdūtā*), non-harassment to others (*apāruṣyam*), friendliness (*mitratā*), capability of speaking lovable words (*priyamvādītā*), sense of gratitude (*kṛtajñatā*), pity to others (*karuṇyam*), etc.<sup>15</sup> These are all moral virtues which constitute *Dharma* and hence these are to be developed for establishing the welfare of human being as well as that of the society. There is also a mention of ten qualities, which are called *sādhārana dharma*,<sup>16</sup> and these are to be maintained by all.

Apart from these mentioned above, Manu has given a very short definition of *dharma*, which is as follows: '*Ahimsā satyamasteṣṇṇ śauca saṁyamevaca; atad samāsikam proktam dharmasya pañcalakṣaṇam*'.<sup>17</sup> Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, cleanliness and equality- all these moral virtues are the marks of a *dhārmika* person. Mahānāmabrata Brahmācāri calls these qualities as 'religion of a gentle man'.<sup>18</sup> The

ultimate objective is to become gentle. There is a prayer in *R̥gveda* which runs as follows ‘*bhadram no api vatyayah manah*’ i.e. make our mind gentle, satisfied and purified.<sup>19</sup> Without purity no true worship is possible. Unless an individual is pure in body and mind, his coming into a temple and worshipping the Deity are meaningless. Enhancement, development and uplift of these qualities in life are *Dharma*. Hence it may be taken into account that *dharma* is nothing but obtaining some moral values. Here, we can remember the statement of Taslima Nasrin. In her novel (*Lajja*) she comments ‘*Dharmer apar nām āaj theke manuṣyatva hok*’.<sup>20</sup> *Manuṣyatva* or humanity may become another name of *Dharma* from today.

Now, we can review of the standpoint of the *Vaiśeṣikas* regarding the notion of *Dharma*. In *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra*, *Dharma* is beautifully defined as follows. That from which one is associated with prosperity and highest good is called *Dharma*. The activities which connect us with welfare in real sense of the term are called *Dharma*. (*Yato ’bhyudaya niḥśreyasa siddhiḥ saḥ dharmah*).<sup>21</sup>

Thus, we come across that all our scriptures are advising everyone to be morally advanced in life. Without morality, spiritualism is not to be attained. To reach the highest level of spirituality one should lead moral life. Besides these, we may cite the position of Jainism and Buddhism in this regard. We know *Pañcamahāvratā* of Jainism and *Pañcaśīla* of Buddhism, which are nothing but moral consciousness.

This very theme is also echoed in the philosophy of Vivekananda and Rabindranath. Vivekananda advises man to manifest the divinity within. *Dharma* is defined by Rabindranath as the extension of the self, i.e. to realize, ‘I’ am among the all things of the world and all things are within ‘me’. It is this which is the journey of human life in the eye of Rabindranath. And this is called *Dharma*. In the circle of his creation (poems, songs etc.), we find the picture of becoming of the extension of the self. In the poem ‘*Prabhāt Utsab*’ he tells:

“*hṛday āji mor kemone gelo khuli*  
*Jagat āsi sethā kariche kolākuli*”<sup>22</sup>

If the above consideration is accepted, some philosophical problems can be raised on the notion of *Dharma*. First, we come across many definitions of *Dharma* in deferent systems of Indian philosophy, but derivative meaning of the term is ‘something upholding’ (*dhāranāt dharmam ityāhuḥ*). How can derivative general meaning of the term be extended to all the definitions? To answer this question we

can say that, if we carefully go through the definitions of *Dharma* in different texts, we shall notice that there is a common message in all the definitions. And the message is to sustain the human beings, society and even the world by providing their wellbeing. Now the question is: what is the thing that sustains the world? It is an order which sustains the world. Likewise, moral principle/morality is that which sustains human beings as well as the society. All the definitions of *Dharma* show that it is moral value which ultimately upholds an individual, the society and the world. The task of moral principle is to bring the harmonious wellbeing to the society. It should not be expected that one's comfort causes the discomfort of another.

We do not find any definition of *Dharma* where there is no moral implication. Caitanya Mahāprabhu once told Sanātana Goswami that the *Dharma* of present age is to show pity or sympathy to others, to feel the fondness of chanting the holy name of God and to give the service to the *vaisnavas* (*Jive dayā nāme ruchi vaiṣṇava sevana, ihā haite dharma ān nāhi Sanātana / 'Caitanya Caritāmrita'*). The word 'dayā' (sympathy) is a moral virtue. All good concepts, generally, are stipulated in the holy name of God. Hence, the chanting of such a vibration of the name of God, I think, must have, at least, psychological value, and it keeps us balanced. The word '*Vaiṣṇava*' does not mean the devotees of Lord *Viṣṇu* only, but all the living entities also on account of the fact that the word '*Vaiṣṇava*' is constituted with the Sanskrit root word '*Viṣṇu*' and its suffix '*sna*'. The suffix *sna* means son. Naturally we all are *vaiṣṇavas* for being the son of God. Hence, *vaiṣṇava sevana* means to bestow the service to all living entities. Accordingly, it can be shown that the basic meaning of *Dharma* can be extended to all definitions.

Secondly, how can the notion of *Dharma* in the sense of morality be extended to other definitions given by the *Vaiśeṣikas*? According to *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra Dharma* is that which brings prosperity in mundane life and spiritual bliss (*Yato 'bhyudaya nihsreyasa siddhiḥ saḥ dharmah*). In response to this question it is said that values regulate a man's conduct which ultimately brings worldly prosperity and spiritual bliss. Now, we may observe how values regulate the conduct of a man. Here an example is given:

“Let us see how *lajjā* makes us active. We generally do some work being prompted by *caḥṣulajjā* or 'shame of the eye'. If all the members of my family are

engaged in performing different duties, it is not possible for me to sit in idleness as it does not 'look good'. We shall be bound to perform duty so that others do not criticize us. The idea which prompts us to action is called *cakṣulajjā*. In other words, when other family members or members of our society are engaged in duty, our activity becomes the cause of our shame. In order to hide it, we become active. It is a fact that, if a man does not engage himself in the service to ensure the welfare of society, then other social members call him 'self-centred' etc. Nobody wants to be designated as self-centred etc, as these attributes become the cause of shame to him. In order to make himself free from this shame, he comes forward to the service of the society and in this way he becomes active".<sup>23</sup>

Thirdly, a problem may be raised if *Dharma* is taken in the sense of morality, it will contradict the *Bhagavadgītā*'s statement: '*Sarvadharmān parityajya māmekam smarāṇam vraja*' (i.e. take shelter with me leaving all *Dharmas*).<sup>24</sup> It may be taken as the contradiction to *Āgama*, which is not acceptable. The problems may be solved when we consider the principles of teaching in the *Vedas*. In Vedic system, we find that a person comes to a bona fide *guru* and he must surrender to the lotus feet of him, which ultimately leads him to lead a moral life.

Fourthly, it is stated in our scriptures that somebody is reluctant to do some work in spite of knowing that it is duty or virtuous (*jānāmi dharmam na ca me pravrtti*). On the other hand, someone hardly feels to refrain from some action in spite of knowing that it is not virtuous (*jānāmi adharmam na ca me nivrtti*). How do such conditions prevail in our society? What are the causes of the same? The causes are that we forget the obligatory sense of the duty. In fact this is *Dharma*. Here *Dharma* means that which stimulates a man in both consciousness and action. Man spoils his energy to render some activities that are rituals. These are the causes behind this problem. When we know that our duty, i.e., our *Dharma* is to become morally advanced, to acquire some divine qualities and to act something which is assigned to us, the society will run smoothly and turn into heaven. In that level, we regain our *Karmasanskriti* (work-culture) in the true sense of the term. Actually, we need a state where common people can act according to their morality, not being biased in any religious codes.

