Philosophy and
the Life-World

Philosophy and the Life-World

Philosophy and the Life-World

CONTRIBUTORS

RAJENDRA PRASAD Retired from Patna University, Present Address : Opposite Stadium, Prem Chand Marg, Rajendra Nagar, Patna, Bihar

MANJULIKA GHOSH Department of Philosophy, North Bengal University, Raja Rammohanpur, Darjeeling, West Bengal

KOYELI CHAKRAVARTI Department of Philosophy, Burdwan University, Burdwan, West Bengal

JAGAT PAL Department of Philosophy, North East Hill University, Shillong, Assam

CHANDIDAS BHATTACHARYA Department of Philosophy, North Bengal University, Raja Rammohanpur, Darjeeling West Bengal

BIJAYANANDA KAR Retired from Utkal University, Present Address : AM - 26, VSS Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Orissa

NIROD BARAN CHAKRAVARTI Retired from Presidency College, Present Address : BC 202, Salt Lake, Sector 1, Calcutta - 64, West Bengal

KARUNASINDHU DAS Department of Sanskrit, Rabindra Bharati University, 56 A B.T. Road, Calcutta -50, West Bengal

PRABHAT MISRA Department of Philosophy & The Life-World, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore, West Bengal

ON THE ADEQUACY OF THE HUMAN-CENTRIC MODEL OF THE FIELD OF MORAL RELATIONS

RAJENDRA PRASAD

i) Objective of the Essay

The word 'field' in the title of this essay and in the discussion that follows is used in the strictly logical sense in which the field of a relation is the sum of its domain and converse domain. There is a traditional, prevalent, or common-sense, model or the field of moral relations according to which, ordinarily, the field of all moral relations consists of only human beings possessing a certain amount of rational and discriminative maturity. This means that only a human being can, conceptually speaking, be the domain or converse domain of any moral relation. In the last two or three decades, moral philosophers have started taking a lot of interest in areas like environmental ethics, animal ethics, etc. Some of them feel that the traditional model of the field of moral relations, or to put it briefly, of the moral field, is suitable only for talking about, or conceptualizing, moral relations existing between human beings, or between human things, and not between human and non-humans, or between one non-human and another. Therefore, it is unsuitable for talking about, or exploring, any issue pertaining to such areas as environmental ethics, animal ethics, etc. in which some reference to something non-human is unavoidable. I intend to show in what follows that there is nothing wrong with the traditional model; that is, nothing wrong with holding that normally, standardly, or ordinarily, as per the way we understand the concept of a moral relation, only a human being can be its domain or converse domain. This model has built into it some sort of flexibility, or openness, taking advantage of which we can extend, if we need to, our notion of a moral relation, ordinarily existing between humans, to talk about any ethical concern involving a moral relation, or something like a moral relation, to a non-human thing, event, or phenomenon, etc. Therefore, I would conclude that the traditional model of the moral field is comprehensive enough to take care even of such areas of ethics in talking about which we have necessarily to deal with some non-human thing.

I shall first briefly unfold the natural evolution of the traditional model involved in the very logic of the concept of a moral relation.

(ii) Traditional Model as Human-Centric

As already said, the field of a relation is the aggregate of its domain and converse domain. For example, in the sentence 'x is greater than y' all those constants, anyone of which can meaningfully replace x would form the domain and all those which can meaningfully replace y the converse domain of the relation 'greater than'. Similarly, in the case of the moral relation 'fair to' in the sentence 'x is fair to y' anyone who can be fair to someone would belong to its domain and anyone to whom someone can be fair to its converse domain. The field of a relation being the totality or sum of its domain and converse domain, the field of the moral relation 'fair to' would thus be the totality of all those who can be fair to anyone and of all those to whom anyone can be fair.

At least a good number of moral relations are such that one can have them to oneself as well as to someone else. One can be fair (or unfair) to oneself as well as to someone else and 'being fair (or unfair) to' denotes, at least in some uses of it, a moral relation.

A moral relation can operate on two levels which may be called non-participatory and participatory. It works on the non-participatory or assessive level, for example, when one judges or evaluates an action to be right or wrong, commendable or condemnable, morally relevant or irrelevant to the context in which it has been done, etc. He can evaluate in the moral sense, or from the moral point of view, not only actions, but also intentions, persons, groups of persons, institutions, etc. In doing this he enters into the relation of evaluating or assessing the moral value of the object judged. To evaluate the status or role of anything is to enter into a **relationship** with it, of course, on the mental level. The relationship is moral, whether one evaluates the moral worth of the thing in positive or negative terms, since the evaluation done may itself be morally right or wrong, justified or unjustified. Judging it right to give to a man of a certain caste a punishment harsher than the one given to a man of another caste when the crime committed by both of them is of the same moral status, is

not only logically wrong but also morally wrong. To judge the moral worth of a thing is to adopt an attitude towards it, which may be an attitude of approval or disapproval, commendation or condemnation, praise or blame, etc. And, the adoption of this attitude can itself be morally defensible or indefensible. Therefore, to call the relation of judging or evaluating a moral, i.e. morally judgeable, or criticizeable, relation is quite in order. To put it in another way, judging the moral worth of a thing is to do something intentionally. Rather, it is something which cannot be done accidentally, inadvertently, or in a huff because it requires one to examine whether or not the thing being evaluated satisfies the relevant criterion or criteria (whatever they may be) of rightness, obligatoriness, or goodness, etc. Such an action has to involve self-consciousness, and therefore cannot be accidental or unintentional.

A moral relationship with the object morally evaluated can be held only by one who possesses the ability of judging, who has some idea of the criterion, or criteria, ground or grounds, i.e. some idea of the reasons, for judging its moral status or worth in positive or negative forms. That is, he has to have a certain level of rationality, or rational maturity. This means that only a human being can be such an evaluator. No plant, or non-human animal can be credited to have the rational maturity or ability to judge the moral worth of anything. It is obvious, then, that the domain of any (moral) relation of morally judging must consist only of human beings possessing a certain kind of rationality, or reasoning ability.

A moral judge may not do anything besides judging, or judging and publicly expressing his judgement. But he may also become a moral activist, that is, proceed to taking the necessary steps called forth by his assessment or understanding. Many Indians considered it morally wrong for an elected legislator to continue enjoying the status and consequential benefits of a legislator even when he has no care or concern for the welfare of the people who have elected him. But a Jai Prakash Narain became a moral activist by compaigning for giving to an electorate the power to de-elect, before the expiry of the period he has been elected for, an elected representative of theirs if and when he has failed to perform the duties he, as a legislator, is required to perform . When one starts taking action in the light of his judgement, or holds a substantive moral relation with anyone, his moral relation with the object or objects concerned becomes participatory in the sense that he participates in a moral pro-

cess or transaction. Jai Prakash Narayan's relation with the then legislators, whom he considered non-functional or mal-functional, became participatory when he started his movement which, though taken to be largely political, was also a moral movement.

Even in ordinary transactions one enters into a participatory moral relationship when he does something which can be morally judged. For example, when a man distributes his parental property among his brothers and sisters strictly in accordance with their bonafide claims, he is fair to his brothers and sisters. 'Being fair to' is a participatory moral relation. So would be its opposite, i.e. 'being unfair to'. Other examples of such a relation would be 'being cruel to', 'being kind to', being faithful (or unfaithful) to', 'being polite (or rude) to', being respectful (or disrespectful)to', 'being sincere (or insincere)to', 'being considerate (or inconsiderate)to', 'being benevolent (or malevolent) towards', 'being caring (or calons) towards', 'being of a forgiving (or unforgiving) nature towards', being friendly (or unfriendly) with', 'being altruistic (or selfish) in', 'being sensitive (or insensitive) to someone's suffering', 'being grateful (or ungrateful) to', etc. etc.

It is also possible that one participates in a moral relation and later on reflects on it and judges it to have been rightly, or wrongly, executed, as we do in self-criticism or self-appraisal. This means that the same person can hold both, a participatory and a non-participatory, relation.

When we consider anyone of these relations, or any of their ilk, we notice that a to hold a moral relation to anything requires a certain kind of mental maturity which is not expected of any non-human thing. Take for example, the moral relation of being faithful to. When we say of a husband that he is faithful to his wife, we assume that he understands the status of the conjugal relation among human relations, the obligations which accrue to him after entering into this sort of relationship with a woman, the social approbation which goes with one's being faithful, and social dis-approbation which goes with being unfaithful, to his wife, the contribution which faithfulness makes to one's leading a happy conjugal life or to having a happy home etc. etc. This kind of understanding we cannot expect a plant or a non-human animal to have. Not even of a dog though we take it to be an unquestionable truth that a dog is faithful to his master or mistress. What I want to emphasize is that

mental calibre which being faithful to requires is not exhibited by a non-human animal. We notice some similarities between the behaviour of a domestic dog and that of a human being, say, an old servant, and say that the dog is faithful, or even that the dog is more faithful than the servant, to its master. The difference is that the behaviour of a dog is instinctive, or conditioned, while that of a human being thought-out or reasoned. A faithful behaviour of a husband is not only inspired by his love for his wife and his own awareness of the obligations of the marriage-bond but is also a response to her behaviour towards him. It is not only responsive but also discriminative. It is discriminative in the sense that a faithful husband discriminates between a behaviour of his wife which is a proper response to his faithfulness and one which is a sign of betrayal. A faithful husband would not mind his wife's letting her brother kiss her. But a faithful dog of the lady would pounce upon her bother if it has not till then been made by her friendly with him. What I want to underline is that not only the judgemental relation but also other moral relations, can be held only by human beings, and not by any plant, any non-human animal, or any inorganic object, like a rock, a river, or a desert, etc. This means that the domain of a moral relation can consist only of human beings. Its boundary is the boundary of the human. In this sense the domain is well-bounded.

To say that only a human being can occupy a place in the domain of a moral relation is not to say that all human beings can do that. To hold a moral relation, as has been said, one has to have some mental, or rather rational, maturity, or ability. For example, the moral relation of being responsible for cannot be held by an infant, an idiot, a subnormal, or a mad, man. But the requirement of rationality in a person for holding a moral relation is flexible, and not too rigid. It is flexible in the sense that it can be held by persons of different levels of rationality. For example, at the bottom we can have a teenager resenting his mother's not caring for him because of her spending a lot of her time in managing the affairs of the ladies' club she has founded, and at the top end the highly qualified, well-studied, individual equipped with the ability to examine pros and cons of every decision he takes. The latter would be someone the like of whom Butler has in mind when he speaks of the cultured, decent, Englishman, as an example of a moral agent whose self-interest overrides an impulse of his, and his conscience overrides his self-interest, when there is a conflict between an impulse and a self-interest, when there is a conflict between an impulse and a self-interest, or between a self-interest and conscience.

In between the two ends we can have persons possessing differing degrees or levels of rational maturity.

Let us now turn to the converse domain of moral relations. That one x human being can have a moral relation with another is obvious. And, normally our talk of moral relations is a talk of a kind of social relations which can exist between one man with another, or between one group of men with another. I can, for some moral reasons, resent, question, condemn, avenge, appreciate, admire, express grtitude for or forgive, etc., a certain action of my neighbour, and do a lot more of several moral things in my dealings with him. The assumption here is that I can have a full-fledged moral relation only with such a being with whom I can communicate and he can communicate with me, who understands the meaning of what I do and I understand what he does, i.e. I can interact with him, argue with him, try to convince him of my stand, or be convinced by his argument, etc., etc. Entering into a moral relationship is thus to participate in a social transaction.

Our moral relationship with children may seem to pose a problem for what has been said above because we cannot have with the kind of communication we can have with an adult. But still we have duties towards them. On the other hand, children have rights on us, but no duties towards us. They cannot have any duty because they do not possess the maturity which being dutiful requires. A mother cannot deny that it is her duty to feed well her six months' old daughter, but she cannot say that the child has the duty not to cry and disturb her when she is engrossed in reading an interesting novel. She cannot also deny that child has her rights on her, for example, the right to be fed well, to be kept clean, etc., though she has no duties towards her (or anybody else). But this case does not pose any problem for the traditional model because one's having a right on someone does not always imply his owing a duty to the latter, nor does one's having a duty towards someone always imply his having a right on the latter. The mother has no right to be fulfilled by her child daughter, though she has some duties towards her, and the daughter has rights on her mother but no duties towards her. The moral relation of being dutiful towards the child is possible because of the assumption, based on the empirical fact, that a child has the potentiality to grow into a normal individual, a full-fledged member of the moral community with whom one can have social interaction.

This is not the case with any non-human thing. We cannot assume that a plant, a hill, or a cat, would grow into an individual, a moral agent.

Sometimes we speak in a language which gives the impression that we can have a moral relation also with an animal. A housewife is angry with her pet cat for having drunk her bedtime milk, and so she is also with her servant who has done a similar thing some other night. We may say that both are guilty of a similar offence and the housewife's anger in both the cases is moral anger, i.e. anger felt for a moral wrong done one night by the cat and another night by the servant.

When we examine the two culprits and their faults, we find that the anger on the cat's having drunk the milk cannot be called moral anger, nor can the cat be called guilty of a moral wrongdoing. The cat has no idea of what is right or wrong; she does not have a reason for drinking the milk, while the servant may have one, say, the reason that the housewife does not give him enough to fill his stomach. Moral anger is felt on one's intentionally doing something which he could have avoided and for doing which he does not have a justifying reason. If there is a justifying reason for doing it, then it becomes morally right and therefore the anger felt for having done it would not be a moral anger. The cat drinks because it is her nature , instinctive propensity, to drink milk if it is reachable to her : she does not deliberate over, or think of, the desirability or undesirability of drinking her mistress's milk. The housewife cannot convince her of having done something wrong because no communion with her is possible . The housewife can surely be angry with the cat because she has suffered a loss, but her anger would be simple annyoyance and not moral anger. Reasons like those mentioned above have given rise to the trditional or common-sense view that moral relations can hold only between one human being and another and not between a human being and a non-human animal, plant, or an inorganic thing like a hill etc. Ethics has been thus, traditionally defined as the study of what a human being living in a society, ought to do or ought to be, which in effect means a study of human relations from the moral point of view which may be deontological or telological. Thus the traditional, or prevalent, model of a moral relation presents it as a relation both the domain and converse domain, i.e. the field, of which consists of human beings possessing, or having the potentiality to possess, a certain kind of rational, or delibera-tive, decision-making, ability.

iii) Human-centric Model as Accomodative
of Extending Moral Relations to Non -humans

The human-centric model does not necessitate or entail that a human being cannot have any moral relation to their environment, to the plants, ani-. mals, rivers, hills, etc. which occupy a large part of his world and which are useful to him in so many ways. As per the traditional model, though a moral relation can straightforwardly exist only between one human and another, we can still say that one ought to take good care of his environment or surroundings. We say one ought to protect his forests (because they cause rainfall), keep the rivers unpolluted (because they give him water needed by his plants, animals, crops, etc.) and ought to be considerate towards his animals (because he benefits from them in so many ways). But, as it is clear from the because-clause in braces in each of the above examples, his obligation to non-humans arises from the fact that the non-humans serve some of his interests or needs, or are usable as means or sources of deriving some benefits.

During the last three or four decades or the 20th century moral philosophers have started paying a lot of attention to such areas as environmental ethics, animal ethics, bioethics, etc. Which are concerned with man's ethical attitudes towards some non-human things or aspects of the world he is in, or of his surroundings. In the terminolodgy of this essay, these are ethical concerns in which the converse domain of a moral relation is something non-human. In the traditional, human-centric, approach to ethics , as we have seen, the entire field of moral relations is held to be human. Therefore, some modem ethicists think that we need a new ethics, or a new approach to ethics, to enable us to talk about the issues pertaining to these new areas of ethics in which the converse domain of a moral relation is something non-human. But these areas do not pose any serious threat to the human-centric, traditional, model. The latter is flexible or accommodative, enough to enable us to express our sensitivity to the ethical importance of rivers, plants, animals, etc. while remaining within its framework, we can hold and talk about a moral relation to a non-human thing because the non-human converse domain of such a relation has always a link, as will be shown below, with some human interest, i.e. something human.

A non-human thing, no matter howsoever greatly we value it, is always of only instrumental value, or speaking more broadly, of value only be-

cause it satisfies some human interest. We say that a farmer ought to keep his ox clean, say, because then it would not transmit any infection to him, that a bus-driver ought to see that his bus does not emit gas while plying, because if it does it would pollute the local air and cause breathing trouble to those on the road who happen to inhale that air, that a hill dweller ought not to denude a hill of its forestration because forestation helps rainfall which men need for culti-vation, etc. etc. Thus, in such cases too, the converse domain of the moral relation of 'ought to', or of 'being obligated to', apparently between a human agent (a farmer, a bus driver, a hill -dweller, etc.) and a non-human thing (an ox, a bus, forestation, etc.) is ultimately between a human agent and a human interest-satisfying thing, i.e. something human. This shows that the human-centric model can take care of all such cases.

In the case of a virtue like kindness, it may seem that it can be said that we ought to be kind to animals without having in mind any interest of ours to be satisfied by being kind to them. It may not be always so because kindness is generally required towards those animals which serve some human interest and not towards those who pose a danger to human existence , or are prone to cause some human suffering. But even if we admit that we ought to be kind to an animal, no matter whether or not being kind to it serves any human interest, this admission does not disprove the adequacy of the human-centric model.

Kindness is a response which is in order only when it is felt towards a being which is experiencing, or subjected to, some suffering, more specifi-cally, to one who is suffering some pain, or has the sensitivity to suffer pain. Therefore, there is no point in being kind to rocks or rivers. But an animal has the sensitivity to suffer pain, and in this respect animals and human beings are similar. It is this similarity which makes kindness to animals a virtue, as is kindness to children or sick men. In requiring one to be kind to animals we assume animals to be similar to human beings. Therefore, kindness to them is kindness to human-like things, and consequently covered by the human-centric model. In fact, anything which one considers to be human-like, say, a plant, a piece of furniture, a book, a river, etc. , can be an object of his kindness. Śakuntala in Kalidāsa's Abijñāna śakuntalam, feels very kind not only to the pregnant deer which is to deliver its baby in a few days, but also to the plants and climb-

ers she everyday waters because she thinks that all of them can suffer pain, and in this respect resemble humans.

Sometimes we do argue for preserving a species of animals which are dangerous, or one of plants which are poisonous. Even in such cases there is a concealed, sometimes openly declared, reference to some human interest. Generally we want to preserve them because we can study them only if they are preserved and are readily available . Here the human interest involved is the interest to satisfy our curiosity to know what kind of things they are and whether or not any use can be made of them. When we argue for preserving nature on the ground that we enjoy it, obviously it is a human-centric argument. We can conclude, therefore, that in any ethical enterprise, whether it is concerned with human or non-human subjects, there is no escape from accepting the primacy of the human, or from adopting the human-centric point of view.

INTUITIONISM AND THE PROBLEM OF MORAL KNOWLEDGE

MANJULIKA GHOSH

Moral knowledge is represented by the intuitionists [1] as the knowledge that a certain object has a certain moral characteristic. To learn a moral truth resembles learning the fact that 'Gandhi was assassinated in 1948' or that 'A new comet will be visible in India from the middle of January, 2001'. The difference between moral characteristics and those that we learn about in science and history is marked off by calling them ontically non-natural. Moral judgements are treated as **descriptions** of features of the universe - the non-natural qualities, properties and relations between things. The intuitionist takes these properties to be **sui generis**, unique and incapable of analysis in more fundamental terms. The fact that these features are so unique as to merit the epithet 'non-natural', in no way affects the status of moral judgements as descriptions. Yet the intuitionist argues that evaluative propositions cannot be deduced from descriptive ones. Judgements concerning the good-in-itself or intrinsic values are self-evident in the sense that they are incapable of proof. But is the concession to the non-natural status of moral concepts enough for the intuitionist ? When we judge an act to have a certain character such that it is 'obligatory', the judgement presupposes not 'blind emotion'[2], as the emotivist says, rather in 'intellectual emotion'. Moral emotions can-not occur unless we were aware of moral facts. What is required of us is to notice that a certain fact has two characteristics, (a) that of being obligatory and (b) that of producing a maximum of good or of being a fulfillment of a promise or the payment of a debt etc. There are a certain number of these 'right -making' or 'good-making' characteristics and they are related to obligation. If you would have noticed these characteristics you would feel a special moral emotion, that of obligation, and you would not have felt that special emotion had you not noticed these characteristics. So runs the intuitionist's argument. But it is not clear what the connexion between noticing the characteristics and feeling the emotion is supposed to be. Is it logically or causally impossible for a man to feel this emotion if he had not noticed

the characteristics ? Or is it impossible in some other way ?

Suppose all these have gone by : I have noticed the right-making characteristics and the rightness; and I feel the emotion of obligation. Does it follow that I ought to do the action towards which I feel the emotion ? If Hume's argument[3] is at all valid, is it not valid against this deduction ? The use of the epithet 'non-natural' serves only to disguise Hume's gap, not to bridge it.

In representing moral knowledge as theoretical, an affair of being aware of, or noticing the "Phenomena" of a special kind, the intuitionist is drawing our attention to an analogy between ethics and empirical science. We learn something by inspecting our 'sense-data', others by introspecting our psychical experiences, and a third world, a world of non-natural characteristics, is revealed to us by an altogether different third faculty called intuition. It is only in this way that moral knowledge can be represented as allegedly theoretical. What is it to call something 'theoretical ? Is it not drawing an analogy between ethics and empirical science[4] ? Is it not proposing the use of logical terminalogy of science as applicable to ethics ? But are they really so applicable ? If the analogy is endorsable, we stand confronted with a new set of data or phenomena or characteristics. But from statements to the effect that these exist does the conclusion namely, 'I ought to do it' follow ? A new world is disclosed for our inspection, it contains such and such characteristics, it is mapped and described in elaborate detail. All this is very interesting. If I have thirst for knowledge I shall read on as one reads about new discoveries of comets. Learning about 'values' or 'duties' might well be as exciting as learning about comets or nebulae. But what if I am not interested ? Why should I do anything about the newly revealed objects ? Certain things, I have now learnt, are right and others wrong; But why should I do what is right and eshew what is wrong ?

If one is not interested in comets or nebulae, it may be regrettable, but not blameworthy. But not to be interested in the difference between right and wrong, not to see the difference, not to feel the obligation to do the one and eschew the other is not a matter of regret, rather it is wicked, immoral and even inhuman. 'Why should I do what I see to be right' is an absurd question, because in conceding that it is the right thing to do, one already concedes that one ought to do it. What we have to understand is the distinction between what it is right

for one to do and what he ought to do. One may be able to see the distinction here and in asking the question one is simply wondering whether he ought to do what one sees to be right. In such a case one seems to think that there is an extra step to be taken. What could this step possibly be ? In ordinary life there is no gap between "This is the right thing to do " and 'I ought to do this ' . The. moral sceptic alone divises a wedge between what obligations and our knowledge of obligations are. If 'X is right ' and 'X is obligatory' are construed as statements to the effect that X has the non-natural characteristics of rightness and obligatoriness, which we 'see' to be present, it appears that we cannot deduce 'I ought to do X' from that premise. A gap of which ordinary language knows nothing has been created between 'X is obligatory on me' and ' I ought to do it;" and that requires to be spanned. The intuitionist might argue that in recognising non-natural qualities of actions and things we must not suppose that there obtains such a characteristic as 'obligatoriness'. Saying that an action is obligatory on me is a simply **convenient** way of saying that I ought to do that action. That means the characteristic of rightness or obligatoriness are mythic. No action is merely right, but always 'right as being of a certain character; e.g. as being the payment of a debt or the fulfillment of a promise.'

The intuitionist promises to tell us, in terms of his account of obligation as a non-natural property, what obligation is, and to explain how we know what we ought to do. However, at the end, he does not give us an explanation, but a restatement of the facts to be explained. We are no nearer to know what obligation is, because it is now conceded that 'X has the characteristic of obligatoriness' is just another way of saying 'I ought to do X'. He simply tells us 'you know what you ought to do by intuiting the non-natural characteristics of obligatoriness that ushers in certain actions". But is it not another way of saying, 'we know what we ought to do by knowing what we ought to do '? Intuitions of objective properties are either infallible or they are not. If they are infallible, the mere existence of an objective property or value is no gurantee that anyone has apprehended it properly. However convinced you may be that we are right, it is still open to me to deny the givenness of our intuition. If you appeal to your intuition, then you have no right to grudge me the same. Again, if intuitions are infallible, then disputes cannot be genuine. If I disagree with you in moral matters, you must charge me either with insincerity or with moral blindness. And that the account of the matter is false is shown by the fact that

we do often allow others to be sincere when their moral views differ from our own.

The objective theory of moral knowledge as proposed by the intuitionist does not solve moral conflicts. Suppose in the case of action a, we form an intuitive moral judgement that a is right. Suppose now we have an action b which is exactly like a in all relevant respects. There is nothing, of course, that guarantees that we will form the intuitive judgement that b is right. We may, form the judgement that b is wrong. The opponent's denial of the proponent's claim is attributed to wilful perversity. It is not surprising because the universalizability approach to objectivity is not the strong point of intuitionism. Religious persecutions are the monopoly of objective theorists claiming religious knowledge. It may so happen and does in fact happen in ethics as well.

REFERENCES

1. Lord Herbert of Cherbury is the first to propose clearly the main epistemological tenet of what we now think of as intuitionism, although it is well over a century before the label came to be applied to such views. We here refer to Herbert's *On Truth*, trans. M.H. Carre (Bristol, 1937).

2. ROSS, W.D. *The Foundations of Ethics*, (Oxford : Clarendon Press), 1930, p. 21.

3. In a famous passage in the *Treatise*, Hume observes that the words 'ought' and 'ought not' express a 'relation or affirmation' that is different from that expressed by 'is' and 'is not'. Sclby-Bigge edn., Book III, P. 469. This is what is known as 'Hume's Law'.

4. In the Preface to his *Principia Ethica* Moore speaks of his book as a "prolegomena to any future ethics that can possibly pretend to be scientific." *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press), 1954 edn. P.IX. Commentators and ethicists differ as to whether Moore is to be classed as an intuitionist. Bernard Williams brackets all three, Moore, Prichard and Ross as intuitionist : *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*

(Cambridge, Macachusetts : Harvard University Press), 1985, p. 213, n. 1.
So does Nowell Smith *Ethics*, (Penguin Books), 1959, pp. 36-47. Mac Intyre
too speaks of Moore's intuitionism. He, however, notes Moore's reluctance
to be so dubbed : *After Virtue* (London : Duckworth), 1985, p. 18.

AYER ON ETHICS

KOYELI CHAKRAVARTI

To Ayer, all ethical judgments are, mere expressions of feeling, and all ethical concepts are pseudo-concepts, and as such, are unanalysable. Ethics, he proceeds to argue, is at best a department of Psychology and Sociology, enquiring about the moral habits of a particular individual or a group, and about the causes of such habits and feelings. My aim in this paper is towfold : first, I will give an exposition of Ayer's analysis of ethical judgments, and secondly, I will examine the above-mentioned contention and argue that ethical judgments cannot be regarded as mere expressions of feeling, because there is a crucial difference between the language of value and the language of preference.

