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On Talk of Modes of Thought

LAKSHMI RAMAKRISHNAN
Prajna Pathashala Mandal, Wai

Talk of modes of thought, conceptual schemes, or modes of rationality is not uncommon, yet, there are serious difficulties about such talk. It is, for instance, rarely clear what such talk amounts to. Often it is no more than a protest against, say, applying scientific or logical criteria to the moral or the religious realm. The verificationists, notoriously, dismissed religious and ethical sentences as meaningless because such sentences are, in principle, unverifiable. There are dangerously close connections between the meaningfulness of sentences and their being claimants to be rationally justified. You cannot hold a certain discourse to be meaningless without holding suspect the rationality of that discourse. So, some who rejected the positivists' model spoke of different modes of rationality—especially those who came under the influence of the later Wittgenstein with his talk of forms of life, language games, etc. Also, developments in philosophy of science encourage talk of different conceptual schemes—even radically different ones. A recent instance of a quest for the mode of thought—of the Indian philosophers—is to be found in Prof. J.N. Mohanty's book *Reason and Tradition in Indian Thought: An Essay on the Nature of Indian Philosophical Thinking.* In this, he is concerned with 'the general mode of thinking'[1] that is to be found in Indian thought. He seeks to reveal 'some of the parameters within which Indian philosophers have thought'.[2] In what follows, I am concerned with this basic project. I attempt an elucidation of the project as I grasp it and a posing of certain puzzles and difficulties about a project such as this which seeks to lay bare a particular 'mode of thought'.

The first part of this paper is an exposition of the general project which Prof. Mohanty has set for himself. The strategy he adopts is to take up for study a few major topics that are discussed in the *darśanas* with a view to delving into their 'deeper underlying structures'.[3] One of these topics is language and meaning, discussed in the *darśanas* as theories of *śābdabodha.* In the second part of this paper, I discuss Mohanty's treatment of this topic in order to highlight the actual carrying out of his project. Mohanty's concern in this is to show that the sense-reference distinction which lies at the heart of contemporary philosophical discussions of language in the West, is absent in these theories. The theories of *śābdabodha*

are not concerned with what Mohanty terms 'linguistic understanding' (understanding sentences), but with 'linguistic knowing' (knowledge generated on hearing sentences). Even theories of linguistic knowing, he argues, cannot do without positing something like the Fregean sense. One may not give them a full-blooded ontological status, but one needs to admit something like sense and in the theories of *śābdabodha* nothing immediately and obviously presents itself as corresponding to 'sense'. But, on closer examination, a few concepts do seem to come close to being 'sense-like posits'. Against the background of this discussion, and set in its context, in the third part of the paper, I pose some questions which the very project Mohanty has set for himself provokes.

I

In talking of the nature of Indian thought, Prof. Mohanty rightly rejects as simplistic and even misleading clichés which are used as easy formulas to characterize it, mostly by contrast with the Western philosophical tradition. Using such opposites as spiritual–non-spiritual, intuition–intellect, to characterize the Indian and western philosophical traditions is misleading, even inaccurate, simply because there isn't the homogeneity in these traditions to warrant such generalizations. There are western philosophies which 'reject intellectual methods for some sort of intuitive mode of deriving knowledge'[4], and there are large tracts of Indian philosophy where, to vary Quine's metaphor, only those who have a taste for desert landscapes can go on. Indeed, his project can be seen as springing from a dissatisfaction with the pervasive tendency to ride on such facile comparisons.

Identifying the 'alleged religious context' of Indian philosophy as its distinctive trait does not help much either because 'it is only a source of concerns rather than of justification of positions taken.'[5] Think of the West's fascination for mathematics and a particular tradition of philosophers who were concerned with setting out a philosophical system with the precision and certainty of an axiomatic system. If a *dārśanika* were told that these persons were engaged in the same sort of enterprise as he was, he would find it very queer indeed—in its concerns. Yet when he is given the actual philosophical arguments and doctrines he would probably feel that what he was up against is not so queer. Mohanty's point seems to be that though the *darśanas* spring from a religious–spiritual concern, when it comes to brass tacks, argument and debate alone hold sway. Just as a Spinoza or a Descartes, though inspired by the mathematical model, does not use any mathematical formula or truth in his argument, so also is there no plea to any mystical or religious experience of the *dārśanika* to clinch any argument.

This point has been made by other philosophers too. Prof. Daya Krishna[6] points out that the very structure of a typical Indian philosophical text reveals its concern with argument and reasoned debate. The author, always presents an opposite view with all arguments in its favour as *pūrvapakśa* and his own *siddhānta* is established only by refuting the *pūrvapakśa* and not by appeal to some religious-mystical experience.

The point Mohanty wants to make is that philosophy in India 'was a supremely rational and critical enterprise'[7] and his concern in the long run is to determine the underlying conception of rationality in Indian philosophy. According to him the common mode of rationality which characterizes all philosophical thinking expresses itself in different ways and in Indian philosophy you have one of these expressions. This then, is his basic project: to get at 'the mode of rationality', the underlying structures, of Indian thought.

> In the long run, the concern is: given the fact that philosophical thinking is a rational activity and that the Indian philosophers were as rational as any in the western tradition, shall we say that they all share and exemplify one common conception of rationality? Or, do they operate with a conception of rationality that is very different from their western counterparts?[8]

There is an interesting, if somewhat puzzling, employment of tenses here. Specifically, one wonders why the past tense is employed in speaking of Indian philosophers.

What, indeed is 'Indian Philosophy'?

> The concept 'Indian Philosophy' owes . . . its problematic character to the difficulty of ascertaining what is in general meant by 'Indian' and what is meant by it in our specific context.[9]

Geographical considerations or those of authorship are obviously inadequate. Again, to restrict the tradition to the texts would be 'unilluminating' for various reasons; it would be either naive or dogmatic to suppose that we have access to the texts without having to take recourse to the interpretations that have historically unfolded.

So what is Indian philosophy? Mohanty suggests that

> A more promising attempt [at definition] would be the following: we start by ostensively listing the core source material in the various *darśanas* and then extend the scope of 'Indian philosophy' to include any work which self-consciously takes up that core tradition, and perceives itself as continuing the discussion of the themes, issues, and problems formulated in, and arising out of, that tradition. . . .[10]

When Mohanty says 'Indian philosophy *was* a supremely rational and critical enterprise' (italics mine) he perhaps does not have the above conception of Indian philosophy in mind. This is the basic tension in his work: between his general project—the search for the general mode

of rationality of the Indian philosophers and his basic methodological stance: that no text is available except through interpretation from the reader's particular historical intellectual position. Purushottama Billimoria talks of 'the two quests which seem to pull in contrary directions'.

> Could it be that Prof. Mohanty has succumbed to the sway of this theory (about the inescapable historicity of a culture, its self-understanding and transmission) while, still, in other respects, looking for the essentially ahistorical. . . .[11]

Although he talks of the 'structure of Indian thought', Mohanty does not hold it to be radically different from western thought. He advances no intranslatability thesis. Nor does he plead that Indian thought must be assessed on its own terms, without being put through norms derived from western logical or epistemological theories. He explicitly rejects this, what he calls 'traditionalist', stance and deliberately applies distinctions and concepts that have been articulated in the western philosophical traditions while expounding Indian theories. This, he says, is inevitable given his 'intellectual situation'.

To repeat, Mohanty holds that Indian philosophy is one expression of a common mode of rationality. But what is the common mode of rationality and what is it for it to express itself in different ways? Mohanty says of the first that any conception of rationality 'must have at least the following components: a theory of logic or of valid inference, an account of what should count as evidence for or against conclusions, a conception of what it is to know something and a theory of action, specifically moral action'.[12]

The question is, how would one come by such a conception of rationality? It is undeniably a western legacy. (One wonders what concept in the Indian traditions comes close to that of rationality.) But the question about rationality now would be what would count as a theory of logic or valid inference and so on. As has been often pointed out, the concepts of logical validity (strictly speaking), form, etc. are not explicitly articulated in theories of *anumāna* while they are central to western logic. Mohanty however does not hold that a theory of valid inference is lacking in the *darśanas* but that *anumāna* provides it—only, presumably, it is a different expression of it. I do not mean to deny that Indian philosophy is rational but I find it difficult to see what is involved in asserting that it is rational. Elsewhere, Mohanty himself expresses a similar difficulty about the assertion that Indian philosophy is spiritual:

> I think the term 'spiritual' has long historical links with some concepts in the Judeo-Christian theology; it does not help to appreciate the deep feature of Indian thinking. For me the most serious problem is that I do not understand what such a characterization [of Indian philosophy as spiritual] means.[13]

To say the same thing of a characterization (albeit a defensive one) of Indian philosophy as rational would not, for Mohanty, be unobjectionable. Rationality is also a concept thrown up by Graeco-European traditions of theoretical enquiries. But, for Mohanty, rationality lies at the heart of any philosophical undertaking and so also at that of Indian *darśanas*/philosophy.

> While it is on the whole a correct methodological assumption that the human mind functions on the whole, at a basic level, in the same way, and also that the very idea of categorizing philosophical thinking according to its geographical and national origins jars with the basic rationality of philosophy, these beliefs, if pressed too far, may mislead by making us insensitive to the different ways in which that common mode of functioning expresses itself.[14]

So, the task is also one of vindicating the application of the word 'philosophy' to the *darśanas*. Philosophy is rational, ergo, if the *darśanas* are philosophy, they are rational.

If the claim is that Indian philosophy evolved through debate among rival schools and that in any text you care to read you find doctrines not dogmatically presented but argued for carefully against possible objections, then the crucial question would be what it is to argue for something. It is perhaps here that there is scope for different modes: perhaps in talking of the Indian mode of rationality (which is an expression of a common mode of rationality), there is the suggestion that doctrines are argued for, but in a different way. Now, there are different kinds of argument; the reductio-ad-absurdum is a different kind of argument from the modus ponens. Do we then have in Indian philosophy a kind of argument which is different from any found in western philosophy and yet is not very different? Mohanty is not maintaining any such thesis though he *is* concerned about the inclusion of *sruti*, or verbal testimony, in the list of *pramāṇas*.

Perhaps 'mode of rationality' has not to do with argument but with concepts and categories that are employed in answering philosophical questions and tackling philosophical issues. But this presupposes that philosophical issues/questions can be posed in some universal mode which Indian philosophy tackles with its mode of rationality and western philosophy with its mode. This is difficult to conceive. But, Mohanty does seem to be concerned with concepts and categories that Indian philosophy has articulated. Indeed, he hopes his work to have 'laid out the conception of theoretical rationality with which the Indian tradition thought'.[15] This becomes clear in his treatment of some central issues in the *darśanas*. A consideration of one of them might give one an actual feel of Mohanty's basic enterprise and how he has gone about carrying it out which an abstract statement of it will not.

II

What follows is an account of Mohanty's treatment of one of the issues in *śābdabodha* which he discusses at length under the title 'Language and Meaning'. He discusses three issues only one of which I shall be concerned with here. This is the issue regarding *padārtha* (word meaning) and *vākyārtha* (sentence meaning). Prof. Mohanty argues for the need of something like a sense-reference distinction which, it appears, was never explicitly articulated in the 'large and variegated discussions of the Indian philosophers on the issue arising in the theory of meaning'.

First, the issue of what is *padārtha*, translated as 'meaning of a word'. 'Meaning' however has connotations which are misleading: one tends to think of something like the Fregean sense. *Padārtha*, however, is a thing, an object which is denoted by a word (*pada*). Anything is a *padārtha* (in one sense) in so far as it is denoted by a *pada* and, indeed, anything is a *pada* (according to the *nyāya*) in so far as it denotes something. The question is, what sort of a thing is denoted by a word: is it a particular thing (*vyaktī*) or a universal (*jāti*) or a shape or configuration (*ākṛti*). The controversy hinges around this: denotation is conceived of as a relation between a word and an object (*padapadārthayorsaṁbandhaḥ*) by the Naiyāyikas or as an actual, real potency that words have (*padaśaktī*) by the Mīmāmsakas. If the denotation of a word is an individual thing then one would have to posit as many such relations or potencies as there are cow-individuals—past, present and future. The Mīmāmsakas therefore hold that the relation of denotation holds between a word and a universal. For example, the śakyārtha or denotatum of the word 'cow' is the universal cowness. This is evidently parsimonious, i.e. it has the virtue of *lāghava*—which, incidentally, is greatly prized in dārśanika debate, very often clinching an argument.

But then this view—*jātivāda*—runs into difficulties because when one hears 'Bring (the) cow and bind her' one comprehends that an individual cow has to be brought; the universal cow cannot possibly enter into vyavahāra—the business of everyday living. The Mīmāmsaka has his own devices to account for this which Mohanty does not mention. The Naiyāyika, avoiding the two extremes, holds that it is the *jātyākṛtiviśiṣṭa-vyaktī* which is the *śakyārtha* of a *pada*, i.e. it is an individual cow as qualified by the universal cowness and a particular configuration of parts (*ākṛtī*) that is denoted by the word 'cow'.

But the problem remains. As Mohanty puts it, 'It is noted that even this qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) entity is nonetheless an individual, only it is an individual as possessing or exemplifying a certain structure and a certain generic property. The almost nagging problem remains. Which such individual is meant by the word 'cow'?. . . This problem is almost insoluble in terms of the *Nyāya* as long as a Fregean distinction between sense and reference is not introduced.'[16] Given the above controversy between the *jātivādi* and the *vyaktivādi*, the following points emerge: it

is recognized that a word is related to many individuals of a particular type (i.e. by the relation that is relevant in the context of sābdabodha) and yet whatever the other relatum be, i.e. what the word is related to, is a thing—either a universal or a particular thing qualified in a certain way. Mohanty seems to think that both cannot be accommodated unless there is a 'sense-like' posit. He suggests that four other theories in the darśanas 'seem to be grappling with the Fregean distinction in one way or the other.'[17] These are the *sphoṭa* theory of Bhartrhari. The yogasūtra idea of *pratyaya* (cognitive state), the Buddhist theory of *apoha* and the Nyāya concept of *śakyatāvacchedakadharma* (the property which limits the designated, denoted entity as such).

Mohanty, rightly I think, holds that of the four, only the Nyaya concept of *śakyatāvacchedakadharma* approaches a Fregean-like notion of sense. *Prakārata* generalizes this notion to all cognitive states.

Take the word 'cow'. On the Nyaya view it denotes an individual cow qualified by cowness, etc. In other words, the cow is the denotatum or referent or the *śakya* and is said to have the property of being the referent, i.e. it (the cow) has the property of *śakyatā*. Obviously, anything at all which is referred to by any word will have the property of *śakyatā*, i.e. the property of being a referent. What can be said of the *śakyatā* that is in a cow in so far as it is referred to by the word 'cow' is that the *śakyatā* is limited by (*avacchinna*) cowness, i.e. *gotva*. The *śakyatā* is *gotvāvacchinna* or, in other words, *gotva* or cowness is the *avacchedaka* (delimiter) of the *śakyatā* that characterizes a cow in so far as it is being referred to by 'cow'. The *śakyatāvacchedakadharma* in the case of the word 'cow' is cowness.

> If the word 'cow' refers to cow individuals, the individual cow is the referent (*śakya*) only as qualified by the property cowness. In the *Nyāya* vocabulary, in this case, the property of being the referent (*śakyatā*) is limited (*avacchinna*) by the property cowness. In other words, cowness is the limiter of being the referent (*śakyatā-vacchedakadharma*) of 'cow'.[18]

This, according to Mohanty, captures one ingredient of the Fregean notion of Sinn, namely the notion of mode of presentation or reference. 'It answers the question precisely how, in what manner, as what, the individual is the referent of the word 'cow'.'[19]

This makes for the difference between cognitions generated by two sentences like 'Rama married Sita' and 'Raghava married Sita'. Though the *śakyārtha* or denotation or reference of 'Ram' and 'Raghava' is the same, yet because that *śakyārtha* is presented under different *sakyatā-vacchedakadharmas*, because the mode of reference is different, the cognitions generated are different. This is how the *śakyatāvacchedaka-dharma* comes close to the Fregean notion of sense as mode of reference, but one might acknowledge the limitations of the comparison.

As Dummett[20] points out, Frege linked the concept of sense with that of 'cognitive value'. His puzzle over 'The morning star is the evening star' is how this and sentences like this can express 'genuine cognitions', how they can be 'informative'. The issue of the sense of a proper name as Frege would have it, is controversial, but, following Dummett, one might say two names having the same referent have different senses if we have a different way of recognizing an object as the referent of each of the two names.[21] It is because of this difference that identity sentences can, on occasion, be informative and express genuine cognitions.

For the Nyaya, however, the concept of *śakyatāvacchedakadharma* is not connected with the notion of information. If an object is denoted by a word 'A' then the object is said to be presented under the *śakyatāvacchedakadharma* of A-tva. This does not make for cognitive value in the same way as does the sense of 'Aristotle' when it is, say, the rebellious student of Plato. But, perhaps the most significant point to be noted is that the feature of intersubstitutability salva veritate of the expressions in a sentence does not hold in all those cases where, according to Nyaya, the cognition generated by the sentence is that of there being one thing presented under two or more *śakyatāvacchedakadharmas.* For Frege, this was a crucial point. If two expressions refer to the same thing but through different modes of reference, the two expressions are intersubstitutable salva veritate (in extensional contexts). Though Frege and most western philosophers would not agree with this, according to the Nyāya, a sentence like '*nilo ghaṭaḥ*' generates a *śābdabodha* which amounts to there being one thing presented under two *śakyatāvacchedakadharmas* namely *nīlatva* and *ghaṭatva.* Mohanty does call this an identity sentence though, 'logically very different from Frege's "the Morning Star = the Evening Star"'.[22]

> A typical identity statement is one in which all the words are *samānādhikaraṇa,* i.e. have the same (nominative) case-ending.[23]

Quoting the commentary *Śrutaprakāśikā* on Rāmanuja's commentary on the *Brahmasūtra* I.i.1.

> Some (identity statements) connote different properties, but denote the same entity (*viśeṣaṇato bhinnārthaḥ viśeṣyatah ca ekārthaḥ*). '*nīloghaṭaḥ*' is given as an example of this kind.[24]

But the expressions '*nīla*' and '*ghaṭa*' are by no means intersubstitutable salva veritate.

A Naiyāyika would not even be impressed by Frege's problem of identity sentences as he poses it in his essay 'On Sense and Nominatum'. The problem there was how one could account for the cognitive significance of sentences of the form 'a=b' which sentences of the form 'a = a' do not possess. For the Naiyāyika like Gadādhara, a sentence like '*ghaṭo ghaṭaḥ*' (A pot is a pot) generates no *śābdabodha.* This really calls

for serious reflection—'A pot is a pot', it is said, does not produce *śābdabodha,* but it is usually not said to be meaningless. The problem of translation looms large here.

What emerges from the above exercise—a search for 'sense' in the Indian theories—is that while the distinction between sense and reference was never explicitly made, nor the need for a 'sense-like posit' actually recognized, there is one concept in the darśanas—that of *śakyatāvacchedakadharma*—which approaches the Fregean notion of sense. Indeed, it captures one element of this notion, which is the mode of presentation or mode of reference. But this must be granted too: even if the darśanas do have a concept approaching 'Sinn', this concept does not have the same role in the theories of *śābdabodha* as Sinn; it does not occur as an answer to the issue which bothered Frege enough to lead him to posit Sinn. One then wonders about the significance of the parallel drawn between Sinn and *śakyatāvacchedakadharma*—even about how it answers Mohanty's general concern about the mode of rationality of the Indian philosophers.

At the level of theory of sentence-meaning (*vākyartha*) too, Mohanty points out, '. . . neither the Nyāya, nor the Mīmāmsā philosophers had anything like the Fregean concept of sense as contradistinguished from reference.'[25] The point Mohanty wants to make is: 'Neither the Mīmāmsā nor the Nyāya, is concerned, in the strict sense, with what one can call "understanding the meaning of an expression". One is rather concerned with how hearing a sentence, under appropriate conditions. . . , serves as a means of acquiring valid knowledge, i.e. as a *pramāṇa.*'[26]

In his discussion of the theory of *śābdabodha* he argues forcefully for the need of recognizing 'the distinction between *śābdabodha* as linguistic knowing and *śābdabodha,* if one insists on using the same term, as linguistic knowing.'[27] The Indian philosophers were doubtless talking of a mode of knowing what is the case (linguistic knowing) and not of understanding the meaning of a sentence (linguistic understanding). Thus, many Nyāya authors hold that if certain conditions do not obtain even a well-formed sentence like 'It is raining' does not generate *śābdabodha.* One such condition would be its being uttered by an *āpta* or a reliable person. If a habitual joker or liar, an unreliable person, were to utter 'It is raining', there will be no *śābdabodha.* Another such condition is *yogyatājñāna* so that, if this does not obtain, no *śābdabodha* will be generated. '*Yogyatā*' is usually translated as semantic fittingness. A sentence like '*vahninā siñcati*' or 'Idleness is green' produces no *śābdabodha* since the sentence lacks *yogyatā* or semantic fittingness. There is no fittingness (compatibility) between fire and sprinkling or between idleness and green. But this is only the requirement that the sentence be free of category mistakes and the like which in itself will not prevent *śābdabodha* from occurring in the case of a sentence like 'There is a jar on this floor' when it is known that there is no jar on the floor; but

yogyatājñāna is not only the knowledge of the semantic fittingness but something more which has the above consequence. There is no unanimity among the darsanikas on what this extra element is but the two ideas which Mohanty, taking off from a paper by Dr Arindam Chakravarty, considers are: in the case of a sentence 'a is F' it has *yogyatā* if and only if a is F (*ekapadārthe aparapadārthavattvam yogyatā*). Now, this is deeply unsatisfactory for, this makes *yogyatā* 'collapse into truth' and also, there would be no difference between *yogyatājñāna* and the *śābdabodha* itself. The other idea which is the *navīnamata* (the view of the later thinkers) is that *yogyatājñāna* in 'a is F' is the absence of certainty that it is not the case that a is F (*bādhaniścayābhāvo yogyatā*) So, what is a causal condition in the generation of *śābdabodha* in the case of 'a is F', is not the knowledge that a is F but the absence of knowledge that it is not the case that a is F. Mohanty's argument is, suppose it to be the case that there is *yogyatājñāna* in the second sense and 'a is F' generates *śābdabodha*, other conditions obtaining. If then it turns out that, in fact, a is not F, what is the status of the *śābdabodha*? Since ex hypothesi, no knowledge obtains, it is some kind of understanding or grasping the meaning of the sentence for which however there is no provision.

One could respond in defence of the theory as follows: the account of *śābdabodha* is clearly a causal account seeking to explain how we sometimes come by knowledge on hearing sentences uttered. Surely, if someone we knew to be a joker uttered something say, 'It is raining' we don't know that it is raining on that basis. Again, if one knew that it is not raining (by perception, for instance) one does not come by the knowledge that it is raining if someone utters 'It is raining'. Certainly, one could be mistaken both about the *āptatva* of the speaker and the *yogyatā*. *Yogyatābhrama* or a mistaken apprehension of *yogyatā* could well occur and the relevant *śābdabodha* will be generated too—only it will be *apramā* (invalid). What is denied is that if it is known that the speaker is not an *āpta* or that there isn't *yogyatā* between the things denoted by the words in the uttered sentence, *śābdabodha* is not generated, i.e. one does not know that it is raining when the sentence is 'It is raining'.

Mohanty does consider such a position which argues that 'It is counter-intuitive to say that we do not understand the meaning of a false sentence. But the view is not counter-intuitive if by *śābdabodha* is meant linguistic knowledge: we surely cannot be said to know when the sentence heard is false'.[28] 'It is raining', when it is known that it is not raining, does not generate *śābdabodha*. It may generate a mental state consisting of the memories of the referents of the components words, but not a 'relational qualificative cognition'.

Mohanty criticizes such a view which 'amounts to ruling out the possibility of understanding false sentences by stipulating by fiat, as it were, that truth is a condition of sentence-understanding'.[29] The

theory, however, does not seem to stipulate any such thing; it holds not that truth is a condition of sentence-understanding but that absence of belief that the sentence is false is a condition of the sentence generating *śābdabodha*, i.e. knowledge of something. But Mohanty's argument is that it won't do to hold that 'when one believes a sentence (in fact false) to be true (and regards the speaker to be competent, etc.) . . . what occurs is a simple recollection of meanings of component expressions but no integrated sentence meaning.'[30] This is perhaps not really maintained. When one believes a sentence actually false to be true, when, for instance, there is *yogyatā-bhrama*, there is *śābdabodha*: it is, of course, *apramā*. This is the point behind holding that *yogyatājñāna*, and not *yogyatā* itself, is a causal factor in *śābdabodha*. Even when *yogyatā* does not actually obtain, if there is *yogyatājñāna* (*yogyatābhrama* here) there is *śābdabodha* (if the other conditions obtain). *Śābdabodha* is obstructed when there is no *yogyatājñāna*, and not always when there is no *yogyatā*. Mohanty's argument is: to say that 'It is raining' does not generate *śābdabodha* when it is not raining and 'to base this claim on the fact that there is no integrated "featured individual" of the sort is precisely to beg the issue about what one grasps in understanding'.[31]

Mohanty's argument proceeds on the assumption that, according to the classical theories of *śābdabodha*, false sentences are co-extensive with sentences which do not generate *śābdabodha*. His assumption is that according to the classical theories, '. . . in cases of putative understandings of false sentences what occurs is simple recollection of meanings of the components expressions but no integrated sentence meaning. . . .'.[32] However the actual classical position seems to be otherwise: a sentence which is false could, on *yogatābhrama* occurring for example, generate *śābdabodha*. It would, indeed, be problematic to hold that false sentences do not generate *śābdabodha* and Mohanty's argument in the context of false sentences believed to be true would hold. But the claim is not that false sentences do not ever generate *śābdabodha* but that if there is a *pratibandhakajñāna* or obstructing cognition that it is not raining, the sentence 'It is raining' does not generate *śābdabodha*. In such a case, i.e. when it is not raining, 'It is raining', a false sentence, might well produce *śābdabodha* if one is in error (about the *āptatva* of the speaker or about the *yogyatā*). But what happens here is that there is *niścayātmakajñāna*, though it is not *pramā*, that it is raining. There isn't, on this account, a neutral grasping of the proposition or thought expressed. It is still an account of 'linguistic knowing' and not of 'linguistic understanding'.

Mohanty's persistent argument is that one cannot do without the notion of sense or meaning as opposed to reference: something which is grasped in understanding.

> One may not need to go so far as to admit an entirely different realm of entities like the Fregean Sinne. But one needs more than

> the mere reference. . . . The mere mode of presentation won't do. We want something that is grasped in *śābdabodha*.[33]

As is well known, Frege introduces sense as the mode of reference or manner of presentation. In 'The morning star is the evening star' the two signs have the same reference (the planet Venus) but their modes of reference (senses) are different. After this introduction of sense, Frege makes a (not unproblematic) move to the position that there are expressions which have sense, like 'the heavenly body farthest from the earth', but probably lack reference. If sense is the mode of presentation of the object which is the reference surely it is problematic to speak of sense when there is no reference. Evidently—and this seems to be Mohanty's view too—if one must employ the sense-reference distinction to account for expressions which fail of reference, one needs to think of sense as more than the mere mode of reference. But Mohanty does not want—and rightly—sense as inhabiting a third realm of reality—of thoughts subsisting timelessly as it were. He seems to think that an intermediate theory of sense as more than mode of reference but without quite admitting quaint entities subsisting in themselves is possible. His claim is that the Nyāya idea of *viṣayatā* (objecthood) is 'able to take care of both the mode of presentation and that what is grasped in understanding'.

Anything, in so far as it is the object of any cognition, i.e. is the *viṣaya* of a *jñāna*, has *viṣayatā* or is characterized by the property of being the object of a cognition. And yet what sort of property or dharma is this *viṣayatā* or objecthood? If the object known is a complex structure, e.g. a white horse, then the objecthood or *viṣayatā* divides into several specific modes: a qualificandness (*viśeṣyatā*) attaching to the qualificand here, the horse, a qualifierness (*prakāratā*) attaching to the qualifier here, white. This property *aśvaniṣṭhaviśeṣyatā*, i.e. qualificandness attaching to the horse is a peculiar entity. Mohanty says, it is not a real property of the horse as the colour of the horse is nor is it a real property of the cognitive state as the temporal or ecological locations are. I am not sure what he means by 'real property'—it seems to me that in so far as it has or is given an ontological status—as it is—it is real enough.

To return to the distinction between linguistic understanding and linguistic knowing, i.e. between grasping the meaning of a sentence and knowing something, some complex entity, on hearing a sentence, Mohanty says that in linguistic understanding which does not amount to knowing, what is grasped would be a structure which would be a concatenation of such intentional meaning-contents.

Such intentional meaning contents (like *aśvaniṣṭhaviśeṣyatā*, etc.) are of the cognition in one sense of 'of' and of the object in another sense of 'of'. The *viśeṣyatā* in this case attaches both to the horse (the object) and to the cognition. 'One then begins to see how by using this concept of objecthood (along with its specific modalities), the Indian epistemologists succeed in talking about a cognitive state and yet in terms of the objects that are being known. We have then a sort of quasi-Sinn, a minimal entity which yet is the mode of presentation'.[34]

Yet, a sentence like 'There is a jar on this floor'—when, in fact, there is none and this is known by the hearer—does not, on the classical account, generate *śābdabodha*. In an 'intuitively clear sense', Mohanty says, we do understand this sentence as much as we do the sentence 'There is no jar on this floor'. Surely the Naiyāyika will share this intuition and yet on his theory only the second generates *śābdabodha*. Might we accuse his theory of inadequacy? Perhaps. But perhaps not. Surely this evaluation is possible only in the context of our conception of what the Naiyāyika is trying to provide a theory of. In other words, we must probe into the 'intentional depths' of this theoretical enterprise. If the project of arriving at the intention behind the theoretical enterprise is an impossible one—since one inevitably interprets from one's own historical, intellectual situation—it is equally true that there is such a thing as 'over-interpretation' as Umberto Eco[35] calls it. There is not just one parameter within which interpretation occurs—that of the reader's situation, his or her horizons; there is also that of the text itself—what interpretation it will permit and what it will not. One indication that we might be over-interpreting is arriving at a manifestly absurd implication of the particular reading.

And it is indeed absurd that the Nyāya theory should deny that sentences believed to be false are understood at all. What it does say is that they do not generate*śābdabodha*. This is conceived of as a causal process: certain conditions obtaining, these cause a particular cognition, the *śābdabodha*. If any of them don't obtain there is no effect generated. So if *yogyatājñāna*, a causal factor in *śābdabodha*, which is *bādhaniścayābhāvajñāna* does not obtain, *śābdabodha* is not generated. But Mohanty's critique is targeted precisely at this, the inclusion of *yogyatājñāna* as a causal factor for *śābdabodha*. Had the Nyāya concern been with 'meaning' as understood in contemporary western philosophy—meaning as that for example, which is preserved in translating a sentence in one language into a sentence in another—then indeed, the inclusion of *yogyatājñāna* is puzzling and so also is that of the *āpta*. The question, as Mohanty repeatedly points out, is how, on hearing a sentence, one is led to knowledge about a relational complex of things in the world. And if this is indeed the question then it is not so puzzling.

To know is, in a crucial sense, to base one's activities on that cognition—to be *pravṛtta* (to be actively interested in something) or *nivṛtta* (to be repulsed from something) or even *udāsīna* (to be indifferent). So if a habitual joker told me that it is raining outside, I wouldn't, for example take an umbrella with me just on that count. I don't, on the basis of his utterance, know that it is raining outside. If,

however, I believe that the person uttering a sentence is an *āpta*, a reliable person, I know that it is raining outside. I know it as well as I do when I actually perceive rain or perhaps infer it on the basis of sound evidence. There is possibility of being mistaken in any of the cases.

The Indian philosophers then developed a theory of 'linguistic knowing' and not of 'linguistic understanding'. But Mohanty is unhappy with this for reasons not entirely clear. It might be argued that the former presupposes the latter, that a theory of linguistic knowing cannot be developed bypassing a theory of linguistic understanding. This, however, has to be demonstrated and, indeed, the primacy may well belong to the theory of linguistic knowing on the basis of which a theory of linguistic understanding, a theory of meaning, could be propounded.

But one argument which Mohanty puts forth persuasively is that without a theory of linguistic understanding, the thesis of *śabdapramāṇa* itself cannot be defended. This is the thesis that the knowledge one attains on hearing a sentence under certain conditions is such that it cannot be accounted for under the other *pramāṇas*—perception, inference, etc. Mohanty's argument is that for such a thesis one needs the conception of *de dicto* knowledge. But given the strictly referential theory of the dārśanikas and the absence of anything akin to 'thoughts' or 'propositions' which can be grasped by the listener there is only *de re* knowledge for them. In other words, because the ascription of a cognition to any one involves the thing (*res*) itself about which the cognition is (this is because of a strictly referential theory of meaning), a sentence uttered cannot be under any conditions an independent source of knowledge. It will be parasitical on perception or inference. 'Upon hearing an *āpta* saying "A horse is running", I am supposed to know a *res*, a thing being in a state of action, but which thing?'[36] This could be given by perception, etc. but that means *śabda* is not an independent *pramāṇa*. This throws up interesting philosophical questions—whether linguistic utterances under certain conditions, generate knowledge in the listener as do perception, inference, etc., the relation between this thesis and theory of meaning. The question whether one need a strong Fregean-like notion of sense to be able to hold that *śabda* is a *pramāṇa* is an exciting one.

III

Mohanty's larger project is to articulate the 'conception of theoretical rationality of Indian thought', its 'mode of rationality' and it is legitimate to view it as fulfilled, in part, by the above exercise, a critique of theories of *śābdabodha*. The question now is: how has this exercise, following which is no doubt exciting, thrown light on the 'theoretical rationality' of the darśanas? It *is* legitimate to expect his project to be, in part, fulfilled by this exercise for, this is precisely how, Mohanty says, he

intends to go about his project.[37] Equally legitimate is the question: how has the exercise demonstrated that in grappling with issues, and perhaps, even in general, Indian theoreticians exhibit a mode of rationality similar to, or different from, that of mainstream western philosophy.

Indeed, what are the issues which Indians have tackled with their mode of rationality and Europeans with theirs? The Davidsonian paradox cannot be ignored. Are there issues which can be posed without presupposing a particular 'mode of rationality' or a particular 'conceptual scheme' which, I think, for Mohanty is the same thing, and which issues have been tackled by the Indian mode of rationality and the western mode? Mohanty would not, I believe, hold this impossible thesis. The issues are as they face a modern Indian philosopher. Mohanty's treatment of the issues in *śābdabodha* might seem problematic precisely in this respect, that he approaches them as concerned with the issue of meaning. While this is perhaps an obvious approach, there are too many features of these theories which are puzzling given it. But then, how does one 'approach' Indian philosophical theories? Indeed, it would be churlish to insist that in treating Indian philosophy the modern point of view be kept out and Mohanty, in no uncertain terms, rejects such a stance. To take such a cloistered stance would be to deny the 'intellectual situation' which Mohanty and Indian philosophers today find themselves in.

But this then renders talk of 'the Indian mode of rationality' problematic. What Davidson says of Kuhn, that he (Kuhn) is 'brilliant at saying what things were like before the revolution, using—what else—our post-revolutionary idiom'[38] can be said of Mohanty: he is brilliant at talking of how things are in Indian philosophy, using—what else—the modern (western) philosophical idiom.

This, perhaps, is unavoidable. But one *can* avoid talk of 'the Indian mode of rationality' and 'the western mode . . .' No doubt, one has the feeling that the Indian philosophers went about their business in a different way, that the world of Indian philosophy is different from that of western philosophy. Mohanty, actually has set for himself the agonizing task of vindicating the application of 'philosophy' to what is called 'Indian philosophy', and it is partly towards this end that he wants to establish that Indian philosophy (so called) is rational, like all philosophy is, though it exemplifies a particular mode of rationality. But like so much else, it is perhaps best to hope this to be shown. It is perilous to say it, perhaps impossible to sensibly do so.

On other grounds one could plead against such statements—and projects—which willy-nilly reinforce western hegemony. Statements like '. . . Indian philosophers were as rational as any in the western tradition . . .' are offensive if only because they don't question the assumption that the West sets the standards. One might say that projects such as what Mohanty has set for himself belong to the tradition of orientalism,

as Edward Said[39] would have it. Said has laid bare the power structure that 'Orientalist Studies' are—they are nothing less than organs of imperialism. He exposes this form of discourse for what it is, i.e. a power structure in its subtler and more subversive forms. Making 'the Orient' the subject of its study has also been an act of subjugating it. Said's arguments against orientalism are anti-essentialist, his main concern being to expose the perversity of talking of the 'oriental', the 'Arab mind' or the 'Indian mind'. He argues powerfully that the creation of these essences must be seen as attempts to petrify the Orient into some *thing* which can be got hold of and subjected to 'understanding' so as to mark the West off as different from, and almost invariably, better than the 'Orient'. To argue that the East (Indian philosophy) is not worse, as Mohanty does, no less belongs to this tradition in as much as it works within the same premises. Orientalism continues in various forms, such as an Indian philosopher trying to establish that Indian philosophers were 'as rational' as their western counterparts. Why is a need felt to describe the 'rationality' of the Indian philosophies, to assert that Indian philosophy is rational? Such a general project would not be conceived of with regard to western philosophy, because the West sets the paradigm. We look in our traditions for what is to be found in the West, like the sense-reference distinction. But why should we even look for such a distinction? It is not possible to view Mohanty's project as merely an academic enquiry into rationality and modes of rationality. He might, for instance, be seen as merely refuting at length actual charges to the contrary—that Indian philosophy is not rational, is not philosophy, etc. But Mohanty's project is not so innocent—the political realities are too loud to be ignored. The 'intellectual situation' of the contemporary Indian of which Mohanty speaks is not a given, but something which has constantly to be created in response to these.

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Life, Culture and Value: Reflections on Wittgenstein's *Culture and Value*

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The aim of this paper is to develop and respond to the culture critique that Wittgenstein has presented in his *Culture and Value*.[1] The theme of the culture critique is the critical understanding of the foundations of the scientific culture that has dominated the history of mankind for the last so many centuries. Wittgenstein has come to the conclusion that the scientific culture fails to locate and sustain the human values that pertain to the human spirit and so must be overcome and transcended by what may be called the culture of the spirit. My effort here is to argue that Wittgenstein has a point in his defence of the values of human life and spirit against the onslaught of science and technology. This defence needs a framework in which the values have a distinctly transcendental character.[2]

THE CULTURE OF PROGRESS AND THE CULTURE OF LIBERATION

There are two types of cultural perspective that Wittgenstein's culture critique admits, namely, the culture of material development and the culture of spiritual life. The first may be called the culture of progress and the second the culture of liberation. The culture of progress is the scientific culture that aims at the material development and the subsequent enrichment of the sensate life of man. The sensate culture[3] is of course not the hallmark of the culture of progress but it is its necessary by-product. That is why the development in material resources has the necessary result that more and more such resources are generated and thus a new mentality of scarcity is created. Wittgenstein goes deeper in probing the foundations of the culture of progress and he locates them in the very idea of progress rather than in the sensateness of its cultural by-products.

Wittgenstein delineates the philosophy of the culture of progress in the following passage:

> Our civilization is characterized by the word 'progress'. Progress is its form rather than making progress being one of its features. Typically it constructs. It is occupied with building more and more complicated structures.[4]

The hallmark of this culture is thus the idea of progress that enjoins a constant search for new structures of all kinds, intellectual and otherwise. This is the spirit of modern science itself. Science is an eternal quest for the understanding of the secrets of Nature. This requires building new structures of our scientific explanation of the world. This 'spirit expresses itself in an onward movement, in building ever larger and more complicated structures'.[5] Herein lies the speciality of this model of culture: it accumulates more and more complex structures of the plan and patterns of life and the world. There is therefore progressive unfoldment of the new visions of life in the new settings of the scientific culture. For it there is no resting place in its onward movement towards the future. The future promises even better life in a better world.[6]

In contrast to the idea of progress in the scientific culture, there is what may be called the idea of clarity and perspicuity in the culture of liberation. The spirit of the culture of liberation lies in 'striving after clarity and perspicuity in no matter what structure'.[7] This typically brings in the idea of seeking liberation from the web of intellectual structures that are imposed on our understanding. It seeks freedom from the world-pictures that captivate the human mind. Here the idea of liberation stands for clarity of understanding and the consequent sense of standing above the scientific culture. The latter sense is the sense of transcending the scientific *weltanschauung* and its attendant value-system. Scientific civilization creates its own value-system in the ideas of progress and progressive acquisition of the material resources. This model of progress thus makes man more and more inclined towards the gross products of our civilization[8] and contributes towards the impoverishment of the human spirit, especially towards 'separating man from his origins, from what is lofty and eternal'.[9]

Thus the two cultures of progress and liberation stand in sharp contrast to each other. While the one stands for the spirit of conquest, the other stands for withdrawal from the race for adventures. One stands for scientific knowledge and the other for spiritual wisdom. Scientific culture ensures outward-looking life of action while the spiritual culture recommends the life of quiet contemplation. Besides, 'the first tries to grasp the world by its periphery—in its variety; the second at its centre—in its essence'.[10] Thus there arises a basic conflict in the very approach to the world and its meaning. In scientific culture the values of life lie in the intellectual excellence and its other modes of manifestation such as in art, religion and science. The age of reason represents the height of this culture as it leads to the progress of all aspects of human life in all possible spheres. This is the dominant culture of enlightenment in the West.[11] To this is opposed the culture of liberation and the freedom of the human spirit. The latter is not opposed to reason and science as such, but it opposes the rationalist and the scientific bias of the age. It stands against the spirit of scientization of

every aspect of life. It undermines the very strategy of reducing all enquiry into an enquiry of rationalization and justification. The contrast of the two cultures lies thus not so much in form but in content. Both are products of the age of enlightenment but, whereas one seeks explanation for everything, the other searches for the essence in contemplative description. The latter is the enquiry into meaning and the value of existence whereas the former still searches for the causes and the grounds in the scientific sense. As Wittgenstein has made it clear, the search for meaning is more fundamental than the search for the truth of causal and rational explanations. The latter misses the meaning for the facts and thus makes value a fugitive category in the scientific scheme of things.

CULTURE AND VALUE: LIMITS OF SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION

The culture of liberation is the culture of value-seeking and of self-realization. For it value-seeking and self-realization connote the same since the supreme value lies in understanding the value of life. Wittgenstein is of the view that the value of life is something that is manifested in culture but is not amenable to causal and anthropological explanation. This is where the protagonist of the culture of liberation fights the possible explanations offered by the theorist of scientific culture. Wittgenstein and Frazer stand opposed to each other on this issue. Frazer is the typical protagonist of scientific culture who offers scientific explanation of the primitive savages and their culture.[12] He finds that the primitive tribes engage in various religious and semi-religious practices which reveal their lack of scientific understanding of the world. Their religion and magical practices are signs of their not having any scientific view of the universe. The worship of the spirits and other magical forces shows that they have a very poor understanding of the forces of nature.

Frazer condemns savage culture into non-science or primitive science and thus typifies the savage mind as irrational and non-scientific. This reflects the prejudice and the dogma of the so-called scientific culture. Wittgenstein resents the overbearing attitude of the scientific-minded anthropologist who rejects, as the cases of stupidity, the primitive man's worship of nature and other religious world-views. Wittgenstein writes;

> The very idea of wanting to explain a practice—for example, the killing of the priest-king—seems wrong to me. All that Frazer does is to make them plausible to people who think as he does. It is very remarkable that in the final analysis all these practices are presented as, so to speak, pieces of stupidity.
>
> But it will never be plausible to say that mankind does all that out of stupidity.[13]

Thus there is a protest against the so-called scientization of human

culture. There may be other forms of protest but Wittgenstein's is the strongest as it shows the inadequacy of the scientific method of understanding of the primitive cultures. This method fails to capture the value or the meaning of the cultural practices of the primitive man. The primitive man has a value-system that underlies his cultural practices. That represents his conception of self, its fulfilment and, above all, his conception of divinity that governs the universe. The anthropologist fails to see the inner meaning of the primitive practices as he adopts an external point of view and searches for the possible causes of the cultural phenomena.[14]

Wittgenstein makes an effort to understand the culture of the primitive people by an approach that can hardly be called historical and anthropological. It is not that he rejects historical analysis altogether, nor is it the fact that he has no use of the science of the possible causes of a phenomenon.[15] What he is after is the deeper meaning or the significance of the phenomenon that is revealed in the total life of the community. It is the 'inner nature' of the practice, e.g. the Beltane Fire Festival that comes to the view once we overcome the historical origin of the practice[16]. The historical origin question has only a limited significance as it pertains to the question of relating it to the past. But the meaning of the practice lies in the present practice itself. The present practice itself presents a connected whole of phenomena that constitute the form of life of the tribe or the group. It is only in the form of life that we have 'perpicuous representation' of the inner connections of meaning of life and actions of man.

Now the question arises, has Wittgenstein's method of understanding of culture ruled out the possibility of a scientific understanding of culture and value? Wittgenstein, in fact, has not denied the possibility of a scientific study of culture. He has only shown that there are serious limitations to the scientific way of understanding culture. First of all, the scientific method of representing culture confines itself to the accumulation of facts and their causes and so misses the values that lie outside the facts. Secondly, the fact-value distinction remains fundamental in our understanding of culture. Facts are what are given in the world, and they constitute the natural world. However, according to Wittgenstein, 'if there is any value that does have value it must lie outside the whole sphere of what happens and is the case. For 'all that happens and is the case is accidental'.[17] It is no doubt true that values are not the accidental entities or the properties of human actions. They, in fact, constitute the meaning or the significance of the actions and so must be the necessary features of the latter. Thus, values are the basic ingredients of the human actions. These ingredients are missed in a purely external point of view that presents only the facts. Lastly, for Wittgenstein, the problems of life and value are such that they are unsolved even when all problems relating to the facts of life are solved.[18]

That is to say, the problems of life and value are not scientific problems at all. They could be called transcendental problems.

The protagonist of the scientific method may protest that Wittgenstein has taken a very narrow view of the method of science and therefore has failed to take note of the fact that in a scientific understanding the values or the meaning of life could be preserved and sustained. This is due to the fact that science itself is not antagonistic to the values and that both facts and values can co-exist in the same frame of understanding. For example, it could be argued that facts are already impregnated with values and that values themselves reside in the facts themselves.[19] Thus the fact-value dichotomy is not as sharp as it is shown by Wittgenstein. Besides, it may be said, the questions of life remain partly factual and so scientific, and there is no reason to believe that they are transcendental in character. But we can see that Wittgenstein's arguments are not easily refutable because there is reason to believe that there is a *prima facie* distinction between what is taken as a value and what is merely a fact. In the body of a culture there are values which are not mere facts to be causally explained and fitted into a scheme of scientific explanation. So it is necessary to bifurcate the pure facts of culture and their underlying meaning or value. This bifurcation is, of course, only methodological and not substantial since values and facts need not belong to entirely different worlds in the Platonic sense. Both pertain to human actions and therefore co-exist without being identical. This leads Wittgenstein to maintain that there is no naturalistic method available to reduce all facts of life into those which can be explained by science only. The values of life and culture need a transcendental treatment as far as their ontic status is concerned. Wittgenstein writes:

> The problems of life are insoluble on the surface and can only be solved in depth. They are insoluble on the surface dimension.[20]

and further,

> One keeps forgetting to go right down to the foundations. One does not put the question marks deep enough.[21]

Thus a depth-level understanding is warranted for the values whether they concern moral goodness or the aesthetic properties of things. Values remain basic to the understanding of man and the world.

CULTURE AND THE ETERNAL VALUES: THE TRANSCENDENTAL ARGUMENT

It is commonplace in a philosophy of culture to postulate cultural ideals or values that provide the foundation for culture. Since there are different cultures in different periods of the history of mankind, it is but natural to talk about different value-systems that underlie the different

cultures. Nonetheless, we can still talk, at least philosophically, about culture in the general universal sense.[22] What we can mean by a universal culture is not that there is empirically such a culture but that there is a transcendental sense in which we can postulate a culture of mankind that represents the value-consciousness in general. This has been the contention of philosophers like those who do not find much meaning in the idea that there are only cultures and not culture in the singular sense.[23] Be it as it may, there is no doubt that there is a definite philosophical sense in which we can talk about culture in the universal sense. It is only in that sense that we can talk about the values that have a universal appeal.

The question of eternal values arises in this context as it is the imperative for each culture to talk about the value or values that transcend space and time. In this mode of talk, the emphasis is on the values that do not change with time and other historical factors. For example, the values of truth, goodness and beauty have a non-temporal and non-historical sense about them. Every culture has a conception of these values and has tried to reflect it in its art, literature and philosophy. Thus, the appeal of eternal values is the strongest in all sustainable cultures of the world.

In the present debate about the non-scientific and transcendental nature of values, it is worth seeing if Wittgenstein could account for the eternal character of the values underlying culture. In fact, Wittgenstein has raised this question about the timelessness of values in the context of defining culture as a series of actions and practices. For the very possibility of culture being a form or forms of life, it is necessary that there be underlying norms or principles that guide these actions. These norms are the values or the ideal objects that guide human life. If these norms themselves are contingent, arbitrary or subject to manipulation, then the life of value-pursuit is at stake. This realization has led Wittgenstein to say that 'the disappearance of culture does not signify the disappearance of human values, but simply of certain means of expressing this value.'[24] Again about the culture-changes he remarks that, 'the earlier culture will become a heap of rubbles and finally a heap of ashes, but spirits will hover over the ashes'.[25] These remarks show that, for Wittgenstein, the values as such do not change with culture and, if they change, there will be identity crisis for the culture itself.

The idea of culture-change is a significant one. It denotes a change in the modes and manners of life and also in the nature of the cultural activities themselves. This may necessitate a redefinition of culture as it involves a setting of new goals for the cultural community. But does this imply a radical value-change? That certain values disappear along with a particular mode of culture is beyond doubt. But these values that disappear are those that are highly contingent and are specific to particular cultural epochs. So there must be more sustainable values that can

endure through time and the cultural changes. These values, if there are any, can be called the eternal values. They carry the burden of the identity of a culture and they make it possible that two cultures meet and communicate with each other. In the absence of eternal values, no two cultures have anything to share and so there will be cultural incommensurability on a massive scale. Besides, at a more fundamental level, the very idea of a culture will be at stake. Culture signifies a set of ideals and aspirations underlying a mass of social activities. This will not make sense if there are no values that organize these activities into a coherent culture. This can be called the transcendental argument for the possibility of the non-changing and eternal values. This is how Wittgenstein expresses the argument:

> What is eternal and important is often hidden from man by an impenetrable veil. He knows: there is something under there but he cannot see it. The veil reflects the daylight.[26]

The 'eternal' is impenetrable but not unknowable, and it is the foundation or the bedrock of life and culture.

The above argument signifies a mode of reasoning in which it is already presupposed that cultures as forms of life are possible and from this it is transcendentally deduced that there must be underlying values to make the cultures possible. Here it may be objected that cultures are not different from the values and therefore it cannot be held that values are the ground of culture. The naturalist philosopher may say that values are as much natural as culture itself and so there is no gap between culture and value.[27] So when culture changes the value also changes and there is nothing that remains as the eternal bedrock of culture. The so-called invariant values are, rather, myths created by the value-realists. John Mackie has recently argued that it is an error[28] to believe that there are objective values in the world since values are not a part of the fabric of the world. Mackie's argument is that the so-called value-entities in the Platonic sense are non-existent in the world and so must be due to the realist's creative imagination. This argument appeals to the queerness of the objective values for establishing their subjective existence.[29] Naturalism in any form does undermine the so-called ontic reality of values because it cannot understand how there could be values which are independent of the natural facts. So naturalism shows that values are supervenient over the natural facts and so must be dependent upon the world itself. This argument does fail to tell how we get at the value-idea itself. That is, it cannot disclose the source of value itself since it has the natural facts as constituting the reality of the world. From the naturalistic point of view, the values are at best a species of the natural facts and so can be accorded a relative existence in the world. But, as Wittgenstein like any other value-objectivist sees it, the argument of the naturalist is inconclusive as it leaves the source of values unexplained. If

the values themselves are natural facts and so subject to interpretation, they definitely lose their significance as values as such. The values disappear from the realm of existence and what we are left with are the different value-reactions there being no value-object corresponding to them.

The transcendental argument is the most acceptable way of recognizing the values as real and objective without pushing them into the realm of the Platonic Forms. That is, there is a way out of the realist's dilemma by telling that values are real as the bedrock of culture and life, and that they must be embedded in the cultural practices themselves. Values constitute the meaning of life and culture and therefore are at the centre of cultural life. This argument does not deny the role of the subject in the conception of the value-world. The valuing subject is the centre of the value-world as it is in the subject that we trace out the very idea of value. But that does not deny that values are objective and are part of the inter-subjectively available culture of mankind. The will or the valuing subject, as Wittgenstein says, is the 'subject of the ethical attributes'.[30]

Thus the transcendental argument establishes that values are real and objective and are related to the valuing consciousness that takes shape in the form of culture. Culture manifests the value-consciousness in diverse forms of activities.

LIBERATION AS A VALUE: THE POSSIBILITY OF TRANSCENDENCE

As already indicated, values are themselves diverse in form and need a multifaceted cultural space. Yet there is a dominant value in each culture. The dominant value determines the rest of the values in the culture. For example, in a purely scientific culture, the dominant value is intellectual excellence that manifests in the form of science. Science, both as a form of knowledge and as a form of power, results in the conquest of nature. So science also represents the emancipation of man from nature. But, in this culture, the highest rational order of life does not lie only in the knowledge that follows from our interaction with the world, but also in the power to use nature for the purpose of the excellence of life. Science, in this sense, becomes the dominant concern of the civilization inspired by the ideal of reason.

The concern of the culture of liberation is, however, the transcendence of scientific knowledge itself. This is due to the fact that liberation itself demands going beyond the limits of scientific knowledge. Wittgenstein has been consistently advocating that science itself must be limited so that we can have better understanding of the world and ourselves. According to him, 'philosophy sets limits to the much disputed sphere of natural science'.[31] This is the theory of those who believe that science is not the only way to the truth of all existence. According to them, the nature of existence is a mystery and it cannot be explained by the scientific laws. Therefore, according to Wittgenstein, 'the whole modern conception of the world is founded on the illusion that the so-called laws of nature are the explanations of natural phenomena'.[32] Thus the idea of transcending scientific knowledge becomes imperative for the understanding of truth. By transcending science one is not supposed to transcend knowledge as such because there is the availability of knowledge of truth of a different kind. Science is only one of the ways of knowing the truth.