Lastly, is *Dharma* in the sense of morality relevant today in a secular country like India? In fact, at present we need a religion which is not ritual-centric, around which all problems of social harmony and conflict start. In Buddhism and Jainism, we come across the concept of *Dharma* which is, in fact, founded on morality. Moreover, Buddhism and *Sāṃkhya* are not God-centric also. An individual, if so called religious, but not moral, cannot build a malice less and a peaceful society. Such persons are harmful to the society. Prof. Raghunath Ghosh cites an example of the deed of such a person in '*Facets of Feminism: Studies on the Concept of Woman in Indian Tradition*', which goes as follows:

“Such a picture of ignorance is beautifully painted in a Hindi film recently released called *bhavandar*. It is shown there that some of the persons ignorant about real status of woman have raped a village girl who has raised her voice against their evil deeds. Among the rapists there is a priest of a temple who is found to utter mantra –‘*yā devi sarvabhutesu mātṛrupena samsthitā*’ in front of the goddess while worshipping just after the rape is performed by him. The priest who is one of the rapists has no right to utter this mantra giving great honour to women. In this context the Director of the film has shown the level of ignorance of ordinary man about great position of women as depicted in our scriptures and maintained by our ancestors. Had he realized the inner significance of such *mantra*, he would have refrained from such action of rape etc. Instead of torturing her he would have treated her as respectable as his own mother. This is one instance of thousand types of woman-torture (pointed out by the director), which are going on every day in our society”.<sup>25</sup>

There are many persons in our society, who commit offence due to the ignorance of inner significance of their deeds. There are many persons also, on the other hand, who not for ignorance rather takes an artificial form (a pretended form) in their nature for doing the evil deeds, which is commonly known as *māyikarūpa*. We know that Rāvana takes the garment of a *sage* for abducting Sita, which is nothing but his *māyikarūpa*. The term *Māyā* as found in *māyikarūpa* is taken in the sense of artificiality (*kṛitrimatā*). Any type of artificial form is called *Māyā*. True humanity or *Dharma* remains in one's non-artificial form. The picture of such non-artificiality (*amāyikatā*) is found in the following poem of Rabindranath:

*‘Bājāo āmāre Bājāo, bājāle ye sure probhāt ālore  
Se sure more bājāo, ye sure bharile bhāṣabholā gīte,  
Śīsur navīn jīvan vanśite, Jananīr mukh tākāno hāsīte, Se sure more bājāo’*<sup>26</sup>

This non artificial form of an individual is his real nature, pure identification. Caste, creed, religious identification; these all are something imposed on human beings. Actually we are beyond of all this. The same echo is found in a song, in a form of a simple question, of a village singer of Bengal: '*Āsvār kāle ki jāt chile, ese tumi ki jāt nile, ki jāt havā jāvār kāle, sei kathā bheve balo nā*'<sup>27</sup> (A song, composed by Lalon Fakir)

We shall have to be free from all these imposed identification. Unless we decline these forms of identification, imposed upon us, it is impossible to become pure in the true sense of the term. Sri Rupa Goswami, one of the six Goswamis of Vrindavana, a Vaisnava philosopher, holds the same, quoting a beautiful verse from *Nārada Pancaratra*, in his '*Bhaktirasāmṛta-sindhu*', which runs as follows- '*sarvopādhi vinirmuktam tat paratvena nirmalam*'.

Hence, it can be said that, if *Dharma* is based on morality as well as non-artificial form of humanity i.e. true humanity, one Universal Religion can be prescribed in the whole world for bringing global peace and harmony. And without only this sense that *Dharma* in the sense of morality (not in ritual sense), human beings are, indeed, considered as animals. Even Aristotle once remarked that man is rational animal. If we set-aside rationality from the definition of man then there is no distinction between a man and an animal.

### Notes and References:

1. These six meanings are : i) Religion like Buddhism, Hinduism, Islamism etc, ii) Morality, iii) Attitude of pious man, iv) Ritual activities which is defined as *pāpa & punya*, v) Essential character of an object, like *Dharma* of water is to move downwards, vi) Customs like *deshadharmā*, *kuladharmā* etc. Bankim Chandra: *Dharmatattva*, *Bankim Rachanavali*, 2<sup>nd</sup> part, Sāhitya Samsad, Kolkata, 1361 (B. S.), p. 672.
2. D Miall Eduards: *The Philosophy of Religion*, New York: George H. Doran Company, 1924, p.9.
3. Taslima Nasrin: *Lajjā*, Ananda Publishers, Kolkata, 1993, p. 15.
4. Aravinda Basu and Nivedita Chakrabarti: *Dharmadarshan* (Beng), K.L.M. Private Limited, Kolkata, 2007, (ISBN 81-7102-150-6), p. 5.
5. Available at: <http://veda.wikidot.com/dharma-and-religion#toc0>, on 14 April 2014.
6. Available at: <http://veda.wikidot.com/dharma-and-religion#toc1>, on 14 April 2014.
7. *Mahābhārata*, *Śāntiparva*, 294/29 (From *Śrīmadbhagavadgīta Rahasya* by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Jyotindra Nath Tagore [trans.], edited by Dr. Dhanesh Narayan Chakrabarti), Progressive Book Forum, Calcutta, 1981, p. 63).
8. *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, 1/1. (The *Bhagavadgītā* edit. Radhakrishnan, Harper Collins: New Delhi, 2009, p. 79.).

9. *Ibid*, 4/7. (taken from *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Rahasya* written by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Jyotindra Nath Tagore [trans.], edit Dhanesh Narayan Chakrabarti), Progressive Book Forum, Calcutta, 1981, p. 578).
10. *Ibid*, 2/40. (*Sri Gitā* [Bengali], edit. Jagadis Chandra Ghosh, Presidency Library, Kolkata, 1331 [B.S.], p.49.)
11. *Śrīmad Bhagavatam*, 1/1/2. ( *Śrīmad Bhagavatam*, edit. A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, Bhakticharu Swami [trans.], Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, Srimayapur, 1985, p. 55.
12. *Sarvabhūtahitam maitram purāṇam yaṁ janā viduḥ. Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva*, 261/59 ( taken from an article entitled ‘Dharma as a Moral Value’ by Prof. Raghunath Ghosh, The Journal of Religious Studies, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1, Guru Gobinda Singh Dept. of Religious Studies, Punjabi University, Patila, Spring 1997, p. 96.).
13. *Ibid*, *Dronaparva*, 89/47. (‘Dharma as a Moral Value’ by Prof. Raghunath Ghosh, *The Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1, Guru Gobinda Singh Dept. of Religious Studies, Punjabi University, Patila, Spring 1997, p. 96.).
14. *Manusamhita*, 2/1. (*Manusamhita* [Beng] edit. Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, Sadesh, Kolkata, 2004, p. 21.).
15. *Kulluka on M. S. 2/6*. (These accurate English expressions of the Sanskrit terms have been taken from the book entitled ‘Sura, Man and Society: Philosophy of Harmony in Indian Tradition’ Raghunath Ghosh, Academic Enterprise, Culcutta, pp. 41-42).
16. Dhṛtiḥ kṣamā damaḥasteyaḥ śaucamindriyanigraḥ/Dhirvidyā satyam’akrodha daṣakṣ dharma lakṣanaṁ. *Manusamhitā*, 6/92. (*Manusamhita* [Beng] edit. Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, Sadesh, Kolkata, 2004, p. 221)
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## RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND COMMUNICATION

SUSHABHAN DEB BARMAN

This paper is about the problem of the communication of religious experience. Religious experience is one of the many forms of human experience. The word “experience” has been used with many different meanings. For present purpose, experience includes all the data and processes of consciousness and nothing else. The word experience we use to mean only the conscious or mental, that is to say, the fact of experiencing. Religious experience is understood as the experience of God or any other divine figure. It can range from the experience of God revealing himself to man to the experience of being aware of God’s presence or even a miracle. The experience of believing nature to be a creation of God is a religious experience; so is the experience of prayer. Religious experiences are of many degrees - some are more intensely religious. However, any religious experience is a unique way of apprehending experience. As we have said already, it is a unique way of experiencing.

Let us now come to the problem of communication of religious experience. It is claimed that religious experience is essentially incommunicable. In saying this we do not mean to say that there is no communication between believers on the one hand and non-believers on the other; that *the twain shall never meet*. What we mean to say is that religious experience is basically a level of experience which is ineffable, cannot be communicated in our everyday language. The problem is not so much of its being personal. It is about the mystic aspect of the experience which makes it incapable of expression in ordinary language. It is a deep experience, too solemn and mysterious, a matter of profound feeling, faith and conviction, something that the rapture of poetry can catch, but eludes the methods usually used in philosophy. Hence words like ‘God’, ‘sacred’, ‘people of God’, ‘sin’, ‘miracle’, ‘kingdom of God’, ‘afterlife’ ‘incarnation’ or ‘*avatara*’ etc., carry meanings and messages which are not amenable to factual expression and analysis. Religious experience is inexpressible; it cannot be put into words used literally. In other words, human language cannot be used literally, while speaking of religious experience. Since all the language is derived from our finite experience, it may not apply to the infinite univocally. Let us take an example. The word ‘father’ is part of ordinary language as in “Mr. Deb

Barman is my father". We also say, "God is the father". But the word 'Father' is not used univocally. In the latter, the word is taken as foundational; it signifies God as the source and ground of our being etc. In the words of John Hick "It is by God's will that we exist . . . We are thus totally dependent upon God as the giver not only our existence but also of our highest good. To become conscious of God is to see oneself as a created, dependent creature receiving life and well-being from a higher source"<sup>1</sup>

That is why religious language is said to be non-propositional. Religious utterances do not express propositions which can be true or false. Similar positions are religious language is non-informative or non-cognitive. Religious language fulfills a different function from that of endeavoring to describe facts. Paul Tillich, for example, conceives of religious faith, a kind of religious experience, as ultimate concern.<sup>2</sup> Religious faith as ultimate concern means a subjective attitude and also the object of this attitude - the divine object. Thus religious experience which carries the news of another world requires special linguistic devices. Hence, there are myths, symbols, and parables for its communicability.