Let us first try to understand Ayer's arguments in detail. Ayer divides the contents of ethical philosophy into what he calls four main classes[1] : (i) propositions expressing definitions of ethical terms, (ii) propositions describing moral experience, (iii) exhortations to moral virtue, and (iv) actual ethical judgments. Of these, the first alone, Ayer argues, may be said to constitute ethical philosophy. The second class belongs to psychology or to sociology. The third, not being propositions at all, cannot be said to belong to any branch of philosophy or science. Ethical judgments which comprise the last class, are neither definitions nor comments upon definitions, nor quotations, and therefore do not constitute ethical philosophy.

Ayer next proceeds to discuss whether ethical terms, can be reduced to non-ethical terms, or to put it in a different way (as Ayer himself puts it), whether statements of ethical value can be translated into statements of empirical fact. The utilitarians and the philosophers generally known as subjectivists are some of those who believe that value statements can be translated into factual statements. To an utilitarian, as is well-known, the rightness of actions is to be

defined in terms of the pleasure or happiness or satisfaction arising out of them, and to a subjectivist, in terms of the feelings of approval which we have towards the actions. Moral judgments, on both the above accounts turn out to be a 'sub-class of psychological or sociological judgments.' Although this interpretation of moral judgments as a sub-class of psychological or sociological judgments appeals to Ayer to a considerable extent, he refuses to take up a subjectivst or an utilitarian stand, so far as analysis of ethical terms is concerned .[2]

To a subjectivist, an action is right if it is generally approved of, but Ayer finds the contention of the subjectivist unacceptable because to say that some actions which are generally approved of are not right does not involve any self-contradiction : an action may be generally approved of, and yet may not be right. On the same ground the utilitarian view, too, turns out to be unacceptable to Ayer. To an utilitarian a right action is one which, of all the actions possible in the circumstances, gives rise to the greatest happiness, or the greatest balance of pleasure over pain. But as Ayer points out, no self-contradiction is involved in saying that an action which causes the greatest hapiness is not always right. In saying that some pleasant things are not good, I am not contradicting myself, and therefore, the sentence 'X is good' cannot be said to be equivalent to the sentence 'X is pleasent'. Ayer further points out that his rejection of subjectivism and utilitarianism should not be interpreted as implying the impossibility of inventing a language in which all ethical symbols are definable in non-ethical terms. All that he wants to assert is that reducing ethical to non-ethical statements in the utilitarian or in the subjectivist manner is not consistent with the conventions of our actual language.

If ethical concepts cannot be regarded as reducible to empirical concepts, neither can they be regarded as being controlled by a 'mysterious intellectual intuition'. In other words, rejection of subjectivism and utilitarianism does not make Ayer accept the 'absolutist' view of ethics. The difficulty with an absolutist view of ethics is that it makes ethical judgments unverifiable. Intuitive certainty varies from one person to another : the same judgment may appear as intuitively certain to one person, and doubtful to another. A criterion that can resolve disputes between conflicting intuitions is essential if a proposition's validity is to be determined by appealing to intuitions, and no

such criterion, Ayer points out, can be given where ethical judgments are concerned. Doubts with regard to the validity of an empirical judgment may be resolved by referring to or carrying out an appropriate empirical test, but no such empirical test, Ayer argues, can be of any use when the validity of an ethical judgment is questioned. An ethical judgment, in other words, is empirically unverifiable, and the fundamental ethical concepts turn out to be unanalysable. The ethical concepts are unanalysable because they are 'pseudo-concepts'. 'The presence of an ethical symbol in a proposition, Ayer says, 'adds nothing to its factual content'. [3]

The two sentences with the help of which Ayer explains this point are: (i) You acted wrongly in stealing that money, and (ii) You stole that money. The first sentence does not add anything to what is said in the second sentence. The remark about the wrongness of the action of stealing money does not provide any extra information about the action. The first sentence differs from the second in expressing moral disapproval of the action of stealing money. The former says just what the latter says, only in a particular tone or perhaps with an exclamation mark added to it, and neither the tone nor the exclamation mark, Ayer argues, adds anything to the literal meaning of the sentence.

Ayer further points out that if we, now generalize the first sentence and say 'stealing money is wrong' , we produce a sentence that cannot be said to have a factual meaning, that is to say, it does not express any proposition that can be either true or false. The reason why it cannot be true or false is that the wrongness of stealing is something about which disagreement is possible in the sense that different people may not have the same feeling about stealing. According to Ayer, if one person says that stealing is wrong and another says that it is not, the two persons are not, strictly speaking, contradicting each other, because neither of them is making a factual statement, or even a statement about his own mental state. Neither of them is asserting a genuine proposition. What both of them are doing is expressing their respective moral sentiments. The function of the ethical word 'wrong', Ayer says, is thus purely 'emotive' : it expresses what we feel about certain objects, but does not make any assertion about them, and what is true of 'wrong' is true of all other ethical words.

In his essay 'On the analysis of moral judgments', [4] Ayer makes the

same remark about moral judgments though he uses a different example. When a man commits a murder, we can provide a good description of the situation by giving a detailed account of different facts, say, of the identity of the murderer and of the victim; of their relationship, of the different motives, conscious and unconscious, that led him to commit murder, and so on. If we now ask whether. he was justified in committing the murder and answer the question in the affirmative, we are not modifying or elaborating the earlier description of the situation. According to Ayer, to say that the murderer's motives are good or bad, or that the act of murder is right or wrong, is not to say what the motives are or what the act is. In other words, in saying that the murderer was justified we are not adding any extra information to our earlier account. Ethical predicates are therefore not factual.

Another characteristic of ethical words, pointed out by Ayer, may now be noted. Ethical words, Ayer says, not only express feeling, but are so calculated as also to 'arouse feeling' and 'stimulate action'.[5]

They may be used in such a way that the sentences containing them may develop the force of commands. For example, the sentence 'It is your duty to tell the truth' may be regarded both as expressing an ethical feeling about turthfulness and as expressing the command 'Tell the truth'. If instead of saying 'It is your duty to tell the truth' we say 'You ought to tell the truth', the tone of the command becomes less emphatic, but nonetheless it involves the command 'Tell the truth'. Again, if we say 'It is good to tell the truth, we are making the same command but now in such a mild tone that the command has become a mere suggestion. The meaning of different ethical words may thus be defined both in terms of the different feelings they express and in terms of the different responses they arouse. It may be noted that Ayer slightly modified his view in the above-mentioned essay. [6] In this essay he says that to speak of moral judgments as merely expressing certain feelings, feelings of approval or disapproval is to over simplify the matter. Rather, it should be said that the attitudes that moral judgments express consist in 'certain patterns of behaviour, and that the expression of a moral judgment is an element in the pattern .'[7]

Ayer now proceeds to explain why no criterion can be found for determining the validity of ethical judgments. Ethical judgments are unverifiable not because of having an 'absolute' validity that is controlled by a mysterious

'intellectual intuition', but because of the fact that they do not have any objective validity. A sentence can be true or false, only if it makes a statement, and sentences expressing moral judgments, as Ayer has shown above, do not say anything. They are pure expressions of feeling and as such do not come under the category of truth and falsehood . They are unverifiable for the same reason as a cry of pain or a word of command is unverifiable - because they do not express genuine propositions .[8] This being Ayer's stand on the validity of ethical judgments, the difference between his theory and the orthodox subjectivist theory can now be spelt out. The orthodox subjectivist does not deny that ethical judgments express genuine propositions. All that he refuses to admit is that ethical judgments express 'propositions of a unique, non-empirical character'. The subjectivist is of the opinion that ethical judgments express proposition about the speakers feelings, and if that is the case, they are obviously capable of being true or false. If the speaker had the relevant feelings the ethical judgments would be true, and if he did not have the relevant feelings, they would turn out to be false. This is something which can, on principle, be empirically verified. To the subjectivist, to make an ethical judgment is to **make a statement** about one's own feelings, while to Ayer, to make an ethical judgment is to **evince** or **express** one's own feelings. As Ayer puts it : ' .....whereas the subjectivist holds that ethical statements actually assert the existence of certain feelings, we hold that ethical statements are expressions and excitants of feeling which do not necessarily involve any assertions.'[9] Ayer point out that his view about ethical judgments enables him to answer an objection which the subjectivist cannot. The objection against the subjectivist theory that the validity of ethical judgments is not determined by the nature of their author's feelings, cannot be raised against Ayer's theory in so far as Ayer's theory does not imply that the validity of an ethical judgment must have certain feelings as its necessary and sufficient condition. What is implied by Ayer's theory is that ethical judgments cannot be said to have any validity.

Ayer next proceeds to consider an objection that has been traditionally raised against the subjectivist theories, an objection that might be raised against his theory as well. Moore has pointed out that if ethical judgments are regarded as mere statements about the speaker's feelings, no arguing about questions of value would be possible. Thus the two judgments 'Thrift is a virtue' and 'Thrift is a vice held by two different people, could both be true on the subjectivist account, inasmuch as considering thrift to be a virtue is merely a matter of

approving of it just as considering it to be a vice is a matter of disapproving of it, and by no means could this be a matter of dispute. Disputes about value-questions would turn out to be impossible on Ayer's theory as well, because according to Ayer, the two above-mentioned sentences do not express propositions at all, and hence the question of incompatibility between the two cannot arise. Ayer answers the above objections by pointing out that disputes that we ordinarily regard as disputes about value-questions are not really so, but are disputes about factual questions. Ayer says that when we disagree with someone regarding the moral value of a certain action, we try to make him understand that he is mistaken about the empirical facts of the case, and if we do not succeed in doing this, we say that his set of values is different from ours, and that arguing with him on that issue is not possible. If a person has some moral principles, we can argue that he must, for the sake of consistency, react morally to certain situations in certain ways, but we cannot argue about the validity of his moral principles.

Refutation of the above-mentioned charge now leads Ayer to draw conclusions about the nature of ethical enquiries. Ethical science in the sense of elucidation of a 'true' system of morals, he says, is not possible, because ethical judgments serve only to express our feelings, and the validity of an ethical system cannot be determined in any way. In fact to ask whether any moral system is true does not make any sense. Enquiring about the moral habits of a particular individual or a group or about the causes of such habits is a task of the social scientist. As a branch of knowledge, ethics is at best a department of psychology and sociology.

I now proceed to consider how far Ayer's analysis of the nature of ethical philosophy can be accepted. According to Ayer, ethical judgments serve only to express our feelings, but to uphold this view is to deny the distinction between the language of value and the language of preference. If ethical judgments are nothing but expressions of approval or disapproval of certain facts, there seems to be no way of explaining (other than in terms of a clash or conflict of preferences) such statements as 'I ought to do it, although I don't want to or 'This is "good" for him, although he may not like it'. In fact words like 'ought', 'right', 'good' etc. derive crucial part of their meaning from a contrast between the language of value and the language of preference. The language of value differs as much from the language of preference as from the language of

description. The contrast between value language and preference language is often brought out by pointing to the fact that if someone calls something 'good' or 'right' one can always ask him : 'What is "good" or " right" about it ?' But one cannot always ask the same question about one's likes and dislikes. One cannot press for reasons for preference as one can press for reasons for evaluations. To value something is very much to prefer something, but no mere preference as such can be considered to be a value. To be a value a preference must have some degree of rationality, that is to say, it must be capable of being supported by reasons in the case of its being questioned. [10] To be a value a preference must also have a degree of consistency over a range of objects. A preference that is liable to change all too quickly from one situation to another is not a value. What distinguishes value-language from preference-language is the former's commendatory force. [11] To make a value judgment, as Hare argues, is not simply to persuade others, but to commend it either to oneself or to others for future guidance. Value-judgments have 'prescriptive'meaning. They are action-guiding : to make a value-judgments is to offer some guidance in making future decisions . To speak of any action as 'good' is to impart a certain instruction or to convey a certain advice to the hearer, namely, 'do it' (the advice also being about actions like it in relevant respects in relevantly similar contexts).

I find Ayer's comments on the status of ethics difficult to accept. To Ayer, ethics is at best a department of psychology and sociology. But to take this stand is to deny the important distinction between the language of value and the language of fact. Two persons may describe a particular situation in the same way, but may evaluate it in different ways. The fact that two persons agree on how a particular situation has to be described (or reported) does not imply that they also agree about the evaluation of it. It is not possible simply to equate value either with preferences on the one hand, or with facts on the other. Even if it is difficult to decide what values exactly are, any consideration of values will have to take note of both personal preference and desires as well as interpersonal perspectives. Hence the basic problem facing any individual trying to choose values for himself is : how to keep value distinct from facts on the one hand and from 'mere' preference on the other, how to reduce the tension between one's personal preferences on the one hand and the restraints imposed by the interpersonal framework of reference on the other. He cannot ignore the demands of either of them. If he ignores the interpersonal reference, his values would be indistinguishable from personal likes and dislikes, while if he ignores

the personal reference, his values would hardly be distinguishable from facts.
12

      Ayer has said that moral philosophy is neutral as regards actual conduct. He says that moral theory, in so far as it is a moral theory, attempts to show what people are doing when they make moral judgments. It does not suggest what moral judgments they are to make; it is neutral with regard to all moral principles, neither recommending them nor condemning them. Moral theories, Ayer says, belong to the field of meta-ethics, not ethics proper. The growing importance of applied ethics, however, seems to suggest the opposite. Dramatic changes have taken place in the last two decades in an attempt to apply philosophy to the solution of real-life problems. Many philosophers have come forward to contribute to the discussion of various problems in medical ethics, to the discussion of various issues relating to political, economic and social matters. I personally believe that moral philosophy can go a long way in understanding and solving various problems of our life. To me the participation of the philosophers in various interdisciplinary debates appears as a welcome change inasmuch as it has served to make the debate more open and has enabled the audience to receive a greater variety of viewpoints.

REFERENCES

1. A.J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic* (Penguin, 1971), p. 137

2. *Ibid* p. 138

3. *Ibid* , P. 142

4. Ayer *Philosophical Essays* (Macmillan, London, 1954), p. 235

5. Ayer, *Language, Truth* and *Logic, op. cit.*, p. 143

6. Ayer, *Philosophical Essays, op. cit.*, p. 238
7. *Ibid*

8. Ayer, *Language, Truth* and *Logic, Op. Cit.* p. 144

9. *Ibid* , p. 145

10. D. Wiggins, 'Truth, Invention and Meaning of Life, *Proceedings of the British Academy*. (No. 62,1976).

11. R.M. Hare, *The Language of Morals* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1964), p. 144

12. Ayer, *Philosophical Essays, op.cit.* p. 246.

FUNDAMENTALISM AND SECULARISM :
THE BUDDHIST WAY OUT

JAGAT PAL

The purpose of this paper is to establish the point that we can solve the problem of religious conflicts of our country by secularizing our religion in the Buddhist way without showing any disrespect to any other religion. And to say this is not to say that the Buddhist religion is superior to other religions or the Buddhist way is the only way to combine secularism with religion.

India has been seeking peace and harmony since the days of human civilization both at the level of individual as well as society. Yet the whole of human Indian history is full of religious conflicts, terrorism and communal rites down through the centuries and remain so even today. Why is it so in our country ? Is it because of the phenomenon of religious pluralism ? If this be so, then as long as there are different religions in our country religious wars, terrorism and rites, etc. will continue to exist and we cannot solve the problem of religious conflicts of our country even if we wish. The reason is simple because each religion has its own different ideologies, forms of faith and worship which are considered by its followers as holy. And these differences will continue to create violent conflicts among the different religious groups of people in our country . The reason is that because people derive inspirations from them according to their own selfish ends. We cannot stop people practicing different religions in our country to solve the problem of religious war, terrorism and communal rites because people consider their religion a part of life. We are all divided in the name of religion into different sects such as Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism, Skhism, Islam and Christianity no matter whether we like or not. All these different religions not only differ with their ideologies, forms of faith and worship but also do conflict on certain points which the fundamentalists and politicians use as weapon to create communal disturbances in our country to achieve their selfish goals. Since we are all divided in the name of religion into different sects and we also consider our religion as a holy

religion, we cannot solve the problem of religious conflicts by combining them under one umbrella which we may characterize as universal religion. In spite of universalistic teachings of all great and historic religious teachers like Lord Buddha, Mahavira, Vivekananda, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Guru Nanak and Jesus Christ, etc. we have not yet been able to solve the problem of our religious conflicts till today. Religious conflicts still continue to exist in different forms in our country primarily because of our fanatic attitudes towards our religion and as well as the religion of others.

But to say all this does not amount to mean saying that there is no way to solve the problem of religious conflicts of our country. We can definitely solve the problem of religious conflicts of our country by secularizing our religion in the Buddhist way without leaving our religion. The reason is that because Buddhist morality is a secular morality. It is based solely on regard to the well being of humankind as such and excludes all considerations drawn from the religious sources, that is, God and holy scripture. The word 'secularism' no doubt is a vague word. It is used in different senses. But here I am using the word 'secularism' in ideological sense of the term. In this sense the word 'secularism' not only signifies the absence of super-humanism and super-naturalism but also signifies humanism. It does not signify super-humanism because it rejects the superiority of one individual over another and treats them all on par with each other. In other words, secularism in ideological sense rejects all kinds of distinctions among human being based on caste, color, religion, race, sex, region, economic status and scholarships, etc. It emphasizes on universal brotherhood, love, affection, tolerance, equality, justice, non-discrimination, impartiality, fairness and well-being of humankind as whole. Its central standpoint is faith in the dignity of human being. It considers individual not in relation with any super-natural being but in relation with the society purely from the moral point of view. Since secularism aims only at human being and every human being is a worldly creature, so we can say very well that it is a worldly doctrine. It is not a metaphysical or theological doctrine. Therefore its source cannot be traced in the existence of any super-natural being such as God. Not only this, its source also cannot be traced in the existence of any super human being or divine scripture. In other words, the doctrine of secularism is not grounded on the faith in the existence of God nor does it derive its authenticity from the nature of God or any super-human being. The doctrine of secularism excludes from it all religious consideration drawn from belief in the existence of super

natural being, that is, God. But to say all this, however, is not to say that the doctrine of secularism is a doctrine of atheism. The doctrine of secularism is not a doctrine of atheism too because it does not say anything about one's belief in the existence of God. It only says that moral arrangement among human beings is possible on the ground of universal brotherhood, love, tolerance, equality, justice, fairness, impartiality and well-being of all the people concerned without making any reference to the super-natural beliefs of super human beings And to say this is not to say that it is a doctrine of atheism. The doctrine of secularism is an ethical doctrine because it solely rests on the doctrine of humanism and the doctrine of humanism is not diametrically opposed to the doctrine of theism. Which means, in other words, that the doctrine of secularism is not anti-religion . Because the doctrine of secularism recognizes the dignity of human being and his place in this world and lets him free to have aby religious thought about God and super-natural beings but without interference in the life of other persons of the society to which he belongs. If this is what the doctrine of secularism means, then from this it is also quite evident that religion does have an important place in secularism, provided that it acknowledges the primacy of ethical over all other considerations including religious consideration as Buddhism does. If this be so, then to be religious. is not necessarily to be non-secular because a religion can be secular if it acknowledges the primacy of the ethical consideration over the religious one when there is conflict between them. Such religion we might call as an ethical religion; a religion that not only prescribes universal morality but also does not allow anything to have religious value if it goes against the universal principle of morality. Buddhism, in my opinion, is an instance of such kind of religion because it acknowledges the primacy of ethical over the religious one. For Buddhism social suffering is not only something that is bad in itself but also a moral evil. It must be uprooted from the life of human beings at any cost to make it meaningful and worth living. And this is what exactly the Lord Buddha did during his life periods. A genuine religious person cannot simply ignore morality because morality is one of the basic constituents of religion. That is why no religion can be conceived without morality. But this does not hold good vice versa because morality can be conceived without religion. Since every religion contains in it certain set of moral beliefs and moral principles that aims at developing the individuals and society, it cannot simply go against humanism if it is a genuine religion. If it goes against humanism because of changes in human conditions, it has to be interpreted and understood considering the philosophy of human-

ism to cater the needs of human beings because religion after all is meant for human beings and human beings are not meant for religion.Religions are the product of human minds. They are constructed for the welfare of society including the individual. If this be so, then to be religious is to be moral. But to say this is not to say that moral ideas cannot conflict with religious ideas. Moral ideas no doubt does conflict with religious ideas. But when they conflict, moral ideas always override religious ideas when we consider the whole matter purely from the rational point of view. The doctrine of secularism is not a doctrine of dogmatism while the doctrine of religion is a doctrine of dogmatism. The doctrine of secularism is a rational doctrine because it is based on rational ground. So to be secular is to be rational and to be rational is to be consistent. Furthermore, since morality is a dynamic phenomenon because moral ideas change according to human circumstances and needs, therefore it is quite possible that a religion may have in its moral core an idea that may be considered to be irrational and untenable by some people belonging to another religion . But even then the fact remains that there is no religion which does not advocate humanism. All religions advocate in theory universal brotherhood, tolerance, love, equality, justice, fairness and kindness, etc. From this point of view, one can say very well that all religions are the religions of humankind. They do not preach anything against humanism. Religion becomes anti-human only when we use it as a means to set one individual against another for the sake of one's own selfish end.

This is perfectly quite possible that a secularist person may or may not be a religious person. But there is no person who is a secularist but not a moralist. The reason for it is quite obvious because secularism is grounded on the doctrine of universal morality. It does not logically rest on any particular religious faith. Since secular morality does not logically rest on the doctrine of any particular religious faith, we cannot say it that secular morality is a religous morality. Since secular morality is not a religious morality, therefore it is perfectly quite possible that we can remove religious conflicts of our country by secularizing religion if we sincerely wish to do so without even discarding our own religion or showing any disrespect to any other religions. The fault basically lies with us. It does not lie with religion. Why do I say that fault basically lies with us is that because it is we who do not take religion in the right spirit because of our greed. If we all take religion in the right spirit for which it is designed, that is, it is meant for the welfare of humanity, it does not create any

problem. Because we can modify it in that case according to the needs of our society. So it is perfectly quite possible to solve our religious conflicts if we all adopt secular attitudes towards religions.

The doctrine of secularism in fact is opposed to the doctrine of fundamentalism because what the doctrine fundamentalism advocates the doctrine of secularism denies it. The doctrine of fundamentalism advocates the view that religious considerations always override all other considerations including moral considerations when there is a conflict between them which the doctrine of secularism does not advocate . The doctrine of secularism rather advocates the view that moral considerations always override all other considerations including religious considerations when there is conflict between them. Those who uphold the view that religious considerations always override all other considerations are called religious fundamentalists or extremists. Those who uphold the view that religious considerations can override only some sorts and not those of some other sorts are called moderate fundamentalists. Most of the moderate fundamentalists are of the view that religious considerations should not override legal, moral, economic and social considerations. Religious conflicts do not occur because of the moderate fundamentalists. When it occurs, it generally occurs due to the attitudes of the extreme fundamentalists besides politicians. The reason for it is quite obvious. Because the extreme fundamentalists believe that their religion is a holy religion and other's religion is not a holy religion. It does not admit any kind of change or modification under any situation. Since they believe that their religion a holy religion and does not admit any change or modification under any situation, therefore they say that it should not be overridden by any other considerations including the consideration of other religions at any cost regardless of human situations and needs. It is this fanatic attitude of theirs that creates religious conflicts in our country. Because these people do not only preach and protect their own respective religions but also expand them by converting people belonging to other religions. To achieve their target they do not hesitate to bribe people in different forms. They may say face to face that all religions are equally good and essentially same . But they do not treat them equally when the question of practice comes. They rather go to the extent of saying that my religion is superior to all other religions. My religion is only wholly true and other's religion is not wholly true. This kind of attitude of theirs surely cannot be said to be a secular attitude at all. If we are all genuinely interested in solving religious conflicts of our

country, we will have to change out rigid and fanatic attitudes. We will have to adopt secular view not only in the case of our own religion but also in the case of other's religion. Unless we do it, we cannot really solve the religious conflicts of our country. But to say that we should secularize our religion is not equivalent to saying that we should leave our religion. It only means that we should give the primacy of ethical universal values over religious ones when there is conflict between them. Religion no doubt is a matter of private life. But to say this not to say that it is not a matter of public life. Religion is a matter of both private and public lives. We cannot deny this fact. Not only this, we cannot pursue most of our religious values without the cooperation of other individuals of the society. If religion were purely a matter of private life, we would have not bothered about it. But since the very fact that we all bother about it because of its impact on our social lives itself shows that it is not purely a matter of private life. If there is some grain of truth in what I have said, then religious conflicts definitely cannot be solved just by saying that it is purely a matter of private life. The removal of religious conflicts is a matter of all the concerned being a matter of public life.

Sometimes the word 'secularism' is used not only as an ideology but also as a policy. For the state the word 'secularism' merely signifies a policy which consists in the fact of not giving any preference to any religion over the other religions. The secular state not only allows all religions to exist but also protects them without any discrimination. It recognizes every religion as equal and each one is given as much preference as the others. India is said to be a secular state in this sense of the term because it safeguards the individual's freedom of religion and allows all religions, that are, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhs, Jainism and Christianity to exist without showing the superiority of one over the others. India does not give preference to any religion over the others. All religions receive equal treatment and protection by the country. Every individual is free to adopt or reject any religion without interference from the state. If he decides to embrace Hinduism, or any other religions for that matter, he is free to do so. India does not dictate religious beliefs to its citizens. When I talk about the secularization of religion, I do not use the term. 'secular' in the sense of policy. I use it in the sense of ideology in the above explained sense of the term. The reason for it is that because religions can be treated equally only when the practice of one religion does not come in conflict with the practice of another religion. But when it does conflict, the issue cannot

be settled just by giving this slogan that every religion should be treated equally. Those who give this slogan are themselves in fact not clear what they mean when they say that every religion should be treated equally. If to treat equally means to have equal respect and not to interfere in the religious matter of others, then it is not just possible at all unless we assume that all religions are equal in all respects which they are not. All religions do differ in certain respect from one another. Take, for example, the Hindu religion. The Hindu religion contains in it caste system which other religions as Buddhism and Jainism do not contain in them. Therefore treating all religions equally in all respects is not just possible at all. If we wish to solve religious conflicts, we can do so only when we do not take the side of any particular religion and decide the whole matter purely on a rational ground. No doubt, it is highly immoral on the part of people belonging to one religion to condemn or interfere in the values of other religions. But if any religion, no matter what it is, goes against the basic principle of humanism for which it is constructed, it surely becomes the subject matter of our moral evaluation and there is nothing wrong in doing so because religion is after all meant for human beings and human beings are not meant for religion. Since religion is meant for human beings for their betterment, therefore it is always open to modification, adjustment and change according to the needs of human society. To deny this fact would amount to mean denying the basic function and objective of religion itself for which it is designed.

But when I say that religious terrorism, conflicts and communal rites etc., can be removed by secularizing our religion in the Buddhist way, I use the term 'Buddhist way' in a particular sense, that is, in the sense of 'what Lord Buddha taught' and not in the sense of what his followers say. And when I use the term 'Buddhist way' in the sense of what the Lord Buddha taught, it cannot be said to be a religious path at all. We cannot say that Lord Buddha's Buddhism is a religion in the sense in which we say Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism are religions. We say Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism are religions because they rest on the belief in the existence of God which Buddhism does not and the belief in the existence of God is treated as one of the defining features of religion. If at all Buddhism can be called as a religion,. it can be called only as an ethical religion because it emphasizes on the ethical values over the religious ones which other religions does not. That is why I say religious conflicts can be solved by secularizing religion in the Buddhist way. And when I say it, I do not pay disrespect to any other religion in any way.