Now it may be asked, why is it that science itself is considered inadequate so far as the ultimate nature of truth is concerned? This is the debate over whether mathematics and science can really map the real structure of the universe. Husserl has raised the problem of crisis[33] in modern science because it has got alienated from the life-world in which all our categories are embedded. This led to the idea that the scientific truth necessarily abstracts from the life-world and so must be found inadequate in dealing with the real nature of life and the world. Heidegger's revolt against the scientific bias of our times follows from Husserl's theory that mathematical science is inadequate and that it does not reflect the real nature of man and his world.[34] Wittgenstein's argument against modern science has the same thrust, that is, it shows that science cannot solve the mystery of human existence and the existence of the world. Science, rather, demystifies the world and thereby takes away the wonder about its existence.[35]

Is this critique of modern science acceptable? The votaries of science may find it strange that there could be so strident a critique of science in Wittgenstein's philosophy since it is assumed that twentieth century analytic philosophy is a defence of science itself against classical metaphysics. But a careful reading of Wittgenstein shows just the opposite. Wittgenstein provides a critique of science rather than a blind defence. For him science and modernity stand for decadence in the true understanding of the existence of man and his world. The scientific *weltanschauung* is the product of a blind belief that science can explain everything. It is, of course, not the case that science cannot explain the large bulk of the empirical world, but from this it does not follow that science alone can reveal the truth. Wittgenstein is not against science as such, but he condemns the so-called scientism of our age.

The culture of liberation which Wittgenstein advocates is committed to the value of knowledge but it is the knowledge that follows from contemplation. It is the knowledge that assures that the world has an essence that can be understood in the grammar of language. The essence of the world is the essence of language itself[36] and so there is no need of a scientific explanation of the essence. Grammar is the internal mirror of the world and thus there is a true picture of the world available in the structure of the language. This inward turn towards grammar and language makes the scientific understanding rather redundant. Hence science is seen as an external means of knowledge of

truth. This way of treating science may look unattractive but that is how a contemplative account of truth looks at the whole matter.

Contemplation includes cognition and does not exclude action either. But it is predominantly concerned with clarity of thought rather than thought itself. Thoughts themselves are the structures of ideas that determine our scientific knowledge. The contemplative approach does not rule out the thought-structures but tries to go beyond in seeking the inner connexions amongst those structures. This search for perspicuity is the hallmark of the Wittgensteinian contemplative-descriptive approach to human knowledge. The thinker is projected as the man of emancipation who, silently but surely, understands the world without trying either to change or modify it.[37] The aim of contemplative thinking is to dissolve the tormenting problems rather than solving them, 'for the clarity we are aiming at is complete clarity. But this simply means that 'the philosophical problems should completely disappear'.[38] Thus complete clarity replaces the ideal of a constructive system of knowledge. Thinking leads to the demolition of the edifices of thinking. The result is intellectual emancipation.

Now the question is, how does Wittgenstein reconstruct the value-system in view of the new thrust towards liberation rather than reconstruction of knowledge? First of all, there is a new link between thought or rational understanding leading to emancipation and the life of culture in art and religion. Art and religion also aim at liberation of man from the tyranny of facts, contingencies and sufferings of the soul.[39] The goal of the total culture is to free man from the life of the natural world. Culture aims at transcendence of nature. The conflict between culture and nature is perennial since culture tries to go beyond the natural scheme of things. From the transcendental point of view, culture is itself an emancipatory force because it aims at the liberation of the soul from the slavery to life of the instincts, passions and natural desires. In a revealing passage Wittgenstein writes:

> How can man be happy at all, since he cannot ward off the misery of the world?
> Through the life of knowledge.
> The good conscience is the happiness that the life of knowledge preserves.
> The life of knowledge is the life that is happy in spite of the misery of the world.[40]

This tells in so many words that the life of transcendence is the life of liberation from the contingent world.

IN DEFENCE OF CULTURE: CONCLUDING REMARKS

The transcendental critique of culture is a defence of culture and not a denial of it. Culture is further deepened in the spiritual awakening that

results from the denial of the importance of time and progress as the two cultural categories. Wittgenstein has viewed time as the sign of bondage to the world since time stands for change, restlessness and contingent development. The sense of transcendence of time is forced on us as we find that there is a view of the world *sub speci aeterni* that captures the world as it were from the above and thus as a whole.[41] In this there is the transcendence of time. This is effected not by going beyond the world but by realizing that the world in time is not the end of everything. There is still the meaning of the world that lies outside the world.[42] Here, of course, it is hinted that the realization of the meaning of existence is independent of what happens in the world.

Culture therefore is possible as long as there is the meaning of existence to be realized. Culture is the process of this realization. As Cassirer puts it, 'human culture taken as a whole may be described as the process of man's progressive self-liberation'.[43] The fact of the matter is that culture as a body of norms and ideals takes man towards the goal of self-realization. This spiritual awakening remains the focal point of the cultural life. It is not that any culture is spiritual out and out. It includes science, art and religion in various stages and forms. But in all these stages the goal is the self-realization.[44] Wittgenstein admits the potentiality of culture to transcend the triviality of its history. This happens only when culture ceases to be a matter of time, history and social organization. It must also include the transcendental dimension of values that are not themselves the creatures of history.

The defence of Wittgenstein's view of culture that we have outlined above is not a mere case of dogmatic acceptance of a known position but rather a case of legitimizing a form of thinking that brings in a conflict between a scientific and technological civilization and the culture of the human spirit, the latter being the model of a spiritual wisdom (*Ātmavidyā*). The truth of a form of thinking of this sort lies in its universalizability and universal acceptance. The force of this point of view can be judged from the fact that man realizes that there is a limit to the growth of a scientific civilization.[45]

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45. I am grateful to Professor Daya Krishna for his helpful comments on an earlier draft of the paper.

Some Problems Concerning the Big Bang Theory of Creation

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The very concept of 'singularity' in the big bang theory of creation poses some serious philosophical problems. The problems are challenging to those who either claim that they are bound to achieve a complete working knowledge of all reality, its nature and causes of existence with the help of natural laws, or those who claim that in principle, the whole reality cannot be explained with the help of natural laws, because there is an irreducible supernatural and metaphysical element to existence. Hence, the big bang theory in recent times has split the thinkers into two groups: the *idealists* and the *non-idealists*. The former maintains that 'singularity', the crux of the issue in the standard model of creation, is the ultimate mystery that leads us to believe in a supernatural creation and as such, it stands as an interface between the natural and the supernatural. Let us call these thinkers (the physicists and philosophers alike) idealists, for the simple reason that they attempt at providing a subjective explanation to all existence that transcends the objective physical facts. It is one way of putting mind over and above the objective physical facts and phenomena. This method of reducing all natural facts and phenomena to something metaphysical or supernatural, by mere subjective whims, is what I perceive to be *idealization of science*. We shall come to it later on.

The other group of thinkers, the non-idealists, are those (physicists and philosophers alike) who do not, in their attempts at explaining the reality, reduce it to something supernatural; rather, taking the help of the available information from the field of science, they enable us to believe in a consistent theory which is either supported by enough observational and experimental evidences or by sound logic and mathematics.

One of the objectives of this paper is to show that such idealization of the *singularity* concept in the big bang theory which tends to give it a metaphysical and supernatural form, has to be dislodged by displaying the range of reasons that we have. The other objective is to provide a *heuristic treatment* or *heuristic understanding* of the problems in consideration.

When I speak of the philosophical problems that arise out of an

understanding of the big bang theory in general and the concept of 'singularity' in particular, it implies the problems like *defining* singularity, explaining its *nature*, the problem of *organization* of the nascent states of creation (i.e. whether or not it is self-organizing and self-explaining) and the problem of the *origin* of the nascent states of creation (i.e. whether or not it is self-caused and non-material in nature). Let us analyze these problems in the light of the idealistic (I) and heuristic (H) approaches that we encounter.

THE PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION AND NATURE OF SINGULARITY IN THE BIG BANG THEORY

The standard model of creation conceives of a singular state, defined as 'a primeval, infinitely shrunken, super dense, unbounded state where all space–time is represented in a point-like reality—a state of structured nothingness, where all matter, space and time seemingly disappear'.[1]

Physicists like E.R. Harrison, Alan Guth, Sydney Coleman and Alex Vilenkin, as well as some of the adherents of Christianity derive interesting conclusions from such a definition of 'singularity'. For example, E.R. Harrison writes, 'Perhaps this is why we have no physical theory of the singularity state—it takes us beyond physics into metaphysics.'[2]

There are, however, a few cosmologists who do not like the traditional form of the definition of singularity, for they believe that it creates a lot of confusion owing to the concepts like 'nothingness'. John Barrow and Joseph Silk (*The Left Hand of Creation*, 1984, Heinemann) for instance, tried to avoid the perplexities of the concept of 'singularity' by trying to *redefine* it in a way that fails to recognize the early complications like considering the 'singular' state as an absolute one, the initial one or the *fixed* one. According to Silk and Barrow, a singularity is said to occur when the path of any light ray through space and time comes to an abrupt end and cannot be extended any further. This idea has been extended by them to redefine the singular state as (a) the image of a traveller (like light rays) through space and time ultimately coming to an abrupt end, to the edge of the universe running out of all space and time and (b) that nothing could be more singular than the *edge of the universe* where all space-time and matter runs out and an alien land lies beyond it.

Certainly the picture is quite useful because it sidesteps all difficulties about the form and content of a particular universe model. Besides, it is relatively easily conceived and easy to deduce whether or not our universe possessed one of these singular edges in the past. But Silk and Barrow do not stop here and unnecessarily idealize (I) their new explanation as follows:

(Ii) 'The new proposal is more akin to the traditional *metaphysical picture of creation out of nothing*, for it predicts a definite beginning to time itself.'[3]

The idealization of the concept of 'singularity' is evident. The connection between the idea of a singular past and the creation of all matter, space and time has been deliberately idealized to imply that all creation owe the origin not to any natural, physical or material state but to 'ex-nihilo' or 'nothing', where 'nothing' represents a complete *void* or absence of matter–energy. Hence, the consequence of such idealization is that:

(a) the state is one of 'nothingness', where it means a state of *non-material void*;
(b) it represents the state of the *exhausted moving matter and energy* and *also time*;
(c) such a picture of an early past to all creation, is *metaphysical*, rather than physical; and
(d) it is an extension of the *ex-nihilo* thesis in Christianity.

Now recalling what E.R. Harrison said, we could add to these idealizations, another point that is, creation has to be metaphysically and supernaturally explained, not otherwise.

The question is, whether or not we are going to accept such idealization of the singularity concept. I just cannot. Now, to justify the misconceptions inherent in such idealization, I put forward a heuristic (H) analysis of the entire issue in consideration.

(Hi) In sciences like physics and cosmology, 'nothing' and 'something' do not stand for an 'absolute' value; rather *relative* values. In relation to the mega world, the 'singular' state represents itself as a state of 'virtual nothingness'. However, in relation to a micro state we are not in a position to ascribe any objective status to it. Hence, we say that we *know nothing* about the objective status of the state at a micro-level, it is quite 'uncertain' by any extension of the term.

(Hii) In cosmological science when it is said that at some epoch, matter, space and time emerges out of 'nothing', it implies that in relation to the mega world, all existence we now comprehend of, abruptly comes into existence from a *yet unknown state* of matter and energy. This amounts to the fact that in relation to the micro state, this unknown state is 'something' about which we *know nothing as yet.*

(Hiii) In astrophysics, the *yet unknown* and *yet uncharacterized, uncertain state* is by far a state of 'structured nothingness' and not a *non-material void.* There is no 'non-material void' state available in the scheme of physical sciences because there is no quantum cosmological evidence that justifies that fact that non-material void might have preceded all existence.

(Hiv) In case of a singular state, which is microscopic and governed by quantum laws, notions like 'cease to exist' and 'end up', etc. have a specific use. These expressions in the ordinary sense do not convey the idea that all matter, space and time *absolutely vanish* and become a non-entity. To say that a state is *represented* in another form does not imply that it has become a non-entity. Matter, energy, space and time only attain a state about which we could assert that it is a state of 'virtual nothingness'.

(Hv) It is evident that there is every likelihood that we can probe beyond the 'singular barrier' to encounter an alien region of quantum complex interaction about which there is little or no information. Hence, the singular barrier may be conveniently conceived as an 'event horizon' or 'edge of the universe' (as conceived by Silk and Barrow). The 'horizon' helps us particularly in understanding that it is a state of such fine tuning that if you move a step forward, you would probably encounter the alien land of 'quantum interaction' or you move backward and find the beginning of all creation.

Evidently, the positive points that were present in the new suggestion (re-definition) of Silk and Barrow that could have helped them in avoiding 'absolutism', 'finalism' and towards delving into the weird region of 'quantum activity' in creation, were grossly overlooked. Indeed, they idealized their own findings to a level that implies absurd things, which the above heuristic treatment of the issue (Hi to Hv) has probably exposed. It is the discovery of the simple logic inherent in the physical theory that helps us to realize the value of re-defining singularity as an event horizon and the material nature of the nascent state in creation. Hence (Hi) to (Hv) successfully reveal the misconception inherent in (Ii) and, therefore, (Ii) should better be discarded.

One important point before we move further to discuss the problem of organization: Why is it so important to think that the idealization of science should be discarded from any serious thinking about the problems regarding the big bang theory? It is because an idealization and distortion of any physical theory whatsoever to lend support to some sort of metaphysics or supernaturalism is both beyond logic and consequently beyond the scope of philosophical enquiry. We can just maintain that physics and cosmology cannot be *distorted* and manipulated to suit the metaphysical ends. But can one say that, if there is a metaphysical thesis that independently frames a creation theory and in principle does not idealize any scientific theory for that purpose, would it be of any value or not? That is whether or not such metaphysical theories are worth discussing? My answer is that, my aim being an objective, physical and heuristic understanding of creation, ex-hypothesi rules out a metaphysical thesis, as it is with the latter, whose aim rules out a scientific explanation. Hence, it will be improper to declare either

metaphysical or scientific theories of creation right or wrong. However, we can say that the physical explanation of creation is in accordance with the proper body of science, whereas the metaphysical theories are not. The scientific explanation is only probably valid (it is either weak or strong) and never gives us an absolutist idea of creation, whereas the metaphysical explanation claims absolute validity of its ideas (therefore claims to be absolutely right or true) and fixity of belief. Finally, the former approach does not depend on subjective whims whereas the latter largely depends on the individual's caprice. I do not think that it is proper to have a creation theory that is subjectively determined, speaks of fixity of ideas and absolutist models. In any case, these drawbacks help us only in realizing the importance of a physical or scientific understanding of the problems. Nevertheless, metaphysical discussions cannot be wholly discarded as it may be quite meaningful and useful to many who have metaphysical convictions. What I want to remind is that a metaphysician just cannot manipulate the findings of physical science for an alien purpose. This paper is against any such metaphysical thinking and not to prove that creationism does not or need not be included in metaphysical thinking at all. Let us now turn to the problem of organization.

THE PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATION

A serious consideration to the possibility of a big bang creation, leads us to two problems:

(a) why does the universe exist at all? and
(b) why is it exactly of this nature and not another?

These two problems rolled into one, constitute a major problem—the *organization* of the universe. Many think that the two problems mentioned above, that constitute the major problem, are *mystic* in character. Perhaps they have in mind the fact that the very existence of the universe as a whole is something unique. As if, universe could not have come into existence following the laws of nature, and some natural law must have initiated the whole process, and is, therefore, incomprehensible. These people also have the idea that the reason why the whole universe is exactly as we have it now and not otherwise, also remains a mystery. The suggestion is that the whole organization of matter, space, time, energy and everything is something unique, something mystic. Hence, we can only have a metaphysical explanation to all these. The very idea of a natural organization of matter, energy, space, time and all the forces of nature for creation is ruled out. The metaphysical explanation of the problem of organization, therefore, does not conceive of self-organizing and self-explaining, sometimes called 'bootstrapping' (cf. A.J. Wheeler), universe.

As the line of controversy is distinctly drawn, we could now look into the (I) and the (H) approaches respectively.

The question is, what aspects are idealized? To know it, we should discuss two very important suggestions in astrophysics. One is that, following the big bang theory of creation, if we try to find out what caused the bang itself, the most probable solution could be that it resulted out of complex quantum actions. If one still asks about what caused the quantum action itself, the answer may be that it is 'self-caused', for there is no prior or first event or first cause with regard to quantum activity. Hence, the universe organized to bang asunder *by itself*, that is, it is 'self-creating' and 'self-explaining'. The second suggestion is that the enormously probable world lines that could have developed in the quantum interaction evolving bubbles in foam, it is a *chance* that one such bubble accumulated enough negative energy to reach a critical state, wherefrom the bang was possible. Hence, the solution is that the universe is a 'chance creation'.[4]

(Iii) No sooner these physical theories of organization were at hand, the idealists came forward with their suggestions (idealizations). Let us take the case of Stephen Hawking and Alan Guth, two celebrated physicists, who had astoundingly manipulated the above-mentioned physical explanations for metaphysical purpose. Hawking's reaction is aptly mentioned in Paul Davies' book *God and the New Physics* and I quote '. . . modern science has found as the interface between natural and the supernatural'.[5] This is what he finally thinks about the singular state, the store of chaotic creation. This has led him to believe, as he says, that the simple initial state of the universe (singularity) exists only when a 'super law' exists. Hence, 'super law' is not a physical concept called 'superforce'; rather, *supernatural law* that guides the 'Chaos→Order' destiny in big bang creation. Clearly, the physical law has taken the form of natural law. A complete confusion of the law of nature and the natural law is evident.

(Iiii) The very idea of a 'chance creation', which was enthusiastically supported by Paul Davies and Alan Guth, among others, conjectures a 'free lunch'—some sort of creation by *accident* or *chance*, without any apparent cause. Guth, however, unlike Davies, went further to idealize the matter a bit. Consequently, we find him saying that the model particularly supports the 'genesis cosmology', that is, the 'ex-nihilo' theory of creation. Evidently, there is a gross manipulation of the idea of chance creation out of no cause or 'nothing', where 'nothing' is taken to be equivalent to 'no matter–energy, space–time and forces of nature'. It is, therefore, conceived as something 'supernatural' in nature.

Such idealization of the 'theory of ignorance' and the 'theory of free lunch' by Hawking and Guth respectively, robbed their own theories, of

all their value. The 'theory of ignorance' positively contributes towards an understanding of the fact that the singular state is an *unknowable* state and, therefore, lacks in *information.*

The loss of information suggests a state of vast chaos or *disorder* and not order because the second law of thermodynamics states that the loss of information grows with disorder or chaotic conditions and not with order. Hence, the initial state was one of disorder or chaos, not order. We thus have a 'Chaos→Order' model of creation. On the other hand, Guth's theory of 'free lunch' enables us to conceive of a situation whereby an abrupt appearance of space–time by a quantum mechanism is highly probable. This finite blob of space–time (hypothetical enclosure) called a 'hypersphere' could disappear owing to a further quantum fluctuation or there is a *chance* that rather than fading away, the blob goes on accumulating enough 'negative energy' to inflate like a balloon. Hence, the appearance of a world line out of a 'structural nothing' is quite probable. Hence, an inherent idea of a self-explaining and self-organizing universe is at hand.

These thinkers, however, idealize their invaluable findings. My attempt is to read the logic of their explanations and to heuristically understand it. In doing so, I think, I shall be able to remove some confusion plaguing such idealizations.

(Hi) The most crucial fact in a heuristic understanding of the problem of organization is to understand the idea of a particular model of 'Chaos→Order' creation. The question is whether or not creation is strictly unidirectionally 'Chaos to Order'. The physical theories discussed earlier speak of such a model or pattern. But does it allow us to understand that, therefore, there must be a prior cause that evoked such 'chaos' or 'disorder'? Is it necessary to conceive of a prime order or prime organization that is responsible for chaos? How is such chaos organized after all? Do we have any reason to believe in a natural organization of chaos? I think, if one fails to answer these questions satisfactorily, one would indeed believe in a metaphysical organization. The point is, we must know the real significance of the notion 'chaos' and 'order' in a cosmic situation. We ought to understand that 'chaos' need not mean 'structurelessness' and 'order' always does not imply 'widely shaped or structured bodies'. 'Order' in this context is an improbable arrangement of elements regardless of whether the micro shape of this arrangement is structured or deformed. 'Disorder' or 'chaos' is the dissolution of such an improbable arrangement. Given this explanation, there is no need to think that the whole universe is in a state of absolute order, because the reality of dissipating structures and irreversible phenomena (disorder) is also evident. Hence, the whole reality need not be and cannot be absolutely viewed as either ordered or disordered. The whole reality is thus a complex 'chaos↔order' pattern and not unidirectionally 'chaos to order' pattern.

(Hii) Next, it is important to understand that the initial state of creation (singular) tells the same story. It will be quite orthodox to believe that the initial condition being 'chaotic', it is a unidirectional pattern of 'chaos to order' creation; whereas, it is a complex 'chaos↔order' pattern, in which both order and disorder are so interwoven that it is simply impossible to think of one point at which everything was in high order or that everything was in absolute chaos. At ultramicroscopic states the very idea of an absolute beginning fails to make any sense. One thing is certain, and that is that we cannot ascertain any exact structure of the *ultramicroscopic* state. But this 'structurelessness' neither means that it is non-material in nature nor does it imply that it preceded a higher state of organization. What the strict adherents of a 'chaos to order' pattern of creation have in mind is that: as 'chaos→order'; therefore, another higher order (absolute) must precede the initial chaotic condition. The conception is completely unfounded, for the initial disorder does not imply that an order precedes it, it could be disorder as well. This is so because if we probe *beyond* the 'singular' past (the event horizon) to find an explanation as to how everything was organized; that is, to look for an answer to what caused the 'singularity' itself, we are insisting on a quantum explanation. Hence, the whole problem of organization begs a quantum explanation. At the outset of this bizarre new understanding we must remember that the notions like absolutely final, absolutely ordered or disordered, here–there, before–after, now–then, cause–effect, etc. become redundant. The dichotomous distinctions along with any absolutist or fixed notions make no sense. The state is one of great disorganization or *quantum chaos*, where indeterminacy and uncertainty rule supreme and there is a complete lack of information. Hence, we have a new picture, and it is that disorganization is responsible for the organization. Hence, chaos precedes a chaos or chaotic mechanism precedes an organization, could be the answer, and not 'higher order→chaos→order'. There is one caution, however, if we search for the extreme *ends* or even in betweens, there is perhaps no state which can be *determined* as absolutely chaotic and absolutely ordered. There is order within chaos and chaos within order. We, thus, have at all the epochs of the history of creation, 'chaos↔order' complex pattern and not a 'chaos→order' pattern. We are also not finding any clue from this quantum understanding that a Higher Organization (metaphysical) precedes everything.

(Hiii) Now, from all these, we get an idea that a quantum mechanical explanation to all creation, is a physical explanation, not metaphysical. It rules out the idea of a First Cause or Higher Organization or a Higher Mind in creation. It also speaks of a natural organization or a self-organizing universe. To the question: What caused the big bang itself?, we can say that it was all *self-caused*. We thus have a 'bootstrapping' explanation. The question is: whether or not the quantum explanation speaks of the presence of or any role of matter–energy? If it does not, then it is quite legitimate to conceive of a situation in creation where everything evolved out of 'nothing', where 'nothing' is complete absence of all matter–energy, space–time, etc. Our heuristics enable us at this juncture to discover that in quantum explanation, 'nothingness' does not imply a *void*. A physicist cannot possibly deny that whatever the case may be, when he is speaking of quantum fluctuations or quantum actions, he is not dealing with *a void* concept. One should know that in physics, we do not speak of voids, rather of *vacuum*. At the quantum level *vacuum* is a vast store of *energy*, mostly negatively accumulated (sometimes referred to as negative energy or zero energy). Hence, quantum explanation of organization speaks of vacuum, not voids and the former is certainly not a metaphysical reality. The heuristic understanding of these problems in consideration helps us in knowing that singularity is not a metaphysical entity (as Hawking conjectured it to be) and also that its organization for creation was not preceded by a Higher Mind (as conjectured by Alan Guth).

(Hiv) Nevertheless, another idealization remains unanswered. How should we answer if someone (an idealist) asks: who has created the quantum law itself? Because, the law has to exist first and then anything else, and if the law itself is an expression of a Higher Mind, then what? Do we not remember Eddington, Jeans and Wheeler, who conceived of a 'mathematician god'? A heuristic understanding of the laws of science dispel such misconception. The laws of science are generalizations from specific *objective regularities* of physical phenomena. The laws do not exist in nature on an a priori basis; they exist not because we cognise them like that; rather, because the objective phenomena reflect them as such in our cognition. Thus, the establishment of the laws of physics proceeds through the detection of a connection between the operation of these laws and the properties of wide range of physical phenomena. If this connection is established by experiment, laws of physics exist. Hence, physical laws (quantum laws as such) are not of Divine make, that is, these are laws of nature and not natural laws.

THE PROBLEM OF ORIGIN

Any discussion with regard to the organization of the universe is so closely linked to the fact of origin that whatever we now propose to discuss has already found a sort of explanation earlier. I am, however, interested particularly in discussing a paradox to which we turn our minds right away. The big bang theory of creation, as we know, inevitably speaks of a huge burst about which two questions can be asked: What *caused* the huge bang at the 'singular' state? and what were the actual factors responsible for such an explosion? These two problems put

together constitute the problem of origin. What is more interesting is that the two problems taken together form a paradox—'the Genesis Paradox', as we call it. The details of this paradox brings into focus the so-called *idealization and distortion* of physical findings. I am inclined to explain the idealization attempts and propose to expose them by means of a heuristic understanding of the same. However, before we do all this let us have a glimpse of the physical theories explaining the problem of origin. The physical explanations can be conveniently classified as the *traditional* and the *quantum* response.

The traditional response or explanation is that the primeval explosion has to be *accepted* as an initial condition. Hence, following an absolutist scheme, one has to know that no force apparently caused the singular state to burst asunder, it simply started like that. The quantum explanation, however, is not so naive and orthodox towards solving the problem of origin. Instead, it advances the following ideas:

(a) Einstein's thesis that 'gravity', although generally imploding in nature, should be counteracted with a negative exploding force that impelled the universe to expand and not infinitely implode to an ultimate black hole;
(b) The idea of an 'antigravity' or repulsive force at the very nascent states of creation;
(c) The idea of the unification of all the forces of nature or 'super force', the by-product of the activity thereof induces the nascent force of repulsion or antigravity, and
(d) The conception of a 'quantum vacuum' state, an ultramicroscopic state of complex quantum interaction, the womb of vast negative energy.

(Iiv) The Genesis Paradox is formulated by idealizing the above-mentioned physical explanations expressed by the traditional and the quantum theories. Regarding the first part of the problem of origin, that is, why did the initials state explode at all?, the paradox is that if gravity is an *imploding* force and that the role of gravity being unknown at this event, how is it that instead of crunching down into some sort of a limbo, it burst asunder? About the second problem, that is, what exactly caused the explosion?, the paradox framed is that, if at an early state there is non-existence of all matter, energy, space and time, then how is it that the entire physical world evolved out of a non-physical state or a non-material cause? From the paradox we get an idea that the early state of the origin of the universe has to be non-material in nature and, therefore, the cause of origin is not physical and that gravity as a force of nature behaving radically opposite to the way it does in macro-states, a special design or arrangement is needed. All this unhesitatingly speaks of a *reason* behind the arrangement and that points to a Super-natural cause. The idealization of the quantum response is evident. The

traditional response, although outdated by now, has also been idealized. A brief assertion could be: 'The rate of the huge bang was calculated by a non-material agency (God) and was so determined that the expansion is exactly just as we now see'. Apart from the idea of the peculiar behaviour of 'gravity' at an early epoch of creation, the idea of a 'quantum vacuum' and 'negative energy' is also responsible for the idealization that we have, for it advances an idea that the primeval bang resulted out of a negative energy level. This is quite true that the theoretical physicists were able to calculate that the total energy at the outset comes out to be exactly 'zero' and only succeeds to compile the needed positive energy during the first 10^{-32s}. The idealists were enthusiastic as to show that the very possibility of 'zero' energy state during the origin implies the breakdown of the much-celebrated law of the conservation of mass and energy. Hence the moving matter is *exhaustible* and so is energy, should be the conclusion. And if this be true, then the very origin of the universe speaks of a non-material or metaphysical cause.

Now let us have a heuristic understanding of the fact:

(Hi) The problem arises out of our understanding of the 'zero' or 'negative energy'. 'Zero energy' is a *negative energy* that arises due to a certain type of gravitational and electromagnetic field or 'spacewarp'. Thus, 'zero energy' should not be mistaken as a weird state of negative energy. Hence, the law of the conservation of mass and energy is not contradictory to the concept of 'zero energy'.

(Hii) The 'zero energy' behaves negatively like a fluid exerting negative pressure and when it bubbles into infinite teeming world lines, one might develop, and at the brink of the 'event horizon' (singularity) accumulates enough energy to burst asunder, generating radiation and everything else in the process. Herefrom, under the positive pressure (energy), expansion takes place. Consequently, the forces of nature gradually separate, which were erstwhile, unified at an enormously high energy state. Evidently, the role of gravity at such unified state is not as it normally is (imploding), rather it acts negatively to explode.

(Hiii) Hence, vacuum, negative pressure, spacewarps are all, in no case, non-physical or metaphysical states. There is no evidence of the fact that the quantum cosmological scenario is non-physical and metaphysical. Interestingly, in physics, as we have already seen, 'vacuum' is a physical or material state and not non-material. Hence, to equate it to void (absolute non-existence of matter and energy) is nothing but idealization of the quantum cosmological concepts.

(Hiv) If we further enquire into the cause of vacuum, spacewarps etc. and then fall back to the same idealism, we are committing blunders.

No doubt, we are still uncomprehending as to what caused these realities. It is for the simple reason that physics not being an absolutist scheme of study, has no final solution to a problem at any point of time. Whatever may be the result of further research in this field, the sceptics should know that we are dealing with quantum phenomena and the very idea of a first or final cause has no relevance at all. Hence, there can be no final cause to vacuum and spacewarp, etc. We are only provided with a probable set of theories, intricately linked to each other. We thus have no way to declare that 'vacuum' and 'spacewarps' are final causes of creation or that something else should be the final cause.

Now that we have discussed the three major philosophical problems that arise out of the concept of a big bang creation, we get on the one hand, four kinds of idealizations (Ii) to (Iiv). This is not to speak that four *types* of idealizations correspond to four types of idealists; rather these are the most striking idealizations that we encounter while reading cosmology, philosophy of physics, philosophy of religion, and so on. The reason is simple, the physicists and the philosophers alike try to find some metaphysical basis for scientific theories. May be it is due to some sort of social, political or personal conviction. I cannot resist thinking that idealization of science for metaphysical ends has a deep-rooted religious conviction and one who irresistibly does so, it certainly neither doing serious philosophy nor science. The discussion is no doubt metaphysical and religious, but why idealize scientific facts and findings for all that? My effort is to denounce any such attempt followed by what I call the heuristics of science—the systematic logical development of the scientific theories, to have a probable knowledge about a physical reality that in turn may ensue some problems of philosophical interest as well. It is, therefore, a methodological art of discovering the essence of any scientific theory. Now to put it together, the heuristic understanding of the entire fact of a big bang creation (and the specific conception of a singularity therein) reflects the following facts:

(1) The concept of 'singularity' in the standard model of creation needs to be redefined, for the traditional one is absolutist in nature and, therefore, confusing. The idea of an 'event horizon' could be accepted as a strong working hypothesis.
(2) The possibility to move *beyond* the horizon should be considered seriously if we ought to have a sound knowledge of the problems of origin and organization in creation.
(3) We should accept the possibility of a self-organizing and self-explaining universe instead of a universe created 'ex-nihilo' by God.
(4) We should accept the probability of a chance creation or accidental universe by referring to the quantum cosmological explanations.

(5) It is not necessary to accept a fixed pattern in creation. That is to say that we move from 'chaos to order' and that the early 'chaos' is Designed by an absolute Organizing Mind. Rather, the history of creation speaks of a 'chaos↔order' pattern, which is so interlinked that it will be difficult to place one before the other.
(6) The scientific theory of creation need not be and cannot be metaphysically viewed by means of idealizing its concept, for scientific concepts themselves were never framed to serve metaphysical ends.

Notes and References

1. The definition of 'singularity' can be seen in Paul Davies, *God and the New Physics*, J.M. Dent & Co, London, 1983.
2. E.R. Harrison, *Cosmology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981, p. 367.
3. J. Silk and J. Barrow, '*The Left Hand of Creation*', Heinemann, 1984, p. 38.
4. The idea of a 'chance creation' can be seen in Paul Davies, *God and the New Physics*, J.M. Dent & Co., 1983; and in his work 'Superforce', Heinemann, 1984.
5. Stephen Hawking quoted in Paul Davies, *God and the New Physics*, p. 56.

Formal Organizations: A Philosophical Review of Perspectives and Behaviour Dynamics

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INTRODUCTION

The literature on organization theory has soared over the years. Contributions have come from diverse persons and sources. Some of these contributors have in most cases shown bias for their disciplines. Others have attempted to conceal their disciplinary biases but the contours of their disciplinary backgrounds have always come out clearly in their writings. Seen in this light, therefore, any attempt at analysing formal organizations using a particular conceptual rubric or framework is bound to be a wasteful intellectual enterprise. This is because the explanations of what constitutes formal organizations is increasingly becoming not only multi-disciplinary in approach but multi-dimensional in persuasion. It therefore behoves on organization theorists and analysts not only to expand their 'research agenda' but to examine different perspectives and frameworks as an attempt at having a more broad-based approach in understanding formal organizations. This inter-paradigmatic approach does not only lend support to a clearer understanding of how organizations function but paints a clearer picture of how organizations behave, their relationship with the environment of which they are a part, and the characteristics which underlie different types of organizations.

In order to analyse formal organizations from a more critical and rational point of view, we shall examine some perspectives in the literature on organizational studies. This is done with a view to presenting a more all-embracing understanding of formal organizations. Aside from this, the adoption of a broad-based approach is likely to clarify how organizations take their rise, how they travel through time,[1] how they interact with the various environments,[2] and how they adopt both defensive and offensive mechanisms[3] to cope with these environments. But the adoption of a single or limited framework for analysing organizations is likely to conflate and obscure our understanding of formal organizations.

The main purpose of this paper, therefore, is to adopt a multi-dimensional approach by philosophically replicating different perspectives of formal organizations, as an attempt to establish the tissue of connection

between the various perspectives. This approach is likely to lead to some form of convergence in organizational analysis. By this, organization theory shall be richer with a common set of scripts, and actors acting their plays on a common stage with a common language. This will be our contribution.

PHYSICAL STRUCTURES PERSPECTIVE

There has been the widespread notion that organizations, irrespective of the social relationships or network of relationships that exist, are basically physical structures. Pfeffer[4] has argued that organizations are physical structures because they do not only wear or resemble physical entities but they, like other physical structures, assume the form of offices, buildings, factories, furniture, equipment and other tangible assets found in the workplace. He went further to argue that apart from the tangible items that adorn the workplace, which constitute formal organizations, they also maintain 'some degree of physical dispersion or concentration'. Apart from these spatial arrangements, organizations as physical entities create social relations which are defined by the structural properties, such as design questions, tasks, roles and activities performed by individuals who work within these structures. Developing the 'physical structures' thesis further, Collins[5] has highlighted the fact that organizations cannot be constructed from anything short of physical structures because they manifest characteristics which are not only enduring but long-lasting. In other words, organizations unlike living organisms have lives that span over very long periods.

In spite of the importance of the physical structures perspective, research and literature in the area is manifestly sparse. Pfeffer[6] has argued that the dearth of research in this area is as a result of the obvious reason that organizations are represented by buildings, furniture, factories and other physical assets. He went further to highlight the obvious implications of the physical effects of organizations to warrant any rigorous research efforts or to arouse any curiosity. He therefore argued that: 'After all, people do not walk through partitions or shout through walls, so one might say that the effects of partitions and walls are clear.' This point was earlier demonstrated by Becker[7] when he argued that it is possible if the work of designing structures has been placed in the hands of architects and interior designers. This argument would appear to have taken away the question of physical structures outside the intellectual province of the organization theorist. All be it, the effects of the physical structures concept is extremely important to all those interested in organizational analysis, irrespective of the perspective or paradigm adopted by these scholars.

Researchers have argued that to synthesize the physical dimension of organizations into the intellectual domain of the organizational analyst requires the adoption of an appropriate instrument for measuring the

physical attributes of organizations. Pfeffer[8] has identified certain key factors as symbolizing the properties in all physical and tangible assets. One of such metrics, according to Pfeffer, is size. Because organizations are represented by physical items, it is said that the larger the size of the physical structures, the more symbolic such structures become, and in the main also typifies the enduring nature of organizations.

A second dimension for the typification of organizations as physical entities is the 'quality of physical space'. While size *per se* cannot fully give a complete metric measure of the physical attributes of organizations, the quality of space assigned to individuals and groups who work in these structures have been identified as an appropriate parameter for determining one of the physical factors that gives expression to the existence of organizations. In the literature, it is further argued that what gives a more powerful metric value in terms of the physical attributes of quality could be underscored by the expensive nature of the decorations and furnishings. This argument presupposes the fact that offices that are better furnished, introduces better comfort, and therefore, could lead to higher levels of productivity. Quality of physical space could also be seen as an index or metric for determining status and hierarchical disposition within an organization. This point can be more vigorously demonstrated through the type of furnishing and decorations done in offices of employees occupying various positions. The argument is that the higher one's position in an organization is the more expensive the cost of decorating and furnishing such an office becomes. Quality of physical space, therefore, is not just an exemplification of status symbol in organizations but conjures in the mind of the office occupant the physical nature of the organization.

Another dimension through which the space question could be looked at is the flexibility of the space. The space in a building should be designed in such a form that it could be arranged or rearranged to satisfy the whims and needs of the owners of the space. The space in any building must not take or assume a static form. It must be designed in a way which gives the owners the opportunity to change, alter and amend the space from time to time to accommodate other uses. The issue and emphasis here is on how space could be put to maximum use and not be confined to a particular use and purpose.

The arrangement of physical space is another important factor to be considered when looking at organizations as physical structures. It is, therefore, important to examine the distance between the location of key personnel in the organization. It is equally important to consider the distance between key departments. For example, it is necessary to relate the distance between key departments, such as personnel and marketing, or between personnel and finance, or between marketing and production. In fact, the question of arrangement in any organization is a very important one. The closer the location of key departments

in any organization, the higher the level of productivity that is likely to be expected. These features are so important in the design of organizations, that they emphasize the physical nature of organizations.

One other issue or premise on which the question of the physical nature of organizations can be discussed is along the dimension of privacy. Privacy is a very important aspect of work organization in organizational life. The amount of space assigned to each person is based on proper arrangement of the space. However, in most organizations, the allocation of private office spaces and how they are arranged is a function of the ranks of organizational members. It has also been argued by Pfeffer[9] that the type of privacy introduced in most organizations is facilitated through the use of walls and partitions. This could be done through the use of solid or glass doors. The essential purpose of introducing privacy in most, if not all, organizations is the symbolization of hierarchical ranks. Another reason for the introduction of privacy in office arrangement borders on what Zajonc[10] would refer to as the 'social facilitation effect on task performance'. The canon of Zajonc's argument is that the existence of other employees in an office space, rather than reduce the level of performance of individual workers as a result of factors such as noise, could in fact facilitate the performance level of the workers.

The final question or issue on the physical nature of organizations we intend to discuss here is location. The literature on organization theory has highlighted the fact that organizations as physical entities are usually located in specific places. The focus here is on the quality of the environment or neighbourhood, how the location of the organization affects or influence its activities or relationship with institutions, people and customers who interact with such an organization.

The various dimensions on which the physical nature of organizations, which we have discussed, brings to focus the fact that entities which do not possess physical traits, cannot be described as having size, quality, flexibility, arrangement, privacy and location. Although it is difficult to make conclusive statements as to the 'physicalness' of organizations, it is becoming increasingly clear and popular that the issues raised above to a very large extent epitomize the direction of discussion in this area of organization theory. However, Braverman[11] has argued that 'there are typically a variety of technical arrangements that can be used to accomplish some work'. This argument presupposes the fact that 'technical determinism' is not an adequate ground for us to understand the physical structures hypothesis of organizations. But Becker[12] has introduced other important issues such as power. influence and social control as factors that could illuminate and bring to the fore the 'physical structures hypothesis'. He went on to argue that:

> a major function of the physical setting of organizations can be seen as an attempt to visually and physically reduce the ambiguity of social position and power within the organization by marking distinctions among job classifications with clear signs of spatial privilege (size of office, quality of furnishings) and by minimizing distinctions within job classifications by rendering all environmental support identical.[13]

The above argument points clearly to the fact that the ambiguous social relations or network of relations that exist in organizations is removed via the design of organization structures. Emphasis is laid on the hierarchical creation of ranks and positions in organizations. All these could be seen as strong currents of views or opinions on the fact that organizations, no matter which way one conceives their nature, are purely physical phenomena. This is because, as members of an organization, customers and or all those having other forms of relational nodes with organizations, the fact becomes clearer that organizations possess physical attributes, therefore, their total existence seems to agree with the physical structures hypothesis.

The physical structures hypothesis could also be sustained on the grounds of the mode and manner in which men and women working in organizations interact with one another.[14] The mode, quantity and pattern of interaction amongst organizational members, to a large extent is influenced by factors such as distance and the physical layout of space. This was confirmed in an earlier study carried out by Festinger, Schacter, and Back[15] in which they studied friendship patterns in housing complexes occupied by students. Sommer, studying interaction patterns amongst people adopting different sitting arrangements, found that: 'The trend in all the data is that people sitting in neighbourhood chairs . . . will be more likely to interact than people sitting in distant chairs.'[16]

The physical nature of organizations is also emphasized in the literature when we examine the profound effect of open-space or open-plan offices on interaction patterns. Although empirical data on this is still sparse Brooks and Kaplan[17] have argued that 'group sociability' increased after a change or alteration of office plan was made. Ives and Ferdinands[18] have also reported that employees who move to an open office showed signs of improvement in communication patterns. But Oldham and Brass's[19] study points to the contrary. Clearwater also argued in favour of Oldham and Brass's study by saying that: 'Landscaped, open office was less adequate on several dimensions of communication, behaviour, including inter-office communication, communication with different divisions, interaction with supervisors, and development of friendship with coworkers, than conventional office designs.'[20] Other scholars who have written on interaction patterns of persons in organizations are Canty[21] and Sommer.[22] In Canty's study it was found that in open office arrangements, 50 per cent of the square footage per employee is saved as opposed to conventional arrangements.

This obviously leads to considerable reduction in costs. In a study summarizing previous contributions, Sommer highlighted the fact that interest and involvement of students in class as well as their performance can be predicted based on the location where the individual sits.

In summary, there seems to be overwhelming evidence to support the fact that physical arrangements in sitting can produce positive consequences if the design of such offices conform with the technical requirements of work. Steel[23] also demonstrated that effective physical designs in the office could assist in organizational development efforts. McCue[24] took into account factors such as power and social considerations as important hangovers of physical design of offices. Other beneficial aspects of physical design centres on effective interpersonal attraction, existence of cooperation instead of competition, and perhaps the 'person-perception' level may improve. It follows, therefore, that organizations are physical structures that create features and characteristics that are identifiable. By their very nature as physical entities, organizations have created room for power and social considerations via the hierarchical arrangement of positions. These hierarchies have also enacted other forms of interpersonal relationships. Seen in this light, organizations could be described as physical structures.

ORGANIZATIONS AS NETWORKS OF RELATIONSHIPS

The second perspective in which organizational activities could be discussed is the notion that organizations consist of networks of relationships. In spite of the fact that organizations consist of physical properties, Weick[25] has advanced interactions among social actors. Weick's argument presupposes the fact that organizations consist of people who interact and interrelate with one another according to certain norms and procedures established by the organizations. Weick's contribution also emphasizes the fact that the behaviour of organizational members is not only patterned but the interaction process among the social actors is repeated. This clearly demonstrates that the interaction among social actors within organization systems is not a 'one-off' process but is highly repetitive. The other element of network concept of organizations is the patterned nature of the behaviour of organizational members. It follows, therefore, that the behaviour of social actors in organizations should conform with certain behaviour patterns, which must not contradict the standards and nuances that are generally acceptable to all other actors within the organization system. Any deviation from these patterned behaviour types or forms is likely to produce some dysfunctional consequences. Pfeffer makes an attempt to demonstrate that the patterned interactions that exist in organizations can be represented in the form of network analysis. This argument seems to have taken its rise from an earlier argument developed by Tichy and

Fombrun[26] when they highlighted that the concept of social structure simply represents the interrelationship between 'social objects', such as between groups and between groups and people.

The network perspective or paradigm in organizational analysis is not a very recent analytical postulate. Network analysis or social network analysis was developed by early scholars such as Bavelas,[27] Guetzkow and Simon,[28] Leavitt,[29] Mulder,[30] and Roby and Lanzetta.[31] But one significant phenomenon about the works of these scholars is their emphasis on the use of small experimental groups in data collection, analysis and interpretation. Pfeffer has unequivocally stated the problems inherent in network analysis in field settings. He highlights the task of collecting a large amount of data as a serious problem while trying to establish the necessary relational patterns or networks in organizations. However, he argues that it is much easier and less cumbersome to collect data on a single form in a relatively shorter period on 'persons' attitudes and perceptions of their environment than it was to attempt to assess the network of interactions occurring in the organizations'. This then presupposes the fact that attempts at studying and understanding organizations is much more difficult than studying and understanding the attitudes and perceptions of individuals and their work environment. It has also become more evident that data collected at individual level for analysis may not be amenable to the rigours of analysis in organizations and their relational network properties.

Another important aspect of organizational studies which requires meticulous analytical treatment is 'the causes and consequences of network properties'. This borders essentially on how networks in organizations could 'be measured and dimensionalized'. Tichy, Tushman, and Fombrun[32] identified four basic methods of data collection that could facilitate an understanding of the relational structure of organizations. One of such methods or techniques is through the use of 'position-analysis'. Position-analysis, as the name implies, involves the use of organization charts and other forms of data to establish the communicating and reporting pattern in organizations. Position-analysis technique is useful in organizational studies because it shows at a glance the communication pattern existing in an organization, but it does not really show how the actual pattern of communication exists in an organization. Another form of data collection which is relevant in organizational studies is through the use of 'reputational or attributional' method or technique. This process requires the researcher to ask questions relating to network properties only to those persons or groups in the organization who play very active and dominant roles or occupy positions of influence in the organization. Hunter[33] has argued that this method has close semblance to the 'reputational method used in community power research'. This method attracts some form of merit in that it reduces the burden of data collection but 'suffers from the

problem of providing shared perceptions of network properties rather than the network properties as they occur'.

A third, and perhaps one of the most important ways through which networks in organizations could be measured and dimensionalized, is the decision-analysis procedure. This method has as its central task the examination of actual decisions taken in organizations. In the decision-analysis method, an attempt is made to identify those who were actually involved in organizational decision-making, how much they contributed, and at what points in the decision-making process they were involved. A systematic analysis and evaluation of the decision-making process is likely to bring to light the network of interactions in specific aspects of decisions that were taken in organizations. The fourth and final method of measuring and dimensionalizing networks in organizations is through the 'interaction method'. Here the basis of measurement of networks is an analysis of reported number of contacts made by organizational members. Tichy, Tushman, and Fombrun[34] have argued that in the interactional method 'the flow of interactions (or influences) and their feedback is the central focus, and power is taken to be a constraint guiding these flows'. The method relies on the frequency or number of times an individual or groups have contacts with each other.

The network analysis approach in organizational studies raises a few questions. First, network analysis framework shows clearly that organizations are composed of people, and that these people interact with one another on a continuous basis. Aside from these interactions that take place regularly, the interactions assume a patterned form. In other words, the network of interactions that takes place in organizations do not occur randomly, but assume an ordered form. This does not only create an interactional pattern devoid of confusion, but makes each contact within an organization system meaningful and goal-directed. This means that the most important component of any organization that gives rise to the formation of networks is the existence of people. People are the main variables that facilitate the activities of all organizational networks.

ORGANIZATIONS AS DEMOGRAPHIC ENTITIES

We have argued that organizations are both physical entities and a network of relational processes. But the argument would be incomplete if we ignore the fact that organizations are also demographic entities 'characterized by demographic processes'. Pfeffer[35] has advanced the argument that demography simply refers to 'the composition, in terms of basic attributes such as age, sex, educational level, length of service or residence, race, and so forth, of the social entity under study'. Pfeffer went on to describe demographic processes that characterize organizational activities as recruitment, growth and turnover, and stated that these factors 'alter the composition of the organization'. Demographic factors account for various aspects of organizational life. Kessel,[36] and Schnore and Alford[37] have in the past used demographic factors 'to account for variables such as the form of city government'. Cutler[38] used demographiç factors to account for the 'operation of interest group politics', and Glen[39] used demographic factors such as attitudes in determining interest group politics.

The various demographic factors or attributes and processes discussed above could have important implications for analysing organizations. Factors such as age, sex, educational level, length of service or residence, race, and so forth, play important roles in organizational activities. The effects of these demographic variables may be important because they help to shape the form, direction and activities of an organization. Kanter[40] argues that proportions—and, specifically, the proportion of men and women in organizations—affect and influence group processes and the consequences of such situations on minority groups in organizations was highlighted. Empirical evidence in this area has not been vast, but the idea of men and women operating side by side and the effects of this on minority groups have been empirically identified by Spangler, Gorden and Pipkin.[41] The result of their investigation showed that differences existed between women students in two law schools on account of minority issues. In one of the law schools women accounted for about a third of the population, and in the second law school they accounted for only about 20 per cent of the population. In the law school in which women were in minority, it was shown that they 'were more likely to go into "feminine" or public law specialities'; and women were said to ask less questions or clarifications in and outside the classroom; and did not perform relatively well academically than in the law school where women constituted about a third of the population.

Another aspect of organizational demography that is worth considering is the question of dimensionalization and measurement of demographic variables. Pfeffer[42] has identified one of such demographic factors as 'the distribution of the organization's work force by length of employment or tenure in the organization'. Length of employment is an important factor that clearly shows differences between the stability index of particular categories of employees or between workers in different geo-political, economic and socio-cultural environments. Ouchi and Jaeger[43] identified 'bureaucratic as contrasted with socialization and acculturation strategies of control' as factors responsible for variations in length of employment between American and Japanese organizations. Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth,[44] Porter and Steers,[45] also identified time as an important measure in determining the level of commitment of the individual to work or his propensity to quit or

actual manifestation of quit behaviour. Aside from time, which we have just discussed, Locke[46] believes that job satisfaction has a significant influence on the quit propensity of the individual or the actual quitting behaviour at work. As we noted earlier, there are various demographic factors at play in the life of every organization. But length of service seems to be one of the demographic factors that has captured the attention of most organizational analysts. This is because length of service has very potent distributional properties in the demography of organizations.

Because measurement of organizational demography seems to pose certain problems, McNeil and Thompson[47] have proposed what they refer to as 'the regeneration index' as a possible rescue attempt. The regeneration index, according to Pfeffer,[48] is based on what the physical scientist would refer to as half-life. McNeil and Thompson[49] defined the regeneration index 'as the amount of time that elapses before the ratio of new members to old reaches 1:1'. In simple statistical terms, the regeneration index could be equated to the median years of service. The concept of regeneration index could further be described as that point in the life of an organization where the ratio of new employees to old-timers is 1:1. There are still other parameters that could be used in the measurement of organizational demography. It is possible to use the basic turnover index, standard turnover index, or stability index as effective measures of organizational demography. These indices may not be scientifically apt to describe the demography of organizations but they attempt to highlight some fundamental issues. The basic turnover index could assist organizations to determine the number of persons quitting in a particular period, and the average number of persons employed in that period. The standard turnover index is simply a shorthand expression of total replacements made during a particular period, divided by the total number employed in the same period, times one hundred. The stability index, as the name implies, shows at a glance the number of employees with more than a given time period of service, and this number is divided by the total number of persons during the period, and the product is multiplied by one hundred.

Though relatively useful techniques, all the turnover indices used may not sufficiently highlight measures of organizational demography as a result of certain apparent weaknesses. However, this is unlikely to be the appropriate place to discuss these weaknesses. Rather, it seems more fruitful to adopt a technique which Pfeffer[50] describes as the identification of 'significant years of service numbers and then compute the proportion of personnel with more or less than those years of service'. Blau[51] has suggested two other distributional properties that need to be considered in an attempt to dimensionalize and measure demographic variables: the index of heterogeneity and the Gini index.

The index of heterogeneity, according to Pfeffer,[52] 'measures the extent to which there are a number of significant groups or categories in a distribution and the dispersion of the organizational population over these categories'. Blau[53] defined the index of heterogeneity as $(1 - P_i 2)$, where P_i, according to Pfeffer,[54] 'is the fraction of the organization's membership in each tenure or length of service category, given that demography was the basis being used to categorize members'. The other measure of demographic distribution is the Gini index. The Gini index is an attempt to assess the level or degree of inequality in the organization. The concept of inequality in this context, simply refers to differences in length of service among organizational members. Blau[55] made an attempt to operationalize the Gini index as follows:

$$G = \frac{2\,\tilde{o}_{si} P_i\,(P_{bi} - P_{ai})}{2\,\tilde{o}_{si}\,P_i}$$

Where s_i = the mean value in a category

P_i = the fraction of the population in that category

P_{bi} = and P_{ai} = the fractions of the population with values below and above the category in question, respectively.

Pfeffer[56] used the above indices in analysing data from 36 academic departments of two large university campuses and found almost perfect correlation between his results and the regeneration index. There was also fairly high correlation 'with the proportion of personnel with more than 21 years of service and less than 7 years of service', and the regeneration index. But he reported that 'average years of service was not significantly correlated with the Gini index and only moderately correlated with the index of heterogeneity'.