Let us explain this with the help of the example of symbols. Religious symbols give us new sensitivities and abilities of perception because of which things, persons, events receive the quality of the 'holy' or the 'sacred'. The trident of Shiva is the symbol of Shiva because it represents the power and glory of the deity. A symbol has two aspects. It opens up the subjective dimension of religious experience and it also opens up levels of reality which are not given to us in any other way.

The point of these special linguistic devices is that they do not convey any information. What we can do is talk round and round the subject, never quite hitting it exactly, until we bring the hearer or the reader to the point of these symbols, their inexhaustible, everlasting character and meaning; until he sees for himself what the experience is. The two sides are then in communion but not communication. According to Rudolf Otto, linguistic communication of religious experience is not possible because it is essentially disengaged from language. In his, *The Idea of the Holy*<sup>3</sup> he says that the experience of the Holy, the numinous experience, cannot be put into words. It is unsayable. That is coming to see the point of religion. Religious experience is unique in that here fissures as it were develop in our ordinary spatio-temporal world and the messages of another world seep in, call it God, Allah, the

Numinous, *Saccidananda*, Sublime, etc., the seriousness of the experience is justified in living this experience and not in communication.

Religious experience is rooted in man's subjective attitude to the divine. By the subjective attitude we mean the direct or immediate awareness of God or the ultimate reality. This does not mean that there are not external concrete manifestations of religious experiences. Religious writings, practices, rituals, pilgrimage and such like are the conventional, recurrent manifestations of particular religions through space and time. There is seemingly an unmanageable abundance of data accumulated about religions by ethnologists, anthropologists, archeologists and other historians of culture. But the accretion of knowledge alone and its communicability can never lead to an understanding of the experience of the transhistoric reality, which we feel designates the fundamental perspective that has to do with religion. It is the human response to an ultimate reality. That is then, the essence of religious phenomenon. No amount of data of manifestation of religion can appreciate the existential dimension of religious experience involving man and his God. There are studies to interpret the structures of man's religious response to symbols in his social world, and the interpretation of the symbols in relation to man's religious world which goes by the name of sociology of religion. This is praiseworthy for developing a methodology for religious practices. But it leaves room for an interpretation of transcendence as a specifically religious category, and hence, of its communicability.

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## **FEMALE INFANTICIDE IS AN INFANTILISM IN OUR SOCIETY**

BHASWATI DE

Infanticide is the intentional killing of infants. Infanticide has been practiced on every continent and by people on every level of cultural complexity, from hunters and gatherers to high civilization, including our own ancestors. Rather than being an exception, then, it has been the rule. In technologically less advanced societies, infanticide was widely accepted, up into the present century. It was very common to destroy infants that were deformed or diseased or illegitimate or regarded as ill omens. But the practice was not restricted to such cases. In many societies, custom determined how many children a family should have, and infanticide was enjoyed as a means of achieving the desired family size. In such societies the practice of infanticide was extremely prevalent.

We know that female infanticide is deliberate killing of newborn female children or the termination of a female fetus through selective abortion. In some countries, female infanticide is more common than the killing of male offspring, due to sex-selective infanticide. While female infanticide has at times been necessary for survival of the community-at-large, there have also been instances where it has been related to the general societal prejudice against females which characterizes most male-dominated cultures. There are many diverse reasons for this wanton destruction; two of the most statistically important are poverty and population control. Since prehistoric times, the supply of food has been a constant check on human population growth. One way to control the lethal effects of starvation was to restrict the number of children allowed to survive to adulthood. Darwin believed that infanticide, "especially of female infants," was the most important restraint on the proliferation of early man.

Infanticide was also widely accepted in more highly developed cultures. It was a common practice among the ancient Arabs, who sometimes regarded it as not merely permissible, but a duty. Female infanticide was common in the poorer districts of China, and although prohibited by both Buddhism and Taoism, was not regarded as wrong by most people. In India, infanticide was accepted during the Vedic age, and the practice was common, over a long period of time, in various Hindu castes. Infanticide was also accepted and practiced by the two most advanced cultures of ancient Europe, Greece and Rome. The status of infanticide in Rome was very

similar. The exposure of healthy infants was probably less common; however this apparently reflects, not a difference in moral outlook, but the need for a population sufficient to maintain a large army. So while the killing of healthy infants was disapproved of, it was not viewed as an especially serious crime. This attitude toward infanticide was shared by the greatest of the Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. Aristotle, in the ideal legislation proposed in his *Politics*, holds that deformed infants should not be allowed to live. Plato, in the *Republic*, goes further, and advocates the destruction not only of defective children, but of those who are the product of inferior parents, or of individuals past the ideal child-bearing ages.

Many philosophers believe that infanticide is intrinsically wrong, and seriously so- for the same reason, and to the same degree, as the killing of an adult human being. Most, however, are content to appeal to the fact that virtually everyone feels that infanticide is seriously wrong. There is a serious question whether philosophers who make such an appeal are right about the facts. Is it true that most people think that infanticide is morally on a par with killing an adult? It is true that the vast majority of people feel that the killing of a normal infant is morally wrong, and it may also be true that they believe that it is seriously wrong. But the situation seems very different in the case of infants that are not normal, where at least a very substantial minority- and possibly a majority-believe that infanticide ought to be permitted.

The practice of infanticide has taken many forms. Child sacrifice to supernatural figures or forces, such as the one practiced in ancient Carthage, may be only the most notorious example in the ancient world. The situation is succinctly summed up by Laila Williamson an anthropologist of the American Museum of Natural History, at the beginning of her article, 'Infanticide: An Anthropological Analysis'. Infanticide is a practice present-day westerners regard as a cruel and inhuman custom, resorted to by only a few desperate and primitive people living in harsh environments. We tend to think of it as an exceptional practice, to be found only among such peoples as the Eskimos and Australian Aborigines, who are far removed in both culture and geographical distance from us and our civilized ancestors. The truth is quite different. Infanticide has been practiced on every continent and by people on every level of cultural complexity, from hunters and

gatherers to high civilizations, including our own ancestors. Rather than being an exception, then, it has been the rule.

The practice has been well documented amongst the indigenous people of Australia, Northern Alaska and South Asia. Barbara Miller argues the practice to be “almost universal”. Miller contends that in regions where women are not employed in agriculture and regions in which dowries are the norm then female infanticide is commonplace, and in 1871 in *The Descent of man, and selection in relation to sex*. Charles Darwin also wrote that the practice was commonplace among the aboriginal tribes of Australia.

In 1990, Amartya Sen writing in the *New York Review of Books* estimated that there were 100 million fewer women in Asia than would be expected, and that this amount of “missing” women “tells us, quietly, a terrible story of inequality and neglect leading to the excess mortality of women.” Initially Amartya Sen’s suggestion of gender bias was contested and it was suggested that hepatitis B was the cause of the alteration in the natural sex ratio. However it is now widely accepted that the numerical worldwide deficit in women is due to gender specific abortions, infanticide and neglect.

In seventh-century Arabia before Islamic culture took root, female infanticide was widely practiced. This is attributed by scholars to the fact that women were deemed “property” within those societies. Others have speculated that to prevent their daughters from a life of misery the mothers would kill the child. With the arrival of Islamic rule the practice was made illegal, however Michelle Oberman believes “there is little reason to believe that call was heeded”.

In nineteenth century England, for example, infanticide was so rampant throughout the country that a debate over how to correct the problem carried out in both the lay and the medical press. An editorial in the respected medical journal *Lancet* noted that “to the same of civilization it must be avowed that not a state has yet advanced to the degree of progress under which child-murder may be said to be a very uncommon crime. The United States ranks also high on the list of countries whose inhabitants kill their children. For infants under the age of one year, the American homicide rate is 11<sup>th</sup> in the world, while for ages one through four it is 1<sup>st</sup> and for ages five through fourteen it is fourth.

Infanticide is a crime overwhelmingly committed by women, both in the third and First World. The practice of killing the girl child is a cruel and abominable act that must be stopped. The only way for that is to spread awareness and make people realize the consequences of not saving their daughter. Education is the basic human right that is vital to personal and societal development and well-being. 'If you educate a man, then you educate a person, but if you educate a woman, then you educate a complete family'.