The question might be asked : Is the Buddhist morality not a religious morality ? If by 'religious morality' we mean an attitude of sincere devotion to human values such as universal brotherhood, love, peace, kindness pity, tolerance, justice, compassion, fairness and relief from suffering, then I would say that the Buddhist morality surely is a religious morality. But if by ' religious. morality' we mean an attitude of sincere devotion to God and practicing of the values of holy scriptures, then I would say that Buddhist morality is not a religious morality at all. Because Buddhism does not derive ethical values from the belief in the existence of God or the divine scripture which Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam do. In other words, the Buddhist morality is a secular morality. It is not a religious morality at all the sense in which we call the moralities of Hinduism, Christianity and Islam as religious moralities. We cannot call Lord Buddha as a God because he was a person of this earthly world even though he attained Enlightenment through his efforts and not by the grace of any divine God. His followers call him as God because of their religious faith. He himself never said that he was a God. He rather kept mum on the metaphysical issues. Whenever metaphysical questions were put to him, he avoided them by saying that they were neither profitable to the society nor conducive to the highest good. Metaphysical questions were considered as futile. He was mainly talking about two things : miseries and the cessation of miseries. Human life is full of miseries and pain. It is our moral duty, he said, to get rid of the miseries and pain from the society. All this clearly shows that Lord Buddha was basically an ethical teacher and social reformer. Ritual practices which we find in the Buddhist religion are in fact the product of the mind of his followers which crept in Buddhism over the centuries. We cannot solve the religious conflicts, as I have already said, by referring to any morality based on religious dogma no matter what it is including Buddhism for the simple reason that each religion is considered as holy religion by its followers. The remedy for religious conflicts, therefore, cannot be traced within the domain of religions. It can traced only outside the domain of religion, that is, in the domain of secular universal morality which Lord Buddha taught to the humanity. The question here might be asked : How does we know what exactly are the teachings of Lord Buddha and what are the interpretations put upon them by his disciples ? There is no doubt that the teachings of Lord Buddha were oral. They were recorded much later by his disciples. But so far the Buddha's moral values are concerned there is no difficulty in knowing them.

No institutional religion gives freedom to its followers to say anything against it even if its faith is based on irrational ground which secularism allows. In fact we can remove religious conflicts to a large extent if we enlighten people to liberate them from blind faith and mental slavery. Every religion has its own conception of God depending upon its culture which becomes the source of division of humankind into different factions. Due to our blind faith we not only praise our own religion but also criticize the religion of others which Lord Buddha never did. Lord Buddha did not condemn any religion nor did he advocate the idol worship. He never founded any religion. He was primarily a moralist and social worker. What he taught that he practiced throughout his life. He did not base his moral conceptions on any supernatural being nor did he derive from them. He did not talk about any divine revealed morality. He based his moral conceptions solely on humanism which is the core of secularism. The values of tolerance, forbearance, brotherhood, friendliness, non-hatred, non-enmity, non-interference, non-discrimination, non-violence, love, kindness, compassion, benevolence and pity which he taught to humankind throughout were the human universal ethical values whose sources lie in the human nature. According to him, the root cause of all evils including the religious evils lies in the very nature of human being itself, that is, in his passions which he called as Vasna. Therefore unless we all control our passions of greed, hatred, and jealousy, etc. according to him, we cannot overcome the religious conflicts. So long we have these passions, religious conflicts will continue to exist in some or the other forms. So if we want to remove religious conflicts of our country, we will have to control our passions of greed, hatred, jealousy, and enmity, etc. In other words, we have to cultivate our life in the Buddhist moral way. And to say this is not to say that we have to leave our own religion and adopt the Buddhist religion. It only means that we have to emphasize ethical values over the religious ones when there is conflict between them. And this is perfectly possible because secularism is not opposed to religion. They can go hand in hand. The Buddhist morality is a secular morality. It does not logically rest on any religious dogma. It rests solely on the notion of humanism and humanism is not opposed to the notions of religion and secularism. This is quite evident from the life of Lord Buddha and his attitudes towards human beings them-selves. He never set one individual against another individual or one society against another society. He treated all individuals on par regardless of their caste, color, sex, creed and region, etc. In fact he did not confine the domain of

his morality to only human beings. He extended it to the domain of other beings as well.

In short, thus, we can say that religious conflicts can be solved if we practice the Buddhist philosophy of secular morality individually as well as collectively in true sense of the term throughout our life. If our attitudes are secular towards people of other religions and we are open minded, we not only can remove religious tensions and conflicts of our country but also can live a better and happier life for which everyone aspires . This is true. There is no doubt in it.

THE LANGUAGE THAT ONE CAN OWN

CHANDIDAS BHATTACHARYA

> He that has found his   language
> knows no bound of joy ... Tagore

Tagore while dwelling on such of his favourite themes as 'self-culture', 'creativity', 'human identity', has often hinted at the distinction between 'a working language' and 'a language of self-expression', between 'a functional language' and 'a language of one's own' . Moreover, he identifies 'the language that one can own' (like a thought that one can own) with 'the language of self-expression'.

1. To meet certain needs we may artificially accept some language or other but language has an ingenuous end to serve, which is not to be identified with meeting the needs. Language has to serve as the vehicle of self-expression.

No doubt, the proper arrangement be made for running the state's administration, but a much higher task is to enliven and enlighten the spirit of the countrymen, add zest to their lives. No language other than one's own can accomplish these tasks.[1]

2. The Bengali writer of those days could soon realize that we can borrow the flame from a distant language just to lit our lamp, self-expression can dawn as morning light through one's own language alone.[2]

3. From my early childhood I could taste the joy of giving shape to my thoughts, collect them in my own languages, and it became clear to me that once the habit of composition in mother tongue could be mastered, there would remain no bar in using an alien language with courage by picking it up when the need arises.[3]

The distinction drawn by Tagore between 'the language that one can own' or 'the language of self-expression', and 'a distant language' is not something cursory or off-hand as is indicated by his emphasis on language of one's own as the instrument for 'a higher task'. In fact, it is only in course of his deep thinking about various shortcomings of our education system, problem of creativity in our thinking and life-style that he appeals to this distinction between 'the language that one can own' and 'the working language' or 'the language that one does not own' :

> 4. The result of all this malchoice of a language is that despite receiving an education of a higher order, we do not develop thinking to that scale. There is a reason for this. Language is the natural vehicle of thinking. But, out of our school, we get rid of our formal language, get ourselves engrossed in story telling, gossiping, high talks in our every day non-formal language.[4]

> 5. It is impossible to educate the people of the country through an alien language. We shall gather, but it would not enrich our language. We shall think, but our language shall remain outside our thought. Our mind shall grow with years, but our language would not be keeping space with. What could be an easier means of turning the whole educational programme into a ridicule.[5]

Moreover, the significance of the emphasis on 'one's language' or 'the language of self-expression' can be guessed from his keen awareness, which is so natural for a great mind to have, about the importance of right choice of language to develope the basic features which make man a man.

However, it is not quite plain sailing to grasp the real *import of his distinction between 'a working language' and 'the language of self-expression'*. Tagore himelf has not elaborated on the issue. Nevertheless, I believe that a great insight is there in his distinguishing 'a working language' from 'the language of self-expression', of which we are generally not aware. I also think that this distinction is *conceptual and not an ad hoc* one. Neither can this distinction pertains merely to the distinction between *unskilled and skilled uses of language*. Also it would be a howler to think that certain personal or racial sentiment is at the root of this distinction.

Of course , the distinction *is internal* one, drawn from the perspective of the user of a language, his ingenuous linguistic sensibility, linguistic requirements tuned to his life-style and perception. It might be that there is a *linguistic sensibility* just as there is, for instance, *colour sensibility.* What colour or sound spectrum can incite us depends on our specific kind of interaction with a particular species. Similarly, of the different languages we are generally exposed to, *it may be that only a particular species of language may, under the circumstances, catch our imagination and become a part of our being.*

But there can be an objection of 'seeing too much' in the above quoted words of Tagore.[6] Also there can be some academic objections to the very idea of 'possessing a language' or 'owning a language', ('the language of self-expression' is something which we could possess) generally from the philosophers who take language to be strictly a *system of rule governed behaviour.* It can be objected that language is a matter of *'following '* and not of *'owning'* . When some job is accomplished strictly following certain rules (military drill, for instance), it is hardly possible to claim the ownership of the act. We could at best speak of owning some thought or feeling in some sense. On the other hand, the issue may seem trivial :'if we could speak of possessing or owning a language, we can say that every language is possibly one's own, since every language is learnable'. However, if learning a language does not confer its ownership on the learner, then no language can be one's own . For what else than learning can confer one the ownership of a language ?

It may seem that there is still a stronger case for the view that there *cannot be a language of one's own,* at least in the sense in which a thought can be one's own. (However, it must be noted that it is not uncontroversial if we could even own a thought or what sense is to be made of the expression 'owning a thought'.). Each language is governed by definite rules, norms and hence each language must be learnable and usable, however queer some language may appear at first. Each language is *learnable,* as any branch of mathematics is learnable. And the reason why one cannot speak intelligibly of 'one's own language' is almost same as why one cannot speak of 'one's own mathematics. Moreover, the general arguments against the concept of 'private language' being quite acceptable to many, it may be doubted if one can speak of 'one's own language' with *a clear and good sense.* A metaphorical use of 'one's own language' is, of course, pardonable.

But what I desire to press upon is that the expression 'one's own language' is no more metaphorical or queer than such expressions as 'one's own thought', 'one's own choice', 'one's own will' ... If we can make *a clear and good sense* of such expressions and can become aware of their significance in understanding *the essence of a person,* then it would not be too difficult to do the same in respect of the expression 'one's own language' or 'language that we can own'. In fact, there seems to be some symmetry between the expressions 'one's own thought' and 'one's own language', which will be *exploited* here to explicate the concept of 'owning a language' or 'the language of self-expression'. There are however, several complicated issues involved in the context : (1) Evolving definite criteria for distinguishing one's own language from what is not one's own language. (2) This in turn leads to the enquiry into the possibility of 'creativity' in language which is after all *rule-governed behaviour* and obviously is not free from certain *constraints.* (3) Comparing symbolizing activity with other forms of activities where the issue of ownership is legitimate without a sense of triviality.

I shall, however, confine myself to a general elucidation of 'one's own language', showing that the idea of 'one's own language' even by the parameter of conventional language is not something paradoxical or metaphorical. In doing so, I take for granted the validity of 'the unlimited expressibility' thesis for all languages, according to which every language is *equally complex and rich and is possessed of its unique in-built mechanism suitable for doing anything and everything conceivable of a language.*

1. LANGUAGE AND ACTION

We need be clear at the very outset as to how we are taking 'language' in talking of 'one's own language'? A language can be viewed rather abstractly as a system of rules, but more concretely as doing something like walking, smiling, etc... For instance, language consists of such activities like *preparing a sentence, hunting for words, hunting appropriate phrases etc., on the other hand, such activities like gossiping, story-telling and so on.* Such activities as preparing a sentence etc. or engaging in gossiping, story telling etc... can both . be categorised under action, although the latter type of activities, i.e., gossiping, story telling etc. obviously enjoy a kind of freedom, or a sort of neutrality which may not be so obviously attributed to such activities as pure sentence preparation, sentence preparation for giving an example of it, etc. In the very

act of story-telling we are not at all aware of our roles as a grammarian, *or we ought not to be*. We are even not aware of the intricacies of sentence manufacturing mechanism, just as in an action we are not aware of laws of physics or chemistry. This is true in spite of the fact that story cannot be told without manufacturing sentences, gossiping cannot be carried on without finding out choicest words ... Sometimes these two sorts of *concrete activities* can be distinguished by using two sorts of prepositions 'in' and 'with' . *We tell a story with sentences, but in preparing sentences we may not tell any story or anything alike.*[7] However, what is important here to note is that these *two sorts of activities* are sign of actual manifestation or of existence of language which is abstractly defined as a system of rules for generating signs and which merely speaks of an abstract possiblity about a language.

Now, if 'language' is understood in this sense of concrete activities than merely rule following, or what I desire to term as 'languagaing', some parallel can be drawn between 'walking', 'choosing'... and 'languaging' . 'Languaging' in this sense is implied in Saussarian distiction between 'langue and parole'. Tagore seems to be exclusively interested in the parole aspect of language when he speaks of 'language of one's own' or 'language that one can own'. *This is because of Tagore's philosophy of man.* He seems to be more interested in what a man can *do* or what he can *become* than in what *a man has done or what* a man *is*. To Tagore, perhaps the possibilities in man is a better indicator of his essence than what he is. Man's essence is manifested in his achievements or doing something (languaging, for instance) and not in his *receiving something* (the rules of language etc. In passing it is interesting to note that Tagore,seems to be more curious about what man *becomes* than what he *receives.*). We are not owner of rules or etiquetts of a language (langue) which are given to us as words are given. Parole of language is genuinely the human aspect of language. In other words 'speaking', 'gossiping', 'story-telling'...are what only human beings can engage in. In fact, *of all human actions, languaging can be more significantly spoken of as free action in spite of being governed by most stringent rules.* (This because of some special reason into which I am not going now. See my "The Uniqueness of Meaning" in *Perspectives in Contem-. porary Philosophy*, Ed, by Prof. Dilip Kumar Chakraborty, published by Gauhati University 1998).

Now, If we are not debarred from drawing a distinction between 'one's

own choosing' and 'what is not one's own choosing', or that between 'what is one's own thinking and 'what is not one;s own thinking'... the distinction between 'one's own language (languaging)' - but borrowed, imitated ... can not be objected. Here it is to be noted in passing that my motto in drawing a parallel between linguistic activity and other 'mental activity' is to just to servey the possibility of bestowing of 'ownership' to a writer or a speaker on the basis of our generally bestowing ownership of thought, for instance, to a thinker. But for Wittgenstein ' thinking happens', while 'writing is done'. This has the implication that even if bestowing of ownership of writing were possible, the bestowing of ownership of thought is impossible. Although Wittgensteins observation is an *iṣṭāpatti* for me, I cannot agree to it .

2. LANGUAGE AND MAN

Tagore envisages a deeper relationship between language and man, when both are in their *natural course, on the point of accepting a language, i.e., languaging, as a mark of authenticy of man. This means that to speak of an authentic man without reference to languaging or authentic linguistic action is imposible.* Similar idea is there in Heidegger's thesis of an authentic man. Heidegger speaks of 'housing the being in language'. Plato implores, 'speak so that I can see thy'. Tagore says,

> 6.Language has to serve as the vehicle of self-expression
> ...Self expression dawns as morning light through one's own language alone.
> Or, *The self sinks into oblivion when* it is unable to express itself ...
> Since
> language is the principal means of self-expression, *the chief task of man is to get rid of the poverty of language and realize himself in full.*[8]

> 7. Or With the shaping of the mind language is framed; language grows when mind grows".[9]

It is easy to understand that to be unique we must own some ingredients - have our own desires, feelings, thoughts, choices and Tagore would add ' our own language', or as I have interpreted 'languaging'. If 'choosing', 'think-ing', 'feeling' could be one's own and the manifestation of one's individuality or self-expression, the *case cannot be different in our languaging.* For the logic of 'choosing' 'thinking' ...are parallel to the 'languaging'. (Of course there is some scope of controversy here and the matter will be dealt with in the sequel). *And*

*as such the expressions 'one's own language' and 'language of self-expression'
are here interchangeable.*

The intimate connection between 'linguistic ability' and 'mental ability' has long
been emphasised by the philosophers, and the linguists, and the psychologists
are falling in with the line.[10]

The ordinary understanding that language *is merely a medium or ve-
hicle of expression,* the means of delivering already conceived or matured men-
tal products is now questioned. The relationship between language and intro-
spective ability is much more intimate. If we try to get a glimpse of our mental-
contents independent of language we shall just draw a blank. On the other
hand, there are some *structural, semantical and operational correspondence
between the mind process and languaging* i.e., language at work. Thinking and
imagining, to begin with the plain cases, is a *generative process* involving *organi-
zation, mapping* and *remapping, composing* and *decomposing connecting* and
disconnecting. There is nothing like 'thinking' or 'imagining' at a stroke. We can
produce a musical note at a stroke, by plucking the single string of a sitar. But
thinking and imagining are more like singing, they are processes, which gradu-
ally develop and grow. And what is to 'language', i.e., to speak or write under
normal condition but to *generate signs* - produce words, phrases, sentences
etc. Particularly production of sentences are more interesting, because only
they can be truly said to be generated, through the process of selection from
myriads of words, phrases, and their proper placing ..., through mending and
amending, rejecting, adding and so on. *If thinking is a subjective process and to
think is to act and to own something, so must be the process of generating
sentences or languaging.* Both types of these activities call for effort, trial and
error, finding the way out of the *blind alley* primarily through one's own initia-
tive and will. Without going too far with some philosophers who identify men-
tal action with linguistic action, we can safely accept that language is not just
an instrument, it is the embodiment of all our introspective abilities, in the
sense in which sound is the embodiment of music (ala Max Black). *Any intro-
spective ability is processed, channelised, and we may even say 'procreated'
through ingenuous operation of language.*

However, what is to *operate language ingenuously* (perhaps the main
issue here) is not easy to grasp. We shall elaborate on this in the sequel. But it
must be mentioned here that cases of natural or ingenuous operation of with

language abound in our *everyday uses of language.*¹¹ This is the reason why Tagore while speaking about 'one's own language' or 'the language that one can own' often refers to the language of 'story telling', 'gossiping', 'high talks'...., cases where the ingenuous (a defining feature of one's own language) operation with language can be easily recognized. (The cases of unnatural operation with language abound, for examples, in answering question papers in examination, in facing interrogation by the would be employer). *Introspectively or phenomenologically* alone we come to the realization that *the very attempt to think of one's own is also an attempt to generate a sign of one's own, and the very attempt to operate language ingenuously is to beget a thought, some emotion, some feeling.* To cramm is never to beget a feeling or a thought, if not just by chance. *A new intuition, insight or a clue can flash on us more surely in our languaging process.* The two processes are endlessly interlaced and it is futile to ask which of the two is the prime mover. Now we can guess the reason for Tagore's recurrent lamentation over forcibly divorcing 'the ingenuous operation of language' from 'introspective exercise'. One of his most fervent prayer was :

> 8. From the Lord let us ask for the boon : bring about a happy union between hunger and food, winter and clothing, thought and language, learning and life.

Now the principal reason why thought, feeling (?), smiling, showing kindness ... can be categorised as 'one's own' is that *they do not just happen to us. We have to do something to make them happen to us, or more simply they have to be generated by intending.* It is not possible now to give a detail analysis of this fascinating episode. But it is necessary to note that 'there are distinctive antecedents to our thought, choice, feeling.. and *enquiring into their history we can decide if they were our own.* Berkeley has given some hint as to the nature of this antecedent of thought that we can claim to own :

What stubbing, plaughing, digging and harrowing is to land, that thinking, reflecting is to mind.

Languaging also does not just *happen to us,* we have to *generate it* no matter even if being unwaveringly guided by the most stringent signs must be one's own. More tangibly speaking, *we can own some sentences, some phrases, or even words* just as we can own some dream ... To do my own thinking I have to do my own languaging, give birth to expressions, symbols which were, as if, no where as my thinking was no where. Even if the same (?) thinking was there in

some one else's mind, to be my own thinking, I cannot borrow it, at best I can think ' alike'. Similarly, a sentence cannot be borrowed, Tagore says, "Language is not an umbrella or an overcoat to be borrowed". One famous saying is:

> Every writer has to create his language, just as every violinist has to create his own tune.

3. LANGUAGE THAT ONE CAN OWN

Tagore says, for identifying 'the language that one can own' with the language one indulges in life situations. Use of language in life situation also may demand trial and error in choosing and ordering words; conjecturing and refutation of the arrangement of sentences or the paragraphs; and most importantly, surmounting the hurdles. There must be linguistic impasses and overcoming those *in the playful mood of a sportsman*. Think how a good sportsman overcomes the hurdles in a game. In dealing with language in life situation : gossiping, quarreling, back-biting... we are capable of giving birth to multifarious expressions that are 'new' and 'unique' in their own ways. Here, we cannot do better than refer to some distinguished philosophers' fascination about 'ordinary language', their fascination about the way in which expressions are employed in ordinary situations, employed *without presumptions* . For according to them only in such situations we are *using expressions authentically*. From this point of view we might define 'the language that one can own' as 'the language which is generated under the *maxim of a categorical imperative'*. To use language under the maxim of categorical imperative is the same as *to use it ingenuously*.[13] Several features or aspects of 'one's own language' thus become clear to us. According to Wittgenstein the use of an expression in ordinary situation only can guarantee 'the great variety of ways' of its use", in other words, *the creative uses of an expression is assured*. Here we can put to test the 'infinite expressibility' thesis. Tagore also maintain implicitly that use of an expression under this situation alone is conducive to the growth of a personal language along with one's biological growth, (see p.). Thus "the language that one can own' is being produced in the manner of *right action, i.e., action done under the maxim of categorical imperative*. When an action is done under the maxim of categorical imperative, it is done out of a pure motive it cannot be. mimicking, done under compulsion. Motive for that action is autonomous and unique, but also universalisable. *Languaging is thus autonumous and unique and a responsible action like a moral action. And perhaps it is difficult to dispute that a moral action is owned by an agent.*

4. SOME OBJECTIONS

However, several problems crop up in drawing parallels between 'languaging' with 'moral action'. This tendency seems to overlook the public character of a language, and makes language more an affair of the 'speaker' and his intention. One thus can easily confuse 'one's own language' *with 'private language'*. But it is generally accepted that language is predominantly a matter of 'norms' and 'rules' at every step of its generation. In generating signs we are rigidly circumvented by too many do's and don'ts which are unknown in the cases of actions as such, or at least with the equal degree of rigidity. There are many problems here pertaining to rather some general problems about creativity in language, bringing out the clear logic of 'linguistic action' as distinguished from 'non-linguistic action'. It is not the place to enter into all this. What I desire to do is something more humble. I shall try to show that language in spite of being governed by (most ?) stringent rules, conventions, etc. the logic of languaging is not so ideosyncratic from the logic of 'action' as to make bestowing the ownership of a linguistic piece to its author something paradoxical.

It can be also be argued that even 'languaging' cannot be one's own exactly in the same sense in which 'choosing', 'thinking' ... can be, in some sense, one's own. Firstly, the logic of 'choosing', 'thinking' ... and the logic of 'languaging', or even the logic of 'walking', 'smiling' ...and of 'languaging are different from one another. The production of linguistic pieces which is, at least a part of the game of languaging is governed at every step by rules, norms, precedence ... and other more rigid principles like the principles of consistency and compatibility, so much so that it is not impossible to think that 'no sentence in a system of sentences may pass out as full proof against all oddities, or never amenable to some change.'

Every linguistic move is subject to *severest appraisal.*[15] We cannot speak or say things in the way we like, according to our convenience, lest the *linguistic move* is judged as unintelligible, jargon, blashphemous, malapropos.... No doubt activities such as choosing, walking are not unrully behaviours, they are also subject to tacit recognition by the society to be counted as 'choosing' or 'walking'. And to that extent some rules or linguistic moves lie on a different plane : linguistic rules are not, according to some, *merely regulative, they can*

even be 'constitutive'. But it hardly makes sense to speak of ' constitutive rules' of 'walking', 'choosing'...Secondly, it may be urged that linguistic pieces are *mere tools* and hence they can be only *borrowed and not owned.* Of course, the importance of the distance of the distinction between 'linguistic piece' and 'move' (see sect. 1) is here played down. According to this view, at best we can speak of *'skilled or unskilled use of a linguistic piece'.* But 'skilled use' cannot always be a synonym for 'creative use', and hence even the show of superskill may not bestow upon the user (and merely a producer) of a linguistic piece, its ownership, to repeat, in the sense in which we are bestowed with the ownership of a smile !

5. LINGUISTIC RULES AND LANGUAGING

In countering this sceptical attitude about 'one's own language', it is, however, to be admitted that linguistic activities are relatively *more constrained form of behaviour* than actions such as walking, smiling, looking, ... This is true at least of technical language in specialized studies such as science, logic and mathematics, and more true of sterotyped use of language, use of an alien language. How ingenous may our utterances be, they have to be in *appearance* (only in 'appearance'[16]) similar to some linguistic expression recognized as such, as a definite kind of expression belonging to a distinct language. This needs be the case because of the strict intersubjective character of language, because of the unique purpose language has to serve. This constraining character of a linguistic move has misled to thinking that manufacturing of a linguistic piece according to semantic and syntactic rules and conventions is a *matter of skill only.* But this cannot be so, simply because use of language is 'innovative'.

The important point to ponder here is not whether there are *precise or unprecise rules and conventions for generating expressions.* No form of creative activities are free. from rules and conventions, but the relevant issue is : how is the rules and other linguistic informations made use of in languaging or making a linuistic move ? Does *the style* of utilization of the linguistic on grammatical informations, the given linguistic ingredients, ideosyncratically differ from the style of utilization of the relevant ingredients in case of other forms of activities, paintings, singing, for instance, where the question of ownership seems to be legitimate ? Were the application of the linguistic ingredients in manufacturing linguistic expression, even in normal cases, mechanical, explicit or enumerative in nature (just as in assembling a radio set by following a printed

circuit), languaging would be *merely a matter of skill*. A language could be mastered independent of suitable linguistic environments. In that case alone the logic of 'choosing', 'walking' ...and 'saying' would be completely different, *for choosing can never be just a matter of skill*. But the very relationship between a linguistic move and rules etc. are far from being precise. (see ft. 16). Wittgenstein in himself believes that there cannot be rules for rule following. It is extremely difficult to decide if *a casual, constitutive or mere regulative* relation subsists between the rule and the move. Far less the utilization of the rules under *normal conditions* can be mechanical, explicit or stereotyped. This can be clear from the *compositional nature of language*. Indefinite number of new sentences can be created in any language through composition. Thus nobody till now perhaps has confronted with the sentence :

> The Bengalis are less prone to heart
> attack, because they are used to fish

But it is produced now and it can also be recognised as belonging to the class of sentence, and also understood. The sentence is just now instantly produced, but I am not aware what rules I have precisely followed to manufacture it, although surely the sentence confirm to definite syntactic and semantic rules of English language, and also some general rules of English language, and also some general rules of *consistency, compatibility, elegance,* parsimony... (there is no end of it!). Similarly, given these vocabulary of the English language : 'the', 'of', 'natural', 'red', 'water', 'not', any reader can compose all the following sentences :

> Water is red.
> The natural colour of water is not red.
> Is water red ?
> Is not the natural colour red ?
> Water is not red.

The reader also can correctly guess if some more sentences can be manufactured from the given vocabulary . But he needs not be aware of what particular rule or purely linguistic information causing, guiding or *regulating him to this end*. In the situation of 'languaging' far less can we be aware of 'rules' explicitly. This very absence of any awareness about any rule compelling us to chose some particular words, their order is linguistic freedom. What else linguistic

freedom or even freedom as could mean ?

Not to speak of a particular rule or usage, it is not even possible to pinpoint what exactly impels one to *select a particular phrase*, words among the innumerable possibilities. The selection of a particular work or a phrase (e.g., the phrase 'morning innocence' in 'my views at that time had a kind of morning innocence' (Russell) is not diametrically opposite to an artist's choice of a particular shade of colour.