We have closely examined organizations as relational networks. The interlinkages that exist in organizations were to a large extent addressed, and how networks in organizations may be measured and dimensionalized. Other aspects of network analysis covered include the determination of network characteristics. Another important aspect of network analysis that was discussed was the various demographic processes that exist in organizations. Some of the important demographic processes which are worthy of mention, that were discussed, include basic attributes such as age, sex, educational level, length of service or residence, race and other factors. Since every organization is a human thing, it is important to conclude that the network of relations that exist does impose some form of order and patterned behaviour in all organizations.

ORGANIZATIONS AS PARADIGMS

Based on literature reviewed so far it has been shown that a great many views have been advanced as to what organizations are, what they represent and what they stand for. But Brown[57] sees the concept of organization as a paradigm. Kuhn,[58] amplified by Pfeffer, has said that, as used in science: 'Paradigm refers to shared understanding and, as important, the shared examples that emerge in scientific disciplines to guide research and instruction in the discipline.'[59] It is also argued that 'a paradigm is a way of doing things, a way of looking at the world'. In other words, a paradigm could be regarded as a framework, an ordered or organized way of arranging activities both at the organizational level and in a wider context. A paradigm could also be interpreted to represent a window through which we can look at activities taking place in organizations, specific geographic or social systems or the world at large. Lodahl and Gordon[60] in their explanation of a paradigm think that 'a discipline's paradigm development with the certainty in technology, and the connection between paradigms and technologies is an apt one'. What Lodahl and Gordon seem to be saying is that a paradigm is simply the equivalent of technology. This means how an organization's technology serves as reference source for achieving the goals of the organization. Because a paradigm serves as the organization's directional map, it is more or less the culture of the organization which shapes and dictates its activities.

Emphasizing both the importance and indispensability of an organization's paradigm, Pfeffer[61] has argued that organizations as a matter of expediency have the singular obligation of articulating their paradigms. This means that organizations should be able to sell their programmes. An organization's paradigm is, more, or less its manifesto. All the programmes and actions of an organization are embedded in its paradigm. An organization's paradigm, therefore, is essentially its directing mind and will. Any deviation from the programmes it has set out for itself, is likely to lead an organization not only to a state of normlessness but a system without myths, sagas and beliefs. But all human activities which are plays acted under the banner of organizations should have a focus, direction and game plan. Because paradigms are the windows through which organization's leaders emit the myths and beliefs of the organization, they (paradigms) are seen as parameters which guide the actions of organizational members. This seems to be in consonance with Selznick's[62] postulate when he argued that 'a critical leadership task was to provide myths and beliefs that infused day-to-day activity with meaning and purpose'. In order to achieve targets set by organizations, the paradigms of these organizations on which all their plans, myths and beliefs are anchored must be fully articulated. It therefore follows that organizations without paradigms are like nation-states without constitutions or political parties without manifestos.

It has been argued that there are several implications to be deduced from the view that organizations are paradigms. Kuhn[63] has developed a rather convincing argument that in the scientific world paradigms rarely 'evolve over time'. Rather, according to Kuhn, as enunciated by Pfeffer, 'old paradigms are replaced virtually *in toto* by new paradigms in a fashion that is more revolutionary than evolutionary'. This argument clearly shows that paradigms do not have partial forms nor do they change from one state to another, but that paradigms move from one state to a completely new or different state. Paradigms are not a conglomeration of different myths and beliefs that move from one form to some other form or forms that have an admixture of myths and beliefs that evolve over time. The most important import of Pfeffer's thesis is that paradigms are not evolutionary but completely revolutionary. Which means, when paradigms change, they change completely and not partially. The emergent paradigm, therefore, is completely different from what had existed before. Based on this argument, no two paradigms can possibly possess the same traits or properties. It is also clear from the argument above that a paradigm as a matter of fact must possess some form of internal consistency. All the subsystems that make up the whole must be 'tightly coupled'. The concept of internal consistency of a paradigm makes it almost impossible to change any part thereof. For a paradigm to be consistent there must be a complete revolutionary action and not through evolution or adaptation. This point had been forcefully highlighted by Golding when he argued that:

> The process of abstraction and simplification enables 'a world' to be constructed and given meaning, but in a way which tends to result in a viewing of the construction as the only possible world. This whole transaction has a tendency to become self-fulfilling. . . . the extent that the access to the totality of the larger world, in the shape of possible alternative views, is blocked. Perspective tend to become ossified.[64]

Another contention concerning paradigms and how they revolve in organizations is the work of Sheldon.[65] He had 'used the imagery of paradigm revolutions' to discuss how organizations would encounter problems in an attempt to effect some form of change. The concept of paradigm was regarded as an important phenomenon by Sheldon. This had led him to use the concept of 'paradigm as a diagnostic' in predicting when change is likely to be easy and when change would be more difficult, so as to require a more elaborate and broader approach. Based on the issues raised by Sheldon, Pfeffer has argued that: 'If paradigms are the glue binding the organization together and differentiating it from its environment and other organizations, paradigm shifts are traumatic and fundamental organizational events.'[66] It therefore follows that a sudden paradigm change could have far-reaching effects

on an organization. If a sudden change in paradigm leads to positive outcomes, then the organization would exploit the situation to its advantage. But if such a sudden change leads to adverse or negative results, then the whole process of change becomes both traumatic and overtly consequential to the activities of the organization. It then means that the glue binding the organization or differentiating it from its environment and other organizations would appear to be melting away.

Jonsson and Ludin in a Swedish study involving investment development companies (ICDs) found overwhelming evidence in support of the paradigm revolution argument.[67] They went on to argue that within the context of the organization there exist 'cycles of enthusiasm and depression' which are associated with prominent 'ideas or myths'. Jonsson and Ludin went further to argue that 'the prevailing myth is the one that presently guides the behaviour of individuals at the same time that it justifies their behaviour to themselves'.[68] It is plausible, therefore, to argue that the existing myth or paradigm serves as a storehouse for any new information that comes into the organization. The existing paradigm remains intact if its (paradigm's) properties are strong enough to condition any new incoming information. But if it is not, then there is likely to be a paradigm revolution. This means a new paradigm would altogether emerge in the organization. It is right, therefore, to argue that there exists in organizations a cycle of paradigm stability and change. In certain cases the change process in organizational paradigms could be subtle and gradual. But in some other instances the paradigm change process could be 'traumatic' and 'unsettling'. Any change process that takes a traumatic form could create serious consequences for an organization. Rounds[69] has advanced two reasons why change does occur in organizations. First, Rounds thinks that the acquisition of technical information could be responsible for the process of paradigm change in organizations. An alternative argument presented by Rounds about change is that 'paradigms do not completely change dramatically, but take time initially for change to occur'.

Another interesting view of paradigm change is said to be associated with societal values. This view of paradigm change does not in any way accept the technical failures concept of change that occur in organizations. The underlying causation in paradigm change according to this view is the fact that 'values and social theory' are dynamic. A given society would want to move away from certain ways of doing things to embrace newer ideas that suit the particular contextual needs of the time prevailing in that community. This argument was forcefully developed by Ouchi[70] in his 'Theory Z' management system in Japan. Ouchi was involved in studying Japanese cultural practices, and argued that the level of productivity would improve if concepts such as quality circles, autonomy and increased responsibility were introduced in the

workplace. It is possible to explain Ouchi's argument from two competing points of view. One view is that, it is likely that such a change in paradigm occurred as a result of 'technical failure of the old paradigm'. The old paradigm, perhaps, was not strong enough to dilute the force of changes that have taken place in various forms in the environment of the organization. Another way of looking at Ouchi's postulate is that a paradigm change would have occurred as a result of gap(s) created by the organization's 'espoused theory' and 'theory-in-use'.[71] What needs to be done in such situations is an attempt to bridge the gap(s). This means, accepting new norms, practices or traditions that have become popular in that environment.

POPULATION ECOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

The literature on organizations has in the main stressed that change or changes in organizations have always taken place through 'processes of learning and adaptation'. But population ecology scholars, contrary to the view expressed above have emphasized that 'change in population of organizations occurs, in part, because of the operation of selection processes working on those organizations'.[72] Population ecology theorists have highlighted selection processes because they believe that organizations operate within certain environments in which they may be constrained both by internal and external environmental factors. Among others, Hannan and Freeman[73] highlighted issues such as the organization's investments, particularly equipment or sunk costs, internal workplace politics as some of the constraints impinging upon the organization from within. They went on to argue that there are also external pressures or factors that constrain the activities of organizations. Some of these external factors that bring pressure to bear on the organization are legal and financial limitations which makes for entry into new markets problematic, and legitimacy problems which hinder the organization's flexibility in terms of adaptation and entry into new activities.

The issues raised above could create problems of adaptation. Because organizations meander through 'storms' of internal and external environmental variables, they must adopt both defensive and offensive mechanisms to be able to cope with these environmental factors. However, the environment of organizations more often than not are difficult to control. The most probable or rational action open to organizations that find themselves in such situations is to adopt a strategy of adaptation. But because adaptation as a strategy is in itself subject to certain environmental limitations, it becomes necessary to introduce selection processes, whereby the key features or characteristics of organizations are identified and classified according to specific configurations. This approach has had tremendous influence on the work of Hannan and Freeman.[74] They therefore, argued that:

> We suggest that a population ecology of organizations must seek to understand the distribution of organizations across environmental conditions and the limitations on organizational structures in different environments, and more generally seek to answer the question: Why are there so many kinds of organizations?[75]

The view expressed by Hannan and Freeman implies that what is most relevant in understanding organizations is the identification and classification of organizations according to types or forms. They went on to argue that 'an organizational form is a blueprint for organizational action, for transforming inputs into outputs'. The blueprint of an organization may not necessarily take the form of formally institutionalized procedures and practices but could be understood most times from the structure of the organization, operational patterns and other indicators that characterize the normative order within each organization. Looking at organizations from an almost identical perspective, Aldrich[76] has also defined organizational form as 'specific configurations of goals, boundaries, and activities'. Taking a cue from empirical sources, Pfeffer has argued that the term form 'has been defined with respect to the particular subject population being investigated and has tended to focus on structural attributes of the organization'.[77] What, therefore, gives theoretical taste and value to organizations can be explained via the distinctive forms or types created by organizational analysts. In the literature on organizations, two distinctive organizational types—specialists and generalists—have commonly emerged. Pfeffer defines a specialist organization as 'one that does a smaller number of things more intensively compared with a generalist'. Some organizations for instance, focus their attention on fewer activities but places a high level of premium on getting these fewer activities done with a high degree of precision and intensity. In contrast, Pfeffer has argued that 'specialist organizations serve a narrower range of product markets, but often because of this specialization, they know these markets and can serve them more efficiently'.

Another important terminology which organization theory scholars borrowed from biological ecology which has become a dominant concept in population ecology of organizations, is niche. Hannan and Freeman define niche as: 'that area in constraint space (the space whose dimensions are levels of resources, etc.) in which the population outcompetes all other local populations. The niche, then, consists of all those combinations of resource levels at which the population can survive and reproduce itself.'[78]

Characteristically, Aldrich[67] also defined environmental niches as 'distinct combinations of resources and other constraints that are sufficient to support an organization form'.[79] Based on these two definitions of niche, it has become apparent that the concept of niche or niches

occupies a very fundamental place in the vocabulary of organization theory. The empirical position of niche in the study of organizations may still be germinating but the theoretical value of the concept seems to have reached remarkable heights. The academic value and taste of the concept, therefore, cannot be sidetracked in any theoretical analysis and theory development in organizational studies.

The place or role of niches in organizational analysis is the interplay between niche characteristics and the concepts of 'specialism' and 'generalism' which forms the basis for predicting population ecology of organizations. The view has been advanced by Pfeffer that specialist organizations, because of their limited range of activities, can exploit relatively narrow environmental conditions to its advantage, thereby reducing the problem of slack or excess capacity. Generalist organizations, on the other hand, can survive or withstand wider environmental constraints as a result of their ability to cast their strategic net rather widely. However, generalist organizations may find it difficult to survive in an environment where a single or limited conditions exist. The compromise between the two organization types, therefore, is that of 'security or risk reduction and efficiency or the exploitation of the particular environment in greater depth'.[80]

Brittain and Freeman[61] have added a further impetus in organizational studies by arguing that 'environments, in ecology theory, are dimensionalized according to three criteria'. The three criteria they considered were: 'the uncertainty of the environment; the compatibility of the different resource states, or whether changes between environmental states are large or small; and the grain of the environment, which is the frequency of changes in environmental states overtime.' According to Pfeffer, there exists both a fine-grained and coarse-grained environment in the population ecology of organizations. These environments have fundamental influence on the activities and direction of organizations. A fine-grained environment is a situation where there are multiplicity of changes occurring over time, whereas a coarse-grained environment is an environmental condition where there are no rapid changes occurring over time, but if changes do occur they could be large in scope. Hannan and Freeman have, therefore, argued that when uncertainty is low specialist organizations are likely to thrive. They also argued that when uncertainty is high specialist organizations would dominate and 'the environment was fine-grained with large differences between environmental conditions'. It follows, therefore, that if there are frequent changes in environmental conditions it is appropriate to adopt a specialized structure. The cost of generalism in a frequently changing environment could be enormous, because the organization is likely to spend a larger part of its operational time in adjusting and tinkering with the structure of the organization.

The most appropriate strategic action open to organization theory

scholars under conditions of uncertainty in coarse-grained environments is generalism. But generalism as an organizing principle could be problematic, particularly in times of 'slack or excess resources'. An alternative course of action or approach to adopt under conditions of uncertainty is the introduction of polymorphism. Polymorphism, according to Pfeffer, is a situation where population heterogeneity is introduced thereby making it possible for some organizations to adapt to some environmental state while others are made to adapt to other environmental states. Polymorphism as an organizing method introduces an element of 'safety-valve' in a world where the only thing which has become certain and permanent is change itself. This combinatorial approach seems to have the characteristic advantage of having at least some survivors in the population ecology if there are any traumatic and profound environmental changes. Pfeffer refers to polymorphism as the organizational equivalent of 'holding companies or confederations of organizations of different forms'.

CONCLUSION

Organization theory looks very much like a loose discipline, with each contributor advocating the theoretical potency, rigour and power of analysis of a particular perspective. But a new revolution in thought in respect of discussions on perspectives of organization theory is necessary. Instead of the rather fragmentary and 'isolationist' approaches adopted in the development of theories of organizations, and an almost sectarian tradition of discussing perspectives discretely, there should be a shift in focus and emphasis in the development of paradigms and perspectives, which should not only share strong methodological connections[82] but a broadening of the theoretical foundation of organization theory. Daft and Wiginton[83] and Van Maanen[84] have advocated a methodological shift to broaden the scope of analyses of organizations to include the qualitative element. However, with the growth in the literature on organizations, there appears to be a seemingly greater level of a 'sense of ambiguity'. A growing number of contributors have emphasized 'studying the interaction of micro and macro processes in the context of understanding change'.[85] Other scholars[86] have advocated the adoption of a more rational and realistic approach in the 'measurement and validation of concepts used in research'. Van Maanen[87] in an attempt to find answers to some of these almost 'neurotic and puzzling' questions that surround organizational analyses, was quick to proffer solutions, whereby researchers in organizations were asked to get closer to the organizations they are studying, to understand the full ramifications of their dynamics—a kind of participant observation technique. But Salancik[88] feels that the best methodological imperative is stimulating 'the organizations being investigated at a distance and watching their response'.

Over time, organization theory has suffered a great deal of polarization as a result of differences in the frames of reference of contributors. These differences in thought are simply antecedents of the beliefs, values and ideologies of the various scholars of organization theory. Some scholars have in the past pursued with rigorous vigour their beliefs and persuasions in specific theories or perspectives in organizational analyses. In fact, Pfeffer had strongly argued that: 'Research on some topics, and using some perspectives, has been pursued with almost boundless energy, in spite of its meagre results, while other perspectives, with at least the potential for offering both parsimonious and more valid analyses of organizations, have been ignored.'[89]

It would appear from the analysis above that one of the major problems facing organization theory is the extremely narrow perspectives adopted by some scholars. This does not in any way suggest that the various approaches should be neatly and 'tightly coupled' together. But there should be an increasing interest and desire by contemporary scholars in organization theory to adopt a reformist approach built on assumptions of consensus and convergence in theory development. This could be done by matching perspective with perspective, thereby removing areas of both conceptual and philosophical contradictions. The range of theories or perspectives reviewed so far should not be seen as competing ideas, rather they should be seen as complementary theories. In other words, none of these theories should be treated as an isolated phenomenon but should be seen as layers of the same component that makes a total whole. The various perspectives are systemic, in that they constitute part of the totality of a holistic system.

Seen in the above light, therefore, organization theorists should now see organizations from different perspectives. In fact, the perspective one adopts at any point in time should be based on certain contextual factors. In whichever 'cell or matrix' the scholar seems to be working, it is instructive to argue that knowledge is like mental bricklaying.[90] Each time a new knowledge is added to what one already knows, a new mental block had been laid. But if we stick too strongly to our views alone, then knowledge cannot grow and there may not be any mental block to be added to what we already know. However, if what we already know becomes obsolete, there is nothing wrong in tearing apart our mental blocks or maps to enable us to acquire new knowledge. If this is not done, our knowledge would become stunted, therefore, our perspective may not only become narrow but unprogressive. It is my argument in this paper, therefore, that organizational analysis should be both multi-disciplinary and progressive in approach.

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The Ancient Greek Origins of the Western Debate on Animals*

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For Plato, in the fourth century BC, animals have reason (*to logistikon*). At least, they do in some of his dialogues. Why does the fox have a long snout? If you do not use your reason properly in this life, the circles of your rational soul will get out of true shape and become elongated. Then you may be reincarnated as an animal with a long snout, to house the distorted circles of your rational soul (*Timaeus* 91E–92A). Plato's order is the reverse of Darwin's. Humans were created first. Animals are reincarnated humans, and may have reason, even if they do not use it.

Plato's pupil, Aristotle, changed all this. He was the great classifier. Repeatedly, he denied reason (*logos*) to animals. His *Nicomachean Ethics* is based (1.7) on making practical reason the distinguishing mark of humans. Not only reason, but also belief (*doxa*) is denied to animals in *On the Soul* 3.3, since beliefs are based on reasons (428a18–24).

Consequently, Aristotle had to compensate animals, in order to explain how they get around in the world. He compensated them by expanding the role of their sense perception. The lion can perceive that the ox is

*The details will be supplied in my book, *Animal Minds and Human Morals: the Origins of the Animals Debate*, Duckworth, London, and Cornell, Ithaca, New York, 1993. In this article, I have selected those aspects of the debate which related to other papers given in the Symposium on 'Vegetarianism' organized by Daya Krishna at Jaipur on January 5–6, 1993. I thank him and the other participants for the very stimulating discussions.

The most important single Greek treatise, Porphyry's *On Abstinence from Animal Food* is available from the Centaur Press, London, in a somewhat inaccurate early nineteenth-century translation by Thomas Taylor. The Budé series has a good commentary and French translation in three volumes. Budé also publishes in one volume Iamblichus' reply to Porphyry in *The Mysteries of Egypt*, with French translation. There is an English translation, again by Thomas Taylor, and another by Alexander Wilder, both reprinted together in an edition by Stephen Ronan, Chthonios Books, 1989.

There is another, less satisfactory, Greek treatment of the Indians on not killing animals by the fifth century AD: Christian Bishop Palladius, *de Gentibus Indiae et de Bragamnibus*, esp. 45–51, not translated.

Direct quotations from the Pre-Socratic philosophers, Empedocles and the early Pythagoreans, are translated into English by Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pressocratic Philosophers*.

near, and rejoice that (or because) he is going to have a meal (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 3.10, 1118a20–3). The lion may even have a rudimentary concept of an ox. At least, some animals have a little experience (*Metaphysics* 1.1, 980b27), and experience is described as the first universal concept in the soul, or so I read (*Posterior Analytics* 2. 19, 100a5–8). Many memories of the same thing, e.g., (I take it) of oxen, constitute this first rudimentary universal concept of an ox.

Aristotle is also extremely insistent that animals enjoy memory as much as humans. This is a major theme of his treatise *On Memory*. The argument is that even human memory does not require intellect, but is merely a function of sense perception. And this is true, even in the case of a human remembering intellectual things like mathematics (*On Memory* 1).

Aristotle died in 322 BC. A generation later, in 300 BC, in the same city of Athens, the Stoic School was founded. The Stoics agreed with Aristotle that animals lack reason and belief. They have no beliefs, because they cannot *assent* with their reason (since they have none) to what appears to them to be the case. They can only follow their appearances (*phantasiai*).

Appearance is their main cognitive faculty. Unlike Aristotle, the Stoics set about denying animals most other human faculties. Animals do not have emotions. You may think that your dog can get angry. But it has only the appearance of injustice. It cannot use reason to assent to that appearance as true. Consequently, it lacks genuine anger (Seneca *On Anger* 1.3.7; 2.3.5–2.4.1). Animals also lack memory. The horse can recognize a road when it sees it, but that is mere perceptual recognition. When it is back in its stable, it cannot remember the road (Seneca, *Letter* 124, 16). Porphyry, in the most important ancient treatise on our subject, *On Abstinence from Animal Food*, repeats at 3.22, a report on the Stoics supplied by an earlier Platonist, Plutarch (see Plutarch *Moralia*, Loeb edition, Vol. 12, for three treatises on animals). According to the Stoics, animals do not have genuine intentions. The swallow only 'as it were' prepares its nest.

Not everyone agreed with Aristotle and the Stoics that animals lack reason. Plato, in some of his works, did not. One argument that came to be treated as important was the argument on whether any animals have speech, for in Greek the same word, *logos*, can mean speech or reason. Reasoning came to be thought of, following a remark of Plato's, as merely a silent inner version of speech. So if you could prove that some animals have speech, you were well on the way to proving that they have reason. And do they?

Aristotle and the Stoics denied speech to animals. But there were objections. Does not the nightingale have a song? The Stoics eventually fell back (Varro *On the Latin Language* 6.56) on the argument that some animals can make individual meaningful sounds, but they cannot string

them together in the right order. In other words, they lack *syntax*. The modern scientific debate has reached exactly the same point. There was an attempt to teach chimpanzees to use American sign language with their hands. Other scientists objected that they could make individual meaningful signs, but could not string them together correctly in sequence: they lacked *syntax*. And *syntax* is treated also by followers of Chomsky as a uniquely human capacity.

The fullest attempt to ascribe speech to animals was made by Porphyry, the second of the Neoplatonists, pupil and editor of Plotinus, who was the first. But in coming to Porphyry, I am skipping six hundred years from the foundation of the Stoic School, and alighting around AD 300. In Book 3 of his treatise *On Abstinence from Animal Food* Porphyry produces a series of arguments for animal speech. An animal understands its master (3.4; 3.5), and understanding involves master and animal having the same appearances (*phantasiai*) in their minds. Animals even understand *Greek* (3.4), and that cannot be said of everyone—unless Porphyry merely means that parrots and others can *imitate* Greek. It is no good objecting that we don't *understand* animals, because we don't understand *Indians*, but they have speech (3.3). Finally, Porphyry charmingly tells us that he once reared a partridge in Carthage, and it made not only the usual partridge noises, but also special noises for Porphyry (3.4).

So far, I have concentrated on what Daya Krishna has called the metaphysical and epistemological issues. How do animals differ from us, and how do we know about them? But there were moral issues too. If there is such a huge difference between animals and ourselves, in that we have reason while they lack it, this was thought to have major consequences as to how we might treat them. Of course, the moral argument was rather weakened, when the Stoics retreated to pleading that animals lack *syntax*. 'They lack *syntax*, so we can eat them' lacks the ring of conviction.

But the Stoics worked out a detailed and influential rationale for the conclusion that we owe no justice to animals, and that nothing we do to them is unjust. They drew on Aristotle's words, 'There is no such thing as justice in relation to horse or ox, because we have nothing in common' (*Nicomachean Ethics* 8.11). But whereas Aristotle was primarily interested in the scientific distinction between animals and humans, and only secondarily in the moral consequences, for the Stoics the moral conclusion was crucial. Their theory of justice was as follows (e.g. Cicero *On Ends* 3.62–68).

As rational beings, it is natural and right for us to treat all other rational beings as kin, or more literally to welcome them, metaphorically speaking, as belonging in the household of rational beings. This process of welcoming, metaphorically, as belonging in the household is called *oikeiôsis* (from *oikos*, a household). And justice rides on the back of

oikeiôsis. It is natural and right to extend justice as far as *oikeiôsis* extends. This theory of justice was hailed by a former British Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher. When she was invited by the French to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the French Revolution in Paris, she told the French people on television that they had no claim on the concept of human rights. For that had been invented earlier by the British at the time of Magna Carta and bad King John, and before that by the Greeks. An article in *The Times* by Mr Kilroy-Silk revealed that the Greeks she had in mind were our Stoics. It is indeed true that the Stoic theory extends justice even to slaves. Contrary to Aristotle's view, there are no natural slaves (Philo *On the Special Laws* 69). And in the sixteenth century, the Stoic idea of the community of all humans was used in the Great Spanish debate on the morality of the conquest of the American Indians.

But although the Stoic theory has benign consequences for humans, it is disadvantageous to animals. The Stoics alleged, despite the prevalence of pet-keeping, that as irrational beings animals could not be welcomed into the metaphorical household. There was a species barrier, and animals were therefore owed no justice. Moreover, the Stoic theory was twice endorsed by the Christian Father Augustine, writing either side of AD 400. (*On the Morals of the Manichaeans and Catholics* 17.54 and 59; *City of God* 1.20). Augustine's endorsement crystallized a previously fluid tradition, and helps to explain the comparative complacency of the western (Latin-speaking) half of the Christian tradition. The commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' does not apply to animals, he said.

The Stoic theory of justice was reinforced by another treatment of justice, which also turned on the alleged irrationality of animals. Epicurus founded the Epicurean School, again in Athens, around 308 BC. According to him, no justice is owed where there has been no contract. Epicurus' successor, Hermarchus, makes the consequence for animals explicit, in a passage which Porphyry has preserved for us (*On Abstinence from Animal Food* 1.12). 'It would have increased our security to make contracts with animals, but we could not push justice that far, *because they are not rational.*' Thus the supposed irrationality of animals becomes the reason for ignoring justice towards them in both the Stoic and the Epicurean School. That is why, in arguing for justice to animals in Book 3 of *Abstinence*, Porphyry has to devote much of his effort to arguing that animals are rational.

The views of Aristotle, the Stoics and the Epicureans are recorded by Porphyry at the beginning of Book 1. But a different view of justice to animals was taken by the Pythagoreans, by Aristotle's immediate successor Theophrastus and by some of the Platonists, including Plutarch and Porphyry. As early as the sixth century BC, Pythagoras had insisted on the kinship of animals to us. One (not the only) ground of kinship was

emphasized even more strongly in the fifth century BC by the Pre-Socratic philosopher-poet Empedocles. We are literally akin, because animals have reincarnated human souls. To kill animals is to kill our relatives, and to eat them is cannibalism.

Theophrastus, who succeeded Aristotle in 322 BC, did not take the kinship literally in this way. But he did introduce into the discussion the word for metaphorical kinship later used by the Stoics, *oikeiotês* (so Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.22; 3.25, quoting Theophrastus). Animals belong metaphorically in our household: they are *oikeioi*, he said, directly contradicting his friend and teacher Aristotle, who had said we have nothing in common. He contradicts Aristotle again, when he says that one ground of kinship is that animals have reasoning (*logismoi*: Porphyry, *Abstinence* 3.25).

Theophrastus improves in the same chapter on one of the Pythagorean arguments for kinship, when he says that we are made of the same elements, not only in being made of earth, air, fire and water—that much could be said even of plants—but we are closer to animals, because we are made of the same tissues. In another passage (*Abstinence* 2.12–2.13), Theophrastus is recorded as distinguishing between animals and plants still further. He rejects the argument (for which see Porphyry *Abstinence* 1.6; 1.18), that if we spare animals, we shall be unable to eat vegetables either. For plants, he says, contradicting Aristotle again (Aristotle *On the Soul* 2, 1–4), have no soul. They are not unwilling for us to pick their fruit, which they would soon drop in any case. And picking fruit does not destroy them. Moreover, we plant and cultivate vegetation, so it is ours in a way that animals are not. Porphyry adds his own contribution to the distinction between plants and animals (*Abstinence* 3.19), possibly drawing on Plutarch, who wrote in the first century AD. Animals differ in having sensation (Aristotle's criterion *On the Soul*, 2, 1–4), and in feeling pain and terror, and so, unlike plants, they can suffer injustice. It is only at this very late stage of Greek thought that pain and terror, instead of rationality, are explicitly cited as a reason for treating animals justly. Because we live in the age of Jeremy Bentham and utilitiarianism, pain and terror may seem to Westerners the most obvious consideration. For the Greeks, it was rationality.

Theophrastus does not accept Empedocles' view that eating animals is a kind of cannibalism. But he does want to present the sacrifice and eating of animals as unnatural. And one device is to say that it arose out of cannibalism, which itself was a response to abnormal scarcity and famine (Porphyry, *Abstinence* 2.27).

I have said that Porphyry devotes Book 3 of *Abstinence* to the need for justice to animals. Book 2 is an attack on animal sacrifice. Because the gods are immaterial, a material sacrifice to them is impure. The highest God should be approached in silence, lower gods at most with hymns

(2.34). The true sacrifice, he says, is the sacrifice of a pure intellect (2.61). Here he agrees with his Christian opponents who made true sacrifice to be purity of heart.

Book 1 of Porphyry's *Abstinence* takes up the Neoplatonist ideal of a life devoted to an ascent to union with God. Such an ascent requires asceticism and is incompatible with meat-eating (1.57). Meat arouses lust, which is another impediment (1.32). We must avoid even the sight of it, and the sound (1.34) of obscene language. If we are to purify or purge (*kathareusai*) ourselves, we should not let ourselves encounter temptation, even to win a victory over it (1.35).

The remaining book of *Abstinence* (Book 4) is devoted to those nations, including the Indians (4.17–18), who have avoided killing animals. The gymnosophists of India are divided into the Brahmins and the *Samanaioi* (cf. *śramana*), who include the Buddhists and perhaps the Jains.

Unfortunately, Porphyry lost the battle to make his fellow Neoplatonists abstain from animal sacrifice. They did agree with his ascetic argument, and consequently only tasted the sacrifice out of piety. But Porphyry's pupil, Iamblichus (died between AD 317 and AD 325) reinstated the tradition of sacrificing animals. In a book called *The Mysteries of Egypt*, Iamblichus quotes from Porphyry's *Letter to Anebo*, and answers it point by point. The *Letter to Anebo* was a respectful but penetrating querying of Egyptian religious practice, much favoured in Greece, including the practice of animal sacrifice. In *Mysteries* 1.11, Iamblichus takes up Porphyry's objection to hearing obscenities. There are religious rituals, in which phalli are set up and obscenities shouted. Iamblichus takes up Porphyry's reference to purification (*kathareusai*), but he understands it in terms of Aristotle' theory of purgation (*katharsis*). To explain this, I must go back six and a half centuries to Plato and Aristotle.

Plato, in *Republic*, Book 10, had reluctantly expelled the poets from his ideal state because they stir up emotions. Aristotle's brilliant reply was that the stirring up of emotions is a valuable function of tragedy and comedy. For in arousing pity and fear, tragedy, purifies you, or, more likely, purges you (*katharsis*), like a laxative, of the excess of these emotions. One might have expected this fascinating theory to be discussed again and again. But it disappears from the pages of Greek Philosophy for six and a half centuries, until it reappears here in Iamblichus. A moderate exercise of erotic feelings, he says, will purge you (*apokathairein*) of these emotions.

Iamblichus also takes a different view of animals from Porphyry's. Animals have *irrational* souls, and so there is no possibility of our rational souls being reincarnated as animals (Nemesius *On the Nature of Man* 2.115–118; Aeneas of Gaza, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. 85, 893A–B). I conjecture that Iamblichus' motivation was to legitimize animal sacrifice. If your grandmother's soul is not inside the animal you are sacrificing,

you will not be so inhibited. At any rate, Iamblichus in his *Life of Pythagoras* connects the issue of sacrifice with that of reincarnation, when he make Pythagoras say that humans are not reincarnated into *sacrificial* animals.

But how can Iamblichus, as a Neoplatonist, ignore Plato's belief in human reincarnation in animal form? The answer, according to the passages cited, is that Plato was speaking *metaphorically*. A human may become *like* an animal in body and soul. One of Iamblichus' pupils, Theodore, suggested the alternative that human souls animate animal bodies only from the *outside*, by remote control. This, too, would weaken inhibitions in slaying a sacrificial victim, since your grandmother's soul would not be *inside*.

Iamblichus, then took a different view from Porphyry of the psychology of humans (temptation can be healthful) and of animals (they are irrational). He also took a different view of gods. Some of them are material, and require material sacrifice (*Mysteries* 5.17; 5.19). Animal sacrifice was reinstated, and after Iamblichus' death, the Emperor Julian, who sought to restore pagan religion and oust Christianity, took Iamblichus as his model.

I shall finish by returning to Daya Krishna's distinction between the metaphysical and the moral issues. Animals are not self-conscious, he said; they only feel pleasure and pain. In place of self-consciousness, the Greek metaphysical distinction was based on rationality. But what I want to stress is that there is not one criterion for just conduct, but many. Self-consciousness and rationality may be superior qualities, but superiority is not the only consideration. The Martians may be even more rational and fully self-conscious than ourselves. But would that entitle them to eat us? As a matter of fact, the Stoic notion of species-kinship also seems to me relevant. It is reasonable for humans to prefer humans and for Martians to prefer Martians, whichever species may be superior. If the Martians had to eat us, in order to stay alive, I should try to avoid being eaten, but I would not think them unjust.

But, it may be objected, if I prefer my own species, do I also prefer my own race, or my own sex? Not at all. There is a real barrier between species, as shown by the handicap suffered by children who have been brought up by animals. But barriers between races and sexes are artificial. Some of the deepest human relationships cut across them. The point has been well made by Mary Midgley (*Animals and Why They Matter*, Pelican Books, and *Man and Beast*).

Rationality, self-consciousness and kinship are not the only considerations either. If I am driving along the road and run into a peacock, should I stop my car to see if it is hurt? The relevant considerations are innumerable, and not merely whether peacocks are rational, self-conscious, or akin—which they are probably not. A very important point is that it was I who ran into it, so I have a special responsibility and it has a special need (Mary Midgley again).

Considerations of responsibility and need are very different from considerations about the whole species of peacock: whether it is rational, self-conscious, or akin, although it is, of course, relevant that the peacock is a species capable of suffering. Another consideration is whether my wife is waiting for me with an urgent appointment.

What I want to say is that moral philosophers tend to be too one-dimensional. They wish to claim that there is only one thing that matters in just-dealing. 'Is the peacock rational?' ask the Stoics. 'Was there a contract?' ask the Epicureans. 'How will you maximize pleasure or satisfaction?' ask the utilitarians. Is the peacock self-conscious? But life is not so simple. Those like the utilitarians who use only one criterion eventually run into absurdity. Peter Singer, whose admirable book *Animal Liberation* reopened sensitivity to animals in western countries a decade or more ago, nonetheless ran into trouble in another book. His criterion of maximizing pleasure or satisfaction, which he used in favour of animals, got used elsewhere to sanction the killing of certain handicapped infants. This would have been prevented, if other criteria had been employed as well as preference-satisfaction. Western countries, soothed by the Christian tradition of Augustine (and eventually of the Stoics) have been complacent and callous about animals. But because there is no one criterion for just dealing, it is hard to say in advance, without looking at the details of each case, that the killing of animals will never be justified—if, for example, it is not merely to please the palate, but is genuinely needed for medical research. Furthermore, the list of relevant criteria may need to be indefinitely expanded, as our imagination and sensitivity grow.

Problems of Formalization in Samvāda Śāstra

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I

Indigenous logic or *ānvīkṣikī/vāda vidyā* forms part of Saṃvāda Śāstra which evolved as a systematic body of knowledge from *hetu vidyā* or *ānvīkṣikī vidyā* of Saṃhitā phase of Indian cognitive history and was first presented in a systematic form presumably by Gotama, improved later and resystematized by Akṣapāda in the presently available Nyāya Sūtra. Nyāya Sūtra incorporates all the 'categories' of Vaiśeṣika Siddhānta so that Saṃvāda Śāstra has to be conceived as a science of knowledge systematization in general and of rational argumentation in particular which takes Vaiśeṣika cosmology as a 'field of argumentation'. Since cosmology is a science about the entire cosmos (*all* that there *is*), it thus provides the most comprehensive and wide-based field of discourse. The central problems to which Saṃvāda Śāstra, then, addresses may be said to be these: How is systematic/rational cosmology to be generated? How is it to be presented? And how is it to be appraised? Since cosmology is the most comprehensive science, it is expected that if these questions regarding it are answered satisfactorily, then these will also serve as guidelines for *all* other sciences. In a sense, then, Saṃvāda Śāstra may be conceived as science of rational systematization of all sciences without exception, that is, a science of generation, presentation/construction, and appraisal of sciences in general.

The other authentic work, apart from Nyāya Sūtra, providing the early picture of *hetu vidyā* or *ānvīkṣikī vidyā* or *vāda vidyā* is the Vimāna Sthāna of Caraka Saṃhitā. This work is historically very significant and provides us valuable insights about how the seers were struggling to arrive at norms of systematic reasoning and rational presentation of knowledge. Most of the categories/concepts of Nyāya Sūtra are present in this work and upon carefully reading it, one has the feeling of Nyāya Sūtra being a mere rearrangement of these fundamental conceptions and principles worked out in the Sthāna. Indeed, the wide interpretative divergence of Nyāya Sūtra that has occurred over time cannot be fully appreciated without carefully reading the Vimāna Sthāna. Several very important interpretative/expository/explicative confusions can be easily dispersed from Saṃvāda Śāstra if we constantly refer back to Vimāna Sthāna which,

therefore, shows the light for reaching the original point how the minds of the then seers were working.

Ever after the onset of vigjnāna phase (1850 onwards) in India, perhaps maximum research effort has been made in tracing the history of Saṃvāda Śāstra as also in 'modernizing'/reformulating it in contemporary idiom.[1] Saṃvāda Śāstra is even pursued in its original style in contemporary India as Navya Nyāya of the fame of Gaṅgeśa and Raghunatha and modern Indian and western formal logicians have for several years explored the possibilities of its formalization in line with contemporary western formal logic.[2] Similar efforts have been made with regard to Baudha Saṃvāda Śāstra (or Bauddha Nyāya).[3] However, these efforts appear more like the effort of capturing or compressing a vast cloud in a small vessel—these also give the hint of an attempt to absorb or assimilate the core/form of a specific culture into that of another—but such efforts were bound to have failed for western formal logic is only a piecemeal effort at symbolizing very limited *saṃvāda* or discourse whereas the discourse in Ārṣa, Jaina and Bauddha Saṃvāda Śāstras is that of the entire cosmos,—its origin, endurance and dissolution. The *saṃvāda* therefore is regarding generation, presentation and appraisal of cosmological *theory* and in this respect it is quite close to modern 'philosophy of science' rather than to modern logics. Moreover, since the *saṃvāda* was to be carried out in *vyākṛta vāgbhāṣā*, the Saṃvāda Śāstra paid attention only to the semantic content or *artha* of statements and arguments not to their syntactic structure or form or *rūpa*. It is unfortunate that in spite of *pratīka bhāṣā* or symbolic language being available in indigenous mathematical cosmology (Sūrya Siddhānta, Brahmasphuṭa Siddhānta, etc.) which had originated quite early in Kalpa Vedaṅga, Indian seer-thinkers never took symbolic linguistic *saṃvāda* as seriously as the former, as had they done so, an indigenous *formal* Saṃvāda Śāstra or symbolic logic or *saṃvāda gaṇita* would certainly have emerged. One could even conjecture that the possible emergence of such a *saṃvāda gaṇita* was obstructed also by historical interventions external to the cognitive enterprise precisely at a moment when such creative efforts were almost on the agenda.

II

It can legitimately be held that post-Vijñāna-phase attempts at formalization have obstructed rather than spurred the proper formalization of Saṃvāda Śāstra for under the leadership and guidance of western logicians, Indian logicians have failed to notice the *indigeneity* of this *śāstra* and have more or less proved the proverb of fitting round pegs in square holes. Thus, for those seeking to discover the fundamental criteria for formalization of the *śāstra*, these available works on formalization serve only to mislead and confuse the mind, the only help

coming from nonformal presentation, in contemporary idiom, of the *śāstra* such as by S.C. Vidyābhūṣaṇa or Chhavinātha Miśra.[4] Even these latter works have carried on the interpretative divergences and not cared to make serious inquiries regarding some foundational interpretations such as by comparison with Vimāna Sthāna version of *hetu/ānvīkṣikī vidyā*. The most notable divergences are regarding *pramāṇa, dṛṣṭānta, siddhānta* and *avayava*, these being the four out of sixteen categories of Nyāya Sūtra, and forming the core of 'informal logic' of Saṃvāda Śāstra itself. It can be safely held that any attempt at formalization is bound to fail in the absence of clarity about the four central conceptions.

The noticeable fact that *pramāṇa* is presented as the very first category *prior to prameya* is itself an evidence that *pramāṇa* has to be considered as *self-explanatory* or *self-evident* so that by means of it or by its instrumentality is the *prameya* to be investigated/known/systematized. In what way can *pramāṇa* be self-explanatory or self-evident? Since in cosmological theorization/systematization—and in all theorizations without exception—*loka* or world experienced as such *ordinarily* is the first easily accessible datum, this itself can be the guide and standard[5] or basis for clarification of *pramāṇa*. *Loka* accepts *pratyakṣa* as the most reliable *pramāṇa*, it resorts to *anumāna* where *pratyakṣa* does not work, and, finally, it accepts *śabda* or seer insight as a last resort where both *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* fail. It is difficult to say when this *selection* and *ordering* of *pramāṇas* was done in the history of Indian cognitive search—perhaps it was an achievement of Sāṃkhya Siddhānta first—but it was accepted by and large by all serious systematizers. Thus, even Bauddha's seem to accept *Tathagata vachana* as *pramāṇa* though they rejected *ṛṣi/āpta vachana* categorically. Further, although *pramāṇas* select *genuine* knowledge from nongenuine one, these do not guarantee errorless knowledge for obviously all humans falter in *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* at least. It is thus indispensable to search for criteria that can *demarcate errorless genuine knowledge* from erring genuine knowledge. And here too, *loka* itself can be our guide and standard. One can clearly notice that Pāṇini's *vyākaraṇa* did serve as a model in the search for these criteria of demonstration though this *vyākaraṇa* was itself systematized by accepting *loka* as guide and standard in respect of the investigations in regularities in *vāgbhāṣa* as being *in the loka*. [Indications are also available that some rudimentary systematization methods of *Kalpa Vedāṅga* helped Pāṇini in arriving at the famous method of unrestricted generalization or *utsargakaraṇa*.] Thus to ensure that *pratyakṣa* is errorless, humans seek mutual agreement which thereby serves to make any given genuine knowledge by *pratyakṣa* as *true*. This can be schematized as:

yah gulāb kā phool hai 1 >
yah gulāb kā phool hai 2 >

---n>

< *gulāb kā phool hai* >

This is precisely the *utsargakaraṇa* of Pāṇini, also called *anugamana-karaṇa* and has close similarities with 'inference by inductive enumeration' of Aristotle. *Utsargakaraṇa* is three-fold: *ekaviṣaya bahu-prekṣakāśṛta, bahuviṣaya ekapreksakāśṛta,* and *bahuviṣaya bahuprekṣakāśṛta,* the first yielding particular *siddhavākya,* the second yielding universal *siddhavākya* and the third yielding maximally universal *siddhavākya.* We have put the derived statement above in conical brackets to indicate that it is *validly* derived as true. The procedure then allows not only the demarcating of errorless genuine knowledge by *pratyakṣa* from erring such genuine knowledge, but it also provides a notion of *validity* or *siddhi* of inference: It is a valid inference if true conclusion is derived from several particular premises that are true. We have then discovered an underlying universal principle of human nature whereupon *similarity* of perceptual experience of several individuals allows us to reach an *agreement.* The principle is an *objective* feature of the cosmos that manifests *in* and *through* human perceptual experience and allows *pratyakṣa siddhi.*

In case of genuine knowledge by *anumāna* also, demarcation criteria for errorless genuine knowledge can be discovered by accepting *loka* as the standard. Thus, humans by and large *infer* that which is not easily accessible to *pratyakṣa* on the basis of some perceptually experienced object/phenomenon/sign called *liṅga* such as from the perception of smoke they infer the existence of fire. The question is how this process of inferring proceeds in human mind? It was suggested that such inference is actuated by the occurrence of a relevant *dṛṣṭānta* upon perceptual experience of the *liṅga* so that upon seeing the smoke, one is reminded of, say, the hearth, whereupon one proceeds to infer the existence of fire. This may be presented schematically as:

us < *parvat par dhuān hai* >*
jaise < *chulhe men dhuān hota hai* >
∴ < *parvat par agni hai* >

This schematization provides us a criterion of demarcating errorless genuine knowledge by *anumāna* from erring such knowledge. That is to say the genuine-knowledge by *anumāna* can be errorless only when the above process occurs in human mind,—naturally, so to say. Thus, upon having some perceptual experience which is *true,* one is led to the knowledge of some related object by means of *relevant dṛṣṭānta* occurring

*These statements are being retained in Hindi as important relational features are brought into focus in this structure, which disappear upon translation into English.

naturally; and such knowledge will be errorless. [A more pertinent example of *anumāna*: Bubble chamber *men rekhāpath hai, Jaise alātachakra men rekhāpath hotā hai, ataḥ bubble*-chamber *men gatimānavastu hai.*] This provides us another variety of inference called *anumānakaraṇa,* and another criterion of *validity* whereupon two premises of which one is true perceptual evidence and the other evertrue *dṛṣṭānta,* allows us to reach a true conclusion. We have thus discovered another objective universal principle of cosmos that manifests *in* and *through* human mind by and large as humans naturally have the ability of such processes to occur, allowing *anumāna siddhi.* The universal principle is itself obtained by *utsargakaraṇa* of *anumāna* process in humans by and large so that schematically:

anumānakāraṇa 1 >
anumānakāraṇa 2 >

---n>
∴ < *anumāna siddhi* >

Though *anumānakaraṇa* as presented above is a feature of human nature by and large, in some exceptional cases (*apavāda*) it takes a slightly divergent course, namely by *vyatirekī dṛṣṭānta,* so that schematically:

us < *parvat par dhuān hai* >
jaise < *tālāb men dhuān nahīn hotā* >
∴ < *parvat par agni hai* >

The inference is thus valid even when the *dṛṣṭānta* is negative though evertrue so that the two principles jointly provide the underlying universal law of *all* human nature without exception. We will shortly discuss the problem of justification of such inferences—which are totally absent in western logic—and the role of *dṛṣṭānta* in these.

Regarding *śabda* as a means of genuine knowledge, it was admitted that its demonstration is not possible. However, if *loka* is to be our standard, then since the seer is also *in* the *loka,* the seer-insights may be accepted as means of genuine knowledge where *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* fail. Though the seer has extraordinary insights to communicate which presumably spring from his extraordinary ability for *sākṣāta,* this ability itself can be acquired by all humans without exception if sufficient effort is made. It was, however, accepted in principle that appeal to *śabda pramāṇa* will be made only as a last resort in the *saṃvāda.* Saṃvāda Śāstra also accepted *upamāna* or *aumpamya* as another variety of inference, the discussion of which we will defer for the present.

III

The universal principle of *anumānakāraṇa* as a means of genuine-knowledge and as a criterion of validation of a variety of inference, rests

on the notion of *dṛṣṭānta*. That is to say, true perceptual evidence alone cannot lead to conclusion, it is only the *dṛṣṭānta* that spurs the mind towards it *after* the perceptual evidence is acquired. What precisely is this *dṛṣṭānta*? *Dṛṣṭānta* is genuine-knowledge which *naturally* belongs to day-to-day experience of life in the *loka*; it is genuine-knowledge even more fundamental than a specific *pratyakṣa* for it does not require any *siddhi*. It may be said to be *empirico-practically self-evident*,—that is why the stress on its being *ordinary*. Thus, for instance, all humans without exception possess this evertrue knowledge that fire and smoke coexist in the kitchen or the hearth, the knowledge is genuine and errorless by virtue of its repetitive occurrence in life making it empirico-practically self-evident. It is this *svataḥsiddha* genuine-knowledge that is *dṛṣaṭānta*, which, in combination with *pratyakṣa-siddha* genuine-knowledge that spurs one towards the conclusion, or, to say the same, *leads* to conclusion as true genuine-knowledge.

The example above is very carefully chosen. The perceptual evidential statement—'*Parvat par dhuān hai*'—expresses *saṃyoga sambandha* between '*parvat*' and '*dhuān*', the *dṛṣṭānta* is most *ordinary*, and the conclusion—'*Parvat par agni hai*'—is obtained by virtue of *samavāya sambandha* between '*agni*' (*kāraṇa*) and '*dhuān*' (*kārya*). Moreover, it is the instance of an activity that is *currently occurring* and perception provides an evidence of the *present* and inference is also about the present state of affairs. Two other kinds of inference—namely, *pūrvavatā* and *śeṣavatā*—were distinguished from this kind although their structure was held to be the same.

Later developments in Saṃvāda Śāstra marked a special feature of the above examples of *anumānakāraṇa*. In the first schema, the premises as well as the conclusion are positive or *anvayī*; in the second schema, the *dṛṣṭānta* alone is negative or *vyatirekī*; so that a third schema is possible in which the premises as well as the conclusion are negative or *vyatirekī*, such as:

us < talāb men dhuān nahīn hai >
jaise < ghaṭa men dhuān nahīn hotā >
∴ < talāb men agni nahīn hai >

Though such process of inferring does not occur in humans ordinarily, the schema was added in order to *complete* the *logical system* of *anumānakāraṇa* and this was clearly a movement in the direction of formalization though it did not materialize. A *logical system* thus entertains *all* the possibilities of inference irrespective of whether these *actually* occur in the human mind or not. This, then led to another threefold distinction of *anumāna pramāṇa* namely *kevalānvayī*, *kevalavyatirekī*, and *anvayavyatirekī*, making nine varieties of *anumānakāraṇa* in all.

One clearly notices a *formal* structure of this variety of inference by *anumāna* which may be presented symbolically as follows:

kevalānvayī:	P
	D^* (P, Q)
	∴ Q
anvayavyatirekī:	P
	~D^* (P, Q)
	∴ Q
kevalavyatirekī:	~P
	~D^* (P, Q)
	∴ ~Q

We have given up conical brackets accepting the criterion of validity that inference is valid only when both the premises as well as the conclusion are true; the asterisk on *dṛṣṭānta* statement indicating that it is evertrue, and (PQ) indicating that it has to be relevant to P and Q so as to lead to the conclusion. Though these fundamental logical forms do not properly picture the *structure* of statements involved, these nevertheless provide us three fundamental rules/conditions of inference by *anumāna* whereupon a true *proposition* when joined with an evertrue adequate *dṛṣṭānta* entails a true conclusion (proposition).*

IV

In Baudha Saṃvāda Śāstra, the analysis of inference by *anumāna* moved in a novel direction. Bauddhas also accepted *loka* as standard and guide and classified *anumāna pramāṇa* in a different threefold fashion. Thus, they distinguished between *tadutpatti anumāna*, *tādātmya anumāna* and *anupalabdhi anumāna*. Of these, *tadutpatti anumāna* is the same as *sāmānyatodṛṣṭa/kevalānvayī anumāna*, but the other two uncover two new varieties of inference.

In *tādātmyānumāna*, the *dṛṣṭānta* is differently formulated though it is considered indispensable for inference to occur,—it is different in the sense of invariably having a relation of class-inclusion though it is also supposed to be ordinary and empirico-practically self-evident therefore evertrue. Thus, schematically:

< yah sinsipā hai >
< sinsipā vṛkṣa hote hain >
∴ < yah vṛkśa hai >

In this variety of inference, the first premiss is a perceptual evidential statement, the second premiss is a *dṛṣṭānta* statement so that the two jointly lead to a conclusion and inference is valid when both premisses are true as also the conclusion. This variety of inference is similar to 'inference by deduction' of Aristotle. It may be noticed that the *dṛṣṭānta*

* These rules are never included in the inventory of rules of inference of contemporary symbolic logic.

here is a universal statement showing *tādātmya* of *sinsipā* and *vṛkṣa*,—the former term excluding all non-*sinsipās* whereas the latter excludes all non-*vṛkṣas* as it is usually put. Further, this variety of inference, being itself *kavalānvayī*, allows only one *anvayavyatirekī* kind, as possible, *kevala-vyatirekī anumāna* in this variety being invalid.

< *yah gulāb hai* >
< *gulāb vṛkṣa nahīn hote* >
∴ < *yah vṛkṣa nahīn hai* >

The *anupalabdhi anumāna* is unique in the sense that it allows inference by means of a single premiss only of perceptual evidential statement. Though it was slightly differently formulated originally, it may be schematized as:

< *dṛṣyapaṭal men apekṣita-ghaṭa nahīn hai* >
∴ < *yahān ghaṭa nahīn hai* >

It may be noted that the conclusion asserts not '*yah ghaṭa nahīn hai*' but '*yahān ghaṭa nahīn hai*'. This inference also occurs ordinarily in humans by and large and allows us to discover another objective universal principle of valid inference. The claim has been made that here we are inferring from 'absence of (perceptual) knowledge' to 'knowledge of absence (of perceptual object)'. The inference is valid when the premiss is true and the conclusion is also true. As the perceptual evidential premiss suggests, *dṛṣyapaṭal* presumably possesses the negative property of *ghaṭābhāva*, which, when perceived, allows one to infer negatively about the expected object. These varieties of *anumānakāraṇa* allow usual symbolic presentation. Thus, P, Q, etc. being predicates and x being a variable,

Anvayī tādātmyānumāna: Px
(x) $(Px \supset Qx)^*$
∴ Qx

Anvaya-vyatirekī tādāmyanumāna: Px
(x) $(P_x \supset \sim Q_x)$
∴ $\sim Q_x$

Anupalabdhi anumāna: D (~g)
∴ ~gx

Here the star again indicates that *dṛṣṭānta* is always true whereas D (~g) symbolizes the situation that there is perceived absence of an expected object as a feature of the subject of perceptual statement, namely the *dṛṣyapaṭal*. These three fundamental logical forms again provide us some rules of inference, the former two of which are familiar but not the last one.