The bias against females in India is related to the fact that 'sons are called upon to provide the income; they are the ones who do most of the work in the fields. In this way sons are looked to as a type of insurance. With this perspective, it becomes clearer that the high value given to males decreases the value given to females. So female infanticide in India has a history spanning centuries. The dowry system has been cited as one of the main reasons for female infanticide and sex-selective abortion as many families who live in poverty cannot afford to raise the funds for a suitable dowry. Those women who undergo sex determination tests and abort on knowing that the fetus is female are actively taking a decision against equality and the right to life for girls. We know that in the past, women were treated as mere house workers, expected to be bound to four walls of the house and managed only household chores. So in many cases, the women are not independent agents but merely victims of a dominant family ideology based on preference for male children.

In India, since 1974 amniocentesis has been used to determine the gender of a child before birth, and should the child be female then an abortion can be carried out. According to women's rights activist Donna Fernandez, some practices are so deeply embedded within Indian culture it is "almost impossible to do away with them" and she has said that India is undergoing a type of "female genocide". The children's right group CRY has estimated that of twelve million females born yearly in India, one million will have died within their first year of life. In the Indian state of Tamil Nadu during British rule, the practice of female infanticide in Tamil Nadu among the Kallars and Todas was reported. In 1985, it was reported by India Today that female infanticide was still in use in Usilampatti in southern Tamil Nadu. The practice was mostly prevalent among the dominant caste of the region, Kallars.

The Indian Association for women's studies reported in 1998 that 10,000 female fetuses are aborted yearly. In the Times of India gave figure of 50,000 abortions of female fetuses yearly, while another study gave a figure of 78,000 killed between 1978 and 1983. The conflicted statistics in this studies show that this crime against women are an undetectable crime, and the numbers are indicative of genocide. The decline of the sex ratio is another indication of female infanticide and sex-selective abortion. The biggest and most easily measurable effect is the low female-to-male ratios. It is so great that today 36% of men between the ages of 15 and 45 in the wealthy state of Haryana are unmarried. This prevalence of unmarried men has a destabilizing effect that counteracts the stabilizing and enriching effects of families in a society. The 2001 census showed a sex ratio of 972 females per 1,000 males.

As of 2005 it is estimated that 22 million women are missing in India, which had been estimate at 3 million while under colonial rule. (8) In Rajasthan many baby girls were brutally murdered in March 2010, one day old girl thrown into canal was found alive in Kurukshetra in 2008 and obsessed with the desire to give birth to a son, a frustrated mother killed all her three daughters in Odisha in 2007. The United Nations has declared that India is the most deadly country for female children, and that in 2012 female children aged between 1 and 5 were 75 percent more likely to die as opposed to boys.

A number of strategies have been proposed and implemented to try to address the problem of female infanticide, along with the related phenomena of sex-selective abortion and abandonment and neglect of girl children. We know that in 1991 girl Child Protection Scheme was launched. It operates as along term financial incentive, with families having to meet certain obligations, such as sterilization for the woman. Once the obligations are met the state puts aside Rs 2000 in a state run fund, and reaching twenty the girl may use the money, which now should stand at Rs 10,000, to either marry or go into higher education.

Today, infanticide is still most common seen in areas of severe poverty. National Center for Biotechnology the number of girls is continuously decreasing and if no initiative is taken then there may be a time when have no girls in India. The government has tried various approaches to help prevent the practice In India

government started the Baby cradle scheme. The plan was to allow families to give their child up for adoption without going through paper work, no names are taken. The scheme has been given praise for possibly saving the lives of thousands of baby girl, but it has also been criticized by human rights groups, who say that the scheme encourages child abandonment and also reinforces the low status in which women are held. The scheme which was piloted in Tamil Nadu saw cradles placed outside state run health facilities. So wake up join campaigns launched by UNICEF and the Indian government and make your country a just one.

There are a number of possible responses to the worldwide problem of female feticide. Female feticide, another heinous evil propelling in our society is the conjunction of two ethical evils: gender bias and abortion. In this the girl children become target of attack even before they are born. The most fundamental response is to decry the practice of abortion and the circumstances that lead women to resort to it. But, now the time has changed, like men women could excel in every field. The principle should also be reflected in specific social and economic policies to protect the basic rights of women and children, especially female children. Now female feticide and infanticide has adversely affected Indian society. It has been reported that female infanticide existed in India since 1789 in several districts of Rajasthan; along the western shores in Gujarat- Surat and Kutch; and among clan of Rajputs in eastern part of Uttar Pradesh. It was so rampant in Kutch that only five of such families were found who had not killed their 'new born' daughters. Various sexes determination techniques like biopsy, sonograms, ultrasounds scan tests and amniocenteses were introduced to detect fatal abnormalities. Unfortunately, these tests were used as tool by number of families to detect the sex of the child that is yet to born. Government regulations prohibiting the use of prenatal sex identification techniques for nonmedical purposes should be strictly enforced, and violators should be punished accordingly. It will be quite helpful to give a halt to this heinous crime. Now India has tremendous examples of woman who have risen from the ashes and done the country proud. It should be known each and everybody that female child is not a curse on the society. She is one of the most beautiful and precious gift of god. She carries within her the beginning and the end. Patience and tolerance are the two important virtues bestowed by god on the woman, helps her to face bravely the

troubles of the society. The principle of equality between men and women should be more widely promoted through the news media to change the attitude of son preference and improve the awareness of the general public on this issue. It should be necessary that to create a society that celebrates the birth of both gender equality and to develop and implement new innovative approaches to fight the menace. It is important to usher significant changes in societal attitude and perceptions with regard to women in every sphere.

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## THE FREE - WILL DEBATE

JUHI ROUTH

What do we mean by freedom in the context of philosophy? As Richard Taylor puts it, to say that it is in a given instance up to me what I do, is to say that I am in that instance free with respect to what I do on that situation. Thus I am sometimes free to move my fingers this way and that, but not, certainly to bend it backward or into a knot. It means, first there is obstacle or impediment to my activity. Those things that pose obstacles to my motions limit my freedom. "To say that I am free to perform some action thus means at least that there is no obstacle to my doing it, and that nothing constrains me to do otherwise."<sup>1</sup> The problem arises when humans reach a higher stage of self consciousness about how profoundly the world may influence their behavior in ways of which they are unaware. It is at this level their mind oscillates between two options: we are free, we are not free.

Some matters are firmly outside our control. What has already happened at times in the past before our birth, what kinds of universe we live in - these things are in no way up to us. Just as much outside our control are many features of our own self - that we are human and will die, the colour of our eyes, what experience is now leading us to believe about our immediate surroundings, even many of the desires and the feelings that now we are having.

But there are other things that we do control. These are our own present and future actions. Whether we spend the next few hours reading at home or going to the cinema; where to go on holiday this year; whether and how we vote in the next election; whether we stay working in an office or leave to attempt writing as a career - these are things we do control. And control them because they consist in or depend on our own deliberate actions - actions that are up to us, we perform or not. As a normal, mentally healthy adult, how we ourselves act is not something that events in nature or other people just impose on us. Where our own actions are concerned, we can be in charge.

Or so we think. But are we really in charge of our actions? Is how we act truly up to us as things such as the past, the nature of the universe, even many of our

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<sup>1</sup> Taylor, *Metaphysics*, p. 44.

own beliefs and feelings are not? The problem of whether we are ever in control of how we act, and what this control involves is what philosophers call the freewill problem.

And what a problem it is. No matter how familiar the idea of being in control of our actions might appear, there is nothing straight forward about it. Whether we have control over how we act, and what this control requires and involves, and whether and why it matters that we have it- this is one of the very oldest and hardest problems in philosophy.

The long history of the freewill problem shows up in its name. Freedom and Will are two words that we in everyday life do not ordinarily much use when talking about our control over, the up-to- us-ness of, our own actions. Nevertheless for the last 2000 years or more Western philosophers have used precisely these terms to discuss this problem of whether we really do have control over how we act. Their choice of these words freedom and will tells us something about why it might matter whether we do have action control- and what this control over how we act might involve.

The controversy between freedom and necessity in the history of philosophy has been seen differently by different philosophers. The issue has been said to be either of the following:

1. Rationalism Vs Voluntarism
2. Mechanism Vs Teleology
3. Empirical Vs *a priori*
4. Heteronomy Vs Autonomy

In the first opposition, rationalism takes reason as a cause. It holds that all actions have rational explanations and in that way actions are caused. Voluntarism opposes the above view and argues for human freedom. In the second opposition mechanism takes the deterministic view whereas teleology favors for freedom of will. The end of an action must be perceived by the agent and action is done freely to fulfill the desired goal. The empirical view with regard to human action holds that all actions can be explained by the observable phenomenon, whereas, *a priori* stand point states that at least some actions have non-empirical *a priori* ground. In the last opposition it is clear that autonomy means autonomy of the will, on the other hand, by heteronomy it is meant that human actions are caused by something other than the agent.

