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RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

रिसर्च एनालिसिस एण्ड इवैल्यूएशन

EDITOR

Dr. KRISHAN BIR SINGH

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समकालीन पाश्चात्य नैतिक–भाषा विमर्श

* डॉ0 अभिषेक उपाध्याय
* University of Allahabad, Uttar pradesh

बीसवीं शताब्दी के आरम्भ में एक नवीन एवं स्वतंत्र विधा के रूप में अधिनीतिशास्त्रीय चिंतन के आरम्भ का श्रेय जी0ई0 मूर को जाता है। 1903ई0 में प्रकाशित अपनी सुप्रसिद्ध पुस्तक "प्रिंसिपिया एथिका" में सर्वप्रथम उन्होंने ही 'शुभ', 'उचित', 'कर्त्तव्य' आदि नैतिक शब्दों अथवा प्रत्ययों के अर्थ के विषय में प्रश्न उठाकर नैतिक दर्शन में एक नवीन युग का सूत्रपात किया। सर्वप्रथम मूर ने ही 'शुभ' के अर्थ को स्पष्ट करने एवं उसकी व्यापक परिभाषा खोजने का प्रयास किया। "शुभ क्या है"? इस प्रश्न को उन्होंने नीतिशास्त्र का मौलिक प्रश्न माना है, साथ ही साथ शुभ के प्रत्यय को नीतिशास्त्र का मूल प्रत्यय घोषित किया है।'

मूर इन नैतिक शब्दों एवं प्रत्ययों के अर्थ एवं स्वरूप के विश्लेषण से संबंधित समस्याओं को नैतिक दर्शन की सर्वाधिक महत्त्वपूर्ण समस्या मानते हैं। मूर के इन विचारों से मूल प्रेरणा लेकर बीसवीं शताब्दी के अनेक दार्शनिकों ने अधिनीतिशास्त्र के विकास में अपना महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया। तार्किक प्रत्यक्षवाद एवं समकालीन भाषा दर्शन ने अधिनीतिशास्त्रीय चिंतन को पर्याप्त महत्व दिया और इसकी विषयवस्तु एवं क्षेत्र का समुचित विस्तार किया। नैतिक भाषा के संबंध में अभी तक जिन अधिनैतिक सिद्धान्तों का प्रतिपादन किया गया है, उन्हें हम मुख्यतः दो वर्गों में विभाजित करते हैं।

प्रथम संज्ञानवाद एवं द्वितीय असंज्ञानवाद। इन दोनों प्रकार के अधिनैतिक सिद्धान्तों को इनकी मूलभूत दृष्टि के अनुरूप क्रमशः वर्णनात्मक एवं अवर्णनात्मक सिद्धान्त भी कहा जाता है। इन दोनों प्रकार के सिद्धान्तों के समर्थक दार्शनिकों ने कुछ मूलतः भिन्न दृष्टिकोणों के आधार पर अधिनीतिशास्त्र की मौलिक समस्याओं का समाधान करने का प्रयास किया है। संज्ञानवादी सिद्धान्त के प्रमुख समर्थक मूर, रॉस, प्रिचर्ड, बेंथम, मिल इत्यादि हैं, जबकि असंज्ञानवादी सिद्धान्त का समर्थन, एयर, कार्नेप, स्टीवेंसन, हेयर, नॉवलरिमथ आदि दार्शनिकों ने किया है।

संज्ञानवादी सिद्धान्त के अनुसार नैतिक निर्णय वस्तु–जगत् के अन्य तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के समान ही संज्ञानात्मक अथवा वर्णनात्मक होते हैं, अर्थात् जिस प्रकार वाह्य जगत् के सम्बन्ध में दिये गये वस्तुपरक अथवा तथ्यपरक कथनों या निर्णयों से हमें कुछ विशिष्ट सूचना अथवा ज्ञान प्राप्त होता है, उसी प्रकार नैतिक निर्णयों एवं कथनों से भी हमें कुछ विशिष्ट ज्ञान अथवा सूचना प्राप्त होती है। इसीलिये अन्य तथ्यात्मक कथनों के समान इन्हें भी संज्ञानात्मक अथवा वर्णनात्मक कहा जाता है। संज्ञानवाद के अनुसार नैतिक निर्णय भी अन्य तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के समान किन्हीं तथ्यों का वर्णन करते हैं, इसलिये नैतिक निर्णयों एवं तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों में कोई मौलिक भेद नहीं है। दोनों प्रकार के निर्णयों के द्वारा हमें कुछ विशिष्ट तथ्यों का बोध होता है अथवा कुछ विशिष्ट सूचनाओं की प्राप्ति होती है और इस दृष्टि से दोनों प्रकार के कथन समान रूप से संज्ञानात्मक होते हैं। उपर्युक्त मत को स्पष्ट करते हुए रिचर्ड बी0 ब्रांट कहते हैं कि "संज्ञानवाद यह मानता है कि नैतिक कथन तथा विज्ञान के कथन में वस्तुतः कोई अन्तर नहीं है, और नीतिशास्त्र भी अनुभावात्मक विज्ञान का ही एक रूप है। संज्ञानवादी यह मानते है कि किसी भी नैतिक कथन के अर्थ में कोई परिवर्तन किये बिना उसका अनुवाद अनुभावात्मक विज्ञान की भाषा में किया जा सकता है।"[2]

उदाहरणार्थ–

संज्ञानवादियों के अनुसार "हमें अपने कर्तव्य का पालन करना चाहिये" यह नैतिक निर्णय एवं "पृथ्वी में गुरुत्वाकर्षण शक्ति है" यह तथ्यात्मक निर्णय समान रूप से वर्णनात्मक, तथ्यात्मक एवं सूचनात्मक है। संज्ञानवाद की इस मान्यता का परिणाम यह है कि नैतिक निर्णयों के अर्थ, स्वरूप एवं प्रमाणीकरण संबंधी समस्यायें तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों की इन्हीं समस्याओं से भिन्न नहीं हैं। अर्थात् संज्ञानवादियों के अनुसार इन दोनों प्रकार के निर्णयों की इन समस्याओं का समाधान एक समान पद्धतियों अथवा विधियों द्वारा किया जा सकता है। नैतिक निर्णयों के संबंध में मूर, रॉस आदि समकालीन दार्शनिकों के इसी विशिष्ट दृष्टिकोण को संज्ञानवाद के नाम से पुकारा जाता है। संज्ञानवादी विचारधारा के मूलतः दो पक्ष हैं 1–प्रकृतिवाद 2–निर्प्रकृतिवाद।

प्रकृतिवादी सिद्धान्त के अनुसार नैतिक निर्णयों अथवा शब्दों की व्याख्या एवं परिभाषा ऐसे इन्द्रियानुभविक अथवा प्राकृतिक निर्णयों के आधार पर की जा सकती है, जिनका नैतिक होना अनिवार्य नहीं है। अर्थात् नैतिक निर्णयों की परिभाषा प्रकृतिवाद, निर्नैतिक निर्णयों के आधार पर भी स्वीकार करता है। प्रकृतिवाद के अनुसार अन्य प्राकृतिक निर्णयों के समान नैतिक निर्णयों एवं शब्दों के द्वारा भी हमें ऐसे गुणों, संबंधों एवं तथ्यों का बोध होता है, जिनका ज्ञान हमें साक्षात् इन्द्रिय अनुभव अथवा अन्तःनिरीक्षण द्वारा होता है। इस प्रकार प्रकृतिवादियों के अनुसार नैतिक निर्णय भी इन्द्रियानुभविक प्राकृतिक गुणों का ही वर्णन करते हैं और नैतिक निर्णयों के अर्थ और स्वरूप में बिना किसी प्रकार का परिवर्तन किये हम उसकी परिभाषा मनोवैज्ञानिक सामाजिक, अथवा किसी अन्य प्राकृतिक निर्णय के आधार पर कर सकते हैं, जो कि अनिवार्यतः निर्नैतिक निर्णय होते हैं। उदाहरणार्थ "अमुक कर्म

हमारा कर्त्तव्य है" इस नैतिक निर्णय के अर्थ की व्याख्या करते हुये हम प्रकृतिवाद के अनुसार कह सकते हैं कि "अमुक कर्म सुखोत्पादक है"। इसी प्रकार "अमुक वस्तु शुभ है" इस नैतिक निर्णय की व्याख्या करते हुये हम कह सकते हैं कि "वह वस्तु सुख की प्राप्ति में सहायक है"। इस प्रकार प्रकृतिवाद के अनुसार नैतिक निर्णयों एवं तथ्यात्मक प्राकृतिक निर्णयों में कोई मौलिक भेद नहीं होता है और हम नैतिक निर्णयों के अर्थ में कोई विशेष परिवर्तन किये बिना ही उनकी व्याख्या किसी प्राकृतिक तथ्यात्मक निर्णय के आधार पर कर सकते हैं। स्वार्थवाद, सुखवाद, उपयोगितावाद, विकासवाद, पूर्णतावाद इत्यादि नैतिक दर्शन के सिद्धान्त इसी मूल अर्थ में प्रकृतिवादी कहे जाते हैं।

इसके अतिरिक्त कुछ ऐसे संज्ञानवादी दार्शनिक भी हैं जो कि प्रकृतिवाद को पूर्णतः अस्वीकार करते हैं। इन दार्शनिकों ने नैतिक निर्णयों की व्याख्या प्रकृतिवाद से भिन्न रूप में की है, इनके सिद्धान्त को निर्प्रकृतिवाद (Non-Naturalism) कहा जाता है। इस सिद्धान्त की मूल मान्यता के अनुसार नैतिक निर्णयों की व्याख्या इन्द्रिय–अनुभव पर आधारित प्राकृतिक निर्णयों अथवा किन्हीं अन्य निर्नैतिक निर्णयों के द्वारा नहीं की जा सकती है, क्योंकि नैतिक निर्णयों का स्वरूप अन्य प्राकृतिक एवं निर्नैतिक निर्णयों से पूर्णतः भिन्न होता है। नैतिक निर्णय अपने स्वरूप में अनन्य एवं अद्वितीय होते हैं, इन्हें हम किसी भी प्रकार से अन्य प्राकृतिक निर्णयों के द्वारा परिभाषित नहीं कर सकते हैं। इन निर्णयों द्वारा न तो किसी व्यक्ति अथवा समुदाय की भावनाओं को अभिव्यक्त किया जाता है और न ही किसी प्रकार के मनोवैज्ञानिक अथवा प्राकृतिक तथ्यों का वर्णन किया जाता है। अतः नैतिक निर्णयों के संबंध में प्रकृतिवाद को स्वीकार नहीं किया जा सकता है।

नैतिक निर्णयों के संबंध में असंज्ञानवादी सिद्धान्त उपर्युक्त संज्ञानवादी दृष्टिकोण के ठीक विपरीत है। असंज्ञानवाद के अनुसार नैतिक निर्णयों का स्वरूप तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के स्वरूप से पूर्णतः भिन्न है, नैतिक कथनों एवं तथ्यात्मक कथनों की प्रकृति एवं भाषा में उनका उद्देश्य भिन्न–भिन्न होता है। भाषा में इनका प्रयोजन एवं तात्पर्य भी अलग–अलग होता है। इस प्रकार असंज्ञानवाद के अनुसार नैतिक निर्णयों एवं तथ्यात्मक निर्णयो में किसी भी प्रकार की मौलिक अथवा वाह्य समानता नहीं होती है। उनके अनुसार नैतिक निर्णयों का उद्देश्य किन्हीं तथ्यों का वर्णन करना अथवा किन्हीं तथ्यों का ज्ञान कराना नहीं होता है, और ये निर्णय मूलतः वर्णनात्मक या सूचनात्मक भी नहीं होते हैं, अपितु तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के विपरीत वक्ता इन नैतिक निर्णयों का प्रयोग अपनी भावनाओं अथवा संवेगों को अभिव्यक्त करने के लिये अथवा अन्य व्यक्तियों में इन्हीं भावनाओं को जागृत करने के लिये और उन्हें कोई कर्म करने अथवा न करने के लिये आदेश अथवा परामर्श देने के लिये करता है। यही कारण है कि इन निर्णयों को असंज्ञानवादी संवेगात्मक अथवा परामर्शात्मक कहते हैं और वर्णनात्मक या सूचनात्मक निर्णयों से इन्हें पूर्णतः पृथक् मानते हैं। यद्यपि नैतिक निर्णयों के संबंध में "संवेगात्मक शब्द का प्रयोग सर्वप्रथम सी0के0 ऑग्डन[3] ने किया था, किन्तु नैतिक निर्णयों के संवेगात्मक स्वरूप को व्यवस्थित एवं तार्किक रूप से प्रस्तुत करने का श्रेय कार्नेप एवं एयर जैसे संवेगवादियों को जाता है। असंज्ञानवाद की स्पष्ट मान्यता है कि नैतिक निर्णयों के द्वारा हमें किसी भी प्रकार का तथ्यात्मक ज्ञान प्राप्त नहीं होता है, इसीलिये तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के विपरीत इन्हें असंज्ञानात्मक निर्णय ही कहा जा सकता है। उदाहरणार्थ, जब हम कहते हैं कि "हमें दुःखी एवं असहाय लोगों की मदद करनी चाहिये" तो यहाँ इस नैतिक निर्णय से हमें किसी भी प्रकार के तथ्यात्मक ज्ञान का बोध नहीं होता है, अपितु यहाँ वक्ता अपनी एक विशिष्ट भावना को अभिव्यक्त करता है और अन्य लोगों में अपनी इसी भावना को जागृत करने का प्रयास करता है। इसके विपरीत जब हम यह कहते हैं कि "पृथ्वी गोल है" तो यहाँ हम वस्तु–तथ्य का विवरण मात्र देते हैं। नैतिक निर्णयों के विपरीत तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों में व्यक्ति की भावनाओं अथवा संवेगों का कोई स्थान नहीं होता है।

असंज्ञानवाद के अनुसार तथ्यात्मक कथनों की यह विशेषता होती है कि इनके प्रति वक्ता में एक तटस्थता का भाव होता है, जबकि नैतिक निर्णयों के सन्दर्भ में वक्ता में तटस्थता का भाव नहीं होता है। एयर का कथन है कि "किसी कथन में नैतिक शब्द की उपस्थिति उसके तथ्यात्मक अर्थ में कोई वृद्धि नहीं करती है। यदि मैं किसी से कहता हूँ कि, 'तुमने वह धन चुराकर अनुचित कार्य किया है' तो मैं इसके अतिरिक्त और कुछ नहीं कहता कि 'तुमने वह धन चुराया' यह कहकर कि 'यह कार्य अनुचित है' मैं इस कार्य के विषय में कोई और बात नहीं कह रहा हूँ। मैं इसके सम्बन्ध में अपना नैतिक अननुमोदन अभिव्यक्त कर रहा हूँ। अब यदि मैं यह कहता हूँ कि "धन चुराना अनुचित है" तो मैं एक ऐसा वाक्य कहता हूँ जिसका कोई तथ्यात्मक अर्थ नहीं है।"[4] जब हम किसी वस्तु के संबंध में तथ्यात्मक निर्णय देते हैं तो सामान्यतः हम उसके पक्ष या विपक्ष में अपनी भावनाओं को व्यक्त नहीं करते हैं। उदाहरणार्थ, जब हम कहते हैं कि "चन्द्रमा पृथ्वी की परिक्रमा करता है" तो हम इस तथ्यात्मक निर्णय के द्वारा चन्द्रमा की विशिष्ट प्राकृतिक क्रिया अथवा गति के संबंध में एक तथ्य का वर्णन मात्र करते हैं, हम किसी भी प्रकार से उक्त निर्णय के पक्ष अथवा विपक्ष में अपनी भावनाओं अथवा संवेगों को अभिव्यक्त नहीं करते हैं। इसके विपरीत जब हम कहते हैं कि "वचन भंग करना अनुचित है" तो इस नैतिक निर्णय के द्वारा हम वचन तोड़ने के कर्म के विरोध में अपना मत अथवा अपनी भावनायें स्पष्ट रूप से अभिव्यक्त करते हैं। अतः वचनभंग के कर्म के संबंध में दिया गया हमारा यह नैतिक निर्णय तटस्थ नहीं माना जा सकता है और यही बात अन्य सभी नैतिक निर्णयों के संबंध में कही जा सकती है।

असंज्ञानवाद के अनुसार नैतिक निर्णयों के अर्थ और स्वरूप के समान उनका प्रमाणीकरण भी तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के प्रमाणीकरण से भिन्न होता है। इसका कारण यह है कि नैतिक निर्णयों के समर्थन में हम ठीक उसी प्रकार के तर्कों का प्रयोग

नहीं कर सकते हैं, जिस प्रकार के तर्कों का प्रयोग हम तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों का समर्थन करने में करते हैं। इस प्रकार नैतिक निर्णयों को तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के समान मानकर हम उनके अर्थ, स्वरूप एवं प्रमाणीकरण की समुचित व्याख्या नहीं कर सकते हैं. नैतिक निर्णय तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के समान न तो वर्णनात्मक होते हैं और न ही सूचनात्मक अथवा संज्ञानात्मक। तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के संदर्भ में वक्ता में एक विशिष्ट तटस्थता का भाव होता है, जबकि नैतिक निर्णयों के सन्दर्भ में वक्ता स्पष्ट रूप से इन निर्णयों के पक्ष अथवा विपक्ष में अपनी भावनाओं को अभिव्यक्ति करता है। इसलिये नैतिक निर्णयों को वक्ता की दृष्टि से तटस्थ नहीं कहा जा सकता है। यही कारण है कि स्टीवेंसन मनोवैज्ञानिक प्रभाव संबंधी सिद्धान्त के आधार पर नैतिक भाषा के अर्थ की व्याख्या करते हैं। वे कहते हैं–"किसी शब्द के अर्थ की परिभाषा अनिवार्यतः उन व्यक्तियों की मनोवैज्ञानिक प्रतिक्रियाओं के आधार पर की जानी चाहिये जो इन शब्दों का प्रयोग करते हैं और इसे ही मनोवैज्ञानिक दृष्टि से 'अर्थ' कहा जा सकता है। अर्थ को ही शब्द का स्वभाव या गुण–धर्म माना गया है, उन व्यक्तियों को नहीं जो इन शब्दों का प्रयोग करते हैं।"[5] इस प्रकार असंज्ञानवादी सिद्धान्त के समर्थक दार्शनिकों का स्पष्ट मानना है कि नैतिक निर्णय तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों से मौलिक रूप में भिन्न होते हैं और इन दोनों प्रकार के निर्णयों से संबंधित अर्थ, स्वरूप एवं प्रमाणीकरण या औचित्यीकरण की समस्याओं का समाधान भी एक समान विधियों एवं तर्कों द्वारा संभव नहीं है।

संज्ञानवाद एवं असंज्ञानवाद के समर्थकों के बीच नैतिक निर्णयों के अर्थ, स्वरूप एवं प्रमाणीकरण जैसे मौलिक मतभेदों के अतिरिक्त, वस्तुनिष्ट एवं तथ्यपरक नैतिक ज्ञान की संभावना के सन्दर्भ में भी तीव्र मतभेद है। संज्ञानवाद के अनुसार तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के समान नैतिक निर्णय भी हमें किन्हीं तथ्यों का बोध कराते हैं, अथवा कुछ नवीन जानकारी देते हैं। अतः तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के समान ही नैतिक निर्णयों को भी सत्य अथवा असत्य कहा जा सकता है, और इसी कारण से जिस प्रकार वस्तुनिष्ठ तथ्यात्मक ज्ञान सम्भव है, उसी प्रकार तथ्यपरक नैतिक ज्ञान भी संभव है। जिस प्रकार तथ्यात्मक निर्णय हमें वस्तुनिष्ट तथ्यपरक ज्ञान देते हैं, उसी प्रकार नैतिक निर्णय भी हमें तथ्यात्मक एवं वस्तुनिष्ट नैतिक ज्ञान प्रदान करते हैं। यही कारण है कि हम तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के समान ही नैतिक निर्णयों के संदर्भ में वस्तुनिष्ट तर्कों का प्रयोग कर सकते हैं और उन्हें सत्य अथवा असत्य सिद्ध कर सकते हैं। इस प्रकार संज्ञानवादी दार्शनिक नैतिक निर्णयों के सत्य अथवा असत्य होने की संभावना को स्वीकार करते हैं।

संज्ञानवादी दार्शनिकों के उपर्युक्त मत के विपरीत असंज्ञानवादी वस्तुनिष्ठ, तथ्यपरक नैतिक ज्ञान की संभावना का खण्डन कर देते हैं। उनके अनुसार तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों से मूलतः भिन्न होने के कारण नैतिक निर्णय न तो हमें किसी प्रकार का वस्तुपरक ज्ञान प्रदान करते हैं और न ही इन निर्णयों को तथ्यात्मक निर्णयों के समान सत्य अथवा असत्य सिद्ध किया जा सकता है। एयर एवं कार्नेप जैसे संवेगवादियों ने अपने शब्दार्थ संबंधी सत्यापन सिद्धान्त के आधार पर नैतिक कथनों को निरर्थक कथन (Pseudo statement) प्रमाणित किया है। जबकि नैतिक निर्णयों की मनोवैज्ञानिक व्याख्या करते हुये स्टीवेसन नैतिक विवाद के संदर्भ में सत्यता एवं असत्यता के स्थान पर नैतिक सहमति एवं नैतिक असहमति की बात करते हैं। असंज्ञानवादियों के अनुसार चूँकि नैतिक निर्णयों को हम सत्य अथवा असत्य के रूप में प्रमाणित नहीं कर सकते इसलिये इनके सन्दर्भ में वस्तुनिष्ठ तर्क भी पूर्णतः अप्रासंगिक हो जाते हैं। अतः असंज्ञानवाद के अनुसार वस्तुनिष्ठ एवं तथ्यपरक नैतिक ज्ञान की कोई संभावना नहीं है। मूलतः संवेगात्मक अथवा परामर्शात्मक होने के कारण इन नैतिक निर्णयों के प्रमाणीकरण के लिये हम किसी भी प्रकार के वस्तुनिष्ठ तर्क प्रस्तुत नहीं कर सकते हैं। इस प्रकार असंज्ञानवादी दार्शनिक नैतिक निर्णयों की असंज्ञानात्मकता के आधार पर वस्तुनिष्ठ नैतिक ज्ञान की संभावना को पूर्णतः नकार देते हैं।

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An Alliance Beyond the Human Realm for Ecological Justice

BY/PAR SHASHI MOTILAL
Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi

ABSTRACT

This paper proposes to argue that ecological justice that is rooted in an ecocentric approach to nature is the key to achieving integral human development which goes beyond 'development that is only worth *our* while'. Ecological justice is achievable if there is a clear understanding of relations at two distinct levels - one, the relation among humans and another between the entire human community and other elements of the ecosystem. These relations are the basis of the alliances that we form to address issues of integral human development. The focus of the paper is the second kind of alliance that is based on an understanding of the relation between the human and the non-human realm. However, an 'alliance' is normally formed between partners with equal standing. Is there a sense in which both humans and the non-human world can be considered to be 'equal partners in an alliance? The paper considers how one might establish this by examining diverse philosophical viewpoints that have addressed the issue of the treatment of non-human animals for anthropocentric ends. It discusses whether equality between parties is necessary for the formation of an alliance drawing extensively from ethical theories and examples from the world. From rights approach, recipients of justice, to care ethics, several theories offer guidance to support what would constitute a 'humane' approach to non-human animals. While these approaches crucially pin the broad perspective, they have not explicitly considered the role of an alliance between humans and non-human animals in achieving a basic level of wellbeing for the latter. Taking cues from the different kinds of 'ruling over' from Stuart Gray's understanding of the relation between humans and non-human nature, the paper seeks to establish that an alliance between humans and the non-human realm is possible even without committing to their equal status and this could form the basis of ecological justice and well-being.

Keywords: environmental justice, integral human development, ecological justice, alliance beyond the human realm, ruling over nature

RESUME

Cet article défend l'idée que la justice écologique enracinée dans une approche écocentrique de la nature est la clé du développement humain intégral et dépasse le "développement qui ne vaut que pour nous". La justice écologique est réalisable s'il existe une compréhension claire des relations à deux niveaux distincts - l'un, la relation entre les humains et l'autre entre la communauté humaine tout entière et les autres éléments de l'écosystème. Ces relations constituent la base des alliances que nous formons pour résoudre les problèmes de développement humain intégral. Cet article est axé sur le deuxième type d'alliance qui repose sur la compréhension de la relation entre le monde humain et le monde non humain. Cependant, une alliance est normalement formée entre des partenaires de rang égal. Y a-t-il un sens dans lequel les humains et le monde non humain peuvent être considérés comme des partenaires égaux dans une alliance? L'article examine comment on pourrait établir cela en examinant divers points de vue philosophiques qui ont développé la question du traitement des animaux non humains à des fins anthropocentriques. Il aborde la question de savoir si l'égalité entre les parties est nécessaire à la formation d'une alliance reposant largement sur des théories éthiques et des exemples. De l'approche fondée sur les droits, en passant par l'éthique du care, plusieurs théories offrent des indications pour soutenir ce qui constituerait une approche humaine des animaux non humains. Bien que ces approches épousent de manière cruciale la perspective large, elles n'ont pas explicitement envisagé le rôle d'une alliance entre humains et animaux non humains dans l'atteinte d'un niveau de base de bien-être pour ces derniers. S'inspirant des différents types de décisions développées par Stuart Gray de la relation entre l'homme et la nature non humaine, l'article cherche à établir qu'une alliance entre l'homme et le monde non humain est possible, même sans s'engager à égalité de statut et cela pourrait constituer la base de la justice écologique et du bien-être.

Mots-clés : Justice environnementale, développement humain intégral, justice écologique, alliance au-delà du domaine humain, domination de la nature
JEL Classification: I39

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1. INTRODUCTION

The paper begins with an assumption that human development is desirable in a very innocuous sense.[1] Further, the paper also assumes that only that development is desirable which is fair, making it what Peter Penz (et. al) (2011) have termed as 'worthwhile development' in the light of the seven parameters mentioned by them. If we sum up the values that Penz (et. al) list as parameters of 'worthwhile development' then it would not be an exaggeration to say that a society that aims for 'worthwhile development' in their sense, would also end up being a more environmentally 'just' society. But what do we understand by 'environmental justice in the first place? Is it all about conserving the environment even at the cost of harm to human welfare - the agenda of the 'environmental fascists and misanthropic biocentrist'?[2] Shrader-Frechette terms this approach environmentalism as against environmental justice (or injustice) which she understands in the context of distributive and participative justice (or injustice). In her words, "Environmental justice requires both a more equitable distribution of environmental goods and bads and greater public participation in evaluating and apportioning these goods and bads." (2002:6). She also claims that "protection for people and the planet go hand in hand" (2002: 5) and that the two movements - environmentalism and environmental justice are "different sides of the same coin" (2002:6) such that a fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of using natural resources would at the same time result in greater protection for the environment.

Environmental justice understood in this sense is an anthropocentric understanding of justice that concerns itself predominantly with injustices caused by discriminatory practices of distribution and participation based on race, class, ethnicity, gender, or age. Important as this aspect of social justice is, it does not address the issues of the injustices and harm that we, the human community, cause or can cause to the environment (including animals and future generations) in our aspiration for development. In order to focus on this aspect of justice we need to go beyond Shrader-Frechette's understanding of environmental justice and think of ecological justice which is based on the idea that each element of the ecosystem is regarded as equally important for the sustenance and well-being of the entire ecosystem. Ecological justice is "necessary for integral human development – the economic, political, social and spiritual well-being of every person...Ecological justice celebrates the interconnection and interdependence of all beings, and recognizes our human responsibility to coexist in harmony for the well-being of the Earth community. Ecological justice promotes human dignity, the self-determination of all persons, and the development of sustainable economies with justice for all within a finite world."[3].

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[1]Though, what would count as 'development' for humans, its scope and extent is undoubtedly a contestable subject especially in the face of an onslaught from the anti-development lobby.

[2] Shrader-Frechette (2002) refers to the views of environmentalists like Dave Foreman, J. B. Calicott, Garrett Hardin and Paul Taylor whom she calls 'environmental fascists and misanthropic biocentrist'.

[3] devpeace_backgrounder_2011-2016_ecological_justice.pdf
https://www.devp.org/sites/www.devp.org/files/documents/materials/devpeace_backgrounder_2011-2016_ecological_justice.pdf

This paper proposes to argue that ecological justice that is rooted in an ecocentric approach to nature is the key to achieving integral human development which goes beyond 'development that is only worth *our* while'. Ecological justice is achievable if there is a clear understanding of relations at two distinct levels - one the relation among humans and another between the entire human community and other elements of the ecosystem. These relations are the basis of the alliances that we form to address issues of human development and how they impact humans (both of the present and future generation) as well as the environment in general. However, when one talks of 'alliances' the more common form of alliance that comes to mind is that between international human agencies and organizations belonging to sovereign states all of which get together to address one or more global issue. Important as they are, the alliances amongst human communities must also extend beyond the human realm to the non-human realm; between humans and the non-human animal world as well as the natural environment in general, specially when we address issues like human - animal conflict, extinction of rare species of flora and fauna, and animals as well as human and environmental calamities caused by climate change. The paper argues for a non-anthropocentric alliance between the human and the non-human realm in addition to the alliance among human communities to achieve the same purpose of ecological well-being and ecological justice. It also attempts to show that the second kind of alliance (between human and the non-human realm) is the basis of the first - that between international organisations.[4]

In considering the alliance beyond the human realm, interesting philosophical issues arise. For example, in the first kind of alliance, i.e., among humans, every allying member is supposedly an equal partner and purportedly gains from the alliance, whereas in the second kind, the alliance beyond the human realm, the gain is one-sided. It is true that when the allying partners are more 'equal' we can expect more justice to all stakeholders; when they are not, injustices may result. So this raises the question - 'Is there a sense in which both humans and the non-human world can be considered to be 'equal partners in an alliance'? - a presumption that would be implied by any ecocentric conception of justice. But again, must an alliance always be amongst equals in order for it to be fair thereby promoting justice? These two questions will be taken up in the concluding part of the paper based on the deliberations through the paper. For this purpose, I draw upon the views of both western and non-western philosophers, ancient and modern, to put forth the idea of an alliance that goes beyond the human realm. The aim is to understand the nature of the alliance beyond the human realm that will protect the interests of both humans and the environment and help to achieve ecological well being and ecological justice

[4] In this paper, I am not looking at the political alliances amongst sovereign states and international organizations to save the earth from climate change disasters and environmental degradation, for example; these may be important but what is more fundamental is the understanding, the eco-dialogue that human communities can have to understand the alliance between the human and the non-human realm.

1. ANIMAL 'RIGHTS' AND 'NEEDS': AN ANTHROPOCENTRIC APPROACH TO JUSTICE

In the traditional western discourse on the relation between humans and non-human nature, starting from Aristotle to Kant, and the rationalists in general, the overriding sentiment was that all human beings are equal in their 'humanity' by virtue of their rational nature. Further, being human was the quality that accounted for the moral status of humans distinguishing them from amoral non-human animals. Being human was also the basis for 'human rights' which served as effective means of bringing about social justice. On the other hand, non-human animals and nature in general was treated merely as an instrument of human use and need, bereft of any moral status and of rights. This attitude resulted in growing injustices towards animals and degradation of nature at large. Philosophers like Peter Singer (1999) and Tom Regan (1999) are, perhaps, the first philosophers in recent times to have argued for the rights of animals thereby attributing equal status to both human and non-human animals in a very basic sense. The difference amongst most philosophers who are willing to ascribe some rights to animals is regarding the question - where should one draw the moral boundary and on what grounds? Whereas Regan champions animal rights based on a rights theory, Singer's approach for the moral considerability of animals is utilitarian and based on the principle of equal consideration of interests. For Singer, 'sentience' (experience) is the limit beyond which rights cannot be conceptually granted to elements of nature and he is hesitant to extend rights to vegetative life, because in his opinion there is not enough evidence to suggest that trees or ecosystems possess consciousness.

Though one may grant that extending the concept of rights to animals has brought about a sea change in our treatment of animals, the concept of 'rights' and the co-relative notion of duties that humans owe to animals (if there are any), are philosophically loaded concepts for one to resolve the issue in any simple way. Criticising the rights approach, Ted Benton (1993) remarks,

> "... the case for attributing rights to non-human animals faces severe intellectual obstacles, their 'neediness' as natural beings is a feature shared with human animals. Moreover, a needs-based view of justice has the further advantage of extending the scope of cross-species moral concern beyond the narrow circle of species whose individuals satisfy [Tom] Regan's subject-of-life criterion. Need understood in terms of conditions necessary for living-well or flourishing is a concept applicable not only to all animal species,but to plant-life as well" (Benton 1993: 212).

According to Benton, human and non-human animals have the same needs which makes them equal in a very basic sense. Emphasizing another aspect of naturalism Benton says,"One aspect of human embodiment - our requirement for food- engages us in social relations and practices which inescapably include animals: as partners in human labour, as objects of labour, and of consumption, as well as competitors for habitats and common sources of food" (1993: 18). He further adds that "[I]f animal husbandry is tolerable at all, these considerations tell in favour of husbandry regimes which preserve opportunities for animals to establish and maintain the broad patterns of social life which are peculiar to their species. Where physical and psychological development requires more-or-less prolonged relationships between juvenile animals and adults, conditions for these relationships need to

be provided" (1993:172). This approach to animals emphasizes the fact that human lifestyles need to change to the extent where any 'over indulgence' on the part of humans would cause harm to the wellbeing of animals on whom we are dependent in numerous ways. The well-being of animals becomes important but only insofar as humans are dependent on animals not so much for their own sake. Although such an attitude towards animals would help in bringing about desirable results, it is still a very anthropocentric approach.

Andrew Dobson (1998) talks of how one may consider humans and animals to be equal. He distinguishes between 'dispensers of justice' and 'recipients of justice' in the context of a theory of distributive justice and argues that animals (as well as future generations of people) may not be dispensers of justice but they can be said to be recipients of justice (1998: 65). If it is in the interest of an animal to strive for its well-being (even if limited to basic needs and the instinctive behaviour of survival) it is still a recipient of justice. It follows that if certain human actions can cause harm to this striving to live "well" then these actions would count as being unjust to the animal. There have been many instances where aspirations for human development have harmed the wellbeing of animals, for example, the case where the Atomic Energy Commission of USA had conducted two atomic bomb tests in Canada in 1953 which resulted in the death of hundreds of sheep that were the victims of the nuclear fallout. (Shrader-Frechette , 2002: 189). This is clearly a case of injustice caused to animals on account of humans. As an entity that can be a recipient of justice, it would be wrong/ unjust on the part of humans to inflict harm to it. In this innocuous sense of 'recipients of justice' we can avoid the controversies about rights claims, duties, obligation, etc. and simply say that both humans and animals need to be treated equally justly since both have an interest in their own well-being - both are recipients of justice, though humans are also dispensers of justice.

The notion of justice that comes across for the non-human world when we adopt the rights, or needs approach to understand the relation between the human and non-human world is anthropocentric as is evident from the fact that the animal rights activists draw boundaries of moral considerability leaving out non-sentient beings and the needs approach also rests on the utility value of animals for fulfilling human needs of food, labour etc. Dobson's 'recipients of justice' status to animals as well as humans, fails to specify how the interests of humans (both of the present and future generation) stack up against the interests of animals when these are in conflict. Though Dobson does give an elaborate account of the priorities, the basis of those priorities is not clear (Dobson 1998 : 33-61). It is the care ethics approach which goes beyond anthropocentrism and appeals to the notion of ecological justice to understand better the relation between the two realms. This is also to be found in many non-western cultures both ancient and modern.

3. DIMENSIONS OF CARE : MOVING TOWARDS AN ECOCENTRIC APPROACH TO JUSTICE

Val Plumwood (1999), a staunch believer of ecocentrism and a relentless critic of anthropocentrism talks of alliances between human and nature. Criticising ethicists (including Singer), who have drawn moral boundaries that distinguish humans as rights holders from the 'others' that cannot be ascribed rights, Plumwood is of the view that drawing a moral boundary creates power relations which treat those beyond the moral boundary only instrumentally. She argues that rather than extending the boundary to include

some animals we should stop thinking in terms of boundaries since it creates polarities in an 'all-or-nothing' way. Arguing for a 'care ethic' approach, Plumwood says that care "can be applied to humans and also to non-human animals and nature more generally" and further that "ethically relevant qualities such as mind, communication, consciousness and sensitivity to others are organized in multiple and diverse ways across life forms that do not correspond to the all-or-nothing scenarios assumed by moral dualism" (1999: 191). In her opinion, the "rationalistic economic calculus which divorces 'rational' and 'efficient' political and economic life from care, compassion, social and ecological responsibility is the ultimate modern expression of the West's ancient rationalist opposition between reason and emotion, male and female, culture and nature, in which it has now ensnared the entire globe and all its species" (1999:206).

The care ethic approach to the human and non-human world has always been the hallmark of most non-western ancient philosophies like Buddhism, Confucianism and Hinduism to mention a few. The idea of '*vasudhaiva kutumbakam*'(the idea of the entire ecosystem as a 'family' where each member is to be treated with mutual respect, care and recognition) pervades the entire ancient Indian philosophical tradition, barring the materialist Carvaka philosophy. The same idea can be drawn from the macro and microcosm view about the world expressed in the phrase - *yathā pinḍe, tathā brahmānḍe* (the macrocosm is a organic whole like the microcosm) - a pervasive thought common to Hindu philosophy. Interestingly one could argue for the same cordial relation from the point of view of Buddhist metaphysics and ethics also. If the theory of 'kamma'(action) and rebirth as propounded by Buddhism is to be believed, and if one's actions in the present life determine what 'species status' one would have in subsequent births in order to bear out the fruits of past actions, it is in the self-interest of a person to do good deeds, including treating nature (animals) with compassion (karuna). Such a 'holistic' approach to the relation between humans and the cosmic world, seeped in metaphysical views transcending species and boundaries of the present generation of humans and animals expresses a ecocentric conception of both well-being and justice.

The writings of Vandana Shiva have also emphasized the importance of conceiving the human and non-human world in the light of ethical teachings from ancient Indian philosophy. In her book *Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in an Age of Climate Crisis* (2008), Shiva has emphasized the "ecological path of living with justice and sustainability". Citing ancient Indian philosophical sources, she maintains that "right living" consists in following "dharma" which can be construed as the bridge between resources (artha) and human needs (kama) and which secures the balance between the two. Dharma is also regarded as the all-pervading principle of social and moral order in Indian philosophy. In Shiva's view, the global economy has created an "ecological imbalance" due to a conflict between "economic laws" on the one hand and "ecological laws" and "social laws" on the other. This imbalance has also led to a non-sustainable paradigm of equity where everyone has an equal right to pollute and deplete earth's resources whereas what we need is a sustainable paradigm of equity which recognizes the equal responsibility not to do that. Shiva discusses the concept of 'Earth Democracy' and states, "Earth Democracy begins and ends with Gaia's laws - the law of renewability, the law of conservation, the law of entropy, the law of diversity. In Earth Democracy, all beings and all peoples are equal, and all beings

and all communities have rights to the resources of the earth for their sustenance."[5] This is yet another sense in which one can conceive of the equality of human and non-human elements of nature thereby facilitating a more just and fair ecological order.