The point that is of greatest significance here is that inference by

anumāna with above specific rules of inference forms the *core* of *saṃvāda* according to Saṃvāda Śāstra which, however, are never entertained in formal logics of western origin and neither can these be reduced to the available rules of inference in the latter. If we consider *upamāna* as another variety of inference, as is done in Saṃvāda Śāstra, this will add further to the list of rules of inference irreducible to the presently available rules.

Thus, in *upamāna* we seem to move from higher generality to lower generality in both varieties which may be schematized as:

< *yah gāya jaisā prāṇī hai* >
< *gāya paśu hotā hai* >
∴ < *yah gāya se anya paśu hai* > and

< *yah gāya jaisā paśu hai*>
< *gāya jaisa paśu gavay hotā hai* >
∴ < *yah gavay hai* >

The *dṛṣṭāntas* in these two varieties differ slightly, the former expressing practico-empirical self-evidentness whereas the latter expressing only 'heard' self-evidentness. Further, in the former, one moves from knowledge of something as a *prāṇī* to something as a *paśu* whereas in the latter one moves from knowledge of something as a *paśu* to something as *paśu viśeṣa*, namely *gavay*.

V

Nyāya Sūtra considers *avayava* as a category distinct from *pramāṇa* and analyses it as fivefold, namely, *pratijñā, hetu, udāharaṇa, upanaya*, and *nigaman*. The thinkers after Nyāya Sūtra have generally considered *anumāna pramāṇa* as synonymous with *avayava*, thinking that *anumāna* itself has five components so that all *anumānas* are said to be *pañchāvayavī*. In this spirit of identity, they consider the *liṅga-vākya* of *anumāna* same as *hetuvākya* and *dṛṣṭānta vākya* same as *udāharaṇa vākya* though *dṛṣṭānta* has already been presented as a distinct category (fifth one) prior to the category *avayava*. As if to justify this identification, they have made a distinction between *svārthanumāna* and *parārthānumāna*, the former presumably referring to *natural* process of reasoning whereas the latter being *presentation* of this process in systematic detail. We may, however, ask if *avayavas* refer to *anumāna* only why these are mentioned in the *sūtra* as a separate category much later and why these were not discussed as components of *anumāna* itself when it was being defined in the beginning? Moreover, if *dṛṣṭānta* is the same as *udāharaṇa* and therefore only one of the *avayavas*, why it is mentioned as a separate category rather than being discussed when *udāharaṇa* is being defined? Further, if the natural process of *anumāna* itself is being presented in systematic detail in the form of *avayavas*, are we not distorting the actual process

(as it naturally occurs) in our presentation? Clearly, therefore, *avayava* is an altogether different category from *pramāṇa* (*anumāna*) as is quite clear from Vimāna Sthāna also. And so does the sense of *udāharaṇa* differ somewhat from that of *dṛṣṭānta*. We may indeed point out that the structure of *anumāna* as already discovered is definitely serving as a *model* for structuring the *avayavas* so that the more general *hetu-vākya* corresponds to *liṅga-vākya* of *anumāna*, and more general *udāharaṇa vākya* corresponds to *dṛṣṭānta* of *anumāna*, and *nigamana vākya* corresponds to *liṅgī-vākya* of *anumāna*. As is pointed out in Vimāna Sthāna, *avayava* refers to 'parts'/components/organs of any complete rational-statement-unit or *siddha vākyarūpa* or *yukta vākya*, or, we may say, these refer to parts of a *complete* argument unit or a piece of reasoning or proof as one *unit*. A system of knowledge essentially consists of such units and in whose making *pramāṇa*, *dṛṣṭānta* and *lakṣaṇa* play the central role.

Consider an example for clarifying this point: '*Vyādhi kārya hotī hai*', *kyonki vyutpanna hotī hai, jaise vātachakra, jaisa vātachakra vyutpanna va kārya hotā hai vaise yādhi, ataḥ vyādhi kārya hotī hai*'. This piece of reasoning forms a *complete unit* and is called a *yukta vākya* or *yukti* constituted of *phrases* in a definite order, the first phrase being *pratijñā*, the second *hetu*, etc. Each phrase thus is an *avayava* of a whole, that is of the *yuktavākya*. It is questionable whether the unit can be analysed in propositions but if that is attempted, then it will look like this:

1. To prove:	*Vyādhi kārya hotī hai*
2.	*Vyādhi vyutpanna hotī hai,*
3.	*Jaise vātachakra vyutpanna hotā hai,*
4.	*Jaisa vātchakra vyutpanna va kārya hotā hai aisi vyādhi hotī hai.*
5.	∴ *Vyādhi kārya hotī hai*

This conception of an argument unit or proof shows great respect for clarity—in *vāgbhāṣā saṃvāda*, for one must begin by first presenting clearly what one intends to or aims at establishing since if one presented the *hetuvākya* without making the intent explicit, the hearer or adversary would not understand why the *hetuvākya* is being put forward and he shall have to wait for an answer till the conclusion is asserted only after which it would be clear that the *hetuvākya* was directed towards an unknown *nigamanavākya*. Further, the *udāharaṇa/dṛṣṭānta vākya* is indispensable for it illustrates/explicates the *hetuvākya* under consideration, as it explicates here in what precise sense is *vyādhi vyutpanna*. As if to leave nothing unclear, the similarity between *udāharaṇa* and *pakṣa* (*vyādhi*) is re-emphasized so as to move to the conclusion. The influence of *vyākaraṇa* is quite evident here* for *loka*

can no longer serve as a guide in reaching the correct structure of a *yuktavākya* or *siddhavākyarūpa* or proof. Just as *vyākaraṇa* uncovers a *vyākṛta vākya* by considerations of *prākṛt bhāṣā*, Samvāda Śāstra tries to reach a '*vyākṛta*' *samvāda-vākya* or a *yukta vākya* by investigations into *prākṛta samvāda* and taking help of natural *anumāna* process as a *model*. One can construct another *yuktavākya* or argument-unit by accepting *tādatmyānumāna* as a model, as Baudha Samvāda Śāstra does. It will be something like this: '*Vyādhi kārya hotī hai kyonki vyutpann hotā hai aur jo vyutpann hotā hai vah kārya hotā hai; ataḥ vyādhi kārya hotī hai*'. It may be noticed that '*jo vyutpann hotā hai vah kārya hotā hai*' is serving as *udāharaṇa* here and *upanay* phrase is not called for, therefore dropped.

The situation, however, is not quite the same in so far as the arguments/derivations in *pratīkabhāṣā* or symbolic language are concerned. In *pratīkabhāṣā saṃvāda*, we remain in suspense about the result/conclusion till it is obtained. Correctness of the result or validity of derivation is determined there by correct application of rules of derivation/inference. Thus, for example, if x + y = 8532 and y = 789, we are kept in suspense about the value of x till it is obtained by application of rules. When we thus seek to formalize *vāgbhāṣā saṃvāda*, we shall have to give allowance to such a situation.

The important question, then, is how to symbolize the *avayavas* preserving at the same time the correct logical form of the proof? Now, the very first requirement for this will be that *avayavas* be stated as simple or compound propositions and not as phrases. This we have already done in the preceding pages. A simple proposition can be symbolized by expressing the subject as a capital letter or base and the predicate as suffix, a practice different from the usual one where the subject is symbolized as variable/suffix and predicate as capital letter. Then the proposition '*Vyādhi kārya hotī hai*' will, for example, be symbolised as Vx where x stands for '*kārya*'. The *udāharaṇa* proposition can be symbolized as U (Ty), the argument U indicating that it is an *udāharaṇa*, or simply as T*y where the star gives that indication. The *upanaya* preposition may be represented as equivalence of double suffixed prepositions such as, Txy ≡ Vxy. The proof would then look like this, '⟧' symbolizing 'to prove',

* It seems the Vaiyākaraṇas after Pāṇini objected to this strict ordering of phrases in a *vākya* for the rules of Vyākaraṇa at least do not seem to call for such order. For Ānvīkṣikī, however, the order of presentation of the phrases was crucial since if this was not adhered to, there would be no *bodha* of the truth of the *siddhavākya rūpa*, or, in modern terms, of the validity of proof. The innovators of Anviksiki seem to have struggled a good deal against various sorts of adversaries of this conception of truth/validity. The example of *siddhayākya rūpa* given in early Ānvīkṣikī (*Caraka Saṃhitā*) is: 'नित्यः पुरुषः अकृत्वात् यथाऽऽकाशम् यथा चाकृतकमाकाशं तच्च नित्यं तथा पुरुषः तस्मान्नित्यः'।

] Vx
Vy
U (Ty)
Tyx ≡ Vyx
∴ Vx

Or, to express the same in a different manner

] Vx: {Vy. U (Ty). (Tyx ≡ Vyx)} |— Vx

This then gives us the complete structure of proof or argument. It may be noticed that the formal structure of proof requires that:

(i) *Hetuvākya* with the same base as *pratijñāvākya* but different suffix be given;
(ii) The suffix of *udāharṇavākya* must be the suffix of *hetuvākya*, its base being different;
(iii) In the *upanayavākya* the suffix of *pratijñā* must be added to the suffix of *udāharaṇa*;
(iv) The equivalence of (iii) must be shown with the *hetu* to which the suffix of *pratijñā* has been added.

If these four conditions are fulfilled, the premises necessarily and *always* yield the conclusion which was to be proved.

Thus, let us say, any Gx is to be proved,

(i)]Gx.

We provide a *hetuvākya* with a new suffix y but the same base G, so that

(ii) Gy.

Then we provide an *udāhraṇavākya* having the suffix y but a different base,

(iii) U (Fy).

We now add the suffix of (i) to the base of (iii)

(iv) Fyx.

We now show the equivalence of (iv) with (ii) adding to the latter the suffix of (i)

(v) Fyx ≡ Gyx

This is then the sufficient basis for yielding the conclusion,

]Gx : {Gy U (Fy) (Fyx ≡ Gyx)} |— Gx

The proof is valid if and only if *true* premises yield *true* conclusions, i.e., Gx is true when Gy *and* U (Fy) *and* Fyx ≡ Gyx are true. The truth of Gx in particular is to be guaranteed by *pramāṇas* and that of U (Fy) is to be guaranteed either by empirico-practical self-evidentness or by clear 'experimental' demonstration.

What is to be proved (provandum) must be stated beforehand for only then can we *search* for a new 'y' such that Gx and U (Fy) and Fyx = Gyx. In the proof, then, first transition is made from the provandum to a new suffix keeping the base same; second transition is made to a new base keeping the suffix same; third transition is made by showing the equivalence of double suffixed different bases; and the final transition is made to the conclusion which *was to be proved.*

In *pratisthāpanā*, the suffixes become the *viparyayas* or complementaries, and the base of the function of *udāharaṇa/dṛṣṭānta* changes so that

] Gx : {Gy. U (Hy). (Hyx = Gx) |— Gx

Normally, in any argument or proof, it is the *hetuvākya, udāharaṇa/dṛṣṭānta vākya* and conclusion or *nigamanavākya* that are crucial. If these three are given, complete or logically correct form of proof can be constructed upon demand. Thus, if it is given that

$$\frac{\begin{array}{l}P_x \\ Q^*x\end{array}}{\therefore P_y}$$

We can construct a proof as

] P_y : {P_x. Q^*x. ($Q^*xy = P_{xy}$)} |— P_y

(In Sāṃkhya Sūtra, the arguments are given in this concise form.)

An alternative form of proof or argument is one in which an already proved proposition or *siddhānta* can be employed instead of *dṛṣṭānta/udāharaṇa.* Thus, for example,

$$\frac{\begin{array}{l}P_x \\ S\ Q_x\end{array}}{\therefore P_y}$$

which, then, will have the following structure of proof;

] P_y : {P_x. S (Q_x). ($Q_{xy} = P_{xy}$)} |— P_y

and its counterproof would be

] P_y : {P_x. S (W_x). ($W_{xy} = P_{xy}$)} |— P_y

A *siddhānta* is one in which the *pratishāpanā* and all counter-*hetus* and counter-*dṛṣṭānta/udāharaṇas* and counter-*siddhāntas* have been refuted, i.e. shown to be invalid arguments/proofs. This criterion of *siddhānta* and the attendant conception of refutation or *pratisthāpanā* or counterproof are more or less totally missing in Greek Euclidean geometry or Aristotelian logic or the later Greco-European logic of Russel and Frege.

According to this conception, then, since an argument upon demand, can always be put in its correct logical form of proof, if follows that given any Px and Qx, a Py can be derived from these.

The only requirement we now have for the above argument form is *that* in order, the *dṛṣṭānta/udāharaṇa* or *siddhānta* will always be stated after the *hetu*. Following the *anumāna* model further, the other forms of argument will now be ~Px. U (Qx)/ \~Py; Px. ~U (Qx)/ ∴ ~Py; ~Px. ~U (Qx)/ ∴ ~Py; ~Px. ~U (Qx)/ ∴ Py; ~Px. U (Qx)/ ∴ Py; Px. ~U (Qx)/ ∴ Py; and Px. U (Qx)/ ∴ ~Py. This process of reasoning, being different from *utsargakāraṇa* and *anumānakārana* as indicated above, will be called *yuktikaraṇa*.*

VI

The logically significant category in Nyāya Sūtra, namely *siddhānta*, differs from *nigamana*. As contrasted with *dṛṣṭānta*, which is a *dṛṣṭa-anta*, it is a *siddha-anta*; therefore it is not empirico-practically-self-evident but the result of a process of *siddhi* or validation as indicated above. However, unlike *nigamana*, which can also be a particular proposition, a *siddhānta* must always be a universal proposition, restricted or unrestricted, field-specific or non-field specific. It is established only after very thorough scrutiny and once established it works as a law which is true whether in one, many or all fields of discourse. Thus, for example, *kāraṇatā* is a *siddhānta* considered true in all fields of discourse in Saṃvāda Śāstra, the only exception being *śūnyavāda* of Nāgārjuna. Or, again *pṛkṛtinityatā* is a *siddhānta* true in Sāṁkhya field of discourse, and so on. It is thus clear that *siddhānta* is that universal proposition which can be obtained

* This procedure of symbolising simple propositions will also admit of usual truth-functional interpretation for connectives. Thus, for example, *aniṣṭa prasaṅga* (Sāṃkhya) will be symbolized as,

$$\begin{array}{l} Px \supset D \\ \sim D \\ \hline \therefore \sim P \end{array}$$

where D symbolises any *samvāda doṣa*. Similarly *prakārāntara pratiṣedha* (Sāṃkhya) will be,

$$\begin{array}{l} Px\ V Qx\ V Rx\ V Sx. \ldots\ldots\ldots \\ \sim Qx. \sim Px. \sim Sx. \ldots\ldots\ldots \\ \therefore Px \end{array}$$

Also, *pariśeṣa* (Vaisesika) will be symbolized similarly as,

$$\begin{array}{l} Px\ V\ Qx\ V\ Rx \\ \sim Qx. \sim Rx \\ \hline \therefore Px \end{array}$$

and *duvidhā* (Nyāya) will be,

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Given: } Px\ V\ Qx \\ (Px \supset Rx).\ (Qx \supset Sx) \\ (Rx \supset D1).\ (Sx \supset D2) \\ \hline \therefore \sim Px. \sim Qx \end{array}$$

by *utsargakāraṇa* or *anumānakāraṇa* or *yuktikaraṇa* but can be employed as an evertrue *premiss* only if true in all systems. Though *dṛṣṭānta* can generally be formulated as a universal proposition and occurs always as a premiss, it differs from *siddhānta* in being *ordinary* and *empirico-practically self-evident*, requiring no *siddhi* at all. [It is important to note that in indigenous languages the structure of universal propositions differs only slightly from the structure of particular propositions, e.g. '*chulhe men dhuān hai*' and '*chulhe men dhuān hotā hai*', and this latter, universal proposition, differs from '*sabhī chulhon men dhuān hotā hai*' in important semantic respect.]

Since the core of a systematized body of knowledge consists of *siddhāntas*, it can be identified by means of those *siddhāntas* which are specific to it only. Thus, for example *kāraṇatā siddhānta* is common to all indigenous cosmologies (save Nāgārjuna's) but then *satkāryavāda* is specific to Sāṁkhya cosmology only, *ārambhavāda* to Vaiśeṣika cosmology only and *pratityasamutpāda* to Bauddha cosmology only. It is obvious that intersystemically true *siddhāntas* serve as ready-to-hand *evertrue* formulas which can be employed as premises whenever required in derivation of conclusions.

The two *siddhāntas*, namely *kāraṇatā* and *prayojanatā*, serve as principles of discovery of causes and purposes respectively, and the specific *yukti* or schema in which these two occur as one of the premises is called *tarka*. That is to say, *tarka* is that specific kind of argument unit in which either *kāraṇatā siddhānta* is one of the premises or *prayojanatā siddhānta* is one of the premises so that their logical forms will be:

$$\begin{array}{l} Px \\ S\ (Wx) \\ Py \end{array}$$

where S (Wx) symbolizes evertrue *kāraṇatā siddhānta* or evertrue *prayojanatā siddhānta*. These two, then, further add to the rules of inference specific only to indigenous logic and irreducible to any available rules of inference of modern symbolic logic.

VII

As indicated, universality in Saṃvāda Śāstra is multifarious and the logical relation of contradiction is also not quite the same as is generally accepted in contemporary symbolic logic. It may, for instance, be asked: what sort of propositions *utsarga*-proposition and *apavāda*-proposition are and which sort of *logical relation* obtains between the two? In Vyākaraṇa Śāstra, for instance, an *apavāda* or exception or anomaly which 'contradicts/violates' a universal principle can itself be universalized as a restricted/limited principle so that it works like a corollary/addendum to the first principle. Thus, if '*Sabhi* A, B *hote hain*' is a universal principle

contradicted/violated by '*yeh* A, B *nahin hai*', then the latter itself can be universalized as '*Sabhi* A, C *hote hain*' where A is specific-A in smaller number. Further, in a *dṛṣṭānta*-proposition, we do make a claim to limited universality though not to absolute universality, such as '*chulhon men dhuān hotā hai*' and this will be contradicted by a restricted universal proposition such as '*Isa chulhe men dhuān nahīn hota*' or by another sort of restricted universal proposition such as '*Kuccha chulhon men dhuān nahīn hai*' which is different from '*Kuccha chulhon men dhuān nahīn hotā.*' Clearly, there are at least four kinds of universalities and the significant question is: How can these be symbolized? Further, if a restrictedly universalized *apavāda*-proposition *functions* as supportive 'law'/principle only to the original unrestrictedly universal proposition, then certainly it cannot be said to *contradict* it, and if this is true, then what sort of proposition would contradict it? Moreover, Samvāda Śāstra admits, as indicated, even of *some* cosmically universal evertrue propositions which can never be false whatever the degree/persistence of anomalous evidence, e.g. '*Sampūrṇa sarga men ṛta/dharma vyāpta hotā hai*', '*Har kārya kā kāraṇ hotā hai*', '*Asat se sat kā utpāda nahīn hotā*'. Clearly, this kind of universality exceeds even the one mentioned above as 'unrestricted' 'universalization', and sources of it lie in '*śabda pramāṇa*' which is indemonstrable in principle.

It is precisely due to the readiness of Indian logicians to accept such evertrue, cosmically universal propositions as directive principles that movements in the direction of potentially formalizable *saṃvāda* were made as in the case of discovery of *all* the possible varieties of *sāmānyatodṛṣṭa/tadutpatti anumāna* mentioned earlier. Even more significant were the attempts of Jaina and Bauddha logicians at construction of *complete* logical systems true in all possible worlds. Thus, for instance, the Jaina logicians found a 'two-valued' logical system utterly inadequate for discourse on cosmology and entertained the *possibility* of construction of an adequate logical system. Bauddha Nāgārjuna, on the other hand, found not only a 'two-valued' system inadequate but all of them so and stressed the *impossibility* of construction of any adequate logical system suited to cosmology-bound-*samvāda*. While Jainas *exhaustively* considered *all* possible values including the *unsayable* or *avaktavyam* in their *saptabhaṅgī naya*, Bauddha Nāgārjuna exhaustively considered *all* possible entities/existents in his *chatuskoti nyāya*. Thus, the Jainas, admitting affirmative, negative and unsayable propositions, exhaustively enumerate the seven possibilities as p, ~p, s̄, p.~p, p.s̄, ~p.p.s allowing seven kinds of propositions/propositional functions in any exhaustive *saṃvāda* which would be a *saṃvāda* about all possible worlds. The important problem here is regarding the status of s̄ which *excludes* all propositions (that are true/false) and is yet treated as a proposition. Similarly, Bauddha Nagarjuna enumerates all entities as *sat, a-sat, sat-asat* and *a-satasat* and suggests that any proposition regarding

each variety would be absurd/meaningless. The central problem here is what precisely can be the criterion of absurdity for absurdity itself cannot be treated as *sat* only?

While we have not considered the attempts of Navya-Nyāya logicians in search of complete logical systems, the Jaina and Bauddha attempts are clear evidence of very high level of development of indigenous *logic* in spite of its remaining informal, for search of completeness or exhaustive enumeration demands that one rise above the level of empirical/given and explore *all* that which is *logically possible*. Exploration of all that which is logically possible can alone provide clues to the deep complexity of the cosmos, not merely the exploration of empirically given and universalization on its basis alone. Yet logic has to be understood as movement from the ordinary/given experience to the maximally or cosmically universal to the logically possible.

VIII

It should however be remarked that Indian logicians, except perhaps the Jainas, got trapped in insurmountable *pramāṇa*-trap which dipped even further after Dignaga and they could never come out of it. One can notice a sort of growing *pramāṇa*-mania after Vātsyāyan to the exclusion of not only the study of related *śāstras* such as Chikitsā Śāstra and Kala Śāstra, but also of crucial knowledge-systems such as Sāṁkhya Siddhānta in analysing the concepts of *siddhānta, yukti, avayava, tarka*, etc. Such fatal neglect kept them form-blinded in spite of remarkable ingenuity in exhaustive analysis of *hetu, sattā*, description, etc.

So widespread and lasting had been the influence of Sāṃkhya Siddhānta on early effort at knowledge systematization in *all the three trends* that we can trace the origin of *all* subsequent cosmologies and developments in their epistemological and logical components to this single cosmology. Thus the concepts of *uddeśa, lakṣaṇa, parīkṣā, sāmānya, viśeṣa, samavāya, pramāṇa, kāraṇa, anupalabdhi, avayava, yukti, tarka, siddhānta, sādṛśya*, etc. are all explicit or explicit in early Sāṃkhya cosmology so that the entire subsequent development of Indian thought can be said to be an analysis by exemplification of this system of knowledge which served as paradigm even for the development of Saṃvāda Śāstra as a science of systematization of knowledge in general. If we are thus asked to name the greatest single misfortune that historically beset indigenous cosmological thought, then it was the neglect of Sāṃkhya cosmology as a paradigmatic example of knowledge-systematization and this neglect resulted in disappearance of original Sasti Tantra itself which nothing can compense us today!

Since, however, the Jaina as well as Bauddha logicians were particularly adept at making exhaustive analyses, we find analyses of logically possible *hetus, doṣas*, etc. in their works. Thus, as early as 500 bCE in Sthānang

Sūtra, *hetus* were held to be of four types: this is because that is, this is *not* because that is; this is because that is *not*, this is *not* because that is *not*. Siddhasena in about 500 aCE presented exhaustive analysis of fallacies/*doṣas* as those of *pakṣa, hetu* and *dṛṣṭānta*. Manikyanandi in about 800 aCE analyzed *hetu* in a fourfold way: *upalabdhi-hetu* and *anupalabdhi-hetu* each of which being either affirmative or negative. Thus, he exhaustively enumerated twenty-two kinds of *hetus* allowing as many kinds of *anumānakāraṇa*. Similarly in the Baudha trend, the treatment of *hetus* as well as *doṣas* by Dignāga in about 500 aCE remains unsurpassed as it has a ring of finality in so far as the question of exhaustive analysis of possibilities is concerned. He is known to have reformulated *dṛṣṭānta* in the form of a maximally universal proposition as also exhaustively analysed the *nigamana* as of nine kinds employing the possibilities *sat, asat* and *satāsat* in respect of *sapakṣa* and *vipakṣa*.

It is noticeable that in post-Vātsyāyan Saṃvāda Śāstra almost as much attention was given to fallacies of reasoning or *saṃvāda doṣas* (that naturally occur when the *samvāda* is undertaken in *vāgbhāṣā*) as to *pramāṇas*. Thus, for example, six out of sixteen categories of Nyāya Sūtra enumerate fallacies, namely, *jalpa, vitaṇḍā, chhala, jāti**, *hetvābhāsa* and *nigrahasthāna*. However, when the *saṃvāda* is sought to be carried out in *pratīkabhāṣā*, the chances of occurrence of such fallacies get eliminated naturally, for a formal *saṃvāda* is concerned only with logical forms of *pramāṇa* and *yukti* in which inferences occur in accordance with logical rules and criteria (such as those of adequacy, ordering, and *validity*) and error in inferring occurs only when the rules and criteria are carelessly applied. One can thus bypass the fallacies or *doṣas* by proceeding with chains of logical forms and subsequently thinking-up *vāgbhāṣā* analogues. Though such procedure does away with the need of detailed thinking, it nevertheless has the great advantage of clarity and nonfallaciousness. Therefore, while obsession with formalization of *saṃvāda* may admittedly damage/dampen ability for thinking as such, its cautious and limited adoption would hopefully prove beneficial ultimately in generating awareness of clarity and precision in *saṃvāda*. The specific problems and features of Saṃvāda Śāstra as discussed above are required to be carefully considered by those making serious attempt a constructing/presenting Saṃvāda Gaṇita.

Notes and References

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Rasvihary Das on 'Value of Doubt': Some Reflections

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I

The present paper is an attempt to give a critical and evaluative account of Professor Rasvihary Das on 'value of doubt' which is originally written in Bengali with the title: *Saṁśayer mūlya.*[1] In most of the cases an effort has been made to highlight the major philosophical problems and issues concerning doubt. In some cases I have shown my points of departure from the view expressed by Professor Das (RD).

II

At the outset RD has considered the statement in the *Bhagavadgītā Saṁśayātmā vinaśyati,* i.e. a man bearing doubt is ruined. This statement is true on account of the fact that if someone becomes dubious regarding the efficacy of the performance of some religious rites, he would not be in a position to perform action.

Any doubt regarding some religious activity is an obstacle to the attainment of 'good' (*śreyas*). The doubt regarding the existence of God cannot lead us to the concentration to Him. Moreover, disbelief in the scriptural texts, in the words of the preceptors makes us refrain from performing laborious religious work. Even doubt acts as an hindrance to our moral action also. Let us think of a situation when a small child is going to be drowned in the river. Under this situation it is quite natural to have a strong desire to save him. But instead of this if we start considering many questions like whether he can really be saved or not, whether we should give him much pain by way of saving him, whether we should really be successful in this matter etc., we shall not be able to perform moral action. Even doubting everything and everyone around us cannot provide us with peace and happiness. If someone doubts that there might be poison in the food, or if he doubts the character of family-members, he will not also be associated with peace.

Though doubt is the cause of harm, yet a few questions may be considered in this connection. Can we be free from doubt at any time? Is it duty to be free from doubt always? Does doubt possess any value?

The Divine Teacher has introduced the term *Vinaśyati* in a slight different sense which is available in the commentary. To Him if someone possesses doubt, he will not be in a position to receive knowledge. It is true that if there is doubt, there cannot be certain knowledge. It is also true that we cannot always attain knowledge in spite of having a strong desire to have it; it depends on the nature of the objects also. There are, of course, some objects whose nature is too difficult to be understood. In this case doubt is inevitable and hence it is very much essential to remove doubt. Because no one wants to remain in doubt. Though the removal of doubt is desirable yet it does not come under the purview of our duty for the following reason.

That which can be performed through our desire comes under the purview of our duty. That which does not depend on our desire or that which cannot be performed in spite of having strong desire cannot come under the purview of our duty. Though it is desirable that all should be intelligent and full of love and kind to others, it cannot be described as duty because nobody can be intelligent and bearer of love out of his own desire. In the same way, if someone invites doubt due to the obscurity of the object or any other reasons, he cannot be blamed for this.[2]

In this context RD is considering previously mentioned *śloka* of the Gītā. To him the *Gītā* is nothing but the advice regarding religion. Hence, doubt about religion becomes an obstacle to the path of the performance of religious rites. The Divine Teacher himself has given a solution as to the method of the removal of doubt. To Him this doubt is to be cut down through the sword of knowledge. If the attainment of knowledge becomes impossible for some reason, there remains doubt forever. If doubt acts as an impetus to achieve knowledge of a particular object, it is to be taken as a healthy one.

It should also be borne in mind that the degree of doubt is not same to all. Some persons have their dubious minds due to which they go on doubting everything. On the other hand, there are some who easily believe in the words of others. Hence, the degree of doubt always depends on an individual's mental structure, attachment, desire etc., which indicate the maturity or immaturity of his mental faculty. A few questions have been raised in this connection. First, whether the doubt, if it depends on the condition of mental faculty, can be described as a quality or fault. Secondly, whether there is any cause of doubt centering around the nature of an object which is different from the nature of mental faculty.

In response to the former, it can be said that something is to be described as quality or fault after analysing the same. That which is favourable of attaining that taken to be good, or desirable is called quality. On the other hand, that which is not in favour of the attainment of these is called a fault. If the performance of the religious activity is

desirable to us, the doubt which stands as obstacle to the same becomes a fault. If mental tranquility is desirable, the doubt, the cause of mental uneasiness, is considered as a fault.

It should also be borne in mind that religion cannot alone be desirable object in this world. If someone ponders over the consequences of religion like internal conflict among men, bloodshed etc. he will not admit religion as most desirable object in this world. The religion which is completely dependent on blind faith cannot be treated as highly desirable object. Philosophy, science or extension of knowledge etc. seem to be more desirable. The love for humanity (*mānavaprīti*), friendliness (*maitrī*) are possible in our society without relating them to the so-called religion and hence they may be desirable to us. If doubt, being non-favourable to religion, becomes promoters to *maitrī*, etc. it is not to be taken as a fault. RD has beautifully expressed this situation with a metaphor. There are many great persons in this world who think better to bear pain after being endowed with eye than to remain in heaven without eye. If doubt, being obstacle to the path of religion, becomes promoter to the attainment of knowledge, it cannot be brought under rejectable object.[3]

It is true that sometimes doubt becomes the cause of *uneasiness*. This uneasiness, as observed by RD, is sometimes *healthy*. When injustice is found around us in the society, it may create some sort of uneasiness in our mind which is desirable. The sense of easiness under this situation is very much embarrassing. Hence, uneasiness due to doubt for a genuine cause is always acceptable.

The doubt for a genuine reason cannot lead us to an unwanted situation. On the other hand, if there does not arise doubt in spite of having a genuine cause for the same, the very absence of doubt leads us to the defect or fault.

Now RD is considering the causes of doubt. When the determinant is not available in determining the nature of an object, there arises doubt. Initially some enquiries of an object lead us to the assumption of its various nature. But when sufficient proof in favour of the assumptions is not available, the doubt as to it becomes confirmed. If some proof both in favour of or against the main thesis is available, there arises doubt. In this case there is not the absence of proof, but the presence of contradictory proofs, which is the cause of doubt. In other words, doubt towards the nature of an object presupposes the existence of enquiry regarding it. The absence of proof towards an object which is not at all our object of enquiry cannot be the cause of doubt. In short, the absence of determining proof of an object which is to be known is the cause of doubt.

Now, what is to be understood by term *pramāṇa*? Without entering into the controversy regarding the nature or number of *Pramāṇa*, it can be said in a general way that perception (*pratyakṣa*) and argument (*yukti*) are

the *Pramāṇas*. That which is perceived or that which can be substantiated through argument is taken to be proved.

It may be argued that there is no guarantee that something which is perceived or substantiated through argument cannot be doubted. For, perceptual awareness may be illusory or argument forwarded in favour of substantiating some standpoint may be fallacious. The awareness of snake may turn to be rope or thesis which is substantiated through argument may be proved as futile afterwards.

In reply, it can be said that if there is any doubt in perceptual awareness or favourable arguments, there is no way to remove this doubt. The philosophers would consider whether there is any cause of all pervading extreme type of doubt or not. But what can be said in this connection is that illusory perceptual awareness or illusory argument is not all real perception or real argument. But until and unless perceptual awareness or argument is not proved as illusory, it is to be accepted as valid and in this way we shall go on acquiring knowledge.[4]

As perception and argument are taken as *Pramāṇas*, doubt may be entertained towards the object which is neither perceived nor known through favourable argument. The doubt having sufficient cause is taken to be healthy and faultless. As religion deals with God, other world, etc. the existence of which cannot be proved through perception or through any convincing argument, one may have doubt as to it.

Now RD is going to consider whether doubt can be taken as a *guṇa* or quality. *Doubt* is not desirable at all as it is a doubt in character, because nobody wants to arrive at the dubious state. On the contrary, it is our duty to overcome doubt and attain knowledge. So, doubt is always taken to be rejectable.

In reply, it is said that this doubt has got a positive side though it is not taken as a goal. Doubt gives rise to knowledge through the instrumentality of critical thinking. If someone starts doubting something, it points to the fact that he is critically considering something without being satisfied with the *blind faith*. That is why, doubt is the revealer of auspicious positive quality by way of leading to the path of knowledge indirectly.

In this modern world some of us are engaged in torturing and killing others being guided by the false notion of religion as said earlier. Had they been known that human intellect cannot explain the gross objects existing in this world, not to speak of the existence of God, other world, etc., they would not have been involved in such killing of human beings. Blind faith on religion makes an individual forget his humanity while doubt on this aspect can save him from the performance of barbaric activities. Faith makes us blind, makes our mind narrow and self-centred while doubt makes our soul illumined and makes our mind sensitive and broad. This particular positive value of doubt cannot be ignored.

In our everyday life though faith is inevitable, it is to be adopted in a very balanced way, not as otherwise.[5]

III

Though it has been stated that all types of doubt are not vicious and some of them are virtuous as they lead us to logical enquiry. This position of RD may be highlighted following line of Vacaspati Mishra. First, it is not always true that confusion follows from the enquiry of having right knowledge but sometimes enquiry of having right knowledge follows from confusion. For enquiry about an object follows if the object is in confusion or if there is any necessity to know it. Vacaspati Mishra in his *Tātparyaṭīkā* and *Bhāmatī* on *Adhyāsabhāṣya* of Samkara has opined that enquiry about an object is permissible if there is *sandigdhatva* or confusion regarding the nature of our object and *saprayojanatva* (having necessity) for knowing it.[6] In other words, here the properties like *asandigdhatva* and *aprayojanatva* give no room for enquiry (*jijñāsyatva*). The properties are called *vyāpakas* while *jijñāsyatva* is called *vyāpya* on account of the fact that the relation between them can be described as *vyāpya-vyāpakabhāva*. For, where there is *sandigdhatva* and *sapryojanatva*, there is *jijñāsyatva*. If a jar is placed in a broad day light and if our sense-organs and mind are properly conjoined with it, further enquiry about this is not permissible because it is *asandigdha* i.e. not an object of confusion. If somebody asks how many teeth a crow possesses, there is no need of such enquiry due to not having any necessity (*aprayojanatva*). Hence, any type of enquiry presupposes confusion regarding the nature of an object and the necessity of knowing it.

Though in most of the cases enquiry arises out of one's confusion, it cannot be denied that sometimes curiosity or enquiry may arise in one's mind automatically. This curiosity may lead him to the world of confusion as to the nature of a particular object. That is, an individual being curious will try to know the nature of an object. If an object possesses two opposite features, he will have confusion, which makes him inactive. Simply he cannot act due to not having a clear picture of the action to be performed. If this action is undesirable, the doubt leads us to the healthy situation. This positive value of doubt has been highlighted by RD.

Secondly, RD has tried to forward a philosophy of harmony so far as doubt is concerned. To him, there are some persons having dubious mind and they start doubting everything which is described by him as *Utkaṭa sāṁśaya*. This situation is not desirable at all. On the other hand, there are a few who easily believe in the words of others without having any doubt, which is also not desirable. So far as *utkaṭasaṁśaya* is concerned, it is not at all one's desirable as it comes under the purview

of a psychological disorder. If someone goes on doubling each and everything in this world, this phenomenon of doubt is also dubious. It is rightly pointed out by him that if someone doubts the existence of poison in food or the character of the family-members, of activities of the subordinate staff, our empirical life will not be possible. For having a smooth social life mutual trust among social members is necessary. If there is no doubt at all regarding some theory or findings, on the other hand, there does not arise any philosophical enquiry. In other words, any philosophical enquiry presupposes the existence of doubt regarding it. In order to highlight this point of RD I am tempted to quote *Nyāyakusumāñjali* where Udayana says *Śaṁkācedanumāstyeva.*[7] If there is doubt, there is inferential cognition. In other words, if there is doubt regarding an object, the inferential procedure is resorted to for removing that doubt. If there is doubt of deviation between two objects existing in different place and time, the knowledge of the invariable existence between them is established through inference. Hence, the doubt entertained in a balanced way (i.e. neither *utkaṭa* nor *stimita*) has got a positive value.

Thirdly, the notion of duty as forwarded by RD is worth pondering. The action which can be performed out of our desire comes under the purview of duty. There are many activities which cannot be performed though we desire to do so and hence these do not come under the purview of duty.[8] The example cited by him is also beautiful. We heartily desire that all persons should be intelligent and lovable to others, but though desirable, we cannot make others intelligent and lovable through effort as there is no feasibility. Hence, it does not come under the purview of duty which reminds me the Sanskrit-equivalent of the term duty—*kṛtya* meaning 'actions ought to be performed'. The term *kṛtya* is originated from the term *kṛti*. The activities are to be taken as *kṛtya* (duty) if they are *kṛtisādhya* i.e. feasible through effort. That which cannot be performed through effort (*kṛtisādhya*) cannot be regarded as one's *kṛtya* (duty), which corresponds to the opinion expressed by RD.

Fourthly, RD has given a liberal interpretation of religion which is very much novel and unique in character and very much relevant in present day society. The religion completely dependent on blind faith is not much desirable to us as this cannot associate us with our well-being. If religion can bring love for humanity, friendliness, etc., it is desirable for all. He actually has given a humanistic approach to religion, which has much bearings in the modern society. To him, love for human being (*mānavaprīti*) and friendliness (*maitrī*) are the media through which peace among social beings can be established. If religion can provide this, it is true religion and hence, desirable. If religion creates conflict, malice and hatred among men, it should be rejected. Hence, he thinks that if someone becomes dubious about the efficacy of the religious rites and refrains from performing rites, he is in a better

position by virtue of the fact that he can bring mutual trust among men leading to *maitrī* etc. without depending on religion. Religion based on blind faith brings malice, hatred among men is not at all religion. If someone possesses doubt in the performance of rites of such type of religion, this doubt saves him from the unwanted situation. In this way he will try to develop *Prīti* among men without taking recourse to so-called religion.[9] Hence, to him, love for humanity or *maitrī*, I think, may be taken as another name of religion, which corresponds to the concept of *Dharma* in the *Mahābhārata*. That which leads to the path of prosperity and wellbeing of all human being is *Dharma* according to the *Mahābhārata*.[10]

Fifthly, that doubt has an important factor in philosophical discourse as accepted by RD can also be highlighted following the line of Gautama and Vātsyāyana. After considering the value of doubt Gautama has enumerated it as one of the sixteen categories. *Saṁśaya* or doubt has been given due emphasis in Nyāya on account of the fact that logic can alone be applied to the object in doubt, but not to the object where nature is absolutely known or absolutely unknown. An enquirer of knowledge starts arguing between two parties regarding the nature of an object which is in doubt.[11] RD has drawn our attention to this because the whole philosophical development virtually centres around the doubt arising in one's mind regarding some theory or concept. Sixthly, RD has accepted two *pramāṇas*-perception (*pratyakṣa*) and argument (*yukti*). Doubt may be entertained towards an object which cannot be proved through perception or through favourable argument. In this connection he has maintained that the existence of God, other worldly object etc. cannot be proved through perception or convincing argument and hence there is doubt. On this point I beg to differ from him. It is true that the existence of God etc. cannot be proved through perception. But there is a section of philosophers who has ventured to prove the existence of God etc. through some convincing arguments like causal argument, ontological arguments etc. Though these arguments may seem to be vague or non-convincing to others, they cannot be ignored because these arguments are forwarded to convince others in favour of the existence of God etc. We may not always agree with the arguments forwarded by the opponents, but in spite of this the logical points existing in them may seem to be cogent and convincing. In fact, those who prove the existence of God with arguments have got some logical points in accepting them, which cannot be ignored. Moreover, RD has opined that the argument which is illusory is not at all argument.[12] This view is also not tenable. Argument or *yukti* is of two types: *Kuyukti* (bad argument) or *Suyukti* (good argument). If it is said that bad argument is not at all argument, it is not at all acceptable. For, the arguments that seem to be 'good' to a section of philosophers may turn to be 'bad' to others. Whether an argument is good or bad depends on different

metaphysical presuppositions accepted by the philosophers of a particular school. The arguments in favour of the existence of God put forth by the *Naiyayikas* may be considered by the Cārvākas as 'bad'. In the same way, the arguments fowarded by the *Cārvākas* in favour of their own stand point may be considered as 'bad' by the *Naiyayikas*. In fact, no argument, I think, is final. Each and every argument is subject to challenge. If it is accepted, each argument is to be taken as *prima facie*, but not final. It being *prima facie* may be refuted by the *uttarapakṣins* and hence it may be considered as bad.

One point made by RD in this connection is worth considering. He thinks that until and unless perceptual awareness or argument is not proved as illusory, it is to be accepted as valid. Though it is true that each and every argument is subject to challenge and hence *prima facie*, one thinks one's stand point as valid until and unless it is really refuted by others. If this standpoint is not accepted as valid, no certain knowledge becomes possible. When an individual believes in certain policy or theory, he develops some reasonings in favour of this. He thinks that these arguments are good ones as these are not countered by others. But I think even if someone's philosophical conclusion is refuted by others, he thinks his position as correct after considering different presuppositions accepted by him. Certain argument or reasoning developed under certain philosophical system is treated to be correct though it may seem to be illusory to the philosophers of other system who nourish a completely different set of presuppositions. In spite of these RD has shown his originality and has made a significant contribution to the world of philosophy by way of pointing out the positive side of *Saṁśaya*. Our attention is drawn to the fact that doubt has got some value which is the basis of human thinking, philosophical development, good social relation and human well being.

Notes and References

1. Rasvihary Das, *Saṁśayer mūlya* in *Katipay dārśanik prabandha*, Bangiya Darsana Parisad, Calcutta, pp. 42–56, 1978, henceforth, *Saṁśayer mūlya*.
2. Ibid., pp. 47–48.
3. Ibid., p. 48.
4. Ibid., pp. 49–51.
5. Ibid., pp. 51–56.
6. *'Atha yadasandigdhamaprayojanaṁ ca na tat prekṣāvat pratipitsāgocaraḥ yathā samanskendriyasannikṛṣṭaḥ sphītālokamadhyavartī ghaṭaḥ . . .'* Bhāmatī on *Adhyāsabhāṣya*.
7. *Nyāyakusumāñjali*, 3/7.
8. *'Āmara icchā karile yāhā karite pāri tāhāiāmāder kartyavya haite pāre. Yāhā āmāder icchā anicchār upar nirbhar kare nā . . . tāhā kakhanai āmāder kartyavyaśreṇibhukta haite pāre nā.'*, *Saṁśayer mūlya*, pp. 44–48.
9. *'Biśvāsmūlak dharmer sahit saṁśrab nā rākhiyāo sādhāraṇ maner prīti o mānuṣer madhye paraspar bandhutva sambhavpar haite pāre. Erakaṁ mānavprīti, maitrī pravṛttikeo kāmya baliyā māni.'* Ibid., pp. 47–48.
10. *'Mānasaṁ sarvabhūtānāṁ dharmamāhurmaṇī-ṣiṇaḥ/yasmāt sarveṣu bhūteṣu manasā śivamācaret'*, *Mahābhārata, Shāntiparva*, 193/31
11. *'Tatrā nānupalabdhe na nirṇīte'rthe nyāya pravartate, kiṁ tarhi? Saṁśayite'rthe'. Nyāyabhāṣya* on *Sūtra* 1.1.1.
12. *'Ye pratyakṣa bhramātmaka baliyā o ye yukti bhrānta baliyā nirdhārita haila, se pratyakṣa pratyakṣai nay, o se yukti yukti nay.' Saṁśayer mūlya*, p. 50.

Philosophy as Critical Reflection: The Philosophy of Rasvihary Das

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The question about the nature of philosophy may be an age-old one; but it has become urgent and important only in recent times, say, in the twentieth century, consequent upon the rapid advancement of science. With the conquest by science of ever-new areas and the unabated secession of territory by philosophy over the centuries, the doubt has arisen as to whether philosophy really has any specific domain of its own. Precise statement of what philosophy is, is not easy. This is borne out by the symptomatic response of the distinguished British philosopher of recent times, G.E. Moore, to whom the question 'What is philosophy?' was put. His reaction was to gesture towards his bookshelves and say, 'It is what all these [books] are about.' The challenge roused many academic philosophers to ponder and try to be clearer about the nature of their pursuit. In his own way, Rasvihary Das, a lifelong devotee of philosophy, seems to have been preoccupied with the question for many years of his later academic life, say, from the late forties to the late sixties of this century. Here I attempt a presentation and a preliminary examination of his view on the nature of philosophy on the basis of his articles 'Philosophy as an Autonomous Spiritual Activity' (1950),[1] 'Pursuit of Truth through Doubt and Belief' (1952),[2] 'What is Philosophy?' (1956)[3] and a few compositions in Bengali (collectively published in 1978).[4]

I

For Das, philosophy is philosophizing. It is essentially a process of thinking and not a body of doctrines to which that thinking may lead. It is teachable by rational means, and is thus distinct from mysticism. Like science, it is a theoretical enterprise. But there are basic differences between the two. Besides, philosophy is autonomous in the sense of being self-legislating. It has no external master. It is an enquiry of a fundamental or foundational nature. God, soul, truth, freedom, goodness, the meaning of human life and its destiny, the ultimate nature of things—themes like these constitute its subject matter. It is relentless in

its questioning. It aims at clarification, enlightenment and understanding —in a word, wisdom. Das finds the term 'critical reflection' most suitable as a short descriptive phrase for his conception of philosophy.

Such critical reflection is possible for man in whose mind arise questions about the nature and limits of his knowledge, his place in the universe, his moral life, etc. Philosophy has no use for God, for God (assuming that He exists) is not afflicted by such (theoretical) problems. He is supposed to be omniscient. Lower animals are too low in the scale of existence to feel philosophical problems. Only for some men, these problems are real and acute, and they seriously pursue the task of clarifying and solving them by resolute thinking. Most men do not bother very much about the problems. Some—very few—reach solution through mysticism which is based on supernormal intuition, which however is neither a systematic process of thought nor is capable of successfully reasoned elaboration. Mystic experiences or realizations, when expressed in language, are often found to abound in paradoxes and contradictions, and as such are rationally incomprehensible. Further, mystic intuition, whether communicable or not, is surely not teachable through any process of thinking or reasoning. On the other hand, thinking or reasoning is the very being of philosophy, which can be taught through example and practice. The mystic's and the philosopher's ways, therefore, are different. The mystic perhaps does not give much value to thought-process and has perhaps reached the end of his quest. Philosophers, on the contrary, more often than not, are always in pursuit of the goal rather than at the end of it.

Philosophy, for Das, is not just theory. It is not a set of doctrines about God, soul, mind, matter, value, knowledge, etc., which philosophers have propounded. It is rather the process of thinking (by which they arrive at their theories) that is philosophy. That philosophy is not a body of knowledge is further evident from the fact that some philosophers deny the possibility of knowledge altogether. They are known as sceptics. Since sceptics are universally recognized as philosophers, and they hold knowledge to be impossible, philosophy as such cannot be held to be a knowledge-system.

What is important for doing philosophy is not to learn that certain thinkers held certain views, but why they held those views, how they were led to those views, what considerations weighed with them, the process of reasoning they followed to reach their conclusions, etc. To note this process carefully and critically is to take an object-lesson in philosophy, whereas merely learning the results of the process is not doing philosophy at all. That certain persons known to be philosophers held certain opinions may be fact, but mere collection of such information is not practising philosophy. Thinking philosophically is going through a process, which can be learnt or aided by following like processes traversed by others.

There is difference between learning facts or being well-informed, and learning to think critically. To learn facts is to remember them —register them in memory. But to learn to think critically is no mere recording of data. Nor is such learning tested by faithful reproduction. One who has learnt how to think philosophically produces philosophy which is not just reproduction of what others have done. Every philosopher's thinking is characteristically his own. He does not just repeat another's intellectual process. There are no set methods or fixed rules for philosophizing. Philosophy is not done by mechanically following a set of operational directives. There has rarely been a detailed working out of methodology in this regard, nor has there been agreement or adherence as regards proffered procedural recommendations. Das does not even attempt to lay down any specific rules for going about the business.

II

Das takes special care to distinguish philosophy from science. The importance of this is heightened by the fact that in modern times the very possibility of philosophy as a specific theoretical enterprise distinct from science has been challenged. The endless disputations in philosophy through the centuries from the earliest of times in civilized history have made some people very doubtful about the prospect of the discipline. It has led to the view that all knowledge that is possible can be had from science and that philosophical search is chimerical. It has been supposed that all genuine problems, requiring knowledge for their solution, belong to the sciences and that problems left in philosophy are either fake ones or are such that science is not sufficiently developed to answer them. So, real problems have no place in philosophy and pseudo-problems which are there in it are better ignored, for what they need is not solution but dissolution. Such a line of thinking has generated re-thinking in philosophy for a clearer conception of its function and jurisdiction as distinguished from those of science.

Das rejects outright certain conceptions as to the nature of philosophy vis-à-vis science. These are as follows: (1) Philosophy gives us knowledge of reality, whereas science seeks knowledge of appearances. (2) Philosophy gives us knowledge of the whole, and scientific investigations are concerned only with aspects or parts of the universe. (3) Science knows reality by observation and experiment, whereas philosophy knows it by pure thinking.

The first view is untenable, because awareness of appearances (as distinct from what is real) is no knowledge at all. Besides, it is absurd to suppose that science does not give us any knowledge. The development of science has certainly resulted in enormous increase in knowledge.

The second view is no good either. Knowledge of the whole depends

on and includes knowledge of the parts. Therefore, if philosophy were knowledge of the whole, it would be wholly dependent on the sciences. To Das, the idea of total dependence of philosophy on science is totally unacceptable. For him philosophy has nothing to do with science except in so far as it is philosophy of science, and there is much else in philosophy besides that.

But apart from this, the very idea that philosophy gives us knowledge of the whole (of reality) is unrealistic. Such knowledge is impossible of achievement. Can any man attain such knowledge of the whole? Certainly not. For then he would have to be an adept in all the sciences, since there can be no knowledge of the whole without knowledge of all the parts, the whole being a whole of parts. Even this will not do, because even the sciences do not give us final truths but only approximations. They themselves are in continual change and development. It is vain and ambitious to suppose that it is possible for any human being to collect and harmoniously synthesize the results of all the sciences into a comprehensive system. Philosophy cannot and does not undertake such a task.

The third view is also open to serious objections. That science gains knowledge of the universe through observation and experiment may be unexceptionable, but the idea that philosophy knows the same thing by pure thinking is quite preposterous and absurd. If pure thinking is thinking that is free from sense-perception, etc., it is quite obvious that no matter of fact can be known in this way. Science and philosophy do not know the same thing in different ways. Science adds to our knowledge of facts; philosophy does not give us any information about matters of fact. Hence it would be wrong to say that scientific knowledge and philosophic knowledge are concerned with the same thing.

It might be held that science gives one kind of knowledge and philosophy another. But this view needs interpretation and clarification before it can be properly evaluated. Does knowledge admit of kinds? If so, what is the basis of its classification into different kinds? Is it difference in the modes of genesis—perceptual, inferential, etc.? Or, is it the difference in the nature of the objects—particular, general, etc.? These differences, however, hardly pinpoint the distinction between science and philosophy. On the other hand, it might be held that knowledge, understood in a basic straightforward sense as the revelation of reality in consciousness, does not have any type-difference. Das does not endorse the attempt to differentiate between science and philosophy on the basis of such difference.

How then does philosophy differ from science? Das enumerates several obvious differences. In science, earlier work is superceded by later work; but not so in philosophy. Aristotelian science is undoubtedly out-of-date now, but not the philosophy of Aristotle. A serious student of philosophy can always study with profit the philosophical works of

early thinkers. Genuine philosophical insights endure through the passage of time. They may fluctuate with passing fashion, but do not suffer total eclipse.

Development of science is made possible by the cooperative work of many scientists. Philosophy thrives rather on individual effort. A philosopher may consult and learn from other philosophers, but his philosophy is his unique contribution, bearing his individual stamp. In this, says Das, philosophy is akin to religion and poetry.

Science seeks knowledge. Such knowledge often turns out to be useful, but it is primarily sought for its own sake—not with any ulterior motive. Curiosity is the spur here. But philosophy is not primarily motivated by curiosity. It does not seek knowledge for its own sake. Its aim is practical—though not physical comfort. According to Sāṁkhya, the philosophical quest is for finding a total and lasting remedy of suffering. This (or an end like this) is called liberation. For Socrates, (philosophic) knowledge is virtue, i.e. it finds expression in virtuous life. True, in the long course of philosophy, the practical aim has not been always in the fore. It has occasionally been dimmed, deflected or attenuated in some types of philosophy. It is not difficult to single out strands in the long history of philosophy where the practical aim seems to be totally submerged, e.g., in an exclusive pre-occupation with argument-forms or linguistic usages. But such departmental stress, excess or blindness should not be taken to characterize philosophy as a whole. One function of philosophy is to formulate ideals and guide conduct. Even otherwise, any serious espousal of a philosophic view means the conscious adoption of a way of life with pervasive practical implications.