The important point is that rules, convention, usage are not explicitly there in our consciousness while we are involved in an ingenuous use of language perhaps only when involved with ingenuous use of language. Chomsky's distinction between 'competence and performance'[17] if valid can lend further support to this crucial point about non-mechanical utilizability of rules ... Chomsky makes the distinction between 'what one knows' (about the rules of sentence-formation) and 'how one uses this knowledge' in concrete linguistic activities'. A native speaker of a language or an user of a language which is wedded to his life must have *internalized* certain rules which only *implicity* 'guide' him to produce innumerable new sentences according to his felt needs, and *specific urges*. What is also interesting to note is that abstract knowledge of sentence formation rules *need not match a native speaker's actual performance* . That is to say, we generate large number of sentences which are *only averagely acceptable* according to the strict principle of linguistic rules and convention . There is thus never full conformity of a linguistic piece to convention. But there is no trouble in doing things with language either. This once again points to the reality of *linguistic freedom* which is essential if 'languaging' is to be possible . It is perhaps easier to understand how linguistic freedom which is essential if 'languaging' is to be possible. It is perhaps easier to understand how linguistic freedom is *compatible* with linguistic rules or linguistic necessity than to understand compability between necessty and freedom in general which has plagued philosophers . To cite a simple case of compatibility between linguistic freedom and linguistic necessity :

'In order to pronounce the letter "T" it is necessary to keep the tongue in a certain position behind the teeth, move it at certain speed, and at a certain directions, keep the pressure of the air from the lungs at a certain level ...' We do not undergo any of these physical constraints deliberately.

But linguistic freedom is possible even within the scheme of a conventional language only when *performance or 'languaging' dominates over competence* . And of course, such a situation becomes possible when language is *wedded to life*. This also helps us to understand how it is that everyone, a linguistic genius or a lay man alike, has a language of his own, or *why it is that even an illiterate can 'language' as he can smile of his own*. Kabir's creative use of language can hardly be doubted.

Another objection can be raised at this point. The possibility of ownership presupposes the possibility non-ownership. If I can be an owner of a smile, I can also be non-owner of a (forced) smile although originating from me. Can we similarly imagine that in spite of being the originator of a linguistic move uttering a sentence, for instance, I might be a non-owner of it ? The issue here is in our terminology, *when there is no languaging in spite of use of language* (see Tagor's remarks on p.15) ? The prompt answer is: *cases where 'competence aspects of use of language tends to dominate over the performance aspects*. The urge to say something, imagine or to think is overshadowed by the search for the rules, conventions... The use of a language tends to become 'ritualistic', 'stereotyped', 'artificial'. This often happens, when particular sentences patterns : '...not only...but also...', 'with reference to ..., ...beg to ...', 'in spite of the ...'etc. etc. *haunt our mind before there is a genuine urge to say something*. Taking a clue from Ryle we can say, 'it is a situation where one is more a grammarian, a compositor ... than a writer or a speaker'. Or this happens when there is more propensity to use readymade expressions like 'weather is fine', 'how do you do', ...Here, as if, the urge to compose has almost come to a hault. With a bit of exaggeration such uses of language can be compared with 'grrrrrrrrr' of a lion, 'mew' of a cat ... these also may serve some purposes. But as Tagore says 'only to meet certain needs'. Sentences which are produced only because, or primarily because *of the influences of familarity, with particular sentence patterns, because of skill with some definite patterns and so on, are not the sentences which we can genuinely own*. This is exactly the case where use of a language has turn into a matter of imitation and skill. No longer linguistic sensitivity, style have their due roles in the compositions of expressions.

That reference to such a situation of competence getting dominance over performance is not far fetched is proved by the fact that people often

grumble that 'words get worn out by their too frequent uses', 'a newspaper has become too cliche ridden'. There are different devices to remedy the diminishing efficacy of words : by uses of more idiomatic expressions, having resort to digression, metaphorical uses of words... Or as some great thinkers have advocated , "to merge in silence". *The composition of linguistic expressions* in the right spirit is surely the most general and easy device. We can send a greeting by selecting the sentence No. 16 of the Indian post and Telegraph Department :"May God showers the choicest blessing on the newly married couple". The same greeting would have different effect when it is self-composed : "I sincerely wish that you who are just married receive from God his choicest blessing". Its freshness is due to *its being composed.* Of course, it is not to be denied that appropriate use of token-expression — say word, phrases or sentences, which are very familiar, but used appropriately according to the context can be a genuine sign of creativity. Otherwise we cannot attribute creative use of language to a lay man. Such a use can be also *intended, does not just happen and there would be languaging.* For instance, the utterance of 'the sun is rising' in the cold and foggy morning in Shillong may be creative and intended when the utterance is not just because of acquintance with the sentence. Moreover, words are not generally coined, they have to be selected. The selective process of words, phrases can be *intended,* and sometimes very imaginatively : e.g., 'bride's key-cold hand', 'the face of the house', 'green jealously' ... There is no bar in such cases of uses by *selection* of already available words, sentences..., for *performance to predominate over competence. Supposing that we can decide about one dominating over the other,* here is not the grammatical knowledge or various *kinds of pure linguistic informations that are causing one to use the set expressions. Such linguistic information may be just some factors.* Much stretch of imagination, sense of elegance coupled with keen awareness of the context (language being wedding to life) may be the main factors. Surely the use of "key-cold" in tropical countries to describe the coldness of 'certain kind' is artificial, *a case of competence dominating over performance.* In such a case it is primarily certain purely *linguistic information* about 'key-cold, that it is phrase in English language, it stands for 'certain type of frigid coldness', and so on influence us to use it. In other words, *in being owner of a sentence linguistic factors as well as many non-linguistic or semi-linguistic factors act responsible.*

M O R A L (I have thought of this paper with the belief that philosophy can bring in some change.)

What said above with an effort may be trivial : 'we own that language which we are capable of operating ingenously and creatively'. Operating with one's own language is not simply *a matter of skill,*for one can be responsible for languaging , what is true of a moral action also. It is perhaps unfortunate that it is not a trivial truth with everybody. Again, language is of a 'bewitching' nature " it not only affords us to think, surmise, hypothesise ... of our own by allowing us to 'language', it can entice us because of so many reasons, eg. as a labour saving device, to make degenerated use of it, to use it artificially by way of borrowing, cramming, copying. *Language is perhaps the only bank where borrowing can easily remain undetected !* But even such degenerated uses of language, what is actually frightening, *can create an illusion of thinking, imag-ining of our own, or as if we are the owners of the sentences produced in that fashion.* In Tagore's word :

> 9. We imitate, look for a precedence ; and what we pass for independent thinking is but an echo of something learned by cramming somewhere.[18]

We have pointed out that distinct sign of artificial uses of language can be found in the *cases where 'Competence'* (knowledge of rules, conventions etc.) *gets an upper hand over 'performance'* (doing things with language) i.e., *cases where there is no languaging.* The degenerated uses of language is almost inevitable where the imperative to use a particular language and the linguistic environment conducive to its ingenuous uses are not co-existing, i.e., the use of the language is *not wedded to life-style.* Many of us are driven to this situation. And this explains Tagore's harping on this 'trivial truth' (nearly sixty years ago).

> 10. Nothing is familiar (the syntax, the morphology , the texture of the language we are compelled to use) from the beginning to the end and as a consequence, we have to start cramming, as it were, *before we are born.*[19]

Tagore had also to serve repeated warning against the obvious pernicious effect this situation would have on our intellectual and moral growth:

> 11. We shall collect, but this would not bring accomplishment to our language, we shall reflect, but our reflection shall remain outside our language, our mind shall be growing with years, but our language shall remain ever retarded .[2]

But our perspective is not yet clear. This is evident from *our average wisdom about 'language that we can own',* for instance, in our tendency

to equate our own language with our professional or technical language with which we have effected some *sort of a compromise, or where 'competence' rules over 'performance'.* This is also evident, for instance, from a Bengali's sense of indifference in not being able to draft an official letter in Bengali, although he might be *capable of indulging in gossip, jokes, giving a bit of his mind are only in Bengali.* This is only because in gossiping ...creative use of language is indispensable and not in issuing an official letter ...

It is also to be noted here that 'one's own language' is not necessarily identifiable with *one's own mother tongue or with the language of the community* to which one belongs. Tagore of course tends to look at one's own language in the light of one's mother tongue. But this is only because usually one's mother tongue is wedded to one's life-style. *But given the suitable linguistic environments any language may be one's own.* But of course, any linguistic environment cannot be given at wish !! This must be clear from our discussion. *The concept of 'one's own language' can be thus defined independent of the concept of 'mother tongue'.* Moreover, Speaking in the objective perlance of 'one's own language' is realistic and safe. This would help us to avoid unnecessary parochial overtones, and to get into the genuine issue i.e., *objectively claim kindred with a particular language among a host with which we generally may be acquainted.* Any language one is able to manage to 'meet certain needs' — lectures, write an application, serve tender notice, is not necessarily a language of his own (if competence dominates over performance). *But everyone has a language of his own, as everyone has a life of his own.* But whereas generally there is no chance of wrong identification of one's own life with the other's, in the case of language there is. We are often tempted to claim kindred with a well-to-do family so also we are tempted to calim a particular language as our own from some pragmatic considerations. And our claim is often illegitimate and detrimental to the development of 'man' in us. Tagore was the only person in this time to have declared a crusade against this tendency. Tagore could visualise that there is no alternative to *linguistic pluralism* under the circumstances - till the world is one society, and decried what we may call *'linguistic imperialism'.*

12. No doubt, the proper arrangement be made to run the state's

administration,...but only one giagantic state's lamp can be kept burning at the gateway, but to keep up with the uninterrupted supply of its oil, should the lamp in every house be put out ? Let us take the case of Europe. The language there varies from the country to country, but the cultural unity pervades whole of the continent ...The flow of contribution from the different streams of language enriched Europe to enable it conquer the heart of the world. Likewise, we should have not two minds in our effort to enrich all the different languages of India...

We shall hope for the 'great event' to take place in our country not through the process of amalgamation of all the languages but by letting each bloom into its unique manifestation.[21]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

(All quotations are in my own translation. The references to Tagore's works are from Centenary Edition, 1962, Govt. of West Bengal Publication.)

1. Baṅga Bhāṣaṛ Parichay, in *Rabindra Rachanabali*, VL. XIV, p.455.

2. 'Chhātrader Prati Saṁbhāṣan' in *ibid.*, VL.XI; pp. 716-17.

3. 'Sikṣār Swāngīkaraṇ' *ibid.*, p. 710.

4. *Op. Cit.* p. 645.

5. *Op.Cit.*, p. 645.

6. To meet this objection I can do no more than recommend a closer study of Tagore's utterances about language in relation to man, scattered perhaps in various forms of his writings. Only some are explicitly mentioned here.

7. This distinction is warranted by various kinds of distinctions now have become famous, like 'language and speech', 'Use and Meaning' (See 'use, Usage and Meaning' by G. Ryle). See also most interesting remark of Susanne K.Langer:

"This basic need which is certainly obvious in man, is the basic need of symbolization. This symbol-making function is man's primary activities like eating, looking or moving about".

8. 'Sāhityer Pathe' in *Ibid.,* VL.XIV, p. 378.

9. *Bānglā Bhāsār Parichay,* Ibid., VL. XIV, p. 55.

10. See, *The Labyrinth of Language*, by Max black, specially the Chapter, 'Thought and Language'.

11. Speaking about linguistic style Hazlit remarks : "To write in a genuine familiar or truly English Style is to write as any one would speak in common conversasion ..." See also 'philosophy of Language' by Flew., A.G.N. in *Philosophy and Linguistic. P. 30.*

12. 'Siksār Her Pher, Ibid., VOL. XI, p. 445.

13. According to Kant and an action which is done under the maxim of categorical imperative is also done 'in the conception of the law', not being determined by the law. And hence we can say that an action (moral) also can be an ingenuous in spite of being governed by a law.

14. See Searle's remark about Grice's emphasis on 'intention' as a factor in communication in 'What is a speech Act ?" in *The Philosophy of Language* Ed. by Searle, p. 45.

15. See 'Use, Usage and Meaning' by Ryle. G, in *The Theory of Meaning, Ed. by Parkinson, p. 113.*

16. This is because as Chomsky points out in his *Language and Mind*, P.10, : "The normal use of language is innovative, in the sense that much of what we say in the course of normal use is entirely new, not a repetion of anything that we have heard before."

17. See *Noam Chomsky* by Lyons, John.

18. See 'Sikshā', *ibid.*, VOL.XI, P. 557.

19. See 'Sikṣār her pher' in *ibid*, VOL. XI. P.645.

20. 'Sikṣār vahan', *ibid.*

21. *Bānglā Bhāsār Parichay, ibid*, VOL. XIV, p.455-56.

THE KAṬHAPONIṢAD ON POWER AND FREEDOM

BIJAYANANDA KAR

The Upaniṣads form an important part of the *Vedas*. Those are considered to be not only great Hindu theological scripture but those are also viewed containing or revealing significant expressions of philosophical reflection, artistic symbolism, poetic charm and mystical ecstasy. Researchers read different meanings and that shows the rich manifold character of the Upaniṣadic texts.

Here, in the present discussion, I propose to briefly discuss the issues concerning power and freedom at the background of the *Kqthopaniṣad,* one of the principal *Upaniṣads.* It offers Ātma-vidya/Jñāna as śreyaḥ through the anecdote of Yama and Naciketā. Usually the Ātma/Jñāna is held as self-knowledge which is considered as the most preferable and Yama has imparted this knowledge, which is the best knowledge, to Naciketa finding him to be the most suitable. Ātma-jñāna is not vṛtti-jñāna or the mode-dependent knowledge which is the common ordinary Knowledge of the empirical variety. This is most uncommon and immediate *(aparokṣa)* and is treated as direct realisation *(sākṣat pratīti).* In view of its being non-empirical, scholars, have interpreted it as other-wordly, transcendental and because it concerns with one's own immediate realisation *(ātmānubhūti),* it is treated to be subjective and, on the basis of its uncommon character, it is held to be purely mystical.

Now, if this rendering is accepted then there seems to be little scope for the introduction of power and freedom of the empirical concern so far as the Upaniṣadic frame of reference is taken into account. If the Upaniṣadic talk of self-knowledge amounts to the attainment of *mokṣa* or absolute emancipation then obviously that concept is of no relevance at the ordinary empirical plane where the sense of freedom is context-bound and is far from any transcendental notion of absolute unconditionality.

Power whose nearest Sanskrit equivalent is *śakti* connotes something of both physical and psychic origin. Power and energy are close and may be treated as logical neighbours. Freedom generally stands for independence. In the empirical plane, freedom is mostly used in the human context, though at times it is extended to non-human beings also. Whether man or animal, the necessity of freedom is expected for smooth living. Whenever there is some external check or control, freedom is curtailed and power also gradually becomes weak and inoperative. In the socio-empiric plane man, therefore, strives to attain power and strength; it is also the case that he seeks to retain freedom as far as possible. It is the sense of freedom that gives boosting to the growth of carefree living with confidence. It accelerates growth and development both in case of individual and also of group.

Power means strength. If there is loss of power, there is loss of strength and consequently there is adverse effect on healthy living. If freedom is obstructed both in the physical and mental front, then that leads to the decrease of power and strength. On account of this man has the natural tendency to retain power and freedom as much as possible. Whether it is individual or it is particular society, nation or state, in all such context there is found to be the yearning for power and freedom in some sense or the other. And this is not something unusual. Of course, too much craving for power and hankering after absolute freedom is neither practically cogent nor morally preferable. Lust for power leads to corruption and that can neither bring happiness at the individual nor in the social plane. The so called pleasure or happiness derived out of the enforcement of power is only temporary and is not of lasting value. So also complete and uncontrolled freedom gives rise to indiscipline and arrogance at the individual sector. Even at the social sphere it leads to some kind of empty vanity and superiority complex. Consequent thereupon, aggressive form of social groupism is formed which too is not preferable. To put in other words both power and freedom are required at the human level, but, at the same time, it is to be marked that a proper balance is to be retained for the exercise of power and attainment of freedom as well. This balancing factor is both practically operative and morally acceptable.

It is keeping this point in mind, let us probe into the basic issue indicated in the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*. It conveys its message through the anecdote. Yama being pleased with the noble and impecable personality of Niciketā requested

him to ask for three boons of his own choice and consequently Naciketā asked for the first boon (1.1.10) which is quite significant from the point of view of the present discussion. He did not ask for his permanent placement in heaven; nor did he like to get permanent hospitality and comfort from Yama in his abode. To put simply, he did not aspire for heavenly pleasant state of existence which has been imagined with highest esteem in religiotheological source. He wanted to come back to the worldly plane of existence. That means the empirical setting is not given up here but is rather very much accepted as the proper place to discharge one's own duties and responsibilities. Naciketā expected from Yama to bring peace and tranquility (*śānta-saṁkalpaḥ*) in the mind of his father who was quite upset and had terrible tension. Naciketā was not so much concerned about himself but was more so for his father and others. It would be evident later how he moved further in imparting the wisdom to people which he attained due to the third boon offered by Yama.

The third boon which was asked for by Naciketā and on which the gist-point of the *Upaniṣad* is almost centred around is found to be quite significant from the moral point of view. He raised the question as to what happens to man (*manuṣya*) when it dies. Some say it exists and some say it does not (*ayam asti, ayam nāsti* - 1. 1.20). There is no mention about Ātman in this context, though *Śaṅkara* and other commentators refer to Ātman here and the whole discussion centres around what is viewed as *Ātma-Jñāna*. Of course, the term '*Ātman*' is also referred to in the Kaṭhopaniṣad later. But the point that is to be noticed here is that the term '*Ātman*' in this context, implies man (in a specific sense) whether his state of being continues after death or not. Now the fact of death is clear. Nobody would ever mean that a particular man continues in the same form and context after his death. It is a fact that the person who is identified as Rāma (the son of Daśaratha, the husband of Sītā etc.) is no more alive. He is surely dead and gone. It is futile to mean that the same historical Rāma still continues as Rāma even if long since he is dead. So if one tries to bring the point that Rāma, the psycho-physical being, the man of flesh and blood continues to exist in some form or other as immortal , this is hardly convincing. Naciketā, it seems was fully aware of this and so also Yama was convinced that Naciketā's question was not directed towards eternal or immortal existence of some esoteric self and the Kaṭhopaniṣad's ideal is not to establish the immortality(*amṛtatva*) of the mystical being.

While Yama explained the *Atma -tattva* to Naciketā (I.II.1), he referred to that issue through an important point of distinction between *śreyaḥ* and *preyaḥ* (preferable and pleasurable respectively). It is said that those who seek pleasure (meaning here sensuous pleasure grounded on greed, attachment etc. can not have success in the long run. They do not attain peace but always undergo worries and tension. But on the contrary, those who are intelligent *(dhrirāḥ)*, composed *(sthirāḥ)*, balanced and judicious aim at preferable. They are not satisfied with the immediate pleasure. It is not pleasure but enduring peace that is their goal, that is why they always try to keep balance by way of self-restraint (*saṁyama*) without causing harm to others. This is morally significant. Yama's reference to *śreyaḥ* and *preyaḥ* obviously has empirical relevance. It is in the empirical plane of existence where either man is driven by the tendency of sensual pleasure or he as radical puritan has given up everythings and has taken recourse to pure asceticism being completely indifferent and negligent of his obligations and duties. To opt for *śreyaḥ* does not, of course, imply that one should become callous towards social obligations. One should not develop an escapist attitude being unreasonably enticed by one's so called self-fulfilment or egoistic freedom. That is never advocated in the Upaniṣadic tradition. Rather, on the other hand, there is the perpetual emphasis laid upon the dismissal of the egoistic supremacy and there is the clear direction for maintaining a balance between the egoistic and the altruistic tendencies that beset the egoistic human personality. In this context, it seems that *saṁyama* is a crucial concept indicated in the Upaniṣad and later on well emphasised in the Indian tradition. Any radical move either for gross hedonistic sensualism at one end or moving for complete puritanic orthodoxy at the other end is found to have been never approved. Here śrī Aurobindo's cautious remark "the materialistic denial and the refusal of the ascetic" deserves due consideration. It seems to be in tune with the general tradition approved and adopted in the Upaniṣadic trend.

Naciketā is found by Yama as one well-balanced personality who is cool and composed. He is neither allured by gross sensualism nor by any visionary empty idealism. He is a man of sound intelligence (*sama buddhi*) who can well discriminate between virtue and vice, good and evil, noble and ignoble and that is why Yama has considered him as fit for *Ātma-jñāna*, i.e., attainment of *amratattva* which is nothing other than the attainment of *śreyaḥ*.

In other words, Ātma-jñāna, seems to be neither for the realisation of any eso-teric mystical self of pure individuation nor for the realisation of any transcen-dental all pervasive highest self as pure existent. Such type of speculative sur-mises seem to be the product obscure picture-thinking. It is the man who by way of proper concentration (sādhanā) and sincere effort can rise in the valu-ational path and can well discriminate between good and bad by way of incul-cating the balanced reflection (sama cintana). he is thus dhīraḥ and not mandah.

It is true that morals are not the product of sense perception. Ought cannot be derived from is. But that does not mean that morals can never have any application on the empirical living and for that an ideal non-empirical visionary setting has to be sought for. At least the Kathopaniṣadic framework seems to have left no scope for such a transcendental footing of moral virtues. śreyaḥ must have to be pursued in the socio-empiric setting and one is to thrive for its realisation in this plane of existence. That is why the Kathopaniṣad is absolutely unambiguous in declaring that the mortal becomes immortal when all desires of temptation (Kāmaḥ) fall (II.iii.14). Brahman or the attain-ment of the immortality is never construed as something transempirical or tran-scendental but is to be realised here and now (atra) provided one moves prop-erly in this path of value . The whole Upaniṣadic message, thus, is laukika and never pāralaukika. It has a distinct ethical tone of socio-empiric concern. It seems to have no leaning for any transcendental divine state of obscurant bliss. The Upaniṣadic saying seems to have a deep and profound human significance. Naciketā has been duly chosen and picked up by Yama as a representative of human race who is set as an illustrious figure and to whom others can emulate for the purpose of moral excellence that is not circumscribed by any narrow consideration of localisation or communalisation but that which is universal and all pervasive (sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ etc.) Amṛtattva thus does not mean esoteric form of existence of the individual, Rāma but, the human nobility which remains as illustration even after his end. To put in a different language, man dies but humanity does not.

Now a point may be raised as to what is the importance and the rel-evancy of this universal value consciousness with regard to power and free-dom both at the individual and the group level. Clarification on this point seems to be not so difficult. Power can be best implemented as well as utilised if the objective or the goal is well determind. If the goal is ill-motivated and valu-ationally of a degraded type then there would surely be improper application of

power resulting therein psychological worries and anxieties, causing thereby physical disorders too. Both physical and psychic powers need some moral grinding so that those become well regulated and thoughtfully balanced. One well plan and programme is expected to be fruitful. Similarly the expectation of power if is backed by proper moral sense of character and integrity then it is very much likely to be productive and it would contribute to peace and happiness. Calmness of mind and purity of purpose temper the flow of power and never tamper it.

Such moral sense of equanimity which is well grounded on the basis of śreyaḥ can never by-pass the significance of freedom. A free individual cannot be mentally upset and troubled. His sense of freedom is not meant to be his being alone free at the cost of others. That is not real freedom. He must be aspiring for freedom not in lieu of others but along with others. This is beautifully expressed by Sri Aurobindo in another context. According to him, true spritualism (i.e., Ātma-bodha in the Upaniṣadic sense) teaches us that we are not only ourselves but all others" (Human Cycle). Such nnotion of freedom again is not visionary but has deep human significance at the empiric setting.

PRACTICAL VEDANTA

NIROD BARAN CHAKRABORTY

Practical Vedanta is associated with the name of Swami Vivekananda. He observes : 'theory is very good indeed, but how are we to carry it in practice? The Vedanta, therefore, as a religion must be intensely practical, we must be able to carry it our in every part of our lives. And not only this, the fictitious differentiation between religion and the life of the world must vanish, for the Vedanta teaches oneness — one life throughout ?'[2]

At least four points have been made in this passage.(1) Theory is very good but without practice it is incomplete.(2) Practical Vedanta is a religion based on Vedanta philosophy.(3) Practical Vedanta is related to every part of our lives. (4) Vedanta (Advaita) teaches oneness and consequently the differentiation between religion and the life of the world is unjustified.

Sister Nivedita in the Introduction to the Complete Works of her Guru states : 'No distinction, hereforth, between sacred and secular. To labour is to pray. To conquer is to renounce. Life is itself religion. To have and to hold is as stern a trust as to quit and to avoid.' She added that none was alien or foreign to her Guru . 'For him, there existed only Humanity and Truth.'[3]

Practical Vedanta does not reject anything as alien or false. Truth is its ideal and it admits no barrier of caste, creed and country. It speaks in terms of humanity and not for any root in particular.

Practical Vedanta is a universal religion. A practical Vedantin holds that Religion is one as Truth is one and the extant religions are the manifestations of this Religion with Capital 'R'.

Vedanta, we all know, has different schools. All of them may be

brought under three heads—Dualism, Qualified monism and Non-dualism. The first is associated with the name of Madhva, the second with Rāmānuja and the last one with the name of Samkara. Madhva will consider the other two as false, Rāmajuja will find the other two as unacceptable, whereas to Samkara non-dualism is ultimately true and the other two may be efficatious to some at different stages of spiritual development but their final falsity can never be denied. Swāmī Vivekānanda finds a hierarchy in them from dualism to non-dualism through qualified monism and considers none of them as false. We do not pass from falsity to truth, he holds, but we pass from lower truth to higher truth. Dvaita, Vishistādvaita and Advaita are but three phases or stages in a single development, of which the last named constitutes the goal. This is part and parcel of the still greater and more simple doctrine that many and the one are the same Reality, perceived by the mind at different times and in different attitudes . One is not exclusive of the many which is not divorced from the one. One is to be read in the many which should be taken as the manifestation of the one. This is the principle of 'Unity in Diversity'. This principle can well solve the different problems of the plurality of race, language, religion and states. The differences can never be eliminated, these will exist forever' 'Variation', according to Swāmī Vivekānanda, 'is the sign of life and it must be there'.[4] Only the one in the variety is not to be lost right of. The different citizens of India have differences of caste, creed, language, race and the like, still they are all Indians. Swami Abhedananda, the brother disciple of Swāmī Vivekānanda, later on, accommodated all extant religions, dualistic, qualified non-dualistic and non-dualistic under one universal religion which is Vedānta.[5]

A Practical Vedāntin can well be a Hindu with the Hindus, a Moham-medan with the Mohammedans, a Christian with the christians and of any other religion with its followers. Swāmījī says : 'I shall go to the mosque of the Mahammedan, I shall enter the Christians church and kneel before the cruci-fix; I shall enter the Buddhistic temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and in his law. I shall go into the forest and sit in mediatation with the Hindu, who is trying to see the light which enlightens the heart of every one. Not only shall I do all these but I shall keep my heart open for all that they may come in the future. Is God's book finished ? or is it still a continuous revelation going on ? It is a marvellous book — these spiritual revelations of the world. The Bible, the Vedas, the Koran, and all other sacred books are so many pages and an infinite number of pages remain yet to be unfolded...Salutation to all the prophets

of the past, to all the great ones of the present and to all that are to come in the future.[6] He adds : 'We want to lead mankind to the place when there is neither the Vedas, nor the Bible nor the Koran; yet this has to be done by harmonising the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran'. The implication perhaps is that Practical Vedānta has respect for all religious texts, faith in their harmony and yet goes beyond them in actual realisation of Truth. Authentic religion does not mean certain texts, it is essentially realisation, being and becoming.