However, even if humans and the non-human world are not equals, one can envisage a relation between them based on the sentiments of care and obligations ensuing from the power equation between them. Amartya Sen (2010) drawing from the teachings of Gautam Buddha in the *Sutta-Nipata*[6] discusses the asymmetrical relation between humans and nature and emphasizes the obligations of power or privilege that ensue from it. Where one party is more 'powerful' there is more responsibility on that party to fulfill the obligations it owes by virtue of the power/privileges it enjoys. Buddha argues that "since we are enormously more powerful than other species, we have some responsibility towards other species that connects exactly with this asymmetry of power". (as quoted in Sen 2010: 205) The argument can be stated as follows: "if some action that can be freely undertaken is open to a person (thereby making it feasible), and if the person assesses that undertaking of that action will create a more just situation in the world (thereby making it justice-enhancing), then that is argument enough for the person to consider seriously what he or she should do in view of these recognitions"(Sen 2010: 206). The argument reinforces Dobson's view that as the exclusive dispensers of justice, human beings have obligations towards non-human nature to treat it with justice too. An argument along similar lines can also be offered towards an equitable solution to the issue of climate justice with regard to allocation of future carbon credits to developed and developing nations. If developed countries are in a position of taking actions (making lifestyle changes) because of their more powerful/privileged position then a policy decision (settling for fewer carbon credits) on their part would enable a more just situation globally. They would be fulfilling greater responsibility because of their greater ability to respond to that situation. The concept of human moral obligation (the obligations that humans have towards themselves as well as other non-human elements of nature) is a powerful concept that can be exploited to establish an amicable relation among humans and between human and non-human elements of nature. (Motilal 2015: 1-24)

In recent times, there has been a significant revival of some indigenous approaches to the human-nature relationship in Latin America that have impacted the public policy and developmental agenda of countries like Ecuador and Bolivia, among others. Two bionomic concepts prevail in this new approach - *Pachmama* (a holistic notion of the world) and *sumak kawsay* (equivalent to that of wellbeing, or even the Ideal/ Good Life).

The Pachmama[7]

According to Ronel Alberti da Rosa (2015), the new Latin American national constitutions made a paradigm shift from the rights of the homo econimicus of the period of Industrial

[5] Quote is from an Excerpt from Shiva (2008) in *Alternatives Journal*, 35:3, 2009. p.22

[6] Reference found in Amartya Sen (2010) footnote 6 in Chapter 9: Plurality of Impartial Reasons. Footnote 6: The classic English translation of *Sutta Nipata* can be found in F.Max Muller (ed.), *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol.X, Part II, *The Sutta-Nipata*: *A Collection of Discourses*, translated by V. Fausboll (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881). A later translation is *The Sutta-Nipata*, translated by H. Saddhatissa (London: Curzon Press, 1985)

[7] The word comes from the extinct kolla language spoken in the Inca Empire.

Revolution to a new paradigm that "tries to mediate the coexistence of three players that interact and establish a sort of moral pyramid: rational animals, irrational animals and the *Pachmama*." (2015: 77) He further says, " The Pachmama, as a kind of indigenous pantheist being, includes humans, their culture and science and all elements of the natural world, i.e., the non-rational world. The Pachmama has the role of regulating the communal life of cultural as well as non-cultural elements." (ibid.)

Sumak Kawsay[8]

The concept of Sumak Kawsay or Good Life has been widely discussed as an alternative to capitalist development and the possible principle of a new way of understanding the economy. It heralded a "new paradigm of development for Latin America" (Ramírez 2010: 5 as mentioned in Altmann 2014: 82) or a "biocentric turn" (Hernández 2009: 62 as mentioned in Altmann 2014: 82). Good Life was understood as "Living mostly in harmony and equilibration with one self, with the community and with the cosmos" (GTZ 2002: 24 as mentioned in Altmann 2014: 86) - a thought that resonates well with the idea of 'vasudhaiv kutumbakam'. "Good life means a way of living that tries to adapt to its environment. It refers to a reconstruction of indigenous principles, adopting them to actual and future realities but always based on the local community and its autonomy" (Viteri 2002: 5 as mentioned in Altmann 2014: 87). According to Altmann, "the Good Life as a central concept amongst others makes ecological aspects of the economy an important matter and provides a conceptual weapon to fight not only exploitation and oppression, but also a way of life that does not allow a harmony inside society and between society and nature" (2014: 91).

4. LIVING IN HARMONY WITH & LIVING IN HARMONY FOR

In understanding the relation that underlies the nature of the alliance between human and the nonhuman world one can draw useful insights from the work of Stuart Gray (2017), who has looked at this relation from the lens of cross-cultural interconnectedness. He is of the view that we need to "identify traditions and vocabularies that can provide broader historical and cultural perspective and thus leverage, for critical dialogue on issues of shared concern across national boundaries" (2017: 223). This is important since 'dialogue' is the basic foundation of an 'alliance' among humans and cross-cultural ecological dialogue can surely form the starting point on which sovereign states can enter into alliances to save the planet.

In Gray's view, the traditional understanding of the relation between human and nonhuman nature is that of ruling over - where humans rule over nature. The human-centric understanding of ruling is ruling over nonhuman nature and ruling with human elements, neglecting what he calls the "connectedness of rule that fundamentally links human and nonhuman interests". Explaining this connectedness he talks of a polycentric polytemporal conception of the self where one's "identity is intertwined with the geographic location in which one lives, the region's climate, loved ones, workplace and co-workers, pets, garden,

[8] In Ronel Alberti da Rosa's view, the eudaemonic analogue to the concept of the Good Life can be found in the form of sumak kawsay in the Quechua language, and other forms among several indigenous cultures of Latin America.

electronic devices, and so on". He talks of the "co-constitutive nature of polycentric identity and the multi-dimensionality of the world in which we are porosly embedded".[9]

Gray distinguishes four aspects of ruling which are:

1. Ruling over (the traditional relation between human and nature where the latter is only an instrument of use)
2. Ruling with (alliances amongst humans based on democratic principles)
3. Ruling for (where the ruler rules for all not just for human beings a form of panocracy)
4. Ruling in a broader network of human and non-human nature.

The relation of 'ruling' in this expanded sense (including ruling-with, ruling-for and ruling-in the interest of nonhuman nature) is opposed to the merely 'instrumental' use made by the ruling-over paradigm. Nevertheless, it still remains an anthropocentric approach since it relies on the idea of rule and rulers and only humans can be rulers. Perhaps a better way to understand the relation among humans, and that between humans and nature (and thereby the alliances based on these relations), is to define them in terms of the idea of 'living in harmony' - 'living in harmony with' and 'living for the harmony of'. 'Living in harmony' is the essential idea in the various non-anthropocentric approaches to justice that were outlined in the paper and it is at the core of ecological justice. Thus, we have to do away with the concept of 'ruling over' and replace it with the concept of 'living in harmony with other humans', and 'living for the harmony of the ecosystem'. The first will ensure harmony amongst human communities in achieving social justice in all its forms (including environmental justice as understood by Shrader -Frechette) and the second will protect the entire ecosystem of which humans are a part. Both these aspects of justice are captured in the idea of 'ecological justice' as defined earlier.

Aspiring for ecological justice is not an attitude of anti-development. It seeks to understand human development as integral and sustainable human development where sustainable is understood as sustainable for the harmonious existence of the entire ecosystem and not merely the existence of the human race. Human development must be evaluated by this parameter and not merely by an anthropocentric notion of justice.

5. CONCLUSION

It appears that it is the relationship between humans and nature that really defines the nature of the alliance between the two. But, in such an alliance, there is no room for ruling over nature. It is precisely for this reason that we may legitimately call this an 'alliance' where the allying partners are 'equal' in all the senses that were culled from the western and non-western approaches to the relation between humans and non-human elements of nature. It is

[9] Raimundo Pannikar expresses the same sentiment when he says,"The individual is just an abstraction, i.e., a selection of a few aspects of the person for practical purposes. My *person,* on the other hand, is also in "my" parents, children, friends, foes, ancestors and successors. "My" person is also in "my" ideas and feelings and in "my" belongings." (1982: 90)

not a contract to be fulfilled by terms and conditions to which all parties agree. It is an understanding that humans have about the interconnectedness and continuum between humans and other elements of nature. It is a sense of 'our being with nature' which is pervasive in nature. And this sense is not necessarily a conscious awareness of our need for nature and to live with nature, rather it is our sense of wanting to live in harmony with nature. It is our response-ability (our ability to respond) that connects with nature for our own sake as well as for its sake.

But, again to press the point about 'alliances' a bit more, one can argue that even if the allying partners are not equal there may still be an alliance between them. More often it is their mutual interest in a higher goal to be achieved through that alliance that brings them together, albeit all parties in the alliance are aware and desire the goal to be achieved. This would be characteristic of the alliance among humans in diverse societies/ sovereign states that would be needed to solve global environmental problems like climate justice. Such an alliance is formal and to be maintained or 'played by the rules of the game'. However, as Sen has remarked "[M]utual benefit, based on symmetry and reciprocity, is not the only foundation for thinking about reasonable behaviour towards others. Having effective power and the obligations that can follow unidirectionally from it can also be an important basis for impartial reasoning, going well beyond the motivation of mutual benefits." (Sen 2010: 207) The 'alliance beyond the human realm' is to be understood in this sense where even if the allying partners are not equal, considerations of care, justice, respect and rights of nature can all constitute 'reasonable behaviour' and 'impartial reasoning' vis-a-vis nature. In this respect, our ways could be different but our goal is the same - A World United for Ecological Justice!

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A Semantic Reading of Quantum Gravity

Enakshi Ray Mitra

The programme of giving a linguistic turn to the theory of quantum gravity is worked out in the following phases. First I propose an analogy of the two ingredient theories of quantum gravity — quantum theory and general relativity — respectively with two standard theories in philosophy of language — logical atomism and conceptual relativism. The philosophical task of synthesizing these two mutually incompatible theories of meaning will then stand in comparison with the physicist's goal of resolving the conflict between quantum interaction and gravitational interaction under a single framework, i.e. the theory of quantum gravity. Once this analogy is convincingly established I go on to show that both the sets of ingredient theories in physics and in philosophy suffer from a basic foundationalist error — the error of externalizing the foundation from the founded and yet pretending to extract one from the other. These errors that seem to transit from the theories of matter to theories of meaning — and vice versa — will be seen to invalidate the synthesizing programmes in both areas.

The final upshot of this paper will be to move beyond the mere analogy between matter and meaning, and reread the physicist's engagement with quanta, space, time, matter, number, gravity, inertia, etc. as semantic engagement with these words. These engagements turn out to be metanarratives lacking a reference to reality. Borrowing insights from later Wittgenstein I shall argue that the ontological perplexities regarding space and time in quantum gravity can best be solved by recasting the theory in terms of language games — here our foundationless uses and practices break, bend and blend space-time into objects and their interrelations.[1]

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[1] For my overall comprehension of the physical and philosophical dimensions of quantum gravity I have relied heavily on Weinstein and Rickles, 2019, "Quantum Gravity". To some extent I have also relied on Rovelli, 2008, "Quantum Gravity", p. 7117. Some details of the philosophical niceties have been gathered from the following papers: Rickles, 2008, "Quantum Gravity": A Primer for Philosophers"; Butterfield and Isham, 1999, "Spacetime and the Philosophical Challenge for Quantum Gravity". I am also substantially indebted to Polkinghome, 2002, *Quantum Theory*.

The Incompatibilities between Quantum Theory and General Relativity

Matter in classical quantum theory is said to be composed of particles bound together by an exchange of strong, weak and electromagnetic forces — of atomic or subatomic magnitudes. Gravity deals with magnitudes of higher order that are not addressed in the kinds of interactions treated in the standard models of quantum physics. To speak in an extremely informal way, quantum field conceives an object in terms of discontinuous fragments or quanta, but to achieve this internal fragmentation it has to preserve the object in a smooth and neat outline. The position and velocity of the internal particles of an object are constantly subject to fluctuation, but these fluctuations have to be defined against a fixed background of space-time. On the other hand, as the general theory of relativity reduces gravity to space-time curvature, it no longer made sense to speak of the gravitational field as propagating *in* a smooth space-time background. As space-time stretches out in an elastic field, as the outer background loses its definite boundary, the internal content of the objects themselves have to have a smooth neighbourhood, resisting quantum fluctuation or fragmentation. Further, in general relativity the quantities like *strength*, *direction* of various fields, and the *position*s, *velocitie*s of particles have definite values that are represented by tensor fields and sets of real numbers (as opposed to imaginary or complex numbers) associated with each space-time point. But in quantum theory these physical quantities do not in general have definite values — for according to this theory if one attempts to specify the position of an electron one loses accuracy of its momentum. Any attempt to increase the specificity of one property (say position, electrical field, etc.) leads to decreased specificity of other properties (momentum, magnetic field, etc.). This basic point of Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle was explicitly rejected by the general theory of relativity. Noting that $\hbar$ is the Planck constant that governs the scale of the quantum effects and G is the Newton constant that governs the strength of the gravitational force, the simplest symbolic expression of this conflict comes in the shape of a correspondence principle: When $\hbar \rightarrow 0$ (i.e. when quantum effects can be neglected) then we have classical general relativity — bereft of any fluctuation resulting from uncertainty relations. When $G \rightarrow 0$ (general relativistic effects can be neglected) then we have standard quantum field theory — free from any deviation from a fixed and flat space-time geometry. (Of course, one has to add the proviso $C \rightarrow 0$, i.e. the velocities being much lower than C (speed of light).)

Now quantum gravity undertakes the programme of unifying gravitational force with the forces of matter and nature — and thereby to bring all forces and

descriptions under a single frame of explanation. But to do that the gravitational field has to be quantized, for which one needs to have a flat background — and that is patently ruled out in general relativity.

Incompatibility between Logical Atomism and Conceptual Relativism: A Semantic Analogue

Pending further details of this synthesizing programme of quantum gravity let me try to construct a semantic analogue of this complex scenario. Corresponding to the minuscule quanta that constitute the electromagnetic field of an object — we have Russell's logical atoms combining into atomic facts; and corresponding to the macroscopic objects undergoing gravitational influence we have the smooth, homogeneous and continuous material substance that is constructed out of these logical atoms and atomic facts. Like the theories of quantum gravity Russell also sought to achieve a synthesis between the unanalysed picture of the world and its anatomized or atomized version. What we are actually acquainted with are sense-data situated in private spaces — which are subsequently correlated with an overarching and public space-time. Our definite descriptions like "this table", "that chair" or even a more complex phrase like "the world consisting of external objects" fail to come into any touch with reality — for there is no such smooth or homogeneous substance answering to these descriptions. Such purported referents actually hide an explosive content of atomic facts within themselves — which in turn are configured out of numerous particulars or logical atoms. This apparent smoothness in outlines virtually obfuscates the discrete and fragmented character of both matter and meaning. Matter assumes the shape of homogeneous and continuous lumps[2] — all of which together constitute the smooth but curved geometry of space-time — or the gravitational field of special relativity. But when we analyse our cognition of these lumpy inflations the electromagnetic or non-gravitational field of the objects — constituted of internal granules — comes into purview.[3]

Russell did not read any incompatibility between the granular structure of matter and meaning on the one hand, and this structure itself as constituting the curved elasticity of space-time on the other. Insofar as the quanta are subjected to numerical formulation in a precise conceptual framework — they cannot be

[2] I have had to use the word "lump" in many other contexts, having contrary connotations.

[3] For the account of logical atomism I have used Russell, 1994, "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism" and also Russell, 1963, "The Relation of Sense-data to Physics". For a preliminary exposition of the analogy between quantum theory and logical atomism I have chosen Russell's version of logical atomism and not the one of early Wittgenstein. However a fuller discussion of probability spaces of quantum theory will have to refer back to the Tractarean theory of possible world as its analogue. See Wittgenstein, 1974, *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*.

reduced to the preconceptual particulars of logical atomism. But an analogy is not an identity, and to carry it forward, I will have to present Russell's logical atomism as being incompatible not with general relativity, but with conceptual relativism, which I project as a semantic counterpart of the latter. Conceptual relativism — of the standard Quinean version — will have to say that Russell cannot reduce the meaning of a sentence, taken in isolation, into a combination of logically proper names, each of which purportedly refers to a pre-interpretive logical atom. What seems to be an insular sentence meaning is always situated in, and thereby penetrated by, an entire web of beliefs that belongs to our scientific and cultural heritage. The putatively neat outline of a sentence meaning, and thus the putative simplicity of the logical atoms, get dissolved in a whole — a whole that is ever-changing and ever-expanding. Logical atomism needed a neat outline of objects and thus a neat boundary defining the collection of atomic facts, to enable an exhaustive hair-splitting of its internal content. Conceptual relativism — in order to dissolve the simplicity of the logical atoms in the light of the ever-expanding whole — effectively smoothed out the jagged fragmentation of separate facts and objects in terms of a continuity. Thus conceptual relativism worked in a direction that is interestingly opposed to that of logical atomism — it destabilized the outer boundary of beliefs and stabilized the discontinued fragmentation of the inner boundaries — simply by penetrating the inner with the outer.

Can I now persuade my readers to a stronger appreciation of the analogy between conceptual relativism and general relativity? Meaning essentialism will attempt to ground all language usages — whether normal or deviant — on pre-given essences, whether in the shape of universals, or logical atoms, invested with a logical (essential) space of permissible combinations. It is within this space that all deviations from essences take place as external relations or interactions between objects. In the Newtonian scheme too matter is invested with an essence — i.e. inertia — whereby it remains at rest or in uniform motion in the same straight line — unless acted upon by some external force. It is gravity that comes as the external force to deflect a body from its essential path — under some specific determinations of mass and distance. Both the inertial mass and the essential behaviour of matter as well as its gravitational mass and accidental behaviour are *contained in* the single absolute space, and it is through a colossal distance *in* space that the mass of a body brings gravitational disturbances in another body. Einstein recast the gravitational field itself as space-time curvature and not as propagating in an external space, thus synthesizing inertial mass with gravitational mass, or essence with accident. Conceptual relativism also exposes logical atoms not as contained *in* a logical space where all normal and weird combinations of meaning obtain; rather the

supposedly insular content of each logical atom is shown to spread out into a vast expanse — an expanse that is indefinite, continuous and elastic — and can by no means be determined a priori as the logical space of pre-semantic atoms. One can say that both these theories of physics and philosophy merge essence and accident, and both of them achieve this by fluidizing the inner fragments of meaning and matter by an interpenetration of the inner and the outer.

The compelling ground for recasting meaning into a combination of discrete logical atoms and also that of reconstructing matter in terms of discontinuous quanta can be more profitably compared by drawing new routes of analogy. In normal condition or what is technically called "low energies" with reasonably "low frequencies of radiation", matter can afford to persist in the shape of a homogeneous lump, but with high energies applied to the special case of a black body — that absorbs and re-emits all radiations — the situation is appreciably different. The bulk behaviour of the black body, i.e. its overall pressure, temperature, volume, etc. cannot be settled by the standard principles of statistical physics. According to the latter the question as to how the radiative energy is distributed among different frequencies will have to be calculated simply on the basis of the temperature of the body, independent of any details about its structure. But if the input of initial energy is fixed on the single variable of temperature (devoid of the frequency factor), then each possible way a radiation can wave will receive the same fixed amount of energy, yielding an absurd result — termed as "ultraviolet catastrophe". The catastrophe consists in the hypothetical situation that if there is no control on the proportionate increase in frequency and energy, the highest frequencies will be piling up an infinite amount of energy and be running away with that. To handle the absurdity of this prediction Max Planck recast the prevalent picture of classical physics that conceived matter in terms of a continuous radiation pattern. He suggested that radiation was emitted and absorbed from time to time in discontinuous packets of energy of definite sizes — called "quanta". The energy content of each quantum was proportional to the frequency of radiation, and it is this proportionality that constitutes the ultimate unit of behaviour of all the material bodies.[4] Here I suggest that the same kind of scenario arises in the sphere of cognition and meaning — when the same table is looked at from a maximally differentiated number of perspectives — by placing a subject in every possible point, i.e. points *around* the table, *over* the table, *under* the table. What we will have are contrary shapes, sizes, colours; so that the table itself — under the enormously high frequency of contrary attributes in the same locus — will vanish into nothing. To bring back the table into existence it has to be recast in a multitude of disconnected sense data — all real and physical.

[4] Polkinghome, 2002, op. cit., pp. 6-8.

To press this thought adventure a bit further, we can project not only the material substance, but the ego or the singular I as the semantic analogue of the black body, which like the latter, absorbs all representations in order to recede behind them — as the ultimate unrepresented subject. Loaded with a progressively increasing mass of representations the subject also disappears into nothing. We have actually witnessed this disappearance in the philosophies of Berkeley and Hume. To bring back the table and the subject seeing the table, we have to dissipate their supposed substantiality and continuity in terms of discrete fragments or logical atoms. [5]

A Problem in the Analogy between Quantum Theory and Logical Atomism

Before I go any further we must note a major discrepancy in this analogy. For Russell the unanalysed lumps of language have to be dissected into pre-semantic simple symbols (logically proper names) with the precise goal of outgrowing all possible indeterminacies in meaning and errors in cognition. But the particles in quantum physics are patently indeterminate in character — any attempt of measurement causes a collapse in their wave packets. Faced with the force of the Uncertainty Principle the logical atomist will no doubt say that any predicative judgement that purports to chart out the distortive mechanism in the wave packets falls back upon pre-predicative units — the logical atoms — which are categorially different from the physical quanta. Thus this analogy sought to be drawn between Russell's logical atomism and quantum physics is a fundamental category error.

Apparently there is considerable strength in this objection, and yet I would like to pursue the proposed analogy on two counts. First, as we shall see, it would bring pressure on Russell's logical atomism by problematizing the purportedly pre-interpretive character of these logical atoms. The critique of logical atomism basically shows that any effort to dissect meaning into simple pre-semantic units presupposes a particular mode of analysis or interpretation that invalidates the very ideal of absolute simplicity or absolute complexity — very much like the subject's act of measuring the elementary particles integrating with their quantitative identity to shape up an indissoluble whole. Quine availed this inherent indeterminacy of the nature of quantum particles to displace the Law of Excluded Middle, from its status

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[5] When we speak of the *same* object seen through different senses (in the Fregean manner), or the same ego receding behind numerous representations, we actually speak of *different* atomic facts configured from different particulars. This is how both Russell (in some phases of his philosophical development) and early Wittgenstein sought to discard Fregean sense as well as the subject. It will be more accurate to say that early Wittgenstein did not discard the subject but accorded it an ineffable status. See Wittgenstein, 1974, op. cit., 5.64, 5.641.

of being "analytic" or "necessarily true" just by virtue of its meaning.[6] His point is obviously directed against the pre-semantic content of any linguistic expression — whereby it would claim to forge a determinate truth value of the proposition (or sentence) in which the expression occurs.

More importantly I pursue this analogy to bring a reverse pressure on the Uncertainty Principle itself by insisting that the proposed uncertainty in the nature of the particles is an epistemological gap — that is virtually grounded on their semantic identity. A numerical formulation of the mechanism of distortion of particles (i.e. the mechanism of integration between the subject and the object) presupposes the numbers as having a determinate range of instantiation — that harks back on the semantic determinacy of the particles. And if the theory of quantum indeterminacy wishes to discard the baggage of semantic determinacy it ultimately has to discard any claim of determinate reference to such particles. We shall see that this ultimate lack of reference that the quantum theory invokes would land the synthesizing programme of quantum gravity into language games or speech acts.

Perhaps both Russell and Quine committed mistakes — Russell did not appreciate that to preserve the logical atoms he has to preserve the fixity of a background space-time and discard the general relativity. On the other hand, Quine while illustrating the relative character of law of excluded middle in terms of quantum uncertainty did not address the all important insight that quantum indeterminacy will require the fixity of a space-time background, nor was he clear as how to accommodate this fixity in his conceptual relativism. Like his barrage of sensory stimulations perhaps he also had to admit a fixed space-time beyond all conceptual schemes of description and reference.

The Problem of Reconciliation

Let me reiterate the conceptual problem in quantizing gravity in a little more detail. One has to isolate the geometrical properties of space-time (viz. the intrinsic and the extrinsic curvature of three-dimensional space) and recast it in terms of position and momentum-variable. Now given the Uncertainty Principle and the probabilistic nature of quantum theory, we are landed on a fluctuating picture of spatial geometry, comparable to the fluctuations in the electromagnetic field. As the ordinary quantum theory presupposes a classical background to define these fluctuations — the background that is characteristically absent in general relativity — it is not possible to give a mathematical formulation of the quantization procedure; nor would the hypothetical construction of this formulation ensure a physical and conceptual account of the resultant theory. General relativity does

[6] Quine, 1965, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", section 6.

not accommodate the possibility of measured values — say the position of two particles — changing with the temporal order of measurement. In general relativity space-time is relative, but not due to the individual spatio-temporal position of the observer, but because space-time itself is an elastic continuum — an ever-expanding rubbery sheet — where the vicinity points of each observer is smooth and even. In other words, as the space-time itself is a flexible and continuous spread there is no scope of identifying definite spatial positions *within* it, there is no scope of saying that the measured values change with the position of the measuring device or the time of measurement. Semantically speaking, the ever-expanding web of beliefs destabilizes the fixed points of reference of each individual subject, nullifying all further possibilities of these referents getting fluctuated by any spatio-temporal change.

The programme of quantum gravity is to demonstrate the elastic field of space-time as a quantum field, and like all quantum fields it must have a microscopic granular structure — like the photons forming the electromagnetic field. All these interactions are to be narrated in the probabilistic dynamics. Likewise the semantic programme of synthesizing logical atomism with conceptual relativism will be to show that all attempts of dissolving logical atoms in the holistic web of beliefs fall back on absolute simples that refuse to be absorbed in the mesh.

MENGER'S PROGRAMME OF SYNTHESIZING QUANTUM THEORY AND RELATIVITY

The rough outlines of incompatibility between these two theories sketched above can be fleshed out in the light of Karl Menger's pioneering approach to achieve their reconciliation.[7]

For Menger space should be conceived not as actual distances between points, but rather as distances between couples of points (p and q belonging to a non-empty set S) where this distance is not ascribed a definite value, but a probability value. This value takes the shape of a distribution function such that for any real number □ the probability that the distance between p and q does not exceed □ is given a value that ranges between 1 and 0. It may be said that the conceptual significance of Menger's using non-random variables[8] or distribution functions is to detemporalize

[7] For writing this section on Menger I have chiefly relied upon the following three works: Schweizer and Sklar, 1983, *Probabilistic Metric Spaces*; Menger, 1970, "Theory of Relativity and Geometry", pp. 459-74 and Roy, 1998, *Statistical Geometry and Application to Microphysics and Cosmology.*.

[8] A non-random variable (also called determinate and non-stochastic variable) is one whose value is known ahead of time, or one whose past value is known. (Tomorrow's date, yesterday's temperature will be cases in point.) On the contrary, randomness is essentially linked with time.

the time process by charting out the variables exhaustively, foreclosing all options and thereby ruling out the possibility of any new uncertainty to emerge through time. In fine the "outcome of any series of measurements of the value of a non-deterministic quantity is a distribution function"[9] which exhausts the range of all alternative values and turns all indeterminacies and uncertainties into a rigorous necessity.

Now we had already noted that the most palpable difference between quantum mechanics and the general theory of relativity is the discreteness of matter and energy in the former, and the unlimited divisibility cum elasticity of both the macroscopic and the microscopic dimensions of space-time figuring in the latter theory. The way Menger restructures the infinite divisibility of space in terms of probabilistic space is philosophically the most provocative move in his scheme. The unlimited divisibility of relativity space is apt to move to an infinite penetrability of every space by every other — thereby ruling out the notion of ultimate discrete units of quantum theory. Now it is this recalcitrant notion of elastic penetrability of every space by every other that Menger turns into a vast range of non-elastic and rigid bits of options, each option being a discrete way of penetrating other spaces and each option of penetration being itself rigid and impenetrable. Thus for Menger the infinite divisibility of space turns into richly variegated ways in which one discrete bit of space can be invaded by every other space, keeping their discreteness intact.

Let us put the matter in a style shorn of its philosophical load and more suited to the terms of the physicist. In the quantum theoretical space each point is a seat, which a point can occupy or not occupy. In other words to say that every quantum theoretical object is probabilistically connected to every other, is to say that the totality of seats remains as it is, irrespective of which seat is occupied and which is empty. Thus in Menger's framework there is no need to distinguish between empty and occupied seats, i.e. no need to distinguish between the three-dimensional space—continuum and the whole set of discrete sets of particles. There is no need to distinguish between the actual world and possible world, for the actual becomes actual only by having the vast range of possibilities actually embedded into itself. And as each of the elementary particles is a spatially extended structure (a couple of points in a non-empty set with a probabilistic distance value attached to each of them) each of these seats also comes to assume a finite volume, i.e. they necessarily retain their discreteness.[10] Roughly this is how the discreteness of spatial units is merged with the infinite divisibility or elasticity of space.

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[9] Schweizer and Sklar, 1983, op. cit., p. x.

[10] The physicist account of Menger's system of collapsing the probabilistic space with the three-dimensional continuum is derived from Roy, 1998, op. cit., p. 98.

On the other hand, it also needs to be noted that Menger's programme of geometricizing physics in a new synthesis between quantum theory and general relativity was sparked off by what he regarded as certain disconcerting features of space in an observable physical continuum. In this continuum spatial identity or rather equality between spaces can at most be regarded as indistinguishability, a notion that turns out to be remarkably indeterminate. Menger cites many examples from physiology where the same space/s is/are perceived and reported to be the same and different (both quantitatively and qualitatively) at different times. Suppose the same two spots of the skin of a blindfolded man are simultaneously subjected to an irritant stimulus, the man sometimes reports the number of this tactile sensation to be one, sometimes two. When two constant lights are projected on our eyes we may regard the first sometimes to be equal to, sometimes stronger than and sometimes weaker than the second. Here the subject is seen to carry on the relations of equality, or of being greater than, between *A* and *B* for the first two incidences, but not for the third. For Henri Poincaré the fact that in an observable physical continuum the equality between *A* and *B*, *B* and *C* may shade into non-identity (through time) shows that the notion of identity or equality in physics and physiology is non-transitive or intransitive, whereas mathematical identity or equality is transitive. It is these proposed features of intransitivity and indeterminacy with respect to the space of an observable physical continuum that motivated Menger to the new direction of synthesizing Einstein's space-time with that of quantum theory. For Menger one should retain the transitive relation in mathematics and revamp the physical and physiological quantities in terms of a distribution function of probability. The latter would be more adequate to express the nature of physical and physiological space than in terms of intransitivity, indistinguishability and indeterminacy.[11]

The way Menger narrates the historical growth of geometry from Euclid to Einstein, or rather the way he conceives the anti-theses between qualitative and quantitative concepts in mechanics (roughly corresponds to the anti-thesis between synthetic and analytic approaches in physics) shows how compellingly he lands on to his unique model of quantizing relativity. This model is that of postulational geometry (practised by K. von Staudt and David Hilbert) which, instead of the synthetic method of deducing theorems from undefined primitives and purely quantitative axioms, started with qualitative assumptions of the undefined objects; and finally worked out how systems of numbers can be associated with them in many different ways and how these systems of numbers can be constructed to be coordinates relative to various frames of reference. Menger recommends that the

[11] This account of Poincaré's dilemma influencing Menger's formulation of probability distribution function is taken from Schweizer and Sklar, 1983, op. cit., pp. ix-x and also chap. 1.

same method should be applied to Einstein's physics where one should begin with undefined concepts and gradually deduce the steps of allocating systems of numbers in many different ways to the undefined objects. This method of enriching a bare quantitative concept by the association of numbers is one of the significant marks in the advent of geometry. This qualitative focus includes projective geometry that ignores length and prioritizes the retained quality of length,[12] it incorporates the general theory of order that sidelines the quantity of distance to foreground the properties of arrangement or structure. These trends of qualitative reorientation developed into the realm of topology — an area which is defined by its tools for securing the qualitative excess over quantity.[13] This qualitative approach of geometry resembles modern algebra, where the concentration on groups, rings and fields can be readily appreciated as ways of foregrounding the qualitative aspects of the structure — pushing the quantitative dimensions like length and distance to the periphery. Overall Menger thinks that this method of arithmeticization or algebraic transformation of Einstein's space and thereby floating up its qualitative character can overcome the apparent incommensurability between quantum mechanics and general relativity.

Menger further clarifies that Einstein's approach was different from both Euclid's geometry, which he terms as "synthetic" geometry operating with undefined primitives and axioms, as well as from analytic geometry with authentically defined objects (triples of numbers, linear equations). Menger states that Einstein's theory actually amounts to the hypothesis that certain physical objects (cross-hairs in telescopes and light rays observed by astronomers) behave like points and lines of a non-Euclidean space. He geometrized certain basic parts of physics — specially the theory of gravitation — ending up with his assumption that space-time in the physical world is a four-dimensional Reimann space. He also assumed that for the metric description of the world each observer carries with him his own particular frame of reference. Einstein's model also incorporates an extensive use of theorems concerning the transformations of the frames of reference. At this juncture Menger observes that Einstein's theory went no further than this — whereas it should have accommodated the dominant tools of modern geometry — viz. the extensive

[12] Projective geometry deals with those properties which an object — say a straight line — retains after it is projected on another object, i.e. it will retain its straightness though its length may change. See Menger, 1970, op. cit., p. 461.

[13] Topological properties are the ones which an object retains even when it undergoes such an irregular transformation as a diagram undergoes if it is drawn on a rubber sheet. The important condition for retaining the topological property in this case is that the sheet should be stretched, compressed or distorted in all possible ways except those which result in tearing the fabric apart or cementing it together. See Menger, 1970, op. cit., pp. 461-62.

transformability of space into numbers, concentration on the qualitative aspects of objects, and a move towards non-locality. With progressive levels of algebraic transformation or rather despatialization of space, space loses its locality, whereby quantum fluctuations turn out to be all-pervading. In other words it is the whole space-time that actually fluctuates.

Menger points out that the problem of reconciling quantum physics with the theory of relativity stands on the same footing with that of applying modern geometry (set theory) to physics. Within the framework of relativity one is ultimately left awed by the infinite divisibility of matter — its being divisible infinitely into smaller and smaller lumps with unaccounted empty spaces between the lumps at each stage. Thus Menger has to conclude that the theory of complicated sets developed during his time (1902-85) cannot be availed by the theory of relativity or even to physics in general.

Overall what is required for the great synthesis is a further geometricization of physics, viz. the geometricization of the physics of microcosm. Let us recall that this alternative geometry that Menger suggests is one where points are not primary entities, it is a geometry that is to be constructed in terms of "lumps".[14] These lumps are proposed as undefined concepts and the points are presented as the result of limiting or intersectional processes applied to these lumps.[15] Menger's spaces are often called C (Cloud) spaces and his geometry is often dubbed as the geometry of hazy lumps.[16]

I would like to press a simple reservation against Menger's agenda of restructuring space in terms of probability distribution function. If the very spatial unity and identity of a physical and physiological datum is ontologically uncertain, then the very scheme of constructing couples of points and laying out the range of favourable options (of the distance between p and q being less than ⍰) vs the non-favourable options (of the said distance being greater than ⍰) will presuppose fixed identity of spaces at the very outset, even before it takes on the ceremonious programme of charting out the possible ways in which the spaces get indeterminate or fuzzy, defying the required property of transitivity. Besides, since numbers pertain to instantiations of a particular concept, the task of assigning any number to a space, whether an integer or a non-negative fractional value of probability, one needs to presume a neat identity for each space that would count as a unique

[14] Let this kindly be noted that while the term "lump" specifically connotes its unanalysable character, I have previously used this word with respect to certain inflated ontologies that can easily be displaced by an exercise of analysis.

[15] Menger, 1970, op. cit., p. 472. The mathematical demonstration of this synthesis (available in Schweizer and Sklar, 1983, op. cit., mainly chaps 1 and 8) does not fall within the scope of this paper.

[16] Roy, 1998, op. cit., p. 9.

instantiation of the particular number.

Let me emphasize that the interesting conceptual errors lurking behind Menger's model of synthesis can be effectively brought out by reverting to what I have trying to establish as the philosophical counterparts of these two theories of physics. Now Russell's philosophy of logical atomism, which I have so far presented as the semantic parallel of the quantum theory will not be of much avail in this context, for the simple reason that Russell did not admit an ontology of possible world. The notion of possible worlds as it figures in early Wittgenstein's version of logical atomism and also in Kripke's *Naming and Necessity*[17] can be used to problematize Menger's scheme of synthesis. It has been strongly suggested by both Kripke and Wittgenstein that an actual and a possible occurrence cannot be collated together in the same world — which is the actual world. The non-actual states of affairs are those which cannot be linked through the space-time trajectories of the actual world. No possible state of affairs can be causally generated by an actual state of affairs, nor even be non-causally linked with the latter through temporal relations of succession or simultaneity, or spatial relations of proximity or distance. A person can undergo a radical gender transformation, or a dramatic change of personality which are effected by organ transplantation or brain surgeries. Physical objects too can be subjected to extreme forms of transmutation and metamorphosis. But of all these transformations, being spaced out in the trajectory of the actual world, none of them can be accorded the status of a non-actual or possible state of affairs. The only way in which the probability range of a state of affairs can be constructed is by abstracting an actual state of affairs from its space-time continuum. And we can say that it was this technique of constructing discrete bits of quanta, abstracted from real space-time continuum that was adopted by Menger. Thus contrary to his claim his probabilistic space cannot be an actual space-time continuum where the difference between empty and filled seats can be virtually nullified. Probability values ascribed to non-actual states of affairs can only carve out possible worlds, it will never be an extension of the actual world.[18]

On the other hand, infinite divisibility of space-time should not be conceived as infinite discrete seats, each filled or not filled by a particle. For later Wittgenstein to talk of infinite divisibility of space is to appreciate the unreality of space — either in the shape of a huge ethereal container in the macrocosmic level or as terminal bits that can fluctuate in variegated ways — all falling under the scheme of probability

[17] Kripke, 1980, *Naming and Necessity,* specially fn. 57, pp. 114-15.

[18] It should be noted that the principle of diffeomorphism covariance, based on the inter-translatabilty of different frames of reference, accords no special privilege to any one frame, and operates not with possible options but with actual options within the real world.

calculation. For later Wittgenstein the demand for an invariant "it" that stays behind the quantum fluctuations of the physicists or recedes beyond all possible ways of conception of a conceptual relativist is merely a grammatical expedient. This invariant "it" fleshes out gradually, indefinitely through our linguistic and non-linguistic behaviours — in an ever incomplete process.

LATER THEORIES OF SYNTHESIS

Tian Yu Cao[19] suggests that any attempt to synthesize quantum theory and general relativity should displace the respective ontologies of these two systems that apparently make them incompatible with each other. He recommends the gravitational property of universal coupling[20] to be essential, but asserts that this can occur in a discontinuous manner with violent fluctuations. Second, as general relativity discards a fixed space-time background, localization is turned into a relational property whereas quantum field theory, despite its continual emphasis on delocalization of space, cannot formulate its mathematics of fluctuation without a fixed reference point. This non-locational and coordinate-independent character of general relativity — not appreciated by Menger — was technically dubbed as "diffeomorphism covariance" (henceforth DC). Third, quantum gravity also has to combine the causal and non-probabilistic approach of general relativity with the non-causal and probabilistic mechanism of quantum theory.