Das is quite confident about the distinction of philosophy from science. One of his arguments is as follows: 'Science is the object of philosophy of science. And since subjective activity must be distinct and different in kind from the object to which it is directed, . . . philosophy must be distinct from science.'[5] If on this ground it is maintained that as science gives us knowledge, philosophy does not do so but only seeks clarification or insight or wisdom—Das would not necessarily object. But as the concepts of insight, wisdom, clarification, etc. are themselves not clear or uncontroversial, he rather prefers to say that philosophy does not provide the sort of knowledge that is had from science.

In fact, philosophy cannot at all improve upon the knowledge provided by science, so far as information about objects or facts is concerned. It is not concerned with any specific object of knowledge but rather with the manner of knowing or understanding. An analysis or elaboration of the function of knowing does not add to our knowledge of objects. It only makes us more self-conscious or reflective. It is in this context that Das says that the distinction between science and philosophy is analogous to that between consciousness and self-consciousness.

Das approvingly mentions K.C. Bhattacharya's view that scientific

knowledge is expressible in literal judgments and is communicable as information, and emphasizes the point that we do not seek or get any factual information in philosophy. A philosopher may not at all be an well-informed man.

The attitude of science is basically objective. It is the objective world or phenomena that science studies. It is object-oriented, object-centric. The subject, in scientific knowledge, remains unnoticed in the background. It does not count. But in philosophy, it is the self or subject that matters most. In it, attention is retraced from the objective world and directed towards what is subjective. There occurs inwardization or consciousness. The subject lives in self-forgetfulness in science. It regains itself in philosophy. The attitude of philosophy, unlike that of science, is subjective—in whatever degree it may be.

There is, however, no opposition between science and philosophy. Only their fields and attitudes are different. Further, there may be points of contact between them. This happens particularly in philosophy of science which subjects the basic concepts, methods and presuppositions of science to scrutiny. This task is better done by scientists turned philosophers and by philosophers who are conversant with science.

A philosopher in a way defines philosophy by doing it. To say what philosophy is, is to do philosophy. But to say what science is, is not to do science. 'What is science?' is not a question within science—it is an external question. But 'What is philosophy?' is a question within philosophy—an internal question.

III

Apart from distinguishing philosophy from science and describing it as critical reflection as exemplified in practice, Das further tries to elaborate his views by mentioning certain generative conditions and other characteristics of philosophy.

Some failure, frustration or disillusionment lies at the root of turning to philosophy. The natural tendency of mind is to look outward to what is objective. But to do philosophy, it has to turn back upon itself. Such inwardization normally does not occur, unless there is some shock, suffering or disappointment. Some such thing is necessary to make one reflective and start on the path of philosophy. Thwarting of some cherished or deep-rooted desire can turn one to introspection and philosophical reflection.

But mere failure is not enough. If it were enough, the world would have been replete with philosophers, for failure of some sort or other is the constant fate of man from birth to death. Poverty, disease, natural calamities, accidents, maladjustment, ill-treatment, injustice, cruelty, death of loved ones or separation from them, non-fulfilment of desires, etc.—any of these can cause mental suffering. None can escape all of

these various causes of pain. If, still, all do not become philosophers, that is not because of absence of failure and frustration, but because most men do not have the capacity for the kind of reflection that is philosophy. Only some men are capable of it and find their fulfilment in it. In this sense, philosophers are born, not made.

Philosophy, though it may be initially occasioned by some failure or disturbance in the sphere of practice or emotions, is primarily an affair of theoretical consciousness. Volitional or emotional frustration gives rise to confusion. Consciousness of lack of understanding leads to problems and questions, which philosophy seeks to clarify, solve or answer. It seeks to gain clarity and understanding by processes of thinking.

Das describes philosophy as an autonomous spiritual activity. As to the nature of the kind of activity it is, I have so far tried to give an idea of Das's views. But what does he mean by designating this activity as autonomous and spiritual?

'Autonomous' does not mean independent of everything else. It cannot be that, since reflection is reflection on something. This something may belong to any sphere to which thinking can be directed. Life-situations, commonsense beliefs, scientific doctrines, moral actions, religious ideas, experiences of all sorts—in a sense, everything—can be subjected to philosophical reflection. Philosophy gets its materials for reflection from all kinds of sources, and hence has to depend upon them. Philosophy is autonomous in the sense of being self-legislating. It serves no external master. Its rules, if any, are not dictated by any other discipline, however successful or exalted. It determines its own rules and procedures.

Secondly, 'autonomous' means self-justifying. Philosophy does not have to justify its existence by service to science or religion or anything else. In the middle ages in Europe, philosophy was regarded as the handmaid of theology. In some quarters, her new mistress is made out to be science. But the very idea that philosophy has to serve some mistress other than herself is totally repugnant in Das's view. For him, philosophy is an end in itself. In doing philosophy, we only fulfil our rational nature and serve no ulterior end. Philosophy is for its own sake.

When Das uses the word 'spiritual' with reference to philosophy, he does not mean anything mystical, religious or other-worldly by it. He uses the word 'spiritual' in the sense in which the German word '*geistig*' is used. For him, anything mental is spiritual; and therefore art, science, religion, etc. are all spiritual in the general sense. However, there are gradations in spiritual functions. 'The less we are concerned with matter or any sensuous content, the more we rise in the scale of spirituality.'[6] Philosophy, for Das, is the most spiritual activity, since it can make every pursuit the object of its reflection and thus is at a higher level than all other theoretical enterprises.

Philosophy is not only intrinsically valuable; it has value as a means also. It explodes myths, dispels superstitions, fights fanaticism and bigotry. The root cause of our sorry plight is too much involvement and over-identification with the not-self. Inwardization or turning from objects to the self cannot but do good. Philosophy, being a movement towards such recapture of the self, is something entirely beneficial.

IV

We may now take a somewhat critical look at Das's theory of philosophy. It is not a hurriedly propounded theory. Its subject is vast, variegated and is an ongoing affair. The problem of properly spelling out its nature remained unrequited with him, like many other problems of philosophy (for critical reflection does not have any final termination). From time to time he would add to his description of it, trying to make the account more and more rounded. But in spite of thus being engaged with it intermittently for long years, he never seemed to come to the end of the task.

He stuck all along to his characterization of philosophy as 'critical reflection', which may well be said to be apt and unexceptionable. However, the natural expectation that this description would be followed up by adequate rigorous elaboration is not fulfilled. Das referred to the cogitations of recognized philosophers for examples of critical reflection. He mentioned some generative conditions of it, such as experience of shock and failure, harping at the same time on the indispensability of unique individual capacity for it, on the attendant inwardization or deepening of consciousness, subject-orientedness, autonomy, etc.[7] But the explication of critical reflection is not such as to enable one to demarcate the realm of philosophy clearly from other disciplines which are also based on rational thinking. How does one, for example, distinguish introspective psychology from philosophy on the basis of Das's theory?

Das had before him the exemplary exposition of the same subject by his illustrious teacher, K.C. Bhattacharya—in which there was an excellent elaboration of the concept of philosophy, clearly indicating the extent of its jurisdiction and setting it apart as a separate serious cognitive activity of great refinement. But though Das wrote several articles on it, giving simpler presentations of the view of his mentor, he did not all the way follow the charted course laid down by the master. One reason for this was possibly that he did not want to exclude so-called philosophy of science, etc. from the orbit of philosophy, as Bhattacharya's view would do. But in order to capture everything that has been and might be done in the name of philosophy by the label 'critical reflection', he seems to have choked the possibility of definite mapping its territory.

Das did not believe in delimiting the range of philosophy. For him, philosophy had no prescribed subject matter, for it could focus its critical gaze on any subject whatsoever—situations, commonsense beliefs, science, moral or religious doctrines, experiences of all sorts, and so on. Nor did he believe that there was any clear-cut method or methods of how philosophy would exercise its critical function. No advance determination of procedure, or extraneous imposition of guidelines was needed. If this is so, there is no final conclusion in philosophy. Everything is always open anew for scrutiny according to the genius of the individual philosopher.

In maintaining the separate identity of philosophy as distinct from science, Das came to espouse the view that whereas science gives us knowledge, philosophy leads to or aims at wisdom, insight or enlightenment. Thus, while agreeing with Bhattacharya that philosophy is not an informational affair like science, he does not go so far with him as to say that it is a body of speech-created symbolism in elaboration of (what is called) the self-evident, but is content to speak of it as a search for wisdom rather than knowledge. However, he does not go in any detail into the nature of wisdom and insight. He was not unaware of the tragedy of the specialist, where man goes on piling up knowledge in the hope of achieving wisdom, but gets blocked and lost in the wilderness of information.

The two-word definition of philosophy as 'critical reflection' is like the general definition of man as 'rational animal'. The descriptive phrase is not inappropriate, but is rather too general for indicating the scope of the subject. It is applicable to all claimants to the title, and for this very reason may not find favour with individual philosophers having specific conceptions of the subject. How would the philosophy of Das be specified itself? Surely not simply as critical reflection. I think that his philosophy is centred on self-enquiry that is enquiry into Goodness, with its implications. In an earlier work published in 1935, his substantial thesis is that the Self is the Ideal. In a much later essay in Bengali on the 'Nature of Philosophy and Its Spiritual Significance', he writes,

> In scientific knowledge, the knower is utterly irrelevant. . . . But in philosophical knowledge, it is the knower that is of fundamental importance. The knowledge which does not make any difference to me is not philosophical knowledge. . . . If I do not know the meanings of 'good' and 'bad', I seem to be unable to live a good life or make any conscious worthwhile effort. Who am I, from where have I come, why at all I am (aimlessly) running helter-skelter—to know all such things we occasionally become disquiet. The philosophical enterprise consists solely in trying to solve problems of this sort by critical thinking. We have to understand that all problems of science are object-centred, whereas all philosophical problems are centred on Self.[8]

The intention (which may be stated as Concordance of Truth and Value) adumbrated in these lines reverberates in varied ways throughout his philosophy, as also in his writings on the nature of philosophy. He is a (value-based) traditionalist with a modern (critical) mind, for whom philosophy is a concern of man as man, where differences of time and clime are of least importance.

Notes and References

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5. 'Philosophy as an Autonomous Spiritual Activity', op. cit., p. 205.
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Heidegger, Bhakti, and Vedānta— A Tribute to J.L. Mehta

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The theme of this essay is the relation of self and other. Viewed on a sufficiently abstract level, the relation appears simple and unproblematic: self and other presuppose each other, one may glibly say, in the same way as identity and difference are correlated. The simplicity vanishes, however, as soon as one descends to a more concrete or practical level. For, how can we or should we approach the 'other'—especially an other belonging to a distant world, to a radically different culture? Are we always condemned to misunderstand, seeing that our approach necessarily departs from our own life-world and our taken-for-granted assumptions and prejudgements? Perhaps, given the danger of misconstrual, we should abandon the effort altogether, retreating instead into our familiar habitat and the safety of time-worn traditions. But then: how should we even come to understand ourselves—bereft as we would be of a responsive foil or counter-image? Moreover, retreat is no longer really a viable option in our present world situation, a situation marked by the growing interpenetration of cultures and the steady globalization of markets, media, and technology.

Thus, to return to the initial question: how can we properly gain understanding? Proceeding from our own assumptions, are we constrained to incorporate alien life-forms by assimilating them into our categories and beliefs? Perhaps, to avoid blatant cultural imperialism, we want to construct a neutral framework generally applicable to all cultures alike. But in constructing and applying this framework, are we not again trying to dominate and domesticate the world—by exorcising precisely the difference or 'otherness' of the other's culture? As Jitendra Mohanty has noted: 'in proceeding from a western cognitive framework, even a traditional-hermeneutical framework, and seeking to extend the latter to non-western life-forms, are we not embroiled or participating in "that cultural violence which a good interpreter should seek to avoid?"'[1]

Mohanty's comments appear in an introductory essay he wrote for a volume of posthumously collected papers by his friend and compatriot: the Indian philosopher J.L. Mehta. Sensitively formulated, Mohanty's

question touches on the central nerve of Mehta's life and work, by pinpointing a crucial issue with which he wrestled throughout his long and productive career. More perhaps than most non-western intellectuals in our time, Mehta was genuinely a citizen of two cultural worlds, carefully seeking to explore the precarious pathways between the two without lapsing into a bland syncretism. Born in 1912 in Benaras, the young Mehta grew up and studied mainly in Benaras where in due course he became a teacher of psychology and philosophy—in an ambience deeply saturated by Brahmanic and Sanskrit learning. While still fully immersed in this ambience, he steadily underwent the influence of 'winds blowing from the West' (as he noted later), especially in the form of western literature (Proust, Joyce, Thomas Mann), western psychology (Freud, Jung), and western philosophy (initially mainly Wittgenstein).

These initial contacts soon prompted him to concentrate his attention more thoroughly on western thought, an endeavour which led him from the study of Husserl and Jaspers progressively in the direction of Heidegger's hermeneutical phenomenology (which became the topic of his first major publication). Having gained a solid textual grounding, Mehta around 1957 left India for an extended sojourn in the West, a sojourn whose way-stations included a study-year in Germany (Cologne and Freiburg), a longer affiliation with the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii, and finally a regular faculty position at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University. After his retirement from Harvard in 1979, Mehta returned to India—a return which for him was also in many ways an intellectual homecoming, for it allowed him to probe more deeply into his own Hindu heritage. As he stated in an essay written shortly before his death:

> My life-work has been too intimately visited by 'modern' secular winds for me to be able to take unquestioningly for granted my inherited modes of thought and living. But I am also unable, because my bond with tradition is not wholly broken, to take the modern present as normative or as giving me a right to sit in judgement on those traditional norms which still reach down to me with magisterial authority.[2]

These pages are meant as a posthumous tribute to Mehta whom I never had the good fortune to meet (he died in 1988). Those who knew him are unanimous in their praise for his scholarship, his equanimity, and his gentle humanity. Speaking for many, Mohanty in his introductory comments says that 'he bore his scholarship lightly' and that, when recognition and honours came to him late in his life, 'this did not change him. There was a sweet simplicity about him which concealed the enormous scholarship that he had acquired.'

Regarding Mehta's writings, and specially the essays collected in his

volume, Mohanty remarks that they show 'the instincts of a discoverer and the sensibilities of a poet, the attachment of a lover and the distancing of a thinker'—which is high praise indeed coming from a renowned fellow-philosopher. Among all of Mehta's writings, none received more widespread and deserved acclaim than his study of Heidegger (which was first published in 1967 in Benaras under the title *The Philosophy of Martin Heidegger* and later, in 1976, appeared in revised form at University Press of Hawaii as *Martin Heidegger: The Way and the Vision*). As Mohanty reports, it was Hannah Arendt who, during a conversation at the New School for Social Research, offered this testimony: 'Do you know that the best book on Heidegger, in any language, is written by an Indian?'[3]

In the following discussion, it cannot possibly be my ambition to provide a full review of Mehta's multifaceted opus. For my present purpose—which is geared towards the issue of a non-violent hermeneutics—I limit myself to three aspects or dimensions of Mehta's work. Turning in a first step to the general problem of understanding, I explore Mehta's relation to Heidegger's and Gadamer's teachings and the lessons he drew from these teachings for cross-cultural dialogue and self-other engagement. Next, I shift attention to Mehta's endeavour to apply hermeneutical exegesis to India's classical heritage, as manifest in the Vedās and Vedānta. By way of conclusion, I finally probe Mehta's attachment to post-classical forms of Hindu religiosity, that is, to the legacy of popular faith and devotion as recorded in the *Bhagavadgītā* as well as later Purāṇic literature and bhakti poetry.

I

Intellectually, the deepest western source of inspiration for Mehta has been Martin Heidegger—although his approach to that thinker was circuitous and halting, and his knowledge of the latter's work almost entirely self-taught. As he wrote, late in his life (in a memorial paper dedicated to his mentor), nobody had 'told' him about Heidegger during his student days or during his early years as a teacher in Benaras. It was almost by accident that, in the decade after the war, he stumbled on some writings of the German thinker, especially his *What is Metaphysics?*—and underwent a kind of 'eureka experience' as a result. From there he moved on to his study-year in Germany where he met with Heidegger in Freiburg—an encounter which encouraged him to write his lengthy study on the latter's 'philosophy' (later more aptly restyled as his 'way and vision'). It was in this circuitous manner, Mehta comments, that he eventually 'found "my" Heidegger—the Heidegger of a lone Indian, all by myself.'

Yet, what he found was not just an idiosyncratic experience, a private insight tailored to a lonely sojourner between two worlds. Probing into

Heidegger's work, he discovered in the attempted 'overcoming' of metaphysics a pathway to a new encounter of East and West, Orient and Occident—a pathway liberating the East from subservience to western categories while simultaneously enabling the West to retrieve hidden (pre-Socratic) resources for a 'new beginning'. From the vantage of Heidegger's 'no-longer metaphysical thinking', East and West were no longer opposed as the rational to the 'mythic', with the result that the Asiatic East was no longer simply the adversary to be negated; conversely, the same vantage allowed the East to 'accept the West in its otherness, without being swallowed by the history that has emanated from it'. In another memorial paper for Heidegger, Mehta described his mentor as a 'western kind of *Rishi*'—that is, as a western thinker who was also an 'untimely *Rishi* in this time of need'. As he added:

> For all non-western civilizations, however decrepit or wounded, Heidegger's thinking brings hope, at this moment of world history, by making them see that, though in one sense (and precisely in what sense) they are inextricably involved in western metaphysical history in the form of 'world civilization' (as Heidegger has called it), in another sense they are now free to think for themselves, in their own fashion.[4]

In his writings, Mehta recurrently invokes Heidegger's teachings, as well as those of his foremost student, Hans-Georg Gadamer—with the intent not of recapitulating these teachings but of deriving lessons for our present context of an emerging 'world civilization'. Without being overtly schematic, one can arrange these lessons under three main rubrics or thematic headings: first, the overcoming of metaphysics, especially the modern metaphysics of the *cogito*; next, the issue of historical development with particular attention to the western idea of 'progress'; and finally, the problem of hermeneutical understanding with a focus on cross-cultural dialogue or engagement. In all three areas, unsurprisingly, Hegel emerges as a critical foil or backdrop for Heideggerian initiatives. With regard to modern metaphysics, Mehta pointedly refers to Hegel's *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* as a telling gauge of the self-consciousness of the modern age; for it was in these *Lectures* that Hegel celebrated Descartes' discovery of the *cogito* as the inauguration of modernity—noting that, in encountering Descartes, the historian of philosophy (like a sailor 'after a long voyage upon stormy seas') finally reaches *terra firma*.

Following Descartes, the notion of the *cogito* was refined and deepened by a string of thinkers in various guises—those of the Leibnizian 'monad', Kant's transcendental consciousness, Fichte's infinite ego, Hegel's absolute spirit, and Schelling's primordial freedom. Surveying this trajectory of formulations, Mehta concludes that the entire history

of modern western philosophy can indeed be described as the 'history of the explication and development of a theory of subjectivity'. However, this trajectory was deflected in our century both by the 'linguistic turn' and by the existentialist stress on finitude and worldliness (being-in-the-world). Heidegger's *Being and Time*, in particular, was at pains to show that human existence or *Dasien* does not fit into the schema of modern epistemology with its stress on the distinction between subject and object, knower and known. Instead of privileging consciousness or self-consciousness, Heidegger centrestaged *Dasein's* openness to being; and once this shift is properly taken into account, 'the representation of man as subject is, to speak with Hegel, brushed aside.'[5]

Overcoming of metaphysics, to be sure, was not narrowly confined to a transgression of the Cartesian *cogito*. In Heidegger's work, the term 'metaphysics' stands for the long and sustained project of western philosophy from Plato to the present; to this extent, it is another name for 'occidental thought in the entirety of its essence'. Seen from this angle, the attempt to overcome metaphysics—or (rather) to transcend metaphysical reasoning by finding the way back into the buried ground of that reasoning—signalled an effort to expose the historicity or historical particularism of western thought and thus to make room for a new and different beginning. In Mehta's words, Heidegger's wrestling with metaphysics—which never amounted to a simple reversal or denial—involved a critical engagement with the western philosophical tradition in such a way that this tradition would yield fresh resources and provide 'a liberative rather than a restrictive basis for future planetary thought.' Construed in this manner, Heidegger's engagement was bound to run head-on into Hegel's metaphysics and especially into Hegel's conception of human history.

In Hegel's view, the earliest phase of history is basically a phase of backwardness and inchoate mumbling, a condition which needs to be transcended or 'sublated' in subsequent stages through the progressive labour of thought. This view was radically challenged and unhinged by Heidegger's critique of metaphysics. In contrast to Hegel's reliance on dialectics leading from obscurity to ever-higher levels of insight and clarity, Heidegger concentrated his attention on what remains still 'unthought' in every thought, that is, on what is held back or in reserve in past modes of thought and experience. As Mehta comments, Hegel's basic error from Heidegger's perspective was to assume that 'philosophical thought is at its purest and most abstract in its historical beginning' and that 'history begins with the primitive and the backward, the clumsy and the weak'. To counter this assumption he cites from *An Introduction to Metaphysics*: 'Just the opposite is true. The beginning is the uncanniest and mightiest. What comes after is not development but shallowness and diffusion.' The same *Introduction* places the overcom-

ing of metaphysics and the resumed accent on being precisely in the context of a historical recovery and renewal. To ask again the question of being, we read there,

> means nothing less than to recapitulate the beginning of our [i.e., occidental] historical-spiritual existence, in order to transform it into a new beginning. This is possible; it is in fact the authentic pattern of historicity, for all history takes its start in a fundamental happening. But we do not repeat a beginning by reducing it to something past and already known, which we may simply observe and ape. The beginning must be begun again, *more radically*, with all the strangeness, the darkness, the insecurity that attend a true beginning.[6]

This emphasis on renewal or 'repetition' has a distinct relevance for the history of philosophy and religion. In his history of philosophy, Hegel portrayed Indian and Asiatic thought simply as an amorphous embryo, as an outlook lacking conceptual clarity and determinate shape. Similarly, in his philosophy of religion, he described India as a 'land of imaginative inspiration,' as a 'fairy region, an enchanted world', a region of 'phantasy and sensibility' but in any case as a world incapable of producing genuine philosophy. Under the influence of German Romanticism, India represented for him 'the character of spirit in a state of dream', a character in which he detected 'the generic principle of Hindu nature.' Needless to say, the task of spirit for Hegel was to awaken from this dream-state—from the state of the 'dreaming Indian'—in order to assume its role as self-conscious reason and subjectivity in the world. This process of awakening forms the inner heartspring of the Hegelian dialectic and, more generally, of the western theory of 'progress' in its various formulations; whether under Hegelian, Marxist, or empirical-evolutionary auspices, historical development since Hegel is seen as the progressive self-realization of human reason, will or other capacities.

As Mehta notes, however, this process of realization is not innocently spiritual, but involves the growing ascendancy of reason over imagination, of Occident over Orient—what Husserl and (following him) Heidegger called the progressive 'Europeanization of the world'. The latter ascendancy was clearly accepted by Hegel in his philosophy of history when he anticipated that India's dream-state would be disrupted and transformed by western colonialism—as was happening already in his time under British control. As Mehta comments wryly: 'Is it not indeed the privilege of the spirit in the waking state, as represented by the modern Hegel-speaking western consciousness, to be master of its dreams?' From this vantage, he adds, Hegel

> said something profoundly true, unbeknownst to himself when he prognosticated, continuing his sentence on the English lordship over India: 'for it is the necessary fate of Asiatic empires to be subjected to Europeans; and China will, someday or other, be obliged to summit to this fate.' For spirit which woke up, or dreamt that it did, after Socrates in the history of western thought, *has* conquered the world and incorporated it into its own big dream.[7]

Fuelled by the dialectic of reason, western ascendancy has an important—and deleterious—impact on the project of cross-cultural understanding. Paralleling the advance of colonial expansion, it is the privilege of the West to comprehend Asia or the East, not vice versa—and this by virtue of its higher conceptual maturity. Endowed with the power of negation or negative determination, western reason, according to Hegel, had the capacity of distancing and analysing or dissecting the world, thereby rendering it amenable to rational control. Willing to undergo the labour of negation and alienation, western spirit first of all retreats or emancipates itself from the world, thereby gaining the freedom (in a next step) to objectify the contents of the world in order to finally integrate or absorb the latter into its conceptual framework. Understanding from this dialectical vantage amounts largely to an effort of incorporation, assimilation, and self-aggrandizement. Mehta speaks in this respect of hermeneutics construed not as an opening of horizons but as 'a weapon directed against the other'. From Hegel's interpretive strategy, he notes, 'the being of the other, far from being acknowledged in its otherness and as a voice trying to reach me with its truth', can only appear as 'spirit in state of dream' and as an element assimilable in the vast drama of the unfolding dialectics; whatever exegetic 'charity' may be operative in this process is 'stifled by the metaphysics of *geist*'. Just as in the case of the theory of progress, however, Mehta finds in our age a promising departure from the Hegelian strategy, in fact, a 'breakthrough' or breaking away from the tradition of western speculative thought. Nietszche's *Birth of Tragedy*, Heidegger's *Being and Time*, and Gadamer's *Truth and Method* are in his view the crucial 'landmarks' of this departure which opens the path to a new mode of hermeneutical understanding: a hermeneutics of 'letting-be,' one that 'does not turn the past or the other into a dream image, an unreality, by the adoption of the *Aufhebung*-principle of Hegel, but lets them be, real and speaking in their own right'.[8]

Throughout Mehta's writings, hermeneutics forms a crucial topic whose meaning and implications are examined with steadily deepening rigour and intensity. Several of his essays give an overview of the development of modern hermeneutics—from Schleiermacher's theological exegesis over Dilthey's historicist brand of inquiry to Gadamer's philosophical (or philosophical-ontological) mode of interpretation. As he repeatedly emphasizes, it was chiefly Heidegger's *Being and Time* which laid the groundwork for a radical reformulation of hermeneutics: its

transformation from a specialized type of inquiry, based on introspective empathy, into a constitutive feature of *Dasein* or human existence as such. Seen as 'being-in-the-world,' *Dasein* for Heidegger was thrown into a situation and at the same time constrained to project itself into the future—a condition which requires a constant interpretive effort geared toward both self-understanding and an understanding of others and the world. In his 'existential analytic,' Mehta comments, Heidegger has 'laid bare the ontological structure of man, and this includes understanding as an intrinsic constituent of man's being-in-the-world.'

Conceived in this manner, hermeneutical understanding is no longer a mere act of empathy extending from an inner self (or subject) to another self (or the world of objects) but rather a basic mode of human 'being-there', that is, an emblem of *Dasein's* 'primordial openness' to other beings and the ground of being as such. Far from reflecting a subjective-intentional design, understanding always has the character of mutuality or of an experience one undergoes with others and the world—with the result that the attainment of a new level of understanding of others also implies a new kind of self-understanding and thus a process of self-transformation. Most importantly, given this aspect of mutuality, understanding can no longer be construed in terms of a dialectic bent on rational appropriation and assimilation; instead, its proper goal is that of a concerned 'letting-be' (*Seinlassen*). In Mehta's words, paraphrasing Heidegger:

> The happening of understanding, and of a tradition as its cumulative result, is itself an ontological process, a continuous language event and an event of truth, rather than a series of operations performed by a subject upon something objectively given; [it involves] remembrance of what has been and an anticipative reaching out to the future and openness to it.[9]

Building upon the insights of *Being and Time*, Gadamer's *Truth and Method* fleshed out and further developed this view of understanding in the direction of a dialogical engagement between self and other, between reader and text. In accordance with the notion of existential thrownness, understanding for Gadamer always proceeds from existing pre-understandings and prejudgements (including prior self-understandings) which are nourished by a particular history or tradition—although a tradition which needs to be constantly recuperated (once its taken-for-grantedness had vanished). These prejudgements may seem at a first glance distorting—and they *are* distorting if they are stubbornly maintained in full awareness of the distortion; yet they are also conditions of possibility or enabling premises of understanding by providing a starting point for reciprocal questioning. Deviating from Dilthey and the older exegetic tradition, Gadamer's hermeneutics does not rely on empathy or an effort to gain access to the other's psyche or the mind of the author (*mens auctoris*); instead the accent is placed on understanding the meaning of an experience, text or tradition, an understanding that can arise only out of a concrete engagement in which existing modes of self-perception or identity are tested and possibly transformed.

Such testing can occur between individuals, between reader and text, but also between different cultures. 'No culture', Mehta notes, 'is an island enclosed within its own horizons; all cultures and traditions have their being within such horizons', it belongs to the very essence of the 'hermeneutic experience' that through it these horizons 'open out, move towards and fuse with each other, in however small degree.' Placed in historical framework, the encounter of perspectives is at the heart of what Gadamer calls 'effective historical consciousness' (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein*) whereby past meanings are retrieved, mediated, and recast in the light of new concerns. What is crucial—for Gadamer as it was for Heidegger—is that understanding involves not an intentional strategy but rather participation in an ongoing interplay of questioning, an interplay which implies not an attempt at mastery but a willingness to give oneself over 'to the *Sache*.' Participants in this process are not bystanders but inserted into a 'happening of truth'; in this sense, we always 'come as it were too late, as Gadamer puts it, when we want to know what we should believe.'[10]

Together with Gadamer, Mehta opposes the 'happening of truth' to the infatuation with 'method'—especially if methodology is expected to yield a neutral, scientific access to meaning. As a movement of living thought, he writes, cross-cultural understanding is concerned with a 'mutual sharing of horizons' not with 'discovering a formula for the "other" culture' or 'grasping it in a concept.' From a Gadamerian vantage, the notion of neutral exegesis and scientific history is largely a chimera. Following in the footsteps of Enlightenment rationalism, historicism and evolutionary theory tend to rob the past of effective potency while holding up 'the image of a disenchanted, demystified, and rationalized world' neglectful of human temporality. Under the impact of positivism, even hermeneutics is sometimes styled as a 'science of interpretation' designed to offer objective, universally accessible knowledge. Where this model prevails—as happens in some versions of psychoanalysis, anthropology, and cultural analysis—understanding is transformed into a method for ordering, managing or streamlining the world or else into an instrument for 'decoding, unmasking, and mastering' an unconscious or repressed experience. 'Strange hermeneutics', Mehta observes, 'in which a valid dialogue can begin only after [cognitive] understanding has first been achieved, rather than being itself the locus or the playground in which understanding has its very being.'

A similar objectivism can sometimes even be found in the comparative study of religions, especially where the latter is erected into a

'science of religion' (*Religionswissenschaft*). Mehta finds it strange that positivism should continue to linger in a discipline ostensibly so far removed from its premises and that its scholars should have remained largely cut off from the 'liberating contemporaneous developments' in philosophy, literature, and literary theory. 'May it be,' he asks,

> that the very starting point, the conception of the study of religion as the study of 'other religions' has resulted in a exaggerated concern with methodology, in an admirable openness to social science and anthropology, but in too little regard for the task of religious *thinking*, of finding an appropriate way of talking about *all* religious traditions and about the history of religion (in the singular) in their global togetherness?

Taking his cues from Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Mehta insists that religious studies can proceed not from neutral curiosity but only from a genuine religious interest—an interest 'no longer tied to specific theologies, and yet religious, pushing towards an integral, universal way of thinking about *homo religious*.'[11]

Although critical of objectivism and the fascination with method, Mehta does not simply reject science or the endeavour of rigorous scholarship—provided they are not presented as substitutes for understanding. His endorsement of scholarship extends even to the discipline of Indological studies which, over the past two hundred years, has emerged as an integral part of western academia. Although appreciating Edward Said's critique of 'Orientalism' as a corollary of western colonialism and imperialism, Mehta is unwilling to discard or brush aside the fruits of western-style learning wherever they promote a broadening of horizons. The problem for the Indian, he writes, is not 'finding out strategies for discrediting this scholarship' but rather discovering how to share in western learning 'without having to surrender his personal relationship to his own tradition.'

Faithful to the demands of hermeneutical engagement, the alternatives for Mehta are not adoption of western science and secularism versus their rejection in favour of a native traditionalism. Given the growing interpenetration of cultures, Indians have no longer the option either to embrace western reason as the 'inner telos' of humankind *or* else to 'entrench ourselves into a specifically Indian philosophizing'. Instead, the only viable pathway is to try to '*understand* both [cultures] in their mutual otherness', to 'learn the language of each' and thus to 'evolve ways of thinking and talking which will be truly appropriate to our membership of both worlds.' The goal of such hermeneutical engagement for Mehta is not a bland universalism or homogenizing syncretism but rather the cultivation of respect for difference fostered by nonobtrusive understanding:

> No facile compromise or reconciliation, miscalled 'synthesis,' but a relentless exposure to the tension between the scientific consciousness and the legacy of the past is the way we can learn to address the right questions to our religious tradition and be rewarded by the answers truly adequate to our present situation.[12]

II

Mehta's comments were not empty phrases but backed by his life's experience. During the years of study and then during his prolonged stay abroad, he thoroughly 'exposed' himself to western culture and scholarship—thought not simply for the sake of idle curiosity. As in the case of Hölderlin (as read by Heidegger) venturing abroad was for Mehta only a sustained preparation for an eventual homecoming, a return which would enable him to 'address the right questions' to his own tradition, especially the tradition of classical India. In this respect, the road was partially cleared but at points also made nearly impassable by western Indological scholarship. As Mehta observes, leading western thinkers on India—Hegel, Schelling, and Schopenhauer—clearly had only a 'secondhand' knowledge of the Indian world based on 'secondary sources and inadequate research'; moreover, despite good intentions, their approach tended to remain thoroughly mired in western metaphysical assumptions. Even a leading German Indologist like Paul Deussen (the friend of Nietzsche) could not see—despite resolute efforts—to which extent his understanding of India was still governed by 'the very Kantian presuppositions on which he took his stand as on unshakable ground.'

Elsewhere, scruples about philosophical presuppositions were even less developed; especially in England, the 'unshakable ground' of Indology frequently coincided with colonial expansion. Thus, when the Boden Chair for Sanskrit was established at Oxford in the latter part of the last century, the specified task of the chairholder was the translation of the Bible into Sanskrit so as 'to enable his countrymen to proceed in the conversion of India to the Christian religion'. The linkage of Indology to imperial interests was perhaps most openly articulated by Lord Curzon in 1909 when, speaking to the House of Lords, he stated that 'our capacity to understand what may be called the genius of the East is the sole basis upon which we are likely to be able to maintain in the future the position we have won' and that 'no step that can be taken to strengthen that position can be considered undeserving of the attention of His Majesty's Government.' Pleading for the creation of a school of Oriental Studies in London, Curzon bluntly declared that 'such studies are an imperial obligation . . . part of the necessary furniture of Empire.'[13]

Undaunted by these 'orientalist' obstacles, Mehta, in his later life,

sought to find his way back into the classical sources of Indian thought, particularly the treasures of the *Ṛgveda* and other Vedas. Perhaps more than elsewhere, access to these treasures was facilitated but also obstructed by western Indology (one may recall Max Müller's famous description of the *Ṛgveda* as 'crude, childish, unscientific' reflecting the character of an 'ancient and simple-minded race of men'). Mehta manages both to pay tribute to, and disassociate himself gently, from Indological scholarship. It would be 'churlish,' he writes, to deny the 'new illumination and breath of fresh air' offered by modern *Ṛgveda* philology. Still, it is obvious that western learning comes to the subject 'from outside' and often treats the Veda as an 'object' rather than a living reality; typically, it is more concerned with historical antecedents of the text than with 'what it has meant to the people whose faith it has nourished' over long periods of time. From the angle of Indian lived reality the *Ṛgveda*, however, has functioned as 'a founding origin and source,' with the result that most subsequent religious literature is in the nature of a 'series of footnotes' or a 'massive commentary' on it. Thus, there is here a clear instance of that tension between western knowledge and indigenous experience mentioned above. While the western scholar seeks to understand vedic texts 'without being religiously involved' and armed with 'extraneous' prepossessions, the Indian lives within a 'cumulative tradition' of which the roots are in the Veda and seeks to re-experience the latter in light of 'all that has emerged from it in a time of present need.' What the contemporary Indian reader of the Veda seeks, Mehta observes (speaking in his own behalf), if that reader is 'modern and not untouched by a sense of historical distance' gene-rated by modernity,

> is both to understand this text and to experience an epiphany. He must live, truthfully, suffering in full awareness the 'darkness of these times' and with hope in the coming dawn, and assist in its emergence by the only act of worship appropriate to the goddess *Vac* (Word, Logos): a prior dedication to the *Sabda-Brahman* (reality as word) that the *Veda* is, to which no word of whatever provenance can be alien.[14]

Mehta's comments on the *Ṛgveda*, and the Vedic tradition in general, are fascinating and revealing of his distanced yet deeply engaged reading. Heeding Heidegger's view of the uncanny night of beginnings, he regards the *Ṛgveda* not only as the '*arché*-text' of the Hindus tradition but as 'the *arché*, the animating source of the religiousness' which generated and sustained that tradition. As a kind of *Ur-Dichtung* this Veda is for Mehta not simply a collection of meanings but rather signals 'the very opening up of a horizon of meaning' out of which subsequent ages were able to construct a whole stream of sacred texts and insights. Focusing on the *Ṛgveda* and its legacy, Mehta singles out a number of

key features for closer consideration. First of all, there is the 'sacredness and all-pervasive reality of the word (*vāc, brahman*)' which constitutes a focal point in Ṛgvedic experience (Mehta follows here the Indologist Paul Thieme in rendering *brahman* as sacred word or utterance). As he notes, *brahman* basically means 'giving poetic form, a verbal formulation'—though not for the sake of human self-expression but in response to a divine call or inspiration. The *rishi* or poet fashions a *brahman*, but not as its originator or creator; for the latter is god-given (*devattam*). It was the centrality of the sacred word which generated among the heirs of the vedic legacy that 'sensitivity to language' that resulted later in the grammar of Pāṇini and the transformation of Vedic into classical Sanskrit.

A second feature of the *Ṛgveda* is its wisdom and even its 'speculative passion' that 'breaks out once in a while' (though it is mostly restrained). From this, Mehta says, flows 'the mighty torrent, swirling and surging, of Upaniṣadic thought' which later gives way to the 'ceaseless creativity' of the philosophical systems (*darśanas*), above all the *Vedānta*. Third, the vedic hymns contain a narrative and 'mythopoetic' strand, although it surfaces often tangentially; this strand is elaborated in later hymns but finally 'bears rich fruit' in the massive epic and Purāṇic literature of later centuries. Next, there is the central importance of '*rita*' in the *Ṛgveda* and the entire vedic religion—a term which Mehta, following Heinrich Lüders, translates as 'truth'. (It was Lüders who had asserted: 'To have made Truth the highest principle of life, that is a deed for which perhaps even modern peoples might envy those ancients.') However, truth here does not simply denote a correspondence or adequation to external facts (which is its preferred meaning in western metaphysics); instead, it designates the largely concealed 'sacred origin and goal' of all thought and activity (in a manner akin to the pre-Socratic *aletheia* discussed by Heidegger). Between *rita* as truth and the world of gods, as well as between gods and humans, there prevails a covenantal bond or a relation of friendship—which is the final point highlighted by Mehta. Friendship, we read,

> is the commonest name in the *Ṛgveda* of the bond between men and the gods, and so of the bond between man and truth. The lordship of transcendent truth and the ultimate sacredness and sanctifying nature of the 'region of truth' make it the relationship of all relationships, so that 'being true to' is the common sacred measure and norm for man's relationship to the gods, to nature, to other men, and to himself.[15]

While honouring the work of noted Indologists, Mehta does not follow their arguments completely or without reservations. One point of disagreement has to do with the status of the world or 'cosmos' opened up by vedic religion. In their interpretation of vedic texts, both Thieme

and Lüders spoke repeatedly about 'vedic cosmology' or the 'world-picture of vedic Aryans.' Mindful of Heidegger's caveats, Mehta objects to this description. Both vedic scholars, he says, 'speak in terms of *weltbild* and *weltanschauung*, as though the vedic *rishis* were talking about nature in the modern sense, as an object confronting the human subject' and amenable to observation (*anschauung*). In the light of recent hermeneutical teachings, however, 'can we afford to ignore the philosophical critique of the concept of world and the idea of a world-picture by Heidegger or by Wittgenstein and, more recently, Richard Roty?' From the angle of *Being and Time*, 'world' must be seen as an '*existentiale*' or an 'aspect of man's mode of being,' while in Heidegger's later work the term refers to 'the unified play of the fourfold of earth and heaven, gods and mortals, in which man dwells on earth as his home, under the heavens.'

Such a view is completely blocked by observational language—just as is the spirit of vedic religion. Under the rubric of *weltanschauung*, we read, there clearly cannot be 'any *sacred* fire (*agni*), or the *sacred* waters here below, or a *sacred* plant (*soma*)'. Yet, for the vedic seers *agni* was not just an observable fire but rather 'the burning flame of longing for self-transcendence, the vehicle which carries man's message to the gods', while *soma* represented 'the ultimate end of human spiritual endeavour, the fullness of awareness, potency and joy, in short, immortality'. Another reservation concerns the status of vedic gods, like *Agni*, *Rudra* or *Varuṇa*. For Thieme and other Indologists, these gods were either personifications of forces of nature or else embodiments of abstract concepts. What these scholars failed to take into account, Mehta comments, is that the vedic seers may have used traditional nature imagery 'for their own purposes and novel ends.' The notion of embodied abstractions was particularly misleading. 'Do we see here a process,' Mehta asks, 'of moving from *logos* to *mythos* rather than the other way round?' If vedic seers had ascended to the level of abstractions, 'why would they go about re-entering the deifying, mythic darkness again?' For Mehta, neither the vedic gods nor *rita* or *vāc* were deified abstractions—just as little as Heidegger's 'being' is an abstract concept. Instead, they formed part of a poetic world-disclosure, of an inspired '*aletheio-poiesis*' (which becomes intelligible from the vantage of Heidegger's remarks on language).[16]

The same kind of poetic world-disclosure can be found in later classical literature, especially in the 'mighty torrent, swirling and surging' of Upaniṣadic texts. In commenting on far eastern thought, Heidegger at one point had portrayed Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* as a form of 'poetic thinking,' and meeting ground of reflective thinking and poetry. Turning to the Indian context, Mehta asks, may we not see the Upaniṣadic utterance as inhabiting a similar sphere, as moving in 'this region where "poetizing and thinking are neighbours"—and not only moving

in it but opening it up first of all as a 'foundation and fountainhead for Indian thought?' Actually, it was with reference to (one aspect of) the Upaniṣads, that Heidegger made one of the very few recorded comments on India. In the course of a seminar on Heraclitus (conducted jointly with Eugen Fink in 1966–67), Heidegger remarked in an almost off-hand fashion: 'For Indians sleep is the highest life.' What sense can one make, Mehta asks, of Heidegger's provocative and seemingly quite misleading statement? To elucidate this possible meaning, he turns to Upaniṣadic texts—especially the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad*—where the states of human being or the stages of human selfhood are discussed (as an elaboration of the sacred syllable *om*). According to these texts, human selfhood can be traced from a 'waking state immersed in everyday awareness to the stages of light dream and deep sleep where subject-object divisions progressively drop away—until finally a fourth stage ('*turiya*') comes into view, a condition of authentic selfhood or pure being where '*ātman*' and '*brahman*' are able to coalesce.

Why, Mehta asks, does Heidegger 'stop short with sleep as the highest,' while failing to mention this fourth stage beyond waking from which the other three derive their meaning? Perhaps, he wonders, it was Heidegger's concern with finitude which held him back from taking a metaphysical leap (into an ideal world) and thus prevented him from seeing that 'even for Indians sleep is not and cannot be the highest life.' yet, the situation was probably more complicated and had to do (again) with the problem of language and corss-cultural translation. In western Indology, the fourth state—especially in its connection with '*cit*'—was commonly rendered as the abode of absolute 'selfhood' or 'pure consciousness', terms which from Heidegger's perspective are emblems of western metaphysics and 'modern subjectivism.' Things might be different, Mehta suggests, if *chit* were seen as relating to human consciousness in the same way as 'being' relates to 'beings' in the western ontological tradition. Thus, it is the 'linguistic problem'—which already 'caused no end of trouble to Hegel'—which may have prevented Heidegger from 'taking the step from sleep to the fourth state.'[17]

By way of the Upaniṣads, vedic insights subsequently infiltrated the diverse philosophical systems or schools of thought—among which Mehta pays special attention to Vedānta. Here again, it was a matter of disengaging himself from western scholarship while still respecting some of its findings. A case in point is the Indologist Deussen who expertly translated and interpreted important Vedānta texts—without realizing his continued indebtedness to Kantian and Schopenhauerian presuppositions. Even the distinguished Indian philosopher K.C. Bhattacharyya, in his studies devoted to Advaita Vedānta, was insufficiently sensitive to the persistent legacy of (German) idealism in his thought. In an attempt to extricate himself from this predicament and

make a fresh start, Mehta turns simultaneously to some of the classical spokesmen of Vedānta—like Śaṅkara and Sureśwara—and to Heidegger's work, *not* with the aim of finding in the latter the key for unlocking classical texts but of initiating a kind of dialogue in which the two perspectives could interrogate each other.

The difficulties of this undertaking are obvious on several levels. For one thing, Śaṅkara lived and wrote standing in the relatively unbroken tradition of classical Hinduism, while Heidegger inherited Nietzsche's rupture with the past. Still, Mehta notes, Śaṅkara too was 'not just a traditionalist intent on restoring the vedic tradition' but an original thinker, 'moved by the experience of his age as destitute, pervaded by an absence and hanging in the abyss' (occasioned by the long period of Buddhist dominance). Next, there is the problem of cultural and temporal distance, especially the fact of Heidegger's relative aloofness from classical Indian thought—more specifically his tendency to lump the latter together with western-Platonic metaphysics (a tendency which explains his preference for far eastern culture as holding greater promise for 'non-representational' thinking). In a modest but important footnote, Mehta seeks to correct or counterbalance this metaphysical construal of Sanskrit literature. Granting the metaphysical component in Sanskrit, he writes,

> . . . it may be instructive to investigate the correctives it has developed against this representational or objectifying element, thus exhibiting its own genius: a mode of utterance in which representation and the cancellation of the representative force are held in tension and balance. Perhaps the uniqueness of Indian philosophy and religion lies in the simultaneous de-objectification of the objectified, in the iconoclastic moment which is never long absent from its iconism.[18]

The encounter of Heidegger and Vedānta, in Mehta's view, offers clues for a fruitful pursuit of comparative cultural and philosophical studies—beyond the pitfalls of one-sided assimilation or shallow synthesis. In the past, he notes, 'comparative philosophy has proceeded largely on the basis of an uncritical employment of metaphysical ideas'; assumed to be 'obviously and eternally valid' and hence indiscriminately applied to non-western cultures and traditions (like those of India). Yet, something remarkable is likely to happen if we seriously take Heidegger's talk of the 'end of philosophy' and the 'overcoming of metaphysics': for what these notions herald is a new freedom from metaphysical biases, a 'loosening of the hold of the "concept" on 'thinking', and a fresh openness to the 'matter of thinking, wherever going on, East or West'. From Heidegger's perspective, the 'end of philosophy' as metaphysical reasoning does not mean its termination but rather its consummation and completion, the fact that it has reached its extreme fulfilment in

the emerging 'world civilization' predicated on the triumph of western scientific-technological reason.

Are we to think of comparative philosophy, Mehta asks, as a 'continuation of this consummation,' as a contribution to this world civilization and in its service? Or should we not rather think of it in terms of the 'task of thinking' which, according to Heidegger, still remains reserved for us at the end of metaphysics: namely, the task of retrieving beginnings in order to explore the untapped future potential in past thought? Mehta's own preferences clearly points in the second direction. If we wish to retain the term, he writes, comparative philosophy would then be 'a name for the task, infinitely open, of setting free' the promise of the past, the task of 'bringing into view and articulating in contemporary ways of speaking, in new ways of speaking, the matter of thinking which, in what has actually been realized in thought, still remains unsaid and so unthought in the traditions of the East.'[19]

With specific reference to Vedānta, this approach signals the need for a re-interpretation of classical texts and their guiding ideas. A case in point is the term *Brahman*—whose vedic meaning had already been recast by some Indologists as sacred utterance, as opposed to a metaphysical essentialism. In Mehta's view, this rethinking of the term needs to be carried forward into post-vedic literature. As the he writes, neither the Upaniṣads nor Śaṅkara were concerned with epistemology in the western sense, with the result that *brahman* for them was not equivalent to Aristotle's 'being' (*to on*), just as little as *Brahman-vidyā* corresponded to a *legein* or *theorein* in the Greek sense. Taking some cues from the later Heidegger, Mehta prefers to associate *Brahman* with world-disclosure or kind of happening in which everything participates (without resort to metaphysical essences). Seen from this angle, Brahman is indeed being, but *not* in the sense 'in which it is other than what it is being for or to', *not* in the sense of 'what knowing, thinking and speaking are about, other than them, as a reality confronting them,' but rather 'inclusive of these as themselves modes of being.' To this extent, Brahman is '*sat, cit* and *ānanda* in one and as one, and my being is one with it.'

This view finds support in some of Śaṅkara's writings (especially his commentary on the *Brahma Sūtra*) which completely reject the identification of Brahman with an (ideal) object of knowledge, predicating any understanding of Brahman instead on the removal of 'the distinction of objects known, knower, acts of knowledge, etc., which is fictitiously created by nescience (*avidyā*).' Despite their monumental stature, however, even Śaṅkara's texts cannot simply be taken as fixed entities of finished structures. In so far as it is a way of thinking, Mehta insists, Vedāntic thought or Vedāntism has been and will remain 'a thinking of the unthought in what has been thought' and thus 'a perpetually novel start.' This vantage point bestows a continual freshness and youthfulness

on Vedānta and on the work of Śaṅkara as its foremost proponent. Perhaps, the beginning of Vedānta, we read,

> . . . still hides a secret for future thinking and saying; perhaps Śaṅkara's thinking still contains a meaning, still awaiting the work of thought to be clearly seen, from which his school itself was sidetracked, even while bringing it to *one* consummation. . . . If so, Vedānta thinking, far from being a closed and completed whole, remains a task for the open future.[20]

III

Mehta's observations on classical texts are penetrating and important; but they do not exhaust his engagement with India and Indian traditions. A tribute to his work would be entirely inept and inadequate if it failed to mention another dimension: his involvement with the legacy of popular and devotional Hinduism as nourished by epic and Purāṇic literature. In this respect, western Indology has probably been on the whole more a hindrance than a support. In preparing his magisterial edition and translation of the *Ṛgveda*, Max Müller wrote in a letter about its importance for Indians: 'It is the root of their religion, and to show what that root is (no temples, no idols), is I feel sure, the only way of uprooting all that has sprung from it during the last 3,000 years.' Subsequent scholarship in the West has in large part shared in this downgrading of popular Hinduism in favour of classical 'roots.' Mehta's work is completely untouched by this bias. In his discussion of Vedānta thinkers, he refers approvingly to Sureśvara's description of Vedānta as 'a science flowing out from the holy foot of Vishnu,' adding that this is 'no figure of speech only.'

For Mehta, one of the most remarkable aspects of Indian history is the continuity of religious faith and devotion throughout the centuries. In the midst of the 'most dramatic changes and ruptures' in their history and despite 'so many broken threads,' he observes, the one thing 'to which Hindus clung and never let go, to which they tenaciously held on by dint of continued creative transformation', was their 'immediate, living relationship with the sacred'. This clinging is sometimes chided or condescendingly mocked by western scholarship as a failure to rise from *mythos* to *logos* or from magic to reason. But from the vantage of our own time, the time of an emergent world civilization, the situation may appear in a different light. For, in our age of 'consummated desacralization' of all aspects of life and of a deepening insight into the effects of secularization, it may be possible to perceive the phenomenon of Indian religiosity for the 'wonder that it was' and continues to be. 'The question today and at this hour in the religious history of mankind, as in reality always', Mehta states,

> . . . is not whether there are many gods, or two, or the one and only, or whether this religion or that is 'true', but whether human living is not to be irretrievably banished from the dimension of the holy, within which all talk of God and the gods, near or remote, present or absent, transcendent wholly or also immanent, has any meaning.[21]

In referring to Indian religion or religiosity, Mehta does not mean to subscribe or lend support to the western bifurcation of faith and reason or theology and philosophy. A central aim and ambition of his work is precisely to move beyond this division of domains and thus 'beyond believing and knowing' in the direction of a thinking or thoughtful faith where mind and heart are joined. The pre-eminent place of this joining is the sphere of the 'holy,' a sphere inhabited by *Homo religious* who is a bridge between the visible and the invisible or *'ein Pfeil der Sehnsucht nach dem andern Ufer'* (in Nietszche's terms). In clinging to the sacred and making room for the dimension of the holy, Indian tradition in Mehta's view gives evidence of the persistence of thoughtful faith or a faithful mode of knowing, a mode which allows us to think 'the holy and the true in their intrinsic, indivisible unity' and thus to experience 'that integral plenitude, in that highest abode of Vishnu and seat of *rita*.'

To be sure, this tradition is today under seige and exposed to a steady process of erosion. Humankind, Mehta comments, lives today in a 'disenchanted world' and religion is no longer the 'central, integrating and historically effective force' that it was in the past. To the extent that it is embroiled in the process of modernization, India too has become willy-nilly a participant in the 'worldwide phenomenon of secularization.' Yet, the issue for Indian intellectuals is whether to be simply pliant tools of disenchantment or else to engage in cultural resistance by bearing witness to an older promise. Before we advance 'from a "developing" to a "developed" status' and banish all 'so-called superstition,' Mehta asks, 'is it not important and timely "to keep the rumor of angels" alive' and, in doing so, to grant a human abode to the sacred? In large measure, he perceives his own lifework in terms of such an engagement. As he noted in one of his last essays, his life-world at that time was surely no longer fully inhabited by 'the ethos of the community in which I was born and raised', although traces of it remained a 'cherished element in the very core of my being.' In the meantime, he had also become a participant in 'the life-world of the India of today' and even in 'the western worldwide phenomenon of technicity' (Heidegger's world civilization). What—his essay queries—

> what, in such a situation, is there left for me to do than go questing after the traces of sacrality, go back to the sacred texts of my

> tradition and try to find a language in which they may be made to speak meaningfully today?[22]

Mehta's sustained 'questing' after these traces is exemplified in his comments on epic and Purāṇic literature. His final lecture at the Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions concluded with a section entitled 'Considerations on the *Rāmāyana*.' These considerations are learned and scholarly; but they are by no means a mere exercise in 'Religionswissenschaft'. As he notes, he himself grew up in a section of Benaras called Ramghat, near the place where Tulsidas is said to have composed his 'Petition to Rāma; and in a neighbouring house, weekly group recitals of Tulsidas's *Rāmāyana*, accompanied by music, 'formed the ambience of my life for twenty years'. These and other reminiscences form the backdrop for his intent, at the end of a long career, to 'bring the beginning and the end together' by concluding with 'a few words in praise of Rāma'. On Mehta's reading, the *Rāmāyana* is an epic tale about human deeds, but it is also a sacred story—more precisely a story about the transfiguration of the human into the divine.