But the most widely accepted view that cuts across all the above is the issue between determinism and indeterminism. Sartre thinks that the problem of freewill would remain unsolved unless the structure of action is explored. Let us quote from Sartre himself - "it is strange that philosophers have been able to argue endlessly about determinism and freewill, to cite examples in favor of one or the other thesis without ever attempting, first to make explicit the structures contained in the very idea of action"<sup>2</sup>. The concepts causality and freedom are deeply connected with each other. If everything that happens has a cause, then we live in a deterministic universe, or in other words determinism is true; and if determinism is true, one may hold, there is no scope for human freedom.

Determinism is the view that everything that happens is determined. In everyday usage, "to be determined" is roughly synonymous with "to be resolved". However, in the context of human freedom, "to be determined" means "to be caused". Determinism then becomes the view that whatever happens has a cause. Indeterminism is the view that is opposed to determinism. Indeterminism does not accept that everything that happens has a cause. Some writers use the term for the view that some future events are in principle unpredictable. The indeterminist is not likely to press his case in the area of inorganic nature; here he will content to let universal causality reign. The determinists who have held that determinism is compatible with moral responsibility generally presupposed a teleological theory of obligation, usually a utilitarian one. They argue that it is right to hold people responsible, praise them, and punish them, and the like, if and only if doing so leads for greatest balance of good over evil. In other words, like all other action, such acts as ascribing responsibility, blaming, and punishing are justified by their results, not by anything in the past. If this view is correct, ascribing responsibility, blaming, and punishing may be justified even if determinism is true (some would add only if determinism is true), for it will not matter that the agent being blamed was not free in the contra-causal sense. All that matters are whether praising or blaming him will or will not have certain result.

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<sup>2</sup> J.P. Sartre: *Being and Nothingness*, P-617.

Thomas Kapitan has rightly stated in “A master Argument for Incompatibilism?”<sup>3</sup> that the past twenty-five years have witnessed a vigorous discussion of an argument directed against the compatibilist approach to freedom and responsibility. The argument points to the fact that if determinism is true, then whatever happens is a consequence of past events and laws over which we have no control and which we are unable to prevent. But whatever is a consequence is a consequence of what is beyond our control is not itself under our control. Therefore, if determinism is true, then nothing that happens is under our control, including our own actions and thoughts. Nevertheless, the author himself is a compatibilist.

Some may think that we are involved in a vicious circle and repeating same arguments between the determinists and the indeterminists. But the debate is such. There can be many reasons behind the fact that it remains unsettled. One is that, philosophers have their own definitions of concepts argued from their own stand point. If you have a different definition of freedom or causality then your debate may be considered as a pseudo one. G.E. Moore, for example is sure that we are free. He writes:

It is therefore, quite certain (1) that we often should have acted differently if we had chosen to; (2) that similarly we often should have chosen differently, if we had chosen so to choose; and (3) that it was almost always possible that we should have chosen differently, in the sense that no man could know for certain that we should not so choose. All these three things are facts and all of them are quite consistent with the principle of causality.<sup>4</sup>

Moore writes the above certainly with his own definition of causality. In fact, the philosophers who hold freedom to be consistent with causality would maintain that a human action is caused cannot alter the fact that we could have chosen otherwise. Universal causality leaves some space for freedom in the sense that if something is not caused, it is an accident. Nevertheless, even accidents have causes behind them. But it is always possible for the determinist who denies freedom to maintain that when a choice is made or action is done you were actually destined or predetermined to do that. In our above discussion, we saw that teleologists may find it

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<sup>3</sup> The Oxford Handbook of Free Will, p127ff

<sup>4</sup> G.E. Moore, *Ethics* p114-5

hard to make space for freedom if it bases itself on psychology. On the other hand, deontologists argue that had there is no freedom, one cannot be held morally responsible. But this does not provide us with a satisfactory answer because it only shows that without freedom, the institute of morality will fall down. But freedom is not proved. Kant has tried to prove human freedom in his first Critique and Groundwork, but according to some, those are demonstration and not proofs. Even Moore in Ethics ends his chapter on Free Will "with a doubt".<sup>5</sup> Peter Van Inwagen in his article "Freewill Remains a Mystery" concludes that 'freewill undeniably exists and that there is a strong and unanswered prima facie case for its impossibility'.<sup>6</sup>

The existentialist Philosophers like Sartre rejects the whole debate between determinism and indeterminism on the ground that the traditional approach to freedom has objectified freedom. To objectify something is to think that somehow it perceivable and provable by rational means. Sartre considers human freedom as a postulate of action. Kant also described freewill as a postulate but he would hardly consider human being as an agent like Sartre. Moreover, Kant reduced human being to an observer by universalizing moral laws that has been objected by Existentialists right from Nietzsche. Sartre states that there could be no solution to the problem so far we consider freedom as something objective. It is strange that philosophers did not attempt first to explicit the structure contained in the very concept of action. It is worth mentioning that existentialists take self as an agent rather than a subject. Agent is one who acts. It does not mean that they are introducing a new dimension of existence replacing thought. To consider human beings as thinking subject is only an abstraction but for existentialist, "Man exists as a whole. He can not be pieced together from thought, feeling and will".

Sartre would say that to exist is to be free; it is not that first I exist then I am free. But "freedom" and "existence" are two different words and have different uses. How to conceptualise freedom as distinct from existence? Nikolai Bardayev, the Russian existentialist, may help us in this regard. He explores the following characteristic of freedom. Traditional arguements treated freedom objectively. To

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*,p115

<sup>6</sup> *Handbook of Free Will*,p159

treat something as an object is to believe that it can be perceived, investigated and proved or disproved from outside. But freedom is not to be proved rather it is the postulate of action. To endeavour to understand freedom objectively is to treat like a phenomenon of nature. But freedom must be already there before we can even think of such a world. It implies that freedom has the primacy over being. Any system or any ontological system that recognizes the absolute primacy of being is a system of determinism. In that system freedom is derivable from being. The act of freedom in Bardayeve's sense is pre-rational: it can not be grasped by thought. It has to be known through exercise of freedom. To this Sartre adds, the cause, act and the end rises simultaneously.

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## KANT ON THE NATURE OF AESTHETIC JUDGEMENT

ANUP KUMAR DAS

In the analytic of beautiful which is the first part of the *CJ*, Kant mentions two distinct groups of criteria to mark aesthetic judgement from other kinds of judgement – logical and moral. Universality and necessity are defining criteria for an aesthetic judgement, disinterestedness and the form of finality are justificatory criteria. Kant presents this in terms of the four moments of an aesthetic judgement – quality, quantity, relation and modality.

Kant's view on the nature of aesthetic judgement is propounded in the *Critique of Judgement*.<sup>1</sup> An aesthetic judgement is a judgement that a given object is beautiful. Such a judgement Kant calls a judgement of taste which is brought under the class of judgements, called reflective judgement. To understand Kant's view, we have to ask what Kant understands by judgement. Judgement is a higher cognitive faculty according to Kant. The notion of judgement runs through the first, second and third *Critiques*. In each *Critique* there is an appeal to our faculty of judgement and the existence of an a priori principle of judgement. But what Kant means by judgement in the first *Critique* (1772) is different from what he understands by it when he comes to write the *Critique of Judgement* (hence forth *CJ*) in 1790. In the *Critique of Pure Reason* (hence forth *CPR*) to think is to judge; to judge is to subsume particulars under a concept. A concept is a rule or principle of systematization. As for example, when we say "this plate is circular", a particular, namely, this plate, is subsumed under the concept of circularity.

Kant rethinks about this conception of judgement in the third *Critique*.<sup>2</sup> He wishes to call the kind of judgement "determinative" judgement, and he seeks to distinguish it from "reflective" judgement. The former, that is, a "determinative" judgement is simply a matter of subsumption – subsuming particulars under concepts given by understanding, understanding being the faculty of concepts. In a reflective judgement a particular is given but the rule or principle under which it falls has to be found or discovered. Let us try to understand Kant's distinction between

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<sup>1</sup> Kant, Immanuel. *The Critique of Judgement*. Translated by James Creed Meredith. Oxford: Clarendon Press, New work, 1986.