The synthesizing attempts of both Cao and Lucien Hardy[21] failed on the following counts: First, their attempted synthesis was supposed to provide an account that is ultimately dissolvable into quanta — measurable by Planck units. But when radiations of extremely high energy are fed into the formal structure, the system breaks down. A strong gravitational field with extremely massive bodies will not preserve the minuscule particles in the Planck units. Gravitational deflection at an extremely high level dissolves the supposedly discontinuous ontology of the quanta into a colossally fluid and flexible continuity.

Second, general relativity in accordance with the principle of DC claims that the *forms* of all physical laws hold with all arbitrary variations of quantities along different coordinates. The underlying idea is that coordinates are not real points in space given *out* there, they are artificial constructs for describing nature. We have noted that general relativity had sought to dispel the illusion of space-time curvature happening *in* space and time — thereby aiming to demolish the idea of "a prior

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19 Cao, 2001, "Prerequisites for a Consistent Framework of Quantum Gravity", pp. 181-204. This is referred to and discussed in Weinstein and Rickles, 2019, op. cit.

20 Roughly speaking it is a coupling or joint which can transmit rotary power by a shaft at any selected angle.

21 Weinstein and Rickles, 2019, op. cit.

geometry". Since there is no essential geometrical structure of the planets, there is no prior lump *in* space that determines the accelerated motions or gravitational disturbances. This means that there has to be a coordinate-*independent* geometry doing away with the massive lumps that exert gravitational disturbances through a series of coordinate points — that were erroneously supposed to be situated *in* space.[22] Einstein exercised this covariance approach in transforming the laws of special relativity (pertaining to inertial motions) to the laws of general relativity that dealt with accelerated or gravitational motions. Barring all technicalities of tensorial equations — we can come to terms with DC in a very naive fashion. I fix my location now in Delhi, Karol Bagh, in my house, writing this essay — in relation to the position and motion of the planet earth; but the quantitative dimensions of the earth itself is endlessly relativized — with no overarching outer limit to verify the supposedly absolute locations, velocities or fluctuations. The purported location will be stretched out in an indefinite network of relations — no term of relation, itself non-relational, will raise its head over this flat pattern. Now quantum theory on the other hand conceives its quantum fields as localized points in the space-time manifold. A synthesizing programme will have to effect a compromise on this specific ontology of quantum theory — displacing its fixed reference points in favour of a relational pattern.

Third (as we have already noted), the reference points of the quantum theory being (epistemologically) intractable due to extreme fluctuations, the quantum particles have to be identified not through genuine referring expressions, but through a range of various probable positions and velocities — through formulae of probability distribution. Inability to identify actual positions also rules out a causal narrative with respect to the particles. On the other hand, general relativity, though discursive and relational in its approach, lays out a causally dynamic picture — devoid of conditional probabilities that typically pertain to quantum fluctuations formulated in the Uncertainty Principle.

As the points of incompatibilities themselves are often obscured in many ways, laying down the clear battle lines between these two theories becomes a challenging task. If we succeed in this preliminary exercise we can come to appreciate the difficulties of a reconciliatory project in more concrete terms. We need to get

[22] But this operation of neutralizing locational reference was performed anonymously — not under the full-mouthed terminology of "diffeomorphism covariance". Perhaps it was for this reason that the lack of reference or locality in the General Theory of Relativity was not readily appreciated, as we have noted this with respect to Menger. To say that the coordinates are not really out there, thus enabling one to retain the form of the theory through arbitrary transformations in coordinates, is virtually to turn reference into a concept, live connection with reality into a lifeless discourse, first level narrative into a meta-narrative. I have dealt with this point in the conclusion of this essay.

a quantum gravitational field that though universally coupled, will be violently fluctuating, will be free of any localized points and (unlike Menger's scheme) will combine both causal dynamism and non-causal probabilities. It is often suggested that under these constraints quantum gravity can at most develop a formal symbolism where all calculable results can be encoded, but it cannot provide an ontological interpretation of the theory.

Likewise any attempt to synthesize logical atomism and conceptual relativism will have to show that the different conceptual schemes or webs of beliefs cannot actually dissolve the discrete logical atoms into a flexible and continuous expanse; rather their relativizing powers have to work *in and through* the logical atoms. But just as the ontological principles of quantum theory breaks down at high energies similarly any attempt in language — to preserve a minimal quantitative identity of the referent — breaks down under extremely deviant modes of interpretation. Examples may be borrowed from later Wittgenstein where he argues resourcefully to show that deviances are not grounded on a given quantitative boundary or a determinate range of extension of numbers. Rather identifying quantity and performing numerical operations fall back on a prior qualitative conceptualization. There are many occasions where he tries to break through the customary notion of the large being built out of the small static units through a process of linear addition. He points out that expressions like "division of a line by a point outside it" and "composition of forces" clearly show that sometimes we tend to look upon a greater area as composed by a division of the smaller and a smaller area as composed of greater area.[23] He has also given an account in *Zettel*[24] of a certain community of people who describe intermediate shades, say between red and yellow in terms of fractions in binary notation — red at the extreme left and yellow at the extreme right. From their very childhood they pick out, mix colours or describe shades of colour in this way.

Corresponding to the principle of DC there will be no actual and non-relational referents in this new theory of meaning — all references will be absorbed in a pattern of relations. An extralinguistic reality *beyond* the framework of reference or description may be allowed in this synthesis. This reality will be sparking off our language system from without — letting the latter to spin freely on its own. Donald Davidson would suggest something akin to this scheme,[25] and one needs to ponder whether quantum gravity will indulge in such philosophical commitments — i.e. whether it will let its theory of quantizing gravity as being simply triggered off by a prelinguistic reality, revolving and growing on its own.

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[23] Wittgenstein, 1984, *Philosophical Investigations*, section 48.

[24] Wittgenstein, 1981, *Zettel*, section 368.

[25] Davidson, 1984, "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme".

Two Synthesizing Programmes of Quantum Gravity

The two most popular approaches of quantizing gravity are known as the String Theory and the Loop Theory.

STRING THEORY

A reasonably modern version of the string theory conceives all physical objects in our universe as composed of vibrating filaments (strings) and membranes of energy. Previously quantum field theory was conceived in terms of point particles (photons, electrons, etc.); string theory recasts it in terms of one-dimensionally extended objects called strings. The Clouds or C-spaces in Menger's space are now thought to have a string-like structure.[26] A consistent development of this theory needed that these strings "live" in a number of spatial dimensions larger than the usual three, and they have to be formulated in nine spatial dimensions and one temporal dimension. These various dimensions allow the string to have a flexible character of being open and closed, have a characteristic tension and a spectrum of vibrations. Various particles would correspond to each mode of vibration in the spectrum and one of these particles happens to be "gravitons",[27] postulated as the massless spin two particles that constitute the basic units of the gravitational field. In other words the interaction with the electromagnetic field and the gravitational field is effected through the mediation of these massless spin-two particles or gravitons. The chief advantage of this theory is that it allows a coherent mathematical calculation of perturbation — technically termed as "perturbative renormalizability". However it needs to be noted that this programme of the string theory to recast gravity as an aspect of the fundamental strings still remains at the status of a conjecture.

LOOP THEORY

The string theory viewed the curved space-time of general relativity as a modification of a flat background geometry — a modification effected by the massless spin-two field. That is why it is said that the string theory does not quantize the gravitational field of general relativity, but something else — that looks like the gravitational field of general relativity at low energies. Indeed from this standpoint the string theory fails in its programme, for the proposed synthesis needed to have preserved both — the discontinuous quanta as well as the indefinite propagative character

[26] Roy, 1998, op. cit., p. 219.

[27] Compared with a spin-0 particle called *scalar boson* and spin-1 particle called vector boson, the gravitons are spin-2 particles, also called tensor boson. If it exists, the graviton is expected to be massless, because the gravitational force appears to have an unlimited range. Web: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graviton, downloaded on 14 September 2017.

of space-time. The semantic analogue that we may try to construct will also get bogged down with a regressive essence — it will never be able to accommodate an indeterminate and foundationless spread of uses. But the loop theory views space-time metric itself as a kind of field that has to be quantized directly — not by splitting it into a flat part *and its* perturbation. This it claims to achieve by converting space straight away into a stack of three-dimensional slices (foliations) and defining a spatial geometry in terms of these foliations. This scheme of writing down general relativity is known as Canonical or Hamilton formulation. The minimal details of this scheme are as follows:

Here one chooses particular sets of configuration variables x_i and conjugated momentum variables p_i and both these are defined as operations on the state of a system at some time. In other words a state space is encoded in terms of these variables. It is through these tools that these variables are said to evolve in time, and this time evolution is claimed to provide a family of curves to the range of possible motions of a state-space. So we see that the loop theory proceeds by treating the configuration and momentum variables as operations of a quantum state-space, and most significantly, this move of turning variables into operations is virtually the move of turning variables into constants. So long as configuration and momentum remain as mere variables they can at most be treated as predicates *of* the state-spaces, i.e. as configuration and movements of objects *in* space, not as space itself. Turning variables into operations would recast configuration and momentum *as* space itself — that spreads out and evolves in time. In string theory the "open" and "close" dimensions of the strings were conceived not as operators, but as predicates of the strings — whereby it seems that it is the strings that we start with, their dimensions are attached to them as predicates and subsequently further operations are foisted on them to yield further results. But in the loop theory, configurations and motions are what we start from — they do not hark back on further configurations and motions to shape up full-fledged objects. This procedure obeys certain commutation relations, and by formulating how the state-spaces undergo different configurations and momenta in accordance with certain principles of commutation this theory is able to encode quantum fuzziness, associated with the Uncertainty Principle. The Hamiltonian operator $H(x_i p_i)$ applied on the quantum states would generate their dynamical evolution.

Let us try to add more flesh and blood to this theory — in some more sweeping strokes — before we can start to extract the relevant philosophical insights. While in Einstein's general relativity gravitational field was formulated in terms of single tensorial equations, the loop theory translates these equations into ten scalar equations — where constraints were made to account for four of these — and the

remaining six were given the status of genuine evolutionary equations without constraints. Among the four constraints used — three were known as momentum or diffeomorphism constraints — that were responsible for shifting data tangential to the initial surface and thus related to the shift vector field.[28] This implies that the type of input data (the data on the initially given surface), the momenta operated on them, and the outcome, viz. the "shift" through tangential operations) are all prefixed by the scheme of the equations. The three types of equations can only describe a particular kind of dynamism — the other kinds of movement will not be accommodated in this equation pattern. The fourth constraint (known as the scalar constraint) is responsible for pushing the data off the initial surface — and is thus related to the lapse function. These four kinds of constraints in their turn determine the genuine evolutionary equations, but unless the canonical initial data match these specified kinds of constraints (viz. the shift and lapse functions) the data cannot be genuinely developed in terms of evolutionary equations, and the physically possible space-time (for choices of lapse and shifts) cannot be generated. When the constraints are satisfied the various choices of lapse and shifts will always grow into the same four-dimensional space-time.

We have seen that the canonical approach of loop theory censures string theory for relying too heavily on a classical space-time background. But ironically the canonical approach itself presupposes some data specified on a priori given space-like surfaces, and also conceives temporal passage in terms of the evolution of that initial data and then quantizing the theory. These initial data seem to be standing on the same footing with the classical space-time background, the difference being only that they are thin space slices evolving temporally, instead of a colossal space-time background. The minuscule surfaces were already there before being subjected to external determinants — like shifting data tangentially or off the initial surface. Further the scheme of loop theory as presupposing initial data on given space-like surfaces does not imply any violation of the principle of DC. The constraints that must be satisfied by the data on the slice imply that whatever observable data one grips on to substantiate the theory will not be specific to any particular slice, all observational data are neutral with respect to all slices. Though specific spatial locations, specific initial surfaces situated in particular locations over and above the external determinants are not presupposed in this theory, yet an a priori given space split from the external determinants is *conceptually* assumed. The space surfaces are not laboured out as inevitable outcomes of quantization; and the time evolution also falls back on the evolution of the data specified on the surface. It is only after

[28] A scalar quantity like temperature, or weight admit of only a one-dimensional measurement. A vector quantity like velocity is measured under more than one dimension — say magnitude, speed and direction.

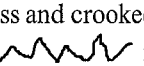
these presumptions that the quantization procedure is applied. So it seems that in spite of showing better direction of quantizing gravity the loop theory failed on the same counts: on the one hand it could not dispel the a priori given space/spaces, and failed to achieve reference on the other.

A semantic analogue of the loop theory will at least have to imbibe its professed spirit by presenting meaning itself as separate states — though not as discontinued fragments — itself being configurations, evolving, moving — not as a universal essence, nor to be composed out of logical atoms through a logical space inserted into the latter. Unlike Davidson's approach this theory will not be under any obligation to preserve a universal framework of meaning to absorb all possible deviations. Nor can this theory be put under the mould of a scheme—content dichotomy that typically characterizes conceptual relativism, for unlike the latter it should not involve a pre-reflective barrage of sensory stimulations, nor a flexible web of beliefs, to operate on this sensory flow. Such a theory may be said to correspond to an interpretation (though unfortunately a myopically distorted one) of later Wittgenstein's view where meaning reduces to a flow of overlapping and criss-crossing fibres — temporary and short-ranged — where old fibres continually get dropped and new ones are added.[29] Now though this theory has the look of universal essences getting broken or relativized, at bottom it is another version of essentialism. The local essences still enjoy an independence over their local applications, they clot as external foundations to their instances — just as in the loop theory space still refuses to be pulled out as a sprawling field, just as it still lingers as hyper foliations — on which configurations and time evolution are to be applied. Meaning also retained its foundational status — as multiple foundations that stayed over and above their respective applications. Meaning was not dissolved into uses, but allowed to remain as clotted over them, space was not dissolved into an ever-expanding smooth continuum, but retained as foliations prior to being quantized.

The Problem of Circularity

The circularity within the ingredient theories will inevitably percolate into the synthesizing theory itself. As already noted, the logical atomists' claim about all meaning being grounded on ultimate simples presupposes a unique mode of analysis whereby the deducible combinations were already infused into the atoms. In conceptual relativism of the Quinean type different conceptual schemes are imposed on the pre-linguistic sense data to generate scheme-relative references and descriptions. Quine did not perhaps appreciate that the purported sense stimulations already have to be invested with the required interpretation before

[29] Wittgenstein, 1984, op. cit., sections 65-68.

they can be absorbed into conceptual schemes to generate meaning. We have seen these circularities to resurface in their attempted synthesis. The quantum theory has explicitly admitted a fixed space-time background to demonstrate the possibility of its quantum fluctuations, it is more interesting to see how this circularity infiltrates into Einstein's general theory of relativity — beyond its brilliant anti-essentialist move. Let us first recount that when a body *seems* to deviate from its inertial essence to take a curved detour *in* a straight space, for Einstein it actually *carves out* its inertial essence in a curved space, by following the straightest route therein. As the flat space-time of Newton turns crooked for Einstein the inertial essence of matter coincides with its gravitational accident. The same insights were voiced by the later Wittgenstein when he said that what looks to be a deviation of a straight line is actually a continuation of straightness, and what looks to be a straight line is not an isolated bit — but it is straightness as a whole, as a continuation of curvature. Straightness and crookedness are internal contrasts, it will be possible to say that a line like  is a bit of a longer line where its deviation from straightness is lost.[30] However Einstein, in spite of his ingenious move, was not fully able to outgrow the old model of space being an external container. Given that a body deviates from its regular motion *because* the geodesics in the local space-time of the solar system is shaped that way gives rise to a further question: How is that the mass-energy content becomes tighter at some regions of space — so that it generates a curved geometry at that locality? This model of Einstein displays an intriguing oscillation between two mutually incompatible pictures. In one picture space itself reduces to mass-energy, or essence reduces to accident, in another picture space still persists over and above mass-energy, by containing the latter, whereby essence still provides a background for the accidents.[31] Conceptual relativism also shows an ambivalence between reducing essence to deviance on the one hand and yet retaining a foundational split between the deviant foundations and its uniquely deviant result — a scheme that lapses into essentialism.

In any canonical formulation of general relativity one is faced with a problem of "constraints" — pertaining to the fact that canonical variables cannot be specified independently. For instance, in Gauss's law of electromagnetism to describe and calculate the workings of the electric field three components of the field have to be chosen at every point x, of which only two variables are the true degrees of freedom possessed by the field; for once these two components are specified, they dictate the third component for every point. Generally speaking, our descriptions and calculations are locked in a closure where the two freely chosen concepts

[30] Wittgenstein, 1981, op. cit., section 281.

[31] I have borrowed this reading of Einstein from Jones, 1982, *Physics as Metaphor*, pp. 128-35.

always determine the third. This patently happens in theories of meaning — for in choosing the variables — the logical atoms — we have already chosen their internal properties determining their logical space — which in their turn determine their external properties — i.e. their actual turnover in the shape of facts. In more flexible theories of meaning operating with physical or mental ostension, verbal rules, etc. we invest the ostensive definition with a pre-meditated content, we inscribe the constituent terms of verbal rules with the desired meaning — so as to get at the desired result. Just as many components in Maxwell's equations do not propagate the fields in the physical sense, similarly the ostensive definitions or the verbal rules supposed to determine meaning are not real happenings, but postulated as architectonic demands. Matter in general relativity was not ultimately propagated *as* space — it still remained as clots *in* space.

The Problem of Time

Physical laws are in general laws of motion — i.e. change from one time to another. Hence we need to take note of some details as to how the canonical loop theory with the constraints of DC operates with the time variable to ensure that its state spaces evolve in time. There are two possible approaches in dealing with the constraints.

The first approach generally adopted by the gauge theories[32] is to deal with the constraints *before* quantizing. The way to do this is to fix the gauge in terms of a particular coordinate system with respect to which the physical data are described spatially and also made to evolve in time. The underlying principle of this approach is to ensure that the configuration and momentum as applied on the state spaces do not have unrestricted freedom — i.e. the possible ways the state spaces can change with respect to these variables are delimited to a particular space-time coordinate. But there is an inherent circularity in this approach — the gauge whereby one tries to specify the coordinates and compute the temporal evolution as a solution of the equation itself gets identified only by virtue of the properties of the solution. Similar pitfalls reappear in the sphere of semantic theories too — however we may try to chisel out the referring expression, sharpen its descriptive content, disambiguate its grammar, fixate quantitative boundary to secure the desired referent — we do not get the intended result unless we put the referent itself in the routes of reference. Deviant reference too cannot be secured by investing the referrer with a transparently deviant content — here too the routes to the deviant referent can only be chalked out after achieving the referent.

The second approach which is the preferred one is to impose constraints *after* quantizing — where one treats the constraints themselves as operators. State spaces

[32] The term "gauge" refers to any specific mathematical formalism to regulate redundant degrees of freedom in a particular field called the Lagrangian field theory.

are not to be given any initial status *on* which one can apply operators to solve the results of equations, rather the state spaces themselves assume the status of being solutions to equations. In the first approach the configurations and momenta were *applied on* a particular space-time coordinate, in the second approach they (i.e. the configurations and momenta) are already conceived in terms of a particular space-time coordinate. There is a crucial point to note here: if the time variable is already infused in the configuration and momenta — the state spaces do not accommodate the further possibility of evolving in time. The first approach was to interpret the state spaces as evolving with respect to an external time variable imposed on it — the second approach is construct the state spaces as already *internalizing* the momenta and configurations, lapses and shifts — so that they cannot further change or grow in time.[33] If the states are symbolized by the variable Φ and the operators or constraints as A, then as the states themselves are the solutions to the equations — the resulting value of applying operator A to Φ will be 0. The super-Hamiltonian function H that is responsible for describing time evolution will have to be expressed as $H\,\Phi = 0$ in this "quantized-constraint" approach.

The way the loop theory, in its attempt to secure time, either turns circular or get detemporalized — bears an enjoyable parity with the logical atomist treatment of time. Russell defined time into existence by defining "perspective" as consisting of all and only those particulars that are related by simultaneity and succession. For him a perspective does not have a psychological character — as it need not house a subject; and it is also non-spatial insofar as it allows a non-spatial relation of two particulars within itself — say the relation between a colour patch and a sense datum of sound. Hence by default perspectives are fleshed out in terms of direct and simple time relations. As for constructing the indirect time relations obtaining between data belonging to different perspectives, Russell employed the principle of transitivity of succession and simultaneity between different temporal moments, and invoked the absolute velocity of light as the limiting point of dissecting space in the vertical dimension.[34] Overall Russell is invoking the time moments themselves to derive the required time relations — either in a single perspective or in connecting different perspectives under an overarching time frame. Also in early Wittgenstein's version of logical atomism, objects were not in space and time, nor could one procure such relations between two atomic facts. The atomic facts being professedly independent of one another any apparent relation between them is actually a relation between their constituent objects, which actually turns out to be a fact with more terms of

[33] This is a point we have already noted with respect to Menger's scheme of non-random variables used in his distribution function.

[34] See Russell, 1963, op. cit., specially pp. 123-24.

relation, and not a temporal relation between two facts. All the expected temporal evolutions of one fact into another are thus flattened out and rendered timeless.

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Let us recount the foregoing narrative in neutral terms — shorn of its physical and philosophical load. The primary motivation to construct matter and meaning in the shape of discrete units is to explain certain abnormal situations like "ultraviolet catastrophe" in black bodies at the level of extremely high energies or extreme deflections of meaning with respect to what is normally taken to be the same substance. To cope with these problems matter and meaning were divided into fragments — but the extremely thin character of these fragments plunged them into violent fluctuations — that had to be accurately determined only against a uniform and fixed background. This scenario of the units of matter and meaning fluctuating against a fixed backdrop soon got challenged by a denial of this outer backdrop itself. Various attempts were made to assimilate both these theories — that of inner fragmentation against outer fixity vis-à-vis the outer fluctuation against inner continuity — but the basic flaws of the ingredient theories botched the reconciliatory projects.

The main pitfalls in the ingredient theories pertained to wrong notions of space and time. Both the prevalent theories of matter and meaning wished to secure terminal points in space that would determine what are the real paths and the real voids laid out amongst themselves. It becomes a serious challenge to recreate our commonly observed world from these thin fragments and to secure their conceptual recursion in space and time. Attempts of deriving a spatio-temporal expansion of these extensionless points either invoked a circularity or lapsed into a saturated and frozen stasis — devoid of any growth and development. The opposite trends of dissolving these particles into a continuous and propagating field — also ended up in discontinuous clots of matter and meaning *contained* in this field — though the clots were of much larger size and substance than their atomized or quantized counterparts.

The ever-present indeterminacy in the putative foundations, the recurrent failures of a non-circular derivation of the real expanse of matter and meaning from their atomic units, motivate these theories to ascend to the second level — with the hope that the real anomalies between theory and concrete observation can be overcome by turning live reference into an abstract, non-referential or conceptual discourse.

However we have noticed that the much-desired conceptual closure sought to be achieved in these metanarratives (or the DC theories) remained unfulfilled.

The semantic gaps that crop up between reality and concepts also persist between concepts — and it is these conceptual gaps that we had been grappling with in our journey. These gaps pertain to vital presuppositions lurking behind all these theories — presuppositions pertaining to the need for terminal points of space, the urgency of deriving all paths and voids amongst these points with a geometrical rigour, demand for semantic transparency, unavoidability of reference as the starting point of discourse. These deep needs cannot be cashed out in terms of *ceteris paribus* clauses or as preamble of a theory — they are unpropositionalized practices or forms of living. Scientific theorization is at bottom a matter of playing language games[35] — and this justifies my attempt of giving a semantic treatment to quantum gravity.

This conviction along with the ontological non-commitment of quantum gravity theories may help us to appreciate the later Wittgensteinian insights about space and time. Statements like "Space is uniform and immobile", "Space is unlimited in extent", and "Time cannot flow in the backward direction" are not descriptions of space and time — but are grammatical paradigms for describing space and time. The apparently contradictory statements — "Parts of space are connected" and "Parts of space are disconnected" — are both geared to the containment paradigm, namely, that of presenting incorporeal husks or containers of objects — floating the options of these containers themselves being continuous or discontinuous with one another.[36] An ontology of everything being penetrated by everything betrays a commitment to the essence of each thing as what it was *before* being penetrated by other things — a veiled admission of objects being contained in separate containers, before they are broken through by other containers. For the later Wittgenstein it is actions that bend, blend and break space into objects and their interrelations, their mutual continuities and discontinuities. Iterating meanings through a continuous space or truncating them into a lumpy disjoint are not trailing behind alternative ontologies, but they are rather different modes of acting. Both the non-technical language of everyday life as well as the scientific language of quantum gravity are sophisticated extensions of these non-verbal uses and actions. It is actions — a seamless blend of linguistic and non-linguistic uses and nothing short of it — that give sense to the talk of penetrating every space by every other — by either an unbroken continuity of iterations, or creating disjoints between them. It is space — the space of continuous uses that creates either continuity or the discontinuity between spaces — between each occasion of use.

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[35] I can cite Lyotard, 1979, *The Postmodern Condition*, specially section 10 — for his analysis of the meta-narrative character of science ultimately lapsing into speech acts.

[36] These insights can be gleaned from a general reading of Wittgenstein, 1956, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*; and specifically from Broyle, 1981, "Talk about Space, Wittgenstein and Newton", pp. 45-55.

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আলোচনা চক্র

৩৪ বর্ষ ২য় সংখ্যা সংকলন ৪৯ অগস্ট ২০২০

গান্ধী : ধর্মে ও আধ্যাত্মিকতায়
দীপেশ চক্রবর্তী ও রোচনা মজুমদার
অমিত দে, এণাক্ষী রায় মিত্র
কুন্তলা ভট্টাচার্য, কে. ডি. গাংরাডে
অমিতা বাল্মীকি

বাঙলার পণ্ডিত (২য় পর্ব)
গোদাবরীশ মিশ্র
দেবেন্দ্রনাথ তিওয়ারী
ইমদাদুল ইসলাম মোল্লা
নির্মাল্য নারায়ণ চক্রবর্তী

জাক লাকাঁ (২য় পর্ব)
শান্তনু বিশ্বাস
অভীক চট্টোপাধ্যায়
অর্ক চট্টোপাধ্যায়

কার্ল মার্ক্স (২য় পর্যায়)
অনির্বাণ চট্টোপাধ্যায়
অভীক চট্টোপাধ্যায়
নন্দিতা বাগচী
পীযূষকান্তি মুখোপাধ্যায়

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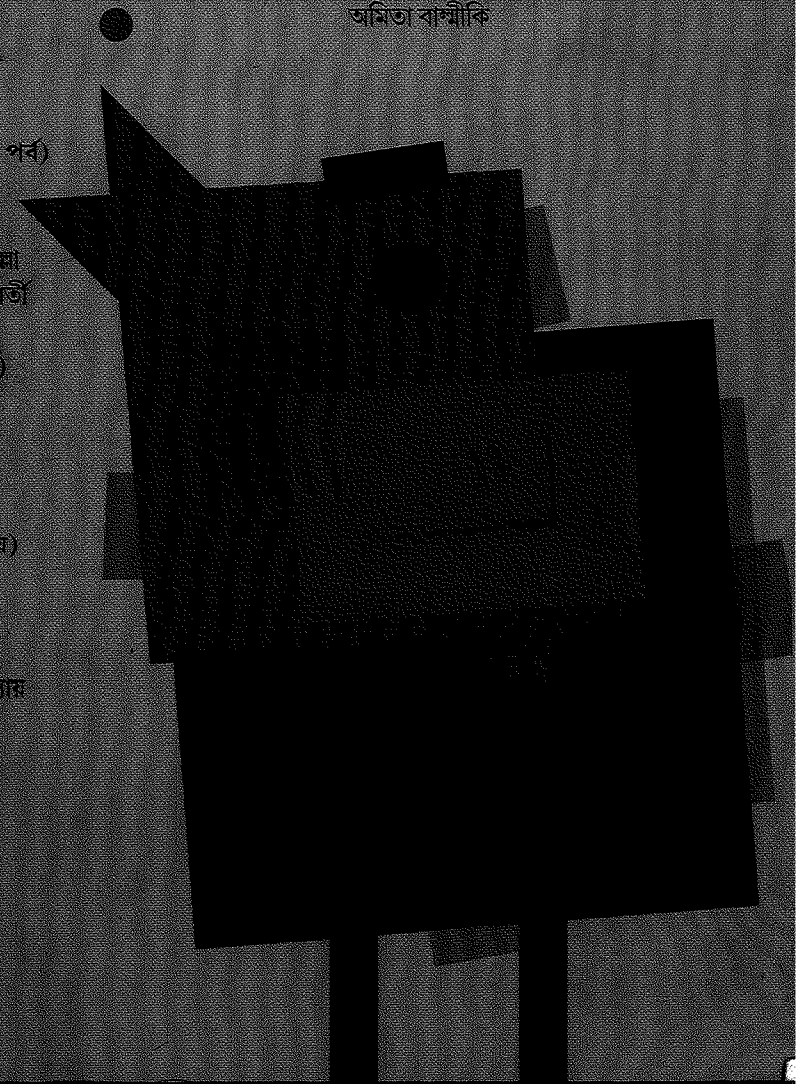
অর্পিতা ব্যানার্জী



আলোচনা চক্র: ৩৪ বর্ষ, ২য় সংখ্যা: সংকলন ৪৯ ।। অগস্ট ২০২০
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বিপ্লব মন্ডল

অক্ষর বিন্যাস
সিদ্ধার্থ দে
স্মার্ট লেজার, ৩০, বান্ধবনগর, কলকাতা-৫৬

মুদ্রক
স্টার প্রিন্টিং প্রেস
২১এ, রাধানাথ বোস লেন, কলকাতা-৬

প্রচ্ছদ মুদ্রণ-বাঁধাই
অভিজিৎ গোস্বামী
লেজার এইড, ৩৫এ/৩, বিপ্লবী বারীন ঘোষ সরণি, কলকাতা-৬৭

মুদ্রক-প্রকাশক
চিরঞ্জীব শূর
২/১৩৫ যতীনদাস নগর, বেলঘরিয়া, কলকাতা-৭০০০৫৬
ফোন : ৯০৮৮১৮৩৫৮৫
ই-মেল : alochanachakra@gmail.com
ওয়েবসাইট : www.alochonachakra.com

মূল্য : তিনশত পঞ্চাশ টাকা

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এণাক্ষী রায় মিত্র

চতুর্বর্ণ বিষয়ে গান্ধীর লেখাপত্রে আপাত অসঙ্গতি রয়েছে, কিছু কিছু ন্যূনতা ও গোঁড়ামিও লক্ষ করা যায়। তবু মনে করি এই সব অতিক্রম করে এই বিষয়ে তাঁর মতবাদের একটা আধুনিক ও বিশ্বাসযোগ্য পুনর্গঠন সম্ভব। এই কথা মাথায় রেখেই নিবন্ধের প্রথম অনুচ্ছেদে চতুর্বর্ণের একটা বুনিয়াদহীন পাঠ দেবার চেষ্টা করবো। এই পাঠ অনুযায়ী চতুর্বর্ণকে সত্ত্ব রজ তম গুণের নিগড়ে বাঁধা যাবে না, আবার জন্মগত পেশার ভিত্তিতেও এর সূত্রায়ণ সম্ভব নয়। বরঞ্চ এখানে এক একটা বর্ণকে এক একটা বিমূর্ত মানদন্ড হিসেবে দেখার চেষ্টা করা যেতে পারে। এই মানদন্ডগুলি পরস্পর বিরোধী নয়, আমাদের জ্ঞান বিশ্বাস কার্যাবলীকে এক একটা বিশেষ অভিমুখে চালনা করার মধ্যেই এদের সার্থকতা। চতুর্বর্ণের এই পাঠ অনেকটাই শ্রী অরবিন্দের ভাষ্য থেকে রসনা গ্রহণ করলেও তাকে একটা নির্লিপ্ত পরিসর দেবার প্রয়াস থাকবে, তাছাড়া অরবিন্দ ভাষ্যের সম্ভাব্য একদেশদর্শিতা বা এই ভাষ্যে ব্যবহৃত বর্ণ বিবর্তনের যে বাস্তব ঐতিহাসিক মালমশলা—সেগুলি এড়াতে না পারলে মনে হয় গান্ধীর মতের সঙ্গে অরবিন্দের একটা সুষম মেলবন্ধন দেখানো যাবে না।

নিবন্ধের দ্বিতীয় অনুচ্ছেদে গান্ধী রচিত গীতা ভাষ্যের কিছু নির্বাচিত শ্লোকের আলোচনা করবো, সেখানে চতুর্বর্ণের মনস্তাত্ত্বিক ভিত্তিমূলের বিরুদ্ধে গান্ধীর যে প্রকাশ্য ও প্রচ্ছন্ন প্রতিরোধ ছিল—তার একটা আভাস পাওয়া যাবে।

তবে গান্ধীর সুবিশাল রচনাবলীতে জাতি আর বর্ণ বিষয়ে ছড়িয়ে ছিটিয়ে রয়েছে অনেক মন্তব্য ও টিপ্পনী—যার বিবর্তন ঘটেছে অনেক বছর ধরে, বিবিধ প্রেক্ষিতে—তাদের সঙ্গে আমাদের এই বিমূর্ত নিরিখধর্মী পঠনপ্রয়াসটি মিলবে তো? গান্ধী রচনার এই বিরাট সমুদ্র থেকে জাতি ও বর্ণ বিষয়ে তাঁর পরিণত অবস্থানটি ছেঁকে তুলে আনার চেষ্টা করেছেন অনেকে—তারই ভিত্তিতে বুঝতে হবে গান্ধী-আম্বেদকরের বহু-বিতর্কিত বিরোধ নিষ্পত্তির উপায়। এই কাজটা করতে হবে নিবন্ধের শেষ ভাগে। সব মিলিয়ে এই নিবন্ধে চতুর্বর্ণের নিরিখধর্মী ব্যাখ্যানের সঙ্গে নিষ্কাম কর্মের সম্বন্ধটিও পরিস্ফুট হবে আশা করি।

প্রথম পরিচ্ছেদটি দীর্ঘ ও তাতে গান্ধীর সাক্ষাৎ অনুপ্রবেশ নেই। কিন্তু গান্ধীমনস্ক পাঠকগণের প্রতি অনুরোধ—তাঁরা যেন ধৈর্য না হারান—গান্ধীর মনোভাবকে শুধু তাঁর নিজস্ব লেখনীর মধ্যে ধরে না রেখে একটি ব্যাপক পরিসর তৈরি করার জন্যই এই প্রলম্বিত বুনন।

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মৌলবাদিতার বিমুখে চতুর্বর্ণকে বোঝার প্রচেষ্টা[১]

চতুর্বর্ণ বলে এযাবৎ কাল ভারতে যা চর্চিত হয়ে এসেছে তা যে গীতা ও বেদে বর্ণিত চতুর্বর্ণের মূলসূত্রের এক বিকৃত অবক্ষয়—একথা সকলেরই জানা। তবে বিকৃতীকরণের এই

ধারাটিকে বুঝতে হলে ঋগ্বেদে বর্ণিত যে 'বিরাট' পুরুষের উপমা—সেটিকে একটু ঝালিয়ে নেওয়া দরকার। তা ছাড়াও চতুর্বর্ণের একটা মনস্তাত্ত্বিক ব্যাখ্যান রয়েছে—এখানে বলা হয় এক একটা বর্ণ আসলে এক এক ধরনের ব্যক্তিত্ব,—যার ভিত্তিতে রয়েছে সত্ত্ব রজ তম গুণের বিশেষ অনুপাত ও সমানুপাত। এই দুটো মতবাদই মৌলবাদী, আসলে এক একটা বর্ণকে যদি চরিত্রের একটা অভিমুখ বা নৈতিক মাত্রা হিসেবে দেখি, তাহলে এই মৌলবাদ বা চতুর্বর্ণের পারস্পরিক বিরোধ-তত্ত্ব টিকবে না। এক একটা বর্ণ আদতে এক এক ধরনের ব্যক্তিত্ব বা 'স্বভাব' আর এই স্বভাব অনুযায়ী কাজ করাই হল মানুষের 'স্বধর্ম'। স্বধর্ম অনুযায়ী জীবনের কার্যকরী পথটি বেছে নেওয়ার পূর্ণ স্বাধীনতা আমাদের রয়েছে, আশা করা যায় এখানে কোনো মনস্তাত্ত্বিক নিয়ন্ত্রণবাদ বা পরিণামবাদের অবকাশ নেই।

প্রথমে চতুর্বর্ণ সম্পর্কিত আদি ও জনপ্রিয় উপমাটি একটু দেখে নেব, পরে চতুর্বর্ণের এই ত্রিগুণভিত্তিক তত্ত্বের দিকে চোখ ফেরাতে হবে, কারণ এই তত্ত্বের মৌলবাদিতাকে অতিক্রম করে অরবিন্দ-ভাষ্যের সঙ্গে গান্ধী-ভাষ্যের সমন্বয়ই আমাদের মুখ্য উদ্দেশ্য।

১.১ ঋগ্বেদের পুরুষসুক্ত : এই সুক্তে এক বিরাট পুরুষের উপমা বর্ণিত হয়েছে, যাঁর শরীরের বিভিন্ন অংশ থেকে চারটি বর্ণের উৎপত্তি। এই সুক্তের বাংলা তর্জমা এইরকম দাঁড়াবে—তাঁর মস্তক থেকে ব্রাহ্মণ, তাঁর বাহু থেকে রাজন্য বা ক্ষত্রিয়, তাঁর উরু থেকে বৈশ্য, ও সবশেষে তাঁর পদযুগল থেকে শূদ্রের উদ্ভব।[২]

১.২ ত্রিগুণ ও কর্ম : চতুর্বর্ণের মনস্তাত্ত্বিক ভিত্তি[৩] : গীতায় শুধুমাত্র আমাদের ঐচ্ছিক কাজগুলিকেই কর্ম বলা হয়নি, এক একটি মানব শরীরের ঐক্য সংরক্ষণ ও প্রজননের জন্য যে সুসমঞ্জস ক্রিয়াকলাপের প্রয়োজন, যেখানে প্রাণ, জ্ঞানেন্দ্রিয়, কর্মেন্দ্রিয়, মন, অহং, বুদ্ধি—সব একত্রিত হয়ে কাজ করে—সেই ক্রিয়াসমূহকেও ঐচ্ছিক কর্মের মর্যাদা দেওয়া হয়েছে। যুক্তি এটাই যে ভারতীয় দর্শন-চিন্তায় অনেক যোগী তাঁদের শ্বাসপ্রশ্বাস, পাকপ্রণালী, এবং রক্তসংবাহন—প্রভৃতি প্রাণদায়ী ক্রিয়াগুলিকে স্বেচ্ছায় রোধ করতে পারেন। এখন, যে কোনো জ্ঞান বা কর্ম আমাদের অবচেতন মনে বা চিত্তে একটি সূক্ষ্ম ছাপ ফেলে, উপযুক্ত পরিস্থিতিতে এই ছাপ বা সংস্কারের পুনরুদ্রেক ঘটে। প্রতিটি নতুন অভিজ্ঞতা বা কাজ যেন আমাদের থিতিয়ে পড়া চিত্তভূমি থেকে একমুঠো বালি তুলে আনে, আবার ঐ ভূমিতেই ফেরৎ দেয়—এইভাবে পুরোনো জমির ওপর নতুন নতুন স্তর সংযোজিত হতে থাকে। সত্ত্ব, রজ, তমের পারস্পরিক ক্রিয়া-প্রতিক্রিয়াই আমাদের সব কর্মের পরিচালক। এই তত্ত্ব অনুযায়ী প্রতিনিয়ত নতুন নতুন সংস্কারের উদ্রেক ও পুনরুদ্রেকের দ্বারাই আমাদের জ্ঞান ও কর্ম মসৃণ অপ্রতিহত ভঙ্গিমায় চালিত হয়।