At the beginning and in the foreground of the story we find a struggle between humans and demons, with the gods simply 'looking down from heaven, keenly watching the fortunes of battle. At this point, Rāma, the hero of the story, is entirely and pre-eminently human. But, Mehta asks, 'what is it to be human? What is man that he should serve the gods and battle against demons, that in doing so he may shine forth in light beyond him and fulfil and manifest the divinity in him?' Born a *kshatriya* prince, Rāma is driven into exile and challenged by demons who rob him of what is dearest to him (his wife Sītā)—experiences which set the stage for a profound seasoning and transformation. 'What goes on in the pages of Vālmiki, as we move from book to book,' we read,

> is a gradual revelation and unfolding of the true nature of Rāma, of the more than human in this very human prince, as in a photographic film from a Polaroid camera. So far as I know, neither the progressive changes in landscape and geography, the crossing and descent, nor the change in Rāma, not into something other than human, but in respect to the suprahuman light that shines through him with ever-growing intensity; none of this has been noticed by scholars. Not once is he identified by the poet with Vishnu, nor is there a suggestion that he thinks of himself as such. And yet, the picture on the photographic plate keeps on developing.

In the end, on the invitation of Brāhmā, Rāma is able to return to his divine abode. The interpreter of the later age, Mehta adds, of 'our age in which *dharma* stands on one leg,' may wish to read the *Rāmāyana* as a purely human tale or adventure. But he can also read it and retell it as

'the story of the highest repository of human devotion, if his concern is with *dharma* and *moksha*.' Pure devotion, however, leads to that 'serenity from which flows all compassion. That is Rāma.'[23]

Five years after his return to India, Mehta presented a lecture on the *Mahābhārata* in Delhi. There, after acknowledging the great distance separating modernizing or 'developing' India from its epic past, Mehta with quiet intensity evokes the memory of *Kurukshetra*, speaking of the 'vital force' with which the epic tale inhabits 'our imagination even today.' In his account, there are several reasons for this continued vitality. For one thing, the *Mahābhārata* is simply 'a rattling good yarn and a mine of minor stories' which have served as source and inspiration for a good deal of subsequent literature. Above and beyond this, the epic is for Mehta 'a work of superb poetic craftsmanship and imaginative vigour, not yet fully explored,' a work that has the continuing power to enlarge our understanding 'because the story it tells and the realm of meanings it opens up can give us a glimpse of our human situation, of the reality of what is.' As he recognizes, the *Mahābhārata* is a tale of dramatic turbulence and unmitigated violence—but it does not glorify the later. Its central message, 'repeated again and again,' he writes, is 'that non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) and compassion (*anrisamsya*) are the highest duties of man, states of being without which we fail to be completely human.'

According to Mehta, the story revolves around the relation between '*kshattra*' and '*brahma*,' the former denoting physical prowess and strength, the latter the power of reflective insight and wisdom. It is the uprising of a quasi-demoic *kshattra* against a wisdom faithful to divine *dharma* which causes the banishment and suffering of the Pāṇdavas, triggering again a process of transformation and transfiguration. Far from merely recounting the story of an 'internecine conflict between two groups of blood-relatives,' the *Mahābhārata* for Mehta reports the Pāṇdavas' agonizing struggle against, and final victory over, a rebellious *kshattra* force—demonstrating in the end that *kshattra* divorced from *brahma* is 'ruinous' while, in the service of *brahma*, it may guide to peace. This lesson is underscored in the final encounter of the Pāṇdavas with Ashvatthama—when Krishna orders the former to put away their arms, an order only Bhima disobeyed:

> Then, Krishna and Arjuna step down from their chariot, throw away their arms, walk into the fiery circle of that ultimate weapon [of Ashvatthama] and forcibly make Bhima obey and stop fighting. Then the weapon became quiescent and inactive. In the very midst of the discourse of violence, what more eloquent testimony could there be to the power of non-resistance, or nonviolent resistance, which is the quintessence of Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence.[24]

Underscoring the human-more-than-human character of the epic poem,

Mehta's lecture contains intriguing comments on Krishna/Vishnu and Shiva, that is, on the most popular deities of devotional Hinduism. Despite the accent on human exploits and inter-clan rivalries, he notes, what happens in the *Mahābhārata*, seen in its narrative structure, 'cannot be understood unless the crucial roles played in the drama by Krishna and Shiva are understood.' Drawing some inspiration from Heidegger's discussion of temporality and being-toward-death (as well as his remarks on the 'passing while'), Mehta presents Krishna/Vishnu as the very source of time or, more precisely, as the sustainer and preserver of temporal human being-in-the-world. As the ultimate divinity and absolute reality, he writes, Vishnu is 'the origin of time itself' or of human temporality; under his auspices, everything that comes into being 'endures for a while and then passes away, including individual mortals and entire civilizations.' During its life span, every living being is backed up by a divine power; the potency granting or allotting time to each being (including each individual *Dasein*) is 'mythically speaking, Vishnu or Narayana incarnate as Krishna in human form.' To this extent, Krishna is the supporting, beneficial, strength-giving agency in human life within a temporal frame 'where *dharma* in conjunction with the other *puruśharthas* hold sway.' Yet, time in this context (and in a Heideggerian sense) is not clock-time but rather a temporality poised in the precarious balance of life and death, presence and absence, arrival and departure. At the outskirts or fringes of an allotted time span, temporality itself takes on the character of evanescence, dissolution and even death—a power that is 'mythically named Rudra or Shiva.' In the *Mahābhārata*, Mehta observes, Shiva is not directly a player or agent in the story, but remains an 'outsider,' a 'strange, uncanny figure' at the outskirts of human activities. Still, from behind the scene (as it were), he takes a hand in 'structuring the plot of the narrative.' Thus, throughout the unfolding events of the epic story, 'Rudra's shadowy presence haunts the realm of the living.' Though absent in person, Shiva is present: 'through his signs and symbols, hints of his actuality are there throughout the narration and they surface clearly at crucial points in the narrative.'[25]

Mehta's relation to Hindu deities was not confined to the level of speculative observations. Honouring the yardstick of a faithful wisdom or thinking, his work was also saturated with genuine devotion and a deeply rooted *bhakti* religiosity, especially as cultivated in the Vaiśnava tradition. Some of his finest and most moving writings deal precisely with this tradition which stretches from the *Bhagavad Gītā*, focused on Krishna, to the later *Vishnu Purāṇa* and *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and finally to the lyrical *bhakti* of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and his heirs. In Mehta's account, the *Bhagavad Gītā* can be regarded as the '*archē*-text of *Ekanti* Vaishnavism,' a text in which devotional surrender or *bhakti* is taught as the highest mode of *yoga* or of the joining of humans with the divine.

Far from counselling a simple emotionalism, *bhakti* in the *Bhagavadgītā* is presented as a 'gathering together of mind, intellect and heart in their unity,' a form of relationship with the highest in which 'man's whole being' is concentrated on this outreach or self-transgression. Replicating the ancient relation between Nara and Narayana, Arjuna in the *Bhagavadgītā* is 'Krishna's *bhakta*,' that is, his 'dear friend' patterning himself completely on his beloved mentor. With an accent more on intellectual and ethical commitment, the *Vishnu Purāṇa* portrays the demon-born Prahlada as the 'prince of bhaktas' completely devoted to Vishnu/Krishna. It is through intense meditation that Prahlada is shown here to achieve juncture (*yoga*) with the divine. In Mehta's words: '*Bhakti* here is meditative insight risen to the pitch of ecstasy.' Because Prahlada knows that Vishnu abides everywhere and in everything, 'he looks upon everyone as equal, without distinction of friend and foe'; in his view, we should have *Bhakti* toward every creature, 'because the Lord dwells in all beings.'[26]

According to Mehta, however, the preceding texts offer only faint glimpses of *bhakti*—whose full depth or strength is revealed in the *Bhāgvata Purāṇa*. In the *Gītā*, *Bhakti* was more proclaimed than illustrated, whereas the *Vishnu Purāṇa* concentrated on an ideal meditative mode, and the *Bhāgavata Purāna* offers a sustained paean to the 'love of God.' In that Purāṇa, the wise-intellectual Uddhava travels as a messenger of his friend, Krishna, to the *gopis* in Vrindaban to persuade them to be content with mental exercises and meditation. But, Mehta notes, his message has little or no effect on the *gopis* whose 'minds and thoughts are already in Krishna's keeping' and whose aching hearts remain 'utterly absorbed in their beloved' who has parted from them and yet is with them 'in the mode of absence, as a trace of his presence.' At this point, Uddhava the messenger becomes himself the recipient of a message or a truth which had been hidden from him before: for he comes to realize that loving Krishna as the *gopis* do is 'the real thing,' the ultimate goal to be pursued even by sages and saints. What Uddhava experiences 'in the depth of his being,' goes beyond his cognitive awareness, for now 'he longs to kiss the dust under the feet of the *gopis* or Braja and wishes it were possible for him to live in Vrindaban even as a plant in the vicinity of the *gopis*.'

What the Purāṇa here intimates is a blending of mind and heart, a faithful-thoughtful kind of devotion; for Uddhava now is 'both a *bhakta*, solely devoted to Krishna as his friend and confidanté, and a *muni* or a thinker.' As before, Mehta is firm in dissociating *bhakti* from sentimentalism or a subjective-emotive state of mind. Remembering Heidegger's notion of 'mood' (*stimmung*) seen as a basic tuning, he insists that *bhakti* 'involves the total human being' and is 'not confined to having feelings of a specific kind.' Seen as a generative tuning of the whole of *dasein*, *bhakti* transcends the traditional distinction between the three mental

faculties of knowing, willing, and feeling; to this extent, it even transgresses the differentiation between three distinct types of *yoga* (with *bhakti* being one of them). As he writes in a Heideggerian vein:

> Contrary to the modern, Western, subjectivistic and man-centered philosophies of life, feeling (as also knowing and willing) must be understood not in the psychological sense of inner commotions and agitations but ontologically as a mode of man's relationship to being. . . . Understood in this metaphysical, non-psychological sense of feeling, *bhakti* represents man's primordial relationship to being, . . . the supreme privilege of man's moral estate and the ultimate refuge in his search for wholeness and for being healed.[27]

In celebrating *bhakti* and whole-hearted devotion, I want to emphasize by way of conclusion, Mehta never gave aid and comfort to any sort of religious fundamentalism or a narrow-xenophobic revivalism. Loyal to the teachings of his European mentors, he never forgot that self-understanding of any kind presupposes 'going out of oneself' and that 'the way to what is closest to ourselves is the longest way back.' For Mehta, the encounter of self and other necessarily had the character of mutual interrogation which implies 'mutual openness and so an acknowledgement of the other as question-worthy.' Such questioning and mutual recognition held for him also the key—not to 'world civilization' but—to a genuine global community, free of domination. The goal of such a global community, he wrote, cannot be achieved 'through any sort of *Herrschaftswissen*, or any sort of cultural and conceptual conquest' but only through 'this reaching out to the other in active understanding.'

These considerations also apply to the situation in India and to the relations between India and the West. The religious tradition of India, Mehta affirms, has been in the past an 'open temple' which allowed itself to be touched by 'Greek power and beauty,' by the thought-currents of neighbouring China, as well as the divergent influences of Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. The present encounter with the West, while wrenching in many ways, also allows Indian to distance themselves from tradition and thus to recapture the past, freely and with renewed vigour. Now, we read, the Indian

> can joyfully let his religious imagination be enlarged and vivified by the heritage of the Greeks, by the vision of Christianity, and the message of Islam, and he can freely seek to appropriate through creative reinterpretation the tradition of which he is both a product and a trustee. He can accomplish this, but only to the extent that he can see himself and his tradition in the wider inter-religous context of world history.

Thus, faithfulness to tradition and openness to the other, the unfamiliar, perhaps even the threatening, here go hand in hand. In this respect, Mehta's outlook is thoroughly supported by the *Bhagavad Gītā* of which he was so fond. There Krishna instructs Arjuna: 'In any way that men love me in that same way they find my love; for many are the paths of men, but they all in the end come to me.' And again: 'The man whose love is the same for his enemies or his friends, whose soul is the same in honour or disgrace . . .—this man is dear to me.'[28]

Notes and References

1. J.N. Mohanty, 'Introduction,' *Philosophy and Religion: Essays in Interpretation*, J.L. Mehta, Indian Council of Philosophical Research and Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, New Delhi, 1990, p. vi.
2. J.L. Mehta 'Life-World, Sacrality and Interpretive Thinking', 1987, *Philosophy and Religion: Essays in Interpretation*, pp. 248–49. The essay was printed earlier in *Religious Consciousness and Life-Worlds*, edited by T.S. Rukmini, Indian Institute of Advanced Study and Indus Publishers, New Delhi, 1988, p. 19. The essay is also contained, together with a discussion in *J.L. Mehta on Heidegger, Hermeneutics and Indian Tradition*, edited by William J. Jackson, Brill, Leiden, 1992, pp. 209–33. Some of the biographical background is offered by Mehta in his essay 'My Years at the Center for the Study of World Religions: Some Reflections', *Philosophy and Religion: Essays in Interpretation*, op. cit., pp. 65–82.
3. 'Introduction', *Philosophy and Religion: Essays in Interpretation*, op. cit., p. v. The Heidegger study was first written in 1962 and presented as a doctoral dissertation at Benaras Hindu University. The later change of title was at least partly due to a letter which Heidegger wrote to Mehta and in which he referred to the early version as 'your book on my "philosophy"'. For this information see Preface of 1974 to *Martin Heidegger: The Way and the Vision*, J.L. Mehta, University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1976, p. xiv.
4. See 'Finding Heidegger' (1977) and 'A Western Kind of *Rishi*' (1977), *Philosophy and Religion: Essays in Interpretation*, op. cit., pp. 20–21, 25, 31. The two papers are joined in the volume under the heading 'In Memoriam: Martin Heidegger.' In view of the hostile accounts often found in the literature, it may be worthwhile to cite Mehta's portrayal of his mentor (p. 31): 'Not a pompous and clever school master bursting with "ideas", not an ecstatic or visionary, not an introverted *yogi* or one lost in the inner world of thoughts, not "mad" or possessed by a demon, but down-to-earth and "all there", composed and collected, a craftsman and a "maker", alert, simple, sane and straight, aware of his limits as a thinker, kind and friendly.' The essay 'Finding Heidegger' is also contained in *J.L. Mehta on Heidegger, Hermeneutics and Indian Tradition*, op. cit., pp. 27–33.
5. 'The Concept of the Subjective' (1966), *India and the West: The Problem of Understanding; Selected Essays of J.L. Mehta*, Scholars Press, Chico, California, 1985, pp. 1, 16, 23.
6. 'Understanding the Tradition' (1969), *India and the West*, p. 138; 'Heidegger and the Comparison of Indian and Western Philosophy' (1970), *Philosophy and Religion: Essays in Interpretation*, op. cit., pp. 8–10. The citations are from Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, translated by Ralph Manheim, Anchor Books, Garden City, New York, 1961, pp. 32, 130. Mehta offers his own translation from the German text of 1953 (a translation which I have revised at a few points in light of Manheim's version).
7. 'The Will to Interpret and India's Dreaming Spirit' (1974), in *India and the West*,

pp. 186–88. See, also the essay, 'The Concept of Progress' (1967), in *India and the West: The Problem of Understanding; Selected Essay of J.L. Mehta*, pp. 69–82. There, Mehta also points to the steady debunking of the theory of progress by both theologians and philosophers. Following Nietzsche, he writes (p. 81), 'Heidegger has traced the lineaments and genesis of this basic movement, of which the outward manifestations constitute what we cheerfully call progress and which is no longer confined to the western world. Accompanying 'progress' as its chill and deadening shadow is the spiritual night falling on mankind, 'the darkening of the world, the flight to the gods, the depredation of the earth', as Heidegger describes it. For the Hegel citation see *Lectures on the History of Philosophy.*

8. J.L. Mehta, 'The Will to Interpret and India's Dreaming Spirit,' in *India and the West*, pp. 194–96; 'Problems of Inter-Cultural Understanding in University Studies of Religion' (1968), in *India and the West*, op. cit., pp. 118–19.
9. 'Understanding and Tradition' and 'The Will to Interpret and India's Dreaming Spirit,' in *India and the West*, op. cit., pp. 150–51, 198. Compare also the essays 'Heidegger's Debts to Dilthey's Hermeneutics and Husserl's Phenomenology' and 'The Transformation of Phenomenology' (two lectures, 1987); in Jackson, ed., *J.L. Mehta on Heidegger, Hermeneutics and Indian Tradition*, op. cit., pp. 35–60, 69–88.
10. 'Problems of Inter-Cultural Understanding in University Studies of Religion' and 'The Will to Interpret and India's Dreaming Spirit,' in *India and the West*, op. cit., pp. 130–31, 199.
11. 'Problems of Inter-Cultural Understanding', 'Understanding the Tradition', 'The Will to Interpret,' and 'Beyond Believing and Knowing' (1976), in *India and the West*, op. cit., pp. 131–32, 155, 181, 213–14. Wilfred Cantwell Smith was Mehta's colleague at the Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions and is often praised by Mehta for his innovative insights. In the field of comparative cultural and religious study, Mehta repeatedly comments critically on the work of Mircea Eliade, taking exception especially to his resort to the scientific categories of structuralist anthropology. Notwithstanding its noble aims, he observes at one point (p. 215), when this approach 'claims to arrive by the study of myth, ritual and symbols at universal, objective, synchronic knowledge about human religiousness, it seems to be pursuing a chimera.'
12. 'Problems of Inter-Cultural Understanding' and 'Understanding and Tradition,' in *India and the West*, op. cit., pp. 125, 159; also 'My Years at the Center for the Study of World Religions', *Philosophy and Religion*, op. cit., p. 67.
13. 'A Stranger from Asia' (1977) and 'My Years at the Center,' *Philosophy and Religion*, op. cit., pp. 52–3, 69. In his writings, Mehta repeatedly criticizes the contemporary Indologist Paul Hacker for his addiction to scientific methodology. 'For Hacker,' he states at one point, 'the impeccable scholar of Advaita Vedānta, Indology is a *Fach*, a field of specialized research, a *Wissenschaft* with a simple but severely austere methodology for investigating alien texts for the sake of what is objectively present in them, with all "interpretation" ruled out of court and its place taken by theological "utilization".' See 'The Will to Interpret,' *India and the West*, op. cit., p. 183.
14. 'The Hindu Tradition: The Vedic Root' (1984), in Mehta, *Philosophy and Religion*, op. cit., pp. 115–17. The essay can also be found in Jackson, *J.L. Mehta on Heidegger, Hermeneutics and Indian Tradition*, op. cit., pp. 102–19.
15. 'The Hindu Tradition' and 'The *Ṛgveda:* Text and Interpretation' 1988, in Mehta, *Philosophy and Religion*, op. cit., pp. 100–4, 109, 113–15, 175.
16. 'The *Ṛgveda:* Text and Interpretation,' in Mehta, *Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 278, 281–82, 288–91. As he writes (p. 288), 'In a remarkable lecture, "On the Way to Language", Heidegger sought to think of language in such a way as "to bring language itself to speech as language", language as it abides in its own manner of being, as language itself speaks in the speech of man. Heidegger also often pointed out that in disclosing to us things—whatever we speak *about*—language holds back the revelation of its own manner of being, conceals it . . .' The vedic poets knew about the play of concealment and revealment from their own experience. . . . As a Ṛgvedic verse says: "the poets hide the paths of truth; they keep secret their hidden names" (10.5.2).' Compare in this context Martin Heidegger, 'The Age of the World-Picture,' in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, translated by William Lovitt, Harper & Row, New York, 1977, pp. 115–54 also Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, translated by Peter D. Hertz and Joan Stambaugh, Harper & Row, New York, 1971, especially pp. 123–25.

17. Mehta, 'Heidegger and the Comparison of Indian and Western Philosophy' and 'A Stranger from Asia,' in Mehta, *Philosophy and Religion*, op. cit., pp. 15, 54–8. Actually, Mehta was not quite satisfied with the solution suggested above, because of a deeper discrepancy between ātman and the 'being of beings' (pp. 61–2). This is the only instance I have discovered where Mehta critically engages Heidegger's views on the basis of a different conception of ontology. See also Martin Heidegger-Eugen Fink, *Herakhil: Seminar Wintersemester 1966–67*, Klostermann, Frankfurt-Main, 1970.
18. 'Heidegger and Vedānta: Reflections on a Questionable Theme' (1978), in *India the West*, pp. 228, 238–39, 265 (note 24). Regarding the later f.n., Wilfred Cantwell Smith in his 'Introduction' to the volume states (p. xvii) that in it Mehta has 'propounded in passing a precious new idea potentially richly productive: a number of doctoral dissertations are suggested in this one provocative insight.' For the comments on Bhattacharyya see Mehta's essay 'The Problem of Philosophical Reconception in the Thought of K.C. Bhattacharya,' in the same volume, pp. 160–178. The essay 'Heidegger and Vedānta' is also contained in *Heidegger and Asian Thought*, edited by Graham Parkes, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1987, pp. 15–45.
19. 'Heidegger and Vedānta,' in *India and the West*, op. cit., pp. 241–43.
20. 'Heidegger and Vedānta,' in *India and the West*, p. cit., pp. 247–50, 259–61. Mehta's main concern in the essay is to differentiate *Vedānta* from traditional metaphysics. 'If', he writes (p. 244), 'Brahman is identified with the Greek notion of being (not to speak of its scholastic variants), conceived as ground, then Heidegger's whole effort is to demolish this idea, for his entire thinking is a critique of just this single concept'. Occasionally, Śaṅkara's thought has been linked with Christian mysticism or else with Thomistic ontology. But, Mehta objects (p. 250), in so far as the final point of reference in these comparisons is still the Greek notion of being, "they cannot be regarded as shedding light on what *brahmā-vidya* is about or what *ātman-bodha* stands for. In this respect, at least, a consideration of Advaita Vedānta in a Heideggerian perspective perhaps offers a better chance, for the thinking of Heidegger and Śaṅkara may be found to have a touching point somewhere in that 'region of all regions', beyond the thought of being and non-being, in which it has its sojourn."
21. 'The Hindu Tradition', in Mehta, *Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 104–5. Compare also the comment in the same context (p. 106) that the "inner logic" of Indian history, 'this thread running unbroken from vedic times to the present, is constituted by the single-minded, unshaken will for the preservation of the dimension of the holy in human living at all costs, leaving it to "history" to reckon these costs at will'. See also 'Heidegger and Vedānta', in *India and the West*, op. cit., p. 223. There (p. 254), Mehta again shows his indebtedness to Heidegger, noting that 'this whole process in which truth is realized in thinking experience occurs within the dimension of the holy, as Heidegger thinks it, as a sacred happening, within an experience of being "which is still capable of a god", which is not yet "too late for the gods and too early for being".' Mehta's phrasing above seems to

resonate with A.L. Basham's *The Wonder that was India*, Rupa & Co., Calcutta, 1991. Regarding Müller see Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *Scholar Extraordinary*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1974.

22. Mehta, 'The Hindu Tradition' and 'Life-Worlds, Sacrality and Interpretive Thinking' (1978), in *Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 118, 245–46, 248. See also 'Beyond Believing and Knowing' (1976), in *India and the West*, op. cit., pp. 205–7.
23. 'My Years at the Center for the Study of World Religion', in *Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 76–82.
24. 'The Discourse of Violence in the *Mahābhārata*' (1987), in *Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 255–56, 259–60, 270.
25. 'The Discourse of Violence in the *Mahābhārata*', *Philosophy and Religion*, op. cit., pp. 258, 263–64. Regarding the 'passing while', see Heidegger, 'The Anaximander Fragment', in *Early Greek Thinking*, translated by David F. Krell and Frank A. Capuzzi, Harper & Row, New York, 1984, pp. 13–58.
26. Mehta, '*Bhakti* in Philosophical Perspective' (1986), in *Philosophy and Religion*, op. cit., pp. 206–8. Compare also 'Krishna: God as Friend' (1988), in *J.L. Mehta on Heidegger, Hermeneutics and Indian Tradition*, pp. 121–35.
27. '*Bhakti* in Philosophical Perspective', in Mehta, *Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 204–5, 207–9, 213–14.
28. 'Problems of Inter-Cultural Understanding' and 'Beyond Believing and Knowing', in *India and the West*, op. cit, pp. 129, 216. On global dialogue compare also 'Postmodern Problems East/West: Reflections and Exchanges' and 'World Civilization: The Possibility of Dialogue' (1978), in *J.L. Mehta on Heidegger, Hermeneutics and Indian Tradition*, pp. 235–51, 253–66. See also *The Bhagavad Gita*, translated by Juan Mascaró, Penguin Books, New York, 1962, pp. 62 (4.11) and 97–98 (12.18–19).

DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS

Is Chomsky's Linguistics Non-Empirical?

Three recent issues of the *JICPR* carry articles having its focus on the status of Chomskian linguistics.[1] Amitabha (1994), while trying to defend his non-empirical reading of Chomsky's linguistics against Amresh's attack, claims to prove that Chomsky's linguistics is non-empirical, before finally rejecting it. The purpose of this discussion is to examine whether he backs up his claim with substantive arguments. It will be shown that none of his arguments can prove the non-empiricality of Chomskyan linguistics. I am not trying to prove the empirical credentials of Chomsky's linguistics by answering the above question in the positive. But I wish to underline the vagueness of Amitabha's target: the empiricality of linguistics cannot be vague unless empiricality itself is vague. So, in a sense, Amitabha begs the question against Chomsky's linguistics. Had it been the realistic claim that is under attack, then this is not exactly the way the question is begged. Amitabha does not, and cannot, examine Chomsky's own empirical claims. His arguments are of no consequence whatsoever.

On the one hand, it was argued that Chomskian linguistics has no empirical content because it is unfalsifiable. The unfalsifiability of Chomskian linguistics follows from the unfalsifiability of the notion of a correct sentence. Grammar, as a theory of language, is therefore non-empirical. Such an argument is too simplistic. The whole of Amitabha's critique of the empiricality of Chomskian linguistics follows from this. I propose to examine certain arguments which Amitabha uses on this central assumption.[2] On the other hand, it was pointed out that a D–N model is sufficient to accommodate the empirical claims of Chomskian linguistics. Both of the authors sorely neglect or dismally fail to locate the exact point at issue, and as a result, give a totally distorted picture of Chomskian linguistics as it is known today. Both write as if this is the first time the issue is being examined. This itself is not true. They hardly give a single reference on the issue which has attracted so many philosophers in the West. The point is that the mode in which it is discussed is completely different from the one which they present. The question whether Chomsky's linguistics is empirical is therefore tied up with the question whether there are explanations in psychology. The plain answer that is emerging is that there are. *Ex hypothese*, they are not on par with physical explanations. Linguistics is a 'soft' science as it is still emerging. Anyone is welcome to discuss the inadequacies of the methodological underpinnings. But they must all be related to the way Chomsky claims to include linguistics as one of the natural sciences ('. . . mentalism is a stance familiar in the natural sciences'). Both of the articles of Amitabha

refuse to take such claims seriously and by making use of one interpretation of linguistics as a theory of language, it proceeds to heap charges and finally dismiss it as non-empirical.[3] Such a conclusion, I think, is quite unwarranted. Such a conclusion is warranted only if an alternative mode of psychological explanation is proposed. One cannot find any in the two articles except some speculative suggestions with no solid backing of arguments.

A quick review of Amitabha's enthymemetic reasoning will prove how ignorant he is of what Chomsky calls the 'second cognitive revolution', which brought linguistics to the fore as a branch of cognitive science, as the growth of a few decades of work will well attest. Amitabha's major lines of thinking are: grammar does not enter into a causal nexus; *ergo*, it is non-empirical; *ergo*, alternative foundations must be sought in normative functions of languages; *ergo* linguistics is only an extended axiomatic system; *ergo*, it is autonomous. It is not clear whether he is arguing for autonomy or against autonomy (the title indicates a defence, but he supplies no worthwhile argument). The main supporting pillar for the above is provided by what he calls the 'explanation–explication conflict'. This idea itself presupposes a sharp separation between axiomatic formal systems and scientific mode of explanation. If conflict means separation, then it begs the most important question while moving to prove that no separation is intended. This route is not easy to sustain, especially in the light of the understanding of cognitive mechanism as an information-processing system. The point is that it is isomorphic to axiomatic systems. What it simply shows is that psychological explanations, of whatever hue, can enter into causal streams. Amitabha's route is different: extended axiomatic system leads him to characterize it as open to Wittgensteinean type of challenge. Since rule-following (normative) considerations clash with Chomsky's avowed presuppositions of competence, they are conflicting paradigms. This is not a sound strategy without assessing Chomsky's own arguments against normativity which are discussed below. It is only to demonstrate the above, that Amitabha develops a distinction between grammar, which is *ex hypothese* non-empirical (then why the need to argue against Chomsky) and psycholinguistics which is empirical; such a distinction is unfortunate, because it is least warranted if the above remarks about cognitive science are understood. Given the benefit of doubt that Chomskian linguistics does not enter into causal system, it still does not follow that linguistics is non-empirical. This is exactly the issue I take up with Amitabha. I put forward a simple argument which is due to Alexander George[4] which runs as follows. Linguistics or grammar, in Chomsky's sense, may not be indentifiable either with psychogrammar (a mental representation of grammar) or physiogrammar (a theory of neural nets), but it does not follow from this that grammar is non-empirical. The lesson one learns is that it is as inadequate as any other

naturalistic explanation of phenomena. More bluntly: what kind of empirical import we have in science itself is not so clear. One need only recall Chomsky's counter to an argument proposed by Thomas Nagel.[5] The argument is that even if we have all the scientific avenues to understand what it is to be a bat, still we are left with something that we cannot include in this (e.g., pain). Chomsky's question is: what is the basis of such a prediction? What sense of non-empiricality can one then adduce to Chomsky's grammar? This question is quite independent of Chomsky's own empirical claims, which I discuss below.

Besides, one cannot show that the non-empiricality of grammar follows from the non-empiricality of the notion of a correct sentence. Similarly, one cannot take the latter to rest on the notion of a sentence as intuitive, and hence qualitative. This is simply Amitabha's strategy. What does linguistics have to do with qualitative understanding of a sentence rather than a quantitative sentence? Neither of these will do. Amitabha of course searches two grounds for supporting his point. Firstly, Chomsky's grammar does not tell us under what frequencies such a sentence is generated. True, but what has it to do with Chomsky's idea of grammar? Chomsky may very well agree that both grammatical as well as non-grammatical sentences (deviant sentences) can be generated, but this only shows that grammaticality is not as good a notion as parsability, learnability, etc. Chomsky in fact concedes the weakness of the notion of grammaticality. The second ground Amitabha seeks is that the conception of a correct sentence has the unique trait of being known to be definitely correct. This begs the question. Further, by making the notion of a correct sentence as a subclass of intuitively known sentences, which is what is entailed by the above, what new empirical grounds does it break? It seems that even without agreeing to the above, one can agree with Itkonen's distinction between the conception of a correct sentence and the conception of a factually uttered sentence.

What exactly is Amitabha up to? He wants to deduce that linguistics has a theory–atheory matrix, and Chomsky's grammar is defaulted by giving a theoretical explanation of the speaker's atheoretical knowledge. Similarly, Amitabha argues that since *rules* are not falsifiable, they are non-empirical. Such an argument rests on *two* misunderstandings: *one*, rules are not claimed to be empirical, rather they are part of mental representations (nowhere does Amitabha discuss how Chomsky shifted his stand on earlier phrase–structure rules); *two*, its status is not shaken by falsifiability with which Chomsky agrees. Chomsky can agree with rule-following and the grounds of their falsifiability. So, Chomsky cannot be won by Amitabha's argument for non-empiricality. Amitabha does not examine a single argument Chomsky advances against normativity of rule-following. They are: (1) they are authoritative structures; (2) norms are unanalysable and on par with notions like 'community' or

'society'; (3) the bearing of a wide variety of considerations on normativity makes it too difficult; and the most important of all is that (4) social facts cannot be reified. (Amresh calls it 'misplaced' with which I am in sympathy.) This forces us to think that there is no straightforward position between private rule-following (normativity) and community-based rule-following (hermeneutics). The above points are adequate enough, in my opinion, to refute the forced opposition that Amitabha brings out.

No wonder, Amresh was provoked to defend a D–N model of linguistic explanation. He too is erroneous on two counts, for he has taken the D–N model as the model and says that Chomsky's model can be fitted into this. My opinion is that he must be sensitized to the state of the art in linguistics Chomsky claims, especially in his principles and parameters (Government and Binding) paradigm which represents a higher evolute of Chomsky's thinking on this matter. I also suggest that Amresh cannot demand an explanatory mode for an emerging discipline without looking at Chomsky's own claims, hence his critique is vitiated by the same fault which Amitabha espouses. Their failure lies in not being able to examine directly Chomsky's own empirical claims, especially the more recent version as cited above. One may raise an objection, as follows. What is the advantage of examining Chomsky's *own* empirical claims? The reason that is adduced here is that even his principles and parameters view is a ramified version of rule-following normativity and hence it is bound to 'wither away'. I agree that this cannot be taken at face value; and secondly, it cannot prove the prediction to be true. A stronger defence of Chomsky's empirical claims can still be made. I think, that depends on how one interprets the philosophical (empirical) significance of this theory. For example, the game-theoretical semanticists see this only as a variant methodology of logical grammar, and try to subsume it under quantification and coreference. What I suggest here is that the most immediate grounds that are to be considered are his empirical claims. There is no reason to think that Chomsky puts his empirical claims on a high pedestal. Rather, he is satisfied with the claim that linguistics is as empirical as any other natural science. The best way one can examine Chomsky's claims is to see whether Chomskian linguistics is holistic and naturalistic in Quine's sense within which the issue is currently raging. He probably needs notions like under-determination and translatability for throwing light on the status of linguistics.[6]

Both the commentators are open to further questioning because they take too narrow a view of scientific explanation; it is either a D–N model or a falsifiability model. So, the reason why Amitabha's positive side is too faint, despite Itkonen, is to be traced to his lack of awareness of many models of scientific explanations, of which the D–N model is one. Amresh presumes that this is the only one in town. One can show this by considering Amitabha's argument that grammar is intuitive

(then why ignore folk sciences?); this can easily be disposed off from Chomsky's own early argument in *Aspects*.[7] For Chomsky, the link between a speaker's intuitions, and the judgements he makes about the possible interpretations of sentences is only indirect. Chomsky gives two reasons: first, the speaker might have 'terrible intuitions' about his language; and, second, behaviour will vary according to his own intentions/intuitions. Under-determination is therefore the point at issue. Or is it inference to the best explanations? Chomsky avoids the passage from the former to indeterminacy. What all it proves is that there is no isomorphism between grammar and its mental representation, or even so, with its physical realization, or else, so to say, between grammar and its axiomatic explication. What grounds are there to believe that explication will provide the necessary immunity with specific empirical advantage? If it is agreed that an individual can choose any one grammar including its extensional equivalents, then the point at issue is one about the possibility of alternative grammars. It is only from some such reflection that George concludes that there is a deep divide between Chomsky and Quine, if at all any, that it is one about under-determination and indeterminacy, *and* that, it rests on the grounds that they seek 'deep explanation'. It is not that they become compatible in George's sense, but it is difficult to pinpoint which side will win.

Similar remarks will apply to Amitabha's none-too-good critique of competence, performance, and the distinction between language and language use. Following Bar-Hillel, Chomsky concedes that 'creativity' (the production problem) lies in mystery. I think, Amitabha's distinction between action and event is of no consequence when he himself does not formulate his argument in terms of action rather than events.[8] If Amitabha's intention is to question the very possibility of synchronic linguistics, as he seems to convey, then his scepticism will be worse than Quine's own linguistics-less list of sciences.

Let me close the discussion with Chomsky's own 'empirical' claims: a theory of language (grammar) is a computational/representational theory of mind/brain in which statements of grammar are identifiable with statements of the theory of mind. A particular speaker's language is called (strongly generated) I-language that contrasts with (weakly generated) E-(xtensional) language. The latter is the formal language available for a philosopher or a formal logician, having no cognitive import, no parsing, and no learnability. Chomsky's central claim in this is that his variety of philosophy of linguistics has more empirical content than any other philosophies of languages, a claim that has not been fully assessed so far. No doubt, for Chomsky, a weakly generated E-language is a sub-class of the structural description (SD) of I-language. But, I am not willing to agree to call a philosopher's analysis of language as 'dubious' as he does. So I cannot agree that Chomsky sounds any

more empirical than any other philosopher of language for that matter. That does not lead to the conclusion Chomsky is non-empirical. As I see it, there is a certain coordination between the jungle linguistics many gavagais and the Chomskian empirical assumption about I-language, for the simple reason that sentences are spoken and understood by speaker and hearer. Setting aside the previous ability-versions of competence, now Chomsky settles for the cognitive steady state of the brain as given by a relational analysis R(H, L) where H stands for the person's brain state and L, the language state. What all this amounts to is that linguistics is as cognitive as any other cognitive science. Moreover, the radical departure of the principles-and-parameters theory makes room for parametric variation, and even for lexical representation. Its bearings on the status of Chomsky's linguistics is not too clear at present. These two variations add a new dimension to his linguistics whose philosophical importance is yet to be properly comprehended. The question is: to what extent will this fulfil the ambitions of a cognitive paradigm? The question is unanswerable in the light of the current controversy in terms of two paradigms. They are, roughly: if the brain is not a semantical processor, then it needs a connectionist NET-talk (functionalistic network).[9] Its bearings on Chomsky's linguistics is not too clear at present. Again, there is a deep divide between Chomsky and Katz; the divide is between a conceptualist and a platonist, which, I think, Amitabha conveniently overlooks.[10] This is a divide within linguistics taken as a cognitive science. Other considerations of linguistics as a theory of representation take us in the direction of psychosemantics.

For all these reasons, I think, the so-called hermeneutic challenge is a farce, and it shows a complete lack of understanding of Chomskian linguistics.[11]

Notes and References

1. Amitabha Dasgupta's article, 'Explanation–Explication Conflict in Transformational Grammar' appeared as early as 1989 (*JICPR*, pp. 93–108) and his defence against Amresh Kumar's attack (1993) appeared in 1994.
2. Here and in many other places, modifications are introduced in the light of the suggestions made by an anonymous referee of the journal. Nevertheless, the suggestion to orient the reader towards further reading cannot be adhered to for two reasons: (1) this is not a self-contained article, but only comments on a paper; and (2) it will make the comments unnecessarily long. Though the orientation to cognitive science too is restricted to Chomsky's own, certain philosophical relevant comments are highlighted. One has to refer only to Davidson-inspired accounts of intentionality which provided a certain backdrop to cognitive models. Christopher Peacocke, Martin Davies, John Foster and Crispin Wright concentrate on psychological explanation and competence, and this has a certain relevance also. For all these, the origin is Frege, which brings an interface between philosophy of language and mind.
3. Amitabha's only reference is to Itkonen's books and articles mentioned in his defence (1994). It must be pointed out that these citations unfortunately have nothing to do Chomsky's later defence of linguistics as part of natural science. I think that Chomsky has no stronger claims such as that linguistics is natural science. Both the authors miss this point.
4. See Alexander George, 'When and Whither the Debate between Quine and Chomsky?' in *Journal of Philosophy* (1986), pp. 489–99, for a number of positions that I adopt here. Following George, I strongly disagree with the proof that linguistics is non-empirical.
5. Chomsky, 'Prospects for the Study of Language and Mind' (Lectures delivered in Israel), 1988, p. 12, See also note 10 below.
6. The exact opposition between under-determination of theory by data and the D–N model is that the former allows rival hypotheses for the same data. Just as there is no fact of the matter for rival translations there is no fact of the matter for deciding on rival hypotheses. But Quine may not agree. The current alternative to this is suggested by Michael Devitt's semantic localism. Semantic localism attempts to naturalize semantics: semantics is as much naturalistic as any other science.
7. I am indebted to A. George for this argument form; see note 3 above.
8. For example, Amitabha's formulation reads: 'to say that S is grammatical is not to say that an event has occurred'. This is *contra* Davidson and anti-Fregean.
9. Connectionist models which deny semantic content are in vogue in many of P. Churchland's works. Psychological explanation can include or exclude semantics. These are the two major forms cognitive science has taken in recent times. The former falls within the tradition of functionalism while the latter refuses to reduce propositional attitude to facts about behaviour, and lies close to Platonism in mathematics. Against this, Devitt claims that semantics is naturalistic (see note 6 above).
10. My own way of characterizing the divide is worked out in my 'Realism and Anti-Realism in Linguistics' (in preparation).
11. My present response is based on Chomsky's *Language and Problem of Knowledge* (Managua Lectures), M.I.T. Press, 1988; his *Knowledge of Language* (New York, 1986) and the following reprints I received from Chomsky: 'Language and Interpretation', 'Philosophical Reflections and Empirical Theory' (1988), 'Linguistics and Adjacent Fields' (1988); 'Linguistics and Cognitive Science: Problems and Mysteries' (1988). I thank Professor Chomsky for the above reprints.

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The *Ātmahano Janāḥ* of the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*

The Interpretation of the Phrase

The *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*, which forms the concluding portion of the *Vājasneya Saṁhitā*, is known for its terse but very highly flexible

* I take the words 'physical', 'conventional', and 'literal' to be synonyms when used in respect of *ātman* or *ātmahan*; 'metaphysical', 'unconventional' and 'metaphorical' are also to be taken as synonyms that commonly refer to Shankara's interpretation of *ātmahan*.

expressions. On account of these expressions it lends itself to be interpreted in so many different ways, unlike any other Upaniṣad. There is a phrase in the third verse of the *Upaniṣad*, namely, *ātmahano janāḥ*, which has received a good deal of attention from the commentators, both Indian and western, for it is capable of giving at least two different senses—one is physical and another metaphysical.*

The conventional sense of the word *ātmahan* is very clear and unambiguous—it means one who commits suicide. Yet this sense is not taken into account while interpreting *ātmahano janāḥ*. Shankara's rendering of the phrase is: the people who kill the eternal Self in themselves, *ātmānaṁ nityaṁ hiṁsanti*. Obviously the word *ātmahan* is forced to give up its conventional sense and yield an unconventional one. We learn from Swami Satyananda Saraswati's commentary that the phrase was originally understood in the sense of the people who kill themselves.[1] But he has not disclosed the source from which he came to know about this 'orthodox interpretation'.

In Bhavabhuti's *Uttararāmacarita*, a well-known Sanskrit drama, there is a clear allusion to the third verse of the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*.[2] It depicts King Janaka as contemplating suicide. But he changes his mind with the reflection that according to the sages, those who commit suicide reach, after death, the worlds enveloped in blind darkness. Bhavabhuti writes thus (Fourth act):

> *andhatāmiśrā hy asuryā nāma te lokāstebhyaḥ*
> *pratividhīyante ya ātmaghātina ity evam ṛṣayo manyante.*

This clearly shows that the third verse of *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* was originally understood as prohibiting suicide. This also corroborates the view of Swami Satyananda Saraswati.

A general rule in the Vedantic exegesis is that the received sense of a word carries greater authority and validity than the one which deviates from it. Therefore it is necessary to study all the ramifications of the phrase *ātmahano janāḥ* and determine how far the conventional sense of *ātmahan* contributes to a right understanding of the phrase as well as the verse in which the phrase occurs.

We must also bear in mind that while fixing the precise sense of *ātmahano janāḥ*, we have to take into account not only the whole verse of which the phrase is a part, but also the two other verses that precede this verse. As the phrase is a part of the third verse, so is the teaching of this verse inseparably related to the teachings of the preceding verses. In other words, the phrase is best understood when it is viewed in the light of all the three verses—verses 3, 2 and 1.

Shankara's Interpretation

We shall now see how Shankara analyses the three verses and note why

he prefers an unconventional to a conventional interpretation. The first verse teaches that the Self is to be protected by renouncing the world, *sannyāsena*. Keeping in view those who are incapable of renouncing the world, the second verse calls upon them to enjoy a long life in the world by doing works enjoined by the Veda and escape the evil that prohibited works bring, *aśubha karma*. The third verse says that *ātmahanaḥ*, when they die, take *asuric* births characterized by blind darkness.

Now the question is this: who are these people called *ātmahanaḥ*? If we adhere to the conventional sense of the word *ātmahanaḥ*, we may say that it stands for the people who kill themselves, who violently remove their bodies. It agrees with the teaching of the verse that when these people die, they take *asuric* births, for, by committing suicide, they have done a wrong deed, *aśubha karma*. Though the conventional sense of the word fits in with the verse of which it is a component, we have to see how the teaching of the verse is related to the teachings of the other two verses, verses 2 and 1. The third verse may be related to verses 2 and 1 if we accept that committing suicide is an *aśubha karma* and that those who resort to this wrong deed stand excluded not only from those who protect the Self through renunciation but also from those who are engaged in Vedic work and take care to protect their human self from the evil associated with *aśubha karma*. As far as this goes, it makes complete sense. But beyond this we face a difficulty. The expression *aśubha karma* stands for the whole class of wrong deeds, not only for the act of killing oneself. Hence it does not make sense why the *Upaniṣad* should choose the self-slayers, exclude the other wrong-doers and say that the former alone take *asuric* births when they die. Are not the latter also entitled to the same fate when they depart from the world? As a result, Shankara has surrendered the conventional sense of *ātmahano janāḥ*.

In his effort to find a more suitable sense to *ātmahano janāḥ* Shankara, as has been already pointed out, takes the expression to mean the people who kill the eternal Self by veiling it through the fault of ignorance, *ātmānaṁ nityaṁ hiṁsanti avidyādoṣeṇa*. In other words, those who kill the Self are the ignorant people, *avidvāṁsaḥ*. Precisely speaking, they are men who are attached to the world and wish to live a hundred years here performing works ordained by the Veda, men who imagine themselves to be mere mortals, *naramātra*. But then why do they take *asuric* births when they die? That is because they are not free from the fault of ignorance, the fault of not renouncing the world and of living under the notion that they are mere mortals.

This raises two questions, rather a single question in two forms: (i) Is it not a contradiction that they who are engaged in prescribed works, should attain *asuric* instead of *deva* birth promised by the Veda? (ii) Does it make sense that they who escape *aśubha karma* by the performance of works ordained by Veda, should fall into *asuric* births which are the

results of *aśubha karma*? To these questions Shankara has one answer—since the *deva* births are far inferior to the brilliance of the unborn *Ātman*, they are said to be *asuric*. Here he makes '*asuric* births' stand for '*deva* births', an antonym do duty for a synonym. This, as Sri Aurobindo says, is a 'misuse' of word.[3]

If the physical sense of *ātmahano janāḥ* is too narrow to include all who resort to wrong deeds, the metaphysical sense of the same expression is too broad to exclude the whole class of wrong-doers. As the sense is either too narrow or too broad, Shankara cannot give the right interpretation of the phrase.

Sri Aurobindo's Interpretation (written before 1914)

Sri Aurobindo has written several commentaries on the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* of which one alone covers the entire *Upaniṣad*. In one of his early commentaries (written before 1914) he has explained the sense of the first three verses of the *Īśāvāsya*.

The first verse tells us that we must 'enjoy by abandonment', i.e. we must abandon the desires of the heart and enjoy leading the world, leading 'men upwards to the Divine'.[4] 'We must not,' says the second verse, 'turn our backs on life, must not fling it from us untimely or even long for early release from our body but willingly fill out our term, even be most ready to prolong it to the full period of man's ordinary existence so that we may go on doing our deeds in the world', deeds 'devoted to God' and, therefore, freed from the binding effects of the ego.[5] The third verse contains a warning to those who kill themselves: 'it is no use taking refuge in suicide or the shortening of . . . life, because those who kill themselves instead of finding freedom, plunge by death into a worse prison of darkness—the Asuric worlds enveloped in blind gloom'.[6]

Sri Aurobindo, it is obvious, accepts the conventional sense of *ātmahano janāḥ*. So he renders the phrase as 'those who slay themselves'.[7] He finds Shankara's interpretation of the phrase to be 'startlingly unnatural and paradoxical', for the eternal Self (*ātmanaṁ nityaṁ*) 'neither slays nor is slain', as is clearly affirmed by the Upaniṣads.[8] According to him, to take *ātmahanaḥ* 'in the sense of suicides'[9] is natural. But then who are these self-slayers and what is the occasion for the *Upaniṣad* to talk about them in the third verse?

The verse itself contains a clue which, when fully developed, tells us who the self-slayers are. It says that the people who kill themselves go to other worlds enveloped in blind darkness. From the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* we know these dark or joyless worlds to be worlds into which the unawakened and ignorant sinks after death, *avidvāṁso'budho janāḥ*.[10] It is therefore clear that *ātmahano janāḥ* are the ignorant people who kill themselves, the people who take their bodies to be the real self. The next question

to be answered is : Why does the *Upaniṣad* bring in the subject of self-slayers and the dark worlds to which they depart after death? As this question is related to the sequence of the three verses—verses 1, 2 and 3, we shall see how the sequence is understood by Sri Aurobindo. 'Enjoy by abandonment', says Sri Aurobindo, is the formula of the first verse. It declares that our aim is to enjoy working for God in the world by abandoning all that separate us from Him—desires and attachments, ego and ignorance. The aim is therefore to abandon the human self, know God to be our true Self, *so'ham* and offer devoted service to Him. From this is derived the next formula of spiritual life—'Complete the full term of human existence and do all works without bondage.' Works continue even after the realization of God, for they do not bind God's worker and are necessary for fulfilling Him in humanity. This is the teaching of the second verse, a natural extension of the first. Together the two verses give a complete account of the spiritual ideal to be pursued by us. Now we shall see which aspect of this ideal is further developed in the third verse. If we do this, we shall have found out the reason for the third verse to talk about self-slayers. Sri Aurobindo seems to hold the view that the third verse develops the idea of freedom common to the two preceding verses. He writes:

> The *Śruti* says . . . that those who slay themselves go down into the nether world of gloom, for they have associated the self with the body and fancied that by getting rid of this body, they will be free, but they have died full of impressions of grief, impatience, disgust and pain.[11]

According to him, the verse teaches that the ignorant who try to be free from grief, etc., by removing their bodies, attain the very opposite of what they desire. We may agree with him that the verse invites our attention to the consequences of viewing freedom in a physical as against a spiritual perspective. But what we do not understand is this: Why does the sage of the *Upaniṣad*, after expounding the spiritual ideal of the awakened, pass on to the physical ideal of the ignorant and its consequences? This has no relevance to the awakened, for they have already gone beyond the level of the ignorant and seen the futility of getting freedom through physical means. Thus the third verse is entirely unrelated to the sense of the previous verses. This perhaps is the reason why Sri Aurobindo himself gave up the physical sense of *ātmahanaḥ* in his final commentary on the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* (written in 1914–15).

Two Western Interpretations: P. Thieme

P. Thieme has written a commentary on the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* according to the *Kāṇva* recension. It covers the first fourteen verses. His work is scholarly, but at the same time misses at many places the subtleties of

the Vedanta. His aim is to show that the verses of the *Īśāvāsya* 'form a consistent, meaningful whole'.[12] According to him, the whole *Upaniṣad* must be viewed as a discussion moving from *pūrvapakṣa* to *siddhānta* through *uttarapakṣa*. He tries to connect all apparently disconnected statements in the text through this approach. As we are mainly interested in the interpretation of *ātmahano janāḥ*, we shall confine ourselves to his exposition of the first three verses of the *Upaniṣad*.

In the first verse is stated a *pūrvapakṣa* view. It says that since the Lord (the supreme Self) is seated in the heart of all living beings, a sage should nourish himself (*bhuñjīthāḥ*) with what is abandoned, i.e. with what is voluntarily ceded to him (*tyaktena*). Therefore he should not rob or kill another living being (*māgṛdhaḥ kasya sviddhanam*). Then in the second comes an *uttarapakṣa*—a sage who acts without attachment (*evaṁ tvayi*) is not soiled by his action, i.e. by killing (*na karma lipyate nare*). Finally, the original position is maintained in the third in the form of a *siddhānta*. It goes back to the view of the first and says that the sages who resort to killing (*ātmahano janāḥ*) are guilty of *hiṁsā* and hence go to the demoniac worlds of gloom after death. We shall quote from his article:

> It looks as if the three verses contain a little discussion: the first speaker (A) maintains that you shall not rob or kill a living being, giving an ethical reason for it. The second speaker (B) rebuts this with the principle that action without 'attachment' does not 'soil' a man. Thereupon 'speaker A' upholds his view, adding that killing is not only wrong, but will be punished in hell.[13]

The sense Thieme gives to *ātmahano janāḥ* is neither conventional like Sri Aurobindo's nor metaphysical like Shankara's, but artificial, for it takes away the reflexive sense of *ātmahanaḥ* and imports into it the demonstrative sense of *ātman* so as to make that term mean 'slayers of other beings'.

Apart from this violence, Thieme's interpretation makes the third verse irrelevant. To see how he has driven the verse to this position we have to review his interpretations verse by verse.

He tries to connect the three verses by showing that they represent three steps in a discussion on the spiritual conduct of a sage. The first verse says: 'You should not rob or kill a living being, for every living being is a dwelling place of the Lord, that is the Self'.[14] The sage is to maintain his devotion to other living beings in the matter of food also; even for the sake of physical nourishment he should not kill another living being. Thus 'enjoinment of *ahiṁsā*'[15] upon the sage is the first step (verse 1) in the discussion.