About authentic religion Swāmījī observes : Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship or psychic control or philosophy — by one or more, or all of these and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details'.

Six points are to be noted here. First, each soul is potentially divine. Secondly, the goal of human life is to manifest this divinity. Thirdly, religion is the manifestation of divinity already in man. This is a new definition of religion. Fourthly, doctrines or dogmas or rituals or books or temples or forms do not constitute the essence of religion. These are only secondary details. Fifthly, realisation is possible in various ways and all these are equally efficacious. Sixthly, the synthesis of Yogas — Jñāna, Karma, Bhakti and Rāja is possible. Previously we heard of Jñāna-Karma-samnccaya or Combination of knowledge and work. But Swāmījī widened the scope of combination and synthesised all the Yogas.

Swāmījī chalked out a new sādhanā for the realisation of the divinity of man which is service to man as service to God (Nara-Nārāyaṇa-Sevā). This is rooted in the Upanisadic text-'Tattvamasi' understood in the light of the teachings of Sri Rāmakrishṇa. One day he was talking about the three main disciplines followed by the Vaiṣṇavas, viz. kindness to creatures, love for the Lord's name and respect for the devotees of God. He did not like the idea of kindness, as a finite man, according to him, cannot show kindness to another man. A man can only be served as God.

Although many heard this, only Swāmī Vivekānanda (then Narendranath) grasped the underlying idea and in later life he gave it a practi-

cal shape and propagated the idea of Practical Vedānta.

If God can be worshipped in images made of clay or metal, He can be worshipped in human form also. This is a new gospel propagated by Sri Rāmakrishna and Vivekānanda. One who serves men as God removes human sufferings and hence does good to the society and in doing so he becomes free. This sādhana of Naranarāyana sevā is different from the ordinary humanitarian service which is generally inspired by mercy and compassion. In such a case a dualism between sevya and sevaka or the served and the server, is unavoidable. Moreover, those who serve in this way place themselves on a higher footing as they give and the others receive. But in Swāmīji's concept of Naranārāyana sevā there is identity between sevya and sevaka as to both of them are potentially divine . When one man serves another, really he serves himself, because essentially and ultimately all are one.

Naranārāyanasevā is not even identical with ordinary Karmayoga. In Karmayoga there is dualism between Karmī (the doer) and Karma (the deed). But here in Naranārāyana sevā nara, narayana and seva represent essential divinity or spirituality. Here God worships God, as accordìng to the Shāstras, we are to worship śiva by being śiva (śivam bhutvā Sivam Yajet).

Naranārāyanasevā is a new spiritual discipline which synthesizes jnana, raja, yoga, bhakti and karma. In this sādhana man has to conceive of God as the self with in to be attached to him through bhaktiyoga with whole hearted devotion and through karmayoga serve him with disinterested, desireless actions.

This Naranārāyana seva takes the whole man - his hand, heart and head and so it becomes a worship of the whole being. Moreover, this Naranārāyana sevā doctrine assigns to man the highest honour, as man himself is God there. Human dignity lies in divinity.

Swāmīji has shown that Advaita which is the basis of Practical Vedānta is harmonions with modern science and aceptable to a critical modern mind.[7] In this new religion, Swāmīji says, theism is belief in one's own self and atheism is disbelief in him. So this religion brings self-confidence and fearlessness.

Swāmīji explains morality in terms of Advaita. Every religion preaches

that the essence of morality is to do good to others. The Biblical inunction —
'treat the neighbour as thyself' is intelligible if we accept the Advaita conten-
tion that there is essential oneness. Advaita justifies the concepts of 'One World'
and 'One Humanity'.

Practical Vedānta as a religion stands for religion of man, values of
life, universal love and eternal Truth. It (Practical Vedānta) is opposed to any
form of privilege for anyone. Swāmījī observes : 'The idea of privilege is the
bave of human life ...there is first the brutal idea of privilege, that of strong
over the weak. There is the privilege of wealth. If a man has more money than
another, he wants a little privilege over those who have less. There is still
subtler and more powerful privilege of intellect; because one man knows more
than others, he claims more privilege. And the last of all, and the worst, be-
cause the most tyrannical, is the priviledge of spirituality. If some persons
think that they know more of spirituality of God, they claim of superior privi-
lege than over everyone else... None can be Vedāntists and admit of priviledge
to anyone, either mental, physical or spiritual; absolutely no privilege for any-
one. The same power is in every man, the one manifesting more, the other less;
the same potentiality is in everyone. Where is the claim to privilege?[8] Vedanta,
thus, paves the ground for true democracy and socialism. Swāmījī frees Vedānta
from its traditional limitation and opens its doors to all and presents it as uni-
versal philosophy and religion with a universal appeal. Thus, Vedānta which
was confined to the forest and cave, came out to work at bar and the bench, in
the pulpit and in the cottage of a poor man, with the fishermen that are catching
fish and with the students that are studying in various disciplines ?

Practical Vedānta has nothing to do with politics and any political gain.
It has a social bearing as it can bring about social change through the change of
the character of the individuals living in the society. Its ultimate aim is the
realisation of one's essential divinity and universal oneness.

REFERENCES

1. Four lectures on Practical Vedanta delivered in London on 10,12, 17,18 Nov, 1896. (The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol II, P.291-341).

2. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol II, p.374.

3. Ibid, Vol.I, p.X.

4. Ibid, Vol.II, p. 564

5. Swami Abhedananda : Universal religion and Vedanta, p.43.

6. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol.II, p. 374.

7. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol.I, p. 366-382.(Reason and Religion)

8. Ibid, Vol.I, p.424.

প্রাচীন ভারতের পরিবেশনীতি : সংস্কৃত শাস্ত্র-সাহিত্যের দর্পণে

করুণাসিন্ধু দাস

১. ভূমিরের পরায়ণম্ :

গাছপালা, প্রাণিজগৎ, মানবসমাজ এবং ভূপ্রকৃতির উপাদান-উপকরণ পাহাড়, নদী, সাগর, মাটি, জল আগুন, আকাশ-বাতাসের সম্বন্ধপরম্পরা নিয়ে প্রণালীবদ্ধ বিদ্যাচর্চা ('stay of the pattern of relations of plants, animals and people to each other and to their surroundings') না হলেও সতর্ক আলোচনা, মনোযোগ, আবেগ-অনুভব প্রকাশের ইতিহাস ভারতে বেশ প্রাচীন । অথর্বসংহিতার পৃথিবীসূক্তে (১২/১) ৬৩টি মন্ত্রকবিতা জুড়ে বরফে ঢাকা পর্বত, ধূলি-পাথর-সমাকীর্ণ বিস্তৃত মাঠঘাট, বনজঙ্গল, নদী, সাগর, মেঘ, ছয় ঋতুর সমাগম, ধান, যব ইত্যাদি ফসল, কীটপতঙ্গ, পাখপাখালি, সাপ, চতুষ্পদ ও দ্বিপদ প্রাণী সব কিছুকে নিয়ে পৃথিবীর পরিচয় দিয়েছিলেন এক ঋষিকবি । তাঁর চোখে এই পৃথিবী আমাদের মা, আমরা তার সন্তান (মাতা ভূমি: পুত্রো অহং পৃথিব্যা: ১২/১/১২), আমাদের কল্যাণ পৃথিবীতেই নিহিত (ভূমে মাতর্নিধেহি মা ভদ্রয়া সুপ্রতিষ্ঠিতম্ - ১২/১/৬৩) । সুধার মতো জলধারা তারই দান (সুধা ন অপস্তন্বে ক্ষরন্তু - ১২/১/৩০)। আমাদের জীবন ও দীর্ঘ আয়ু তার কাছ থেকে পাওয়া চাই (সা নো ভূমি: প্রাণমায়ুর্দধাতু - ১২/১/২২)। এই মাটিতে বাম ডান পা ফেলে তুচ্ছ কীটপতঙ্গের ক্ষতিসাধন করবার অধিকার তাই আমাদের নাই (পদ্ভ্যাং দক্ষিণসব্যাজ্যাং মা ব্যথিষ্মহি ভূম্যাম্ - ১২/১/২৮) । এখানে চোখ দিয়ে যা দেখি, কানে যা শুনি, মুখে যা বলি, সব কিছুর সৌষ্ঠব আমাদের প্রত্যাশিত (যদ্ বদামি মধুমৎ তদ্ বদামি, যদীক্ষে তদ্ বনন্তি মা - ১২/১/৫৮) বলেই এমন প্রার্থনা স্বাভাবিক : ভদ্রং কর্ণেভি: শৃণুয়াম দেবা : ভদ্রং পশ্যেমাক্ষভির্যজত্রা:। স্থিরৈ রঙ্গৈ স্তুষ্টুবাংসস্তনুভির্ব্যশেম দেবহিতং যদায়ু: ॥ (প্রশ্নোপনিষদ্, শান্তিমন্ত্র)। অথর্ববেদের কবি জানতেন, এই পৃথিবী বিশ্বম্ভরা বসুধানী প্রতিষ্ঠা হিরণ্যবক্ষা জগতো নিবেশনী (১২/১/৬); এ হল ওষধি-বনস্পতির লালনভূমি (গোপা বনস্পতীনাং গৃভি রোষধীনাম্ ১২-১-৫৭) এবং মানুষের বিকাশক্ষেত্রও (আবপনী জনানাম্ -১২-১-৬১) বটে কেননা নানা বৈশিষ্ট্যের নানা জনগোষ্ঠীকে আশ্রয় দিয়েছে সে (জনং বিভ্রতী বহুধা বিবাচসং নানাধর্মানং পৃথিবী যথৌকসম্ -১২-১-৪৫)। মাটির পৃথিবীর সঙ্গে জীবজগতের এই অন্তরঙ্গতার কথা মনে রেখেই মহাভারতের কবি ভীষ্মের মুখ দিয়ে বলেছেন - ভূমৌ হি জায়তে সর্বং ভূমৌ সর্বং প্রণশ্যতি।

ভূমি: প্রতিষ্ঠা ভূতানাং ভূমিরেম পরায়ণম্ ॥

২. বিশ্বভরা প্রাণ

আর, ভাববাদী দৃষ্টিতে যাবতীয় প্রাকৃতিক সত্তার অন্তরালে গুহাহিত গহ্বরেষ্ঠ ঐশী সত্তা মানতে পারলে তো কথাই নাই । ঋগ্বেদে সরস্বতী নদী এইভাবে পাবনী জলধারায় মূর্তিমতী সুচেতনার দেবী হয়ে উঠেছিল (পাবকা ন: সরস্বতী; চেতন্তী সুমতীনাম্। ঋগ্বেদসংহিতা ...) । আগুনে, জলে, ওষধিতে বনস্পতিতে, বিশ্বভুবনের সর্বত্র এক দিব্যচেতনার বোধ কালক্রমে উপনিষদের যুগে এসে স্পষ্ট হয় (যো দেবো গৌ যো অপ্সু যো বিশ্বং ভুবনম্ আবিবেশ/ য ওষধীষু যো বনস্পতিষু তৈস্মৈ দেবায় নমো নমঃ॥ শ্বেতাশ্বতর ২ / ১৭) । নৈসর্গিক ঘটনা ও নিয়মরাশিকে মনে হতে থতাকে অন্তর্যামী অক্ষরব্রহ্মের প্রশাসন (এতস্য বা অক্ষরস্য প্রশাসনে গার্গি সূর্যাচন্দ্রমসৌ বিধৃতৌ তিষ্ঠতঃ। মাসা ঋতবঃ সংবৎসরা ইতি ... প্রাচ্যো ' ন্যা নদ্যঃ স্যন্দন্তে (শ্বেতেভ্যঃ পর্বতেভ্যঃ । বৃহদারণ্যক ৩/৮/৯) । গ্রহ-নক্ষত্র হোক, কিংবা গাছ-পাথর হোক, দেবতার প্রতীক হিসাবে তাকে অবলম্বন করে ছান্দোগ্য উপনিষদে যে সম্পদ উপাসনার রীতির দেখা মেলে, তাতেও এই দৃষ্টিভঙ্গির পরিচয় । ব্রহ্মবাদীর চোখে তাবৎ বিশ্বচরাচর চৈতন্যের বিবর্তরূপ, সূত্রে মণিগণা ইব আগুনের ফুলকির মতো বহুধাব্যাপ্ত এই জগৎ সংসার-এর অন্তর্নিহিত ঐক্যসূত্র অখণ্ডং সচ্চিদানন্দম্ অবাঙ্মনসগোচরম্ ব্রহ্ম, যা কিনা পরমাত্মস্বরূপ। জীব ব্রহ্মৈক্যবোধ বিন্দুতে সিন্ধুদর্শন ঘটিয়ে micro macro একাকার করে সর্বত্র আত্মাদর্শন এবং আত্মাতে সর্বদর্শন সুনিশ্চিত করে ছাড়ে । যস্মিন্ সর্বাণি ভূতান্যাত্মৈবাভূদ বিজানত : । তত্র কো মোহঃ কঃ শোক একত্বমনুপশ্যতঃ ॥ (ঈশ. ৭) । যস্ত সর্বাণি ভূতান্যাত্মন্যেবানুপশ্যতি সর্বভূতেষু চাত্মানং ততো ন বিজুগুপ্সতে॥ (ঈশ.৬) । 'আপন হতে বাহির হয়ে' বাইরে দাঁড়ালে 'বুকের মাঝে বিশ্বলোকের' সাড়া মিলতে অসুবিধা কোথায় ?   বেদান্তসূত্র বেয়ে ক্রমে ভাষ্যপর্যন্ত এই আস্তিক্যবোধ বেশ দৃঢ় (অভিমানিব্যপদেশস্ত বিশেষানুগতিভ্যাম্ - বেদান্তসূত্র ২ / ১ / ৫; অনুগতাশ্চ সর্বত্র অভিমানিন্যৈশ্চেতনা দেবতা মন্ত্রার্থবাদেতিহাসপুরাণাদিভ্যো'বগম্যন্তে - শাঙ্কর ভাষ্য)। এদিকে অথর্ববেদ যে মাঝে মাঝেই কোন লতাগুল্ম ওষধি বনস্পতিকে কিংবা জলকে সম্বোধন করে তার সাহায্য চাইছে, গাছগাছড়ার স্বাস্থ্যকর উপকরণের সপ্রশংস উল্লেখ করছে, সবেতেই এই অধ্যাত্মদৃষ্টির ভূমিকা স্পষ্ট, যদি চ বাস্তব উপযোগ নির্ধারণের হিসেবি মনোভাবের অসীম মূল্যও এখানে মানতেই হয় ।

শতং যা ভেষজানি তে / তেষামসি ত্বম্ উত্তমব্ অনাস্রবম্

অরোগণম্ -অথর্ব. ২ / ৩ / ২

শ্রেষ্ঠমসি ভেষজানাং বসিষ্ঠং বীরুধানাম্ ।

- অথর্ব ৬ / ৩ / ১ / ২;

আপস্তং সর্বং নিষ্করণ্ ভিষজাং সুভিষক্তমা:।

- অথর্ব ৬ / ৩ / ২ / ৫;

সিন্ধুপত্নীর সিন্ধুরাজ্ঞীর সর্বা বা নদ্যস্তন।

দত্ত নস্তস্য ভেষজং তেনা বো ভুনজামাই ॥   - অথর্ব ১/৪/৪)

অপ্স্বন্তরমৃতম্ অপ্সু ভেষজম্ ।

                - অথর্ব ১/৪/৪)।

মেঘদূতের নির্বাসিত বিরহী যক্ষ 'আষাঢ়স্য প্রথমদিবসে'হাতের কাছে অন্য কাউকে না পেয়ে মেঘকেই ভাই সম্বোধন করে তার বৌদিকে (ভ্রাতৃজায়া) দুটো কথা পৌঁছে দেওয়ার জন্য কাকুতি মিনতি করেন এই প্রয়োজনের তাগিদেই । কালিদাসের মন্তব্য — কামার্তা হি প্রকৃতিকৃপণাশ্চেতনাচেতনেষু ! বস্তুত যে কোন সুকুমার চিত্তবৃত্তিই তার প্রগাঢ় আবেগবশে অচেতনে চেতনকে খুঁজে পায় । বিক্রমোর্বশীয় নাটকে শোকার্ত পুরূরবা হারিয়ে যাওয়া প্রেয়সীর খোঁজে লতাপাতাকে জড়িয়ে ধরেন আত্মীয়ের মতো ভেবে । রঘুবংশে রামচন্দ্র চোদ্দ বছর পর অযোধ্যায় ফেরার সময় অনুভব করেন সরযূ নদী মায়ের মতো অপার স্নেহে শীতল বাতাস ছড়িয়ে তরঙ্গের হাত বাড়িয়ে সন্তানকে যেন কাছে পেতে চাইছে।

সেয়ং মদীয়া জননীব তেন মান্যোন রাজ্ঞা সরযূর্বিযুক্তা ।
দূরে বসন্তং শিশিরানিলৈর্মাং তরঙ্গহস্তৈরুপগৃহতীব ॥
                - রঘুবংশ, ১৩/৬৩

বনবালা শকুন্তলার কাছে বনজ্যোৎস্না লতাটি তো আদরের বোন, তার ফুল ফোটার দিনকে যৌবনসমাগমের দিন ভেবে একটি আমগাছের সঙ্গে তার বিয়ে দেওয়ার কথা ভাবেন অনসূয়া-প্রিয়ংবদা সমেত শকুন্তলা । মা-মরা হরিণশিশু তাঁর পালিত সন্তান যেন । স্বামীর ঘর করতে যাওয়ার দিনে শকুন্তলার কাপড়ের খুঁট ধরে টেনে 'যেও না' বুঝিয়ে দেওয়ার হক তার কারও চেয়ে কম নয় । শকুন্তলার মতো হরিণীটিও এখন মা হতে চলেছে । তার নির্বিঘ্ন প্রসবের খবর না পাওয়া পর্যন্ত শকুন্তলার স্বস্তি নেই । বিদায়বেলায় হরিণীর দল ঘাস মুখে পুরেও মুখ নাড়তে ভুলে যায় । কোকিলের ডাক না শোনা পর্যন্ত শকুন্তলার মনে হয় —অরণ্য দেবী বুঝি তাঁকে যাওয়ার অনুমতি এখনও দেন নি । সদ্যোজাত যে মানবকন্যাটি মাতৃপরিত্যাক্ত দশায় পাখির ডানার ছায়ায় আশ্রয় নিয়ে শকুন্তলা পরিচয়ে পরিচিত হয়েছিল, পক্ষীমাতার আশ্রয়ের মতো কণ্বের গৌতমীর স্নেহছায়ায় বড় হয়েছিল উন্মুক্ত প্রকৃতির কোলে — কালিদাসের ভুবনমোহিনী প্রতিভা তাঁকে প্রকৃতির সন্তান হিসেবে তারসঙ্গে অচ্ছেদ্য প্রীতির বন্ধনে বেঁধেছে । মানুষের স্বরূপচিত্রণে প্রকৃতির অফুরন্ত ঐশ্বর্য এইজন্য উপমা-রূপকের পথ ধরে সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যে বারংবার আসে। কুমারসম্ভবের উমার ছবি আঁকতে বসে কালিদাস দেখেন সৌরকিরণস্পর্শে প্রস্ফুটিত পদ্মের সৌষ্ঠব (সূর্যাংশুভির্ভিন্নমিবারবিন্দম্), মনে হয় পুষ্পভারনত একটি লতা যেন চলাফেরা করছে (পর্যাপ্তপুষ্প - স্তবকাবনম্রা/সঞ্চারিণী পল্লবিনী, লতেব ॥ কুমারসম্ভব ৩/৪৫) প্রকৃতি ,ত আপন গণ্য বলেই জনৈক অরণ্যবাসী রাজা দুষ্মন্তকে হরিণ মারতে নিষেধ করে বলেন

ন খলু ন খলু বাণো সন্নিপাত্যোয়মস্মিন্
মৃদুনি মৃগশরীরে তূলরাশাবিবাগ্নিঃ।

নিরপরাধ আশ্রমমৃগকে মারবার জন্য নয়, রাজার শস্ত্র তো আর্তকে রক্ষার জন্য । খেলাচ্ছলে **হোক,** শিকারের লোভে হোক, ব্যাধের হাতে **ক্রৌঞ্চবধের** নির্মম কাহিনী বাল্মীকির শোকবিহ্বল **কণ্ঠে শ্লোক** হয়ে তাই ফুটে ওঠে (শোক: শ্লোকত্বমাগতঃ) ।

মা নিষাদ প্রতিষ্ঠাং ত্বমগমঃ শাশ্বতীঃ সমাঃ ।
যৎ ক্রৌঞ্চমিথুনাদেকমবধীঃ কামমোহিতম্ ॥

আটপৌরে জীবনের অভিজ্ঞতায় সাধারণ মানুষ তো জেনেছে, তার চারপাশের চেতন অচেতন **সকলের** কাছে তার ঋণ কত ব্যাপক । দুধের বাচ্চা শিশুও সানন্দে তার মাতুল গোষ্ঠীর তালিকায় **চাঁদ-সূর্য,** কাক-বক, বাঘ-সিংহ-ভালুককে স্বীকৃতি দিতে বরাবর প্রস্তুত । তাদের কেউ রাঙা জামা **গায়ে হামা** দিয়ে, কেউ কপালে টি দিয়ে, কেউ হিংসা ভুলবার আশ্বাস দিয়ে, নয়তো খাবার সময় অদৃশ্য **সঙ্গ দিয়ে** ভাগনে ভাগ্নীদের ভালোবাসা পেয়ে আসছে অনাদিকাল থেকে । আশৈশব আত্মীয়তার জোরে **শিশু-** কিশোর সাহিত্যে জীবজন্তু পাখ-পাখালির অজস্র আনাগোনা ; বড়দের সাহিত্যেও তার **ঘাটতি নেই।** গাছপালা নিসর্গজগৎ সম্বন্ধেও একই কথা । **বাণভট্টের কাদম্বরীতে জাবালিমুনি গাছের কোটর থেকে** পড়ে যাওয়া শুকপাখির ছানাকে সযত্নে লালন করেছেন । রাজা শূদ্রকের সভায় কিরাতবৃদ্ধ তার **মেয়েকে** নিয়ে হাজির হয়ে আশ্চর্য এই শুকপাখিটিকে রাজার হাতে তুলে দেন । উত্তররাম চরিতের **তৃতীয়** অঙ্কের শুরুতে মুরলা ও তমসা নামে দুই নদীকে মানবী হিসেবে উপস্থিত করার প্রসঙ্গটিও **স্মরণীয়।** (যেমন উল্লেখযোগ্য মহাবীরচরিত নাটকে **লঙ্কা** ও অলকা নামে দুটি নগরীর নাটকীয় চরিত্র হিসেবে উপস্থিতি)। গাছপালার সঙ্গে প্রাণীকুলের অন্তরঙ্গ সম্পর্ক। ঘোষণার তো কথাই নাই । **ছায়ায় হরিণ,** শাখা-প্রশাখায় পাখি, কোটরে কীট, বড় বড় ডালে বানর, ফুলে ফুলে মৌমাছি - পঞ্চতন্ত্রে **সবাইকে** আপন করে নিয়ে দাঁড়িয়ে থাকা একটি গাছের বর্ণনা প্রসঙ্গত মনে পড়ে ।

ছায়াসুপ্তমৃগঃ শকুন্তনিবহৈর্বিহ্বগ্বিলুপ্তচ্ছদঃ /বীটেরাবৃতকোটরঃ
কপিকুলৈঃ স্কন্ধে কৃতপ্রশ্রয়ঃ /বিস্রব্ধং মধুপৈনিপীতকুসুমঃ শ্লাঘ্যঃ
স এব দ্রুমঃ /সর্বাঙ্গৈর্বহুজীবসঙ্খসুখদো ভূভারভূতোপরঃ ॥
(পঞ্চতন্ত্র ২/২)

যেমন, মনে পড়বে প্রাণিসংরক্ষণ, গাছপালা পরিচর্যার পরামর্শ প্রসঙ্গ। যথা ——

সৌদূহ্যতে কালে পাল্যতে চ তথা প্রজা।

সিচ্যতে চীয়তে চৈব লতা পুষ্পফলপ্রদা ॥

যথা বীজাঙ্কুরঃ সৃক্ষঃ প্রযত্নেনাভিরক্ষিতঃ ।

ফলপ্রদো ভবেৎ কালে তদ্বল্লোকঃ সুরক্ষিতঃ ॥

<div align="center">(পঞ্চতন্ত্র ১/২২৫-২২৬)</div>

অধুনা বনসৃজনপ্রকল্পে গাছ পুঁতে অপত্যস্নেহে তাকে লালনপালন করার কথা বলা হচ্ছে পঞ্চায়েত থেকে। কালিদাসের শকুন্তলাতে দেখেছি, গাছের গোড়ায় জল না দিয়ে কোনদিন জলপান করতেন না তিনি; ফুল ভালবেসেও কদাচ ফুল ছিঁড়ে নিয়ে নিজের সাজসজ্জায় বসতেন না । গাছে ফুল ফুটলে যেন উৎসবের ধূম পড়ে যেত তাঁর মনে ।

পাতুং ন প্রথমং ব্যবস্যতি জলং যুষ্মাস্বপীতেষু যা /

নাদত্তে প্রিয়মণ্ডনাপি ভবতাং স্নেহেন যা পল্লবম্ ।

আদ্যে বঃ কুসুমপ্রসূতিসময়ে যস্যা ভবত্যুৎসবঃ।

<div align="center">(শকুন্তলা ৪/৯)</div>

শ্রীধরদাসের সদুক্তিকর্ণামৃত সংকলনে নিসর্গপরিবেশ ও মানবসম্পর্ক নিয়ে কয়েকশত শ্লোক সংগৃহীত আছে। কবি মানিকলাল চোষে গাছ হল সেই পরম আশ্রয় (যম্ অধ্বন্যজন রাজম্বমাতরম্ ইব ক্লান্তিচ্ছিদে ধাবতি)। কবি ধর্মনামের মতে তৃণভোজী হরিণের কাছে তৃণভূমি হল মা, আর গাছপালা হল বন্ধুবান্ধব (তৃণাঙ্কুরাতী মাতেব মুক্তা স্থলী। বিশ্রামস্থিতিহেতবো বন্ধুপমাঃ পাদপাঃ) । আর এক কবি তো জলের প্রশংসায় পঞ্চমুখ হয়ে বললেন - জলই জীবন এবং তার পাবনী শক্তি ও অনুপম (শৈত্যং নাম গুণস্তবৈব সহজঃ স্বাভাবিকী স্বচ্ছতা / কিং ক্রমঃ শুচিতাং ভবন্তি শুচয়ঃ স্পর্শেন যস্যাপরে / কিং চাতঃপরম্ অস্তি তে স্তুতিপদং যদৃ জীবনং দেহিনাম্)।