দেখা যাক কীভাবে এক একটা বিশেষ ত্রিগুণ-অনুপাত থেকে এক একটা বিশেষ ব্যক্তিত্বের উদ্ভব। গুণ হল আমাদের কর্মশক্তিরই ছাঁচ, আর যে শক্তির দ্বারা আমরা আমাদের জ্ঞানেন্দ্রিয় ও কর্মেন্দ্রিয়র সাহায্যে পারিপার্শ্বিকের সঙ্গে মোকাবিলা করি—তাই হল আমাদের কর্মশক্তি। কর্মশক্তির যে বিশেষ প্রবণতা, আমাদের মেধা বা ধীশক্তির দ্বারা বিবিধ ধর্মের সামঞ্জস্য বা ভারসাম্য বজায় রাখে—সেটাই হল সত্ত্বগুণ। রজগুণ কর্মশক্তির পরিবহনের ভার

নেয়, ও সবশেষে বলা যায় যে তমগুণ আমাদের বুদ্ধিমান্দ্য ও তৎ-সম্পর্কিত জড়তা বা নিষ্ক্রিয়তারই আর এক নাম। সব ধরনের ব্যক্তিত্বই এই তিন গুণের এক একটা বিশেষ সমন্বয়, জীবনের এক একটা ধাপে এক একটা গুণসমন্বয় প্রাধান্য পেয়ে যায়।

তিনটি গুণের মধ্যে সামঞ্জস্য রক্ষা করে যে সত্ত্ব গুণ, বলা যেতে পারে তা তথ্য ও তত্ত্বের সংশ্লেষক। ইন্দ্রিয়র ওপর আঁছড়ে পড়া উদ্দীপকের প্রাচুর্যে, বাহ্যিক জগতের ঘটনা-সম্ভারে সে আপ্লুত হয় না। অভিজ্ঞতার অবিন্যস্ত প্লাবনকে সে তত্ত্বের কাঠামোয়, সাধারণ সূত্রের শৃঙ্খলে সাজাতে জানে। কোনো সত্ত্বপ্রধান ব্যক্তিত্বে যদি উপযুক্ত পরিমাণ রজগুণের সমাবেশ ঘটে, সেক্ষেত্রে উপযুক্ত দৈহিক বল ও প্রায়োগিক পটুত্বে সমৃদ্ধ ঐ ব্যক্তি বিমূর্ত বৌদ্ধিক সূত্রগুলিকে যথাযথ প্রকরণে ব্যবহার করতে পারবেন, তত্ত্ব ও জীবনের পারস্পরিক বিরোধের সঙ্গে মোকাবিলা করতে পারবেন। কিন্তু অবিমিশ্র রজগুণ অপ্রতিহতভাবে অহংবোধের জন্ম দেয়, নানারকম হিংসাত্মক কার্যকলাপ—যেমন, খুন-জখম, দলন, দমন, অপরিমিত ভোগ-এর স্বাভাবিক পরিচায়ক। অন্যদিকে তামসিক ব্যক্তিত্ব শিথিল, শ্লথ, অসাড়, ইন্দ্রিয় অনুভবের মালমশলাগুলি নিষ্ক্রিয়ভাবে গ্রহণ করেই তার ক্ষান্তি, গৃহীত উপাদানকে কোনো সৃজনশীল পথে নিয়ে যাওয়ার ক্ষমতা তার নেই। তমগুণ যদি কোনো ব্যক্তিতে ঘন হয়ে জমাট বাঁধে, তাহলে সেখানে সত্ত্ব ও রজগুণের ন্যূনতম পরিশিষ্টের আর বিশেষ কিছু করার থাকে না। ইন্দ্রিয়-উদ্দীপকের রসদটুকু নিয়ে সে বেঁচে বর্তে থাকবে, প্রাণধারণের জন্য যতটুকু করা দরকার সেটুকু চালিয়ে যাবে, কোনো সাধারণ সূত্র গঠন বা বিমূর্তায়নের স্তরে উঠতে পারবে না।

তাছাড়া সত্ত্ব রজ ও তম যথাক্রমে সুখ, দুঃখ ও জড়তার উৎপাদক, তাই এথেকে আরও বোঝা যায় যে বর্ণভেদ শুধু গুণভেদ নয়, কর্মভেদও বটে। সাধারণ ভাবে বলতে গেলে ব্রাহ্মণের কর্ম হল যাজন, যজন, অধ্যয়ন, অধ্যাপনা; ক্ষত্রিয়ের দায়িত্ব হল বাহ্যিক আক্রমণ ও অন্তরীণ ব্যাধি থেকে মানুষকে বাঁচানো, তাঁদের রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ; বৈশ্যের কর্ম হল ব্যবসা ও চাষবাস; শূদ্রের দায়িত্ব হল উচ্চবর্ণের মানুষকে শ্রমদান।[৪]

অতএব দেখা গেল গুণকর্মের এই ত্রিধা বিভাজন ত্রিবিধ ব্যক্তির নির্ধারক। প্রতিটি ব্যক্তিতে রয়েছে যে বিশেষ ত্রিগুণ-সমন্বয় সেটাই তার স্বধর্ম। সুব্বানাচার[৫] এই ত্রিগুণ-সমন্বয়ের একটা কাঠামো দিয়েছেন—সেটা নীচে উপস্থাপিত হল।

ক.	সাত্ত্বিক সাত্ত্বিক-রাজসিক	ব্রাহ্মণ
খ.	রাজসিক-সাত্ত্বিক রাজসিক রাজসিক-রাজসিক	ক্ষত্রিয়
গ.	তামসিক-রাজসিক	বৈশ্য
ঘ.	তামসিক তামসিক-রাজসিক	শূদ্র

এই পাঠে আমরা অন্তত ঋগ্বেদের ঐ শরীরী উপমা থেকে বেরিতে আসতে পারলাম। এইটুকু অন্তত বোঝা গেল যে চতুর্বর্ণ জন্মসূত্র পাওয়া জীবিকা নয়, তার ভিত্তি আমাদের ব্যক্তিত্বে, আমাদের স্বধর্মে, যার মূল আমাদের মনে বা মনস্তত্ত্বে। এই স্বধর্মই আমাদের আত্মিক উন্নতির মানদন্ড গঠন করে।

১.২.১ বর্ণ নির্ধারণে সংস্কারের অবদান : যোগসূত্রে দু'ধরনের সংস্কারের কথা বলা আছে— (১) স্মৃতিফল বা বাসনা (২) ত্রিবিপাক। এই পৃথিবীতে জন্মগ্রহণের (অচেতন) বাসনা, বেঁচে থাকার বা আয়ুর বাসনা আর সুখ দুঃখ ভোগের বাসনা—এই তিন প্রকারের কথা বলা হয়ে থাকে। এই তিন ধরনের বাসনাই নিষ্ক্রিয়, নিশ্চেষ্ট, এরা শুধু স্মৃতির জন্ম দেয়, নতুন কিছু গঠনে অক্ষম। আমাদের জ্ঞানেন্দ্রিয় ও কর্মেন্দ্রিয়র যে অপক্ক স্বাভাবিক শক্তি তা যখন এই তিন রকম বাসনার ছাঁচে রূপায়িত হয়, তখনই ত্রিবিপাকের সৃজনশীলতার অবকাশ আসে। ত্রিবিপাক থেকেই জন্ম নেয় আমাদের চেষ্টা বা ইচ্ছাশক্তি, যার ফলে এটি আমাদের জ্ঞানেন্দ্রিয় ও কর্মেন্দ্রিয়র শক্তির সঙ্গে সাক্ষাৎভাবে সংলগ্ন হয়ে এই ইন্দ্রিয়গুলিতেই প্রাসঙ্গিক পরিবর্তন ঘটায়। সংক্ষেপে বাসনা যে পথ কেটে দেয়, ত্রিবিপাক সেই পথ বেয়ে আমাদের ইন্দ্রিয়-শক্তির সঙ্গে সংলগ্ন হয়ে উত্তরোত্তর জ্ঞান, কর্ম ও সংস্কারের জন্ম দেয়। তবে ত্রিবিপাকের এই সৃজন এই জন্মের জন্য নয়, পরজন্মে সঞ্চালিত হয়।

ত্রিগুণ, কর্ম ও সংস্কার সম্বন্ধে গীতার যে তত্ত্ব তা যোগসূত্রের উপর নির্ভরশীল, আর যোগসূত্র অনুযায়ী আমাদের কর্ম দু প্রকার—ভোগভূত ও পুরুষকার। ভোগভূত ক্রিয়া হল আমাদের অনৈচ্ছিক ক্রিয়া, অভ্যাসজনিত, বা আবেগতাড়িত ক্রিয়া, পাকক্রিয়া বা নিঃশ্বাস-প্রশ্বাস—বলা বাহুল্য এগুলির ক্ষেত্রে আমাদের ইচ্ছাশক্তি ইন্দ্রিয়র সহজাত শক্তির দ্বারা অভিভূত হয়। এই ক্রিয়াগুলি অতীত সংস্কার আর বাহ্যপ্রভাবের দ্বারা নিয়ন্ত্রিত। অন্যদিকে সত্যিকারের স্বাধীন, স্বতঃপ্রণোদিত, ঐচ্ছিক কর্ম বলতে যা বোঝায় আমাদের পুরুষকার হল তাই —এরা বস্তুত আমাদের সংস্কারের দমন ও প্রতিরোধে সক্ষম। তবে বিশেষ বিশেষ কর্ম যে বিশেষ সংস্কারের ধারার জন্ম দিয়েছে, তার ফল কর্তাকে ভোগ করতেই হবে—এই ধারাকে লঙ্ঘন করা যায় না। কেউ যদি চৌরকর্মে ব্যাপৃত হয়, বা রাগের বশে কাজ করাটাকেই অভ্যাস করে ফেলে, এই কর্মধারা তাদের প্রাসঙ্গিক সংস্কারশৃঙ্খল উৎপন্ন করে যাবে, যতক্ষণ না এই সংস্কার-ধারা নিয়ে আমরা সাক্ষাৎ ভাবনা চিন্তা মনন না করি, সেগুলি জোর করে নতুন পথে চালিত না করি। এটা করতে পারলে তবেই চৌর সংস্কার ও ক্রোধ-সংস্কার যথাক্রমে অচৌর সংস্কারে ও অ-ক্রোধ সংস্কারে রূপান্তরিত হবে, তাদের নতুন ফল উৎপন্ন করবে, কিন্তু তার জন্য আগের সংস্কারপুঞ্জের ফল নিঃশেষিত হওয়া প্রয়োজন। এখান থেকে একটা কথা বোঝা যাচ্ছে—ভারতীয় মনস্তত্ত্বে দুটো স্তর স্বীকার করা হয়েছে—প্রথম স্তরে আমাদের জ্ঞান, বিশ্বাস, ইচ্ছা—এক কার্য-কারণের অলঙ্ঘ্য নিয়ন্ত্রণের অধীন, কিন্তু দ্বিতীয় স্তরে মানুষ তার নিজস্ব সংস্কারগুলির উপর মনন করতে পারে, তাদের সঙ্গে মোকাবিলা করতে পারে, নতুন পথে মোড় ফেরাতে পারে।

গীতা ৩—৩৩-৪৩ সূত্র মোটামুটিভাবে এই যোগ-তত্ত্বের সঙ্গে সামঞ্জস্যপূর্ণ। এখানে ৩৭ আর ৪১-৪৩ সূত্রের ওপর গান্ধী-ভাষ্যের একটা তর্জমা দেখে নেওয়া যাক—

'কাম ও ক্রোধ—এই দুই বৃহৎ শক্তি মানুষকে পাপের পথে নিয়ে যায়। ঈশ্বরের উপলব্ধির সঙ্গে মানুষের মন তাঁরই নিয়ন্ত্রণে আসে, ইন্দ্রিয়তাড়না থেকে মুক্তি পায়।' ৪৩ সূত্রে সংস্তভ্য 'ত্মানম আত্মনা' এই শব্দবন্ধের যে পাঠ দিয়েছেন তা মোটামুটি এইভাবে প্রকাশ করা যায়—'আত্মশক্তি দ্বারা বা ঐশ্বরিক প্রবৃত্তির দ্বরা মনের দানবীয় প্রবৃত্তিগুলিকে পরাভূত করা।' [৬]

জীবের গঠন ও প্রকৃতি দুটি কারণের উপর নির্ভরশীল—একটা হল তার পূর্বজন্মের সংস্কার, আর একটা তার বর্তমান জন্মের পারিপার্শ্বিক, শিক্ষা ও সৎসঙ্গ। এই দুই কারণের সংমিশ্রণে মানবপ্রকৃতির যে পরিবর্তন ঘটে সেকথা গীতার ৭—১১, ৩৫ সূত্রে পাওয়া যায়। অন্য বর্ণের ব্যক্তিরাও যদি ব্রাহ্মণসুলভ আচার-অনুষ্ঠান— যেমন শম-দম ইত্যাদি পালন করেন, তাঁরাও ব্রাহ্মণ হিসেবেই গণ্য হবেন। অনেক পন্ডিতের মতেই বৈদিক যুগে বর্ণভেদ ছিল না—যেমন ঋগ্বেদের এই দ্বিধাহীন দ্ব্যর্থহীন শ্লোকটি যদি স্মরণ করি :

'অবলোকন করুন—আমি একজন স্তোত্রকার, আমার পুত্র চিকিৎসক, অর্থাৎ বৈদ্য, আমার কন্যা যবভর্জনকারী, অর্থাৎ পাচিকা।'

অনুরূপ ধ্যান ধারণা ঐতেরীয়, ছান্দোগ্য, এবং শতপথ ব্রাহ্মণেও পাওয়া যায়। তাছাড়া তৈত্তিরীয় ও শতপথব্রাহ্মণ উপনিষদে শূদ্রের কোনো উল্লেখই ছিল না—স্পষ্টই বোঝা যাচ্ছে যে পরবর্তী যুগে শূদ্রের ধারণাটি কৃত্রিম উদ্ভাবনায় মূল সমাজ ধারায় ঢুকিয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছিল।[৭]

উপরের আলোচনার প্রেক্ষিতে এই তত্ত্বে একটা উভয়-সংকট লক্ষ করা যায়। —প্রথম বিকল্পে আমরা আগে জন্মাই, পরে বর্তমান জীবনে চলতে চলতে আমাদের গুণ কর্ম আহরণ করি, দ্বিতীয় বিকল্পে বিশেষ বিশেষ বর্ণের বিশেষ বিশেষ গুণ-সমন্বয় নিয়েই আমরা জন্মগ্রহণ করি। প্রথম বিকল্পটি অভিজ্ঞতাভিত্তিক দাবি, দ্বিতীয় ক্ষেত্রে এটি একটি পূর্বতঃসিদ্ধ আবশ্যিক তত্ত্ব, গীতা ও যোগসূত্রে কর্ম ও দ্বিধাবিভাজিত সংস্কারের যে কট্টর অবধারণ, ত্রিবিপাক ও ভোগভূত কর্মের যে মৌলবাদী পরাতাত্ত্বিক ব্যাখ্যা—এই সব নিয়েই তৈরি হয়েছে এই দ্বিতীয় বিকল্পটি।[৮] মানবজীবনের বিভিন্ন ধাপে তাদের গুণ-কর্মের যে পরিবর্তন ঘটে সেটা তো সাধারণ অভিজ্ঞতার ব্যাপার। মাঝে মাঝে তা বেশ নাটকীয় বা আমূল পরিবর্তন বলেও ঠাহর হয়। তবে এই পরিবর্তন কখনোই চূড়ান্তভাবে ভুঁইফোড় বা আকস্মিক নয়, তা হলে তো গোটা মানবজীবনের গোটা পরিসরটাই বিশৃঙ্খল অরাজকতায় পর্যবসিত হত—সব কিছু থেকেই সবকিছু নিষ্পন্ন হত, আবার কোনো কিছু থেকে কোনো সিদ্ধান্ত টানা যেত না। এই দ্বিতীয় বিকল্পের জোরে চতুর্বর্ণের যে গুণ-কর্ম ভিত্তিক তত্ত্ব—তার প্রয়োজনীয় মদত পেয়ে যায়। এই তত্ত্ব অনুযায়ী প্রতিটি ভোগভূত কর্ম সংস্কার-জনিত, সে নিজেও আবার প্রাসঙ্গিক সংস্কারের জন্ম দেয়, এইভাবে জন্ম জন্ম সংস্কারের স্তর পুঞ্জীভূত হতে থাকে। কিন্তু অন্যদিকে পুরুষকার অনুযায়ী পূর্বপ্রদত্ত সংস্কার নিয়ে নাড়া চাড়া, তাদের দিক পরিবর্তনের স্বাতন্ত্র্য মানুষের আছে। তা না হলে তো কোন্ সংস্কারকে কতদূর কী মাত্রায় পরিবর্তন করা যায়—তা তো সংস্কারের মধ্যেই ধরা থাকতো, সংস্কার-পরিবর্তনের আপাত স্বাধীনতা ওই নিয়ন্ত্রণবাদেই বিলীন হয়ে যেত। শাস্ত্রকাররা যখন বিশেষ বিশেষ বর্ণের মানুষকে বিশেষ বিশেষ কর্ম করার নৈতিক বিধান

দেন, সেক্ষেত্রে পূর্বপ্রদত্ত সংস্কারকে অতিক্রম করার স্বাতন্ত্র্য না থাকলে ওই বিধান দেবার কোনো সার্থকতাই থাকতো না।

চতুর্বর্ণের গুণ-কর্মভিত্তিক তত্ত্বের ত্রুটি : এতক্ষণ আমরা চতুর্বর্ণের ধারণা ও তার গুণ-কর্ম ভিত্তিক তত্ত্বটিকে গীতা ও বেদের পটভূমিতে, যোগসূত্রের আলোতে পরিশ্রুত করার চেষ্টা করছিলাম, সম্ভাব্য অপব্যাখ্যা ও ঐতিহাসিক অবক্ষয় থেকে মুক্ত করে দেখতে চাইছিলাম। তার মানে এই নয় যে এই গুণ-কর্ম তত্ত্ব অকাট্য। এই ত্রুটি সনাক্ত করে তবেই গান্ধী-অরবিন্দের সম্ভাব্য সমন্বয়ে যেতে হবে।

বলা বাহুল্য আমাদের জ্ঞান, অভিজ্ঞতা, কর্ম—এদের কোনোটাই আকস্মিক বা যদৃচ্ছ ঘটনা নয়, বা যাদুর খেলও নয়, তাই এই তত্ত্ব অনুযায়ী আমাদের প্রতিটি জ্ঞান বা প্রয়াসের একটা যথাযথ সাংস্কারিক ভিত্তি চাই, তা না হলে, এই বিশেষ জ্ঞান বা কাজটি এই বিশেষ জ্ঞাতা বা কর্তার, অন্য কারও নয়—এই দাবিই করতে পারতাম না। কিন্তু প্রশ্ন হল—যে পুরুষকার সংস্কারকে পরিবর্তন করে, পরিমার্জন করে—তারও তো একটা সাংস্কারিক ভিত্তি চাই, তা না হলে কার পুরুষকার—এ কথাই তো ঠিক করা যাবে না। আরও বলা হয়েছে—বর্তমান জ্ঞান বা কর্ম থেকে এই সংস্কার দ্বারাই অতীতলব্ধ সদৃশ জ্ঞান বা কর্মের স্মৃতি উদ্বুদ্ধ হয়। এখন এই দুই সংস্কার—বাসনা ও ত্রিবিপাক—এরা তো অচেতন, তাই এদের সম্বন্ধে কোনও জ্ঞান বা অনুভব হবার অবকাশ তো জ্ঞাতার নাই! 'সাদৃশ্য' শব্দটার অর্থই হল জ্ঞাত সাদৃশ্য, অজ্ঞাত সাদৃশ্যের ধারণাটাই অর্থহীন। কার্য-কারণ সম্বন্ধ অজ্ঞাত হতে পারে, মাধ্যাকর্ষণের টান অজ্ঞাত হতে পারে, কিন্তু সাদৃশ্য অজ্ঞাত হতে পারে না। অচেতন সংস্কার জড় পদার্থেরই সামিল, আর কেউ যদি দাবি করে যে এই সংস্কার তার জড় শক্তিবলে এক জ্ঞানের সঙ্গে আর এক জ্ঞানকেও টেনে আনে, সেক্ষেত্রে এই টেনে আনাটা হবে বস্তুগত আকর্ষণ (চৌম্বক টান বা মাধ্যাকর্ষণের মতো) তাকে কোনোমতেই সদৃশ জ্ঞানের উদবোধ বা স্মৃতি বলা যাবে না। তা ছাড়া সাদৃশ্যের বোধ হওয়ার জন্য দুটি সদৃশ বস্তুর উপস্থিতিই প্রয়োজন—সংস্কার-তত্ত্বে তো শুধু একটি সম্বন্ধীর উপস্থিতি পাই, অন্যটি তো তত্ত্বের প্রয়োজনেই অনুপস্থিত!

সব মিলিয়ে ব্যাপারটা দাঁড়াল অনেকটা এইরকম—এক একটি ব্যক্তি ও ব্যক্তিত্ব এক একটি আধা তরল আধা জমাট সাংস্কারিক ভিত্তিভূমি নিয়ে জন্মায়, এই তল্‌তলে পদার্থটা আসলে ত্রিগুণের এক একটা বিশেষ সংমিশ্রণ, যার উপর আবার দ্বিতীয় স্তরের পুরুষকার কাজ করে, ঐ পদার্থের গতি-প্রকৃতি পরিমার্জন করে। আমি বলবো—এই গোটা ছবিটাই বিশ্বাসযোগ্য নয়। অবশ্য এই ছবিতে এক একটা গুণকে আমরা কখনোই স্বতন্ত্রভাবে পাই না—পাই এক একটা মিশ্রণ, কিন্তু এই এক একটা তল্‌তলে মিশ্রণ কিন্তু এক একটা সুনির্ণীত বর্গ—আর এই মিশ্রণে কোন্ গুণ কোন্ ধারায় কতটা পরিবর্তিত হতে পারে—তা পূর্বনির্ধারিত বলেই দাবি করা হয়। এই ছবিতে এই আধা তরল আধা দ্রব পদার্থটিই আমাদের ব্যক্তিত্ব, আমাদের বর্ণ—যার ভার বহন করতে হবে আমাদের সারা জীবন। এই আধা তরল অধিবিদ্যা মনস্তাত্ত্বিক নিয়ন্ত্রণবাদের ত্রুটি-বিচ্যুতি নিয়েই থেকে গেল, সেগুলি এড়াতে পারলো না।[৯]

ভারতের ইতিহাস বিবর্তনের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে বর্ণব্যবস্থার মূল মনস্তাত্ত্বিক ও নৈতিক সূত্রগুলির অবক্ষয় ঘটেছে — একথা সকলেই বলে থাকে। যেখানে এক একটা বর্ণ আদতে এক একটা চিন্তার মাত্রা বা অভিমুখ মাত্র, সেখানে এদের অনুরূপ এক একটা কৃত্রিম গোষ্ঠী তৈরি হল; ঋগ্বেদের পুরুষসুক্তে যা ছিল এক উদ্ভাবনী প্রেরণামূলক চিত্রকল্প, তাই পর্যবসিত হল কল্পনাবিহীন আক্ষরিক অধঃপাতে। পন্ডিত ও পুরোহিত হয়ে গেল সত্ত্ব গুণ বা ব্রাহ্মণত্বের ব্যঙ্গচিত্র, অলস অত্যাচারী জমিদার হয়ে গেল রজস্ বা ক্ষত্রিয়ত্বের ভেক, লোভী ব্যবসায়ী হল বৈশ্যত্ব (রজ-সত্ত্ব সমন্বয়) এর প্রতিভূ—আর সবশেষে তৈরি হল লাখ লাখ অর্ধভুক্ত জনমজুর, তৈরি হল শূদ্রত্বের সাথে তাদের নতুন সমীকরণ। বলা বাহুল্য, এই অবক্ষয়ের হোতা মানুষ স্বয়ং, আর গুণ-কর্মভিত্তিক বর্ণ-তত্ত্ব অনুযায়ী প্রকৃত হোতা হল এদের জন্মগত ত্রিগুণমিশ্রণ, তাদের পূর্বপ্রদত্ত সাংস্কারিক দ্রবভূমি। মনস্তাত্ত্বিক নিয়ন্ত্রণবাদের এই পুরো তত্ত্বটার প্রতিটি স্তরে স্তরেই দেখা যাচ্ছে অসংগতি।

১.৩ চতুর্বর্ণের এক মেদহীন পঠনপ্রয়াস : নিয়ন্ত্রণবাদ এড়ানোর জন্য চতুর্বর্ণের এক অন্য পাঠ প্রয়োজন, যাতে এক একটা বর্ণ বা এক এক ধরনের ব্যক্তিত্ব এক এক পরিমাণের দ্রবতায় না পর্যবসিত হয়। উল্লিখিত চারটি মানদন্ডের তাই একটা নবীকরণ দেওয়া হল—(ক) প্রজ্ঞা—পরম তত্ত্বজ্ঞান স্বরূপ (খ) শক্তি বা পরম প্রতাপ (গ) সংহতি—অর্থাৎ বিবিধ অংশের সুসমঞ্জস ভারসাম্য, (ঘ) কর্ম—শ্রমে পটুত্ব ও পূর্ণতা অর্জন।[১০] চতুর্বর্ণের এই ধারণায় প্রতিটি ব্যক্তি তার পুরুষকার অনুসারে আপন আপন সংস্কারকে নতুন পথে চালিত করতে পারে, তার এই প্রয়াসকে পুরোনো সংস্কারের খাঁচায় আবদ্ধ হতে দেয় না। আগে আলোচিত সংস্কার তত্ত্বে জ্ঞান-কর্মের যে দুটি স্তর স্বীকৃত হয়েছিল—একটি প্রাথমিক স্তর ও অন্যটি পরা স্তর—এই পাঠে ওরকম স্তরবৈষম্যের স্থান নেই।

এক একটি ব্যক্তিত্বের ধাঁচাকে এক একটি গুণমিশ্রণের সঙ্গে এক করলে অসুবিধাটা কোথায়? অসুবিধা এটাই যে এক একটা গুণ বা বর্ণ যেমন এক একটা নিরেট তন্মাত্র নয়, তেমনি এক একটা বিশেষ মিশ্রণকেও এক একটা বর্ণের সঙ্গে একাত্ম করা যায় না। এক একটা গুণের যে কোনও জমাট দুর্ভেদ্য সত্তা নেই—প্রতিটি গুণ যে অপর দুটি দ্বারা অনুবিদ্ধ—শুধু এটুকুই বুঝলে হবে না। এক একটা সংমিশ্রণও কোনও স্বতন্ত্র সত্তা নিয়ে বসে নেই—এক সংমিশ্রণ সব সময়েই অন্য সংমিশ্রণের দ্বারা আক্রান্ত। এক এক মাত্রার দ্রবতা বা এক এক মাত্রার সংমিশ্রণ সবসময়েই অন্য মাত্রার সংমিশ্রণে ছড়িয়ে পড়ছে—তাই এক একটা বর্ণকে যে এক এক পরিমাণ দ্রবতার সঙ্গে একাত্ম করা হয়েছিল—এটা ঠিক নয়।

এই দৃষ্টিভঙ্গির পূর্ণ তাৎপর্য বোঝা যাবে যখন দেখবো কীভাবে প্রজ্ঞা, শক্তি, সংহতি আর কর্ম—একে অপরে অনুপ্রবিষ্ট। বিশুদ্ধ ধীশক্তি—যখন তা তত্ত্বকে তার জাগতিক প্রয়োগ থেকে টেনে ছিঁড়ে আনতে চায়, তখনও জগতের জলজ্যান্ত উপাদানেই তার ভিত্তি। যে তত্ত্বের কোনও প্রায়োগিক অভিমুখ নেই—সে তত্ত্ব তো তত্ত্ব হিসেবেই বিফল। প্রথমত এরকম তত্ত্বসর্বস্ব প্রয়োগবিমুখ প্রয়াস জ্ঞানের আদর্শ নয়—অহংবাদী প্রবৃত্তিতাড়িত এই তত্ত্ব নৈতিক ভাবে বিফল; অন্যদিকে তত্ত্বের প্রয়োগপদ্ধতি, পরিপার্শ্বের অপরিবর্তনীয়তার সূত্র[১১]—এগুলি যদি তত্ত্বে

সমন্বিত না হয়, তা হলে সেটা তত্ত্বজ্ঞানেরই ব্যর্থতা। এইজন্যই ব্রাহ্মণত্বকে মেলাতে হবে ক্ষত্রিয়ত্বের সঙ্গে, ক্ষত্রিয়ত্বকে দেখতে হবে শুধু পেশীশক্তি হিসেবে নয়— জীবনের জটিল পরিস্থিতিতে তত্ত্ব ও প্রয়োগের প্রতিবন্ধকতা মোকাবিলা করার জ্ঞানশক্তি হিসেবে। অনুরূপভাবে যে উৎপাদন বাড়াতে পারে সে যেন নোটের পাহাড় না জমায়, সে যেন মানবসম্পদের সঙ্গে, মানুষের জ্ঞান ও কর্মের সঙ্গে ধনের একটা গুণগত সাম্য তৈরি করে—এটাই সংহতির পরিচায়ক। শেষমেশ কর্ম হল শ্রমকে ভালবাসার আদর্শ; অন্ধ আনুগত্য নয়, চিন্তাবিহীন কায়শ্রম নয়, শ্রমের মধ্যে সৃজনী উদ্ভাবনাকে মেশানো, তত্ত্ব ও প্রয়োগের ব্যবধানকে কমিয়ে আনা। এই প্রেক্ষিতে ক্ষত্রিয়ত্বের সঙ্গে শ্রমনীতির যোগসূত্র স্পষ্ট। এই ভাবেই প্রযুক্তিবিদ্ ও শ্রমিকের কাজের সঙ্গে তাত্ত্বিকের কাজ একসূত্রে গ্রথিত হয়, এইভাবেই কর্ম মিলিত হয় প্রজ্ঞা ও শক্তির সঙ্গে, এইভাবেই এই তিন নীতি সংহতির সূত্রে বাঁধা পড়ে। এইভাবেই বুঝতে হবে চতুর্বর্ণকে—প্রবণতা হিসেবে, অভিমুখ হিসেবে—যাদের প্রতিষঙ্গী কোনও বাস্তব পদার্থ নেই।

অরবিন্দের মতে এই চারটি সূত্র বা অভিমুখকে আত্মশক্তির আলোকে সমন্বিত করতে হবে—যে আত্মশক্তি অহংবোধকে পরাভূত করে। আগেই বলেছি আমি অরবিন্দ ভাষ্যের কিছু রদবদল করবো, যাতে গান্ধী ও অরবিন্দের ভাষ্যকে একে অপরের সঙ্গে খাপ খাওয়াতে পারি। এই সংশ্লেষণের একটা বিশেষ তাৎপর্য আছে বলে মনে করি। একদিকে এক একটা মানদন্ড বা মাপক অন্য মাত্রাগুলিকে দূরে সরিয়ে একট বিশেষ মাত্রাকে প্রক্ষেপণ করে—যেমন দৈর্ঘ্যের মাপক প্রস্থ ও ঘনত্বকে পরিহার করে শুধুমাত্র লম্বমান পরিসরটিকেই আলোকিত করে, তেমনই ঘনত্বের অভিমুখ যেন দৈর্ঘ্য-প্রস্থহীন পীনত্বকেই তুলে ধরে। কিন্তু যা নিছক মানদন্ড বা অভিমুখ—তাকে যদি বাস্তব সত্তায় (বিশুদ্ধ দৈর্ঘ্যে বা বিশুদ্ধ প্রস্থে) ফুলিয়ে তুলি তা যেমন এক বুদ্ধিভ্রম, তেমনই যদি ইচ্ছাকৃতভাবে মানদণ্ডের বিকৃতি ঘটাই—যেমন ইল্যাস্টিক রুলার যদি হয় আমার দৈর্ঘ্যের মাপক, জল বা পারদের মতন তরল/আধা তরল পদার্থ যদি হয় আমাদের গণনার একক—সেও হবে আর এক ধরনের বিভ্রান্তি। একদিকে জ্ঞান ও তত্ত্বকে স্বাতন্ত্র্য দিতে হবে, বাহ্যিক জগতের বিবিধ ঘটনার দ্বারা যেন আমাদের তত্ত্বজ্ঞান অভিভূত না হয়,আমাদের তত্ত্বীকরণের ক্ষমতা যেন শিথিল না হয়ে যায়; অন্যদিকে উপাদানবিহীন আকারসর্বস্ব সংগতিও এক অন্ধ দাসত্ব—যারা যথাক্রমে বিশুদ্ধ সত্ত্ব ও বিশুদ্ধ রজগুণের ছদ্মবেশ—তাদেরও প্রতিরোধ করা দরকার। এই চারটি নিরিখ বা ভাবমুখ—এদের কোনটার মধ্যে কোনটার কতটা অনুপ্রবেশ দরকার—কতটা তাত্ত্বিকভাবে অনুমোদনীয়—এটা কে ঠিক করবে? এখানে মনস্তাত্ত্বিক নিয়ন্ত্রণবাদ, বা পূর্বপ্রদত্ত সংস্কার-তত্ত্ব খাটবে না, আবার বাহ্যিক জগতের উপযোগিতার নিরিখেও এর সমাধান হবে না। এই সূত্রেই আসবে নিষ্কাম কর্মের প্রাসঙ্গিকতা—যা আমরা পরবর্তী পরিচ্ছেদ গুলিতে দেখতে পাবো।

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চতুর্বর্ণের নিরিখধর্মী প্রেক্ষিতে গান্ধীর গীতা-ভাষ্যের আলোচনা

গান্ধীর গীতাভাষ্যের কিছু নির্বাচিত অংশের ভিত্তিতে চতুর্বর্ণের নিরিখধর্মী পাঠের সঙ্গে তাঁর মতকে খাপ খাওয়ানোর চেষ্টা করবো।[১২] তিনি ৪-১৩ নং শ্লোকের ব্যাখ্যা করছেন

এইভাবে—'ঈশ্বরচেতনাই যাঁর জীবনের ধর্ম তিনিই ব্রাহ্মণ, জনসাধারণকে সেই চেতনায় দীক্ষিত করাই তাঁর ব্রত।' এই প্রসঙ্গে গান্ধীর বিশেষ প্রণিধান—'এই গুণগুলি ছাড়াও অন্য বর্ণের উপযোগী গুণগুলিতে তাঁর সমান অধিকার।' আর এই প্রসঙ্গেই তিনি বলছেন—'শূদ্রের বিশেষ ধর্ম হল শ্রম বা সেবা, যা তিনি 'যজ্ঞের আদর্শে প্রাণিত করবেন' বা 'জনস্বার্থে বিনিয়োগ করবেন।' ৩-৩৫[১৩]-এর পাঠে তিনি বলছেন—'কোনও বিশেষ পেশায় প্রতিষ্ঠিত মানুষ—যেমন সংমার্জক—তিনি যদি তাঁর নিজের পেশা ত্যাগ করে হিসাবরক্ষক হতে চান, তাহলে তিনি তাঁর নিজের ও তাঁর গোষ্ঠীর বিপদ ডেকে আনেন।' বিশেষ দ্রষ্টব্য এই যে গান্ধী কিন্তু 'স্বধর্ম' শব্দটিকে 'মানস-ভৌতিক জীব' ('psycho-physical organism') এর অর্থে গ্রহণ করেননি,[১৪] 'স্বকর্তব্য' হিসেবে অনুবাদ করেছেন। তাঁর মতে যে মনোভাবে ও মর্যাদাবোধে কাজটি সম্পন্ন হয়, ঈশ্বর কাজটিকে সেই নিরিখেই বিচার করেন, কাজটি বস্তুত কী কাজ—সে কথা এখানে অপ্রাসঙ্গিক।[১৫] তাঁর অনুবাদের ভঙ্গি থেকে এটা স্পষ্ট যে বর্ণকে তিনি কোনও জন্মগত মানস-ভৌতিক জৈব সত্তার সঙ্গে একাত্ম করেননি, কোনও মনস্তাত্ত্বিক নিয়ন্ত্রণবাদের কাঠামোতে ফেলতে চাননি। বরঞ্চ তাঁর মতে কেউ যদি স্বধর্মকে লঙ্ঘন করে সে নিষ্কাম কর্মনীতিকেই লঙ্ঘন করে।

কেন, তা একটু খতিয়ে দেখা যাক। কথিত আছে মন্ডুকের দেহের মূল আয়তন তার স্বধর্ম—সে যদি নিজেকে ষাঁড়ের আয়তনে বাড়াতে চায়—এই স্বধর্মের লঙ্ঘন তো তার মৃত্যুরই সামিল। দুধ জলের চেয়ে উৎকৃষ্ট হতে পারে, কিন্তু মাছকে জলেই প্রাণধারণ করতে হবে, দুধে প্রাণধারণ তার স্বধর্মের লঙ্ঘন। আমাদের পৃথিবীর সব শক্তির উৎস হল সৌরশক্তি, কিন্তু তাবলে পৃথিবী ছেড়ে সূর্যে যাওয়া হল স্বধর্ম-হানি তথা আত্মহানি। দুধ, জল বা আগুনের ধ্রুব সত্তা আছে তা বলছি না, অথবা প্রতিটি বস্তুর দৈশিক পরিমাণ এক অতীন্দ্রিয় দেশ-খোলসের দ্বারা আবৃত—এরকম তত্ত্বও আমাদের অভিপ্রেত নয়। দেশ বা বিস্তার কোনও স্বতন্ত্র পদার্থ নয়—যা অদৃশ্য আধারস্বরূপ প্রতিটি বস্তুকে ঘিরে থাকে, আর তাদের আকার বা আয়তনকে নিয়ন্ত্রণ করে। বস্তুই দেশ, বস্তুর আকার ও আয়তনই বিস্তার, সমগ্র জগৎ ধ্বংস হলে বিস্তার স্বয়ং ধ্বস্ত হবে, জগতের আধারস্বরূপ কোনও শুদ্ধ দেশ বা বিস্তার অতীন্দ্রিয় খোলসস্বরূপ পড়ে থাকবে না। বস্তুর চারপাশে কোনও অদৃশ্য ঘেরাটোপ নেই, তাই এই হিসেবে সব বস্তু অপরাপর বস্তুতে নিমজ্জিত। কিন্তু তার মানে এই নয় যে কোনও বস্তু তার আয়তনকে ফুলিয়ে (বা চুপ্‌সে) অন্য আয়তন গ্রহণ করতে পারবে। আসলে দেশকে বস্তু-অতিরিক্ত আধার হিসেবে দেখার ফলেই এই ধরনের মন্ডুক-বিভ্রান্তির জন্ম হয়। মন্ডুক তার দেহের ক্ষুদ্র আধারকে যাদুবলে বৃহত্তর আধারে উন্নীত করতে চেয়েছিল। ক্ষুদ্র চারাগাছ কীভাবে ক্রমে ক্রমে বৃহৎ বৃক্ষে পরিণত হয়? দেহের ক্ষুদ্র আধারটিকে ভেল্কিবাজিতে ফুলিয়ে ফাঁপিয়ে নয়, আরও নতুন নতুন পদার্থ—আরও জল, আলো, বাতাস, মাটি ধীরে ধীরে নিজের শরীরে সংশ্লেষণ করেই সে বেড়ে ওঠে। বেড়ে ওঠার কোনো স্তরেই তার আয়তন এক বাহ্যিক আধারস্বরূপ নয়—এই সহজ সত্যটিকে মন্ডুক বোঝে নি, সে ভেবেছিল তার শরীরের আয়তনটি রাবারের বেলুনের মতন, অধিক বাতাস ঢুকলে ছোট আধারটি বৃহৎ আধারে পরিণত হবে। তার এই বৃহদায়তন প্রাপ্তির প্রয়াস—প্রাকৃতিক নিয়মকে লঙ্ঘন করে, উদ্ভট কিছু পাওয়ার বাসনা—সকাম