In the next step (verse 2) another aspect of the sage's conduct is taken up. The second verse says: 'You may do anything (even rob or kill

a living being), provided you are acting without "attachment" (passion, fear, hope, desire): for thus sin will not soil you.'[16] So the sage does not become guilty of *hiṁsā* if he kills for food and this killing is without attachment. This contradicts the position taken by the first verse.

In the final step (verse 3) the *Upaniṣad* is expected to restate in the light of the rebuttal its original position that the sage who is devoted to all living beings should not only practise *ahiṁsā* but be also unattached in his actions. It is an error to think that unattached actions are dry and devoid of the noble emotions of the heart. They are indeed devoid of personal motives and interests, but not of the boundless emotional concern for the good of other living beings in the world. In fact unattached actions and *ahiṁsā* are not alternatives between which the sage has to make a choice. So the *Upaniṣad* ought to show that unattached actions support and not exclude *ahiṁsā* under any circumstance. But, contrary to this, the *Upaniṣad* comes to an irrelevant conclusion that the sages who kill go to the worlds of gloom after death.

Apart from this, there is another difficulty. Thieme thinks that the first three verses of the *Upaniṣad* are concerned with the conduct of a sage. Accordingly, he takes *ātmahano janāḥ* to be the sages who kill or do *hiṁsā*. But if we take the clue provided by the word *janāḥ* we will be forced to conclude that the third verse is concerned with the ordinary ignorant people who kill other living beings, not the sages who see the Lord in all and are devoted to them as His habitations.

Two Western Interpretations: Sharma and Young

Arvind Sharma and Katherine M. Young make out a case for the literal interpretation of the phrase *ātmahano janāḥ* in the *Īśāvāsya*, as distinguished from the metaphorical interpretation put on it since the time of Shankara. They show that though the metaphorical interpretation of the phrase—'the people who kill the Self in themselves'—has won wide acceptance among many Indian scholars, it cannot be ignored that there is enough evidence to the contrary in the history of Hinduism itself, i.e. evidence in support of its literal interpretation—'the people who commit suicide'. Speaking of the third verse where the phrase occurs, they write:

> An examination of the evidence on the point, however, suggests that the verse has been understood in a literal sense within the history of Hinduism more often than is recognized, that this understanding of the verse makes much more sense in the context of the *Upaniṣad* itself than has been generally acknowledged, and that, therefore, much greater credence should be accorded to this particular literal interpretation as disapproving of suicide than has hitherto been the case.[17]

As we are interested in the exegetical rather than in the historical aspect of the phrase, we shall examine how successfully Sharma and Young build their argument on the basis of exegesis.

They rightly point out that by going into the historical aspect of *ātmahano janāḥ* one cannot conclusively establish that it should be understood in the literal and not in the metaphorical sense. They write: 'The fact that a particular interpretation was demonstrably common during a significant period of the history of Hinduism does not by itself render it correct or even plausible as a valid option, unless it can be established that it is consistent with the text and the context in which it is found.'[18] Therefore they try to explain the sense of *ātmahano janāḥ* in the context of the first three verses as follows:

> The first line of the first verse of *Īśa* . . . portrays the universe as pervaded (and therefore possessed) by God. The second line draws the conclusion that as it is enveloped/possessed by God it should be enjoyed through renunciation and nothing in it should be coveted, because it belongs to God.
>
> The second verse discusses the consequences of such a worldview of the universe in relation to the idea of *karma*, which is a major concern of the Upaniṣads. . . . The second verse seems to carry with it the assurance that if a person were to perform action, either virtual or otherwise, in the spirit of the first verse, then the person will not be tainted or smeared by *karma*. In this context the third verse seems to be designed to prevent the reader of the *Upaniṣad* from drawing the mistaken conclusion that since action is invariably associated with one's body it might be possible to get rid of *karma* by getting rid of one's body, that is, by committing suicide.[19]

From this explanation emerge three points relevant to our purpose: first of all, the phrase *ātmahano janāḥ* is used in the third verse in the sense of the people who commit suicide; secondly, the *ātmahanaḥ* are those who try to escape the bondage of *karma* by destroying the body with which alone performance of actions is possible; thirdly, the aim of the verse is to prohibit suicide as a means of escape from the bondage of *karma*.

Sharma and Young hold that the third verse arises in the sequence in order to remove a 'mistaken conclusion' from a premise we have accepted by accepting the teaching of the second verse.

According to them, the mistaken conclusion—'to get rid of *karma* by getting rid of one's body'—follows from the premise supplied by the second verse—'action is invariably associated with one's body'. Given the premise, the conclusion will be mistaken only under one condition, namely, only when one fails to grasp its implied sense that though action is invariably associated with the body, the removal of *karma* does not depend upon removing one's body. Now the question is this: Is it really possible to put this sense into the premise? Except by a wild imagination it is impossible. Further, the premise, as stated by Sharma and Young, does not contain the whole teaching of the second verse which says that one should live a hundred years in the world and do works without bondage, i.e. do works 'in the spirit of the first verse' which tells us that all are God's possessions (including all that one has and does). In this form the premise is very clear and allows no room for any kind of misunderstanding, much less any wrong conclusion. Therefore there is no point in the assertion of Sharma and Young that the aim of the third verse is to prevent us from drawing a 'mistaken conclusion' from the second verse.

Sharma and Young, like Thieme, fail to demonstrate the relevance of the third verse to the preceding verses of the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*. By failing to do so, they have not exegetically justified the literal sense of the phrase *ātmahano janāḥ*, a sense considered to be most appropriate and most natural by them.

Sri Aurobindo's Interpretation (written in 1914–15)

Sri Aurobindo's is the best among the extant commentaries on the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*. It is a complete work which appeared in the Arya series in 1914–15. In it is found the substance of the whole Vedānta. It is worth recalling what Sri Aurobindo has to say about the phrases of the inspired writings such as the *Īśāvāsya*: 'each phrase in Veda, as in the notion of the universe itself, lives not to itself but goes back to all that has gone before and reaches out to all that is coming; all moreover obey an unexpressed central unity which once grasped, illumines the whole text, but without which these writings break up into a mass of disconnected thoughts.'[20] His commentary on the *Īśāvāsya* is an admirable substantiation of this pronouncement.

The Lord, *Īśa*, who is one and free, 'does not desire, but inalienably contains, possesses and enjoys'. So too our soul, who is one with Him, must give up desire, possess and enjoy all, *tena tyaktena bhuñjīthāḥ*.[21] This is the teaching of the first verse. The next verse expands the ideas of the first. As the freedom from desire is not due to inaction or its possession is 'limited to the enjoyment of the inactive Soul that only witnesses without taking part in the movement', its completeness includes 'the doing of works in this material world and a full acceptance of the term of physical life'. The Lord fulfils himself in the world by works and 'man also is in the body for self-fulfilment by action'. The human soul by becoming one with the Lord is not 'bound by the result of its works', *na karma lipyate nare*.[22] Now comes the third verse and speaks about *ātmahano janāḥ*. After death, it says, they enter into other words, sunless and dark, *asūrya nāma te lokāḥ*.

Before we know who the *ātmahanaḥ* are and why they go to the gloomy

worlds after death, let us take the word *ātmahan* and analyse it. When we add the suffix *han* (to obstruct, to kill) to *ātma(n)*, we get *ātmahan*. *Ātman* is used in three distinct senses: (i) physical body, *śarīram* (*Chāndogya*, 8-8-1); (ii) the individual self or soul living in the body, *śārīrātmā* (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, 4-3-35); and (iii) the eternal Self beyond the body, *aśarīrasyātmā* (*Chāndogya*, 8-12-1). As the second verse of the *Upaniṣad* is concerned with the individual soul who dwells in the body and uses the body as its instrument, it is but appropriate to take the *ātman* in *ātmahan*, which occurs in the very next verse, in the second sense mentioned above, i.e. in the sense of the soul living in the body. In this sense *ātman* can be more justifiably combined with the suffix *han* than when it is taken to mean the eternal Self. For just as an individual soul is nourished and protected by right living and right works, so also it may be made to wither away and die without nourishment and protection by wrong living and wrong works not conducive to its natural development or brought to a sudden end by wrongly removing it from the body which is its field of life and works and throwing it irretrievably into violent states of fear, grief and horror.[23] In so far as wrong living and wrong works submerge a person in desires and attachments and wrong or self-willed dissolution of the body sinks him inescapably into violent passions, they represent themselves as two forms of obstruction to his self-fulfilment, more appropriately, as two forms of killing the soul in him, *ātmahananam*. This is the significance of Sri Aurobindo's rendering of *ātmahano janāḥ* as those 'who are slayers of their souls'.[24]

Though Sri Aurobindo has not dealt with the process by which he has arrived at his interpretation of *ātmahano janāḥ* it can be surmised if we take a look at the passage where he has given his comments on the third verse of the *Īśāvāsya*:

> By persisting in gross forms of ignorance, by coercing perversely the soul in its self-fulfilment or by a wrong dissolution of its becoming in the Movement, one enters into states of blind darkness, not into the worlds of light and of liberated and blissful being.[25]

Here he mentions two things about the soul: (i) to coerce it perversely by persisting in the gross forms of ignorance; (ii) to wrongly dissolve its becoming in the Movement. They refer to the two forms of killing the soul mentioned above. Further, he has excluded the two interpretations of *ātmahano janāḥ* with which we are already familiar—(i) 'those who kill the eternal Self'; and (ii) 'those who commit suicide'. He does not favour the first, because killing of the eternal Self, as was mentioned before, is inconceivable. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* clearly affirms that the Self neither kills nor is killed. Nor does he accept the second, because its emphasis is on the body rather than on the soul whose prospects of self-fulfilment become utterly gloomy when compelled to cut off its connections with the body.

Before we proceed further we shall refer to an adverse comment made by a scholar on Sri Aurobindo's rendering of *ātmahano janāḥ*. He first says that Sri Aurobindo has not accepted Shankara's interpretation of the above phrase as slayers of the Self. Then he points out that 'through oversight, Sri Aurobindo himself has adopted the translation of *Ātmahanaḥ janāḥ* as slayers of their own souls'.[26] There is no oversight at all in respect of Sri Aurobindo's translation, for he has translated the phrase with an eye on the distinctive significance of the word 'soul'. As one well versed in the writings of the Vedānta, he uses the words 'soul' and 'Self' not as synonyms. For they have two different senses: while the soul refers to a consciousness intimately connected with the body (*śarīrātmā*), the Self stands for a higher consciousness completely detached and without any such connection (*aśarīrasyātmā*). This explains, as we have already shown, why killing of the soul is conceivable and killing of the Self is not. The scholar's comment issues out of a mistaken view that 'soul' and 'Self' are synonymous terms.

Now we know who the *ātmahanaḥ* are—they are killers of their souls, they who obstruct the progress of their souls by plunging them in desires and attachments or in states of violent passions from which escape is hardly possible. But then why does the *Upaniṣad* speak of them and their entry into the worlds of blind darkness? The answer to this question is to be found in the whole sequence of verses 1, 2 and 3. The central idea of the three verses is self-fulfilment through liberation: the first two speak of it affirmatively, the third does so negatively by denying self-fulfilment and liberation.

In the first two verses the *Upaniṣad* tells us that the way to self-fulfilment lies through renunciation and liberated works. It means, as Sri Aurobindo says, that the liberated soul, by doing works without the ego, possesses the worlds beyond 'as it possesses the material birth, accepting in them a means towards the divine manifestation in which they form a condition of its fullness'.[27] It is by protecting and nourishing itself that the soul conquers death and wins the worlds of light. In the third verse the *Upaniṣad* says that those who destroy their souls are bound by death and after death go to dark worlds where such people live in grief and suffering. Unlike these ordinary people, *janāḥ*, who destroy their souls and go to the dark worlds, those who reach self-fulfilment and conquer the other worlds are men, *narāḥ*.[28] The phrase *ātmahano janāḥ* is intended to suggest by contrast that those who fulfil themselves are *ātmavanto narāḥ*. This gives the answer to the question about *ātmahanaḥ* in the third verse of the *Upaniṣad*.[29]

By taking *ātmahano janāḥ* in a sense other than the physical and the metaphysical Sri Aurobindo has put the best possible interpretation on the phrase and helped us to see its relevance in the sequence of the three verses of the *Upaniṣad*. He, like Shankara, does not favour the conventional sense of the phrase, but at the same time parts company

with him in fixing its appropriate sense. The conventional sense of a word generally carries a greater authority. However, it does not mean that it should be favoured in all circumstances. Where the context gives a contrary sense to it there its conventional sense may be overlooked and the new sense accepted.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See Swami Satyananda Saraswati, *Īshāvāsya Upanishad*, Bihar School of Yoga, Monghyr, 1973, p. 23.
2. The date of Bhavabhuti is the eighth century AD. Shankara is believed to have lived about a hundred years before him.
3. Sri Aurobindo, *The Upanishads*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1972, p. 465.
4. Ibid., p. 455.
5. Ibid., pp. 455 and 458.
6. Ibid., p. 466.
7. Ibid., p. 468.
8. *Sri Aurobindo Archives and Research*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1977, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 76.
9. Ibid., p. 76.
10. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4-4-11.
11. *The Upanishads*, p. 468.
12. P. Thieme, '*Īśopaniṣad*', *JAOS*, 85, 1965, p. 97.
13. Ibid., p. 93.
14. Ibid., p. 92.
15. Ibid., p. 90.
16. Ibid., p. 92.
17. Arvind Sharma and Katherine M. Young, 'The Meaning of Ātmahano Janāḥ in Īśa Upaniṣad', (3), *JAOS*, 110, 1990, p. 596.
18. Ibid., p. 598.
19. Ibid., p. 601.
20. Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine : A Commentary on the Isha Upanishad*, Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, Calcutta, 1981, p. 35.
21. *The Upanishads*, p. 75.
22. Ibid., pp. 76–77.
23. Cf. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4-4-5: 'According as one acts and conducts himself, so does he become. The doer of good becomes good, the doer of evil becomes evil.'
24. *The Upanishads*, p. 64.
25. Ibid., p. 77.
26. P.B. Gajendragadkar, ed., *The Ten Classical Upaniṣads*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1981, Vol. I, p. 97.
27. *The Upanishads*, p. 120.
28. The word *naraḥ* is also used in the sense of a hero. See Moneir William, *Sanskrit English Dictionary*, Indian Edition, 1987.
29. See the passage on the inspired writings in the opening paragraph of this section.

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Notes and Queries

I

Can *Viṣayitā* be treated as *Viṣayatā* in a cognition which becomes introspectively self-conscious of itself and, if so, can this possibility of relativising the distinction between *Viṣayitā* and *Viṣayatā* be carried on, at least theoretically, ad-infinitum?

II

What exactly is the difference between Navya-Nyāya use of the following terms and whether they refer to the same idea or there is some subtle difference between them?

(1) (a) *Anuyogitā—pratiyogitā*
(b) *Viśeṣyatā—prakāratā*
(c) *Ādhāratā—Ādheyatā*
(d) *Nirūpyatā—Nirūpakatā*
(e) *Vṛtti*
(f) *Vyāpya—Vyāpaka.*

Do these pair of terms convey the same distinction? If so, why do we use them simultaneously or even successively in analysis? If not, what is the difference? Also,what is the correlate term for *Vṛtti*?

(2) *Tādātmya, tadātmatā*
Abhinnatā
Svarūpa Sambandha
Sva-samānādhikaraṇatā
Sva-Vṛttitva
Sva-āśrayatva.

(3) What is the difference between *Saṁyoga* and *Saṁsarga*?

(4) Is there a radical difference between the relations mentioned above and the following relations?
(a) *Viṣayitā—Viṣayatā.*
(b) *Avacchedaka—Avacchinna.*

(5) Can there be such a thing as *Samavāyatva*?

(6) Does Nyāya make any radical distinction between the universals which are apprehended in natural objects which are perceived and those which arise because of the whole machinery of Navya-Nyāya analysis such as, say, *avacchedaka* and, if so, how does it account for the same? On the other hand, if it does not do so, does it hold that linguistic meanings are apprehended in the

same way as non-linguistic objects are. Is *avacchedakatva*, for example, apprehended in the same way as *parvatatva*?

Jaipur DAYA KRISHNA

Āhārya Cognition in Navya-Nyāya

The question 'whether deliberate falsehood in cognition can have a place in the Navya-Nyāya scheme of things or epistemology', raised by Lath is interesting but not one which has not been raised and answered (affirmatively) by Nyāya authors. Lath need not have been at pains to search out possible instances—from different fields—of āharyā cognitions. Such instances are just at hand. The jaundiced person seeing the conch before him as yellow, knowing fully well that it is nothing but white, is an oft-quoted example of false cognitions known as false by the knower. Another familiar example of such a cognition is 'a man seeing the moon as double by pressing his eye-ball'. Before answering Lath's question I would like to point out that a slightly similar question has been raised by Gaṅgeśa himself about inferential cognition. I quote here Gaṅgeśa's remarks on this point as they occur in the Pakśatā section of his Tattvaciṇtāmanī. The remark is this 'प्रत्यक्ष दृष्टमप्यर्थ अनुमानेन बुभुत्सन्तेतर्करासिको'. This means that, although ordinarily doubt about the presence of the major in the minor is necessary for the inference of the former, yet if there is strong desire to infer the perceived major in the minor, then even the absence of the said doubt does not obstruct the occurrence of the inference of the major. Perceptual certainty about the presence of the major in the minor is certainly preventive of the inference of the major but the desire for the inference tilts the balance in favour of the inference and thus the inference emerges despite perceptual knowledge being already there.

Turning now to metaphorical cognition and other similar cognitions, it may be pointed out that there is nothing unreasonable if it is maintained that a person can have the cognition which he knows to be false. Doesn't a debater seek to defend a view just to defeat his opponent when he is fully aware that the view being defended is false? Not only this, when a person refutes a certain view, hasn't he to take full cognizance of the view refuted? It is quite natural, for example, for a jaundiced person to assert, 'I see the conch as yellow but I know that it is white'. All deliberate falsehoods are more or less of this type. When the contradictory cognition is present, the contradicted cognition cannot be prevented even from emerging into being. The contradiction itself involves reference to the contradicted cognition. The only difference in the occurrence of the contradicted cognition from the same

uncontradicted cognition is that there is present in the former case introspective awareness of the contradictory character of the contradicted cognition in the mind of the cogniser. The presence of desire for the occurrence of the contradicted cognition tilts the balance in its favour by weakening, so to say, the contradictory force of the contradicting cognition. The causal collocation productive of the contradicted cognition is strengthened by the addition of desire and thus despite contradiction the contradicted cognition does arise. There is nothing unreasonable in this view. Lath has quoted S.J.B.'s query to late B.N. Shukla regarding the possibility of the occurrence of verbal cognition—शाब्दबोध—from the incompetent sentence 'he irrigates with fire'. I do not know what answer Shuklaji gave to S.J.B's query. The right answer to the query—which is very simple—is that when the sentence is known to lack competence it is not that no verbal cognition is yielded by the sentence. The false cognition arising from the sentence is introspectively cognized (अनु व्यवसाय विषय) as false by the cognizer. Thus the false cognition becomes an epistemic qualificand in the introspective cognition '"That he irrigates with fire" is a falsehood'. Of course, the cogniser is inwardly aware of the falsehood but poses as if he does not believe in the falsehood. In all deceptions the introspective awareness that what one is saying or communicating is false is always present in the mind of the deceiver.

A significant question may be asked here. Granted that the deceiver is aware of the falsehood of a cognition does he have the (original) cognition or not? If he has, what is the status of this (object) cognition? Does the person denying the statement, 'one irrigates with fire', first have the cognition that 'one irrigates with fire' and then deny it? If he has, what is the nature of this cognition? The answer to the question is simple. In the backdrop of a contradictory cognition the emergence of the contradicted contradiction is only in the capacity of an epistemic qualificand of 'falsehood' as inwardly apprehended. Where a person makes the remark—to deceive another—that 'plants are being irrigated with fire' what he intends his listener to understand is that 'his (listener's) cognition that fire irrigates' is true (although he himself knows it to be false). The listener's false cognition of irrigation with fire is presupposed by the deceiver when he makes the deceptive remark.

The *āhārya* cognition is not ordinary illusion. There are illusions and illusions. Nyāya does not enumerate all the different types of false cognitions or illusions. All these are subsumed by Nyāya under the general category विषर्यय. Vedānta calls it अध्यायस (which is quite different from ordinary illusion).

One question does yet remain to be answered. The question is this: 'How does the imaginative falsehood practised in metaphor yield pleasure or joy when it is known that it is nothing but falsehood?' Nyāya's answer to the question—which is quite different from the

poeticians' and also not quite satisfactory—is, that often deliberate self-deception is more pleasurable than other-deception. It is a kind of creative activity by means of which one seeks as it were to defy reality which is felt as restrictive of one's cognitive freedom. Phantasizing is a kind of recreation to which one takes recourse when one is bored with the stark reality of the external world.

The *āhārya* cognition that the face is the moon is not inferential. So the well-known Nyāya explanation that even perceived objects can be inferentially known if there is a strong desire for inference, cannot be applied straightaway to the said cognition. The cognition is perceptual and it is supposed to take place in defiance of the contradictory perception that the face is different from the moon. The desire or predisposition to *perceive* the face as identical with the moon is *āhārya* cognition as a result of which the contradictory force of the difference-perception is vitiated. But since the contradictory perception is not dissipated, the *āhārya* cognition that emerges in succession to the latter is of the nature of *mental perception* (मानस प्रत्यक्ष as Nyāya calles it). It is therefore almost similar to the internal perception of one's own pleasure, pain, etc. Thus the contradictory perception is visual while the *āhārya* perception is mental. The explanation based on introspective awareness of falsehood applies to other cases of āhārya cognitions mentioned above which need to be distinguished from the rūpaka cognition. There are different types of *āhārya* cognition having different causes like *vāsanā*, desire, predisposition, disability of sense-organs, strong prejudices, and so on.

The sum and substance of the points discussed above along with a few more points may be put down as follows;

(1) The *āhārya* cognition is quite different from the illusory cognition although both are false cognitions. Because of this difference in nature of the *āhārya* cognition Śamkara calls it *adhyāṣa* and illustrates it with the help of the cognition of the double moon that a person may have by pressing his eyeball even while knowing that there is only one moon.

(2) The said cognition is sometimes inferential but it is usually perceptual. It is not always caused by the desire to have it for oneself although the desire to deceive or may cause it. If the cognition is meant for oneself it occurs as the qualificand of 'invalidity' and has the form, for example, 'That plants are irrigated with fire is a falsehood.' To mislead a credulous person one may however make the blatantly false statement that 'plants are irrigated with fire'.

(3) The reflective or introspective invites future awareness of the *āhārya* cognition as the epistemic qualificand of falsehood that one may have, is mental (called मानस प्रत्यक्ष in Sanskrit) but its

character of privacy is unlike the privacy characterizing mental states like pleasure, pain, etc.

(4) As stated above the āhārya cognition is usually perceptual overriding another perceptual cognition which contradicts it. The presence of passion, obsession, desire, etc. in the causal collocation of the āhārya cognition helps it to weaken the causal collocation of the contradicting cognition. But such weakening of the causal collocation of the contradicting cognition (happens in the case of other kinds of cognition too). What happens is that the contradicting cognition is followed in the second moment of its occurrence by the emergence of the contradicted cognition as its causal collocation is reinforced by the induction of *āsanā*, passion, make-believe, etc. Thus, in the case of the *āhārya* cognition we have one kind of perception prevailing upon or overriding another kind of *perception itself*. If the contradicting perception disappears due to time-lapse the residual impression left behind by it persists till the contradicted cognition comes into being.

(5) The admission of *āhārya* cognition raises the question of why the same entity is not cognized again and again by cognitions similar to each other if one desires to have such cognitions. (Novelty is not—according to Nyāya—a characteristic feature of a valid cognition). However, the possibility of monotonous types of cognition pertaining to the same entity may be called into question even by Nyāya.

(6) Another question that the *āhārya* cognition may give rise to is that Nyāya's admission of this cognition may force it to admit tautological cognitions too, provided there is a strong desire to have them. The question may have two answers. One, Nyāya can deny that any sensible person does or will ever have such a desire to know where there is nothing to know in the tautology. Two, the tautology may be desired to have propositional or even factual character. In a proposition there have to be both a subject and a predicate. The subject must be endowed with subjecthood and the predicate with predicatehood. The predicate cannot be contained into the subject. The subject is the determinandum and the predicate the determinant. How can one and the same thing play both these roles? Of course, a thing can be known or sensed indeterminately but then such a sensing cannot have the form of tautology.

(7) The *āhārya* cognition may be viewed even by Nyāya as an emotive content masquerading as determinate cognition. This is why it is sometimes described or called 'wishful thinking' which—as per Nyāya view—means wish assuming the form of thinking. Thus it may be treated as a peculiar type of illusion. Here there are two

illusions involved, viz. the illusion of wish parading as thinking and the illusion of the wished object as the object of thought or knowledge.

(8) From the above discussion it becomes quite obvious that Nyāya cannot go all the way with poetics in its explanation of Rūpaka. There is however a mode of interpretation of Rūpaka which, without infringing Nyāya doctrines can maintain the validity of *āhārya* cognition. In the stock example of Rūpaka, viz. 'The face is the moon' the word 'moon' may be taken to mean (or suggest) by means of '*laksaṇa*' a majority of characteristics of the moon. Then the sentence can bear the interpretation that the face is endowed with almost all the characteristics of the moon. Sinule may now be distinguished from Rūpaka quite easily. If only a few characteristics are common to two things then they may be described only as alike and not as identical with each other.

Nagpur N.S. DRAVID

Book Reviews

R. SUNDARA RAJAN, *Studies in Phenomenology, Hermeneutics and Deconstruction*, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, 1991, pp. 346, Rs 190.

At one level, Sundara Rajan's essays are what the title of their collection suggests: a survey of some recent trends in European thought. Even when viewed as merely that, they deserve our attention for their sheer sweep and sophistication. Yet reading them in this manner will be clearly inadequate, for that is not how they are intended. To quote the author himself, they are 'an attempt to examine critically and in terms of their sources, the pre-suppositions' of his own earlier work. They represent his introspection and self-appraisal. They are important to us because they document the intellectual journey of one of our more important contemporary Indian philosophers.

In this journey, Sundara Rajan's paramount search is for the relationship between language and the world. Appropriately enough, he begins with an exploration of Husserlian phenomenology, of its assumption, in particular, that the world can be grasped in its immediacy. While he concedes that the common backdrop of nature is necessary for even our most subjective experiences, he finds the phenomenological belief that the world can be confronted in its purity rather simple-minded. Such a confrontation is conceivable only if language could transparently describe the world—a thesis rather difficult for him to accept. This leads Sundara Rajan on to Heidegger's existential phenomenology, which he finds far more acceptable because it recognizes and highlights the complex functioning of language. Language does not merely reveal; it also equally conceals. Hence the constant need for interpretation. This recognition prepares the ground for onward journey towards hermeneutics. In fact, hermeneutics emerges as Sundara Rajan's enduring mainstay. For even when his fascination for the mysteries of language and human subjectivity motivate him to explore psychoanalysis and structuralism, yielding many insights, his predilection towards hermeneutics is all along visible. For example, he is deeply impressed by Ricouer's parallel between phenomenological epoché and the Freudian notion of free association. His study of structuralism inspires him to view cultures as languages. All language and thought function through binary oppositions: man/woman, culture/nature and so on, but each culture develops its own peculiar way of transferring these binary oppositions into hierarchies. That one could have more than one reading of such cultural language propels Sundara Rajan towards deconstruction. It is through deconstruction that we can

break down cultural edifices and come face to face with meanings hidden behind them.

If phenomenology, hermeneutics, structuralism, psychoanalysis and deconstruction were merely temporary resting places in Sundara Rajan's intellectual history, each forgotten soon after it is reached and left behind, the journey would probably not hold our interest. The fact is that in his quest for the relationship between subjectivity, language and the world, and in his making sense of his own journey, these are not disjointed stages. He carries something of every stage with him as he moves on.

It is natural for us to peek curiously into his baggage as he unpacks it to share with us. What do we find there?

What we find, above all, is Derrida's influence. That explains why Sundara Rajan rejects unequivocal 'presence' of the referent. That also explains why he is not satisfied with Gadamer's recognition of the role prejudgments play in our search for truth. For Derrida, our fascination with 'presences' is a legacy of western metaphysics. He wants us to recognize that more than the need to interpret things, we need to interpret interpretations.

It should follow ordinarily from Derrida's position that we are caught in an infinite regress of signifiers. Sundara Rajan will have us believe, however, that one need not read a streak of nihilism in the deconstructionist programme. He will like to persuade us that what Derrida is questioning is not reality but only the patterns of our thought. In other words, his is only a critique of our usual simplistic understanding of the relation between language and the world. Its radicalism lies in the fact it opens itself to the same deconstruction as it sets out to perform on others. It is, in this sense, the ultimate recognition of finitude.

Despite such pleadings, one cannot help feeling a certain discomfiture when handling the cognitive enterprise on Derrida's lines. For what remains nonetheless unclear is the fundamental issue as to how reality can at all be grasped if all claims about it are equally vulnerable to deconstruction. It will be one thing if deconstruction were merely warning us that the emperor may possibly be naked, but it is quite another to posit an altogether impossibility of knowing about the world. One is, then, close to an abysmal void. And it is scary.

Sundara Rajan may find such anxieties expressive of nostalgia for metaphysics. He writes: 'The closure of the metaphysical tradition does not occur without profoundly shaking up the order of our thinking; a way of thinking that has guided our reflections about human affairs for so long cannot simply be gone beyond without some of the deepest doubts and misgivings being stirred up.' (p. 328)

That may well be so. But is there truly any merit in 'going beyond' the metaphysical if we have no idea what really lies beyond? If the mystic solution of dealing with the void is not acceptable to Derrida and

Sundara Rajan, then we too cannot make its demolition a programme in itself. In order that the world is not reduced to absurdity, reflecting the fiction of Kafka and Camus, we must go beyond deconstruction as well. Or is it that Spengler was right after all that western culture is dying and all that we are left with is civilization?

By taking sides with Derrida, Sundara Rajan will have to face up to the implications of deconstruction.

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R. BALASUBRAMANIAN AND RAMASHANKER MISHRA (eds.): *Man, Meaning and Morality*, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, 1995, pp. ix+297, Rs 225.

Man, Meaning and Morality is a collection of essays in honour of Professor Rajendra Prasad. These essays written by distinguished philosophers and academicians are a fitting *Festschrift* to Professor Prasad who is one of the most creative philosophical minds of our country. In this review I propose to deal with the seminal themes of the book, namely, Man, Morality and Meaning and focus on the significance of these concepts in the light of the contributions made to this volume.

I

The most significant theme of the volume is the concept of man. This concept constitutes the background of the rest of the problems dealt with in the volume. The problem of man relates to the problem of historicality, man's suffering, his emancipation and his ultimate spiritual destiny. These concepts constitute a package which demands a broad spectrum of analysis. The philosophy of man defies a particular brand of analysis of these concepts. There is an open-ended assortment of approaches available for the purpose. This volume itself is an embodiment of the catholicity of approach.

S.S. Barlingay's paper, 'The Historicality of Man' focuses on the historical nature of man, his temporal rootedness in the world and, above all, his socio-cultural being in the network of manifold relations, not only among other human beings, but also with nature as such. History, as Barlingay observes, is 'a story of such a man' (p. 77) and it encompasses all the actions human being engage in in the continuum of time. Barlingay considers this historical aspect of man as the most fascinating and so goes into considering the constitutive conditions of historicality as the essential condition of man. According to him, there is a tension between the humanly created world, i.e. the 'proto-universe' and the natural world or, in his words, 'the cosmocentric universe'. Out

of this tension is born the domain of meaning, that is the domain of culture and philosophy. Barlingay's is a pluralistic proto-universe that allows for the social space of interpersonal communication. In this space, however, the presence of language should have been more prominently projected than has actually been done by Barlingay.

Heidegger in this century has provided a more historical perspective of the human life-world in his conception of the man-in-the-world or the *Dasein*. He has brought back time and historicity into the very being of man. This has been highlighted by S.A. Shaida in his paper, 'Nature and Technology: A Hermeneutic Understanding of Heidegger'. Shaida's attempt is interpretational and authentically textual. He aims at showing that the man-world relationship is structured through language, meaning and the tools that man designs for acting on the world. Heidegger's framework for understanding the man-world relationship, according to Shaida, emphasizes the 'primacy of the practical' (p. 261). This leads to the birth of the *techne* or technology as the sum-total of the tools man uses. Though technology is a 'way of revealing' (p. 226) truth or being, yet it also conceals it when the true nature of it is forgotten. Technology clouds the man-world relation and distorts it, unless a more 'naturo-centric' (p. 271) point of view is adopted. Shaida has suggested a way out of the impasse without going much into the mechanism of man's self-recovery.

A non-Heideggerian way of man's self-recovery is provided by the Upaniṣads in their conception of *Ātman* as the essence of all beings. The *Ātman* promises the emancipation of the world-bound *jīva* in that the former beckons to a level of existence beyond time. This is the basis of the notion of self-realization developed by the Upaniṣads as rightly emphasized by Joel J. Kupperman in his paper, 'Ātman and Self-Realization'. Kupperman has done well to point out that the *Ātman* is 'what would be left in any of us after a profound spiritual operation' (p. 189). This of course implies that what is left is the primordial being that is the basis of all existence. So the knowledge of the *Ātman* can 'add enormously to the value of someone's life' (p. 193). Here is the clue as to why the western conception of value is felt to be inadequate as there is still a level of existence which promises a more well-grounded realization of the value of man's life. Upaniṣadic philosophy can play a role in making us realize this.

The question of suffering in the life of man is not merely of psychological interest and has a tremendous philosophical importance as it reveals the moral and metaphysical deficiency in man himself. Philosophers have always been puzzled as to why man suffers at all and how there can be emancipation from pain and suffering. This has been the crux of the problem in R. Sundara Rajan's paper, 'Suffering, Psychotherapy and the Search for Meaning'. Sundara Rajan's attempt is to provide a hermeneutical understanding of the structure of human

suffering. He believes that there is a way out of the suffering by a change in the understanding of the meaning of the human situation itself. This he demonstrates by invoking Levi-Strauss's therapeutic conception of the shaman's song alleviating the suffering of the woman in labour. What is important for Sundara Rajan is 'the meaning-giving framework, the availability of coherent perspective and not so much the objective correspondence' (p. 223). This he calls 'the meaning-organization view' (p. 227) which suggests that there is a drive towards meaning which is 'fundamental and autonomous' (p. 227). It is in meaning alone that there is possibility of emancipation from suffering because all suffering is due to mental and spiritual sickness. The suffering man must be made aware that his own understanding of himself has to be restructured. However, Sundara Rajan's framework does not explain how meaning of the human situation can be made clear without a sufficient understanding of the ontological structure of the human reality as such. The language of suffering presupposes the ontology of the suffering man which has to be probed for the sake of the emancipation or spiritual salvation of the individual.

The classical theory of *Karma* has a solution to the problem of suffering. It was meant to explain why man suffers, sometimes without reason. The solution offered was that man suffers because of his past actions which he himself has done. Dharmendra Goel, however, views the whole project with scepticism. His paper, 'The Concept of *Karma*, Freedom and Personal Identity' is a critique of the theory of *Karma*. According to Goel, *Karma* theory is 'positively committed to total predetermination' (p. 198) of the present life by the past thus negating the very possibility of individual freedom and autonomy. Thus, for him, if freedom of action is real, then the *Karma* theory must be wrong. This seems to me a false dilemma. Neither does the *Karma* theory deny freedom nor does freedom require the abnegation of necessity in the world. Both freedom and necessity are accommodated in the *Karma* theory since without there being a well-ordered world freedom itself becomes impossible. The law of *Karma* is the unbending law that a man reaps the results of the actions which he himself has initiated.

The fact is that the world is not a set of chance events and that there is an ontological necessity that accounts for the regularity in the world including human behaviour. However, there is no contradiction between necessity and human freedom. The idea of necessity of the ontological type is explained by M.K. Bhadra in his paper, 'The Concept of Ontological Necessity'. He is mainly concerned with the nature of necessity rather than its compatibility or incompatibility with freedom. Bhadra argues that 'necessity, thus ultimately ontological, has to be grasped at the transcendental pre-reflective level of experience' (p. 207). The necessity pertains to the world as it holds 'in the realm of things' (p. 210). Thus Bhadra rightly points out that necessity is part of the world

and not a product of language and experience. Taking the clue from Kant and Strawson he argues that the ontological necessity is reflected in the structure of language and experience because language and our thought-structure both reflect the necessary structure of the world. This defence of ontological necessity can be called transcendental in the Kantian sense and there is hardly any doubt that such a view of necessity is correct.

II

The second important theme of the book is morality which is also a central concern of the book. The questions which are uppermost in the minds of the contributors to the theme relate to the status of moral language, the nature of moral values and moral obligations. There is a distinct philosophical consensus that moral language is rational and that moral values are the ones that are based on moral reasoning.

William K. Frankena in his paper, 'Stevenson's Emotive Theory of Ethics' takes up the issue of moral emotivism that was the dominant concern of Stevenson and Prasad. He has taken Stevenson's theory as the most important model for the analysis of moral language. Beginning with the emotivist theory that the moral language expresses 'the speaker's attitude' (p. 125) and has 'an emotive meaning' (p. 126), Frankena goes on to defend the emotivist theory as basically right. His argument is that emotivism is sufficiently capable of safeguarding the rationality and objectivity of the moral discourse. To say that moral judgments express moral attitudes does not amount to denying that there are objective moral situations and that there are objective criteria of deciding which attitudes are moral and which are non-moral. Frankena denies that 'ethical judgements merely express the speaker's pro and con attitudes and/or invite or urge others to share them' (p. 139). There are also facts which the moral judgments do entail such as that no ethical attitude is without an objective foundation. That is to say, the emotive meaning of the moral language goes parallel with the factual or descriptive meaning. Thus supervenience and universalizability, according to Frankena, 'are more essential to particular ethical judgments than Stevenson thought' (p. 140). Frankena admits that moral language has 'a rational justifiability of an intersubjective sort' (p. 140). This is sufficient admission of the fact that emotivism is not enough and that the ultimate justification of morality is its rationality.

R.B. Brandt has further carried on the debate about the rationality of the moral discourse in his paper, 'Non-Cognitivism and Objective Criticism in Ethics'. He has not disowned the non-cognitive theory of moral language especially the emotivist theory. In defence of non-cognitivism, he says that value disagreements always involve disagreements in desires or moral commitments taken as conative phenomena' (p. 113). Even then there is no loss of objectivity in our

moral decisions or value preferences. Moral decisions are based on moral reasoning such that preference of one moral system to another is called a 'rational preference' (p. 122). This exercise of moral preference is based on 'facts and logic' (p. 122). If this much of moral objectivity is guaranteed, the moral non-cognitivism becomes less objectionable to a moral cognitivist who pleads that there are moral facts that back up a moral system. The non-cognitivist preference for moral attitudes must be constrained by the fact that moral facts are ineliminable.

The autonomy of the moral discourse demands a fresh look especially when there is so much debate about the rationality of the moral decision. The autonomy demands that at least some moral concepts stand on their own and do not need any justification, moral or non-moral. Kai Nielsen pleads for the non-justifiability of the concept of equality in his paper, 'On Not Needing to Justify Equality'. According to him, the principle of equality is a basic moral principle and therefore needs no justification. For him, to ask for 'justification of it is senseless or at least is symptomatic of a failure to understand what moral discourse is all about' (p. 142). The reason is, equality is 'a deeply embedded moral belief in the web of moral beliefs' (p. 159). Thus in this paper there is an argument that morality itself is an autonomous domain of truth and there is no need to go beyond morality to justify the fundamental moral truths.

In this context the fact-value and the Is-Ought distinctions are very relevant. In classical moral philosophy a sharp distinction has been drawn between the domain of facts and the domain of values. This has entailed the further distinction between statements of facts and statements of values. Shivesh C. Thakur in his paper, '"Is", "Ought" and "Is Not"', has developed a critique of these distinctions. His argument is that the fact-value distinction is untenable as 'there is no fundamental gap or polarity between facts and values' (p. 173). Similarly, says Thakur, 'the non-derivability of an "ought" from an "is"—the last refuge of anti-naturalism—is either a myth or disguised bit of linguistic legislation' (p. 175). But one can see that this conclusion is overloaded with a naturalistic bias and that it does not take sufficient care to situate the values which are so fundamental for the moral discourse itself.

Sibajiban Bhattacharyya's paper, 'Analysis of Ought Sentences in Indian Philosophy' has demonstrated that in the Indian conception of morality ought-sentences do play a vital role. Taking the clue from Nyāya and Mīmāṁsā, Bhattacharyya argues that the ought-sentences behave as the prescriptions of duty and so must be taken as fundamental for the moral discourse. His analysis is textual and so misses much of the spirit of a fresh argument justifying the validity of the ought-sentences. However, understanding the classical argument is very important for evaluating the Is-Ought distinction itself.

The concept of moral obligation has been the central focus of R.S.

Mishra's paper, 'Obligation and Inclination: A Critique of Prasad's View'. Mishra very rigorously undertakes a critical understanding of the internalist-externalist controversy about moral obligation. According to him, Prasad's internalist view of moral obligation is not defensible as there is no guarantee that the moral sense internally determines the moral obligation. Moral obligation is very much dependent on external factors such as the agent's moral goals and his rational choices. So moral obligation cannot be mere mental preparedness to do what is morally obligatory. It is rather what is morally obligatory that imposes itself on the moral inclination of the agent.

III

The remaining theme of the book is concerning language and communication which is the most pressing problem for contemporary philosophers of language and meaning. It is really remarkable that there have been efforts made in this volume to solve some of the problems relating to human communication.

D.P. Chattopadhyaya in his paper, 'Enlightenment, Communication and Silence', has raised some fundamental issues regarding the nature of human communication and silence. Starting with the problem of reason and enlightenment in the West which he takes as one end of the spectrum of human understanding, he switches back to the Buddhist and the Indian model of understanding and enlightenment which brings in silence as a way of attaining truth. Chattopadhyaya has done a balancing act of putting together two apparently opposing models of enlightenment. The exercise has brought the two perspectives closer in the sense that the notion of silence is not altogether absent in the West as the author himself has shown—Wittgenstein in his *Tractatus* took silence as the culminating point of enlightenment. The Buddhist way to truth is silence, not because reason is denounced or language is thought to be the sign of impurity. All that the Buddha wanted to emphasize is that enlightenment requires transcendence of reason, language and the ordinary modes of communication. Hence the importance of self-imposed silence. This is never a signal of failure of communication or of withdrawal of rational judgment. Chattopadhyaya has very seriously taken note of the fact that language and meaning are constitutive ingredients of rationality and no agenda of enlightenment can dispense with them. He says that 'meaning is co-sharable even before it is linguistically articulated. In a sense, meaning, like man, stands disclosed' (p. 67). Thus language presents itself inevitably as the medium of meaning and communication of meaning and has a 'life of one's own' (p. 71). Besides, 'silence is part of language and not dissociated from it—does not stand outside of it' (p. 68). This way of putting the structure

of language and meaning does convey the deep structure of human understanding in general and solves some of the mysteries concerning communicability, or the lack of it, of man's apprehension of the highest truth.

The paramountcy of linguistic meaning and communication underlies the modern enlightenment discourse in the West. This is reflected in the modern concept of language as the systematic discourse of human thought, cognition and volition. This has in recent times led to a debate as to whether language is a monolithic discourse or a conglomerate of a series of speech acts. The latter idea has gained currency because of the fact that it has made language a more accessible phenomenon and made meaning a matter of conventional rules and usages. William P. Alston in his paper, 'Truth and Sentence Meaning' has brought that debate into focus. He has argued that the idea of language as holding the promise of truth and representation is too formal and restrictive. It is, therefore, according to him, more intuitive to accept language as a domain of speech acts and their conventional structures. This further entails that truth-conditions alone do not account for meaning and so something more is required to explain meaning. This he finds in what he calls 'the illocutionary act-potential' (p. 99). This is the structure underlying all speech acts which consists of the illocutionary force and also the propositional content. Meaning is the product of the convention-guided force and the propositional content. Alston's present analysis is the continuation of his generally well known position on language and meaning and it goes towards clarifying his position further. It has demonstrated that the speech act theory of semantics cannot easily be wished away.

B.N. Pattnaik's paper 'A Theory of the Clitic and Bound Pronoun Constructions in Some Indian Languages' is a piece of painstaking research in linguistics. It studies the grammatical structures of some Indian languages in the light of Chomsky's theory of Government and Binding. No specific philosophical theses are offered though the general philosophical assumptions are clear such as that the natural languages have a rule-structured grammar and that they can be systematically analysed.

The volume under review is thus an important contribution to philosophy as it offers a magnificent variety of philosophical ideas at a very high level. It is worth reading not only contribution-wise but also as a whole. It stimulates thought and provokes one to think afresh. I therefore recommend the volume as an indispensable source of philosophical ideas for all serious students of philosophy.

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G.C. NAYAK: *Philosophical Enterprise and the Scientific Spirit*, Ajanta Publications, Delhi, 1994.

Although this collection of essays on various topics of seminal importance, by the distinguished Professor G.C. Nayak, derives its name from the topic of the first chapter, the scientific spirit of undogmatic inquiry permeates the book. The author, in some chapters, deals with philosophical problems directly, such as those of value, social justice, rationality, meaning of life, etc., but in others, certain aspects of thought of great thinkers of the past have been discussed in a thought-provoking manner.

The subject matter, the methodology, aims and objectives of philosophical enterprise may differ from that of scientific research, but both activities share an overall anti-dogmatic stance. Nayak characterizes it as scientific temper. But, why use the label of science, since open-mindedness is the minimum requirement of any sort of inquiry. Science is characterized by the verifiability of falseability of its hypotheses, which most philosophical theories are not. To set aside scientific rationality and to confine the scientific spirit to an anti-dogmatic stance only is to make superfluous claims about the similarities of philosophy and science. Since, even before the advent of modern natural science, openmindedness has been the hallmark of every renowned philosopher, it would be better to call it philosophical spirit and not to lean on science to secure philosophy's lost credibility. Why worry if philosophy, unlike science, cannot have 'any external justification' in terms of utility in the narrow sense, for the society or in our day-to-day existence? Can we live without raising philosophical questions and having an attitude towards life based on our conception of the world and man's position in it? It is high time that philosophers gather self-esteem and look at scientific pursuit philosophically. Nayak's own 'philosophy of common-ism' is an effort in the same direction.

Though one may not agree with him on many issues, Nayak's proposal for the replacement of a static view of things based on an essentialist metaphysics by a non-essentialist and dynamic view of things requires careful attention of the scholars. Viewed in this perspective, we have to reassess the well-known distinctions such as 'ignorant–wise,' great–small, 'respectable–despicable', etc., as simply functional differences without absolutistic bias. Adoption of such a common-istic framework, will go a long way in changing our perverted, fixed outlook towards things, persons and institutions. But, an anti-essentialist doze, as suggested by Nayak, will not do miracles as the problem lies not so much at the metaphysical level, but more so, in the clash of interests in society. Though functional, these distinctions are preserved with the purpose to safeguard one's socio-economic status. Hence, these cannot be removed by conceptual remapping alone, but need to be supplemented by active

political activity; mere changes in educational curriculum will not serve the purpose. However, his discussion of *pratitya-samutpada* as an example of typical philosophical activity, different from both commonsense and science, is illuminating in itself and also in tracing inspiration of his own philosophy of common-ism.

Nayak, in the chapter 'Why should I be Rational; argues that some form of rationality is essential for the pursuit of knowledge and claim of that knowledge as truth. Philosophy, being a rational enterprise, thus, stands justified. But, is this all? Do we not require rational approach in the realm of values, religious faith and aesthetic enjoyment too? Scientific rationality, though highly successful, may not exhaust all forms of rationality. Also, we cannot deny the role of the irrational in human affairs. It appears that relationship of rational with irrational should not be viewed as an either/or relationship. Though not elucidated himself, Nayak quotes Russell at another place, 'A man is rational in proportion as his intelligence informs and controls his desires'. (*Skeptical Essays*, London, 66, p. 37). Surely, the author could have propounded a weaker thesis too, about the role of rationality in pursuit of other irrational desires to make his case stronger.

In 'Religion, Secularism and Scientific Temper', Nayak rightly points out the confusion surrounding definitions of these terms. A secular outlook, in his opinion, need not be atheist or materialist in the crude sense, one may simply have no concern with religious or spiritual matters. True, belief in religion may be called unscientific only after a scientific inquiry of the claims of religion. But, if the truth of religion can be understood only by self-realization as the adherents of religions claim, how can one inquire it using scientific method alone? Thus, secularism and scientific temper seem to be compatible while religion and science do not, so far as rationality forms the kernel of both, scientific temper and secularism.

'*Sarva Dharma Sambhava*' as a solution to the problem of a multi-religious society like India is ruled out by Nayak because there is no way to know that there is only one God and the same can be attained by variety of ways. Moreover, followers of one religion always claim superiority over other religions which makes it rather impossible for them to pay equal respect to religions other than their own. His plea for tolerance for different forms of religious worship sounds more practical but his own brand of 'transcendental secularism' fails to convince. Since it is 'trans-religious' and 'trans-secular', why then call it 'transcendental secularism'? Neither can it be called scientific only on the basis of transcending all dogmas and prejudices, leaving aside scientific rationality, nor can it be termed secular when in actual day-to-day life one is allowed to practice the religion of one's choice. Again, to call it truly religious only confuses the issue. If the word 'science' is no more sacrosanct, so is the word 'religion'. Accepting some true concept

of religion—in his case—'unique concern for weakling' (pp. 51–53) offers no solution because in practice, sacred cannot be so easily separated from profane. Perhaps, in order not to go too far from Indian culture and yet retain one's secular credentials, the distinguished author has tried to balance too many things, resulting into too abstract a concept, devoid of any practical utility.

While commending Nehru for his rationalist outlook towards Indian culture, Nayak in 'Indian Culture and Nehru, the Rationalist,' criticizes Nehru's last desire to get his ashes immersed in the Ganges and scattered over vast fields of India as an exercise in self-deception. But this can also be viewed as an expression of his love for his motherland and its culture and his desire to arouse the same in his countrymen, like Ho-Chi-Minh did in Vietnam. Culture is not wholly rational and a rationalist outlook need not be anti-emotional.

Nayak contests, in 'Tagore's Philosophy of Religion', Narvane's view of a poet's religion as 'aesthetic humanism' and characterizes it as 'spiritual humanism'. His argument is that though Tagore is indifferent towards the abstract conception of *Brahma* and critical of ascetic denial, yet he not only recognizes Divine presence in the best of men, but also in the lowliest and oppressed class; the idea of God in Tagore is not that of a creative artist only but of 'Diner Sangi' too. Though the communistic tendency, as pointed out by the author, is a significant aspect of Tagore's vision, the whole life of the poet bears testimony to the fact that he was more concerned with beauty as created by God himself or by its men. Calling him spiritualistic may draw attention away from his chief merits.

In a thought-provoking essay 'Kautilya and Gandhi', Nayak raises two very pertinent questions, viz. has any State of considerable power ever been established at any time anywhere without the use of force and can such a State, even after establishment, be governed without use of force? Since the answer is negative, Kautilya's stand cannot be set aside so lightly when he advocates use of immoral means for the protection of the State against enemies and traitors, but forbids them in case of law-abiding citizens and also in normal times. Compared to this, Gandhi knew very little about the power of fear and terror which could make human beings incapable of doing good in return for evil, or of doing anything at all.

One must appreciate emphatic denial by the author, of Dharma as an eternally binding principle of all times to come, since there is no single Dharma or coherent system of adharmas in a society which would hold valid for ever. Same is the case with social justice. Meaningful application of both is always with reference to a certain context and hence, there is always need to revaluate them in accordance with the demands of society. Perfect social justice is a myth, we have to be satisfied with working social justice which actually means piecemeal

justice meted out to different sections of society at different times to maintain balance by irradicating excesses. Based on *guna* and *karma* alone, Nayak advocates a dynamic *Varna Vyavastha*. But, Nayak gives no clue to transform present *Jati Vyavastha* into such a dynamic system. With only four *varnas*, the question of fitting in thousands of professionals is also not addressed. Moreover, his concept of piecemeal justice may not be acceptable to a majority of under-privileged people, fighting for full justice.

The collection also contains some illuminating pieces dealing with controversies related to Advaita Vedānta philosophy. The author commends Max Mueller for contesting the view of many western scholars that ethics and morals have no place in Advaita Vedānta. The enlightened person, a *jeevan mukta* or a free man as he is conceived in Advaita Vedānta, is not affected by the pleasure or pain caused by *Prarabdha* and thus, is in a better position to do good to the society, without any attachment whatsoever. He need not shun the worldly life and may opt for a life devoted to social welfare. But is this the case? What we have seen throughout is that though the enlightened one may not fall prey to the ordinary temptations of the world yet he may still remain indifferent to social welfare. At best, like Buddha, they have been thinkers and preachers only. Even if one does not question the real contribution of such saints to socio-ethical causes, one may certainly ask, how many people can become *jeevan mukta* when they have no time and inclination to do so and as such, only a few such enlightened souls can be of little practical influence in the modern political set-up. For a common man, the problem of value is of choice among various alternatives and Advaita philosophy of value, termed as 'transcendental secularism' by the author, does not provide any such criterion. The more pertinent question is, should we not hold Advaita Vedānta, being the leading philosophy, responsible for lack of active socio-political concern among its practitioners as well as general public throughout Indian history?

However, Nayak's objection to reduce everything in Sankara Vedānta to linguistic analysis, in some quarters, though linguistic analysis plays a significant role in achieving illumination, calls for closer scrutiny by the interpreters of Sankara. His contention is, since Avidya is not merely a linguistic error or confusion, linguistic illumination and *vidya* in Sankara are not the same; distinctionless non-dual reality has an ontic status. But, the meaning of analysis of Vedānta type which leads to such illumination is not very clear in the two chapters devoted to the topic. Similarly, Nayak's effort to establish Radha Krishnan as a major philosopher, instead of being mere interpreter of thoughts of others, by pointing out his contribution to the theory of intuition fails to convince.