৩. সর্বো দণ্ডজিতো লোকঃ

শাস্ত্র বাক্যের প্রভুসম্মিত উপদেশে (অর্থাৎ সরকারী হুকুমনামার মতো নির্দেশ) এবং কাব্যকবিতার প্রেয়সীমূলক পরামর্শবচনে এইভাবে সংস্কৃত সাহিত্য মানুষকে তার পরিবেশের অন্তরঙ্গতায় সুস্থিত করতে চেয়েছে । তার সুফল ফলেনি এমন কথা কেউ বলবেন না । মাটি আমার মা, গাছ আমার ভাই, জল আমার অন্তরঙ্গ সত্তা, প্রাণিকুল নিকট সহযোগী এভাবে বুঝে থাকলে 'আত্মনঃ প্রতিকূলানি মা পরেষু সমাচরেৎ' বলে কাউকে তো প্রিয়জনের ক্ষতিসাধন থেকে নিবৃত্ত করার দরকার হয় না । কিন্তু নিজের ডাল নিজে কাটবার মূর্খতাও আছে বরাবর । যেমন, কাদম্বরীতে বাণভট্ট একদল

মানুষেরে আত্মঘাতী অরণ্যবিনাশের কথা বলে তাদের নিন্দা করেছেন - 'যস্মিন্ এক কাননে নিবসন্তি তদেব উৎখাতমূলম্ অশেষত: কুর্বন্তি !' অন্যের আয়ু গিলে খাওয়াতেই বুঝি তাদের সুখ (পিবন্নিব অস্মাকম্ আয়ূংষি)। ব্যাধের ভয়ে সঙ্গীকে ছেড়ে বাচ্চাদের ফেলে রেখে তাই হরিণী পালাতে বাধ্য হয়। কবি ছিত্তিপের রচনায় পাই, ব্যাধের হাতে ধরা পড়ে হরিণী তার সন্তানদের রক্ষার স্বার্থে কাতর প্রার্থনা জানিয়ে বলছে -

আদায় মাংসম্ অখিলং স্তবর্জ্জমঙ্গে / মাং মুঞ্চ বাগুরিক যাহি

কুরু প্রসাদম্ / অদ্যাপি শষ্পগ্রহণানভিজ্ঞা : শিশবো মদীয়াঃ ॥

নির্বিচার নিসর্গধ্বংসে লিপ্ত মুনাফাসর্বস্ব সভ্যতার লোলুপ ব্যাধের হাতে পড়ে জননী বসুন্ধরা এখন বোধ করি একই ভাষায় তার সন্তানদের নিরাপত্তা চাইছে। ধর্মের নামেও কিছুকিঞ্চিৎ উপদ্রব মানুষ করেছে বৈকি ! লাঙ্গল চালালে মাটিতে অনেক পোকামাকড় মারা পড়ে এই কারণে ব্রাহ্মণের হলকর্ষণ নিষেধ করেছিলেন মনু (ভূমিং ভূমিশয়াংশ্চৈব হন্তি কাষ্ঠময়োমুখম্ - মনু. ১০/৮৪)। যজ্ঞব্রত ব্রাহ্মণ তাই বলে যজ্ঞসভায় পশু বলিতে কুণ্ঠাবোধ করেনি। যজ্ঞে মন্ত্রপাঠ করে এই পশুহত্যার নাম উপকরণ (উপাকৃতঃ পশুরসৌ যো'ভিমন্ত্র্য ক্রতৌ হতঃ। অমরকোষ ১৪০৩)। অশ্বমেধের ঘোড়াকে হত্যার আগে কত কি যে স্বস্তিবচন শোনানো হয় ! তুমি তো মরছ না, স্বর্গে যাচ্ছ; গাধা নয়, আর কিছু নয়, স্বর্গের ঘোড়া তোমার রথ টানবে ইত্যাদি (ন বা উ এতন্ প্রিয়সে ন রিষ্যসি। ঋগ্বেদ ১/১৬২/ ২১)। তোমার প্রিয় দেহের জন্য আর ক্লেশ থাকছে না, আনাড়ি হাতে অস্ত্রাঘাত, অঙ্গচ্ছেদনের ভয়ও থাকছে না আর (মা স্বা তসং প্রিয় আত্মা...মা তে গৃধুরবিশ - স্বাতিহায় ছিদ্রা গাত্রাণ্যসিনা মিথূ কঃ ॥- ঋগ্বেদ ১/১৬২/২০)। চার্বাক একে দ্বিচারিতা গণ্য করে প্রশ্ন তুলেছে - যজ্ঞে কোতল হওয়ার সুবাদে স্বর্গলাভ যখন এতই সহজ ব্যাপার, তখন যজমান তার বুড়ো বাপকে স্বর্গে পাঠানোর এমন সুবন্দোবস্ত করে না কেন ? (পশুশ্চেন্ নিহতঃ স্বর্গং জ্যোতিষ্টোমে গমিষ্যতি। স্বপিতা যজমানেন তত্র কস্মান্ন হিংস্যতে ॥)। করুণাঘন বুদ্ধও বেদবিধির এই নির্মম দিকটির নিন্দা করেছেন (নিন্দসি যজ্ঞবিধেরহত শ্রুতিজাতম্। সদয়হৃদয় দর্শিতপশুঘাতম্। কেশবধৃতবুদ্ধশরীর জয় জগদীশ হরে ॥ গীতগোবিন্দ ১/ ১৩)। তবে পঞ্চতন্ত্রের গল্পেই এই নিন্দাবাদ চরমে ওঠে, যেখানে বলা হল - গাছ কেটে, পশুহত্যা করে, পশুরক্তে মাটি ভিজিয়ে কাদা করে যদি স্বর্গে যেতে হয়, তবে নরকযাত্রার পথ কোন্টা ?বৃক্ষাংশ্চিত্ত্বা পশূন্ হত্বা কৃত্বা রুধিরকর্দমান্। যদ্যেবং গম্যতে স্বর্গে নরকং কেন গম্যতে ? (পঞ্চতন্ত্র ৩/১০৬)। পুরাণবিহিত পূর্তবিধি বরং যথেষ্ট eco-friendly ব্যবস্থাপনা, কেননা পুণ্যলাভের পথ হিসেবে সেখানে পুকুরখনন, কূপখনন, চৈত্যনির্মাণ, গাছপালা লাগিয়ে বনসৃজনের সংস্থান ধর্মকর্ম হিসেবে গণ্য হয়েছে (পূর্তং খাতাদি কর্ম যৎ। - অমরকোষ ১৪০৮; পুষ্করিণ্যঃ সভাবাপীদেবতায়তনানি চ। আরামাশ্চ বিশেষণ পূর্তং কর্ম বিনির্দিশেৎ ॥ - অমরকোষের ব্যাখ্যাসুধা টীকায় স্মৃতিবচন হিসেবে উদ্ধৃত; বাপীকূপতড়াগাদিদেবতায়তনানি চ/অন্নপ্রদানম্ আরামাঃ পূর্তম্ - ॥ অত্রিসংহিতা)। মনু জানাচ্ছেন - শ্রদ্ধয়েষ্টঞ্চ পূর্তঞ্চ নিত্যং কুর্মাদ্ অতন্দ্রিতঃ। শ্রদ্ধাকৃতো হ্যক্ষয়ে তু ভবতঃ স্বাগতৈধনৈঃ ॥ (মনু. ৪/ ২২৬)। সৎপথে উপার্জিত না হলে সে ধন দিয়ে যাগযজ্ঞ, পূর্তকর্ম তাহলে মনুর মতে ধর্মকর্ম নয়।

অর্থশাস্ত্রে এমনকি গ্রামের সীমানা নির্ধারণের জন্য সৃষ্টি নামে ওষধি, শিমূল, শমী ইত্যাদি

গাছ পোঁতার কথা বলেছেন কৌটিল্য (২/১)। চাষের সুবিধার জন্য জলাধার নির্মাণের নির্দেশও এখানে মেলে। লোকসাধারণের উদ্যোগে এসব কাজ হলে জমি দিয়ে, গাছের চারা দিয়ে, পথ তৈরি করে দিয়ে সাহায্য করা শাসকের কর্তব্য বলে গণ্য হয়েছে। পুণ্যস্থান বা বাগান তৈরির ক্ষেত্রেও একই রকম পৃষ্ঠপোষকতা কাম্য (সেহোদকম্ আহার্যোদকং বা সেতুং বধয়েৎ। অন্যেষাং বা বধ্বতাং ভূমিমার্গবৃক্ষোপকরণানুগ্রহং কুর্যাৎ। পুণ্যস্থানারামাণাং চ। - অর্থশাস্ত্র ২/১)। দামি গাছ লাগিয়ে দ্রব্যবন নির্মাণের কথাও এখানে আছে (২/১)। অকৃষিযোগ্য জমিতে পশুচারণভূমি সংরক্ষণ এমনি আর একটি সংস্থান (অকৃষ্যাং ভূমৌ পশুভ্যো বিবীতানি প্রযচ্ছেৎ। - অর্থশাস্ত্র ২/২)। গ্রামের সীমান্তে কিংবা অন্য কোথাও উপযুক্ত স্থানে মৃগবন তৈরি করে পশুদের নিরাপদ আশ্রয় নিশ্চিত করতে বলেছেন কৌটিল্য (সর্বাতিথিমৃগং প্রত্যন্তে চান্যন্মৃগবনং ভূমিবশেন বা নিবেশয়েৎ। অর্থশাস্ত্র ২/২)। ব্যাধ, শবর, পুলিন্দ, চণ্ডাল, বনচরদের হাতে সেসব রক্ষণাবেক্ষনের দায়িত্ব ন্যস্ত করার কথাও এখানে আছে (২/১)। আছে পশুহত্যার কঠোর শাস্তির বিধান। যেমন হাতিমারার শাস্তি প্রাণদণ্ড (হস্তিঘাতিনং হন্যুঃ। - অর্থশাস্ত্র ২/২)।

প্রাকৃতিক পরিবেশ ও জীবজন্ত সংরক্ষণ প্রসঙ্গে সামাজিক সচেতনতা নিয়ে এমন ভাবনার বহু চিহ্ন শাস্ত্রগুলিতে ছড়িয়ে আছে। পশুপালন, পশুচিকিৎসা, বৃক্ষচিকিৎসার কথা এখানে বিশেষভাবে উল্লেখযোগ্য। যেমন, অশ্বচিকিৎসা বিষয়ে অশ্ববৈদ্যক গ্রন্থে ওষুধ হিসেবে অর্জুন, আমলকী, হরীতকী অতসী, নিম, এরণ্ড, কুলথ, তুলসী, লশুন, পটোল এর উপযোগিতার কথা মেলে। বৃহৎসংহিতার বৃক্ষায়ুর্বেদসংক্রান্ত অংশ, অগ্নিপুরাণ ২৮১তম অধ্যায়, সুরপালের (খ্রি. একাদশ শতাব্দী) লেখা বৃক্ষায়ুর্বেদ ইত্যাদি থেকে গাছের রোগ ও তার চিকিৎসার নানা তথ্য সংগ্রহ করা যায়। শাঙ্গধরপদ্ধতির অন্তর্গত উপবনবিনোদ অংশে দেখা যায়, নিষ্ফলা গাছে ফল ফলানো, গন্ধহীন ফুলের গাছে সুগন্ধি ফুল ফোটানোর মতো বিষয় পর্যন্ত তদানীন্তন পরীক্ষা-নিরীক্ষায় স্থান পেয়েছিল। সেই মনুসংহিতার যুগ থেকে মানুষ তাবৎ গাছপালাকে আটটি শ্রেণীতে বিন্যস্ত করতে জানে - ওষধি, বনস্পতি, বৃক্ষ, গ্রহ, গুল্ম, তৃণ, প্রতান ও বল্লী (মনু. ১/৪৬-৪৮)। মনুর দাবি, এদেরও চেতনা আছে, তবে তা চাপা পড়েছে তমোগুণের প্রভাবে (অন্তঃসংজ্ঞা ভবন্ত্যেতে সুখদুঃখ সমন্বিতাঃ। মনু ১/৪৯। সুতরাং আঘাত করলে গাছপালাকেও লাগে। জ্বালানির প্রয়োজনে জ্যান্ত গাছ কেটে ফেলাকে মনু তাই উপপাতক গণ্য করেছেন (ইন্ধনার্থম্ অশুষ্ণাণাং দ্রুমাণামবপাতনম্। মনু. ১১/৬৪)। অন্যদিকে, পাঁচটি আমগাছ পুঁতলে নরকবাসের শাস্তি থেকে রেহাই মিলবার আশ্বাস দিচ্ছেন শাস্ত্রকারেরা (পঞ্চাম্রোপী নরকং ন যাতি। মনু.৩/১৬৩ শ্লোকের কুল্লূকভট্ট লিখিত টীকায় উদ্ধৃত)। একটি গাছকে দশটি পুত্রের সমান গণ্য করার উপদেশ এই বোধেরই সম্প্রসারিত পর্যায়। (দশকূপসমা বাপী দশবাপীসমো হ্রদে। দশহ্রদসবঃ পুত্র দশপুত্রামো দ্রুমঃ॥ সুরপালের বৃক্ষায়ুর্বেদ)।

মনু, নারদ, অত্রি, যাজ্ঞবল্ক্যের নামে পরিচিত ধর্মশাস্ত্র, কৌটিল্যের অর্থশাস্ত্র ইত্যাদি থেকে পরিবেশনাশকারী নানা দোষ ও অপরাধের তালিকা এবং তার শাস্তি কিংবা প্রায়শ্চিত্ত বিধান বিশেষভাবে মনোযোগ দিয়ে আমাদের পর্যালোচনা করা উচিত। যেমন বাঁধ কেটে বা অন্যভাবে বহতা জলস্রোত অন্যদিকে ঘুরিয়ে দেওয়া কিংবা বাঁধ বেঁধে স্রোত অবরুদ্ধ করা বিগর্হিত আচরণ গণ্য করেছেন মনু এবং

দোষীকে অপাঙ্ক্তেয়, দ্বিজাধম বলে পরিত্যাজ্য ঘোষণা করেছেন (স্রোতসাং ভেদকো যশ্চ তেষাং চাবরণে রতঃ। এতান্ বিগর্হিতাচারান অপাঙ্ক্তেয়ান্ দ্বিজাধমান্ । ... বির্জয়েৎ ॥ মনু. ৩.১৬৩, ১৬৭)। যাজ্ঞবল্ক্যসংহিতা জানাচ্ছে, সামান্য অসুবিধা সৃষ্টি হলেও যথেষ্ট কল্যাণ করতে পারে এমন সেতুনির্মাণ বন্ধ করে দেওয়া রাজার পক্ষে উচিত কাজ হবে না । (ন নিষেধ্যো'ল্পবাধস্তু সেতুঃ কল্যাণকারকঃ। পরভূমিং হরন্ কৃপঃ স্বল্পক্ষেত্রো বহূদকঃ ॥ – যাজ্ঞবল্ক্য ২ / ১৫৬)। এইভাবে সামান্য জায়গা জুড়ে থাকলেও অনেক জল মিলবে – এমন কূপখননের জন্য অন্য লোকের জমি দখল করলেও তাতে দোষ দেখেন নি যাজ্ঞবল্ক্য । কথাটা বাগান তৈরি ইত্যাদি ক্ষেত্রেও প্রযোজ্য । মিতাক্ষরা টীকার মন্তব্য – স্বল্প পীড়ার বিনিময়ে প্রভূত উপকার লাভ সমর্থনযোগ্য বৈকি (স চেদ্ ঈষৎপীড়াকরো বহূপকারকশ্চ ভবতি)। সেতু কথাটা এখানে খাল কাটা, বাঁধ বাঁধা দুটোকেই বোঝাচ্ছে । নারদসংহিদায় (১৫/১৮) পাচ্ছি

সেতুশ্চ দ্বিবিধো জ্ঞেয়ঃ খেয়ো বন্ধস্তথৈব চ ।
তোয়প্রবর্তনাৎ খেয়ো বন্ধঃ স্যাৎ তন্নিবর্তনাৎ ॥

নর্মদা বাঁধপ্রকল্প ইত্যাদি সংক্রান্ত সাম্প্রতিক আলোচনা-বিতর্কে পুরানী প্রজ্ঞার এইসব নিদর্শন সমাধানসূত্র সন্ধানে সহায়ক হতে পারে । মনুসংহিতায় (১১/৬৩) ওষধিবিনাশ, মহাযন্ত্রস্থাপন (টীকাকার কুল্লূকভট্টের মতে যার অর্থ জলপ্রবাহের গতিরোধ করে সেতুবন্ধ নির্মাণ 'মহতাং প্রবাহপ্রতিবন্ধহেতূনাং সেতুবন্ধাদীনানং প্রবর্তনম্), পুকুর, উদ্যান বিক্রি ইত্যাদি উপপাতক বলে গণ্য হয়েছে (তড়াগারাম দারাণামপত্যস্য চ বিক্রয়ঃ। মনু. ১১/৬১)। কেননা, তা স্ত্রীপুত্র বিক্রি করার মতো গর্হিত কাজ । পুকুর, কূপ বা জলাশয়ের জল চুরি করলে চান্দ্রায়ণ প্রায়শ্চিত্ত মনুর বিধান (...হরণে...কূপবাপী জলানাং চ শুদ্ধি শ্চান্দ্রায়ণং স্মৃতম্ ॥ মনু. ১১/১৬৩)। স্নানের পুকুর নষ্ট করলে এমনকি জলে ডুবিয়ে বা অন্যভাবে তাকে মেরে ফেলার কথা বলতেও তিনি কুন্ঠিত নন । তবে সংস্কার করে আবার ঐ জলাশয়কে ব্যবহার উপযোগী করে দিলে উত্তমসাহস দণ্ড অর্থাৎ হাজারপণ জরিমানা ধার্য হয়েছিল । (তড়াগভেদকং হন্যাদ্ অপ্সু শুদ্ধবধেন বা । যদ্বাপি প্রতিসংস্কুর্যাদ্ দাপ্যস্তূত্তমসাহসম্॥ – মনু. ৯/২৭৯)। এ হল ধনদণ্ড (ধিগ্দণ্ডং প্রথমং কুর্যাদ্, বাগ্দণ্ডং তদনন্তরম্। তৃতীয়ং ধনদণ্ডং তু বধদণ্ডম্ অতঃপরম্ ॥ মনু. ৮/১২৯) । অন্যদিকে সেতুভাঙার শাস্তি মনুর মতে নির্বাসন (গ্রামঘাতে হিতাভঙ্গে ...নির্বাস্যাঃ সপরিচ্ছদঃ॥ - মনু. ৯/২৭৪) । বধ, সর্বস্ব বাজেয়াপ্তকরণ, অঙ্গচ্ছেদ ইত্যাদির মতো এই নির্বাসনকে উত্তমসাহস দণ্ডের প্রকারভেদ বলা চলে (বধঃ সর্বস্বহরণং পুরান্নির্বাসনাঙ্কনে । তদঙ্গচ্ছেদ ইত্যুক্তো দণ্ড উত্তমসাহসঃ ॥) ।

নদীর বেগ অব্যাহত রাখার দিকে বিশেষ নজর দিয়েছেন শাস্ত্রকার । কেননা, নদী বেগেন শুধ্যতি (মনু. ৫/১০৮) । সদুক্তিকর্ণামৃতে (১২০৬খৃ.) উদ্ধৃত বঙ্গালকবির কবিতায় পাচ্ছি গঙ্গানদী আর বঙ্গালবানী দুটিতেই অবগাহন করে পবিত্র হওয়া যায় (অবগাঢ়া চ পুনীতে গঙ্গা বঙ্গালবানী চ) । প্রায় একই কালে লক্ষ্মণসেনের অন্যতম সভাকবি উমাপতি ধর অবশ্য জানিয়েছেন – পৃথিবীতে শত শত নদী আছে যার জলস্পর্শে মানুষ শুদ্ধিলাভ করে; আর গঙ্গা হল এমন এক নদী যার দিকে চোখ মেলে তাকালেই পুণ্য হয় । অথচ সেই পুণ্যতোয়া জাহ্নবীর জলধারা কোথাও বিচ্ছিন্ন, কোথাও আবিল, কোথাও জল এত কম যে দেখলে দুঃখ হয় (নেত্রালয়পথ ব্যতীত পয়সঃ সন্ত্যেব নদ্যঃ শতম্ / প্রায়শ্চিত্তম্

উপচরন্তি কৃতিনঃ স্পৃষ্টৈব যাসাং পয়ঃ / যা দৃষ্টৈব পুনাতি বিশ্বমখিলং সেয়ং পুনর্জাহ্নবী / বিচ্ছিন্না ক্বচিদ্ আবিলা ক্বচিদ্ অতিস্বচ্ছাম্বুশোচ্যা ক্বচিৎ ॥)। বাংলার ভূগোল ইতিহাসের সতর্ক পড়ুয়াদের বিশেষভাবে এই তথ্য বিশ্লেষণ করা আবশ্যক মনে করি ।

জলের শুদ্ধতার স্বার্থেই নদী, সরোবর, পুকুর সর্বত্র স্নানের নির্দিষ্ট জায়গা থাকা বাঞ্ছনীয় (নদীষু দেবখাতেষু তড়াগেষুসরঃসু চ। স্নানং সমাচরেন্নিত্যং গর্তপ্রস্রবণেষু চ ॥ মনু. ৪/২০৩)। বিনা অনুমতিতে অন্যের যান, শয্যা, আসন, কূপ, উদ্যান, গৃহ কিছুই ব্যবহার করা উচিত নয় (যানশয্যা সসান্যস্য কূপোদ্যানগৃহাণি চ। অদত্তান্যুপভুঞ্জান এনসঃ স্যাত্তুরীয় ভাক্ ॥ মনু. ৪/২০২)। জলে মলমূত্র, থুথু, এঁটোকাঁটা, রক্ত, বিষ ইত্যাদি ফেলাও অনুচিত (নাপ্সু মূত্রং পুরীষং বা ষ্ঠীবনং বা সমুৎসৃজেৎ। ... লোহিতং বা বিষাণি বা ॥ মনু. ৪/৫৬)। একইভাবে অনুচিত গণ্য হয়েছে পথঘাট, গোচারণভূমি, চাষ দেওয়া জমি, জল, নদীতীর, ভাঙামন্দির, পর্বত শীর্ষ ইত্যাদি জায়গায় মূত্র ত্যাগ (ন মূত্রংপথি কুর্বীত ন ভস্মানি ন গোব্রজে ॥ ন ফালকৃষ্টে ন জলে ন চিত্যাং ন চ পর্বতে। ন জীর্ণদেবায়তনে ন বল্মীকে কদাচন ॥ ন সসত্ত্বেষু গর্তেষু ন গচ্ছন্নাপি চ স্থিতঃ। ন নদীতীরমাসাদ্য ন চ পর্বতমস্তকে ॥ মনু. ৪/৪৫, ৪৬, ৪৭) ।

৪. ন কশ্চিদ্ দুঃখভাগ্ ভবেৎ

দূষণপ্রতিরোধের এইসব ব্যবস্থার পাশাপাশি জীবসংরক্ষণের দিকগুলিও স্মরণীয়। যেমন হাতি, ঘোড়া, গাধা,উট, হরিণ, মোষ, ছাগল, ভেড়া, এমনকি মাছ সাপ ইত্যাদি মেরে ফেলা সংকরীকরণ নামে উপপাতক (খরাশ্বোষ্ট্রমৃগেভানামজাবিকবধ স্তথা/সংকরীকরণং নেয়ং মীনাহিমাহিষস্য চ ॥ ১১/৬৮)। যারা কুকুর পোষে ও খেলা দেখায় পাখির ব্যবসা করে কিংবা মোষ ও ভেড়ার কারবার করে , তাদের সম্বন্ধে মনুর চরম বিরক্তি (শ্বক্রীড়ী শোনজীবী চ ...॥ মনু. ৩/১৬৪; ঔরভ্রিকো মাহিষিকঃ বর্জনীয়াঃ প্রযত্নতঃ ॥ মনু . ৩/১৬৬)। পাখি বা কুকুর পোষা হলে সে বাড়িতে ভিক্ষা নিতে পর্যন্ত তাঁর আপত্তি । সরাসরি গরুর পিঠে যানব্যবস্থা তাঁর দৃষ্টিতে নিন্দিত আর (গবাং চ যানং পৃষ্ঠেন সর্বৈথ বিগর্হিতম্। মনু. ৪/৭২)। আচার্য, পিতামাতা, গুরু ব্রাহ্মণ, তপস্বীর সঙ্গে হিংস্র আচরণ আর গরুর ওপর অত্যাচার তাঁর কাছে সমান অপরাধ (ন হিংস্যাদ্ ব্রাহ্মণান্ গাশ্চ সর্বাংস্তৈব তপস্বিনঃ। মনু. ৪/১৬২)।

প্রাণীহত্যা করে মাংস খাওয়ার ব্যাপারে উপযুক্ত বিধিনিষেধের কথাও স্বভাবতই এসে পড়ে। মনু লক্ষ্য করেছেন জীবজগতে খাদ্যখাদক সম্বন্ধের পরম্পরা কিভাবে পরিবেশের সামঞ্জস্য রক্ষা করে চলেছে । চরণাম্ অন্নম্ অচরা দংষ্ট্রিণামপ্যদংষ্ট্রিনঃ। অংস্তাশ্চ সহস্তানাং শূরাণাং চৈব ভীরবঃ॥ (মনু ৫/২৯) । অর্থাৎ ঘাসপাতা হরিণের খাদ্য, হরিণ বাঘের খাদ্য, মাছ মানুষের খাদ্য, হাতি সিংহের খাদ্য এইভাবে খাদ্যশৃঙ্খল বিধাতার বিধান অর্থাৎ প্রকৃতির নিয়ম (ধাত্রৈব সৃষ্টা হ্যাদ্যাশ্চ প্রাণিনোত্তার এব চ॥ মনু. ৫/৩০)। এদিক থেকে দেখলে অখাদ্য বলে কিছু নেই (স্থাবরং জঙ্গমং চৈব সর্বং প্রাণস্য ভোজনম্॥ মনু.৫/২৮)। অকাতরে পশুহত্যা করে মাংস খাওয়া তাই বলে মানুষের সাজে না, কেননা ওটা নিন্দিত রাক্ষসো বিধিঃ। শুধু শাস্ত্র মেনে যজ্ঞে পশুবলি দিয়ে সেই মাংস খাওয়াটুকুই মনুর অনুমোদিত (যজ্ঞায় জগ্ধির্মাংসস্যেত্যেষ দৈবো বিধিঃ স্মৃতঃ । মনু. ৫/৩১)। তাছাড়া কিনে এনে, নিজে উৎপন্ন