কর্মের মার্কামারা উদাহরণ বলা যেতে পারে। শুধুমাত্র কর্তব্যের খাতিরেই কর্তব্য করা, কোনও বাসনা কামনা বা বাহ্যিক উপযোগিতার চাপে নয়—এই যে নিষ্কাম কর্মনীতি, মন্ডুকের স্বধর্ম উল্লঙ্ঘনের কাজটি নিষ্কাম কর্মনীতির এক নাটকীয় বৈপরীত্য।

প্রাকৃতিক নিয়মকে কৃত্রিম উপায়ে ছাপিয়ে ওঠার চেষ্টা, দেহের আয়তন বাড়ানো, মানদন্ডকে বিকৃত করা, কৃত্রিম উপায়ে করোনার জীবাণু উৎপাদন—যার ফল ভোগ করছে আজ সমগ্র বিশ্ব—এ সব কাজেই রয়েছে বাসনার বিপুল বোঝা—যা প্রাকৃতিক নিয়মকে অতিক্রম করে, বাসনার বশে কর্মকে তার অভিপ্রায় ও ফল থেকে বিযুক্ত করে। আজকের করোনা মহামারির হোতা যদি কেউ থেকে থাকেন, তাঁরা নিষ্কাম কর্মের আদর্শে এই কাজ করেননি। নিছক কর্তব্যের খাতিরে, অন্য কোনও ফললাভের আশায় যে ব্যক্তি কাজ করেন, সেক্ষেত্রে তার কর্মের ফলটি স্বতন্ত্র শরীর নিয়ে প্রকটভাবে চেয়ে থাকে না, অর্থাৎ তা কর্মকর্তার কামনার বস্তু হয়ে উঠতে পারে না, কর্মের মধ্যেই, কর্মের অভিপ্রায়ের মধ্যেই সে আত্মস্থ হয়ে যায়। শুধুমাত্র কর্তব্যের খাতিরে এই জীবাণু উৎপন্ন করলে তার সম্ভাব্য উপযোগিতা, আধিপত্য অর্জন, আলাদাভাবে কামনার বস্তু হয়ে উঠতে পারতো না—এবং এই সুফলের লোভ সম্ভাব্য বিশ্বব্যাপী ধ্বংসকাণ্ড থেকে কর্মকর্তার চোখ সরিয়ে নিতে পারতো না।

নিষ্কাম কর্মের নীতি আমাদের কর্মের যে নৈমিত্তিক ফল (অর্থাৎ যা বাহ্যিক বা অনিয়ত) সেই সব ফলকে বর্জন করার বিধান দেয়, কর্মের স্বাভাবিক বা অঙ্গাঙ্গী ফলকে নয়। কর্ম, কর্মের অভিপ্রায় ও কর্মফলের যে নিরবচ্ছিন্নতার কথা বলতে চাইছি—তা নিষ্কাম কর্মনীতির মধ্যেই ধরা পড়ে। যোগদর্শন বা গীতায় কর্মের স্বাভাবিক বা অন্তরীণ পরিণতিকেই কর্মফল বলা হয়েছে, কর্মের বাহ্য অনিয়ত আনুষঙ্গিক ঘটনাবলীকে ফলের মর্যাদা দেওয়া হয়নি। স্বাভাবিক ও নৈমিত্তিক ফলের পার্থক্য কিছু উদাহরণের সাহায্যে ব্যাখ্যা করা যেতে পারে। ১। উচ্চতর অধ্যয়নের দ্বারা পান্ডিত্য অর্জন ২। অজ্ঞতাবশত কোনও তৃষ্ণার্ত ব্যক্তির দ্বারা করোনা-আক্রান্ত মানুষের উচ্ছিষ্ট জলপান ৩। চারাগাছ পোঁতা আর ওই গাছটি বেড়ে ওঠার সুখানুভূতি ও প্রত্যাশা। এই প্রসঙ্গে আমি বলবো—কৃত্রিম উপায়ে করোনা জীবাণু সৃষ্টির স্বাভাবিক ফল হল মহামারি—এই ফলকে উৎসর্গ করার কথা নিষ্কাম কর্মনীতির বিধান নয়। অন্যদিকে উচ্চতর অধ্যয়নের ফলে উঁচু চাকরি নাও মিলতে পারে, গাছ লাগাবার পরেও অন্যান্য শর্তসাপেক্ষে গাছটি না বাড়তে পারে—তাই চাকরি পাওয়া, ফলন্ত বা ফুলন্ত বৃক্ষপ্রাপ্তি—এই সব অনিশ্চিত অনিয়ত পরিণামকেই পরিহার করার প্রশ্ন ওঠে। এই প্রসঙ্গে বিশেষ দ্রষ্টব্য যে গীতার ২- ৪৭ নং শ্লোকে[১৬] 'মা' এই নিষেধাত্মক অব্যয়টির দ্বারা দুরকমের নিষেধ বোঝায়—প্রথম অর্থে নিষেধাত্মক বচনটি হল একটি তথ্যজ্ঞাপক বা বর্ণনাত্মক বচন—কর্মকর্তার নৈমিত্তিক ফলের ওপর কোনো অধিকার নেই—এই তথ্য জ্ঞাপন করাতেই এই বচনের তাৎপর্য। দ্বিতীয়ত আমাদের বুঝতে হবে যে 'মা' এই শব্দের দ্বারা কর্মের স্বাভাবিক ফল—যেমন পঠন-পাঠন দ্বারা মেধা বৃদ্ধি, চারাগাছ পোঁতার সঙ্গে তার বেড়ে ওঠার ধারণা (প্রকৃত বেড়ে ওঠা নয়) অজ্ঞতাজনিত ভুল কাজ—যেমন জীবাণু-আক্রান্ত জল খাওয়া—এইসব কর্মের অঙ্গাঙ্গী ধর্মগুলি বোঝানো হয়নি। এই পরিণতিগুলি যেহেতু কর্মের সঙ্গেই একাত্ম, তাই 'কর্ম করো, কিন্তু এই ফলগুলি পরিহার করো'—এই বিধান দেওয়ার অর্থ হয় না। 'মা' এর দ্বিতীয় অর্থ হল স্বাভাবিক

ফলের প্রতি যে বাড়তি আকর্ষণ (বা বিকর্ষণ) তাকে পরিত্যাগ করা। তাই আবার-ও বলি—জীবাণু সৃষ্টি করার স্বাভাবিক ফল হল মহামারি, এই ফল কর্মেরই অঙ্গাঙ্গী—সেখানে ঐ কর্মকে রেখে তার ফলকে বর্জন করা যায় না। অর্থাৎ এ ক্ষেত্রে সমগ্র কর্মটিকেই বর্জন করা উচিত ছিল।

গীতার ২-৪৭, ৪৮ সূত্রের উপর গান্ধীর টীকা টিপ্পনীর সঙ্গে এই স্বাভাবিক/নৈমিত্তিক ফলবিভাগকে সমন্বিত করা যায়। 'কর্মের ফলপ্রাপ্তি যেন তোমার উদ্দেশ্য না হয়—কর্মের প্রতিদান পূর্ণতভাবে তিনিই দিতে পারেন।' এখানে যে ফল গান্ধী পরিহার করার কথা বলছেন তা অবশ্যই কর্মের অঙ্গাঙ্গী বা স্বাভাবিক ফল নয়, বাহ্যিক বা অনিয়ত ফল—যার হওয়া না হওয়া আমাদের নিয়ন্ত্রণের বাইরে। গান্ধীর মতে নিষ্কাম কর্ম এক কষ্টসাধ্য প্রয়াস—যা আপাতদৃষ্টিতে কর্মের স্বাভাবিক ফল বলে ভুল হয়, তাকে নৈমিত্তিক হিসেবে উপলব্ধি করতে হবে। নৈমিত্তিক ফল আমাদের সচেতন অভিপ্রায়ের বাইরে, তা বস্তুত আমাদের অনৈচ্ছিক বা স্বতঃস্ফূর্ত ক্রিয়ারই সামিল—আর এই অর্থেই গান্ধী এই ফলগুলি ঈশ্বরে অর্পণ করার কথা বলেছেন। পড়াশুনা করে, অধ্যাপক পদের সব চাহিদা পূরণ করে চাকরির দরখাস্ত করতে পারি, ইন্টারভ্যু দিতে পারি, কিন্তু আমার মূলকর্ম আর এই ফলপ্রাপ্তির মধ্যে কোনও স্বাভাবিক সম্পর্ক নেই, এটা বাহ্যিক ঘটনার অনিশ্চিত আকস্মিকতায় ভরা। আর যে অর্থে একটি আকস্মিক উদ্দীপক আমাদের শরীর মন, জ্ঞান, কর্মের বাইরে সেই অর্থেই নৈমিত্তিক ফল আমাদের থেকে বিযুক্ত। কর্মের বাহ্যিক বা আকস্মিক সুফল (অথবা কুফল) যে অর্থে ঈশ্বরের নিয়ন্ত্রণাধীন, গান্ধীর মতে সেই অর্থেই ঈশ্বরের সঙ্গে আমাদের সম্বন্ধ স্বতঃস্ফূর্ত ক্রিয়ার মতোই ক্ষীণ ও দুর্বল। গীতা ২-৪৮ নং সূত্রের ভাষ্যে গান্ধী বলছেন—'শুভকর্মের প্রতিও আমাদের আশ্লিষ্ট হওয়া উচিত নয়। তাহলেই আমাদের কর্মে ও প্রযুক্ত সাধনে বিশুদ্ধি বজায় থাকবে।' গীতার ২-৪৮ সূত্র যে স্বাভাবিক ফল ত্যাগ করার কথা বলে না, নৈমিত্তিক ফলত্যাগের কথাই বলে, এই অন্তর্দৃষ্টির এক উদ্ভাবনী লেখন পেয়ে যাই গান্ধীর ভাষ্যে।

স্বাভাবিক ও নৈমিত্তিক ফলের মধ্যে এই বিভ্রান্তির ফলেই এক একটা বর্ণনিরিখের বিকৃতীকরণ ঘটে, নিষ্কাম কর্মের আদর্শ থেকে বিচ্যুত হই। জীবাণু বিজ্ঞানের (virology) কথাই ধরুন—প্রজ্ঞার নীতি অনুসারে তত্ত্ব ও প্রয়োগকে এমনভাবে সমন্বিত করা উচিত—যাতে বাস্তব ফললাভের বাসনা তাত্ত্বিক শৃঙ্খলকে একবিন্দু শিথিল না করে। শক্তির আলোকে তত্ত্ব-প্রয়োগের ধারণা ও তার বাস্তব প্রয়োগের ফারাক সুস্পষ্ট হয়—আর শেষে কর্মনীতি এই দুই-এর ফারাককে দূর করে সম্ভাবনাকে বাস্তবে রূপান্তরিত করে। প্রতিটি বর্ণ একে অপরের সঙ্গে নিখুঁতভাবে সংশ্লেষিত, যাতে কোনো বাহ্য উপাদান ঢুকে এই তিনটি নিরিখের সংহতি না নষ্ট করতে পারে। জীবাণু বিজ্ঞানের তত্ত্ব ব্যবহার করে কায়েমী স্বার্থসিদ্ধির জন্য কৃত্রিম জীবাণু সৃষ্টি বৈজ্ঞানিক তত্ত্বের মধ্যে পড়ে না, জীবাণু-তত্ত্ব থেকে এই কৃত্রিম সৃষ্টিকর্ম ততটাই বাহ্যিক, ততটাই বিযুক্ত, যতটা কর্মকর্তার লোভ-বাসনা তার তত্ত্ব-জ্ঞান থেকে বিযুক্ত, বিশ্লিষ্ট। কৃত্রিম জীবাণুর সৃষ্টিকর্মে যে লোভলালসার সঞ্চার আমরা দেখি, স্বাভাবিক /নৈমিত্তিক ফলবিভ্রান্তির এর চেয়ে প্রকৃষ্ট উদাহরণ আর কী থাকতে পারে?

গীতার ১৮ : ৪১-৪৪ শ্লোক অনুযায়ী জন্মগত গুণাবলী অনুসারে (স্বভাবপ্রভাবৈর্গুণের) ব্রাহ্মণ, ক্ষত্রিয়, বৈশ্য, শূদ্র—এদের বিশেষ বিশেষ কর্তব্যের ভাগ-বাঁটোয়ারা হয়ে থাকে। গান্ধী 'শম' ও 'দম'-এর যে প্রচলিত অনুবাদ-অনুদ্বেগ (serenity)ও আত্মসংযম (self-restraint)—এদুটিই ব্যবহার করেছেন, 'তপস্' শব্দের অর্থ করেছেন—যে প্রণালীর দ্বারা শরীর, বাক্ ও মন নিয়ন্ত্রিত হয়। 'ক্ষান্তি' (ক্ষমাশীলতা)-কে নিয়েছেন শুভকামনার তাৎপর্যে (এমনকি যদি কোনো ব্যক্তি আমাকে পাথর ছুঁড়ে আঘাত করে, তার জন্যও)। 'আর্জবম্' শব্দের তর্জমা পাই 'অনাবিল দৃষ্টি', অর্থাৎ মানুষকে চতুর্বর্ণের মিথ্যা ঠুলি পরিয়ে না দেখাটাই স্বচ্ছতার পরিচায়ক। 'জ্ঞান' 'বিজ্ঞান'-কে অনুবাদ করেছেন তত্ত্ব ও অভিজ্ঞতার সমন্বয়ে, শুকনো পুঁথিনির্ভর পাণ্ডিত্য হিসেবে নয়।[১৭] এই অনুবাদশৈলী আমাদের চতুর্বর্ণের নিরিখধর্মী ব্যাখ্যাকে স্পষ্টই সমর্থন করে। জগৎকে বৌদ্ধিক অভিমুখে দেখা—ইন্দ্রিয়-উদ্দীপকের প্রাচুর্যে নয়—এই দেখাকেই গান্ধী ব্রাহ্মণত্বের পরিচায়ক হিসেবে চিহ্নিত করেছেন। ব্রাহ্মণত্বের গুণাবলীর সবশেষে উল্লিখিত হয়েছে—'আস্তিক্য' বা ঈশ্বরে বিশ্বাস। তাঁর মতে অবিচলতা, আত্মস্থতা ও স্থৈর্যেই 'শম'-এর তাৎপর্য—বাহ্যিক পরিস্থিতির প্রভাবে যেন মন কোনোভাবেই বিক্ষিপ্ত না হয়, আবেগের ভারসাম্য না হারায়। তিনি আরও বলেছেন—আত্মস্থতা ও আত্ম-সংযম যদি অসৎ উদ্দেশ্যে নিয়োজিত হয় (যেমন প্রাইজ জেতা বা কুস্তি-প্রতিযোগিতায়) একমাত্র ঈশ্বরবিশ্বাসের আলোকে পরিশুদ্ধ হলে তবেই তা ব্রাহ্মণত্বের পর্যায়ে উন্নীত হবে।

গীতার ১৮-৪৩ নং শ্লোকের ব্যাখ্যায় গান্ধী বলেন—পরাক্রম ('শৌর্য'), আত্মবল ('তেজস্'), সঙ্গতি বা সামঞ্জস্য ('ধৃতি'), উপায়কৌশল্য বা উদ্ভাবনীশক্তি ('দাক্ষ্য')—এই সবকটি গুণই ব্রাহ্মণ এবং ক্ষত্রিয়ে সমন্বিত হওয়া প্রয়োজন। এ থেকে অনুমান করা যায় যে চতুর্বর্ণের কোনও ত্রিগুণভিত্তিক মৌলবাদিতায় তাঁর বিশ্বাস ছিল না। তাছাড়া তিনি যেখানে বলেছেন—প্রতিটি ব্যক্তিরই প্রতিটি বর্ণের অনুষঙ্গী গুণগুলির চর্চা করা উচিত—এই 'উচিত' শব্দটির তাৎপর্য অনুধাবন করা প্রয়োজন। মানুষের জীবন যদি এক একটা পূর্বপ্রদত্ত ত্রিগুণ-সমন্বয় দ্বারাই সম্পূর্ণ নিয়ন্ত্রিত হত, তাহলে তো 'উচিত' শব্দটি প্রয়োগ করার কোনো অবকাশই থাকত না। তবে গান্ধী এই তিন গুণের বিবিধ অনুপাতের কথা বলেছেন, আর বলেছেন যে বর্ণোপযোগী গুণাবলী যে ব্যক্তিতে অধিকমাত্রায় দেখা যাবে, তাই হবে তার বর্ণ। গান্ধীর এই দুটি মন্তব্যকে একসঙ্গে গ্রহণ করতে হবে, সেক্ষেত্রে প্রজ্ঞা, শক্তি, সংহতি আর কর্ম, এই চারটি সূত্রের পারস্পরিক পরিপূরণের যে প্রস্তাব আমরা নিয়েছি, তার সঙ্গে গান্ধী ভাষ্যের খুব একটা বিরোধ হবে বলে মনে করি না।

গীতার ১৮-৪৩ নং শ্লোকে কিছু কিছু ক্ষত্রিয়ত্ব-সূচক ধর্মের উল্লেখ আছে, যেমন, 'শৌর্যম্, তেজো' ..., যুদ্ধে ... অপলায়নম্। এখন প্রজ্ঞা ও শক্তির সংশ্লেষণে ব্রাহ্মণত্ব ও ক্ষত্রিয়ত্বকে মেলানোর যে কৌশল আমরা নিয়েছি, তার সঙ্গে উপরি-উক্ত ক্ষত্রিয় ধর্মের সংগতি নাও থাকতে পারে। গীর্জার ধর্মযাজকদের নিপীড়নে গ্যালিলিও যখন তাঁর আবিষ্কৃত বৈজ্ঞানিক তত্ত্ব সম্বন্ধে মিথ্যা স্বীকারোক্তি দিতে বাধ্য হন, তাঁর এই স্বীকারোক্তি কি যুদ্ধে অপলায়নরূপ ক্ষাত্রধর্মের পরিপন্থী? আশা করা যায় গান্ধী এখানে বলবেন যুদ্ধ মানেই ন্যায়যুদ্ধ, আর ধর্মযাজকদের অজ্ঞতা ও কায়েমী স্বার্থসিদ্ধির জন্য বৈজ্ঞানিক নিয়মের

অস্বীকার—একে কখনোই ন্যায়যুদ্ধ বলা যায় না। এই প্রসঙ্গে বলতে পারি—শারীরিক অত্যাচার সহ্য করার ক্ষমতা বা সত্যের খাতিরে নিপীড়কের হাতে মৃত্যুবরণ—তা পেশীশক্তি বা বীরত্বের পরিচায়ক; প্রজ্ঞা ও ধীশক্তিতে যে অঙ্গীকার ব্রাহ্মণত্বের সূচক বলে আমরা বলে আসছি—তা কিন্তু বীরত্ব নয়, এক স্বতন্ত্র মানদন্ড।[১৮]

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চতুর্বর্ণ প্রসঙ্গে গান্ধীর অবলোকন

বর্ণের উপর গান্ধীর ছড়ানো ছেটানো, অসংলগ্ন, আপাত-বিরোধী লেখা—এ থেকে তাঁর পূর্ণাঙ্গ মতটিকে টেনে টুনে বার করা—একটু কঠিন বই কি। প্রধান কারণ এটাই যে চতুর্বর্ণ সম্বন্ধে গান্ধীর মনোভাব একটা দীর্ঘ সময় ধরে, ধাপে ধাপে বিবর্তিত হয়েছিল। চতুর্বর্ণের জাতিভেদমূলক ভাষ্য গান্ধী কিছু কিছু জায়গায় দ্ব্যর্থহীন ভাষায় বর্জন করেছেন, আমরা শুধু সেই মন্তব্যগুলিই বেছে নেব।[১৯] ১৯৩০ সালের প্রথম ভাগে জাতিভেদকে 'অগ্রগতির প্রতিবন্ধক'[২০], 'সামাজিক অমঙ্গল'[২১] হিসেবে চিহ্নিত করেছেন। ১৯৪০ সালে বলেন জাতিভেদ এক ধরনের 'কালবিপর্যয়'[২২], একে 'বিদায় নিতে হবে'।

এছাড়াও বলেন : 'আশ্রমে বর্ণাশ্রম ধর্ম পালিত হয় না। আশ্রমের রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ যাদের দায়িত্বে তাঁরা তো ছাত্রছাত্রীদের পিতামাতা স্বরূপ, এই আশ্রমরক্ষকরা, যারা ব্রহ্মচর্য পালন করেন, নিয়মিত মজুতদারি প্রতিরোধের ধর্ম অভ্যাস করে থাকেন, তাঁদের জীবনে তো বর্ণাশ্রম ধর্মের কোনো অবকাশ নেই। আশ্রমবাসীরা সন্ন্যাসীর স্তরে অধিষ্ঠিত, তাই এঁদের এই ধর্ম পালন করার প্রয়োজন নেই। কিন্তু এছাড়া বর্ণাশ্রম-ধর্মের প্রতি আশ্রমের দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস আছে।'[২৩] এক্ষেত্রে এটাই বোঝা যায় যে বর্ণকে তিনি কখনোই পূর্বপুরুষের জীবিকার সঙ্গে এক করেননি বা মনস্তাত্ত্বিক নিয়ন্ত্রণবাদের দৃষ্টিতেও দেখেননি। আশ্রমবাসীরা নিষ্কামকর্মের আদর্শে দীক্ষিত, অনুশীলিত, লোভলালসার বাহ্যিক চাপে বা উপযোগিতার খাতিরে আশ্রমবাসীরা কাজ করেন না, ফলে চতুর্বর্ণকে তারা বিমূর্ত মানদন্ডের আলোকে দেখতে সক্ষম। গান্ধীর মতে প্রতিটি মানুষের পূর্বপুরুষের জীবিকা অনুসরণ করাই শ্রেয়, কিন্তু আশ্রমবাসীরা, যারা চতুর্বর্ণের নিরিখধর্মী ভাবধারাটি জীবনচর্যায় আত্মস্থ করেন, তাঁরা এই দায় থেকে মুক্ত।

গান্ধীর মতে অস্পৃশ্যতা আসলে একটি কৃত্রিম মুখোশ—যা চারটি বর্ণমাত্রার পারস্পরিক পরিপূরণে প্রতিবন্ধকতা করে, চতুর্বর্ণে নিহিত যে নৈতিক ভিত্তি তাকে ফুটে উঠতে দেয় না। অস্পৃশ্যতার চর্চায় সকাম কর্মের চিহ্নগুলি বিশেষভাবে জাজ্বল্যমান, বাসনা ও কায়েমী স্বার্থের ভারে সে ন্যুব্জ।

অনেক সময়ে গান্ধী একাধারে অস্পৃশ্যতা দূরীকরণের কথা বলেছেন, সাম্যের কথা বলেছেন, স্বেচ্ছায় জীবিকা নির্বাচনের কথা বলেছেন, আবার সেই সঙ্গে পূর্বপুরুষের জীবিকা গ্রহণ করারও বিধান দিয়েছেন। যেমন আমরা যদি এই মন্তব্যগুলি বিচার করি—'শূদ্রকে জন্মসূত্রে ব্রাহ্মণ নাও বলতে পারি। আর যেই বর্ণে যার জন্ম, তার বিরোধিতা না করাই শ্রেয়। এটিই প্রকৃত বিনয়ের লক্ষণ।'[২৪] 'আমি বর্ণপ্রথাকে ন্যক্কারজনক বা ঘৃণ্য অন্ধতা বলে মনে করি না। এর নিজস্ব ত্রুটি বা সীমাবদ্ধতা রয়েছে, কিন্তু এর মধ্যে কোনো পাপাচার নেই।'[২৫]

আবার এই মন্তব্যগুলি যদি লক্ষ করি : 'প্রতিটি ব্যক্তি তার পূর্বপুরুষের জীবিকাকেই তার ধর্মনীতি হিসেবে গ্রহণ করবে। এই সার্বিক নিয়ম সমস্ত মানুষের পরিবারকে নিয়ন্ত্রণ করে।' একই অনুচ্ছেদে বলছেন—'নানাবিধ স্বেচ্ছাপ্রণোদিত কাজ, নানাবিধ যোগ্যতা অর্জন (শিক্ষা, অনুশীলন) প্রভৃতি প্রয়াস থেকে কেউ কাউকে বিরত করতে পারে না। যে ব্যক্তি ব্রাহ্মণ পিতা মাতার ঔরসজাত, আর আমি যে বৈশ্য পিতা মাতার সন্তান— প্রয়োজন পড়লে আমরা সঙ্গতভাবেই ... জাতীয় স্বেচ্ছাসেবক বা অবৈতনিক পরিষেবকের কাজ, বা অবৈতনিক উঞ্ছবৃত্তি অভ্যাস করতে পারি। যদিও বর্ণধর্ম অনুসারে বৈশ্য হিসেবে ওষুধ ও চাল ডাল বিক্রি করেই আমার রুজি রুটি কামানো উচিত। যতক্ষণ কোনো ব্যক্তি তার শ্রমের প্রতিদান না দাবি করে, ততক্ষণ পর্যন্ত সে যে কোনো কার্যকরী পরিষেবা অভ্যাস করতে পারে।'[২৬]

পিতৃপুরুষের জীবিকাকে সাত্ত্বিক অভিমুখে দেখা উচিত, হয়তো এটাই ছিল গান্ধীর অভীষ্ট, আর এই প্রেক্ষিতে দেখলে তাঁর বিধান এক সার্বিক নৈতিকতার মর্যাদা পেয়ে যায়। এই অর্থেই গান্ধী বৈশ্যের সন্তান হয়েও জাতীয় স্বেচ্ছাসেবকের কাজ বা অবৈতনিক উঞ্ছবৃত্তি অভ্যাস করার কথা বলতে পারেন। শূদ্রকে তার পিতৃপরিচয়কে বিনম্রতার সঙ্গে গ্রহণ করার যে নিদান গান্ধী দিয়েছেন তাকে দেখতে হবে শ্রমনীতির পটভূমিতে, তার আনুষঙ্গিক দক্ষতা ও কর্মপটুতার মানদন্ডে। চতুর্বর্ণের মনস্তাত্ত্বিক ব্যাখ্যান থেকে নিরিখধর্মী ব্যাখ্যান—এই যে দীর্ঘ পথ আমরা পরিক্রমণ করেছি, তারই আলোকে গান্ধীর এই পাঠ আমরা গ্রহণ করতে পারি।

'আমি বর্ণাশ্রমধর্মে বিশ্বাস করি, বর্ণভেদে নয়। মানুষ তার পিতৃপুরুষের জীবিকা থেকেই সন্তুষ্টি আহরণ করবে, এটাই বর্ণাশ্রমধর্মের অর্থ।[২৭] ... বর্ণ নিয়ে আমি অনেক চিন্তা ভাবনা করেছি, এই সিদ্ধান্তে উপনীত হয়েছি যে বর্ণের অনুশীলনের ওপরই হিন্দুসমাজ বেঁচে আছে। সারা বিশ্বের সমাজ সংস্থান বর্ণব্যবস্থার ওপর দাঁড়িয়ে। ঐশ্বরিক জীবন ও দানবীয় জীবন—মানুষের মনে যতক্ষণ পর্যন্ত এই দুই প্রবৃত্তি থাকবে ততক্ষণ পর্যন্ত মানবসমাজেও গোষ্ঠী বিভাগ থাকবে। এই সংস্থানকে একটি সম্প্রদায় দিয়ে পুনঃস্থাপিত করার চেষ্টা বৃথা।'[২৮] এখন ঐশ্বরিক ব্যক্তিত্ব ও দানবীয় ব্যক্তিত্ব—এরা এক একটি নির্দিষ্ট পরিমাণ ত্রিগুণ-মিশ্রণের ওপর দাঁড়িয়ে আছে, একথা গান্ধী কখনোই স্পষ্টভাবে দাবি করেননি, বা বিবিধ বর্গের ব্যক্তিত্ব একে অপরের সঙ্গে নিটোলভাবে মিশে অনায়াসে এক সুসংহত সমাজ গড়ে তোলে—এই ধরনের অতিসরলীকরণ গান্ধীর অভিপ্রেত ছিল না। গান্ধীর চিন্তাশৈলীতে বর্ণাশ্রমধর্ম এক পরীক্ষামূলক পদ্ধতি বা প্রারম্ভিক কৌশল মাত্র, কিন্তু তার প্রয়োগে এই চারটি বর্ণ যেন অমোঘ মনস্তাত্ত্বিক বর্গে দানা না বাঁধতে পারে।

গান্ধীর আরও কিছু ভাবনাচিন্তা নিয়ে আমরা যদি একটু নাড়াচাড়া করি—'সবশেষে হয়তো আমরা সকলেই দেখবো যে বর্ণাশ্রমের মধ্যে এমন কিছু নেই যার বিরুদ্ধে আমরা যুদ্ধ চালিয়ে যেতে পারি। তার পরেও যদি বর্ণ কোনো কুৎসিত চেহারা নিয়ে বিরাজ করে সমগ্র হিন্দু সমাজ তার বিরুদ্ধে সংগ্রাম করবে ...।[২৯] এথেকে স্পষ্টই বোঝা যায় যে বর্ণের মনস্তাত্ত্বিক বুনিয়াদ আর নিরিখধর্মী ভাষণ—এদুটিকে গান্ধী পৃথক করতে পেরেছিলেন, আর শেষ পর্যন্ত প্রথমটিকে ছেড়ে দ্বিতীয়টিকেই গ্রহণ করেন। চারটি বর্ণের সঙ্গে মিলিয়ে বাস্তব হিন্দু সমাজকে

চার গোষ্ঠীতে ভাগ করা—এটা ছিল তাঁর কাছে একটা পরীক্ষণমূলক কর্মসূচি—বাস্তবের সঙ্গে না মিললে ঐ বর্ণতত্ত্ব যে বর্জনীয়—তার স্পষ্ট ইঙ্গিত তার লেখার মধ্যে পাই।

দলিতদের মধ্যে যে অন্তরীণ শ্রেণিবিভাগ রয়েছে সে ব্যাপারে গান্ধী পূর্ণমাত্রায় সচেতন ছিলেন। ১৯৩৭ সালে তিনি লেখেন—'ধর্মপতিদের যে সব আপাত-অমোঘ বাণী সবর্ণ ও অবর্ণের মধ্যে বিভাগ সৃষ্টি করে, আবার অবর্ণদের মধ্যে ছোটো ছোটো গোষ্ঠী তৈরি করে—তা তফঃশীলি সম্প্রদায় সমাদর করবে বা গ্রহণ করবে—এ আশা করা যায় না। কারণ এই অন্তরীণ বিভেদের মধ্যে রয়েছে ষড়যন্ত্রের গন্ধ আর যুক্তির বিরোধিতা।'[৩০] বর্ণভেদের যুক্তিবিমুখ স্বরূপটি তাকে যেভাবে আলোড়িত করেছিল তা থেকে স্পষ্টই বোঝা যায় যে চতুর্বর্ণের নিরিখধর্মী পাঠ গান্ধী মুক্তমনে গ্রহণ করেছিলেন।

আমরা জানি যে তিনি অস্পৃশ্যদের জন্য স্বতন্ত্র ভোটসভার কট্টর বিরোধী ছিলেন, একটি সর্বসাধারণ নির্বাচন-পদ্ধতিতেই ছিল তাঁর দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস। দলিতদের সর্বসাধারণের মধ্যে আত্মস্থ করার নীতি আমাদের চতুর্বর্ণের নিরিখধর্মী ব্যাখ্যার সঙ্গে সম্পূর্ণভাবে সঙ্গতিপূর্ণ। মানুষের ব্যক্তিত্বের এক একটি মাত্রা, বা বস্তুর আয়তন মাপার এক একটি মানদন্ড যেমন অপরটির থেকে আলাদা করা যায় না, তেমনি দলিতদের জন্য স্বতন্ত্র ভোটসভা বানানোর প্রস্তাবটি তাঁর চোখে ততটাই কৃত্রিম কষ্টকল্পনা বলে মনে হয়েছিল। এই পথে দলিতের মুক্তি নেই, বরঞ্চ তারা একটি অচল অনড় গোষ্ঠীতে হিমায়িত হবে।

অস্পৃশ্যতার বিরুদ্ধে অনেক সুভাষিত, অনেক উদ্দীপক, আবেদন পাই গান্ধীর কাছে। 'অস্পৃশ্যকে যদি সমাজের প্রধান প্রবাহে অন্তর্ভুক্ত না করা হয়, তাহলে স্বরাজের জন্য আন্দোলন শুধু ধোঁয়াতেই অবসিত হবে।' 'আমার মধ্যে যদি একজন বৈষ্ণবের লেশমাত্রও থাকে, সেক্ষেত্রে অন্ত্যজকে পরিত্যাগ করে যে স্বরাজ লাভ করা যায়— তাকে বর্জন করার শক্তিও ঈশ্বর আমাকে মঞ্জুর করবেন।'[৩১] ... (অতএব) আমার কাছে স্বরাজ আত্মশুদ্ধির আন্দোলন।'[৩২] এখন 'আত্মশুদ্ধি' বলতে কি গান্ধী চতুর্বর্ণের চারটি মাত্রার পারস্পরিক ভারসাম্যের কথা বলেছেন—যা নিষ্কাম কর্মের নীতিতে অবস্থিত? সমাজের প্রধান প্রবাহের মধ্যে দলিতদের আত্মস্থ করার আদর্শও চতুর্বর্ণের নিরিখধর্মী পাঠের সঙ্গে সঙ্গতিপূর্ণ। বর্ণ যদি মাত্রা বা মানদন্ড হয়, কোনো মাত্রাকেই অপর মাত্রা থেকে বিযুক্ত করা যায় না, আবার অপরের সঙ্গে সম্পূর্ণ একাকার করাও সম্ভব নয়। এরকম কৃত্রিম প্রয়াস একদিকে বাহ্যিক বাসনার ভারে ন্যুব্জ, অন্যদিকে বৌদ্ধিক বিভ্রান্তিতে জর্জরিত। স্বাধীনতাই স্বরাজের সার, দলিতের মুক্তি না হলে স্বাধীনতার অর্থ নেই,। 'স্ব-এর অধীনতা হল বাহ্যিক উপযোগিতা আর প্রবৃত্তির অধীনতা থেকে মুক্তি, নয়তো বুদ্ধিপ্রমাদ ও নৈতিক স্খলন রোধ করা যাবে না।

'আমি যখন তোমাদের আপন আপন হৃদয়কে অস্পৃশ্যতা থেকে মুক্ত করার আবেদন জানাই, আমি এটুকুই চাই যে তোমরা সব মানুষের মূল ঐক্যে ও সাম্যে বিশ্বাস রাখো। একই ঈশ্বরের সন্তান যে সব মানুষ—তাদের মধ্যে উঁচু নীচু ভেদাভেদ ভুলে যাও—আমি তোমাদের কাছে এই আমন্ত্রণ জানাই।'[৩৩] এখানে গান্ধীর ভাষায় শুধুমাত্র ভাবাবেগ নেই, চতুর্বর্ণের ধারণাটির যে বৌদ্ধিক বিভ্রান্তি সে ব্যাপারে তাঁর বিশেষ সংবেদনশীলতা লক্ষ করা যায়। চারটি

বর্ণকে যে চারটি মানদন্ডের মতোই পরস্পরের থেকে আলাদা করা যায় না, অস্পৃশ্যদের জন্য আম্বেদকরের স্বতন্ত্র নির্বাচনমন্ডলীর দাবি হয়তো গান্ধীর এই বোধকেই বিশেষভাবে পীড়িত করেছিল, সেই বেদনা থেকেই হয়তো নিঃসৃত হয়েছিল তাঁর স্বেচ্ছামৃত্যু বরণের হাহাকার।[৩৪]

অস্পৃশ্যতা নিয়ে গান্ধীর আরও প্রণিধান—তিনি যেহেতু জন্মসূত্রে অস্পৃশ্য নন, সেহেতু অস্পৃশ্যতায় পরিবর্তিত হবার ফলে যে দুঃখভোগ ঘটে তার মাত্রা অধিক। এখন এই মন্তব্যের তাৎপর্য কী? আমরা দেখেছি বর্ণের চারটে মাত্রা কীভাবে দুর্ঘটনাক্রমে চারটি গোষ্ঠীতে অবক্ষয়িত হয়ে এক একটা দার্শনিক মুখোশ পরে বসল। এখানে গান্ধী হয়তো বলতে চেয়েছেন—বৈশ্যের মুখোশ পাল্টে শূদ্রের মুখোশ পরলে নিজেকে আরও দূরাগত ও সঙ্গতিহীন নিপীড়নের মধ্যে নিক্ষেপ করা হয়। এক মুখোশ ছেড়ে আর এক মুখোশ পরা মানে তো মুখোশের মুখোশ, ছায়ার ছায়া, বাস্তব থেকে দুই ধাপ সরে এসে আরও গভীর স্তরের নৈতিক ও বৌদ্ধিক নিপীড়নের কাছে আত্মসমর্পণ।

পরিশেষে উঞ্ছবৃত্তি সম্বন্ধে গান্ধীর চিন্তাভাবনায় কিছু বিতর্কের উপাদান পাওয়া যায়। 'যে ক্লেদ উঞ্ছবৃত্তিকে ক্লেদাক্ত করে, তা ভৌতিক ক্লেদ, তাকে সহজেই ধুয়ে ফেলা যায়। কিন্তু যারা অসত্য ও ভন্ডামির দ্বারা ক্লিন্ন, সেই ক্লেদ এত সূক্ষ্ম যে তাকে ধুয়ে ফেলা অত্যন্ত কঠিন। অস্পৃশ্য বলে যদি কেউ থাকে তারা হল সেই সব মানুষ যারা অসত্য ও ভন্ডামিতে পরিপূর্ণ।'[৩৫] ... ''উঞ্ছবৃত্তি'—ঐ শব্দটিকে আমি তার পূর্ণাঙ্গ অর্থে প্রয়োগ করছি, (সমাজের) সদস্যরা যদি ঘর থেকে বেরিয়ে এসে আক্ষরিক ও নৈতিক অর্থে এই শহরটাকে পরিচ্ছন্ন করার কাজে হাত লাগায় তারা একটি মহৎ কাজ সম্পাদন করবেন।'[৩৬] 'যেই সব পেশার কাজগুলি করতে হাত পা চালানোর দরকার পড়ে, সে সব পেশাগুলিকে যদি আমরা ঘৃণা না করতাম, আমাদের এই দুর্দশায় পড়তে হত না, আর স্নাতকরাও উঞ্ছবৃত্তি অভ্যাস করতে কোনো লজ্জাবোধ করতেন না।'[৩৭]