When most of the philosophers nowadays shy away from the problem,

it is refreshing to read, 'Does Life Have a Meaning'. The author accepts that life does not seem to have any ultimate meaning, but it can be made meaningful by choosing and living for the values in the given context. But, though satisfied himself with piecemeal meaning, what irks him is the meaninglessness of a majority of lives, except that of a fortunate few, by such standard. Whether one believes in God or not, unless an objective design is acknowledged which pervades the whole universe, no life has got meaning in any important sense, Nayak asserts. But, why crave for universal meaning? Why not rest satisfied with piecemeal meaning? Such an attitude calls for an activist approach to make life meaningful for himself as well as for all mankind. Only then, Nayak's philosophy of common-ism can be of some value.

Nayak, in the last chapter, points towards our deep-seated delusions due to which we consider devotion to any particular value as final and everlasting and also fail to discriminate between what happens to us during our lifetime from that occurring after our death. The question is, can values, whatever they may be, retain their attraction in the face of real annihilation? Can one face this stark reality with equanimity and not commit suicide? To face the fact of annihilation without falling into the trap of any delusion, one must train oneself in transcending all attachments. The author's contention that such transcendence will automatically lead to *Mahakaruna in Bodhisattva* is not bourne out by the historical experience. But, why opt for suicide or enlightenment? There is always a middle path. And, one need not be a Buddha to be compassionate towards human misery. Only a little love would be sufficient.

This book is recommended for reading not for the solutions it proposes, but for the questions raised and discussed with consistent rationalist outlook on a wide range of problems. Some repetition is inevitable in such collection of essays written at different times, but many mistakes of proof could have been avoided. One cannot have a high opinion of the quality if instead of Rawls, Raula is printed (page 60). But overall, it is a commendable effort by Professor Nayak, in which he has opined his views on many controversial topics. He, too, seems to me, a critical traditionalist, like so many other of his generation.

53, Ashraftola, Hardoi ALOK TANDON

A. RAMAMURTHY; *The Central Philosophy of the Ṛgveda*, Ajanta Publications, New Delhi, pp. xi + 256, Rs. 290.

I

As we know, the Veda falls into three broad divisions—the Saṁhitā, the Brahmaṇa and the Upaniṣad. According to another classification, the

first is treated as part of the second while the third is left as it is. Thus a twofold classification has come into existence—the book of Works (*karma*) and the book of Knowledge (*jñāna*). By making the Saṁhitā a part of the Brahmaṇa, the Brahmaṇa is given a prominent position; in the same way, by assigning an inferior position to the book of Works, the book of Knowledge is recognized as representing the essence of the Veda, *vedānta*. Thus little by little the Saṁhitā part has been pushed into complete obscurity. As the author of the book under review rightly says, 'the concern traditionally shown to the Saṁhitās has been nothing more than paying them formal sentimental homage' (p. 2). Therefore, he proposes to study the *Ṛgveda Saṁhitā*, the oldest among the four compilations, as a work whose merit lies in what it says rather than what the followers of Brahmaṇas (*vedavādins*) or those of the Upaniṣads (*brahmavādins*) take it to be—while the former consider it to be a collection of prayers to be used in the performance of the rituals, the latter view the same as setting forth an ideal inferior to that of the imperishable Self.

Of the Brahmaṇas and the Upaniṣads, the author regards the former to be 'the earliest historically known attempt at interpreting the Vedic Saṁhitās' (p. 2). According to him, 'the most significant and enduring contribution of the Brahmaṇas towards Vedic interpretation consists in providing a broad perspective and direction for understanding the meaning of the Saṁhitās. This they have done by introducing the interpretative concepts of *adhidaivika, adhibhaudika* and *adhyātmika*' (p. 3). In addition to being a guide and a help in studying the Saṁhitās, the triple concept, says the author, is useful in understanding 'the significance and justification of the broad division of the Veda into Saṁhitās (mantra portion of the Veda), Brahmaṇas and Upaniṣad' (p. 3).

There are basically three ways in which the Divine is apprehended—through the gods, through the physical nature, and through the subjective powers and principles of human being. The Veda, the object of which is to apprehend the Divine at all the three levels, is appropriately divided into the Saṁhitās, the Brahmaṇas and the Upaniṣads. While the Saṁhitās and the Brahmaṇas deal respectively with the vision of the Divine at the first two levels, the Upaniṣads with the same vision at the level of human being (p. 6).

Now coming to the subject of the *Ṛgveda Saṁhitā*, the author invites our attention to two broad views about the Vedic gods. The gods are viewed either as deifications of the forces of Nature or as manifestations of the spiritual powers of the human soul. Correspondingly, we have two schools of interpretation, naturalistic and mystical. Of the two, the mystical interpretation (*adhyātmika*) which is one way of seeing the Divine, as in the Upaniṣads, occupies such an important position that the other interpretation is completely neglected. This, says the author, is an exaggeration and offers a one-sided view of the Vedic gods. For no

Vedic god is described 'either exclusively in terms of its phenomenal character or in terms of its divine nature' (p. 18). For instance, Agni, the object of several Agni-hymns of the *Ṛgveda*, 'is truly divine and at the same time a phenomenon of Nature' (p. 24). The aim of the author is therefore to make 'a systematic attempt to reconcile both the views and yet to go beyond them in comprehending the basic vision of the Vedic seers as expressed in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda*' (p. x).

As the Vedic hymns are full of ancient vocables, which do not appear in classical Sanskrit or which have acquired new connotations during the classical period, it is difficult to understand the *Ṛgveda* Saṁhitā without using some method by which the original significance of the vocables can be recovered. Yaska, author of *Nirukta*, is in favour of interpreting the obscure words of the Veda etymologically. Most of the Vedic interpretations in India follow the etymological method. He draws our attention to two important things: (i) a single word in the Veda may have many meanings and therefore what it signifies varies from context to context; (ii) there are also words in the Veda which have an identical significance as determined by their contexts; and therefore, the differences arising out of their verbal forms have no connections with what they signify. If we try to justify (i) and (ii) etymologically, we have to 'introduce different roots to derive different meanings out of the same word' (p. 8) in the case of the first, and, in the case of the second, all the possible meanings of a word must somehow be 'derived from a single root' (p. 8). In either case, the attempt, says the author, will bear no fruit for 'the meanings which a word can have or the several words by which a thing is known cannot be explained in terms of or derived from the same root' (p. 9). In support of his view he refers to *Nighantu* and *Nirukta* both of which are authoritative guides to Vedic interpretation. The *Nighantu*, he says, 'contains lists of words used synonymously in the Veda, and all those synonymous words cannot be explained etymologically to mean the same' (p. 9). As for the *Nirukta*, which is 'supposed to be a commentary on the *Nighantu*', he says that its author Yaska 'has not tried to explain or justify, in terms of his etymological analysis, how the various synonyms as contained in the *Nighantu* can mean the same thing' (p. 9). To Professor Ramamurthy the right method for understanding a Vedic word consists in 'observing how it behaves in all the contexts of its Vedic usage as well as in the light of total Vedic thought or vision' (p. 10).

The author does not find, either in Dayananda Saraswati or in Sri Aurobindo, a method which satisfactorily explains the Vedic hymns. He dismisses both, the former by saying that 'he was guided by certain extraneous considerations' (p. 15) and the latter by stating that 'his interpretation . . . tended to be one-sided' (p. 15).

Having outlined the aim and method of his study in the first chapter, the author proceeds to develop his thesis on the *Ṛgveda* in the second

chapter. His thesis is that as the hymns of the *Ṛgveda* centre round the deities, a right understanding of its hymns is possible only when the deities are rightly understood. The attributes they possess are of two types—divine and phenomenal—for they partake of the qualities of two realities, the Divine and Nature. In the deities the two meet and mingle with each other; while the Divine manifests itself through the deities, Nature serves them as their abode and means of manifestation. 'Thus the deities have two births' (p. 41). First, they are born of the Divine, for they are 'the manifestations of the Highest' (p. 41); second, they are born again in Nature, for they manifest 'themselves within Nature' (p. 41).

Nature, says the author, is 'a vehicle of self-expression of the Divine' (p. 39). In itself Nature is not divine but acquires divine significance and value by 'its inherent capacity to reveal the Divine' (p. 30). The Divine, on the other hand, is 'the lord of all the deities' (*deveṣu adhidevaḥ*) (p. 40) as He is superior to them. He is One (*ekaḥ*) from whom all the deities are born (p. 40). His supreme form is *ṛta* which pervades all and sustains all, for it holds everything together (*dhāryo yanti*) (p. 42). He is the indwelling principle of all the deities and at the same time exceeds them through his superior form (*śreṣṭham vapu*) (p. 42). 'Nothing in Nature is wholly divine nor wholly phenomenal. The Divine is what lies hidden within Nature' (p. 48). Nature and the Divine 'are integrally related' to each other (p. 48).

The deities 'as the primary and universal manifestations of the Divine dwell in Nature and reveal themselves in and through its diverse workings' (p. 29). Every one of them possesses both phenomenal and divine attributes, for it not only 'represents a phenomenon of Nature' but is endowed with a 'capacity to reveal the Divine' (p. 31). By 'taking note of one aspect of a deity, to the neglect of the other, the true nature of a deity eludes us forever. To comprehend the nature of a deity truly and fully we have . . . to take into consideration both types of attributes' (p. 38).

II

In chapters 3 and 4, Agni and Indra, the two great objects of worship in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda*, are chosen for discussion. On the phenomenal side, Agni is present everywhere, in all things in which the element of heat is found. He abides even in 'floods, rivers, and oceans'. Apart from earth, he is in mid-world and heaven. His form changes according to the plane of his existence: on earth he is physical fire, in mid-world he is lightning and in heaven he is sun. On the divine side, Agni is identified as the immortal light in mortals. He resides within the heart of man, *jyotiḥ hṛdaye agne iyase vidvān*. He is a seer and none can excel him in his wisdom. He discerns between the wise and the unwise, the

devoted and the undevoted, the sinless and the sinful. He is *trātā*, the saviour. Like a boat, he ferries people across their sins. He helps man to attain immortality. He is beyond the comprehension of man. Even other deities fail to comprehend him truly and fully. Agni himself says: 'who has beheld me, which of the deities has fully seen my manifold forms (10-51-2)?

Indra is as important as Agni. But there is a basic difference between Indra and the other deities: while the other deities are spoken of in terms of both divine and phenomenal attributes, Indra is not so spoken, for he is devoid of the latter attributes. To put it otherwise, his power is exclusively divine and has no representation in any phenomenon of Nature (p. 114). All deities become powerful and wise by Indra's power and wisdom. He is full of *māyā*, the power by which he assumes various forms. He is great because none can resist his power. Where power is decisive there Indra is seen and worshipped as the source of power. Hence the prayer 'The entire universe is engaged in thy worship' (1-57-3). All worship the Indra power not out of fear but out of love. 'The ties by which worshippers are bound to him', says the Vedic poet, 'are not bonds but ties of love' (6-24-4). His power creates not only strength and vitality in all classes of beings but vision and wisdom in all men. Man becomes a *kavi* when he possesses Indra's power. Hence the Vedic poet's prayer, 'May we be possessed of Indra power', *indravantam syāma* (1-105-19). Also, Indra power purifies and saves. By purifying the heart of man he makes him act in accordance with *ṛta*. He saves men from their sins and hence known as *taraṇi*. Though Indra is known through his power, in himself he is incomprehensible: 'We wish to know thee, but we know thee not' (8-80-3).

Chapter 5 is devoted to the subject of divine inspiration. To rise to the level of divine inspiration is the supreme quest of the seers of the *Ṛgveda*. It is by the imperishable word of the Veda that the poet is inspired and becomes a devotee of the deities. In the word is the supreme abode of deities and by knowing the word the Veda is truly known (1-164-39). In the process of inspiration the gods have an important role to play. Agni is described as 'the awakener in man of the bright speech' (2-9-4). The hymns of Rik and Saman seek him who is thus awakened by Agni (5-44-14). Agni is also spoken of as the increaser of hymns. Vasishtha, one of the great sages of the Veda, is said to have become a maker of hymns by the grace of Varuna (p. 163). Varuna awakens man to devotion and unfolds the knowledge of the hymns. Pushan is the inspirer of the wise and the means of the hymns (10-26-4). Indra is the source from which hymns flow unceasingly (10-89-4). 'The devotion', says the author, 'makes man bow down in reverence to the deities, and in its birth he sees the supreme fulfilment of his life' (p. 165).

Chapter 6 gives an account of Soma whose importance is to be measured by the fact that a whole mandala, the ninth, of the *Ṛgveda* is

devoted to him. The hymns addressed to Soma are called *pavamāni sūktas*, the *sūktas* that deal with the god of purity. As regards the spiritual significance of Soma, Professor Ramamurthy writes: 'if all the aspects of Soma as presented by the *Ṛgveda* are taken note of, and if we are to interpret them comprehensively . . . ., then we have to view the significance of Soma in divine terms' (p. 174). Further, he adds: 'while the other deities reveal themselves to man in and through their phenomenal manifestations, soma has no phenomenal manifestation in the above sense' (p. 175). Soma as a sap of a herb and Soma as the divine *rasa* are two different things and their difference is clearly maintained by the Vedic poets (10-85-3). Soma is a seer whose 'light is the light of wisdom' (p. 187). He reveals the meaning of the word to man (9-97-2), because he is the lord of word. Though he is born in the highest realm, he is brought down to earth by men. He is the source of immortality and proclaims immortality to us. He dispels darkness from us and helps to fight dark forces. He makes man immortal and truthful and guides him as the supreme path-finder, *dharmāṇaḥ pate* (9-35-6). He is lodged within *ṛta* and full of *ṛta*. He discloses the deities to men because he is the father of the latter, *janita devānām* (9-109-4). He is the inspirer of hymns. He prepares the mind of the wise and makes the birth of divine word possible. Though the hymns of the Veda are various expressions of Soma, they cannot exhaust his glory and greatness (9-97-9). For he exceeds them as the lord of the word, *vācaspati*.

Chapter 7, the concluding part of the book, discusses the myth of Vritra, one of the elusive subjects in the *Ṛgvedic* studies. The author of the book thinks that an interpretation of the myth will help us 'in comprehending the central philosophy of the *Ṛgveda*' (p. 209). Vritra is the chief among the dark and undivine beings such as Ahi, Pani, Vala, etc. His work is to defy the gods and obstruct man's journey towards the Light and Truth. In this work other beings participate as his allies. He is opposed to the law of sacrifice, for he eats food without first offering to the deities. He obstructs the flow of waters, *āpaḥ*, and conceals the cows in the darkness, *dhenavaḥ*. He is everywhere and envelops all . He has no fixed abode, *aniveśanānām*. Men can cross over all evils only by conquering Vritra, *vṛtra hatyeṣu codaya viśvā tareṇa dūritāni* (7-33-15). All the deities are the killers of Vritra. But among them Indra alone is referred to as the best killer of Vritra, *vṛtrahantamam*. In the act of killing him the seers also take part. With the aid of the deities they slay Vritra. In the *Ṛgveda* the slaying of Vritra and his allies is considered to be the most important achievement. Three are the results of this achievement: (i) the winning of the sun; (ii) the release of the waters; and (iii) the recovery of the cows. As symbols, the sun, the waters and the cows signify respectively the divine wisdom (p. 215), the flow of the sacred hymns (p. 227) and the sacred word embodied in the hymns (p. 232).

III

The merits of the book are overshadowed by its demerits. If we exclude chapters 1 and 2 for the moment, the rest of the book containing chapters 3 to 7 is devoted to a study of the Vedic gods, the power of the word to reveal the gods and the myth connected with Vritra.

Except for a few interesting observations here and there one does not find anything new or illuminating in these chapters (3 to 7). Take any god—Agni or Indra or Soma, the account is based upon familiar studies in the field of the Veda. Almost all epithets, phrases and words connected with the gods are taken in their spiritual sense and explained accordingly—a kind of interpretation the author himself has rejected as one-sided. If the chapters are not intended to state anything beyond what other studies have already found in the hymns, the best that one can expect from them is that each should give a scholarly account of the results of those studies. But the chapters are not designed to be such accounts either, for the author's desire is to study the Veda independently. An independent study of the Veda can be undertaken only if one possesses the qualification necessary for understanding each *mantra*, each *sūkta* as a unified whole. It is not enough if one understands a few words or phrases in the *mantra* but one must grasp the whole *mantra* in relation to its words, the whole *sūkta* in relation to its *mantras*. As is evident from his book, the author has trained himself to study the words and phrases in isolation and not the whole *mantra* and *sūkta*. Hence the chapters on the gods have ended up as mere compilations without connecting ideas or developing arguments.

Not only the chapters on the gods but chapter 5 also shares the same fate. In this chapter are arrayed the various gods—Savita, Brahmanaspati, Usha, Agni, Indra, Varuna, Pushan, etc., and all of them are connected together by their common power to kindle devotion in man through the word and raise him to the highest condition of vision and wisdom. No attempt has been made to throw further light on the connection between the word and the gods in the journey undertaken by the Aryan poets. If the word is born through the grace of the gods and if the word can make a man wise and divine, we do not understand why there should be so many gods to produce an identical result.

Chapter 7 is an exception in that its discussion is fairly cogent. However, the insights and interpretations the author has given in respect of the Vritra myth are liberally borrowed from Sri Aurobindo to whom he has dedicated his book. It springs a surprise on us when we notice that he has not let out the name of Sri Aurobindo anywhere in the pages of this chapter. As if he does not want to borrow everything from Sri Aurobindo he tries to be independent at times and follows his own light. For instance, in interpreting the word cow he tells us that it means the sacred word or the hymn. (p. 234). The cow in the *Ṛgveda* is the most important image and its importance is further increased by its

association with the darkness, the abode of Vritra (10-113-7) and the concealing pen of cows. The recovery of cows, as is often described in the *Ṛgveda*, is made possible by the word which destroys the enemy and the pen which conceals them. In 5-45-6 the hymn runs as follows: 'Let us make a hymn whose mother opens for us the stall of cows' (see page 234). If we accept Professor Ramamurthy's interpretation of cow, the above text becomes unintelligible. If the hymns are hidden behind 'the stall', it makes no sense to say that the poet is free to make a hymn and seek the help of the mother of hymns. We have to conclude that the cows behind the stall cannot mean the sacred hymns.

Now we shall get back to the opening chapters, 1 and 2. The first chapter performs the customary function of introducing the subject of the book. In it the author states the aim: to go beyond the exclusive studies of the Vedic gods and set forth a synthetic view in which the gods will be regarded as possessing both kinds of attributes, phenomenal and divine (p. 18). The second chapter is an elaboration of this aim.

While speaking on the method of studying the hymns of the Veda, the author of the book refers to Sri Aurobindo. He points out that Sri Aurobindo's approach is not 'of much help in understanding the meaning of most of the Vedic hymns' (p. 15). The reason, according to him, is that 'instead of relying much on the root-definition of key Vedic terms, he tried to understand them at a higher or spiritual level or how they express symbolically the divinely inspired wisdom of the Vedic seers' (p. 15). Here he makes two points: (i) that Sri Aurobindo has not relied much on the root-definition of key Vedic terms; (ii) that he tried to understand the Vedic terms symbolically and at a spiritual level. This is a summary dismissal of a method rationally and scientifically established by Sri Aurobindo. For a method to be valid in Vedic studies it must prove its worth by its widest possible application to the texts and also by making them intelligible in the greatest possible measure. A glance at Sri Aurobindo's commentary will show that his method has adequately proved its worth in these two terms and emerged as the most reliable one. It cannot be rejected simply because it chooses to give a spiritual or symbolical interpretation of the Vedic terms. More serious than this verdict on Sri Aurobindo is the author's self-contradiction. Though he rejects root-based study as unsound on page 9, he very quickly reverses his position on page 15, while criticizing Sri Aurobindo, and speaks as if that study is a sound method of interpreting the Vedic terms. As a result, we fail to know whether or not he is in favour of root-based study.

Professor Ramamurthy claims that chapters 3 and 4 aim at substantiating the thesis he has put forward in chapter 2 (p. 70). But in the process of substantiation he fails to demonstrate how an incomplete view of Agni or Indra has an adverse effect upon understanding the hymns addressed to them. Nor does he mention anywhere the special gains we make in terms of grasping the hymns if we choose to take a

complete view of the gods. On the contrary, he writes to our dismay that the hymns addressed to Agni are inclined to give prominence to his divine attributes. He says: 'In all the hymns addressed to Agni his divine nature is given prominence' (p. 76). If this is true, then the Professor will be forced to abandon his case. If the Vedic hymns themselves give prominence to the divine attributes of Agni, then there is no wisdom in going against the spirit of the hymns and arguing that divine attributes give only a partial view of the god. More shocking than this is the Professor's admission that 'Indra as divine power does not represent any phenomenon of nature' (p. 114). If, as this implies, Indra does not possess phenomenal attributes, then we are at a loss to understand how a chapter on this god can substantiate the thesis put forward by the Professor. A similar error is found in the chapter on Vritra, the enemy of the gods. The main theme of the book is that the Vedic gods are rightly understood only when we view them as having both divine and phenomenal attributes. But Vritra is not a god like Agni or Indra. Hence he possesses neither divine nor phenomenal attributes. If we want to classify his attributes, then they must be put in a class which contains the undivine and sinful. Therefore we do not know how a discussion on Vritra could be useful in substantiating the thesis on the Vedic gods. The chapter on Vritra has no relevance whatsoever to the underlying aim of the book.

The book is on a sublime subject—the *Ṛgveda*, but unfortunately it has been written in a very casual and confused manner, flouting all the rules necessary for a book-writer.

Pondicherry N. JAYASHANMUKHAM

K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY: *Vedic Hermeneutics* (*Śrutyarthaparyālocanā*), Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, New Delhi in association with Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, 1993, pp. 105, Rs 1500.

Vedic Hermeneutics (*Śrutyarthaparyālocanā*) by K. Satchidananda Murty is a very significant publication at this point of time when we are realizing the need to correctly understand our ancient heritage. This book discusses the way to re-examine the Veda, the foundation stone of ancient thinking in its entirety. Murty emphasizes that 'all the Vedas may be considered to have a unity of purport and singleness of ultimate concern which comes to light through a harmonic (*samanvayika*) understanding of them'. The book consists of three chapters. The first chapter entitled 'A Right Approach to Sacred Lore' discusses (i) Nature and content of the Veda, (ii) Importance of knowing the meaning of

the Veda, (iii) Interpretation of the Veda and (iv) Eligibility for the study of the Veda. The second chapter entitled 'The Content of Sacred Lore' concerns itself with (i) Interpretative methodology, (ii) Interpretative freedom through *Tarka*, (iii) The Vedic, on argumentative faith, (iv) Attitudes to the Veda, and highlights the main points of the discussion in the (v) Epitome. The third chapter named 'Unity and Essence of the Veda' concentrates on (i) Harmonizing the Veda (ii) The Veda and empirical knowledge, (iii) Yajña and the (iv) Meaning of the Veda.

Murty has tried to open many knots that have entangled the entire field of Vedic studies today. Presenting the various views, ancient as well as modern, he opines that while studying the Veda, the student must not depend on just one commentary but look up the diverse interpretations of the Vedic hymns so as to understand the multiple possibilities of its vast and deep meaning.

Murty has given the different views regarding the nature and content of the Veda but the question of the 'divine origin of the Veda' must be understood from the viewpoint of aesthetics. The epithet 'scripture' in fact does not suit the Veda as it is indeed poetry divine. We would like to understand the question of the divinity of the Veda by referring to the 'myth of poetic creation' occurring in the beginning of the Rāmāyaṇa. After seeing one of the Krauñca birds killed by the hunter Valmiki utters the famous verse, '*Mā niṣāda pratiṣṭhāṁ . . . Kāmamohitam*', but is perplexed about its nature and origin. Thinking about it he comes back to the *āśrama* and sits in meditation and then before his mind's eye appears Brahmā, the Creator, who tells him, 'Through my wish alone, o brahman, has occurred this outflow of the Divine Speech'. Or we refer to Tagore who says in one of his poems that he is only an instrument and the player resides somewhere hidden and mysterious—the deity of the mind—the *manodevatā*. Ṛṣi Dīrghatamā of the Veda talks of the divinely possessed mind but the poet is himself mystified regarding the origin of the divine state of mind: '*Kavīyamānaḥ kaḥ iha provacad devaṁ manaḥ kuto'adhiprajātam*'. To be able to see the invariant sustaining principles of life correspondently working at various levels of existence is not possible through any of the *pramāṇas* but through seeric vision or intuitive realization about which no logical explanation can be given and as it is not in the ordinary power of man this revelation is known as divine (*apauruṣeya*). The intuitive vision subordinates everything else to itself; even the poet or the seer is blotted out by the vast penetrating illumination. And what is God but the archetype of light (*to archetypon phos*). In this sense the Veda is divine and beyond death and decay (*Devasya Paśya Kāvyaṁ nā mamāra na jīryati. Atha* V). The Vedic poet-seers saw the eternal truths, the fundamental and universal principles of secret coherence and inner unity operative at various levels of cosmic functioning and also the One Absolute Principle of sustenance at the

centre of the whole cosmic process. That vision or realization is not only mysterious and intuitive but so vivid and overpowering that it must flow out, it must be shared, but ordinary words would not do—only words that could become the vehicles of conveying that seeric vision had to be chosen and we know that the creative moment of poets' divinely aesthetic experience of reality chooses its own words, symbols and images. In fact Agni, Indra, Vāyu, Sūrya, Varuṇa, Savitā, Uṣā, Āpaḥ, Yūpa, Ulūkhalamusala, etc. are the *Devatās* of the Vedic poems by virtue of their being employed by the Vedic seers to convey their vision of the persistent principles at the back of the changing flux. The '*Deva*' is the illumination, the vision, and the *Devatā* is the mythical symbol that extends that vision (*devaṁ tanotīti devatā*). Yāska says that 'a seer who has had the vision of reality shows love for mythification (*Ṛṣerdṛṣṭārthasya prītirbhavatyākhyānasaṁyuktā, Nir.* 10.2). The mythical symbol, the poetic design and the choice of words of the Vedic poem are such that it gives multifarious meanings according to the capacity and the sensibility of the comprehenders who create their own texts while interpreting it. No commentary or bhāṣya can substitute the Vedic text and we are convinced that no translation of the Veda can ever give a satisfactory meaning. One cannot ignore the fact that till the sixth century AD no *bhāṣya* of the Veda was attempted. It is a recognized fact even today that poetry is difficult to translate but it is almost impossible to translate the seeric speech where every word has a special resonance of an all-pervasive meaning due to the radical metaphor inherent in the making of the word itself. For instance, though the words '*Pṛthvī*' and '*Kṣiti*' would both be translated as *earth* and this is what these words mean when used in ordinary speech, when employed in the mythical poetry of the Veda, '*Pṛthvī*' symbolizes the idea of vastness, extension and all-pervasiveness; it externally refers to earth, midsky and heaven but on the other hand signifies the expanses of our inner self. '*Kṣiti*' when used in the hymnic poetry of the Veda refers to all that which provides shelter, stability, peace and also the sub-conscious image of endurance, refuge and safety. 'A word when used in a poem or hymn is rendered divinely animated', says the Veda itself (*Yāmahurvācaṁ kavayo virājam, Atharvaveda* 9, 2,5). So this is how the question of the divinity of the Veda could perhaps be reasonably understood.

Further, Murty discusses the various interpretations of the Veda and considers the ritualistic, polytheistic and monotheistic interpretations as most important. He refers to Sāyaṇa, Venkata Mādhava, Yāska, Madhvāchārya, Jayatīrtha and the Western scholars exploring the Veda on these lines. He records the spiritual commentary on *Ṛgveda* 1.164 by Ātmānanda, the commentary of Dayānanda on the *Ṛgveda* and the symbolic mystical way of interpreting the Veda by Shri Aurobindo and his follower T.V. Kapāli Śāstri. Murty says, 'what is important is to recognize that from very early times the Veda has been interpreted in

many ways. Certain Ṛgvedic passages point out that its hymns are mystical prayers (*niṇyāṇi—rahasyāni stotrāni*), and mystic statements (*niṇyā vacāṁsi*) uttered by sages illumined by noble ideas and prayers. . . . Symbolic explanations of sacrificial acts are found in the *Brāhmaṇas*, the *Āraṇyakas* and the *Bhagvadgīta*. The Mahābhārata indicates that the Vṛtra legend and sacrificial acts can be understood symbolically. If Vṛtra is *Tamas*, ignorance, Indra's Vajra is *Viveka*, discrimination. All this shows that there was an awareness of understanding Vedic legends and rituals symbolically.' In fact both myth and ritual are not only symbolic in nature but are also interdependent. A mythical image as well as ritual is to be seen as a part of a total pattern of meaning. The archetypal patterns of situation, thought and feeling presented in the mythopoetic hymnology of the *Saṁhitās* are dramatized in the act of ritual in the *Brāhmaṇas*. In the entire Vedic poetry the word *Yajña* has been used incessant times implying an all-pervasive and all-inclusive expanse in which all the *Devatās* co-exist and co-ordinate. The *Ṛgveda* starts with a hymn to Agni whose functioning is qualified by the dimensions of *Yajña* that is a mythical term implying synchronized creative activity at macrocosmic as well as microcosmic levels. The *Brāhmaṇa* literature says, '*Parokṣo vai devaḥ*' and '*Parokṣo vai Yajñaḥ*' meaning *Yajña* and *Deva* cannot be understood in a direct way but indirectly i.e. symbolically. Though Veda is meant for all, everyone finds one's own meaning according to his own capacity. Some can have complete identification with the seeric vision (*Tādbhāvya, Nir.* 13.13), some can understand it through intellectual analysis (*Tarka, Nir.* 13.12) as is done by the philosophers. Moreover a person with wide knowledge is praised among the knowers of the Veda (*'Pārovaryavitsu tu khalu veditṛṣu bhuyovidyaḥ praśasyo bhavati'*, Nir. 13.12). The essence of the *mantra* is however not directly received by a person who does not have seeric perception and rigorous self-discipline (*na hyeṣu pratyakṣa-mastyanṛṣerataṗaso vā*, ibid).

Murty has gone into the question of the eligibility of the study of the Veda and asserts what the Veda says itself that it is meant for the whole humanity. 'Nowhere in the *Samihitā-Brāhmaṇas* or the Upaniṣadic portions is any caste, sex or race excluded from studying and benefiting from the Veda' (p. 15).

The second chapter named 'The Content of Sacred Lore', is the longest of all the three chapters (pp. 21 to 65 with seven pages more of supportive references). Murty has waded through the entire Indian as well as western works devoted to translate, analyse and philosophize the meaning of the Veda. The attitudes of the *Nyāya, Vyākaraṇa, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Vaiśeṣika, Manusmṛti, Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Bhāgavata* and Ācāryas like *Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja* and even *Cārvākas, Buddhists* and *Jains* have all been assessed. He lauds the validity of *Tarka* that imparts interpretative freedom and that is what is witnessed in the exposition of

the *mantra* by various systems of philosophy and the Indian tradition accepts all. Murty has, however, presented the sum total of the whole discourse on Vedic interpretation beautifully in these words, 'The essence of the Veda has to be deliberated upon for years in a sustained way with faith by the pure mind of the one who has become an ethical being; then one may arrive at certainty of its being truth, and finally one may realize it. This is the classical stand' (p. 34).

In the epitome Murty has raised the question about human judgement regarding '*dharma*'. The *śruti* gives us the basic fundamental principles of sustenance (*satyadharmas*) and man is given the power or reasoning (*tarka*) through which he must discern what would be the '*viśeṣa dharma*', i.e. what at a particular point of time and place would sustain all that is connected with it and so the time honoured principle of the freedom of the doer (*Svatantraḥ Kartā*). In Indian tradition no authority is so absolute as to imprison man's freedom of thought and act. Murty says, 'It is extraordinary that unlike the followers of almost all the scriptures these people declared, "our scripture has many meanings, i.e. many interpretations of it are possible"' (pp. 29–30). All the amplification and the supplementation (*samupabṛṁhaṇa*) of the Veda by the *Vedāṅgas*, the *Smṛti-Itihāsa-Purāṇas* and the philosophical schools (*Darśanās*) is, in the words of Murty, 'on the whole that of reasonable faith'.

In the last chapter entitled 'Unity and Essence of the Veda', Murty emphasizes that there is in fact no conflict between the empirical and the ethereal. Quoting Sāyaṇa, Ātmānanda, Śankarācārya and others, Murty points out that there is no contradiction between the Veda and the Vedānta and the 'entire Veda is concerned with Brahman'. All the Vedas become one in that one Supreme (*Sarve Vedā Yatraikaṁ Bhavanti*).

Writing on *Yajña*, Murty has presented the true meaning of Vedic *Yajña* that had been translated as 'sacrifice' by the foreign scholars and conveyed generally a pejorative sense referring to some dead meaningless rituals. He says 'it is an act of worship, a sign of subjection and honour to a tremendous numinous power one confronts, the external action being a symbol of this submission'. Murty gives innumerable references from the *Saṁhitās*, the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Āraṇyakas* to confirm that the Vedic *Yajña* in its sublimest form is meditation on the Supreme Self in which the limited self is poured as an oblation. In spite of a bewildering variety of rituals and gods it is repeatedly asserted that it is the Supreme Self that is worshipped by different names and in different ways as that One is the uniting thread of the whole cosmos and the central point of all flux.

The five great rituals (*Pañca Mahāyajñas*) prescribed for a householder for daily performance have rightly been called the acts of mercy by Prof. Murty. 'Awareness of our relationship with the primal source of all being must be expressed in sacrifice—in our compassionate devotion to the welfare of all men and creatures, of all being (*Sarvabhūtahita*)'.

Attaining of knowledge and imparting it to others is the *Brahmayajña* (the word '*Brahma*' derived from *bṛṁh*, to expand, stands for knowledge as well as the all-encompassing supreme consciousness), i.e. the act of expansion of the highest sort. In fact the very spirit of *Yajña* is crossing limits and boundaries. *Devayajña* is meant to feel identified with the forces of nature and not harm the natural resources in anyway. *Pitryajña* symbolizes importance of heritance for human society and regard for it. The *Atithiyajña* and the *Bhūtayajña* teach one the true spirit of socialism as well as lead to the sublimation of selfish instincts into human feelings of compassion, identification and sharing. Maintenance and furthering of all life is *Bhūtayajña*. Says Prof. Murty, 'Implicit in the conception of the five *Mahayajñas* as the means of redemption for man is the assumption that man is in spiritual and physical union with all existence; he is a part of the cosmos, he is related to infinite Being. . . . Man stands in relation not only to the transcendent and the eternal, but also to the existent and the finite; he is related to all being, all existence. To recognize this unity and interdependence of all existence and especially of all life, and to manifest this in action by living not only for ourselves but for all creatures and for God, is the highest type of sacrifice'. The ultimate aim of *Yajña* is to do good to all beings and that is the truth.

According to the Indian tradition the Vedas are like the snow-clad Himālayas from which have flown all the streams enriching the entire intellectual life. There have been interpretations and reinterpretations in the process of adjustment and re-adjustment in a positive creative fashion according to the need of the day but the core-content has remained the same. The poets of the Veda through their seeric vision designed a poetic world where the mythical figures symbolizing the basic fundamental principals of life were presented as working in harmony. The design seemed to be true at various levels of meaning. The theologian moulded his rites, the preacher sought his belief, the philosopher found the clues for his intellectual speculation and the law-makers worked out the social and political lifestyle in accordance with the archetypal truths of the saṁhitās which came to be regarded as the ultimate authority. The vast Purānic literature and the epics are supposed to explain the truths of the Vedas (*Itihāsapurāṇābhyaṁ vedam samupabṛṁhayeta*). There has been a unique alliance and co-ordination among the different disciplines in ancient Indian tradition (*Śāstraśāstrānubandhitvam*).

It was only the western scholarship of the nineteenth and early twentieth century that introduced paradoxical paradigms in the approach to the understanding of the Veda. Possessed with the postulates of historicity, the evolutionary theory and an idea of dichotomy between the religious and the secular aspects of life (an outcome of the struggle between the church and the state that was going on in Europe at that time), the western scholars divided and compartmentalized the different

Vedic texts and categorized them as religious, secular, ritualistic, philosophical, primitive and advanced, and what not. For a long time the Indian scholars have been toeing the same line. But now the time has come to re-assess and understand the real nature of the Vedic texts, their mutual relation and ancient methodology of delving deep into the meaning of the seeric word (*Ṛṣivāk*).

About the western scholars Murty says, 'They were busy dating it through an analysis of its language and ideas, assigning different portions of it to different periods and gathering historical and anthropological facts about the authors of its hymns and their society. The majority of them did not seek to study and understand the Veda in the way in which for thousands of years those who believed it to be a holy book did.' The author also reviews the different approaches to the Vedic lore by various western scholars. On the one hand he refers to Roth who rejected even Sāyaṇa and on the other to Abel Bergaigne who emphasized the deep study of the text itself and Richard Piscel and Karl Geldner who advocated the close study of the entire Indian tradition to understand the Veda.

Veda is indeed *Svataḥpramāṇa* and even one *sūkta* (hymn) fully understood reveals many dimensions of existence in its multiple hidden layers. The deep study of the Veda confirms that there is no aspect of life that it does not enlighten. The Upaniṣads elaborate in a more direct way that which is poetically presented in the Veda. The whole of the *Kenopaniṣad* in its four chapters propounds the entire truth about *Brahman* as the propelling force behind the microcosm and macrocosm that is presented just in eight verses of the *Vāksūkta* (*Ṛgveda*, x .125). Many verses of the Veda are reproduced in the Upaniṣads as representing the very essence of the Upaniadic discourse. For instance the verse '*Dvā suparṇā Sayujā sakhāya samānaṁ . . . . . abhicākśīti*' occurring in the *Ṛgveda* (1.16.20) and the *Atharvaveda* (9.9.13) re-occurs in the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* (3.1.1) and the *Śvetaśvataropaniṣad* (4.6). Another verse, '*Rūpaṁ rūpaṁ pratirūpa babhūta. . . . yukta hyasya harayo śatādaśa*', of the *Ṛgveda* (6.47.18) is not only reproduced in the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, 2.5.19 and *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, 5.9.10, but beautifully analysed as propounding the *Brahmatattva* in its qualified as well as the absolute aspect. The old Upaniṣads like *Chāndogya* and *Bṛhdāraṇyaka* even follow the Yājñika style of symbolism to impart the knowledge of the ultimate truth. The Vedic poetry in its own style answers the *Brahmajijñāsā*, the *Dharmajijñāsā*, the *Tattvajijñāsā* and even the questions related to poetics, linguistics, sociology, polity, ethics, psychology, education, agriculture and economics, etc. The sixteenth chapter of the *Gitā* does not add anything new regarding the *Daivī Sampad* and the *Āsurī Sampad* to what has been presented by Ṛṣi Vasiṣṭha in *Ṛgveda* VII, 104.

In the *Atharvaveda* that is very close to daily concerns of life, we find even beautiful nursery-rhymes. A *sūkta* of eleven verses (5.15) repeats

the same line praising sweet-speaking and at the same time teaches numbers up to one thousand. In the entire Vedic literature one finds a synthetic approach to the problems and riddles of life; here the microcosm and the macrocosm are seen as inter-related and profound synchronization is achieved between the subjective and the objective realms. There is basic unity and co-ordination between *Eko Devaḥ* and *Viśve Devāḥ*. Moreover there is no fundamental contradiction regarding polytheism and monotheism here as these are only relative perspectives. The view of the plurality of 'gods' is functional and submits finally to the concept of One Supreme, the *Īśa* that pervades and supports all that move in this moving world (*Īśopaniṣad*, that is actually the last chapter of the *Yajurveda*, I) and from here the journey to monistic principle '*so'ham*' (*Īśopanisad*, 16) is not very far and that '*Ekam Sat*' is according to Murty the purport (*tātparya*) of the Veda. He says, 'That Great thing is the meaning of the Veda, he who does not know that meaning does not know it. "*Navedavin manute tam bṛhantaṃ*".'

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Sukharanjan Saha and P.K. Mukhopadhyay: *Gaṅgeśōpādh-yāyapranitasya Tattvacintamaṇerantimōbhāga: Śabdakhaṇḍam*, Jadavpur University, Calcutta, pp. xv + 309, Rs 200.

For a long time now, Nyāya philosophy has come to be divided into two trends: ancient and modern. The trend of ancient Nyāya is determined by reflection, mainly, devoted to *prameya*. The methods of self-knowledge serving the highest *puruṣārtha—mōkṣa* are mentioned here. So in philosophy—in the form of spiritual science it has established itself as an independent discipline. *Pramāna* has received proportionately as much significance as have *prameya* and other discussed themes during its study. *Tarka, pramāna, anvaya-vyatireka, dharmigrāhakmāna*, etc., are employed here as various methods. Therefore, while demonstrating some thesis, counter proofs are also looked into besides presenting the supporting proofs. The objectives, definitions and examination of the sixteen *padārthas* as indicated in the textual tradition are discussed here wherever the context demands and as comprehensively as possible.

A discipline cannot develop without competitive debates. In the development of Nyāya, Buddhist philosophers have had the role of major critics constantly. There have been other critics also such as Sāṃkhya philosophers and others, but their role has been relatively negligible. Based on the logical proofs in conformity with Nyāya the thinking trend of the growing modern logic moved in a different direction. In this trend the deliberation on objects like *prameya*, etc.,

became attenuated and supplementary. In addition to the eliminating of controversies and overcoming the fallacies of lack of complete concomitance (*avyāpti*) and concomitance wide of mark (*ativyāpti*), etc., and moving toward refinement of faultless definition this movement became so vast and deep that meticulous study became necessary in order that one could reach the bottom of the matter.

After the Buddhist institutes and *viharas* were destroyed by the foreigners, and in order that the discipline could develop, Prabhākar Mīmāṃsakas of the Gaur region appeared on the scene as the main critics of Nyāya in spite of the fact that the Buddhist school already constituted an important component in the competitive tradition. Gaṇgeśa has stated rightly in the beginning of the *Tattvacintāmani:* 'Going by logical method learning from the teachers the *gurumata.*' Here by the term *Guru* used in *saṣthi, Prabhākar Mīmāṃsakas* are meant, not their *Naiyāyika* teachers. They had enquired into their theses systematically through the word of their teachers in order to demolish them. Even before this, Udayana had remarked when the occasion arose, in his *Kusumānjali*: 'It is *gurumata* and not the doctrine of the *gurus*'. Here the term *gurumata* directly refers to Prabhākar doctrine. It seems that in the thinking of those times followers of Prabhākar had acquired greater prominence. So, it was not possible for anyone to introduce one's own position by ignoring them. May be they were compelled to recognize them as their opponents so that they could develop their Navyanyāya approach. Otherwise the stability, strength and advance of this movement of thought would not have been possible.

Systematic logic controlled the entire movement of this trend which was only proper and natural. In the sequential thinking of fourfold *pramāṇas*—perception, etc., its supporting logic has the primary right to be there. So the idea of the contrary to the desired conclusion and the principle of parsimony, etc., are available here in their complete form.

There was a time when the sport of this form of logic and the approach of Navyanyāya attracted the attention of the learned to such an extent that they were received with respect even in areas other than Nyāya. Other disciplines of contemporary and later times had a major impact of this trend. *Tatvaprakāśikā* of *Vedānta* (*citsukhi*), *Advaitasiddhi, Bhāttacintāmani* of Mīmāṃsakas, *Laghu alaṃkārasāstra*, etc., are there as examples of having its impact. Though the beginning of the Navyanyāya trend had taken place with the *prakaraṇa* (thematic) writings of Udayanacārya and consequently his style—first presenting the alternatives and then later eliminating them, can be noticed in *Ātmatatvaviveka*, etc. Later in the work of Gaṇgeśa and its commentaries it attained full richness. On this track logicians preceding Gaṇgeśa, Maṇikantha and Saśidhara wrote *Nyāyaratna* and *Nyāyasiddhāntadeep* successively; even then, mainly with the logical elimination of the

principles of Prābhākar Mīmāṃsa, on the basis of the strength of the proofs supported by logic and experience in a concise form, the credit of presenting their views goes to him. Therefore, Gaṇgeśa attained the renown of being the founder of Navyanyāya.

The definition of *padārtha*, presenting possible inadequacies and their logical elimination, refinement by application of related new words or giving up the accepted words, exhibiting the consistency of mutual relationship, cause and effect notion, idea of *pratibandhita* and *pratibandhaka*, etc., are the notions which have found a prominent place in this text. In the same sequence, *pratiyōgitā, anuyōgitā, prakāritā, prakārtā, viṣayaytā, viṣayitā, viśeṣyatā, saṃsargatā*, and *avacchedakatā*, etc., terminological words, became a little complex, abstruse and difficult to understand by frequent use. Yet, the style of establishing their theses by eliminating counter proofs and supporting them with positive proofs, has been accepted as a model by the learned pundits. Right at the beginning of *Cintāmaṇi* he declares: 'Reflecting on the opposite view, no cunningness has been shown, nor the presentation of one's own view has been less forceful.'

On the basis of fourfold *pramāṇas* as conforming to Nyāya philosophy this *Tattvacintāmaṇi* is divided in four parts, and its *Anumāna* part found more prestige. The continuous tradition of learning and teaching it, and its commentaries is present and developing even today. After this part, the *Śabda* part is dealt with and the least significance was attached to the *Upamāna* part.

Here in the *Śabda* division, while on the one hand, grammarians', *śabda-nityatvavāda, samāsaśaktivāda, vibhaktyārtha*, and *ākhyārthārtha*, etc., are refuted and the meaning conforming to its own *śāśtra* and *vyapekṣavāda* have been established; there, on the other hand, the theses of Mīmāṃsakas—*anvitabhidhānavāda* and *abhihitānvayavāda* are eliminated with arguments and *saṇketarūpa śakti* and causality of term-knowledge in *śābdabōdha*, etc., are established duly.

Though the *Śabdakhaṇda* of Tattvacintāmaṇi has been published twice before this one, the first edition was published in the journal *Pandit* from Kashi edited by the renowned philosopher Bāl Śaśtri. The second edition was edited by the great logician Kāmakhyānāth Tarkavāgīṣ from Calcutta Sanskrit College after some days. Naturally the later edition is more refined. One notices the mistakes of the earlier edition while going through the text and teaching it. These get corrected in the later edition. Therefore, for getting it published again in its complete form, keeping in view the edition of Tarkavāgīṣ as the ideal and bringing it to the notice of the learned people the credit goes entirely to Sāha and Mukherji and they deserve encomiums. The University of Jadavpur, Calcutta must be thanked for funding its publication. The philosophical world especially the Naiyāyika community will remain under their debt. They have published a text which was ever expected and desired.

The parts on *Pratyakṣa* and *Anumāna* of *Cintāmaṇi* with respective commentaries were already published by several institutions in the post-independence period. But the part on *Śabda* has been published for the first time in this period.

For some people the publication of texts which have not been not in print for a long time is a means of making money but the writer of these lines differs from this view. Such a thought is trifling and dogmatic and is a product of an illiberal and small mind. In fact, to make available by publication a rare text is a work of great merit. One is reminded here of the lines from Abhinavabhārati: 'Resuscitating an earlier established work amounts to writing an original text so far as the measure of significance is concerned'.

Sāha and Mukherji have done a great good to the philosophical world by publishing the original *Śabdakhaṇḍa* of Tattvacintāmaṇi. They have also indicated the number of lines as given in the earlier edition. This would facilitate the researcher if he needs to refer back to the commentary of the earlier printed text.

I am convinced that the philosophical community would surely be interested in acquiring this volume.

Ganganath Jha Kendriya Samskrita Vidyāpith
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R.K. GUPTA: *Social Action and Non-Violence*, published by Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, and distributed by Allied Publishers Ltd., New Delhi, 1995, pp. x + 128, Rs 100.

This volume collects ten of R.K. Gupta's published works on related themes with its title contributing a good rubric under which to place them. The fact that six of these appeared in *Gandhi Marg*, perhaps more than its title, is indicative of a strong interest in Gandhian philosophy. That a professional philosopher should have focused his writing during a whole decade on some of its central ideas can only be commended. To do so fruitfully requires more than analytical ability; it also requires a sensitiveness and a sympathetic responsiveness to them, both of which are to be found in what is here put together in one volume.

Perhaps the hallmark of Gupta's philosophical style is a certain brevity and economy of expression, when the concepts and ideas he brings into focus can easily prompt one to an extensive treatment of them. In my review I shall follow his example by highlighting what seems to me to characterize his general approach as a moral and social philosopher writing in this area, rather than trying to say something

worthwhile severally on the important questions he has dealt with in these pages.

Perhaps the most important single distinction Gupta makes is that between social and anti-social actions, and he does so in marked preference to the more common distinction between acts that can be said to be good or bad *qua* individual acts without criterially bringing into consideration how they are to be adjudged in their effect on the well-being of society. This seems appropriate since his distinction is meant to serve the purposes of his discussion of the various aspects of the concept of non-violence in the wide significance it has acquired as the result mainly of the uses it was put to by Gandhi. But seeing a human act in its wider social setting does not require that its primary characterization should also be made as it affects the well-being of the society in which it is done. So often it is because an individual act is visibly bad that we see reason to describe it as bad also for the agent's society, which means that the primary senses of 'good' and 'bad' belong to the individual act itself and not to its consequential character.

A second reason with no less appeal arises from Gupta's rejection of utilitarianism and his strong preference for the Gandhian ideal of sarvodaya. He is at pains to claim that in making his distinction between them he wishes these terms to be understood 'entirely non-evaluatively' (p. 4). I think this latter claim is much too strong to be tenable, but were Gupta a utilitarian he could make the former claim in the following way. An act might be taken in its nature to be good, though such a judgment is not to be taken as verdictive or fully judgmental in the sense of being itself the sufficient condition of a corresponding commitment in respect of an agent's conduct. But even this is not altogether acceptable if we see Gupta as having strong Kantian predilections. Thus Vere's sentence of death on Billy Budd in Melville's novel of that title when he was believed to be 'innocent before God' was surely a bad action which was thought to be justified as required by the needs of British national safety, and even declared by Professor Peter Winch to be right 'for Vere' albeit not for himself (which is a meaningless caveat). I for one, and perhaps Gupta too, would want to say that the badness of sending a man known to be innocent to death is sufficient in itself to make such an action bad in the full moral sense.

While Gupta's desire to socialize human actions when dealing with them in the context of the theme of non-violence is understandable, a similar impulse leads him to so define those that are 'personal' as to leave out what is surely salient in them. He defines a personal action as one 'which does not presuppose the existence of any other person or persons' (pp. 1–2). On this definition personal actions would be similar to actions which have no social significance, like scratching one's chin (example given by Aquinas). And this is to trivialize a basic concept. J.S.

Mill in his *Essay on Liberty* failed to do justice to this notion when he laid down that society is justified in intervening whenever an agent harms someone other than himself. But this is a serious mistake. Dealings between husband and wife, for example, are personal in a clear sense, yet there has to be fairly high threshold of harm below which society has no business whatever to intervene in matters of this nature.

Although Gandhi developed his ideas on non-violence by concentrating on non-violent action in the cause of justice in a situation where a social group was seeking justice its practice, when legitimately termed satyagraha, has also a place in situations of an inter-personal nature. So Gupta rightly gives importance to discussion as properly falling within the scope of Gandhian theory. Here the notion of truth in fact comes into its own far more perspicuously. And we can, without adopting a high moral tone, stress the importance of truthfulness in genuine discussion whose presence is not to be similarly assumed when we have instead of it debate and controversy.

But when this has been said it still remains true that satyagraha's importance lies first and foremost in the social realm (in the sense this needs to be understood once the personal is given its due place). Gandhi saw his quest as an exploration in the pursuit of truth. In dialogue and conversation the importance of the parties recognizing the value of truth(-fulness) does not need to be stressed to the extent evidenced by Gandhi's resolute pursuit of it. One might even say, echoing Gandhi's Tolstoyan inspiration, that politics is a form of public lying. So there is nothing surprising in Gandhi's self-doubting and mental disquiet as he came to be the central figure in Indian politics.

I suggest that it would be wholly in keeping with Gandhi's own thought to say that in a very important sense it was truth which was primary for him and not non-violence. I believe Gupta would endorse my suggestion without any real hesitation. If above all Gandhi's campaigns of satyagraha were undertaken in the pursuit of truth, then to see them as a method of acting is to undervalue them seriously and even to misunderstand their nature. The need to be truthful can take many forms and in so far as satyagraha is an earthly expression of it, it too has many forms. The great significance of truthfulness is that it is not just a way of acting; being able to act in truth is also to live a certain mode of life. If satyagraha were a method then it ought to be available to all and sundry, and Gandhi never thought that to be the case.

Gandhi held that satyagraha is bound to succeed. Gupta does not see this to be a claim which can be evaluated without close scrutiny, and he is right in this. Apart from the usefulness of the distinctions that can be made in this special area of human agency there is also the vital question of how far we have been able to penetrate the depths of human nature. But there is something that needs to be said here by way of introducing an element of scepticism regarding the claims of modern

psychology, with which Gupta does not, or perhaps would not, express concurrence. It can, I believe, be said that Gandhi would not have been deflected from his path in the slightest by what this supposed modern science has to say, and I think rightly. So it would seem that it is a kind of conceptual truth that satyagraha can only succeed. The important task is to enquire how this truth is to be understood, and to seek to state it as best we can.

Perhaps one thing can be said straight away in this regard, and I shall say it in bringing this review to a close. Satyagraha is necessarily something that can take place only between two parties each of whom is willing to speak to the other. Where satyagraha seems most out of place is where one of the parties deals with the other in a non-human way because there is a refusal or unwillingness or even an inability to deal with the other except in the most externalist way, as one might deal with a stone or a piece of wood or something to be devoured (as by a predator). So the non-violent speech of a group under threat from some form of depravity (such as Nazism) or from a horde possessed of a maniacal ideology seems to pose a threat to the very validity of satyagraha. Here the only way open to the satyagrahi must be defiance, however unavailing it proves to be. There is a truth here which Gandhi's life demonstrated, as did that of Jesus. Non-violence, when it stems from truth, is not necessarily comfort-giving, any more than speaking the painful truth must be so. Jesus said that he brought a sword into the world, and so could Gandhi have.

But it is more comfortable not to recognize the sword of truth as the sword it can be and to forget that there ever was a bearer of it, as we have for the most part done.

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