<sup>2</sup> Wicks, Robert. *Kant on Judgment*, Routledge, 2007, p.10

“determinative” and “reflective” judgement. In the introduction to the *Critique of Judgement* Kant writes, “If the universal (the rule, principle, or law,) is given, then the judgement which subsumes the particular under it *is determinant*”.<sup>3</sup> It makes determinant a basic concept by means of a given empirical representation. For a determinant judgement the law is given, a-priori. On the same page of *CJ* Kant says that a determinant judgement “has no need to devise a law for its own guidance to enable it to subordinate the particular in nature to the universal”.<sup>4</sup>

There is, however, a second possible relation between particulars and universals. This relation obtains when a particular is given, but the universal is to be found. A reflective judgement is a product of the capacity to respond to the situation defined by this relation. Hence, Kant defines a reflective judgement as a capacity for reflecting on a given representation according to a certain principle, to produce a possible concept.<sup>5</sup> A reflective judgement has the task of finding an appropriate universal for a given particular. This is the peculiarity of a reflective judgement.

A reflective judgement is linked to reflection. Kant uses “reflection” in two senses. He says that to reflect is to compare and combine a given representation 1) either with other representations or 2) with one’s own cognitive faculties<sup>6</sup>, with respect to a concept thereby found possible. This shows that from these two conceptions of reflection arise two senses of reflective judgement. In one sense, a reflective judgement may be concerned with certain relations among objects. In another sense, a reflective judgement may be concerned with certain relations between an object and a subject of cognition. That means, there are relations of comparison and combination of a given representation with one’s own cognitive faculties – relations which are not represented by any concept at all. In such a judgement, in the subject’s estimation of an object, no concepts are employed. What the judgement involves instead is a harmony of the cognitive faculties of imagination

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<sup>3</sup> *CJ*, trans. James Creed Meredith, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, p.18

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Burnham, Douglas. *Kant’s Philosophies of Judgement*, Edinburgh University Press, 2004, p.149

<sup>6</sup> Wicks, Robert. *Kant on Judgment*, Routledge, 2007, p.38

and understanding. That is to say, the response to the object is a harmony of these faculties.

A judgement of taste or aesthetic judgement is treated by Kant as a species of reflective judgement in this second sense. He says that in an aesthetic judgement we deal with a “judgement in its reflection”. An aesthetic judgement is judging an object as beautiful. Judging an object as beautiful does not mean predicating an objectively valid concept, namely, the concept of beauty to it or attributing to it properties of empirical objects, for example, pleasing, agreeable, satisfying, etc. There is no hedonic appeal. There is, according to Kant, a unification or synthesis of manifold of intuitions in imagination. In this combination of the manifold, imagination is brought into accord or in harmony with understanding. This expression “harmony with understanding” means that the imaginative grasp of unity meets understanding’s general requirement of lawfulness, though understanding does not supply any law or concept for the arrangement of the manifold by imagination. Kant’s account of harmony of faculties does not assign any active role to understanding, its customary role of applying a concept to a manifold as rule of its unification. Imagination, as it were, does the function of understanding by holding together the manifold as unity before the mind, but without the use of a concept or a rule. That is to say, the judgement “‘X’ is beautiful’ describes a state of affairs in which imagination accomplishes everything that is accomplished by understanding, but without the use of a concept. Kant explains this with an example. He speaks of the experience of listening to music. Listening to music produces a feeling of unity and wholeness in a manifold of impressions. The enjoyment of music is produced by the mind’s grasping of this unity but without the use of a concept or a rule. That is why the relationship between imagination and understanding in the context of a reflective judgement of taste is called by Kant “free play”<sup>7</sup> of imagination and understanding without the compulsion of any concept.

In the ‘Analytic of Beautiful’ which is the first part of *Critique of Judgement*, Kant mentions two distinct groups of criteria to distinguish aesthetic judgement from other kinds of judgements - logical and moral. Universality and necessity are defining

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<sup>7</sup> Wicks, Robert. *Kant on Judgment*, Routledge, 2007, p.44

criteria for an aesthetic judgement and disinterestedness and form of finality are justificatory criteria. Kant presents this in terms of the four logical aspects or moments (*Momente*)<sup>8</sup> of aesthetic judgement. But it is difficult to say what Kant means by “moment”. There is no explanation in any of the commentaries. However, these are quality, quantity, relation and modality. From the moment of quantity aesthetic judgements are characterized as ‘subjectively universal’. Laws of nature are universal. Moral laws are universalizable. Aesthetic judgements are subjectively universal. Universality is the basic epistemological condition for calling an object beautiful. When I call something beautiful, I do not merely say that it pleases me; rather it ought to please everyone perceiving. If my use of predicate ‘beautiful’ is not to be irrational, I must have some reason for demanding a similar delight from everyone. The claim to universality of aesthetic judgement is supported by the difference between judgements about the ‘agreeable’ and those of the ‘beautiful’. The term ‘agreeable’ functions to report the occurrence of feeling of pleasure in a specific person, perhaps even on a specific occasion e.g., the colour or scent of roses, the finery of fabrics, etc. It does not involve claims on the agreement of others. This claim to inter subjective validity is a condition of the meaningful use of ‘beautiful’. So the expression “beautiful to me” is not permissible. Without universality there would not be such a thing as taste. Taste for Kant in the *CJ* does not mean refinement or cultured habits but stands for what is universally communicable. Taste is the extension of the feeling of pleasure to others on the a priori assumption that what appears to my rational feeling as beautiful will occasion the same judgement in others with rational feeling like me.

Let us now come to the requirement of necessity. Universality and necessity always go together. In an aesthetic judgement the feeling of delight in a beautiful object is said to have a necessary relation with the object.<sup>9</sup> This necessity Kant calls exemplary necessity. The necessity of an aesthetic judgement “... can only be called *exemplary*”<sup>10</sup> i.e, it is the necessity of the assent of everyone to a judgement that is

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p.16

<sup>9</sup> *CJ*, trans. James Creed Meredith, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, p.53

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p.81

regarded as an example of a rule that we are unable to state<sup>11</sup>. To make something *exemplary* is to see in the particular what is not valid for the individual alone. That means that the given pleasure in an aesthetic object is connected with a necessary feature of the subject rather than with a contingent feature.

From the moment of modality aesthetic judgements are required to be necessary. A beautiful object has a necessary relationship to delight.<sup>12</sup> This requirement of necessity is not unrelated to the requirement of universality. For the demand of universal validity can be satisfied only by a pleasure which is connected with a necessary rather than a contingent feature of the subject. This necessary feature is the harmony of faculties which is the same for all.

The justificatory criteria are those of disinterestedness and finality of form, from the first and the third moments, i.e., quality and relation respectively. A judgement of the beautiful occasions a delight which is disinterested, that is, the object is judged as beautiful apart from any interest or desire. Interest here means interest in the real existence of an object – as if beauty were the quality of an object, as if we could know and verify this. Interest also means the object becomes desired in some way. A reflective judgement is free from my desire, interest, likes and dislikes. By ‘free’<sup>13</sup> Kant means that the ground of my judgement is free from various inclinations which are exterior to the beautiful object itself, called ‘pure beauty’. When we say “this rose is beautiful”, or “this statue is beautiful”, the delight is disinterested because it is not hinged to the object. For what is the rose as flower after all? It, as Kant says, is the ‘genital’ of the plant. That may be of interest to a botanist but aesthetic delight is different to real existence of objects, whether it is agreeable, useful or good. And in that sense, it is ‘free-floating’. Terms such as “rose” or “statue” identify the object of judgement but cannot ground the inference to their beauty. There are some roses and many statues which are not beautiful.

Kant then turns to the moment of relation. Relation here concerns a relation between the judgement and its object. This particular moment in Kant’s argument is complex. And I shall try my best to explain it. The correct object of an aesthetic

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p.81

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p56

<sup>13</sup> Wicks, Robert. *Kant on Judgment*, Routledge, 2007, p.61

delight is purposiveness without the consciousness of any purpose or actual end. From the fact that delight in a beautiful object is disinterested and without a concept. Kant concludes that it has no relation to any subjective end, that is, its success in fulfilling the subject's intention or some objective end. The aesthetic response to a beautiful object is in terms of its form alone. The object has only a "finality of form". In the *CJ* Kant says, "In painting, sculpture, and in fact in all the formative arts, in architecture and horticulture..., the *design* is what is essential. Here it is not what gratifies in sensation but merely what pleases by its form that is the fundamental prerequisite for taste".<sup>14</sup> That means in a reflective judgement of taste the object is responded to by virtue of its form alone. An object has the finality of form when it stands in a certain relation to the subject who perceives and enjoys it. The relation consists in the object's suitability to produce harmony of faculties – imagination and understanding. Such a tendency on the part of the object is finality of form or purposiveness because the harmony of faculties is our general cognitive purpose which is pleasing.