চতুর্বর্ণের যে নিরিখধর্মী পাঠ আমরা চর্চা করে চলেছি সেটি অনুযায়ী উঞ্ছবৃত্তিকে তিনটি গুণের সমন্বয় বলা উচিত। সাত্ত্বিক মাত্রা অনুযায়ী উঞ্ছবৃত্তি হল বাস্তুসংস্থান (ecology) ও পরিপার্শ্ব সংরক্ষণের তাত্ত্বিক নিয়মগুলির প্রণিধান, রাজসিক অভিমুখে এই বৃত্তি বৈজ্ঞানিক তত্ত্বকে প্রয়োগে রূপান্তরিত করে প্রলম্বিত কর্মকান্ডে পরিচালনা করে, সর্বশেষে উঞ্ছবৃত্তির তামসিক মাত্রা হয়তো বাস্তব কায়িক শ্রমের প্রতিটি ধাপের খুঁটিনাটি, তত্ত্ব ও প্রয়োগের প্রতিটি ক্লেশকর বিরোধকে রক্ত-মাংসের শরীর দিয়ে উপলব্ধি করে। এই চারটি মাত্রার সংশ্লেষণেই উঞ্ছবৃত্তি এক মহৎ পেশায় উন্নীত হতে পারবে। গান্ধী শুধুমাত্র তথাকথিত শূদ্রদের উঞ্ছবৃত্তি অভ্যাস করতে বলেননি, সম্ভবত সব মানুষকে উঞ্ছবৃত্তির সাত্ত্বিক, রাজসিক ও তামসিক মাত্রাগুলিকে সমাদর করার জন্য ডাক দিয়েছিলেন। যদি তিনি শুধুমাত্র শূদ্রের উপরই এই বিধান চাপিয়ে দিতে থাকতেন, তাহলেই তাঁকে (আম্বেদকরের ভাষায়) 'নারকীয়তা ও নির্মম পরিহাসের'[৩৮] দায়ে দায়ী করতে পারতাম।

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১৯৪৫-এ এসে চতুর্বর্ণ সম্পর্কে গান্ধী একটা দৃঢ় অবস্থান গ্রহণ করেছিলেন। গুজরাতিতে লেখা একটি পুরোনো সংকলনে তিনি একটি নতুন ভূমিকা সংযোজন

করেছিলেন—তাতে তিনি স্পষ্টভাবে ঘোষণা করেন যে চতুর্বর্ণের উপর তাঁর যাবতীয় পুরোনো উক্তি—যা পরবর্তী বা বর্তমান উক্তির বিরোধী সেগুলিকে বর্জন করতে হবে। 'কিন্তু বর্তমানে একটিই বর্ণ বিরাজমান—সে বর্ণ শূদ্রের, যদি চান তো তাকে ''অতিশূদ্র'' বা ''অস্পৃশ্য'' বা ''হরিজন'' বলতে পারেন।'[৩৯]

বর্ণের উপর তাঁর সর্বশেষ মন্তব্যগুলির মধ্যে একটিকে আলাদা করে দেখা যেতে পারে। এখানে তিনি বলছেন—হিন্দুত্বকে বেঁচে থাকতে হলে বর্ণকে বিদায় নিতে হবে, তবে তার সঙ্গে এও যোগ করছেন : 'এখানে বর্ণের অবকাশ ছিল কর্তব্য হিসেবে'। তাঁর মতে 'এ সত্য সব ধর্মে প্রযোজ্য, বর্ণ বা যে কোনো নামই ব্যবহার করি না কেন। যে মুসলমান মৌলবী, বা যে খৃষ্টান ধর্মযাজক তাঁর সমাজের মানুষকে উচিত কর্তব্য শেখান, আর তা শেখান টাকার জন্য নয়, তাঁর সত্য বিচারের স্বভাবজ প্রতিভার বলে, তিনি 'ব্রাহ্মণ' ছাড়া আর কী হতে পারেন? অন্যান্য সব বর্গ সম্বন্ধেও একই কথা প্রযোজ্য।'[৪০] এখানে দেখা যাচ্ছে তিনি পূর্বপুরুষঘটিত বৃত্তি বা মনস্তত্ত্ব-ঘটিত বিভাজন—এর কোনোটাই সমর্থন করছেন না, আমাদের চরিত্র ও ব্যক্তিত্বের কিছু মুখ্য প্রবণতা যা নিছক কর্তব্যের খাতিরেই আমাদের সর্বোৎকৃষ্ট অবদানটি দিতে উদ্বুদ্ধ করে—কর্ম ও ফলের মিথ্যা বিভাজন থেকে যা মুক্ত—এই অবস্থানটিই তিনি শেষমেশ গ্রহণ করেছিলেন।

বর্ণ বিষয়ে গান্ধীর মনোভাবকে মানদন্ডের ছাঁচে দেখা আপাতদৃষ্টিতে নতুন কিছু নয়, অনেক বিশিষ্ট গান্ধী-বিশেষজ্ঞের মতে গান্ধী শেষ পর্যন্ত বর্ণের একটি মানদন্ড-ধর্মী সংস্করণই বজায় রেখেছিলেন।[৪১] এই চিন্তাশৈলীর সঙ্গে আমি একটা নতুন পরিপ্রেক্ষিত সংযোজন করতে চেয়েছি। আমার মতে চতুর্বর্ণকে এক একটা নির্দিষ্ট অনুপাতের ত্রিগুণ-মিশ্রণ বা পূর্বপ্রদত্ত সংস্কারের ভান্ডার হিসেবে দেখলে চলবে না, বা অন্য কোনো মৌলবাদী ধাঁচায় ফেলে দেওয়াও উচিত নয়। নয়তো বর্ণের একটি বিশ্বাসযোগ্য মেদহীন নিরিখধর্মী পুনর্গঠনে উপনীত হতে পারবে না। দীর্ঘ ক্লেশকর পথ পরিক্রমণ করে, বর্ণতত্ত্বের প্রাথমিক স্বীকৃতিগুলিকে ধীরে ধীরে সংশোধিত করে শেষ পর্যন্ত গান্ধী বর্ণের এই মৌলবাদী সংস্কারতত্ত্বকে নিঃশর্তভাবে বর্জন করতে পেরেছিলেন। তাঁর সমগ্র জীবনের ইতিহাস, তাঁর সমগ্র জাতির ইতিহাসই তাঁকে দেখিয়েছিল—কীভাবে আমাদের নীতিবোধকে, আমাদের ভালো/মন্দের বিচারকে সবরকম অধিবিদ্যক, মনস্তাত্ত্বিক ও বাহ্যিক উপযোগিতার আরোপ থেকে বেরিয়ে আসতে হবে।

সূত্রপঞ্জি

১. বাসু, এস, (১৯৯৫) 'দ্য কাস্ট সিস্টেম অফ্ ইন্ডিয়া—অ্যান অরোবিন্দনিয়ান পার্সপেক্টিভ', শ্রী অরবিন্দ মন্দির অ্যানুয়াল, ৫৪, ১৩৬-১৫৪। এই পরিচ্ছেদটির জন্য এই প্রবন্ধটির প্রভূত সাহায্য নিয়েছি। তাছাড়া এই প্রবন্ধের সহায়তায় অরবিন্দের যে মূল গ্রন্থগুলি ব্যবহার করেছি, সেগুলি হল—শ্রী অরবিন্দ, (১৯৯৭), *হিউম্যান সাইকল্, দ্য আইডিয়াল অফ্ হিউম্যান ইউনিটি, ওয়ার অ্যান্ড সেলফ্ ডিটারমিনেশন*, পন্ডিচেরি, শ্রী অরবিন্দ আশ্রম প্রাইভেট লিমিটেড, অধ্যায় ১, ১১, ১৩; *এসেজ্ অন দ্য গীতা*,

(১৯৯৭) ঐ, অধ্যায় ৮, ১৪, ১৮, ১৯, ২০; *দ্য সিন্থেসিস অফ্ যোগা* (১৯৯৯) ঐ, অধ্যায় ৩।

২. মূল শ্লোকটির জন্য ওয়েব : www.sanskritweb.net/rigvedarv10-086.pdf. দ্রষ্টব্য।

৩. আরণ্য, শ্রীমৎ স্বামী হরিহরানন্দ, (১৩৬৯ বঙ্গাব্দ), *কর্মতত্ত্ব*, পশ্চিমবঙ্গ, মধুপুর : কপিল মঠ—এই বইটির সাহায্যেই সংস্কার, কর্ম, ও কর্মফলের বিবৃতি লেখা সম্ভব হয়েছে। তবে এই বিবৃতি শেষমেশ যোগসূত্রের ভিত্তিতে বুঝতে হবে, আর এই মনস্তত্ত্বের প্রাসঙ্গিক বিষয়গুলি বিভিন্ন সূত্রের মধ্যে ছড়ানো রয়েছে। যে গ্রন্থটি ব্যবহৃত হয়েছে সেটি হল—বেঙ্কটেশানন্দ, স্বামী (অনুবাদ ও টীকা) (২০০১) *দ্য যোগাসূত্রজ অফ্ পতঞ্জলি*, দিল্লী : মোতিলাল বেনারসিদাস প্রাইভেট লিমিটেড। তবে বিবিধ প্রকারের সংস্কার, স্মৃতি ও কর্মফল সংক্রান্ত খুঁটিনাটির হদিশ পাওয়া যাবে অধ্যায় ২, শ্লোক ১২-১৫, অধ্যায় ৪—৮-১০। একটা সর্বাঙ্গীন ছবির জন্য অধ্যায় ১, শ্লোক নং ৬, ১১, ১৮, ১৯, ৩৪, ৪৩, ৫০ দ্রষ্টব্য।

৪. চক্রবর্তী, টি কে, (২০১০), 'ইন ডিফেন্স্ অফ্ ভার্ণাভ্যভস্থা: এ রিজয়েন্ডার টু আম্বেদ্‌কর', *যাদবপুর জার্নাল অফ্ ফিলজফি*, ২০ (৩), ৩৫-৪২।

৫. সুব্বানাচার, এন, ভি, (১৯৬৬) *সোশাল সাইকোলজি, দ্য ইন্টিগ্রাল অ্যাপ্রোচ*, ক্যালকাটা : সায়েন্টিফিক বুক এজেন্সী, টেবিল ৯, পৃ. ২৫৯, ৩২৩; বাসু এস (১৯৯৫) পাদটীকা ১৪-তে উদ্ধৃত।

৬. জন এস., (অনুবাদ) (২০১৯) *দ্য ভগবদ্‌গীতা অ্যাকর্ডিং টু গান্ধী*, বার্কলী ক্যালিফর্নিয়া : নর্থ অ্যাটলান্টিক বুক। ১৯২৬-২৭ গান্ধী ভগবদ্‌গীতা সংস্কৃত থেকে গুজরাতিতে অনুবাদ করেন আর এই ভাষাতেই ভাষ্য লেখেন। টীকায় সূচিত বইটি গুজরাতি থেকে ইংরিজিতে অনূদিত। গান্ধীর গীতা ভাষ্যের আলোচনা মুখ্যত এই নিবন্ধের দ্বিতীয় পরিচ্ছেদে উপস্থাপিত হয়েছে, সবক্ষেত্রেই গীতার প্রতিটি শ্লোকের সূচনায় প্রথমে অধ্যায়ের নির্দিষ্ট নম্বরটি সূচিত হয়েছে।

৭. চট্টোপাধ্যায়, বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র, (১৪০১ বঙ্গাব্দ) বঙ্কিম রচনাবলী, কলকাতা : শিশু সাহিত্য সংসদ, ২য় খন্ড, বিশেষত পৃ. ৭০৩, ও চক্রবর্তী, টি কে, (২০১০) প্রবন্ধে এই বিষয়ে বিশদ তথ্য পাওয়া যাবে।

৮. চক্রবর্তী টি কে, (২০১০) প্রবন্ধে এই দুই বিকল্প উপস্থাপিত হয়েছে।

৯. মিত্র, এ, (২০১৪) আন্ডারস্ট্যান্ডিং যুধিষ্ঠির'জ অ্যাক্‌শন্স্ : রিকাস্টিং কর্মযোগা ইন আ উইট্‌গেনস্টাইনিয়ান মোল্ড, এ চক্রবর্তী অ্যান্ড এস. বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় (এড) *মহাভারত নাউ, ন্যারেশন, এস্থেটিক্স্, এথিক্স্*, লন্ডন, ন্যু ইয়র্ক, ন্যু দিল্লী : রাটলেজ্, পৃ. ৫৭-৮০। এখানে বিশেষ করে পৃ. ৬২-৬৭ এ কর্ম ও সংস্কারতত্ত্বের বিশেষ ত্রুটি-বিচ্যুতির বিশদ বিশ্লেষণ পাওয়া যাবে।

১০. এই চারটি নীতির দার্শনিক অন্তর্দৃষ্টি কাপালি শাস্ত্রী, টি ভি, (১৯৪৮), *শ্রী অরবিন্দ : লাইট্‌স্ অন দ্য টীচিংস*, মাদ্রাস, শ্রী অরবিন্দ লাইব্রেরি—এই গ্রন্থ থেকে সংগৃহীত। বাসুর প্রবন্ধেও এর উদ্ধৃতি পাওয়া যাবে।

১১. 'যদি অন্যান্য পরিস্থিতি অপরিবর্তিত থাকে' এই 'কেটেরিস প্যারিবাস' সতর্কীকরণ সমস্ত সার্বিক নিয়মের সঙ্গেই সংলগ্ন হয়ে থাকে।

১২. জন এস., (অনুবাদ) (২০১৯)।

১৩. 'শ্রেয়ান্ স্ব-ধর্মো বিগুণৈঃ পরধর্মাৎ স্বানুষ্ঠিতাত্/স্বধর্মে নিধনং শ্রেয়া পরধর্মো ভয়াবহঃ।' গীতার মূল শ্লোক উদ্ধারের জন্য রাধাকৃষ্ণনের গীতা ভাষ্যগ্রন্থ ব্যবহৃত হয়েছে। রাধাকৃষ্ণন, এস., (অনুবাদ ও টীকা) (১৯৪১) *দ্য ভগবদ্‌গীতা*, লন্ডন : জর্জ অ্যালেন অ্যান্ড আন্‌উইন লিমিটেড।

১৪. স্বধর্মের এ অর্থ রাধাকৃষ্ণন গ্রহণ করেছেন—রাধাকৃষ্ণন, এস., (অনুবাদ ও টীকা) (১৯৪১) পৃ. ১৪৬-১৪৭ দ্রষ্টব্য।

১৫. জন এস, (২০০৯) পৃ. ৫০-৫১ দ্রষ্টব্য।

১৬. 'কর্মণ্যে বাধিকারস্তে মা ফলেষু কদাচন/মা কর্মফলহেতুর্ভুর্, মা তে সঙ্গো স্ত্ব অকর্মণি'।

১৭. মনে রাখতে হবে গান্ধীর মূল গীতা-ভাষ্য ও শ্লোকের অনুবাদ সংস্কৃত থেকে গুজরাতিতে। তাই গীতার মূল সংস্কৃত শব্দাবলী বিষয়ে গান্ধীর মনন আমরা বুঝবার চেষ্টা করছি দুটি অনুবাদের স্তর পেরিয়ে, প্রথমে গুজরাতি থেকে ইংরিজি, তার পরে ইংরিজি থেকে বাংলা।

১৮. নিজের প্রাণ বাঁচানোর তাগিদে গীর্জার ধর্মযাজকদের কাছে মিথ্যা স্বীকারোক্তি দেওয়ার জন্য গ্যালিলিওর ছাত্র অ্যান্ড্রিয়া তাঁকে ধিক্কার জানান—সেই ধিক্কারের উত্তরে গ্যালিলিওর যে যথাযথ মন্তব্যটি দিয়েছিলেন তা এই প্রসঙ্গে স্মরণ করতে পারি। অ্যান্ড্রিয়া বলেছিলেন : 'হতভাগ্য সে দেশ যে দেশ বীরপ্রসবিনী নয়'। গ্যালিলিও বলেছিলেন : 'না, হতভাগ্য সেই দেশ যে দেশে শুধু বীরেরই প্রয়োজন হয়।' ব্রেখ্‌ট, বি, *লাইফ অফ গ্যালিলিও* দ্রষ্টব্য। রেভসোশ্যালিস্ট ফর সোশ্যালিস্ট স্টোরিজ কর্তৃক ডিজিটাল সংস্করণ, ওয়েব : www.socialiststories.com/liberate/Life%20of%20Galileo%20-%20Bertolt%20Brecht.pdf. ২১ মার্চ ২০২০ তে উপলব্ধ।

১৯. নউরিয়া, এ., (২০০৬) 'গান্ধীজ লিট্‌ল্ নোওন ক্রিটিক অফ্ ভর্ণ', *ইকনমিক অ্যান্ড পলিটিকাল উইক্‌লি*, মে ৪১ (১৯), ১৮৩৫-১৮৩৮। এই প্রবন্ধটির সহায়তায় আমি গান্ধীর লেখা থেকে প্রাসঙ্গিক অনুচ্ছেদগুলি উদ্ধার করেছি। গান্ধী রচনাবলীর যে সংস্করণটি ব্যবহার করেছি সেটি হল—গান্ধী এম্.কে, (২০১৫) কলেক্টেড ওয়ার্ক্‌স্ অফ্ মহাত্মা গান্ধী, কিন্ডল্ এডিশন।

২০. গান্ধী এম্.কে, (২০১৫) *ইয়ং ইন্ডিয়া*, ৪-৬-১৯৬১।

২১. ঐ, *অ্যাড্‌ভান্স*, ১৫-১০-১৯৩২।

২২. ঐ, *ভর্ণভ্যভস্থা*, পৃ. ১৩-১৪। এখানে গান্ধী 'anachronism' শব্দটি ব্যবহার করেছেন।

২৩. ঐ, ভর্ণাশ্রম, পৃ. ৪৫৬।

২৪. ঐ, ভল্যুম ৪০ : ২ সেপ্টেম্বর ১৯২৭—১ ডিসেম্বর ১৯২৭, পৃ. ৪৮৪।

২৫. ঐ, ভল্যুম ৫৯ : ১৩ জানুয়ারি,১৯৩৩—৯ মার্চ, ১৯৩৩, পৃ. ২২৮।

২৬. ঐ, ভল্যুম ৪০ : ২ সেপ্টেম্বর, ১৯২৭—১ ডিসেম্বর, ১৯২৭, পৃ. ৩৮৪-৮৫।

২৭. ঐ, ভল্যুম ১৫ : ২১ মে, ১৯১৫—৩১ অগাস্ট, ১৯১৭, পৃ. ৭৯।

২৮. ঐ, ভল্যুম ১৫ : ২১ মে, ১৯১৫—৩১অগাস্ট, ১৯১৭, পৃ. ২২৬-২৭।

২৯. নৌরিয়া (২০০৬) এ উদ্ধৃত, পৃ. ১৮৩৫ দ্রষ্টব্য।

৩০. ঐ, পৃ. ১৮৩৬।

৩১. গান্ধী, এম্ কে, (২০১৫) ভল্যুম ২২ : ২৩ নভেম্বর ১৯২০—৫ এপ্রিল ১৯২১, পৃ. ৫৭।

৩২. ঐ, *ইয়ং ইন্ডিয়া*, ১২-৬-১৯২৪, পৃ. ১৩৮।

৩৩. ঐ, *হরিজন*, ১৬-২-১৯৩৪, পৃ. ১৪৬।

৩৪. ঐ, ভল্যুম ৫৭ : ৫ সেপ্টেম্বর, ১৯৩২—১৫ নভেম্বর ১৯৩২, পৃ. ১২৩।

৩৫. ঐ, ভল্যুম ১৬ : ১ সেপ্টেম্বর ১৯১৭—২৩ এপ্রিল ১৯১৮, পৃ. ১৩৮।

৩৬. ঐ, *ইয়ং ইন্ডিয়া*, ২৫-২-১৯২০, পৃ. ৩৩৬।

৩৭. ঐ, ভল্যুম ১৯ : ২৯ সেপ্টেম্বর, ১৯১৯—২৪ মার্চ ১৯২০, পৃ. ১০৫।

৩৮. আম্বেদ্‌কর, বি. আর., (১৯৪৬) 'গান্ধীজম : দ্য ডুম অফ্ দ্য আন্‌টাচেবলস্', *ওয়াট্ কংগ্রেস অ্যান্ড গান্ধী হ্যাভ ডান টু দ্য আন্‌টাচেবলস্*, বম্বে : থ্যাকার অ্যান্ড কো. পৃ. ৩০৩।

৩৯. নৌরিয়া (২০০৬) পৃ. ১৮৩৭।

৪০. ঐ।

৪১. উদাহরণস্বরূপ, টমাস পান্থাম, রামচন্দ্র গুহ, ও পার্থ চ্যাটার্জীর লেখায় গান্ধীর চিন্তার ভাববাদী নির্মাণ পাওয়া যায়। সিং,এ (২০১৪) 'গান্ধী অ্যান্ড আম্বেদ্‌কর : ইরেকন্সিলিয়েবল্ ডিফেরেন্সেস?', *ইন্টারন্যাশনাল জার্নাল অফ্ হিন্দু স্টাডিজ*, ১৮ (৩) ৪১৩-৪৪৯—এই প্রবন্ধে তিন ধাঁচের ভাববাদী ব্যাখ্যার একটি তুলনামূলক বিশ্লেষণ পাওয়া যাবে। তবে আমার নিবন্ধের থেকে এই ভাববাদী চর্চার লক্ষ্য আলাদা।

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Dispersing the Inner - Recoiling the Outer: A Later Wittgensteinian Narrative for Art and Literature

ENAKSHI RAY MITRA

0 INTRODUCTION

What we know as the dichotomy between the 'inner' and the 'outer' is virtually an opposition between time and space – the non-spatial mind or soul on the one hand, and the extended bodies and objects on the other. All the so-called mental states like sensation, perception, intention, emotions, though themselves devoid of any extension, motion, position, direction or dimension, yet have the power to generate the richly variegated movements of nerves, muscles, sense-and motor organs - in all possible details of their qualitative or quantitative expanse. For the best comprehension of Wittgenstein's critique of this inner/outer opposition we should start with the way he compellingly builds a conceptually repeatable character into the mental predicates, and demonstrates this character of repeatability as a matter of spatial distribution or spatial dynamics of the mental. Thus, Wittgenstein collapses the myth of the non-spatial character of the inner with the myth of the non-conceptual or pre-linguistic character of the same. Showing the spatial dimensions of the inner involves Wittgenstein in a philosophical labour in two directions – the first is to activate the inner as a special paradigm of describing the outer, the second is to dissipate the seemingly non-spatial bits of the inner into an ever-indeterminate and ever-incomplete expanse of the outer.

I shall also try to insist that both these exercises of condensing the outer and dispersing the inner, need a thickly detailed real time[1] narrative of a literary text - which the philosophical works, even those of later Wittgenstein's non-standard style of writing - are unable to achieve. This in its turn imposes some new demands and responsibilities on the literary narratives themselves – viz. that the mental predicates, instead of being spattered as idle expressions, should be unpacked through a strenuously detailed account of a broad spectrum of behaviors of subtle shades and dimensions – ranging from the most uninhibited exercise of the sense- and motor-organs to the extreme point of a passivated withdrawal of behaviour itself.

1 WITTGENSTEIN'S CRITIQUE OF THE INNER

The crux of Wittgenstein's treatment of the 'inner' consists in his contention that if a representation – say a red sensation - is claimed to be inner, i.e., non-spatial, it cannot be available to memory, or to conceptual recognition. If the red sensation is shorn of spatial linkages, then the subject having this sensation can only move through a one-dimensional axis of time; he himself will turn out to have no spatial dimension with which he can turn back and connect the present sensation with its past counterpart, or anticipate a possible recurrence in the future. Hence the sensation itself being devoid of all content cannot claim to be a sensation at all.

The inner-theorist will insist that the inner objects are 'given' – patently and primordially – so much so that their bare presence moves from context to context – causally or brutally – all

[1] By 'real time' I do not mean a live commentary or a simultaneous recount, but only that the duration of the narrative should have the same duration as the possible occurrence which the fictional work claims to depict.

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by itself, without being recognized by the subject as all the occurrences of a sensation falling (or not falling) under the same type. But here McDowell[2] would put Wittgenstein's argument in a more pointed fashion – the bare presence of the inner, totally constrained by its non-repeatable specificity cannot be said to attain the freedom or spontaneity required for conceptual recursion. Such an attempt to transit from the non-conceptual to the conceptual would be fraudulent. Put in the other way round McDowell would argue that a so-called inner representation is always secured by an abstraction from a manifold – i.e., from a complex structure of shape, size, color, position and movement - and what is abstracted from a manifold cannot be withheld from conceptual recursion – it inevitably breaks forth from its putative non-spatiality – and becomes spatially distributable, recognizable across possible occasions of recurrence.

We need to put the crucial force of this point through specific illustrations. The subject must understand his pain or his color impression as secured from an unusual angle, only in so far as it is subsumable under a general type of a state of affairs. To conceive the peculiarity of one's own experience of pain or color is also to appreciate what it is for someone else to have the same kind of pain or color impression if he is placed in the same angle. The subject understands the specific structure of inner sense precisely because he does not only conceive it in terms of an exclusively first-person angle, but conceives the very same circumstance as thinkable by others, or at least by herself at different times. This is what is done when one says something like 'My visual experience represents something as being of that shade', or 'I know how tall I am' by putting her hand on the top of her head to prove it (PI 279)[3]. What we have here is a genuinely recognizable feature, a genuine operation of our conceptual capacity—the very same capacity to embrace a color in mind can in principle persist beyond the specific duration and location of the experience itself.

Now the mode of 'inner' recursion may be significantly different from that of the outer, for the associated capacity to repeat may be very short-lived; that is, the past and future through which the thought travels may be the very recent past and the immediate future.[4] But even if the purportedly inner sample (a red sensation) does not recur in the future, the capacity or the logical possibility of the recognition persists in thought based on memory. Even to say 'This experience is uniquely particular,' 'This red that I see now is exhausted in this moment', is virtually to betray the general features exploitable in a conceptual capacity.

What cannot be done is to start with the pre-spatial and pre-conceptual bits of the inner and go on building chains of conceptual negotiations on its basis. The main point of Wittgenstein's critique of the inner /outer dichotomy is to challenge the self-interpretively of what are customarily called the objects of inner sense—i.e., to challenge their specially 'given' status that exhausts the concept, leaving no gap between itself and the conceptual operations. Wittgenstein challenges this claim by playing up the opaque or non-given character of the objects of inner sense, dispersing the givenness into non-givenness; or rather, rupturing the insular temporality of the inner into an open expanse of uses. In fine as the non-conceptual reduces to the conceptual, and the inner sense boils down to the outer sense.[5]

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[2] McDowell, J. *Mind and World*, 1996, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996, p 20.
[3] Wittgenstein, L. *Philosophical Investigations*, eds G. E. M. Anscombe. Rhees and G. H. Von Wright, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984. This work has been abbreviated as '*PI*' all through the paper.

[4] McDowell, *Mind and World*, Lecture III, section 5.
[5] Ibid. p 21–22.

2 INNER AS A PARADIGM OF DESCRIBING THE OUTER

'Sensations are private' is to be appreciated as a grammatical proposition—a standard for according meaning to certain moves in contrast to others (PI 247). This paradigm is forged by passivating the object to the sole perspective of the subject, blocking all its expansions and orientations from other points of view. As Wittgenstein illustrates, the difference between the public and the private - the outer and the inner - depends on two kinds of attention. One can speak of a red object, as to how it strikes with its glowing effulgence from all perspectives; or one can highlight a particular color scheme or a particular tone or hue (PI 277), or use an allegorical picture of a red membrane coming out of the object and one's body immersed in it (PI 276, 277). It is the last two modes of employment that constitute the necessity of the proposition 'This red sensation of mine is inner or private.' Similarly, one can activate a pinprick or a burning sensation by subjecting different percipients exactly to the same stimulus on the same part of their body. We can illustrate the popular antics of Phantom—the comic strip hero created by Lee Falk—like bashing the heads of two 'baddies' together. The point of activating sensations is to loosen them out of their seeming enclosure in the body of a particular perceiver and distribute them as shareable items among more than one perceiver. However, we tend to fall in with the more attractive alternative of 'passivating' or 'privatizing' our sensations, where all we actually do is to highlight a particular quality of the object or our sense organ or the intermediating atmosphere, or play up an unusual perspective. These alternative modes of exercising one's attention—of enclosing an object within a particular boundary and thus privatizing it, or distributing it in possible recursions across different viewpoints—both are ways of acting. They are not passive representations with a special neurological or psychological identity that push actions outside their exclusive ontology, reducing actions to merely external and contingent accompaniments.

The purported necessity of the proposition 'Sensations are private' stands on par with the necessity of so-called analytic propositions like 'Every rod has length,' 'Everybody has extension,' and 'Everything is identical with itself'. (PI 216) While the triviality of the proposition 'p = p because nothing apart from p can penetrate it' lies naked, that of our privacy games with sensations is camouflaged, or better, renovated, by a play of imagination. What do we do when we say: 'This red sensation is exclusively mine,' 'Nobody else can share this pain caused by this pin insertion in my finger?' In the first case we are held under the sway of the red membrane coming out of the object, submerging my body and settling back into it. The pin delinked from all its operations and interactions from other bodies in other directions is attenuated to a single, uni-dimensional penetration in my finger, thus effecting a cyclic interlocking between the two. The game of privacy lies primarily in formulating grammatical propositions in this way—propositions that set paradigms for describing sensations and feelings as 'private' and trees, chairs, sticks and stones as 'public'.

3 THE NEED FOR A WITTGENSTEINIAN NARRATIVE IN LITERATURE

Projecting the inner as a paradigm for describing the outer is not a real condensation of space into spacelessness, or a real transformation of extension into extensionlessness. It is an exercise of thwarting or recoiling spatial expansion – toning down the bodily movements to the minimum, constraining the objects to a static position for a prolonged duration. And the more we try to shrink up the exuberance of behaviors, or scale down its outstretching dimensions – the more space we activate to make it available to this retrenching exercise - the more we seek to roll up into the inner, the more we disperse into the outer. While the inner is

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a paradigm of the outer - the outer also becomes the criterion of the inner – from the other way round. 'An inner process stands in the need of an outward criterion.' (PI 580)

It is at this juncture that a literary narrative makes its intervention. Condensing the outer in the shape of an 'inner' paradigm and fleshing out this paradigm in the backdrop of the 'outer' - both these exercises need a densely detailed, thickly variegated, real time narrative. A philosophical discourse by its very nature forecloses the actual flow of life into frozen capsule of a theory; and perhaps even Wittgenstein's later works – despite their concrete illustrations, meticulous specificities, and ongoing portrayals - cannot dissolve the second-level talk about uses and practices into the ever-incomplete flow of uses themselves.

Unfortunately, many literary pieces themselves go on spattering mental predicates like 'he thought', 'he willed to do so and so', 'he became angry', 'he felt pain' and project these as tokens of innocuous laziness. They even tend to present this laziness as a philosophical stance of condensing the inflating empirical garbage of behaviors into the compact non-spatial mind. Let us see what a literary narrative of a sensation - with respect to a table - from a single person's perspective can achieve. It is a challenge thrown to the writer to activate an apparently lazy yarn with a different dynamism – the slow change in the hue and shades of the table, the gradual accumulation of dust-particles, my eye-balls controlling all digressive movements, the gradual strain building up in my optical nerves, counting the slow beats of my heart. This is not an account of how the empirical space of behaviors is nullified in terms of a non-space, rather my first-person narration of a sensation explodes this non-space into multiple routes of potential distribution through inevitable routes of my proprioception. I may put water in my eyes to get a blurry image of the table; I may put a screen between myself and the table, cut horizontal slits on the screen to turn the table into disconnected slivers of brown. The more I engage in these 'private' adventures or 'inner' enterprises – the more I publicize the object and open it out for general consumption. Philosophical texts can at best talk about this privatist style and /or recommend it, they cannot embody this style in its exposition.

How can the literary narratives bring in these 'fine shades of behaviour' (PI p 203) that would capture the 'inner' dimensions of the 'outer'? Can they capture the difference between a genuine pain and a pretence - in their protracted and ongoing narrative - without using the word 'pain' at all? Here indeed Wittgenstein has provided valuable suggestions that can be adopted by an adventurous narrator. The descriptions of pain-behaviour should not simply be recording changes in the direction of limb-movements or give quantitative details of muscle configurations or contortions. Any honest attempt to merge the inner with the outer should outgrow both the dualist inertness as well as the behaviourist obsession with stereo-typical body-movements embedded in formal and geometrical parameters. Any quantitative scheme of narration should be recast in a historical mould incorporating the qualitative changes – the emergent gleam in the eyes, the suppressed whistle, tears welling up in the eyes, strained gulping down the Adam's apple, slow whitening of knuckles, gradual inflation of muscles, vibration of nerves, accumulating beads of perspiration, flushing of the skin, gritting the teeth – i.e., all that demarcate genuine pain from shamming. The authenticity in representing pain or any mental predicate consists in exploring and publicising the subtle and subdued dimensions of the body, and thereby making it available for universal participation. Further, the creative genius of the writer would motivate him to roll out the concept of pain in an unconventional pattern of subversion – including expressions of joy, non-involvement or carelessness. It is within a holistic and historically protracted exploration that the non-

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standard and unconventional modalities of the inner - or what Wittgenstein dubs as the 'imponderable evidences' (PI p 228) - will be appreciated.

Thought in the dualist scheme claims a vital status in the realm of the inner, and all activities like sub-vocal speech, humming, reading silently, calculating in one's head, are at best the veil or medium behind which the ultimate thought recedes forever. Following Wittgenstein's suggestions (PI p 220-1) we can place the demand for a thickly detailed description of the innervated movements of the larynx - as to how it moves from each letter, syllable or note to the next. Such a narrative can show that it is only the normally expansive exercise of the larynx in producing loud speech, loud singing or visible moves of calculation, that subsequently get retrenched into small movements inside the throat. Within this extensive and finely tuned story the larynx- movements will grow into full-bodied thoughts and cease to be their skeleton – the status that was accorded by the dualists.

The dualist scheme would smoothly accommodate the possibility of grafting words on the mouth of animals – with a neat subtraction of that speech being caused by thought. If animals uttered words as we do – the dualist would attempt an analogical inference to the thought supposedly causing the speech - and declare that this inference yields a false conclusion. But the possibility of this epistemological failure (involved in the invalid analogical argument) presupposes the notional comprehension of the effect (animal speech) without the cause (animal thought). But Wittgenstein would point out that we cannot even understand the words grafted on animal's mouth as speech - 'If a lion could talk, we could not understand him'. (PI p 225) When words are grafted on to the mouths of normal animals in movies these words hang in the air like ghostly projections. Wittgenstein explains that animals do not talk, not because they cannot think, or lack the mental capacity. 'But-they simply do not talk'. (PI 25) They simply do not play the games of commanding, questioning, recounting, chatting, etc. etc., as they play the games of walking, eating, drinking, playing, mating. (PI 25) An honest account of the animal life with all the positive details of their behaviors and activities will not have to fall back on the purported absence of their inner thought as the purported cause of absence of their speech; what they do not do – will be exhaustively narrated in this non-causal account of what they actually do.

But the Disney animation techniques and subsequent computer graphics have evolved a new technique of fictional narrative to make animals genuinely look as if they are speaking. For this they had to enliven the animals with a new body-frame and a new structure of behaviors - where their speech is effectively recast as a spontaneous extension of their non-verbal activities. One can specifically refer to some of the Disney animations where they start from accurate body-frames of specific kinds of animals - lions, tigers, wolves and pythons – and extend them elastically, unobtrusively, to a frame of human semblance. Remember how in 'Lion King' Mufasa raised his legs while walking with a royal grace, how the movements of the lions' eye-balls took on a human mobility; remember how the beautiful feline in 'Aristocats' coiled up her tail with an unmistakable suggestion of a graceful lady manoeuvring her legs. The most remarkable technique could be noted where the body of a python (Kaa in 'Jungle Book') was re-configured in a mammalian style enabling us to extract the standard movements of human hands, legs, shoulders and waist - all from that homogeneously elongated flesh. Overall, the cartoon and non-cartoon animations of animals in the most recent technologies provide delightful occasions to realise the crucial insight of Wittgenstein – speech or language is not a passive replication of reality – but a sophisticated extension of non-verbal behaviour.

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Wittgenstein's treatment of the inner can be used in literature and feature-films to break through the false schism between erotic love and platonic love. We have seen that a deliberate stoppage of outer movements or withdrawals are nothing other than behaviors and they get their significance through a rich backdrop of cultivation – like gritting one's teeth, contraction of muscles, holding one's breath, recoiling one's limbs, stiffening the knuckles. Similarly, the difference between erotic love and platonic love lies in two lay-outs of bodily behaviours. In this connexion we need to address Putnam's interventions[6] – he said that unless we entertain a firm conviction about the need for communication and empathy, our mind does not get expressed in external manifestations. Putnam gives the example of a Spartan community whose members do not harbour this conviction and hence their pain (and other mental states) is held back from any behavioural manifestation. And Putnam insists that this intermediary belief itself is irreducibly mental - it cannot be cashed out in actual or possible behaviours. No doubt Putnam will hold the same opinion about romantic love and its external manifestations. Here again we need to rely heavily on literature - to dissipate that putative clot of an intermediary - in terms of an array of foundationless usage, where the dogged question about the primal cause of the love-behaviors (manifest or controlled) would not arise. This intermediary belief does not precede behaviors as an ethereal origin; rather it is a language-game of putting up a paradigm - whereby the unsophisticated mass of love- or pain-behaviors is judged against a set of subdued expressions. The so-called platonic love between a man and a woman stretches out over a broad spectrum with finely distinguished shades – each differing from the other in subtle nuances. It ranges from ordinary acquaintance, friendship, thick camaraderie to a gradually ascending level mutual dependence and indispensability. All these mentalistic terms are to be fleshed out through fine distinguished shades of behaviour – where all the apparently primary colors of this love-spectrum turn out to be seamless blend of ongoing similarities.[7] Sometimes there is a passive indifference about the lover's body, sometimes a pronounced neglect, sometimes an easeful withdrawal, sometimes a poetic aestheticisation, sometimes the evocative undulations of the body which were in the forefront recede to the background. All these would figure as possible bodily orientations of the so-called platonic love, romance or friendship.

A dualist account of sexual experience is often fraught with false causal splits between the inner and the outer. These splits occur between the non-spatial images of all erotic spaces (erotic touches, smells and visions) on the one hand - and the purely physical movements on the other - where the latter supposedly generated by the former. Once the mental cause of intercourse is relegated to the non-spatial realm, the residual effect will be claimed to be described in purely spatial and non-erotic terms – 'rhythmic muscular contractions in the pelvic region', 'lubrication', 'convulsion', 'swelling and brightening', 'withdrawal', 'ejection', 'reduction of size', 'final relaxation of muscles', 'dropping of blood-pressure; etc. Here again the onus falls on the literary narratives to dissolve the causal split between the non-spatial realm of inner sex and its outer manifestation in a single continuum.