করে কিংবা দান হিসেবে পেয়ে কোন মাংস দেবতার উদ্দেশ্যে বা পিতৃপুরুষদের উদ্দেশ্যে উৎসর্গ করে খাওয়া চলে (ক্রীত্বা স্বয়ং বাপুত্মেপাদ্য পরোপকৃতমেব বা । দেবান্ পিতৃংশ্চার্চয়িত্বা খাদন্ মাংসং ন দুষ্যতি॥ মনু ৫ / ৩২)। যেহেতু যজ্ঞ সর্বজীবের কল্যাণের জন্য, তাই তার স্বার্থে পশু, পাখি, গাছ ওষধির বিনাশ মনু মানতে রাজি আছেন (যজ্ঞশ্চ ভূত্যৈ সর্বস্য তস্মাদ্ যজ্ঞে বধো, বধঃ । মনু. ৫.৩৯); ওষধ্যঃ পশবো বৃক্ষাস্তির্যঞ্চঃ পক্ষিণস্তথা । যজ্ঞার্থং নিধনং প্রাপ্তাঃ প্রাপুবন্ত্যুৎসৃতীঃ পুনঃ ॥ ৫ / ৪০)। লোভের বশে মাংসভক্ষনের পাপ মাংসবিক্রেতার পাপকে ছাড়িয়ে যায়। (মনু.৫ / ৩৪)। একটা পশুহত্যার পাশে পশুলোমের সপ্পসংখ্যক জন্ম ও হত্যার যন্ত্রণা শাস্তি হিসেবে পেতে হয় (যাবন্তি পশু রোসানি তাবৎকৃত্বো হ মারণম্ । বৃথাপশুঘ্নঃ প্রাপ্নোতি প্রেত্য জন্মনি জন্মনি॥ মনু. ৫ / ৩৮)। প্রাণিহত্যা ছাড়া মাংস পাওয়া সম্ভব নয় এবং প্রাণিবধ কিছু স্বর্গীয় কাজ নয় । সুতরাং বিশেষ ক্ষেত্র ছাড়া মাংস বর্জন করাই শ্রেয় (না কৃত্বা প্রাণিনাং হিংসাং মাংসমুৎপদ্যতে ক্বচিৎ । ন চ প্রাণিবধঃ স্বর্গ্যস্তস্মামাংসং বিবর্জয়েৎ ॥ মনু. ৫ / ৪৮)। অন্য প্রাণীর মাংস দিয়ে নিজের মাংস বাড়ানোর তুল্য পাপ আর কি হতে পারে (শ্চমাংসং পরমাংসেন সে বর্ধয়িতুমিচ্ছতি । অনভ্যর্চ্য পিতৃন্ দেবাংস্ততোহন্যো নাস্ত্যপুণ্যকৃৎ ॥ মনু ৫ / ৫২)। ইহলোকে আমি যার মাংস খাচ্ছি পরলোকে সে আমাকে খাবে এই বোধ থেকে পশুহত্যা বারণ করছেন মনু । পশুহত্যায় যে অনুমতি দেয়, যে মারে, যে টুকরো করে, যে কেনে বা বেচে, যে রাঁধে , যে পরিবেশন করে এবং যে খায় - ঘাতকের তালিকায় সবাই পড়ে (অনুমন্তা বিশসিতা নিহন্তা ক্রয় বিক্রয়ী / সংস্কর্তা চোপহর্তা চ খাদকশ্চেতি ঘাতকাঃ ॥ মনু ৫ / ৫১)। মাংস খাওয়া ছাড়া প্রাণরক্ষার অন্য উপায় না দেখলে তবেই তা খাওয়া উচিত - যাগযজ্ঞের বাইরে এটুকুই মনু মানতে রাজি যথাবিধি নিযুক্তস্ত প্রাণানামের চাত্যয়ে ॥ মনু ৫ / ২৩)।

কি কি প্রাণী কিছুতেই খাওয়া উচিত নয়, মনুসংহিতায় তার তালিকা বেশ বড় । কাঁচা মাংস খেকো চিলশকুন, পায়রা, টিট্টিভ, চড়াই, হাঁস, চক্রবাক, গ্রাম্য মোরগ, সারস, শুক-সারি, পানকৌড়ি, বক, দাঁড়কাক, খঞ্জন ইত্যাদি পাখি এরমধ্যে পড়ে (মনু ৫ / ১১-১৪)। সাধারণভাবে মাছ খাওয়াও মনুর না - পসন্দ । (মৎস্যাদঃ সর্বমাংসাদস্তস্মাস্মৎস্যান্ বিবর্জয়েৎ ॥ শুধু দুচাররকম মাছ (পাঠীনরোহিতৌ ...রাজীবান্ সিংহতুণ্ডাংশ্চ সশল্কাংশৈশ্চব সর্বশঃ॥ মনু ৫ / ১৬) এই নিষেধাজ্ঞার বাইরে। অন্যপ্রাণীর মধ্যে কচ্ছপ, শশক ইত্যাদি পাঁচটির মাংস খাওয়ার অনুমোদন আছে (শ্বাবিধং শল্যকং গোধাং খড়্গাকূর্ম- শশাংস্তথা/ভক্ষ্যান্ পঞ্চনখেষ্বাহরনুষ্ট্রাংশৈশ্চকতোদতঃ॥ মনু ৫ / ১৮)। সঙ্গে উট বাদে অন্যান্য একপাটি দাঁতওয়ালা প্রাণী । স্বাস্থ্যবিধির পাশাপাশি পরিবেশচেতনা ও যে এই ব্যবস্থাপনার অন্তর্গত, তাতে সন্দেহ নেই । একটা কথা অবশ্য থেকেই যায়। এইসব বিধিনিয়ম কি দারিদ্র্যপীড়িত শূদ্রসমাজেও প্রযোজ্য হওয়া সম্ভব ? শূদ্র পিতা, ব্রাহ্মণকন্যা মাতার সন্তান হিসেবে চণ্ডালকে মনুসংহিতা নরাধম আখ্যা দিয়েছিল (চণ্ডালশ্চাধমো নৃণাম্ । মনু. ১০ / ১২,১৬)। তাকে ছোঁওয়া পর্যন্ত বারণ (চণ্ডাল এবৈকঃ ...স্পর্শাদৌ নিরস্যতে। কুল্লুকভট্ট , ১০ / ১৩)। সাধারণ লোকবসতির সংস্রব এড়িয়ে তাদের চলাচল বসবাস নির্দিষ্ট । এতে স্বাস্থ্যবিধি, পরিচ্ছন্ন পরিবেশ, আর্থিক নিরাপত্তার কোন বালাই নিয়ে ভাবনার অবকাশ শাস্ত্রকারদের হয়নি । উচ্ছিষ্টভোজন গর্হিত কাজ বলেও দাসকুলের জন্য ছেঁড়া পরিত্যক্ত পোষাক-আশাক, উচ্ছিষ্ট খাবার বরাদ্দ করতে তাঁদের কুন্ঠা জাগে নি। একদল শূদ্রের বাসন তবু পুড়িয়ে শুদ্ধ করে নেওয়া চলে, আরেকদল যে বাসন ব্যবহার করেছে,

সর্বশুদ্ধিকর আগুনের পাবনীশিখা পর্যন্ত তা শুদ্ধ করতে অপারগ বলে জানা যায় পাণিনির সূত্র থেকে (শূদ্রাণাঞ্চ অনিরবসিতানাম্ - মনু. ২/৪/১০)। ঘাটের জল আর আগুনের স্বতঃশুদ্ধির যে কথাটা ভবভূতি বলেছিলেন (তীর্থোদকঞ্চ বহিশ্চ নান্যতঃ শুদ্ধিমর্হতঃ) তার ধার এখানে কেমন যেন ক্ষীণ মনে হয়। খাদ্যাখাদ্য নির্বাচন বিশেষত কোন্ প্রাণীর মাংস খাদ্য অথবা খাদ্য নয় এই বিচারও আর্য কিংবা আর্যেতর পিছড়ে বর্গ-এর কথা ভেবে স্থির হচ্ছে বলে মনে হয় না। বনবাদাড়ে থেকে, বনের ফলমূল, পশুপাখির মাংস খেয়ে অরণ্যচারী মানুষদের বাঁচার কাহিনী সংস্কৃতে দুর্লভ নয়। পশুর অঙ্গপ্রত্যঙ্গ ও পাখিদের সম্বন্ধে নানা খুঁটিনাটি তথ্য জানবার জন্য বনবাসী অনার্যদের দ্বারস্থ হওয়ার কথা মীমাংসাদর্শনেও(১/৩/১০) মেলে। অভিযুক্ত ওরা : পক্ষিণাং পোষণে বন্ধনে চ ম্লেচ্ছাঃ(শবরভাষ্য)। কৌটিল্যের অর্থশাস্ত্রে বনরক্ষার দায়িত্ব বনপাল-এর মাধ্যমে শাসকের বন্যেরা বনে সুন্দর; তাদের অরণ্যের অধিকার তাতে কতদূর নিশ্চিত হয়েছিল কে জানে ? যাইহোক কৌটিলীয় অর্থশাস্ত্রে (২/ ২) যে নানারকম বনের কথা পাচ্ছি, তা মধ্যে পশুবন, হস্তিবন, পক্ষিবাট, ব্যালবাট ও বিবীত (তৃণভূমি) অভয়ারণ্য। এসব জায়গায় আগুন লাগানোর শাস্তি হিসেবে জীবন্ত পুড়িয়ে মারবার কথা কৌটিল্য সুপারিশ করেছেন (বিবীতক্ষেত্র ...হস্তিবনাদীপিকম্ অগ্নিনা দাহয়েৎ। অর্থশাস্ত্র ৪/১১/২০)। ডালপালা এবং গাছ কাটার শাস্তিও কম উল্লেখযোগ্য নয় (অর্থশাস্ত্র ৩/১৯)। জীবজন্তুর ওপর নিষ্ঠুর উপদ্রব ও নির্মম আচরণের জন্যও কঠোর শাস্তির সংস্থান আছে এসব গ্রন্থে। যেমন, সারথির দোষে, রথের ধাক্কায় প্রাণীহিংসা হলে পরিস্থিতি অনুযায়ী সারথি ও রথের মালিককে শাস্তি দেওয়ার বিধান আছে মনুসংহিতায় (মনু. ৮/২৮৭, ২৯৩,২৯৬,২৯৭)। কোন কোন অপরাধের ক্ষেত্রে নিন্দামন্দ (অর্থাৎ ধিগ্দণ্ড ও বাগ্দণ্ড), অর্থদণ্ড ছাড়াও প্রায়শ্চিত্ত, দানধ্যান ইত্যাদির সংস্থান আছে (মনু. ১১/ ১৩২-১৩৩)। অত্রিসংহিতায় পাচ্ছি দুটি বলদ দিয়ে হালচাষ গোবধের সমান পাপকর্ম, চারটি বলদ দিয়ে হালচাষ ও রীতিমতো নৃশংস কাজ, ছয় বলদের হাল ব্যবহারিক আর আট বলদ দিয়ে হাল টানালে তা যথার্থ ধর্ম (অষ্টাগবং ধর্মহলং ষড়্গবং ব্যবহারিকম্। চতুর্গবং নৃশংসানাং দ্বিগবং গববধকৃৎ॥)। আরও বলা হয়েছে সেখানে - দুটি বলদ দিয়ে একপ্রহর পর্যন্ত, চারটি বলদ দিয়ে মধ্যাহ্ন পর্যন্ত, ছয়টি বলদ দিয়ে দিনের তিন চতুর্থাংশ কাল পর্যন্ত এবং আটটি বলদ দিয়ে করলে তবেই সারাদিন হালচাষ বিধেয় (দ্বিগবং বাহয়েৎ পাদং মধ্যাহ্নং তু চতুর্গবম্। ষড়্গবং তু ত্রিপাদোক্তং পূর্ণাহস্ত্বষ্টভিঃ স্মৃতঃ ॥)।

অর্থশাস্ত্রের সূনাধ্যক্ষ প্রকরণটির (২/২৬) দিকে এই প্রসঙ্গে আমাদের বিশেষ নজর দেওয়া প্রয়োজন। কোন্ কোন্ পশু, পাখি, মাছ মারা নিষেধ, সেই মর্মে রাজাদেশ এর কথা পাচ্ছি সেখানে। আদেশলঙ্ঘনের শাস্তি উত্তমসাহস দণ্ড। মাছ বা পাখির তুলনায় পশু ধরা-মারার শাস্তি দ্বিগুণ করার সংস্থান আছে। বনে জীবন্ত পশুপাখি ধরা পড়লে তাদের অভয়ারণ্যে ছেড়ে দেওয়ার নির্দেশটি বিশেষভাবে লক্ষণীয় (পক্ষিমৃগাণাং জীবচ্ছড়্ভাগম্ অভয়বনেষু প্রমুঞ্চেৎ। অর্থশাস্ত্র ২/২৬)। রক্ষণযোগ্য প্রাণীর তালিকায় মানুষ থেকে শুরু করে হাতি, ঘোড়া, কিছু জলচর প্রাণী, নদী-পুকুর, খাল সরোবরে জন্মানো মাছ, ক্রৌঞ্চ, কুরর, জলকাক, হাঁস, চকোর, মত্তকোকিল, ময়ূর, শুক, ময়না, জীবঞ্জীবক ইত্যাদি পাখির নাম স্থান পেয়েছে। মঙ্গলসূচক পশুপাখিও এই তালিকার অন্তর্ভুক্ত। গাইগরু, ষাঁড়, বাছুর কিছুতেই মারা চলবে না, বলেছেন কৌটিল্য (বৎসা বৃষা ধেনুশ্চৈষাম্ অবধ্যাঃ। অর্থশাস্ত্র ২/২৬)। গো-নির্যাতন, গোবধের শাস্তি ও বিধান করেছেন তিনি। তবে, অভয়ারণ্যের হিংস্র পশু বা অন্য কোন জীবজন্তু

এমনকি মাছ নিজের সংরক্ষিত এলাকা ছেড়ে বাইরে চলে গেলে তাকে ধরা, বেঁধে ফেলা, এমনকি প্রয়োজন হলে প্রহার ও বধ করা আইনসিদ্ধ গণ্য হয়েছে। (দৃষ্টা: পশুমৃগব্যালা মৎস্যাশ্চাভয়চারিণঃ। অন্যত্র গুপ্তস্থানেভ্যো বধবন্ধমবাপ্নুয়ুঃ॥)।

পাপের ভয় দেখিয়ে, নরকবাসের আশঙ্কা জাগিয়ে নয়তো আচার-বিচার-**শুদ্ধির দোহাই** দিয়ে কিংবা শাস্তির ব্যবস্থা করে, অথবা সর্বভূতে আত্মাদর্শনের বোধ জাগরিত করে **প্রাচীন ভারত** পরিবেশরক্ষায় মানুষের ভূমিকা সুনির্দিষ্ট করতে চেয়েছিল। বলা বাহুল্য, দেশে শান্তির **পরিস্থিতি বজায়** থাকলে তবেই এসব ব্যবস্থার মূল্য। যাজ্ঞবল্ক্যসংহিতার শুরুতে তাই বলা হয়েছে - **যস্মিন্ দেশে মৃগঃ** কৃষ্ণস্তস্মিন্ ধর্মান্ নিবোধত (১/২)। কৃষ্ণসার হরিণ স্বচ্ছন্দে নির্ভয়ে চলাফেরা করতে **পারে** – এই ছিল তখন সামাজিক স্বস্তির সূচক। বিশৃঙ্খল পরিস্থিতিতে, যুদ্ধকালীন অবস্থায় কিন্তু ব্যাপারটা **অন্যরকম**। তার রীতিব্যবস্থাও আলাদা, যাকে **আপদ্ধর্ম** বলা যায়। শত্রুদেশকে কজা করার জন্য অবরোধ করে লোকজনদের সন্ত্রস্ত করা, গুপ্তচর মারফত খাদ্যভাণ্ডার, জলাশয় ইত্যাদির ধ্বংস কিংবা তাতে **বিষপ্রয়োগ** দিব্যি রাজধর্ম হিসেবে শাস্ত্রসম্মত গণ্য হয় তখন। (উপরুধ্যারিন্ আসীত রাষ্ট্রং চাস্যোপপীড়য়েৎ। দূষয়েচ্চাস্য সততং যবসান্নোদকেন্ধনম্॥ ভিন্দ্যাচ্চৈব তড়াগানি প্রাকারপরিখাস্তথা। সববন্দয়েচ্চেনং রাত্রৌ বিত্রাসয়েত্তথা॥ মনু. ৭/১৯৫-১৯৬)। আসলে দেশ-কাল-ব্যক্তি-পরিস্থিতি নিরপেক্ষ নীতি বলে তো কিছু হয় না। মহাভারতের উদ্যোগপর্বে তাই বলা হয়েছে

যস্মিন্ যথা বর্ততে যো মনুষ্যস্তস্মিংস্তথা বর্তিতব্যং স ধর্মঃ।
মায়াচারো মায়য়া বর্তিতব্যঃ সাধ্বাচারঃ সাধুনা প্রত্যুপেয়ঃ॥ (৩৭/৭)।

আধিপত্যবাদীর পরিবেশনীতি আর আমজনতার পরিবেশনীতি যে এক হওয়া সম্ভব নয়, তা বলার অপেক্ষা রাখে না।

বেদের ঋষিকবি – মধু বাতা ঋতায়তে মধু ক্ষরন্তি সিন্ধবঃ মাধ্বীর্ণঃ সন্ত্বোষধীঃ। মধু নক্তমুতোষসো মধুমৎপার্থিবং রজঃ। মাধ্বর্গাবো ভবন্ত নঃ। মধু দৌরস্ত নঃ পিতা মধুমান্ নো বনস্পতিঃ। এই মর্মে পৃথিবীর ধূলিকণা থেকে আকাশ বাতাস, নদী, ওষধি, বনস্পতি, প্রাণীসম্পদ, সর্বত্র সপ্রাণ আনন্দধারার মধুসত্তা অনুভব করতে চেয়েছিলেন বিশ্বতোভদ্র মানবদৃষ্টিতে। ধূলায় ধূলায় পরমবাণী অনুধাবনের সে সুস্থিতি লোভের স্বার্থপর স্থূলহস্তাবলেপে সুদূরপরাহত। অথর্ববেদ তিনভুবনের শ্রেষ্ঠ ভুবন চিহ্নিত করেছিল মাটির পৃথিবীকে (ইমা য়াস্ত্রিস্ৃ পৃথিবীস্বাসাং হ ভূমিরুত্তমা। -অথর্ববেদ ৬/৩/ ১/১)। সে গৌরব অটুট রাখার দায় নিশ্চয় আমাদেরই। পৃথিবীর তাবৎ সৌষ্ঠব ও ঐশ্বর্যকে ঝুঁড়ে ফেঁড়ে ক্ষতবিক্ষত করবার আত্মঘাতী অজ্ঞান কিংবা স্পর্ধা আমাদের শুভবুদ্ধিকে যেন গ্রাস না করে। কার্লমার্কস যথার্থ বলেছিলেন –

'private ownership of the globe by single individual will appear quite as absurd as private ownership of one man by another. Even a whole society, a nation or even all simultaneously existing societies together, are not owner of globe. They are only its possessers..., they must hand it

down to succeeding generations in an improved condition.'

<div align="right">(ক্যাপিটাল, তৃতীয় খণ্ড)</div>

'এ বিশ্বকে এ শিশুর বাসযোগ্য করে যাব আমি/
নবজাতকের কাছে এ আমার দৃঢ় অঙ্গীকার ।'
- কথাটা কথার কথা না হয়ে যাতে কাজের শপথ হয় তার রসদ সন্ধানে আমাদের ঐতিহ্যের সম্পদ
আহরণ যেন বাদ না পড়ে ।

নির্বাচিত গ্রন্থপঞ্জী

১. সংস্কৃত ভাষা ও সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যশাস্ত্র বিষয়ক প্রস্তাব - মদনমোহন কুমার সম্পাদিত, বঙ্গীয় সাহিত্য
পরিষদ ১৯৭৭ ।

২. অথর্ববেদসংহিতা - হরফ প্রকাশনী ।

৩. ঋগ্বেদসংহিতা - হরফ প্রকাশনী ।

৪. উপনিষদ গ্রন্থাবলী - উদ্বোধন কার্যালয়।

৫. কালিদাস সমগ্র - রেবাপ্রসাদ দ্বিবেদী সম্পাদিত।

৬. পঞ্চতন্ত্র - এম.আর. কালে সম্পাদিত ।

৭. সদুক্তিকর্ণামৃত - ড. সুরেশচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় সম্পাদিত।

৮. মনুস্মৃতি - আচার্য জগদীশলাল শাস্ত্রী সম্পাদিত, মতিলাল বানারসীদাস, ১৯৮৩।

৯. কৌটিলীয় অর্থশাস্ত্র - রাধাগোবিন্দ বসাক সম্পাদিত, ১৯৬৭।

১০. চার্বাক দর্শন - হেমন্ত গঙ্গোপাধ্যায় ।

১১. ধর্মশাস্ত্রে ও অর্থশাস্ত্রে জীববৈচিত্র্য ও তার সংরক্ষণ পদ্ধতি - প্রিয়দর্শন সেনশর্মা, ১৯৯৯।

১২. সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যের সমাজতত্ত্ব ও অন্যান্য প্রসঙ্গ -করুণাসিন্ধু দাস , ১৯৯৯।

১৩. India's Concept of Environment and Concern for Nature, Ramaranjan
Mukherjee , Journal of the Asiatic Society, Vol. XXXVI, Number 2,
March 1995.

১৪. পরিবেশচিন্তা বিজ্ঞান থেকে দর্শনে - অতীশ চট্টোপাধ্যায়, ১৯৯৯।

ADVAITA PSYCHOLOGY OF COGNITION

PRABHAT MISRA

Indian philosophy has often been charged with the saying that it is too much metaphysical. But a close analysis reveals that in all the systems of India, metaphysics and epistemology are basically blended. It is true that the systems, in general, are ambitious for establishing metaphysical assumptions, nevertheless they do not ignore the philosophy of cognition including its psychology in their concern. The Advaita Vedānta often taken as a metaphysical system has a novel and sound philosophy of cognition. In the works of Śaṅkara, it is found to be contained implicitly; in the works of post-Śaṅkara Advaita thinkers, it has secured its distinguished position.

The Advaita Vedānta has established the reality of Brahman - the single non-dual principle of consciousness. Excepting to Brahman or Consciousness-as-such, there is nothing as real and consciousness. But the empirical world appears to be real and the wordly beings are also possessed of consciousness. So the system recognises another principle viz., *avidyā* or necescience for the explanation of the apparently real and conscious entities and activities. Although it seems to be inconsistent, the Advaita Vedānta upholds the view that all our empirical cognitions are product of avidya or nescience. Empirical cognition presupposes cognition, cogniser, cognising and cognisable object. This distinction is not granted in the Advaita, which believes in the reality of non-dual one principle - Brahman or the self *(atman)*. The Self or Brahman is ever-free and unattached to everything else. There is nothing besides it to be attached to. All the distinctions of subject and object, cognition, cogniser, cognising and cognisable are erroneously attributed to the self. All empirical objects including bodies, sense-organs etc. and events and processes including cognising, thinking, memorising come under the category of not-self. As soon as the superimposition *(adhyāropa)* or false identification breaks up, there remains no relation between the Self *(atman)*, on the one hand and the body, the

organs and the cognising process, on the other. As all the empirical realities and events are dependent on the nescience, so the empirical cognition also is solely dependent on it. The Advaita in this connection accepts the Muṇḍaka-śruti as the first principle of philosophising that the two types of the knowledge-higher (*parā*) and lower (*aparā*) should be known.[1] Higher knowledge is the realisation of Brahman and lower, the empirical Cognition. The empirical cognition is the product of nescience and devoid of any attachment to the Pure Consciousness or Brahman. But as Brahman is the locus or substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of nescience and all its products, the said cognition is nothing but the empirical manifestation of that eternal consciousness. Dr. V.P. Upādhyāya has nicely put : "Just as the solar light is revealed on being reflected in and against a dark background, similarly the Eternal Light or Pure Consciousness also necessarily requires of some background such as the mind for its empirical manifestation through appearing therein. The background does not generate the light, but only helps its revealation or manifestation in different forms. Thus perception is not produced by the mind but is essentially pure and quiescent as Brahman. Nevertheless one and the same Reality or Pure Consciousness, Brahman appearing through the different constituents of cognition, comes to be viewed as the subject, the object and their knowledge and as its manifestations occur through limited psychoses and under the limitation of time and space etc."[2]

II

According to the Advaita Vedānta , the Pure Consciousness Brahman is the essence of all things, embracing the world of appearance. So the empirical states of consciousness are also not completely detached from the Pure Consciousness. These states of consciousness, the Advaita holds like the *Sāṁkhya*, are due to different *Vṛttis* or mental modes. These *Vṛttis* are the various modifications of mind, the internal organ, in according with the different shapes of the objects. The Advaita System is in favour of the vivartavāda, the theory of unreal transformation, so far as Brahman, the Pure Consciousness is the material cause of the world-appearance. But when it is thought that the appearing world is the product of avidyā or nescience, the Advaita Vedānta has also to speak of *Parināmavāda* or the theory of real transformation like the sāṁkhya. The avidya has transformed itself into the world of variety. The cognitive instrument, the mind or *antaḥkaraṇa* is also an evolute of it. The *Vṛtti* of

this antahkarana, a Samkarāite holds, is responsible for all the cognitive states, mediate or immediate, in our working stage.

The Advaitins uphold that in the case of perceptual cognition, the antakharana or internal organ gets in touch with the empirical objects through the sense-channels and becomes transformed into the forms of those objects. This transformed or modified state of antahkarana is called *Vrtti*. In the cases of *Visayagata pratyaksa*, antahkarana vrtti removes the ignorance (*ajñāna*) of the object concerned and the light of Pure Consciousness conditioned by that *Vrtti* reveals the object.

N.K.Devarāja has given a brief but authentic explanation of Sa mkara's view of *Vrttijñāna* from his depth of the study of Samkara's comments on different Upanisads. He observes, "The word knowledge is used by Samkara to denote not only pure awareness ... .. but also the modes of internal organ inspired or informed by that awareness. It is knowledge in this latter sense, which appears and disappears and constitutes the changing element in our experiences. The self which is of the nature of pure awareness is said to have the modes of the internal organ for its objects which latter it illumines. The pure awareness is designated by the Vedāntists as *Sāksī* or *Sāksījñāna*, while knowledge in its changing aspect is called *Vrttijñāna*"[3]

<center>III</center>

The doctrine of *Vrtti*, however, was not first introduced by śamkara himself in the Advaita Scheme of cognition. This concept of *Vrtti* was propagated by the Sāmkhya philosophers and the great seers of the Upanisads. For his metaphysical epistemology, Sāmkhya borrowed the concept from the Sāmkhya and the Upanisads. He fails to give us a systematic and eleborate explanation of the mechanism of the *Vrttijāña*. Likewise śamkara Padmapāda and Sureśvara, the two great pioneers of extreme Advaitism, were not interested in building up epistemology of the system. Subsequently, as the other systems of philosophy considered expistemology in their philosophical speculations with all emphasis at their command, the Advaitins also accepted it as an important concern. Thus the theory of *Vrtti* gets a profound recognition in the hands of the author Vivarana and it blossoms forth in the Vedāntaparibhāsā of Dharmarāja.