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<sup>14</sup> *CJ*, trans. James Creed Meredith, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, p.67

## **THE CARTESIAN HUMAN BEING** SUTAPA GOSWAMI

Rene Descartes is often considered as the founder or the father of modern philosophy. He has provided us with a new method or way of thinking for philosophy that broke away the thought of medieval period. He was not blind to accept anything. In his work we find freshness, new dimension of thought which is not to be found in any thinker before of him. Descartes was very much worried about the uncertain state of philosophy in his time. He saw that philosophy was cultivated for many centuries by the best minds that had ever lived and there was yet not a single proposition in it which was not under dispute<sup>1</sup>. However, Descartes did not claim that knowledge is not possible. But knowledge for him must be as certain as Arithmetic or Geometry. He wanted to establish philosophy on a certain ground, on a firm and solid foundation. He was surprised to find that philosophy in true sense had lost its meaning in the darkness of medieval period. He wanted to establish philosophy as certain as Mathematics. Therefore, in order to make philosophy truly scientific, he adopted an extraordinary and excellent style, which is called methodological doubt. In that process he started to doubt everything that could be doubted. The object of his methodological doubt was to apply the mathematical method of philosophy for obtaining certitude in knowledge. This will be clearer if we focus on Descartes' great work *Meditation on First Philosophy*, which contains six meditations. The first meditation subtitled "What can be called into doubt" opens with the meditation reflecting on the number of falsehoods he has believed during his life and on the subsequent faultiness of the body of knowledge he has built up from these falsehoods. Actually Descartes brought all of those things within the sphere of doubt which may produce contradictions in our thoughts but excluded all those which can't generate any contradiction when thought about. Say for example, if we consider that the earth, the heavens, the colours, figures etc are nothing but the illusions or dreams and also if we consider ourselves as having no hands, no eyes, no flesh, no blood, nor even any sense-organ, really there do not arise any sort of contradiction in such type of

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<sup>1</sup> Masih, Y. *A Critical History of Western Philosophy* (Greek, Medieval and Modern), Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1994. p 199.

thoughts. That means, in Descartes' philosophy we may bring the existence of natural world and also our bodily existence within the very sphere of doubt because of their contingent nature. We can think of us as without having a corporeal body and also can think the non-existence of external world but we can never think of us as without a mind because of its necessary significance. Therefore, it is clear that under the sphere of doubt we can never bring the existence of our soul or mind or the existence of mine as a thoughtful being. Thus by applying his methodical doubt, Descartes, after very long effort comes to a conclusion that the most certain thing in this world is the assertion that 'I am, I exist'; it is necessarily true in each time that I pronounce it, or that I mentally conceive it.

But what is the foundation on which Descartes established this necessary truth? After doubting many things Descartes came to the conclusion that, there should be no doubt about my doubting, that means 'I doubt' cannot be doubted. Because, the activity of doubt involves the activity of thinking. To doubt is to think and to think is to exist. The activity of thinking indicates the person who thinks. I may doubt anything but I cannot doubt that I doubt. Hence, I doubt or think, therefore I exist, i.e. *cogito ergo sum* is the one certain truth on which the foundation of philosophy may stand up. Therefore, there should be no self doubting; there should be no doubting about self existence. *Cogito ergo sum* means that my consciousness is the means of revealing myself as something existing.

However, I must exist in order to doubt, or to be deceived. Descartes thus arrived at the cogito: "I must finally conclude that this proposition, I am, I think, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind"<sup>2</sup>. From this, it can be said that "I am think, therefore I exist" is the first and most certain of all to occur to anyone who philosophizes in an orderly way. Here is the relevant extract from the *Meditation II*:

"I have conceived myself that there is nothing in the world – no sky, no minds, no bodies. Does not it follow that I do not exist? No surely I must exist since I persuaded myself of something. But there is a deceiver supremely powerful and cunning whose aim is to see that I

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<sup>2</sup>Descartes, Rene. *Meditation on First Philosophy*, Trans. Donald A. Cress, Hackett publishing company, 1967.

am always deceived .But surely I exist, I am deceived. Let him deceived me all he can, he will never make it the case that I am nothing while I think that I something. So that after having reflected well and carefully examined all things, we must come to the definite conclusion that this proposition: "I am, I exist", is necessarily true each time that I pronounce it, or that I mentally conceive it."<sup>3</sup>

From what has been discussed so far, it may seem that by his method of doubt Descartes prove the existence of human being or more particularly the person who enquires. But this would be a wrong conception about Descartes' intention. Descartes was very much conscious about that every time I utter the word 'I' I exist, but the question for him was 'what am I'. That is, what is it to be a human being or what is the essence of being human? Descartes rejects the typical method which looks for definition, e.g. 'Rational Animal'. Because the words used in the definition would then need to be defined. He seeks simple terms that do not need to be defined, whose meaning can just be 'seen', which must be self evident truth, whose truth and falsity does not depend on any other thing. And his answer is 'cogito'.

But what about the human body or, the same, what is my relation with my body? In response to this question it can be said with Descartes that, we human beings cannot be designated as 'body' because by applying the same methodic doubt (proposed by Descartes) we can say that, 'body' is not beyond doubt, there may be certain deceiver who is extremely powerful, and whose aim is to deceive us. And obviously there would be no self contradiction if we deny that there is no body, because we can think ourselves as existent being without having body. So, body is not defining character of human being or 'I'.

Here naturally one query may arise that, why it is so? Why body is not so authentic? To find out the answer of this question we must focus on Descartes' *Meditation II*. According to Descartes, we know our bodily existence through the use of senses, which however, for Descartes is unreliable. To demonstrate the limitations of the senses Descartes gives an example of wax.

According to Descartes, a piece of wax has certain characteristics, such as, shape, size, smell and so forth and our senses inform us about these characteristics.

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<sup>3</sup> *Meditations*, p. 150.

But when the wax was brought towards a flame, all its characteristics were changed completely. So, all the characteristics of a piece of wax that the senses brought to our notice are found to be accidental. However, it seems that the same wax remains, it is still the same thing, it is still the same piece of wax, even though the data of senses inform us that all of the characteristics of wax are different. But for why we say that the same wax remains. For Descartes, certainly nothing remains excepting a certain extended thing which is flexible and movable. That means extension remains unchangeable. And we get this knowledge not through general perception but through mind or the faculty of judgement which rests in my mind. Therefore, in order to grasp properly the nature of the wax, we should put aside the senses, we must use our mind. In this regard the following sentence from Meditation II must be cited:

“And so something which I thought I was seeing with my eyes is in fact grasped solely by the faculty of judgement which is in my mind”.

Descartes concludes that it is the mind which exists undoubtedly, because its existence does not depend on senses. There is nothing which is known distinctly, than mind. And we previously have shown that thought is the essence of mind. The mind according to Descartes is a ‘thinking thing’ and an immaterial substance.

The word thinking has been used by Descartes in a boarder sense of term. Thinking includes: understanding, doubting, affirming, denying, perceiving, imaging, willing and other acts of the intellect. The nature of the human mind is that it is a thinking thing. However, Descartes also accepts the truth that both mind and body constitute a human being. But how the two distinct things i.e. mind and body become related with one another? But Descartes could not give any satisfactory answer of this question. Descartes proposed interactionism to explain the relation between the two extreme opposite substances. However, his solution is problematic and is not accepted by most of the philosophers to come after him.

According to Descartes ‘I exist’ is beyond the region of doubt and is therefore, absolutely certain. Through the process of thinking Descartes not only proved ‘cogito’, but also proved the existence of God. In our mind there is an innate idea of Being who is eternal, omniscient, omnipotent and source of all goodness. Now the question is what or who can be the cause of this idea? We know that the cause must be at least equal to the effect. Therefore, we human beings cannot be the cause as we are finite beings. Hence, this idea must have been caused by an equally

perfect cause, namely, the infinite perfect being, called God. God can not be a deceiver so he does not allow deceiving us. Therefore, God must exist. And through this we also are able to recover the reality of external world (corporeal substance). This in turn serves to fix the certainty of everything that is, clearly and distinctly understood.

A brief inspection on the Cartesian concept of human being indicates that a human being is a thoughtful being. He or she is a composite substance with a body and mind, though mind is more authentic than body. We can think of ourselves as without having a body but we can never think of ourselves as without having a mind. Mind and body are two different entities; there is nothing between them. The Cartesian concept of human being may be summarised as follows: human being is essentially a thinking being having a body and as God creates the world; it cannot be an illusion, human being is *in* the world and not the world is in him or her.