Feminist literature can motivate itself to narrate women's orgasm in a Wittgensteinian style. The prevalent theory on women's orgasm seeks to discover a spatial connexon between the vagina and the clitoris – as to how the highly innervated tissues of the clitoris are pulled closely towards the anterior walls of the vagina during the phases of arousal and intercourse.[8]

[6] Putnam, H. 'Brains and Behaviours' in ed. J. Heal, *Philosophy of Mind, Oxford*: Oxford University Press, 2004.

[7] See *PI* 66, 67 for Wittgenstein's treatment of the notion of similarity.

[8] I have drawn the relevant details about the notions of orgasm and sexual response cycle from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orgasm (accessed 30 November 2017).

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Now this phenomenon of women's orgasm has to be recounted again through labored details as to how a woman carves out the space of her sexual intercourse, how she voluntarily makes the smaller regions of the clitoris burst forth in the larger regions of the vagina. Overall, it is again an exercise to dissolve the schism between the inner and outer in the realm of women's sexuality.

4 CAN THERE BE NEURO-FICTIONS OR NEURO-MOVIES IN THE WITTGENSTEINIAN STYLE?

We know that neurological theories have overpowered the scenario where all the enigmas of mental predicates – conception, cognition, emotion and volition - are sought to be explained exhaustively by brain-states and neural firings. I shall address only one of such theories – that of A Raftopoulos[9] who lays out his theory of visual perception in microscopic details of milliseconds (ms). 150 ms after the stimulus onset when most of the visual regions of the brain have been activated, and neuronal firings occur in response to the specific location, the brain is said to fuse the features of the stimuli and form single units with initial boundaries. These are said to be 2.5 dimensional objects or proto-objects - which are flat fragmentary and disjoined, with incomplete and indeterminate surfaces. They are still confined to the double images of the retina, and they are yet to be positioned in the common space-time coordinates. Now for Raftopoulos the processing of stimuli into 2.5 d objects and the route through which they are turned into full-fledged three-dimensional objects is radically non-conceptual. Two discrete stimuli cannot recognise their mutual similarity in qualities, to get fused into one; and our mere phenomenal consciousness about the 2.5 d objects rules out the possibility of their being conceptually integrated in terms of any general or repeatable features. It is only some kind of brute spatial correspondence between the spatial characteristics of the stimuli and the cortical geography that turns discrete stimuli into full-fledged objects with repeatable class-properties.

Evidently in such neurological theories it is the brain takes the place of the mysterious 'inner' saddling us with a new dualism – the brain-body dualism. Wittgenstein would say that it is not the flat two-dimensional fragments in the brain and at the originary point of visual perception that gradually generates thicker and more complete representations through a structure of milliseconds – all supposedly enclosed in the brain. Rather it is motion and action, starting from infant's movements - like oscillation of eye-balls, turning around the head, and gradually rotating its whole body, moving up to the standing posture and walking – all these that bend, blend and break space into full-fledged perceptions. It is at this juncture that a new genre of neuro-fictions or neuro-movies can come in. Let these genres narrate the neural happenings inside the brain parallelly with perception, which will clearly show that the exercise of sweeping out the flat disconnected proto-objects into full-fledged objects is nothing but action. Perhaps these holistic yarns of neuro-fictions can successfully show that all the intermediary linkages - the highly sophisticated tools of FFS, LRP, 2d images, 2.5d images changing in the mind-boggling speed in the brain - will still have to be integrated with the simple incidence of human action and participation.[10]

Comprehending later Wittgenstein's anti-foundationalist approach had always been like walking on waters, or laboring under an intellectual vertigo – where you are always prone to

[9] Raftopoulos, A. 'Reference, Perception and Attention', *Philosophical Studies*, vol. 144, 2009, pp. 339–60.

[10] Wittgenstein L. *Philosophical Remarks,* ed. Rush Rhees, Tr: Raymond Hargreaves and Roger White, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1975, *p* 100-101

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land back on a seemingly hard ground, and let your relentlessly dissipative exercise ossify into a putative foundation. If reaching out to fictional narratives seems to be far-fetched or misguided, let philosophy find out its own narrative space - in the shape of philosophical fictions or docu-dramas that would weave out a story – ever indeterminate and ever-incomplete.

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আলোচনা চক্র

৩৩ বর্ষ ১ম সংখ্যা সংকলন ৪৬ জানুয়ারি ২০১৯

নারীবাদের দর্শন লিঙ্গস্বরূপ যৌনস্বরূপ দি পার্সোনাল ইজ দ্য বিজ্ঞানে নারী বাদ ধ্রুপদি যুক্তিবিজ্ঞান
জগৎ বিশ্বাস ও যুক্তি রীজনের পুরুষায়ন জ্ঞানীয় মূল্য অবস্থানিক তত্ত্ব উত্তর-আধুনিকতাবাদ নারীবাদী
অধিবিদ্যা বাংলা সিনেমায় গল্পে উপন্যাসে দর্শন 'আধুনিকতা' প্রসঙ্গে হানা আরেন্ট সত্তাবোধের আত্ম-অন্যীভবন
জেনোফেমিনিজম ও শুঁড়েলা চিন্তন বাস্তবের মরুভূমিতে স্লাভই জিজেক দর্শন সাক্ষাৎকার জর্জিয়ো আগামবেন
প্রসঙ্গ জেরি ফোডর বঙ্গীয় শব্দার্থকোষ বেদান্তদর্শন ১৯৪৬-৪৭ এর ডায়েরি

নারীবাদের দর্শন

সম্পাদনা : অতসী চ্যাটার্জী সিনহা ও মনোজ নস্কর

'ঘুরে দেখতে শিখুন ...' ।। শেফালী মৈত্র
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বিবিধ সন্দর্ভ

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প্রচ্ছদ
বিপ্লব মন্ডল

অক্ষর বিন্যাস
সিদ্ধার্থ দে
স্মার্ট লেজার, ৩০, বান্ধবনগর, কলকাতা-৫৬

মুদ্রক
স্টার প্রিন্টিং প্রেস
২১এ, রাধানাথ বোস লেন, কলকাতা-৬

প্রচ্ছদ মুদ্রণ-বাঁধাই
অভিজিৎ গোস্বামী
লেজার এইড, ৩৫এ/৩, বিপ্লবী বারীন ঘোষ সরণি, কলকাতা-৬৭

মুদ্রক-প্রকাশক
চিরঞ্জীব শূর
২/১৩৫ যতীনদাস নগর, বেলঘরিয়া, কলকাতা-৭০০০৫৬
ফোন : ৯০৮৮১৮৩৫৮৫
ই-মেল : alochanachakra@gmail.com
ওয়েবসাইট : www.alochanachakra.com

মূল্য : দুইশত টাকা

সূচিপত্র

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দ্বিতীয় ভাগ : বিবিধ সন্দর্ভ

দর্শন বিষয়ক

বাংলা সিনেমায়, গল্পে, উপন্যাসে দর্শনের টুক্‌রো টাক্‌রা ।। এণাক্ষী রায় মিত্র ১৬৯
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বাংলা সিনেমায়, গল্পে, উপন্যাসে দর্শনের টুক্‌রো টাক্‌রা

এণাক্ষী রায় মিত্র

চলচ্চিত্র, সাহিত্য ও চিত্রকলার সঙ্গে দর্শনতত্ত্বের সম্বন্ধটা ঘনিষ্ঠ ও বহুমুখী। শিল্প সাহিত্য প্রভৃতির কাঠামো, এদের সঙ্গে মানুষের আদান-প্রদান যেমন দর্শনের একটা বিষয়, আবার কোনো কোনো সময়ে একটি বিশেষ দর্শন-চিন্তা তত্ত্বের বেষ্টনীর বাইরে কল্পকাহিনি বা ছায়াছবির আঙিনায় হাজির হয়। আবার অনেক সময়ে তত্ত্বটিকে একটা তরলায়িত নাট্যরূপ দেওয়ার চেষ্টা করা হয়—বিভিন্ন চরিত্রের মধ্যে গতিময় কথোপকথনের মাধ্যমে।

শিল্প-দর্শন সম্মিলন বিষয়ে অনেক গুরু-গম্ভীর তত্ত্ব-কাঠামো থাকতে পারে, কিন্তু এই প্রবন্ধের ঐ জাতীয় কোনও পন্ডিতি উচ্চাশা নেই। আমি শুধু কয়েকটা বিক্ষিপ্ত দৃষ্টান্ত নেব, দু-একটা ছায়াছবি, একটা দুটো গল্প আর উপন্যাস—সবই বাংলা ভাষার। এগুলি সবই বেশ জনপ্রিয় আর বহুল প্রচলিত, বাঙালী পাঠকের বা দর্শকের সনাক্ত করতে অসুবিধে হবে না। আর এইগুলির মধ্যে থেকে তুলে নেবো কিছু কিছু বিশেষ মুহূর্ত বা পরিস্থিতি, যেখানে কোনো কোনো চরিত্রের মুখে (বা কখনো স্বয়ং লেখকের বয়ানেও) উঠে এসেছে ছোটো খাটো বিক্ষিপ্ত দর্শন বা টুক্‌রো টুক্‌রো দার্শনিক মন্তব্য।

আমি কেন এ-কয়টা দৃষ্টান্তই বেছে নিলাম—এটা কিন্তু পুরোপুরি আকস্মিক, এই দৃষ্টান্তগুলি আমার ব্যক্তিগত অভিজ্ঞতার পরিসরে ঘটনাক্রমে এসে পড়েছে; এই নির্বাচনের আর কোনও তাত্ত্বিক বা নীতিগত ভিত্তি নেই। হ্যাঁ, যা বলছিলাম—এই সব টুক্‌রো টাক্‌রা দর্শন-চিন্তাগুলি নিয়ে একটু নাড়া চাড়া করব, দেখতে চাইব মূল দর্শনতত্ত্বের কতটা প্রতিফলন ঘটেছে এসব মন্তব্যে, নাকি আধা তাত্ত্বিক, আধা-অ-তাত্ত্বিক, বোঝা-না-বোঝার আলোছায়াতেই এদের মাধুর্য? সত্যিই তো, শিল্প-সাহিত্যের চরিত্রগুলি যদি সব সময়েই যথাযথ দর্শন-তত্ত্ব আওড়াতো, তাহলে তো খোদ শিল্প-মাধ্যমটাই হয়ে যেতো একটা ছদ্মবেশী শাস্ত্রবিজ্ঞান!

সাহিত্য-সম্রাট সুনীল গঙ্গোপাধ্যায়ের প্রথম দিকের উপন্যাস *মেঘ, বৃষ্টি, আলো*[১] দিয়ে শুরু করছি। যদিও এটা আমাদের বেশির ভাগেরই পড়া, তবু যে পরিস্থিতিটা নিয়ে আমি আলোচনা করতে চাই—সেটা পাঠকদের একটু মনে করিয়ে দেওয়া প্রয়োজন। উপন্যাসের নায়িকা অনুরাধা একজন সুদর্শনা, স্বাস্থ্যবতী যুবতী—তার প্রতিবেশী প্রণবেশবাবু মধ্যবয়স্ক, বিবাহিত, যাঁর স্ত্রী রুমা অসুস্থ। প্রণবেশবাবু কোনো এক বিদেশী যন্ত্রপাতির কোম্পানীর সেলস্ ডিপার্টমেন্টে কাজ করেন, কিন্তু অবসর সময়ে বিভিন্ন তাত্ত্বিক বিষয়ের বই পড়া তাঁর অভ্যাস। অনুরাধাকে প্রায়ই তাঁর বাড়িতে যেতে হয়, তাঁর অসুস্থ স্ত্রীকে দেখতে বা বাচ্চা মেয়েটিকে সঙ্গ দিতে। প্রণবেশবাবু ভদ্র, পরিশীলিত, দায়িত্বশীল স্বামী ও পিতা, কিন্তু অন্যদিকে তিনি অনুরাধার প্রতি গভীরভাবে অনুরক্ত।

একদিন অনুরাধা প্রণবেশবাবুর বাড়িতে গেছে, দেখা গেল তিনি কান্ট-এর 'ক্রিটিক অফ পিওর রীজন' পড়ছেন। অনুরাধাকে দেখে তিনি ডাকলেন ও এ-কথা সে-কথার পর তাকে একটা বিদেশী পারফিউম উপহার দিতে চাইলেন।

প্রণবেশ—'এটা তোমার জন্য এনেছি'।

অনুরাধা—'কেন, আমার জন্য এনেছেন কেন?'

প্রণবেশ—'কেন, তার কোনো যুক্তি নেই। কান্টও বলেছেন, যুক্তি দিয়ে পৃথিবীর সব রহস্যের মীমাংসা করা যায় না।'[২]

প্রণবেশবাবুর এই কান্ট-প্রয়োগ প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক দর্শনচর্চার কাঠামোয় খাপ খাওয়ানো মুশকিল। আসলে কান্টের জ্ঞান-তত্ত্ব বিবিধ পারিভাষিক প্রত্যয়ে পরিপূর্ণ, তার মধ্যে কোন্ ধারণাটি প্রণবেশবাবু 'যুক্তি' হিসেবে অভিহিত করছেন, সেটাই পরিষ্কার নয়। কান্টের মতে মানুষের জ্ঞানের দুটি প্রধান উৎস—সংবেদন ও বুদ্ধি। এর মধ্যে সংবেদন-শক্তি মূলত নিষ্ক্রিয়, সে ইন্দ্রিয়র আঁছড়ে পড়া কাঁচা মালমশলার দ্বারাই পরিচালিত হয়, অন্যদিকে বুদ্ধিশক্তি প্রধানত সক্রিয়, সে গৃহীত উপাদানকে সমানধর্ম (concept)-এর আঙ্গিকে সাজায়, তাতে বর্ণনার ভাষা দান করে। এই বুদ্ধির উৎসকে কান্ট মাঝে মাঝে রীজন বলেছেন।[৩] ধরে নেওয়া যাক প্রণবেশবাবু 'যুক্তি' বলতে এই বুদ্ধিশক্তিকেই বুঝেছেন। তবে প্রণবেশবাবুকে বুঝতে হলে আমাদের কান্টের জ্ঞান-তত্ত্বের আরও দু-একটি কথা জানতে হবে। কান্টের মতে আমরা বাস্তবকে জানি বা বুঝি আমাদের মনের কতগুলি আকারের মাধ্যমে—যেমন বস্তুর দৈশিক অবস্থান, তাদের কালিক পারম্পর্য—এগুলি আমাদের সংবেদন-শক্তির অন্তর্নিহিত আকার, অন্যদিকে বস্তুগুলির মধ্যে দ্রব্য-গুণের কাঠামো, বা দুটি ঘটনার কার্য-কারণ সম্পর্ক—এসবই কিন্তু আমাদের বুদ্ধির আকার। এই সব আকার আমরা ইন্দ্রিয়-উপাত্তের উপর আরোপ করে তবেই তাদের বিষয়কে তৈরি করি, আকারবিহীন বিশুদ্ধ সত্তা আমাদের জ্ঞানের বাইরে। স্থান, কাল, ধর্ম-ধর্মী সম্বন্ধ, কার্য-কারণ আঙ্গিক—এসব লাগিয়েই তো তৈরি হয়েছে প্রণবেশবাবু ও অনুরাধার শরীর মনের গঠন, পারফিউমের বোতল, টেবলে ছড়ানো বই, এমনকি 'ক্রিটিক অফ পিওর রীজন' বইটির অবস্থান, অবয়ব, রঙ, আয়তন। পারফিউম কেনা, অনুরাধাকে দেবার ইচ্ছা, তাকে দেবার দৈহিক প্রয়াস—এই প্রতিটি ঘটনার সনাক্তীকরণ, এদের কালিক পরম্পরায় সাজানো, কার্য-কারণ আঙ্গিকে বিন্যস্ত করা—এগুলি সবই মনের অবদান।

এখন কান্টের তত্ত্ব-কাঠামোয় দাঁড়িয়ে যদি কেউ বলে 'যুক্তি দিয়ে সব রহস্যের মীমাংসা করা যায় না'—তার একটা সম্ভাব্য অর্থ দাঁড়াবে—আমাদের জ্ঞানের আকারের বাইরে যে বিশুদ্ধ বস্তু-সত্তা—তাকে যুক্তি দিয়ে বোঝা যায় না; কারণ যুক্তি তথা বুদ্ধির আকার দিয়ে বুঝতে গেলে তা তো বিশেষিত বা বিকল্পিত হয়ে যাবে—নিরাকার সত্তাটাকে পাবো কই? কিন্তু প্রণবেশবাবুর অনুরাধার জন্য পারফিউম কেনা—এটি একটি আকারিত বা বিশেষিত ঘটনা, প্রণবেশবাবু তো নিজেই এটিকে ভাষার দ্বারা চিহ্নিত করেছেন, বর্ণনা করেছেন, ফলে এই ঘটনার যুক্তি বা ভিত্তি তো ঐ নিরাকার নির্বিকল্প, বিশুদ্ধ সত্তা-রহস্যের মধ্যে পড়বে না।

তবু প্রণবেশবাবুকে সমর্থন করার জন্য যদি বলি—প্রণবেশবাবুর মনে এই সব ঘটনা-প্রবাহ—অনুরাধাকে ভালো লাগা, তার জন্য পারফিউম কেনা, তাকে উপহার দিতে

চাওয়া, অনুরাধার প্রত্যাখ্যান—এসব বিকল্প আরোপের আগে যে শুদ্ধ সত্তার অবাচিত রূপ—তার রহস্যের কথাই উনি বলবার চেষ্টা করছিলেন। কিন্তু না—কোনো কিছু যখন ঘটনা হিসেবে বর্ণিত হয়েছে, তাতে পরিপুষ্ট ধারণার অনুপ্রবেশ ঘটেছে—তখন এই সবিকল্পক জ্ঞানকে আর নিরাকার তন্মাত্রে পর্যবসিত করা যায় না। ঘটনার কারণ বা যুক্তি অনুসন্ধানে আপতিক প্রতিবন্ধকতা আসতে পারে, জাগতিক বাধা আসতে পারে, স্মৃতি-বিক্রম হতে পারে—যেমনটা হয়ে থাকে অতীত ভূগর্ভ থেকে কোনো প্রাচীন শহর খুঁড়ে বার করতে, বা অনেক দিন আগের কোনো ঘটনা—যার কোনও নথিপত্র নেই—তার পুনরুপস্থাপন করতে। তেমনই অনুরাধাকে পারফিউম কিনে দেওয়ার (অথবা না কিনে দেওয়ার) পেছনে অনেক ধরনের অভিপ্রায় প্রণবেশবাবুর মনে কাজ করতে পারে, তার মধ্যে কোনোটা মুখ্য, কোনোটা গৌণ, কোনোটা পুরোভাগে, কোনোটা পার্শ্বিক, কোনোটা একসময়ে মনে এলেও পারফিউম কেনার অব্যবহিত পূর্বক্ষণে না থাকার দরুণ হয়তো প্রণবেশবাবুর স্মৃতিতে ধরা নেই। কিন্তু এই যে সব জ্ঞানীয় ব্যবধান—এটা কান্ট-তত্ত্বের জ্ঞান ও নির্জ্ঞান সত্তার মধ্যে যে ব্যবধান—তার সঙ্গে এক করা যায় না। সেটা হবে কান্টের তথা দর্শন-চর্চার, এমনকি আমাদের সাধারণ যুক্তি-বুদ্ধির অপলাপ। তাহলে প্রণবেশবাবু এই অপলাপ করলেন কেন? আরও খুঁচিয়ে বলতে গেলে সুনীল গঙ্গোপাধ্যায় তাঁর চরিত্রকে এই দর্শনপ্রমাদে লিপ্ত করলেন কেন? একি তাঁরই দর্শন-প্রমাদ? নাকি প্রকারান্তরে কান্ট-দর্শনের এই অজ্ঞেয় সত্তার বিরুদ্ধে পরোক্ষ প্রতিবাদ?

এবার চলে যাব মানিক বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের 'প্রাগৈতিহাসিক' গল্পে। এই গল্পের মুখ্য চরিত্রেরা অবশ্য কেউই দর্শন-চর্চায় আগ্রহী নয়—গল্পের দার্শনিক উপলেপ এসেছে একেবারে শেষে—খোদ লেখকেরই মন্তব্যে। অতি-উদ্ধৃত অনুচ্ছেদটি তাই আবার তুলে দিতে হচ্ছে—

'হয়তো ঐ চাঁদ আর ঐ পৃথিবীর ইতিহাস আছে। কিন্তু যে ধারাবাহিক অন্ধকার মাতৃগর্ভ হইতে সংগ্রহ করিয়া দেহের অভ্যন্তরে লুকাইয়া ভিখু ও পাঁচী পৃথিবীতে আসিয়াছিল এবং যে অন্ধকার তাহারা সন্তানের মাংস আবেষ্টনীর মধ্যে গোপন রাখিয়া যাইবে তাহা প্রাগৈতিহাসিক, পৃথিবীর আলো আজ পর্যন্ত তাহার নাগাল পায় নাই, কোনও দিন পাইবেও না।'[৪]

মানুষের ইতিহাসের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে এগিয়ে চলেছে তার নিজের ইতিহাসকে ধরে রাখার প্রয়াস—বিভিন্ন মূর্ত নিদর্শনে—ছবিতে, লিপিতে, ভাস্কর্যে, বা অন্যান্য প্রতীকচিহ্নে। অতীতের গভীর থেকে গভীরতর গর্ভ—যেখানে মানুষ বা প্রাক্-মানব প্রজাতি তার নিজস্ব ইতিহাস লেখার কাজটুকুও আরম্ভ করেনি—বা করলেও তা পৃথিবীর বুক থেকে মুছে গেছে—ইতিহাসের এই অতি-অতীত স্তরটাই প্রচলিত অর্থে প্রাগৈতিহাসিক। এই প্রচলিত অর্থে প্রাগৈতিহাসিক কিন্তু অ-কালিক নয়—কারণ কালপ্রবাহের ধারণাটাই এমন যে তার মধ্যে এমন কোনো প্রাথমিক স্তর যেখানে কাল আরম্ভ হয়—সেটা মানা অর্থহীন। এখন মানিক বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় তো বলা বাহুল্য 'প্রাগৈতিহাসিক' শব্দটিকে তার প্রচলিত অর্থে নেন নি। তিনি হয়তো এটাই বলতে চেয়েছেন যে মানুষের হিংসা, লোভ, যৌন লালসা এমনই অতলস্পর্শী যে মানুষের নিজ ইতিহাস রচনার আগে থেকেই তার এই মনোভূমি মূল উৎসরূপে বিদ্যমান। তা ইতিহাস রচনার প্রাকশর্ত হিসেবে উপস্থিত—এই মৌল মনোভূমিকে আর ইতিহাসের

আওতায়, বা প্রজনন-তত্ত্ব ও জীন-সংক্রমণের বিজ্ঞান-পরিকাঠামোয় ধরা যায় না। তাকে আলোতে আনা যায় না—কারণ সে নিজে অন্ধকারে থেকে তৈরি করে আলোর শরীর, সে নিজে অন্ধকারে থেকে সম্ভব করে আলোর প্রকাশ-প্রক্রিয়া।

কিন্তু দর্শন-ইতিহাসের নতুন নতুন পথগুলি নিয়ে নাড়া-চাড়া করলে মানিকবাবুর এই ব্যঞ্জনা তার অভিঘাত হারাতে পারে। শুধুমাত্র যৌনতার বিষয়টুকুই একটু অনুধাবন করি—মানুষের জৈবিক গঠন যদি অন্যরকম হত, যে যদি উভলিঙ্গ হত বা তার প্রজনন-প্রক্রিয়া যদি চলত কিছুটা অযৌন-প্রজননের ধাঁচায়, তাহলে কি তার যৌন-মানস, যৌনতার দ্বিকোটিক-আঙ্গিক, নারী-পুরুষের নিটোল বৈপরীত্য ও তৎসম্পর্কিত লোভ-লালসা, ঈর্ষা-অসূয়ার সামগ্রিক পরিসরটাই পাল্টে যেত না? সেক্ষেত্রে মানুষের যৌনতাকে বা তার অন্যান্য রিপুর আধিপত্যের ক্ষেত্রটিকে কী অর্থে প্রাগৈতিহাসিক বা ইতিহাস-বিনির্মুক্ত বলা যায়—সেটা চিন্তার বিষয়।

মানব-শরীরের জৈব-যৌন গঠন নিয়ে কষ্টকল্পনা না হয় নাই করলাম। তবুও যৌনতার ক্ষেত্রটিকে যে এক হিসেবে আপেক্ষিক, আপতিক, ঐতিহাসিক দুর্ঘটনাপ্রসূত তা ফুকো[৫]-কে অবলম্বন করে বোঝা যেতে পারে। ফুকোর মতে যৌনতা—সে তথাকথিত 'স্বাভাবিক' বিসমকামিতাই হোক, বা সমকামী প্রবণতাই হোক—তা কোনো নির্বিকল্পক আদিম প্রবৃত্তি নয়; এ এক সামাজিক নির্মাণ—পূর্ণাঙ্গ তাত্ত্বিক পরিকাঠামোর মধ্যেই বিচার্য। ভিক্টোরিয়ান আমলে যৌনতাকে যত বেশি অবদমিত করার চেষ্টা হয়েছে ততই তৈরি হয়েছে নতুন নতুন দেহ-কল্প, দেহের নতুন নতুন শাসন, শরীরের নতুন ভাঁজে ভাঁজে নতুন চাহিদা ও প্রলোভন। তৈরি হয়েছে শরীরের নতুন নতুন উচ্চাবচতা, বিবিধ অংশের বিবিধ অনুভূমিক-পুরোভূমিক সংস্থান, আবরণ-উন্মোচনের নিত্য-নতুন নকশা। কেউ যদি আদেশ দেয়, মহিলারা পা ফাঁক করে বসবে না, বা তাঁদের ঊর্দ্ধাঙ্গের পোষাক-রেখা গলার দু ইঞ্চির বেশি নীচে নামতে পারবে না—এই শাসন কিন্তু মহিলার শরীরের কোনো পূর্বস্থিত বাস্তবিক যৌনসত্তাকে সূচিত করে না, বরঞ্চ নারীদেহের এক আয়াসসাধ্য নির্মাণের ফলেই তার পরবর্তী অবদমনের প্রশ্ন আসে। অবদমনের পরিসর খুলে দেয় নতুন কাল্পনিক দেহ নির্মাণের পথ। যৌন অবদমনকে আমরা এক স্বাভাবিক বিস্ফোরণের চেষ্টাকৃত সংবরণ বলে মনে করি, কিন্তু এই আপাত-বিস্ফোরকতা ও তার আপাত-অবদমনের টানাপোড়েনও এক প্রলম্বিত সামাজিক অভ্যাসের ফলশ্রুতি। এরই সঙ্গে যুক্ত হয় বাজার ও অধিকতর মুনাফার উদ্বেগ—যেখানে নারী-পুরুষের ভেদ অনুপ্রবেশ করতে পারেনি, যেখানে আপাতদৃষ্টিতে নারী পুরুষ নির্বিশেষে চাহিদা একই রকম, সেখানেও উদ্ভাবন করতে হবে নতুন নতুন স্তরভেদ, নতুন নতুন বৈপরীত্য। এছাড়া পুঁজিবাদী সরকার নিয়ে আসে এক নতুন ধরনের উৎকণ্ঠা—যার সে প্রশাসন করবে, সেই জনগণের দেহ, তাদের জন্ম-মৃত্যুর হার, বিবাহ, জন্ম-নিয়ন্ত্রণ, মাত্রাতিরিক্ত অবিমিশ্র যৌন আচরণের ফলে জনস্বাস্থ্য-হানির আশংকা। প্রশাসিতব্য মানুষগুলি সরকারের চোখের ঠুলিতে নানাবিধ যৌন মাত্রা পেতে থাকে।

ফুকো-র মতে মানুষের আচরণের ভিত্তি খুঁজতে হবে যৌনতায় নয়—বরঞ্চ যৌনতার নাভিমূলে রয়েছে এক সংকল্পিত ক্ষমতার অধিষ্ঠান, ক্ষমতার নিত্য নতুন প্রক্ষেপ। নতুন নতুন বর্গীকরণ, নতুন নতুন সংস্থান ও বৈষম্যের আবিষ্কার—এসবই ঐ ক্ষমতারই রূপায়ণ। যে সব

তাত্ত্বিকরা নতুন নতুন যৌনতার বর্গ রচনা করে চলেছেন—শুধু তাঁরাই নন—যাঁরা এই নব নব কিসিমের যৌনতার বাস্তবিক চর্চা করে চলেছেন তাঁরা নিজেরাও এই ক্ষমতার প্রযোজক। এবং একই সঙ্গে ক্ষমতার ঘূর্ণিচক্রে আটকে পড়া মানুষ। মোট্‌মাট্—যৌনতা কোনো পূর্বপ্রদত্ত কাঁচা মালমশলা নয়—তা এক চেষ্টাকৃত অভ্যাস, এক ক্ষমতাচিহ্নিত অনুশীলন। এই ক্ষমতা হিতৈষেণার ছদ্মবেশে আধিপত্য বিস্তার করে, শাসন-দমন-বশীকরণের হাতিয়ারে আনুগত্য আদায় করে যৌনতাকে নিয়ন্ত্রণ করে। এই ক্ষমতা কতগুলি ছোট ছোট সম্বন্ধের সমষ্টি, সমাজের প্রতিটি ক্ষেত্রে, প্রতিটি স্তরে ছড়িয়ে আছে এর প্রকাশ। এ যে শুধু কতিপয় শাসকের কব্জাগত তা নয়, অর্থাৎ কিছু সংখ্যালঘু উপরের তলার মানুষ যে কতগুলো সাধারণ নিয়ম বানিয়ে জনসাধারণের উপর ওপর থেকে চাপিয়ে দেয়—এমনটা নয়। বস্তুত অসংখ্য সাধারণ মানুষের দৈনন্দিন জীবনচর্যা থেকে উঠে আসে যৌনতার কিছু সাধারণ অভিমুখ—তারা ধীরে ধীরে জমাট বাঁধে, তাত্ত্বিক আঙ্গিক ধারণ করে।

যৌনতার এই সামাজিক নির্মাণ-প্রক্রিয়াকে যদি সমাদর করতে পারি মানুষের অন্যান্য 'স্বাভাবিক' প্রবৃত্তির ঐতিহাসিকতাও ধীরে ধীরে পরিস্ফুট হবে। সেক্ষেত্রে মানিক বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের এই কিংবদন্তী গল্পের কিংবদন্তী উপসংহারের একটা পুনর্মূল্যায়ণ হওয়া প্রয়োজন।

রাজশেখর বসু-র 'নির্মোক নৃত্য' গল্পে[৬] আমরা দেহ/মন-সংক্রান্ত দর্শনচিন্তার এক উজ্জ্বল প্রযোগ দেখতে পাই। স্বর্গের উর্বশী চ্যালেঞ্জ ছুঁড়লেন—যে কোনো পুরুষ—তিনি নিজেকে যতই রিপুবিজয়ী জীবন্মুক্ত মনে করুন না কেন তাঁকে পরাস্ত করতে উর্বশীর খুব একটা বেগ পেতে হবে না। এই চ্যালেঞ্জের মোকাবিলা করার জন্য দেবরাজ ইন্দ্র তিন দিব্য মানবকে[৭] স্বর্গের রাজসভায় নিমন্ত্রণ করে নিয়ে এলেন—তাঁদের নাম—কুতুক, পর্বত ও কর্দম। এঁদের পরাস্ত করার জন্য উর্বশী স্ট্রিপ-টীজ নাচের পরিকল্পনা নেন, আর অনুষ্ঠান ঘোষণার সময়ে ইন্দ্র এই নাচের ভারতীয় তর্জমা করেন—'নির্মোক নৃত্য'। নামকরণের তাৎপর্য এটাই যে নির্মোক বা খোলস অপসারণের মতোই উর্বশীর দেহও নাচের স্তরে স্তরে ক্রমশ 'অপাবৃত' হবে। নাচের ধাপে ধাপে উর্বশী ক্রমে তাঁর সমস্ত বস্ত্র উন্মোচন করলেন—তাঁর 'কুন্দশুভ্র নগ্নকান্তি'র উন্মাদনায় পর্বত ও কর্দম ঋষিও পরাস্ত হলেন। কিন্তু কুতুক নির্বিকার।

'কুতুক বললেন, থামলে কেন উর্বশী, আরও নির্মোক ত্যাগ করো।

নারদ বললেন, আর নির্মোক কোথায়? উর্বশী তো সমস্তই মোচন করেছে।

কুতুক বললেন, ঐ যে ওর সর্বগাত্রে একটি পদ্মপলাশতুল্য শুভ্রারক্ত মসৃণ আবরণ রয়েছে।

—আরে ওটা তো গায়ের চামড়া।

—ওটাও খুলে ফেলুক।

—পাগল হলে নাকি হে কুতুক? গায়ের চামড়া তো শরীরেরই অংশ, ও তো পরিচ্ছদ নয়।

—পরিচ্ছদ না হোক নির্মোক তো বটে। ঐ খোলসটাও খুলে ফেলুক, নীচে কী আছে দেখব।

নারদ বললেন, কি আছে শোনো। চর্মের নীচে আছে মেদ, তার নীচে মাংস, তার নীচে কংকাল।

—তার নীচে কী আছে?

—কিছু নেই।

—যার প্রভাবে "অকস্মাৎ পুরুষের বক্ষোমাঝে চিত্ত আত্মহারা, নাচে রক্তধারা" উর্বশীর সেই নারীত্ব কোথায় আছে?

—নারীত্ব আছে ওর বসনে, আভরণে, ভাব-ভঙ্গীতে, আর অনুরাগী পুরুষের চিত্তে। তুমি তো বীতরাগ, চিত্ত পুড়িয়ে খেয়েছ, দেখবে কি করে?

মহামুনি কুতুক ক্রুদ্ধ হয়ে বললেন, আমাকে প্রতাড়িত করবার জন্য এখানে ডেকে এনেছ? এই উর্বশী একটা অন্তঃসারশূন্য জন্তু, ছাগদেহের সঙ্গে ওর দেহের প্রভেদ কী?[৮]

কুতুকের এই প্রতিক্রিয়া দুভাবে দেখা যেতে পারে। এক দৃষ্টিভঙ্গিতে কুতুক এক গভীর দর্শন-প্রমাদের শিকার—যাকে রাইল (Ryle) 'ক্যাটেগরি মিস্‌টেক' ('category-mistake' বা বর্গ-বিভ্রান্তি) হিসেবে চিহ্নিত করেছিলেন।[৯] ধরা যাক কোনো বালক 'দলীয়-সংহতি' বা 'দলবদ্ধতা' শব্দের অর্থ জানে না, তাকে দলীয়-সংহতি দেখানোর প্রতিশ্রুতি দিয়ে কেউ ফুটবল খেলা দেখাতে নিয়ে গেল। খেলার শেষে সে বলল—'আমি তো এতগুলি খেলোয়াড় দেখলাম, তাদের বল নিয়ে দৌড়োনো দেখলাম, গোল দেওয়া দেখলাম, গোল আটকানোও দেখলাম, 'হেড' করা দেখলাম, একজনের আরেকজনকে বল 'পাস' করাও দেখলাম, কিন্তু দলীয়-সংহতি জিনিসটা তো দেখতে পেলাম না'? এক্ষেত্রে বালক ভেবেছে যে খেলোয়াড়, ফুটবল, গোলপোস্ট, বা কোনো এক খেলোয়াড়ের বিশেষ কোনো প্রয়াসের মতো দলীয়-সংহতিটাও কোনো একটা অতিরিক্ত দ্রব্য বা ক্রিয়াবিশেষ। রাইল-এর মতে আত্মা বা মন—দেহের পরিব্যাপ্ত আচরণ, চলন-বলন, দেহের বিবিধ অভিমুখীনতা বা প্রবণতা ছাড়া অতিরিক্ত কিছু নয়। এর অতিরিক্ত মন খুঁজতে যাওয়া বালকের ঐ দল-সংহতি খুঁজতে যাওয়ারই সামিল। সেক্ষেত্রে অনেক দার্শনিকের প্রতিক্রিয়া ঐ বালকের প্রত্যাশার মতোই হবে—'আমি দেখেছি তার চোখ দিয়ে জল পড়ছে, তার রগের শিরাগুলো ওঠা নামা করছে, পেশী কুঞ্চিত, চামড়ার ভিতর থেকে রক্ত বেরুচ্ছে, ঠোঁট সাদা হয়ে যাচ্ছে, কিন্তু তার ব্যাখ্যা বা বেদনাটাকে তো দেখতে পেলাম না'? এখন ঐ বালক আর দ্বৈতবাদী দার্শনিকের মতো কুতুকও ভেবেছিলেন উর্বশীর নারীসত্তা তাঁর দেহের ক্রিয়া প্রক্রিয়া, অস্থি, মজ্জা মাংস—এ সবের অতিরিক্ত কিছু। না পেয়ে ঐ বালক আর দ্বৈতবাদী দার্শনিকের মতো কুতুকও প্রতারিত বোধ করছেন। কুতুকের এই মিস্‌টেকের চেয়ে উপভোগ্য 'ক্যাটেগরি- মিস্‌টেক'-এর দৃষ্টান্ত আর কী থাকতে পারে?