According to the Advaita Vedānta, pramānas (valid cognitions) are six in number : *pratyakṣa* (perception), *anumāna* (inference) *upamāna* (comparison), *śabda* (verbal testimony), *arthāpatti* (postulation) and anupalabdhi (non-cognition). These are all the mental modes during the working state (*jagradvṛtti*). There are also other two vṛttis viz, dream (*swapna*) and swoon (*suṣupti*). The jagradvṛtti is necessarily a mode of inner organ (*antahkaranvrtti*). But the other two vṛttis are to be regarded as avidyāvṛtti (the mode of nescience). *Vṛttis* in dream (*svapna-Vṛtti*) are not due to the function of sense-organs.[4] Svapanavṛtti is a modified state which arises out of the inclination (*Vāsanā*) inherent in the antahkaraṇa. In the swoon (*suṣupti*), cognition itself is of the state of ignorance-there simply arises the modification of avidyā in respect of the object of ignorance.[5]

Although the Advaitins speak of the role of *Vṛtti* in all cognitions - immediate and mediate, they, unfortunately, have not given any consistent account of *Vṛtti* in respect of mediate cognitions like inference etc., where the sense-organs are not in immediate and direct contact with the object to produce the cognition. In their works, the concept of *Vṛtti* has been emphatically and eleborately discussed in course of their dealing with the process of perceptual cognition. The Vedantaparibhāsā states that perceptual cognition is nothing but the Pure Consciousness.[6] But according to the Advaitins, Pure Consciousness is not the right cognition (*pramā*), because, it does not remove ignorance, since the cognitionhood (pramātva) does not inhere in it. The Consciousness which is manifested through the Consciousness conditioned by the mental mode is the perceptual cognition. Pure Consciousness is beginningless and uncaused, so it would have no instrumental cause (*kāraṇa*) like the eye, ear etc. The Advaitins hold that content-consciousness (*viṣayacaitanya*) remains covered by the ignorance. This ignorance is realised by such thought or utterance 'I do not know the jar'. When mind goes out to the content of cognition through the respective sense-organ (then it modifies itself in the shape of an object, such as a jar), this mental mode removes the ignoranbe in respect of the content consciousness. While vrttivyāpti removes the ignorance, *phalavyāpti* manifests the object. Pure Consciousness is beginningless, uncaused : but the consciousness limited by such *antahkaraṇa vrtti*, which is arisen out of the sense object contact will necessarily be caused and has a beginning.

Dharmarāja, the author of Vedāntaparibhāṣā maintains that the *antahkaranavrtti* itself may secondarily be called as pramā or valid cognition. The Vrtti, by nature, becomes the limiting adjunct (Upādhi) of the Pure Consciousness, since the *pramā* attributes its own character to it. But it also distinguishes that prama-consciousness (*pramā-caitanya*) from other consciousness at that very time. Thus it (the *Vrtti*) becomes avacchedaka (differentium) also. In the way the character of pramā (*pramātva* or cognitionhood) is found to be superimposed on the *Vrtti*. Dharmarāja quotes from the Vivarana : '*antahkaranavrttab Jñātvopacārāditi*'.[7] By the word "*jñanatvopacāra*" is meant the super-imposition of cognitionhood. Thus the *Vrtti* itself may be treated as the pramā like consciousness. And the sense-organs like the eye, the ear etc. are taken as the instrumental cause of cognition, since the sense-contact immediately preceedes the *Vrtti*.

In a cognition-situation, the Advaitins hold, due to the different limiting adjuncts (*upādhi*) one single consciousness may be divided into its four aspects : Viṣaya -caitanya (content-consciousness) pramāṇa -caitanya (cognitive consciousness), *pramātr-caitanya* (cogniser-consciousness) and *pramiti-caitanya* (cognition-consciousness). Otherwise, the one undivided eternal consciousness is not capable of being appeared as our diverse impermanent cognitions. The Paribhāsākāra speaks of three divisions leaving aside the pramiti-caitanya. It appears that he has included the pramiti-caitanya in the category of the pramāna - caitanya or *Vrtti-caitanya*. The identification of *Vrtti* with the knowledge, cognition or consciousness is simply figurative. This has been stated by the author Vedantaparibhāṣā in this line : Jñānāvacchedakatvād *vrttau jñānatvopacārah*.[8] In fact, as the one undivided Reality-consciousness is the cognition itself (*pramiti*), so it is economical (*lāghava*) not to count it as one of the different aspects of cognition-situation.

IV

To point out the role of vrtti in perception, we may go through perceptual process as pictured by Dharmaraja in his Vedantaparibhāsā . The process is as follows :

The Internal organ is of the nature of light. It goes through the visual organ etc. to reach the location of contents like jar(Which is in contact with the sense-organ). Consequently, it is modified in the form of contents like jar. This modification is called a Vrtti.[9]

The object of perception e.g. the jar and the respective *Vṛtti* possess the same location outside.[10]

The identity between the object of cognition and the *Vṛtti* is made possible and maintained by the fact that both are simply conditioned consciousness.[11] The fact of identity or non-difference implies the immediacy of perceptual cognition. This can explain also the perceptual character of cognitions like 'I am happy', etc. The non-difference of consciousness conditioned by happiness, misery erc. and consciousness conditioned by the respective *Vṛttis* gives rise immediate cognition of happiness or misery.[12]

Besides the non-difference of the two conditioned consciousness, there are other two constitnent factors of perceptuality viz., simultaneouty and fitness. That the *Vṛtti* and the object of perceptual cognition are to belong to the present time (*vartamānatvaṁ visaysvisesanaṁ deyam*)[13], otherwise the said non-difference would not be found. And the object must be cognissable i.e. it must be fit for perception (*yogyatvsyāpi visayaviśesanatvāt*)[14].

Of these three perceptual factors, the non-difference is most important. And this non-difference is centered in the *vṛtti-caitanya*. The Advaitins, in general, accepts this view. The Paribhāsakāra puts this Advaita line of thought in this way : The *Vṛtti* in the shape of a jar being in conjunction with the jar and the jar-defined consciousness being non-different from the consciousness defined by the jar-psychosis, there arises the perceptuality for the jar-cognition.[15] This concept of non-difference (*abheda*) is metaphysical one. It has been taken into account in the Advaita Philosophy for the immediacy or directress in the case of perceptual cognition.

V

In fact, a long standing philosophical problem in connection with the theory of perception is that how the knower subject, mind or self comes into contact and directly know an object that exists outside the mental area. The *Vṛtti* theory of Advaita has tried to solve this in some way. The accepted view of perception as the genesis of the sense-object contact cannot definitely encounter this problem. Again, since mind has been accepted as sense organ by almost all the philosophars, the inferential cognition (in which the contact of

mind is granted) would be nothing other than perception. The Vivaraṇa line of thought as has been expressed in the Vedāntaparibhāsā is that the perceptuality of cognition is not to be accounted by the sense-object contact. The idea of perception (immediate cognition) as arising out of the sense-object contact will cover the idea of mediate cognition like the mind-generated inference. The Nyāya view that mind (manas) plays the role as having the character of indriyatva in perception and that of manastva in inference is, however, not intelligible, not satisfactorily explained by the advocates. Again, God's apprehension arises without the sense-object contact, since He is without any sense-organ. So his acquisition of knowledge would never be immediate. To recover from such crucial limit, the Navya Naiyayikas speak of perception as an immediate apprehension .

Gangeśa's famous definition is :'pratyaksasyn sākṣātkaritvaṁ laksanam' — the character of immediacy is the common defining mark of perception. The factor of sense-generatedness has, thus, been excluded from the definition of perception. In fact, not only the omniscience of God, but also the abnormal perception like illusion, hallucination, dream etc. are the cases which are not sense-generated. Further, when we visually perceive a piece of ice, for example, at a distance, we have sensation of its white colour, but not of its touch or taste. Nevertheless, our perceptual cognition includes all the qualities at that time. This fact reveals that the sensing factor is not all for perception. The Navya Nyaya view of the nature of perception as immediate apprehension may be admitted by the Advaita. But we do not find any concrete structure of perceptual process offered by them in accordance with their definition of perception. The Advaitins, however, this process that gives rise to the immediacy in perception by the concept of vṛtti-caitanya. The non-difference of vṛtti-caitanya with viṣaya-caitanya can establish the perceptual cognition as immediate.

VI

In this connection, it would be nice to throw some light on the concept of antaḥkaraṇa (internal organ or mind) as advanced by the champions of the diverse schools of Indian thought. In almost all the systems of Indian Philosophy, mind or antaḥkaraṇa has been treated as a sense-organ. some Buddhist like Diṇnaga does not recognise mind as a sense-organ.[16] A good number of Advaita thinkers also do not regard it as a sense-organ.

The Sāṃkhyakāras, the Mimāṃsakas, the Naiyāyikas and the Vaiśeṣikas maintain that *antahkaraṇa* is manas as the internal organ of perception. They hold that it is an unconscious substance. The Advaita Vedānta does recognise antahkarana as only the manas. *Antahkaraṇa* has four different aspects viz., *manas, buddhi, ahaṃkāra* and *citta*. As such *antahkaraṇa* has different functions or modes : the indecisive or doubtful state of mode of *antahkaraṇa (Saṃsaya)* is represented by the manas, the decisive state of mode of *antahkaraṇa* (nisscaya) is connected with the *buddhi*, the self-refering state of mode of *antahkaraṇa (garva)* is called the ahaṃkāra and the remembering state of mode of *antahkaraṇa (smaraṇa)* is designated as the citta. Thus we find, in accordance with the varieties of modes, the *antahkaraṇa* is divided. The author of Pañcadaśī, of course, speaks of two fold division of *antahkarana manas* and *buddhi*.[17] Other two, citta and ahaṃkāra seems to be included in the former two respectively. The author of Vedāntasāra puts the above four modes of *Vṛtti*-such as *niscayātmika (buddhi)*, *Saṃkalpavi Kalpātmikā* (manas), *anusandhānātmikā* (citta) and *abhimānātmikā* (ahaṃkāra). But to him, the citta should be included in the buddhi and the *ahaṃkāra*, in the *manas*.[18] Thus the manas has been designated as a particular function of *antahkaraṇa* or internal organ - it is not same as the *antahkaraṇa* as a whole, in the Advaita philosophy.

The most striking issue here, however, is that *antahkaraṇa* or the internal organ is not at all a sense-organ, according to some distinguished Advaitins. In the other systems, *antahkaraṇa* has been treated simply as manas and as an independent reality like the atman(self). But to the Advaita system, antahkarana is a transformation of *ajñāna* or nescience - it is neither independent, nor real. Brahman or the self is the only reality in this system. Of course, this system agrees with others by holding that it is unconscious and distinct from the self.

Now that whether the mind or *antahkaraṇa* is a sense-organ or not is a controversial issue, and this controversy may perhaps be traced to the comments of śaṃkara on the Brahmasūtra, śaṃkara simply mentions that according to the śruti,[19] *manas* is not an *indriya*; but some Smritis regard it to be an *indriya*. But he does not reconcile the controversy.[20] Of the two principal schools of Advaita Vedanta viz. ; the school of Bhāmāti and that of Vivaraṇa, the former holds that the antahkaraṇa is an indriya, the latter maintains that it is not.

According to the advocates of Bhāmāti School, like Vācaspati, knowledge of pleasure, suffering etc. is valid knowledge and generated by the internal sense-organ i.e. manas. *Manas* is an instrument (karana) of such knowledge. In his comments on śāṁkarabhāsya of the Brahmasūtra (2,4,17), Vacaspati pointsout that other organs can apprehend only the objects of present time but mind can apprehend the objects of past, present and future : this distinguishes mind from other organs.[21]The author of Pañcadaśī, while discussing the different categories in second chapter, joins his hands with the Bhamati School. According to him, *manas* is the internal organs, it is superior to the ten external organ.[22]

The champions of Vivaraṇa School do not accept the view. According to their line of thought, as expressed in the Vedāntaparibhāsā, manas, mind or antahkaraṇa is not an instrument, but a locus. The consciousness defined by pleasure, suffering etc. and the consciousness defined by the mental modes (*Vṛtti*) of pleasure, suffering etc. - the two upadhis being present in the same locus, the perceptuality for the knowledge of pleasure, suffering etc. in the form of 'I am in pleasure', 'I am in suffering' occurs.[23]

The Vivaraṇa school contends that knowledge of pleasure, suffering etc. is not sense-generated and so not pramā . Knowledge of these inner objects is manifested by the Witnessing Self (*Sākṣībhāsya*). Since such knowledge is the mode of beginningless science (*avidyāvṛtti*), but not the modification of mind, it does not require of any internal organ. Sāksi or the witnessing -Self is the Pure Consciousness with the limiting adjunct of avidyā. The author of Pañcadaśī states in the Kūtasthadīpa that *Sākṣī* is *Kūtastha* cit. It is the direct seer of both the gross and subtle bodies. It is sustained by itself and is never modified into some other form.[24] In fact this Witnessing-Self is the light (enlightened by the Pure Self) by which not only the inner objects like pleasure, suffering, illusory objects etc. having known existence are cognised, but also the external objects having unknown existence are apprehended.[25]

The author of Vedānta-paribhāsā strongly upholds that antahkaraṇa is not a sense-organ. He nicely interpretes certain statements of the Gita (*manas sasthāni indriyāṇi* - 15,7) (also some smṛtis - *vedānadhyāpayāmāsa mahābhārata - pañcamān*). By refering to the *Kathaśruti - indriyebhyah para hyarthā*

arthebhyaśca param Manah,[26] Dharamaraja has successively arrived at the conclusion that mind is not a sense organ. In this śruti, manas has been treated as a distinct category from other indriyas.

P.K. Sundaram has referred to the Advaitacintakaustubha, Chapter VIII, where it has been argued that antahkarana is the material cause of all the mental modifications. It is a granted principle that the material cause of anything can never itself be the instrumental cause in its production. Clay is the material cause of jar, it can never be the instrumental cause in the production of it.[27]Thus we find that serious charges have been thrown by the theoreticians and supporters of the Vivarana School against the Bhāmāti view that mind is a sense-organ which further finds close correspondence to the views of some distinguished systems of Indian Philosophy.

VII

Now what would be our conclusion ? It is fact that mind or antahkarana is not just like other sense-organs as the gate-ways of receiving objects. But as for the other cognitions of external objects, some *karana* (instrument) is necessary, so should be not need some instrument for the cognition of internal objects like pleasure, suffering etc. ? There are two worlds for the living beings - one external and the other internal. This internal world is the concern of psychology. The objects of this internal world, we know, are cognised. At least for their cognition, it seems better to accept an internal organ or *antahkarana*. Moreover, some characteristics of the antahkarana makes it indistinguishable from some other organs like the organ of sight and hearing. The organ of sight is composed of light (*tejas*), according to the Vivarankāra himself. The Paribhāsākāra also observes '*taijasa- mantahkaranam*', while explaining the necessity of *Vṛtti* to relate the consciousness of individual self with the object.[28] And as the visual sense goes out in long rays, so also does the *antahkarana*. The going out of the auditory, again, is accepted by the Advaitins, like the going out of the *antahkarana*. Thus *antahkarana* bears the fundamental characteristics of the organs of vision and hearing. So it can be taken as a sense organ, although of a peculiar type.

Dr. Āsutosh Śāstrī notes that the view of Dharmarāja in the Vedāntaparibhāsā in regard to the position of internal organ suffers from self-

contradiction.[29] According to him, while refuting the sense-contact definition of perception Dharmaraja says that if perceptual cognition be merely sense-generated, then remembrance, inference will also perceptual cognition, since these are generated by mind or the internal organ.[30] In such a criticism, Dr. Sāstri points out, mind has been granted as a sense organ. But in the paribhasa Dharmaraja has firmly tried to establish that mind is not the sense-organ.[31] Herein lies the self-contradiction in his view.

It may also be thought that as the Paribhāsākāra maintains against the Nyāya view that antahkarana is not partless, but composed of parts, since it has a beginning,[32] so it can be regarded as an *indriya*. Other external organs are also composed of parts and have beginning. And we find in the same text that for the modification, *antahkarana* has been accepted as having parts. So the very concept of *antahkarana vrtti* points to the fact that *antahkarana* is a sense-organ.

<center>VIII</center>

According to the Advaita Vedānta, however, knowledge of the antahkaranavrtti is manifested by *Sāksi* or the Witnessing Self, which is the Pure Consciousness limited by the adjunct of *avidyā*. Objects of this knowledge are also manifested by the *Sāksī-caitanya*. We have just stated the Advaita principle that any object known or unknown needs *Sāksī* for its manifestation. When we do not know a thing, say a jar, we have the non-cognition of it. This non-cognition is not the absence of cognition. To the Advaitins, knowledge or cognition as the Reality-Consciousness can never be absent. Experience also shows, when we become conscious of such absence, we are conscious of knowledge itself along with the object of that knowledge. This type of non-cognition proceeding cognition is termed as bhāvarupa-ajñāna (*ajñāna* of the object in concern). As *Sāksi* is the *caitanya* conditioned by the limiting adjunct of *ajnana*, so ajnana is manifested by *Sāksi* or the Witnessing Consciousness. Where there was no jar, then the Consciousness was revealed in the non-cognition of the jar, the same consciousness also reveales the cognition of the jar, when there is the jar. This uninterrupted consciousness is not connected with the object e.g. the jar and so, is changeless. This consciousness is the Pure Consciousness or Brahman. This Pure Consciousness, when limited by the beginningless ajñāna residing in the internal world of the jīva is called the *Sāksī-caitanya* or Witness-

ing -Consciousness.

The author of Pañcadaśī has distinguished two kinds of *Sākṣti-caitanya* in the Kūtasthadīpa - cidābhāsa or *Vrtti-caitanya* and *Kūtastha* or *ādhāra-caitanya*. He says that an external object e.g., a jar is cognised through the psychosis (*Vrtti*) assuming its form. But the cognition 'I know the jar' comes directly through the Substrate Consciousness (*ādhāra -caitanya*) i.e. Brahman.[33] So cognition of an object, say the jar, involves a double consciousness Vrtti-caitanya that envelopes the jar and *Kūtastha-caitanya* that reveales the jar to the cogniser. This may remind us of the *Vrtti* theory of cognition of the Sāṁkhya, where it is said that the relation of *puruṣa-caitanya* to the buddhi vrtti makes the cognition of any object to a cogniser-possible . But how is the relation between matter product buddhi with its *Vrttis* and the ever conscious *puruṣa* are brought out in the dualistic Sāṁkhya is a mystery. Accepting the one uninterrupted Reality -Consciousness, for both the *Vrtti* and the *Kūtastha*, the Advaita School of thought has, in this connection, established itself on a solid ground.

IX

The above account shows that for the cognition of object a modification of the mind (*antahkaranavrtti*) is necessary . The mind or *antahkarana* is said to be modified into the configuration of an object, when it is infected with the character of that object. This infection is technically called *vrttivyāpti*. In some Advaita work (Viththaleśa on the Laghucandrikā), as A. Ray Chaudhuri notes in his Self and Falsity in Advaita Vedānta,[34] it is said that the mental psychosis should not always mean that the antahkarana would assume the form of the object. (i.e. objects having configuration), which are sensible. But the categories of colour, taste, quality, action etc. have no form, yet, are sensible. The mental modifications into any form is not possible in respect of these. Hence, in every case of mental modification, when the object comes in contact with the *antahkarana*, it is said that it is infected with the object of cognition. In fact, according to the Advaitins the categories quality, action, universal etc. are not absolutely different from the substance. So the form of substance is the form of these. These categories are not absolutely formless. So the *antahkarana* may be modified into the form of quality, action etc. as it becomes so in the form of substance. What the Advaitins would really mean to say that the men-

tal mode which is able to remove the obstruction of ignorance about the movement of *antahkarana* in connection with the existence of some object is the *Vrtti*. When some mode of *antahkarana* obtains the movement in connection with the existence of some object (substance, quality, action, or universal) by the removal of ignorance about that object, than that mental mode is called the *Vrtti* in the form of that object.[35]

Now Pure Consciousness being devoid of any modification cannot be taken as manifesting an object. It is eternally present. Nevertheless, we remain unware of a present object many times. The object as the product of avidyā cannot also reveal itself. So we require of a third something, which is necessary for the manifestation of the object. This third something is a change of something which is neither the Pure Consciousness, nor the object. This change is the modification of *antahkarana antahkaranavrtti*. Such an evaluation of A. Raychaudhuri[36] appears to us to be more convincing than any other in connection with the Advaita standpoint of *Vrtti*.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *dve vidye veditabya iti ha sma yad Brahmabido Badanti, parā caivāparā ca* - *Mundakopanisad* - 1,1,4

2. Lights on Vedanta - p. 137.

3. An introduction to śaṁkara's theory of knowledge-pp. 94-95.

4. *indriyājanya-visaya-ocarāparoksāntahkarana vrttyavasthāsvapnāvasthā* - Vedāntaparibhāsā, edited by pañchānan Bhattacharya, p. 308.

5. *susuptirnāmāvidya-gocarāovidyāvrttyavasthā* - ibid, p.15.

6. *pratyakasa-prama-cātra caitanyamaya* - ibid, p. 15.

7. ibid, p.18

8. ibid, p.18.

9. *saeva pariṇāmo vṛttyucoate* - ibid, p.31.

10. *tathā cāyaṁ ghata-ityadi-pratyaksasthale ghatādestadakārā-vṛtteśca vahireketra deśe samāvadhanat* - ibid, pp. 32-33.

11. *ghatāvacchinna - caitanyasya tadvṛttyavacchinna-caitanyasya cābhinnataya tatra ghatajñanasya ghatāṁśa pratyaksatvam* - ibid, pp.33-34.

12. *sukha-Dhukhādycacchinna-caitanyasya tadvṛttyaya-cchinna-caitanyasya ca niyamenaikadeśasthitopadhi dvayavacchinnatvanniyamenāhaṁ sukhityadijñānasya pratyaksatvam* - ibid, pp. 34-35

13. ibid, 36.

14. ibid, p.37.

15. *tathā cāyaṁ ghata iti pratyaksasthale ghatākāra - vṛttesghatasaṁyogitayā ghatāvacchinna-caitanyasya tadvṛttyavachinnacaitanyasya cābhinnatayā tatra ghata-jnānasya ghatāṁśe pratyaksatvam* - ibid, pp.33-34.

16. *na sukhādi pramēyāṁ vā mano vāstindriyāntaram. aniṣadhādū pāttañcedanyendriyarutaṁ vṛthā-Pramāṇa-Samnccaya-* Chapter 1, quoted from the foot-note, Vedānta-Paribhāṣā edited by Panchānana Bhattāchārya, p. 25.

17. *ahaṁvṛttoitdaṁtaḥkaraṇa dvidhā/vijñānaṁ syādahamvṛttiridamvṛttirmano bhabet -* Pañcadasi, chapter-VI. 70.

18. *anyoreva cittā-hamkarayorntarbhāvaḥ-* Vedāntasāra, chapter II.67.

19. *etasmājjāyate prāṇo manas sarvendriyani ca -* Mundakopanisad - 2, 1,3

20. *nanu manasopyevam sati varjanamindriyatvenā prāṇavat syad 'manas saṅvendriyānica' iti prthakvyāpadeśabhedadarśanāt, satyametat, smrtau tvekādaśendriyāniti manopindriyatven Srotrādivat sāmgrahyate -*

śāṁkarabhāsya of the Brahmasūtra - 2,4,17.

21. *athabendriyānā ṁvartamānmātra -visayatvānmanasastutraikālyagocar-tvādbhedenābidhānam,* - Bhāmati on Samkarbhasya, - 2,4, 17.

22. *mano daśendriyādhyaksamhṛdpadmagolake sthitam/taccantahkaranam bahyesvāsvatantryādbinendriaih* -Pañcadaśī, chapter II 8.

23. *Sukhadhukhādyavacchinna caitanyasya ... 'aham sukhī, dhukhī'- ityadi jnānasya pratyaksatvam - Vedantaparibhasa, edited by Panchanan* Bhattacharya, pp. 34-35

24. *dvigunikytacaitanya janmanāsāni-bhutitah/akutasthantadanyattu Kutasthamavikāratah-* Pañcadaśī - chapter VIII.23.

25. *Sarvam Vastu jnātatayā ajnātatayā va sāksibhāsyam* - A familiar Advaita principle, mentioned in different Advaita works.

26. Kathopanisad - 1, 3, 10

27. Advaita Epistemology - p. 26.

28. Vedāntaparibhāṣā -edited by Pañchānana Bhattāchārya, p. 304

29. Vedānta darasan - Advaitavāda - p.101-102

30. *na hindriya-janyatvena jnānasya sāksāttvam, anumityāderāpi manojanyatayā saksātvāpatteh- Vedāntaparibhāsā,* edited by Panchānana Bhattāchārya, p. 26.

31. *na tāvadantahkaranamindriyamityatra mānamasti* - ibid, p. 22.

32. *na tāvadantahkaranah - niravayavam, sādi dravyatven sāvayavatvāt -* ibid, p. 19

33. *ghataikākāradhisthā cit ghatamevāvabhāsayet/ghatasya jñātate Brahma-caitanyenā vabhāsate-* Pañcadaśī, Chapter VIII.4.

34. pp. 177-178

35. Comments (Vivrti) on Vedāntaparibhāsā, edited by Panchanan Bhattacharya, p. 31.

36. A Raychoudhuri, Self and Falsity in Advaita Vedanta (1955).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Vedāntaparibhāsā of Dharmarajādhvarīndra, ed. by Pañcānana Bhattacharya Tarka -Samkhya-Vedantatirtha, Cal, 1377(Beng.)

2. P. K. Sundaram, Advaita Epistemology, Madras, 1968.

3. V.P. Upadhyaya, Lights on Vedanta, Chowkhamba, 1959.

4. N.K. Devarāja, An Introduction to Samkara's Theory of Knowledge, Motilal Banarasi Dass, 1972.

5. S.N. Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol.1, Motilal Banarasi Das, 1975.

6. Svami Prajnananda, Schools of Indian Philosophical Thought, Calcutta, 1973.

7. S.C. Chatterjee, The Nyaya Theory of Knowledge, Calcutta, 1965.

8. Upaniṣad, ed: by Atulchandra Sen, Cal. 1974.

9. A Raychaudhuri, Self and Falsity in Advaita Vedanta, Calcutta, 1955.

10. Gangādharendra Sarasvāti's Vedāntasiddhānta -sūkti-mañjari, ed. by Narendra Chandra Vedāntatīrtha (Introduction), Cal, 1935.

11. D.M.Datta, The Six ways of knowing, Calcutta, 1972.

12. Vedantadarsanam (Samkarabhasya of Brahmasutra) ed. by Durgacarana Samkhya - Vedantatirtha, Cal., 1970.

13. Saral Pañcadaśī, Sri Amulapada Chattopadhyay (ed), Calcutta, 1979.

OTHER JOURNALS PUBLISHED BY VIDYASAGAR UNIVERSITY

1. **Vidyasagar University Journal of Economics** (Journal of the Department of Economics with Rural Development)

2. **Politics and Society** (Journal of the Department of Political Science with Rural Administration)

3. **Vidyasagar University Journal of Commerce** (Journal of the Department of Commerce with Farm Management)

4. **Indian Journal of Geography and Environment** (Journal of the Department of Geography and Environment Management)

5. **Vidyasagar University Journal of Physical Science** (Journal of the Departments of Applied Mathematics with Oceanology and Computer Programming. Chemistry and Chemical Technology, and Physics and Techno-physics)

6. **Vidyasagar University Journal of Biological Sciences** (Journal of the Departments of Anthropology, Botany and Forestry, Human Physiology with Community Health and Zoology)

7. বাংলা বিভাগীয় পত্রিকা (Journal of the Department of Bengali)

8. **Vidyasagar University Journal of Library and information Science**

9. **Vidyasagar University Journal of English**

10. **Vidyasagar University Journal of History**