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**THE CONCEPT OF *SĀMĀNYALAKṢAṆA PRATYĀSATTI***  
**IN *NAVYA NYĀYA*\***

INDRANI CHOUDHURY

The present paper deals with the concept of *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* as a super-normal means of knowing with special reference to Navya Nyaya. It is one among the three types of super-normal connection technically called *pratyāsatti* or *alaukika sannikarṣa*. The term *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* may be explained as something whose essential character is universal or *sāmānya*. In other words, it is a kind of connection, which is in the form of universal (*sāmānya*). When our eyes are conjoined with smoke, we acquire the cognition of smoke in which the chief qualifier (*prakāra*) is smokeness (*dhūmatva*). By virtue of being a qualified cognition (*jñāna viśiṣṭa*) the smoke which is a qualificand (*viśeṣya*) is having its chief qualifier (*prakāra*) i.e. smokeness. Through this universal smokeness (*dhūmatva*) which serves here as a supernormal contact, the cognition of all smokes is attained. The contact of our sense organ with the object is normal (*laukika*). The universal i.e. *dhūmatva* which has become a qualifier to the knowledge of the object i.e. *dhūma* which is a qualificand serves as the supernormal connection called *sāmānyalakṣaṇa (dhūmatvam pratyāsatti)*. Due to the acceptance of such *pratyāsatti* the problem of induction, which arises in connection with inference, can easily be solved. This provides certainty about the future prediction that all smokes existing in different space (*deśāntarīya*) and time (*kālāntarīya*) will be associated with fire. In other words, though we have not been presented with all smoky things, we are in a position to assert a true judgement about that class. Since whatever inference provides us is grounded on relation between two universals-smokeness and fireness. The Naiyayikas claim that we see the newly observed instances of a smoky thing as possessing fire, though the basis of our perception lies in the previously ascertained inference about the universals.

In this context the term '*lakṣaṇa*' means '*svarūpa*' or nature. The connection in which universal becomes the nature of the object is called *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*.<sup>1</sup> If this definition is admitted, each and every person would have cognition of all smokes through the connection of smokeness which is eternal and remains through inherence (*samavāya*) in all smokes. From smokeness we can get the knowledge of all smokes, had it been taken as a form of our cognition. In the practical life it does not always

happen due to fact that one attains a particular knowledge of an object from a particular universal. In fact, there is an object i.e., smoke connected with our sense-organ which is taken as a *viśeṣya* or qualificand and there is universal 'smokeness' as a qualifier. Keeping this thing in view the Navya Naiyayikas have proposed a different type of definition of the same which runs as follows. The word '*sāmānyalakṣaṇa sannikarṣa*' means the universal becoming a qualifier of a cognition where the object connected with sense-organ becomes a qualificand (*indriya-sambaddha-viśeṣyaka-jñānaprakāribhūta*)<sup>2</sup>. In the context of knowledge of a particular smoke the smoke has become a qualificand connected with sense-organ. In such smoke the universal 'smokeness' inheres as a qualifier (*prakāribhūta*). In fact, 'smokeness' is to be known as a qualifier and 'smoke' as a qualificand in a cognition which is taken as a qualified cognition (*viśiṣṭa-jñāna*). All individual manifestations of smoke existing in past, present and future can be perceived with the help of super-normal connection through smokeness existing in a particular smoke.<sup>3</sup> Without the acceptance of this type of *sannikarṣa* the doubt regarding the invariable connection with fire which is beyond the reach of sense-organs cannot be explained. When a particular smoke, a particular fire and their co-existence are known, the corresponding universals of them like smokeness and fireness are known simultaneously. Through the universals all individuals having these universals become the object of knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

When someone is going to ascertain *vyāpti* between smoke and fire, he might have doubt in the following form: 'Whether all cases of smoke are cases of fire'. This doubt does not arise at all in the observed case of *vyāpti*. But it may arise concerning all cases of smoke and fire existing in different place and time that are beyond the range of sense-organ.<sup>5</sup> Any type of doubt presupposes the knowledge of the object. Hence in order to justify doubt in the previous form (i.e., whether all cases of smoke are cases of fire), the prior knowledge of all cases of smoke is essential. This is possible through universal i.e., smokeness in this case. This is another need for admitting *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* as a form of connection, which ultimately assists in ascertaining *vyāpti*.

From the above standpoint of the Navya Naiyayikas one could raise the following questions. First, the case mentioned by the Navya Naiyayikas may be

justified with the help of an ordinary contact called *samyukta-samavāya* (conjoined inherence) in which ‘smokeness’ in smoke is apprehended directly. What is the utility of admitting *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* as a super-normal connection? In reply, the Navya Nyaiyayikas may defend themselves by pointing out the fact that when a particular smoke is known through smokeness both are connected with our sense-organs. But in the case of knowing smoke remaining in different time and space as having smokeness is not connected with our sense-organs. Hence, through the universals only the relation between smoke and fire existing in different time and space which is not in proximity of the sense-organs can easily be known, because any type of ordinary perception fails to reveal such truth.

Secondly, the Buddhists do not believe in universal which is eternal and inhered with many (*nityatve sati aneka-samavetatva*). The above-mentioned case of *vyāpti* may easily be explained with the help the rule of cause-effect relation technically called *tadutpatti*. A relation of invariable concomitance can be established between smoke and fire remaining in different space and time with the help of causality, but not through universal. The trust on causality may empower us to tell that if smoke as an effect remains in future fire as cause also will remain without taking help of the universal. In reply, the Navya Naiyayikas might argue that though ‘smoke’ has been taken as an effect caused by fire, all smokes and fires in the womb of future can be known through universal ‘smokeness’ and ‘fireness’ only, but not through causeness and effectness. It should also be kept in mind that the smokeness is to be taken as universal or *sāmānya* binding all individuals of the same class being eternal, but the properties called causeness (*kāraṇatā*) or effectness (*kāryatā*) are limiting adjuncts (*upādhi-s*) and hence they, being acquired properties, can bind others of the same class temporarily but not eternally (*nityatayā*). For this reason for attaining a connection between two things remaining in different space and time these *upādhi-s* are inadequate.

Lastly, in the context cited earlier ‘smoke’ (*dhūma*) may have at least three limiting adjuncts (*avachhedaka-s*)-‘smokeness’ (*dhūmatva*), ‘pervadedness’ (*vyāpyatva*) and ‘effectness’ (*kāryatva*). Among these only smoke limited by smokeness (*dhūmatvāvachhinna dhūma*) may be the super-normal connector of apprehending all cases of smoke remaining in different space and time due to its

eternal character , but other limiters, being inherited properties and non-eternal in character can bind only non-eternal things, i.e., smokes limited by the property of effectness (*kāryatāvachhedakāvachhina kārya* i.e., *dhūma*). If smoke remains as a *kārya* or effect then effectness may be a connector of all smokes having property of effectness, which is not taken as smoke-in-general (*dhūmasāmānya*) and hence universal or *sāmānya* is essential for having all smokes as a super-normal connection. For the Buddhists such problems do not arise due to the fact that the very notion of inference in Buddhism is completely different from that of the Naiyayikas. To them any determinate cognition which is associated with mental ascriptions or description called *kalpanā* is inference, which is determinate perception (*savikalpaka pratyakṣa*) in Nyaya. Hence the concept of universal (*sāmānya*) and having connection with all individuals remaining different space and time with this is not admitted by them. Under this circumstance the relation of identity (*tādātmya*) and causality (*tadutpatti*) may act as relation between smoke and fire, which is true in the phenomenon level (*samvṛti-sat*), but not ultimately (*paramārtha-sat*)<sup>6</sup>. But the Navya Naiyayikas, being realists, do not believe in such dichotomy and hence for them *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* is needed as a form super-normal connection (*alaukika sannikarṣa* or *pratyāsatti*).

### References:

1. “*Sāmānyam lakṣaṇam yasya ityarthah*” *Siddhāntamuktāvalī* on verse-63.
2. *Ibid.*
3. “*Tatra dhūmatvena sannikarṣeṇa dhūmā ityevam rūpam sakaladhūmaviṣayakam jñānam jāyate.*” *Ibid.*
4. “*Vyāptigrahaśca sāmānyalakṣaṇa-pratyāsattiyā sakaladhūmādi-viṣayakah.*” *Tattvacintāmaṇi* with *Māthurī (sāmānyalakṣaṇa-prakaraṇa)*, edited by Kamakhyanath Tarkavagisha, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1962, p.200. Henceforth, *Tattvacintāmaṇi*.
5. “*Manmate tu sakaladhūmopasthitau kālāntarīya-deśāntarīya-dhūme vahnivyāpyatva-sandehah sambhavati.*” *Siddhāntamuktāvalī* on Verse no.63
6. “*Prasiddhadhūme vahnisambandhāvagamāt kālāntarīya-deśāntarīya-dhūmasya mātābhāvenājñānāt. Sāmānyena tu sakaladhūmopasthitau dhūmāntare viśeṣādarśane samśayo yujyate.*” *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, p.200
7. Sayanamadhava: *Sarvadarśana-samgraha*, Bengali trs by Satyajyoti Chakraborty, Sahityasri, Kalikata, 1996, pp.16-31.
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