কিন্তু একটু অন্য দৃষ্টিভঙ্গিতে দেখলে বিভ্রান্তির শিকার উর্বশী তথা ইন্দ্র ও নারদ, কুতুক অতটা নন। যাকে আমরা মন বলি—অর্থাৎ আমাদের আবেগ অনুভূতি, জ্ঞান, অনুভব, স্মৃতি, ইচ্ছাশক্তি, অভিপ্রায়—এগুলি দেহের আচরণ অতিরিক্ত কিছু নয় ঠিকই, কিন্তু তাবলে বিশেষ বিশেষ মানসিক অবস্থার সঙ্গে বিশেষ বিশেষ দৈহিক আচরণের কোনো গাণিতিক সমীকরণ করা যায় না। কোনো মার্কামারা আচরণ থেকে বেরিয়ে এসে এক নতুন, সৃজনশীল অ-গতানুগতিক আচরণ করার স্বাধীনতা আমাদের পূর্ণমাত্রায় আছে—সে স্বাধীনতা আমাদের দেহের মধ্যেই বিধৃত। শিশুর উন্মোচিত, অপরিশীলিত আচরণ ধীরে ধীরে সংবরিত, সংকুচিত

আঙ্গিক গ্রহণ করে—দেহের এই সংবরণ তো দেহেরই ভঙ্গিমা, দেহের নীচে সূক্ষাতিসূক্ষ্ম অ-দৈশিক শরীর বা অশরীরী হৃদয় খুঁজতে যাওয়া বাতুলতা। একথা অস্বীকার করা যায় না কুতুক প্রথমেই উর্বশীকে বলেছিলেন—'যাবতীয় জন্তুর মতন তোমার দেহও পঞ্চভূতের সমষ্টি। তার অভ্যন্তরে নারীসত্তা কোথায় আছে তাই আমরা দেখতে চাই।'[১০] কিন্তু হয়তো তিনি দৈশিক শরীরের অভ্যন্তরে অদৈশিক কোনো সত্তার কথা বলতে চাননি, কারুর পক্ষেই এধরনের অর্থহীন স্ববিরোধী বক্তব্য রাখা সম্ভব নয়। তিনি হয়তো খুঁজছিলেন উর্বশীর দেহেরই এক অন্যমাত্রিক, অ-পূর্বাভাষিত অভিমুখ—যা শুধু স্ট্রিপ-টীজ নাচের প্রচলিত ধাঁচ, বসনের ক্রমিক উন্মোচন, ও গড়পড়তা কিছু অনুশীলিত দেহ-ভঙ্গিমা—এই বিধিবদ্ধ কাঠামোর বাইরে। মনে রাখতে হবে বস্ত্র উন্মোচনের সঙ্গে খোলস উন্মোচনের তুলনা টেনেছিলেন ইন্দ্র, তার সঙ্গে উর্বশীর ও নারদের ষোল আনা সায় ছিল—এই তুলনা কুতুক করেননি। তাই প্রাথমিক বিভ্রান্তি উর্বশী, ইন্দ্র ও নারদের—তাঁরা কি অর্থে উর্বশীর নগ্ন দেহকে নির্মোকহীন বিশুদ্ধতার পর্যায়ে ফেলেছিলেন, তা আদৌ পরিষ্কার নয়। মানবশিশু যে নগ্ন দেহ নিয়ে ভূমিষ্ঠ হয়, আর উর্বশীর দেহ যে সুপরিকল্পিত ক্রমিক উন্মোচন প্রক্রিয়ায় নগ্নতায় উপনীত হয়েছিল—এ দুটো তো এক নয়—আমরা 'প্রাগৈতিহাসিক' এর আলোচনার পরিপ্রেক্ষিতেই বলতে পারি যে দ্বিতীয় ক্ষেত্রে এই নগ্নতা প্রয়াসসাধ্য, নির্মাণসাপেক্ষ, চেষ্টাকৃত অনুশীলনের ফসল। নগ্ন নারীদেহের এই কৃত্রিম পরিকল্পিত নির্মাণকে যদি এক অকৃত্রিম আদিমতার রূপ দেওয়া হয় তাহলে উর্বশী নিজের জালে নিজেই জড়িয়ে পড়বেন, তাঁর সব প্রস্তাবিত অকৃত্রিম বস্তুই কৃত্রিম হয়ে পড়বে—তাঁর দেহ, চামড়া, অস্থি-মজ্জা—সবকিছু। উর্বশীর এই ভুয়ো প্রতিন্যাসকেই যেন কুতুক উন্মোচিত করলেন—কুতুকের এই আপাত 'ক্যাটেগরি-মিস্‌টেক' হয়তো উর্বশীর ছলযুক্তিকে প্রতিহত করার উদ্দেশ্যে।

ইন্দ্র, নারদ, উর্বশীরা অবশ্যই বলতে পারেন যে সুন্দরীশ্রেষ্ঠা নারীর নগ্নদেহের যে নির্মোকহীন বিশুদ্ধতার কথা বলা হয়েছে, তা কামনার বিশুদ্ধতা। বস্ত্রাবৃত দেহের প্রতি যে আকর্ষণ তা তো মেকি সভ্যতা-প্রসূত মেকি কামনা—তার খোলস থেকে পরতে পরতে বেরিয়ে এসে কামনার নিখাদ আবরণহীন উত্তুঙ্গ স্তরে উপনীত হওয়াই 'নির্মোক-নৃত্যের' তাৎপর্য। কিন্তু সেক্ষেত্রে বলব—এ আর এক ধরনের ক্যাটেগরি-মিস্‌টেক। কারণ যৌন-কামনা এক ধরনের বর্গ বা ক্যাটেগরি, অন্যদিকে বহির্দেশের খোলস ছাড়িয়ে ভিতরের নির্যাসে পৌঁছোন আর এক ধরনের বর্গ বা ক্যাটেগরি। নারকেলের ছোবড়া ছাড়িয়ে শাঁস বার করা, মাছ মাংস সব্জি নিংড়ে তার রস আহরণ, অপরিষ্কার ধাতু গলিয়ে তাকে বিশুদ্ধ সংস্থানে নিয়ে আসা, এমনকি একটি দীর্ঘ বস্তুর অবাঞ্ছিত প্রস্থগত উপচয় যথাসম্ভব বর্জন করে তার 'বিশুদ্ধ' দৈর্ঘ্যে পৌঁছোনোর যে প্রয়াস—এসবই দ্বিতীয় বর্গের মধ্য পড়বে। এই বর্গ-সম্বন্ধীয় চিন্তার আকার-প্রকার প্রথম বর্গের ওপর—মানে যৌন কামনার ওপর আদৌ প্রযোজ্য নয়।

তাছাড়া কোন্‌টা মেকি কামনা, কোন্‌টা নিখাদ কামনা—এটাই বা স্থির করব কিসের ভিত্তিতে? কামনার শুদ্ধতা অশুদ্ধতার পিছনে তো কোনও বাস্তব অধিষ্ঠান নেই। যে স্ট্রিপ-টীজ নাচের মাধ্যমে কামনার খোলস উন্মোচনের দাবি জানানো হয়েছে, সেই নাচের কোনও স্বচ্ছ, স্বব্যাখ্যাত সত্তা আছে কি? যে অনুশীলিত প্রক্রিয়ায় কামনাকে তার 'বিশুদ্ধ' স্তরে নিয়ে যাওয়া

হয়, তা একটি ব্যাপক জীবনচর্যার পটভূমি ছাড়া সম্ভব হয় না। স্ট্রিপ-টীজের সাফল্য বা তার অভিপ্রেত ফলটি কিন্তু ওই নৃত্যের শরীরের মধ্যে নিহিত নেই। একটু অন্যভাবে বলতে গেলে—ঐ নৃত্য ও নৃত্যের ফলস্বরূপ যে চূড়ান্ত কামনার উদ্রেক—এ দুটি পরস্পর-বিচ্ছিন্ন নয়—একটি প্রলম্বিত অভ্যাসের মধ্য দিয়ে আমরা এ দুটিকে একাকার করতে শিখে নিয়েছি। কুতুক এই জীবনচর্যা বা এই অভ্যাসের বাইরে—তাই স্ট্রিপ-টীজের অভিপ্রেত ফলটি তাঁর ওপর কাজ করল না। তবে এও ঠিক যে নারদ-কুতুকের প্রশ্নোত্তর শুনে মনে হয় কুতুক যেন সত্যিই শরীরের তলায়, অস্থি-মাংস-মজ্জার তলায়, সর্বোপরি কংকালের তলায় 'নারীসত্তা' নামক এক বস্তুময় দ্রব্যের সন্ধানী, তাঁর বাক্‌শৈলীতে ক্যাটেগরি-মিস্‌টেক-এর একটা অতি-পরিচিত আঙ্গিক অস্বীকার করা যায় না। রাজশেখর বসু হয়তো জেনে বুঝেই তাঁর চরিত্রদের মধ্য দিয়ে একটা নয়—দু দুটো সমান্তরাল ক্যাটেগরি-মিস্‌টেক মূর্ত করে তুলেছিলেন।

দু-একটি বাংলা ছায়াছবিকে এবার আলোচনার পরিসরে নিয়ে আসব—এখানে চরিত্রেরা অনায়াসে যেভাবে দার্শনিক মন্তব্য ছুঁড়ে দেন—তা বেশ মনোরঞ্জক। যেমন সত্যজিৎ রায়ের 'নায়ক' ছবিতে[১১] একটি পার্শ্বচরিত্র জ্যোতি ও ছবির কেন্দ্রীয় চরিত্র অরিন্দমের কথোপকথন। অরিন্দম 'নায়ক' ছবির নায়ক হলেও উল্লিখিত দার্শনিক আলাপচারিতার নায়ক কিন্তু জ্যোতি, অরিন্দম এখানে শ্রোতা মাত্র। দৃশ্যের সংলাপটি শুধু তুলে দিলাম—

'অরিন্দম : পরজন্মে তোর বিশ্বাস আছে?

জ্যোতি : কার পরজন্ম?

অরিন্দম : মানুষের, ধর তোর।

জ্যোতি : আমি যে আমি সেটা পরজন্মে আমি বুঝছি কি করে? জ্যোতি বাঁড়ুজ্যে তো আর জ্যোতি বাঁড়ুজ্যে হয়ে জন্মাচ্ছে না। আর জাতিস্মরও সবাই হয় না। তাই বিশ্বাস-অবিশ্বাসের প্রশ্ন উঠছে কি করে?

অরিন্দম : (দীর্ঘশ্বাস) এগজ্যাক্টলি

জ্যোতি : মার্ক্স আর ফ্রয়েডের যুগ ভাই, নো পরজন্ম, নো প্রভিডেন্স।

অরিন্দম : জানি জানি, একটাই লাইফ টাইম একটাই চান্স ...'

অরিন্দম জ্যোতির এই যুক্তিতে সন্তুষ্ট, এতটাই সন্তুষ্ট যে এর ভিত্তিতে সে তার জীবনের বাঁকই পাল্টে ফেলল। কিন্তু আপনি সন্তুষ্ট কি? না আমি বলছি না যে পরজন্ম আছে, অর্থাৎ দেহ বিনষ্ট হলেও আত্মা অমর, সে অন্য দেহে পুনরায় জন্মগ্রহণ করে। কিন্তু জ্যোতির যুক্তিতে একটা স্ববিরোধ আছে। পরজন্মের কথা তোলাটাই যে আসলে অর্থহীন সেটা প্রতিষ্ঠা করতে হলে পরজন্মের তাত্ত্বিক সম্ভাবনাটুকুও মেনে নেওয়া যায় না; কিন্তু জ্যোতি তো সেটাই মেনে নিল। অর্থাৎ মেনে নিল যে কিছু কিছু মানুষ সত্যিই জাতিস্মর হয়ে থাকে, অর্থাৎ আত্মা সত্যিই এক দেহ ছেড়ে অন্য দেহ পরিগ্রহ করে। অর্থাৎ আত্মার নতুন নতুন দেহ গ্রহণের কথা বলা মোটেও অর্থহীন নয়, তবে বেশির ভাগ ক্ষেত্রেই জাতক তার পূর্বজন্মের দেহবিনাশ, আত্মার দেহমুক্তি ও নতুন দেহে অনুপ্রবেশ ইত্যাদি ঘটনা মনে করতে পারে না। ফলে তার এই জন্মের

আত্মা ও পূর্বজন্মের আত্মা যে অভিন্ন—এই অভিন্নতাটাও তার জ্ঞানের বিষয় হয় না। জ্যোতির যুক্তি থেকে শুধু এটুকুই প্রতিষ্ঠিত হয় যে বেশির ভাগ ক্ষেত্রেই বর্তমান জাতক 'আমি' শব্দটির দ্বারা পূর্বজন্মের বা পরজন্মের কোনো জাতককে নির্দেশ করতে পারে না; ফলে 'পরজন্মে আমায় এই জন্মের কর্মফল ভোগ করতে হবে', বা 'গতজন্মে ঐ পাপ করেছিলাম, তাই এই জন্মে তার শাস্তিভোগ করতে হচ্ছে'—এই ধরনের বাক্যগুলি সত্য না মিথ্যা তা জানার কোনও উপায়ই নেই। কিন্তু এ থেকে পরজন্মের প্রস্তাব যে অবাস্তব বা অর্থহীন সেটা কিন্তু প্রতিপাদিত হয় না। পূর্বজন্ম আর পরজন্মের কথা সর্বৈব নির্মূল করতে হলে জ্যোতি আর অরিন্দমকে বুঝতে হবে যে জাতিস্মরের কথা বলাটাই অর্থহীন, অর্থাৎ আত্মার এক দেহ ছেড়ে অন্য দেহে পরিক্রমণের প্রস্তাবটি বাগর্থগত ভাবেই নিষ্ফল।

বাগর্থগতভাবে নিষ্ফল কোন্ বাক্যগুলি? যেমন অসমাপ্ত বাক্য (যেমন 'রাম খেতে ...'), ব্যাকরণবিরোধী বাক্য ('সে আপনার অতীব শ্রীযুক্ত মুখমন্ডলের খাসা সিম নাসার বেসর সেখানে ঝুটাপান্না'[১২]), ও ক্যাটেগরি-মিস্‌টেক ঘটিত বাক্য ('শচীন তেন্দুল্কারের ব্যাট করার রঙ নীল')। শেষোক্ত বাক্যটি পূর্ণায়ত, ব্যাকরণগত গঠনেও কোনও দোষ নেই, কিন্তু বাক্যের অন্তর্গত শব্দগুলি বা তাদের দ্বারা নির্দেশিত প্রত্যয়গুলি পরস্পর সম্মিলনে অযোগ্য। এখন 'আত্মা এক দেহ থেকে অন্য দেহে সঞ্চরণশীল'—এটা অর্থহীনতার শেষোক্ত বর্গেই পড়বে, কিন্তু সেটা বোঝার জন্য সামান্য একটু পরিশ্রম করতে হবে। 'নায়ক' ছবিতে তো জ্যোতি বা অরিন্দম এই পরিশ্রমটুকু করেনি (বা পরিচালকও তাদের দিয়ে করাতে চাননি), তাই আমরাই বোঝার চেষ্টা করি।

প্রথমে দেখতে হবে দেহহীন চৈতন্যের অর্থপূর্ণ নির্মাণ অসম্ভব, সেটা বুঝলে বিদেহী আত্মার এক দেহ থেকে অন্য দেহে সংক্রমণের প্রস্তাবটাও কাটিয়ে উঠতে পারব। প্রথমে উল্টোদিক দিয়েই শুরু করি—অর্থাৎ যেটাকে নস্যাৎ করতে চাই, সেটা সাময়িকভাবে ধরে নিয়েই এগোনো যাক। ভাবুন তো আপনার দেহ নেই, কিন্তু চিন্তা আছে, অনুভূতি আছে, আপনি দেখতে পাচ্ছেন, শুনতে পাচ্ছেন, নীরব বাক্যও উচ্চারণ করতে পারছেন। এই দেখা, শোনাকে অতীন্দ্রিয় হিসেবে ভাবতে হবে, বাক্যোচ্চারণও হতে হবে বাক্‌যন্ত্রের সাহায্য ছাড়া— কারণ বিদেহী আত্মার ইন্দ্রিয় বা বাক্‌যন্ত্র থাকবে কি করে? রাতে দিব্যি ঘুমিয়েছিলেন, সকালে উঠে দেখলেন ঘর-ভর্তি আলো, ঘড়িতে আট্‌টা বাজছে, ঘরের আসবাব-পত্র সব ঠিক আছে, কিন্তু আপনার শরীরকে আপনি বিছানায় দেখতে পাচ্ছেন না। চম্‌কে আয়নার দিকে তাকালেন, না আয়নার মধ্যে আপনার প্রতিফলন নেই। আপনি কি তাহলে অদৃশ্য হয়ে গেছেন? না, কারণ কেউ যদি ঘরের মধ্যে আসে সে আপনাকে স্পর্শও করতে পারবে না। আয়নার দিকে হাঁটার চেষ্টা করলেন, যদিও কিভাবে করলেন, সেটা বলা মুশকিল, কারণ আপনার তো পা নেই, কিন্তু কোনোভাবে দেখছেন আপনার সামনের জিনিসগুলি বড় হচ্ছে, আর দূরে খাটের কাছে রাখা জিনিসগুলো ছোটো হচ্ছে। সবই একরকম, শুধু নিজের দেহকে দেখতে পাচ্ছেন না, ছুঁতেও পারছেন না। অভিজ্ঞতা বা অনুভবের জন্য প্রয়োজন যে স্নায়বিক টান, মাংসপেশীর কুঞ্চন, ভারসাম্য ও লম্বমানতার বোধও অটুট—এই সব আছে কিন্তু শরীর নেই।

এইভাবে বিদেহী আত্মার অর্থপূর্ণ নির্মাণ করা গেল কি? গেল না, কারণ এই অতি-সংক্ষিপ্ত বিদেহী বিবরণের মধ্যেও কিন্তু দেহের সূচনা লুকিয়ে আছে প্রতিটি রন্ধ্রে রন্ধ্রে। চোখ ছাড়া দেখছি এ না হয় মেনে নেওয়া গেল, কিন্তু বিদেহী আমি— তার যে বিভিন্ন দিকে তাকানোর কথা বলা হয়েছে, তা সম্ভব হচ্ছে কি করে? মাথা না ঘোরালে তো দিক পাল্টানো যাবে না, কিন্তু আপনার তো মাথাই নেই। সেটাও না হয় ছেড়ে দেওয়া গেল, কিন্তু আপনি নিজের শরীরকে ছোঁবার চেষ্টা করবেন কি করে? আপনার তো হাত নেই, তাই আঙুল নাড়াবার চেষ্টার কথাও বলা যাবে না। আপনার তো শরীরই নেই, তাই শরীরে সামনে পিছনে জিনিসের ছোট বড় হবারও কোনও প্রশ্ন নেই।[১৩]

অনেকেই আত্মার বর্জন এত সহজে মেনে নেবেন না। তবে আত্মাকে সূক্ষ্ম শরীর বলা যাবে না—আমি তথা সূক্ষ্ম শরীর দেখছে আমার নিষ্প্রাণ দেহটা বিছানায় পড়ে আছে—এরকম পরিস্থিতি বর্ণনায় পদে পদে স্ববিরোধ দেখা দেবে। তাছাড়া আত্মা যদি অ-দৈশিক হয়—তাহলে তো তার এক দেহ থেকে আর এক দেহতে সংক্রমণের কথাও বলা যাবে না। অবশ্য এসব আপত্তি মোকাবিলা করার কৌশল আত্মবাদী দর্শনতত্ত্বে পূর্ণমাত্রায় আছে, তবে বিভিন্ন ভারতীয় দর্শন-সম্প্রদায়ের মধ্যে আত্মার স্বরূপ বিষয়ে মতবিরোধও প্রচুর। এই প্রসঙ্গে বৈশেষিক সম্প্রদায়ের আত্মা-তত্ত্ব খুব সংক্ষেপে উল্লেখ করা যেতে পারে। এঁদের মতে আত্মা দেহ নয়, কারণ শৈশব, যৌবন, ও বার্ধক্যের দেহ ভিন্ন হওয়া সত্ত্বেও এরা যে এক—এই প্রত্যভিজ্ঞা বা সনাক্তীকরণ দেহাতিরিক্ত আত্মা ছাড়া ব্যাখ্যা করা যায় না। তাছাড়া খুব সঙ্গত ভাবেই পাঁচটি ইন্দ্রিয়কে, তা তাদের সম্মিলনকেও আত্মা বলা যায় না। আত্মা নিরবয়ব বা মূর্তিহীন, সর্বব্যাপক এবং অসংখ্য। মানুষের পরলোকগমন বা জন্মান্তরের অর্থ হল বিভিন্ন স্থানে উৎপন্ন নতুন নতুন দেহের সঙ্গে এক অভিন্ন নিত্য সর্বব্যাপী আত্মার নতুন নতুন সংযোগ।[১৪] যাই হোক, এই সব যুক্তির কূট-কচালি আলোচনা এই প্রবন্ধের উদ্দেশ্য নয়। এইটুকু বলা যায় যে জাতিস্মর হওয়ার জন্য চাই পূর্বজন্মের দেহের মৃত্যুর স্মরণ, ঐ মৃতদেহ থেকে আত্মার বিচ্ছেদের স্মরণ, আর ঐ একই সর্বব্যাপী আত্মার বর্তমান জন্মে নতুন দেহপ্রাপ্তির প্রত্যভিজ্ঞা। এইরকম স্মৃতির যে মূর্ত নির্মাণ সম্ভব নয়—তাই আমরা আগে দেখার চেষ্টা করছিলাম।

বর্তমানে প্রসঙ্গে আমাদের আগ্রহের বিষয় এইটুকুই যে জ্যোতির যুক্তিতে একটা ফাঁক থেকে গেল। জ্যোতির সোজাসুজি বলা উচিত ছিল যে পরজন্মের প্রস্তাবের মধ্যেই জাতকের পূর্বজন্মের স্মৃতি, পূর্বের সঙ্গে বর্তমানের যোগসূত্র নিহিত আছে—ফলে পরজন্মের ধারণাটাই দাঁড়ায় না। সেটা বলেও তার সঙ্গে জাতিস্মর টাতিস্মর এনে জ্যোতি ব্যাপারটা গুব্‌লেট করে ফেলল। যাঁরা 'নায়ক' ছবিটি দেখেছেন (বা দেখেননি) তাঁদের সকলকেই মনে করিয়ে দিতে চাই যে অরিন্দম 'শঙ্করদা' নামক এক সিনেমা-বিদ্বেষী অভিজ্ঞ নাট্যকর্মীর দলে নাটক করত, আর উনি অরিন্দমের সিনেমায় প্রতিষ্ঠা পাবার পথে বাধা হয়ে দাঁড়িয়েছিলেন। অকস্মাৎ শঙ্করদা স্ট্রোক হয়ে মারা গেলেন, অরিন্দমের সিনেমার নায়ক হবার পথে বাধা সরে গেল। কিন্তু শঙ্করদাকে সত্যিই ভালবাসত অরিন্দম, তাই তার মনে বিবেকের খচখচানি—পরজন্মে এই বিশ্বাসঘাতকতার জন্য তাকে শাস্তি পেতে হবে না তো? পরজন্মে শঙ্করদার মুখোমুখি হয়ে এর জন্য জবাবদিহি করতে হবে না তো? জ্যোতি কিন্তু অরিন্দমের এই সমস্যার পুরোপুরি সমাধান করতে পারেনি, তার যুক্তিতে পরজন্মে

অরিন্দমকে এর জন্য শাস্তি পেতে হতেও পারে, বা শঙ্করদার সঙ্গে দেখা হতেও পারে। কিন্তু শঙ্করদা বা অরিন্দম কেউ তাদের বর্তমান জন্মের জাতকের মধ্যে পূর্বজন্মের মানুষকে সনাক্ত করতে পারবে না—এই আশ্বস্তিটুকুই যথেষ্ট।

শেষ বিষয়টি 'উৎসব' ছায়াছবির একটি দৃশ্যাবলীকে কেন্দ্র করে—যেখানে ছবির এক চরিত্র দেরিদা-র 'কন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন-ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন' বিষয়ে বিশেষভাবে আপ্লুত।[১৫] দৃশ্যটি দেখার আগে দেরিদা-র এই বহু-চর্চিত ধারণাবন্ধটি একটু সাদা-মাঠা ভাবে বুঝে নিতে চাই। শব্দের অর্থকে সুসংবদ্ধ আবেষ্টনীতে বাঁধার প্রয়াস, আমাদের বিবিধ-বিচিত্র প্রয়োগ ও ব্যবহারকে এক মূল তত্ত্ব-কাঠামোয় কুক্ষিগত করার কর্মসূচিই হল কন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন। অন্যদিকে আমাদের প্রয়োগ-ব্যবহার যে সবসময়েই তাত্ত্বিক কাঠামো থেকে বেরিয়ে আসে—এই কাটা-ছেড়ার প্রয়াসই হল ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন। ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন কিন্তু শুধুমাত্র অভ্যস্ত নিয়ম ভেঙে ব্যতিক্রমী বা বিপ্লবী ভাবনাশৈলীর কথা বলে না; কারণ যে নিয়মই গড়া হোক না কেন—তা মৌলবাদী নিয়মই হোক বা বিপ্লবী আদর্শই হোক, প্রয়োগের আগে নিয়ম কতগুলি নিটোল সামান্যধারণার ক্যাপস্যুল নিয়ে বসে থাকে না। নিয়মের কোনও জাদুকরী লম্বা হাত নেই, যা অদূর বর্তমান বা সুদূর ভবিষ্যৎ পেরিয়ে সম্ভাব্য-অসম্ভাব্য সব প্রয়োগকে নিজের গর্ভে বন্দি করে রাখতে পারে। বাস্তব জীবনপ্রবাহের এক একটি বিশেষ প্রয়োগের মধ্য দিয়ে যেতে যেতে একটু একটু করে পুষ্ট হয় নিয়মের সদা অপূর্ণ শরীর—এই অপূর্ণতার, এই অস্পষ্টতার নিরলস চর্চাই হল ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন। (ভাষার এই সব অনিবার্য ফাঁক-ফোকর, প্রতিটি সংজ্ঞার সম্ভাব্য ব্যতিক্রম, তার প্রতিটি শব্দের আত্মদীর্ণতা—এই সব প্রতিপাদনের প্রচেষ্টায় ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শনও হয়ে পড়ে এক ধরনের কন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন।) এই দৃষ্টিতে শব্দকে যেহেতু নিশ্চিত সংজ্ঞায় বাঁধা যায় না, যে কোনও পদের বিপরীত অর্থেরও কোনো সুবদ্ধ পরিলেখ নেই, ফলে একটি বিপরীত জোড়ের শব্দদুটির মধ্যে কোনো সুস্পষ্ট বিভাজন-রেখাও টানা যায় না। আবেষ্টনী ভেঙে পদের তথাকথিত বিপরীত ঢুকে পড়ে তার শরীরে, বিপরীতের আলোকেই সে পায় তার সদর্থক পরিচিতি।[১৬]

যাই হোক এবার 'উৎসব' ছায়াছবির উল্লিখিত চরিত্রের কন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন-ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন চর্চার মন দেওয়া যেতে পারে। বাৎসরিক দুর্গাপূজা শেষ হয়েছে, রাত গভীর হচ্ছে, কিন্তু বাইরে ভাসান চলেছে জোর কদমে। গ্রামের পৈতৃক বাড়িতে জমায়েত হয়েছে গোটা পরিবার—তাদের মধ্যে পরিবারের ছোট মেয়ে ও তার স্বামী—কেয়া আর অরুণ—এই তরুণ বিবাহিত দম্পতির শয্যাদৃশ্য ও সংলাপই আমাদের আলোচনার কেন্দ্রস্থল। কেয়া তার ছন্নছাড়া স্বামীর প্রতি পুরোনো অভিমানে রোরুদ্যমানা, অরুণ আদরে সোহাগে তার মান ভাঙাতে উদ্যোগী। সঙ্গমের প্রস্তুতি চলেছে, তারই মধ্যে জারিত হচ্ছে অরুণের দেরিদা-দর্শন-বিলাস।

অরুণ : সিগ্রেট খেতে গিয়ে ঘাটের কাছে দাঁড়িয়েছিলাম কিছুক্ষণ সন্ধ্যাবেলা। কত ঠাকুর ভাসান গেল, একটার পর একটা, এক একটা ঠাকুর ভাসান যায় আর কতগুলি ছেলে ঝাঁপিয়ে পড়ে, কাঠামোগুলি জল থেকে তুলে নিয়ে আসে।

কেয়া : কেন?

অরুণ : সামনের বছর ওরই উপর নতুন করে ঘর বাঁধবে। (চুমু) রি-সাইক্লিং—দ্য লেটেস্ট থিওরি ইন এনভিরন্‌মেন্টাল স্টাডিজ।

কেয়া : তার সাথে দুর্গাপূজার কী সম্পর্ক?

অরুণ : বেসিকালি দুটোই তো এক। ঘর আর বাসা বাদ দিলে বাকি থাকে জল আর মাটি। সেই জল আর মাটি দিয়ে ঠাকুর গড়ে ভাসান দিলে আবার জল আর মাটি হয়ে যায়। কন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন-ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন ... (থরথর করে গলা কাঁপছে) কন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন-ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন (অধিক মাত্রায় গলা কাঁপা) ... কন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন-ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন (কামে বুঁজে আসছে গলা)

দৃশ্য শেষ

আসলে একটি ধারণার আবেষ্টনী ভেঙে তাকে তার বিপরীতে মিলিয়ে দেওয়ার প্রক্রিয়া কিন্তু ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন নয়। একটি বস্তুকে সমানধর্মে বেঁধে ফেলে তারপর তাকে তরলায়িত করে বিপরীতের সঙ্গে মিলিয়ে দেওয়া যায়। বাস্তব নিজেও এক পিচ্ছিল পরিসর—লাল রঙ মিশে যায় হলুদে, সোজা মিশে যায় ব্যাঁকায়, দীর্ঘ হয় হ্রস্ব, কতগুলি চুল হারালে একজন সুকেশ ব্যক্তিকে আমরা ইন্দ্রলুপ্ত বলতে আরম্ভ করি—তা বলা যায় না। কিন্তু বৈপরীত্যের এই পরস্পর-নিরবিচ্ছিন্নতা, বা পরস্পর-পরিপূরকতা—যেমন জন্ম-মৃত্যুর প্রবাহ, জল-মাটি থেকে গড়ে উঠে আবার জল-মাটিতেই বিলীন হয়ে যাওয়া—এগুলি কন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন-ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শনের দৃষ্টান্ত নয়। এসব ক্ষেত্রে দুটি সংজ্ঞাবদ্ধ পরিচিতি থেকে আরম্ভ করে দুটিকেই সুপরিকল্পিত পরস্পর-বিপরীত ধারণা-প্রবাহে চালিয়ে নিয়ে যাওয়া হয়েছে; কিন্তু বিপরীতে নিমজ্জিত হওয়ার আগে তথাকথিত মূল ধারণা দুটির অন্তর্নিহিত ফাটল, তাদের ফাঁক-ফোকর, বাস্তব প্রয়োগের মধ্যে দিয়ে তাদের একটু একটু করে হয়ে ওঠার প্রক্রিয়াকে আত্মস্থ করা হয়নি। মাটিকে জলপ্রবাহে মিশিয়ে দেওয়ার আগেই তো মাটিকে এক একমাত্রিক সামান্যধারণায় হিমায়িত করে দেওয়া হয়েছে— তার ফলেই তো তৈরি হয়েছে বৈষম্য-দূরীকরণের প্রক্রিয়া—বা এই আপাত-বিনির্মাণ। কিন্তু প্রকৃতপক্ষে ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শনের পরিসরে বিপরীত জোড়ের পদদুটিই অনির্দেশ্য পথে ভেঙে-চুরে এগিয়ে চলে, একে অপরে মিশে যাওয়ার কোনো নির্দিষ্ট পথ তো আগে থেকে কেটে দেওয়া নেই।

তবে এই দার্শনিক অপলাপের জন্য অরুণকে (বা এই ছবির পরিচালককে) দোষ দেওয়া উচিত হবে না। ঘনীভূত কামোন্মাদনা যখন ঘনীভূত দর্শনচেতনায় মিশে যায়—সেখানে কন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শন-ডিকন্‌স্ট্রাক্‌শনের ধারণাগুলি তো ওলট-পালট হয়ে যেতেই পারে—এ আর বেশি কথা কি?

....

এরকম টুকরো টুকরো দর্শন ছড়িয়ে আছে আরও অসংখ্য গল্পে, উপন্যাসে, নাটকে, কবিতায়, সিনেমায়, কারুশিল্পে। অনেক সময়ে এরা রচনার বাঁধুনির সঙ্গে অঙ্গাঙ্গীভাবে জড়িত, তবে অনেক সময়েই আসে আল্‌গা মন্তব্যে, অনির্দিষ্টভাবে, কোনো না কোনো চরিত্রের মুখে। আর শুধু শিল্প-সাহিত্যে কেন—আমাদের প্রতিদিনের জীবনের প্রতিটি ক্ষেপে শতকরা পঞ্চাশ ভাগ মানুষের মুখে মুখে দর্শনের খই ফোটে। সম্প্রতি দেশের বিভিন্ন কলেজ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়গুলির গুণাগুণ বিচার করে তাদের যথাযথ নম্বর দেবার ভার নিয়েছে কিছু প্রতিষ্ঠান—যেমন 'ন্যাশনাল অ্যাসেসমেন্ট অ্যান্ড অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন' (সংক্ষেপে 'ন্যাক্'); আর তাদের মূল্যাঙ্কনের

মানদণ্ডগুলির মধ্যে একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ নিরিখ হল যে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে অধীত পাঠক্রম শুধু তাত্ত্বিক স্তরে থাকলে হবে না, তাদের বাস্তব প্রয়োগ দেখাতে হবে। এক্ষেত্রে কলেজ-বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের দর্শন-বিভাগগুলি অন্তত এই বিষয়ে নিশ্চিন্ত থাকতে পারবে— শিল্পে, সাহিত্যে ও জীবনে দর্শনের প্রয়োগিক দৃষ্টান্তের অভাব কোনোদিনই হবে না।

সূত্রপঞ্জি

১. গঙ্গোপাধ্যায় সুনীল, *সাতটি উপন্যাস*, দেজ পাবলিশিং, কলকাতা, ২০০৬, পৃ. ১১-১০২।

২. ঐ, পৃ. ৫৩।

৩. কান্ট ইমানুএল, *ক্রিটিক অফ পিওর রীজন*, অনু : নর্ম্যান কেম্প স্মিথ, ম্যাক্‌মিলান, লন্ডন, ১৯৯২। 'রীজন' শব্দটির বিবিধ প্রয়োগের জন্য ইন্ডেক্স দ্রষ্টব্য।

৪. বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মানিক, *মানিক গ্রন্থাবলী*, গ্রন্থালয় প্রাইভেট লিঃ, কলকাতা, ১৯৮২, তৃতীয় খণ্ড, পৃঃ ২৫৩-২৬২, উদ্ধৃতি পৃ. ২৬২।

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৭. রাজশেখর বসু দিব্য মানবের ব্যাখ্যা দিয়েছেন—যাঁরা স্বর্গে মর্ত্যে অবাধে আনাগোনা করেন। ঐ, পৃ. ৬১৩।

৮. ঐ, পৃ. ৬১৫।

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১০. বসু রাজশেখর, 'নির্মোক নৃত্য', পৃ. ৬১৪।

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১৪. ন্যায়-বৈশেষিক সম্মত আত্মার অতি-সংক্ষিপ্ত পরিচিতির জন্য পাঠক এই বইটি দেখতে পারেন—অন্নংভট্ট, *তর্কসংগ্রহ ও তর্ক-সংগ্রহ দীপিকা*, অধ্যাপনা : নারায়ণচন্দ্র গোস্বামী, সংস্কৃত পুস্তক ভান্ডার, কলকাতা, বঙ্গাব্দ, ১৪১০।

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এণাক্ষী রায় মিত্র

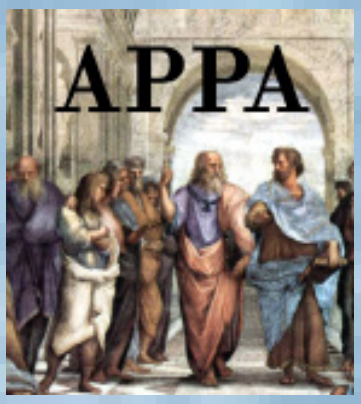
ভূমিকা

বাংলা ভাষা যে আজ অবধি তত্ত্ব জ্ঞানের চর্চার উপযোগী হয়ে উঠতে পারেনি—এই বিষয়টা অনেকদিক দিয়েই আলোচনা করা যায়। ভারতের তথা বাংলার দুশো বছরের ঔপনিবেশিক ইতিহাসে, সমাজের অধুনাতম ভাবধারায়, ভাষাতত্ত্বের জটিল সূত্রাবলীতে, ভাষাতত্ত্ব ও মনস্তত্ত্বের সন্ধিস্থলে। তবে এই বিষয়ে কথা উঠলেই আমরা স্বাভাবিক ভাবে প্রথম কারণটার দিকেই আঙুল তুলি—দীর্ঘ কালব্যাপী ব্রিটিশ আধিপত্যের ফলে প্রশাসনে ও দৈনন্দিন প্রযুক্তিতে বাংলাভাষা অকেজো হয়ে গিয়েছিল, তার-ই জের চলেছে জ্ঞানচর্চার ক্ষেত্রে। তাছাড়া বাংলা বর্ণে ইংরিজির জ্যামিতিক সুঠামতা নেই, ধ্বনিও বেশ মেদবহুল, উচ্চারণে বিশেষ পরিশ্রমের দরকার। 'স্বতোবিরোধী', 'নৈর্ব্যক্তিক', 'যুগ্ম'—এই শব্দগুলি রোজকার কথোপকথনে ব্যবহার করলে, অনেক বাঙালিই বলে ওঠেন—'ওরে বাবা, কী কঠিন শব্দ!' তাছাড়া লেখালেখির ক্ষেত্রে বাংলা অক্ষর জোড়া দেওয়া একটু শক্ত, বাংলা টাইপের সফট্ওয়ারের সঙ্গেও বন্ধুত্ব হতে অনেক সময় লাগে। তবে প্রদীপ বসু এই বিষয়টি দেখেছেন এক গভীর দার্শনিক সমস্যা হিসেবে—যেখানে ভাষা, জগৎ ও মানবমনের পারস্পরিক সম্বন্ধ বিষয়ে অনেক প্রামাণ্য তত্ত্বের এক জীবন্ত প্রয়োগ পেয়ে যাই তাঁর পর্যালোচনায়।

দর্শনচর্চায় বাংলাভাষার অনুপযোগিতা—এই বিষয়েই প্রদীপবাবুর ৩-৪ টি প্রবন্ধ[১] রয়েছে—আমি তাঁর বিশ্লেষণের ভাষাদার্শনিক তাৎপর্যের ওপরই বিশেষ ভাবে মনোনিবেশ করব, তার নানান অভিমুখ ও ইতিহাসকে তুলে আনার চেষ্টা করব, আর যে সব প্রাসঙ্গিক বিষয়গুলি স্বল্পালোচিত বা অনালোচিত রয়ে গেছে সেগুলির আরও বিশদ ব্যাখ্যার চেষ্টা থাকবে এই নিবন্ধে।

জ্ঞানচর্চার দ্বিতীয় পর্যায়ী ভাষা

দর্শন তত্ত্বের ভাষার বৈশিষ্ট্য কী? এই ভাষা বলা যেতে পারে এক দ্বিতীয় পর্যায়ী ভাষা—যা ঘটনার বর্ণনা করে না—ঘটনার সামান্য আকার বা বস্তুর ধ্রুব সত্তা নিয়ে আলোচনা করে। কোনো বিশেষ ফুলের রঙ, আকার, গন্ধ ইত্যাদি বর্ণনায় বাংলা ভাষা উপ্চে পড়ে তার বিশেষণ সম্ভারে, কিন্তু ফুলটির এই লালত্বের চরিত্র কী, সামান্য ও বিশেষ ধর্মের পার্থক্য কী হতে পারে, ফুলটি দ্রব্য না গুণ-সমাবেশ—লাল রঙটি বস্তুনিষ্ঠ



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Nemo Veritatem Regit
Nobody Governs Truth

Shifts in the Classical Indian Conception of Philosophical Practice: *Vedic*, *Itihāsa-puranic* and *Dārśanic*

Balaganapathi Devarakonda
Head of Philosophy, Delhi University, Delhi, India

Abstract

The present study attempts to provide an understanding of the various shifts in the philosophical practice that existed in Classical Indian tradition. The three shifts identified for this purpose are from *Vedic*, *Itihāsa-purānic* and *Dārśanic* phases in terms of cosmic, *dharmic* and rationalistic perspectives. I comprehend the limitations of choosing such a broad canvas. In tandem with the classical *Advaitic* tradition (*nèti nèti*, not this, not this) of India, let me specify what I am not doing here, in order to prevent unwarranted expectations. Firstly, presentation of a tradition of philosophical practice of more than 3000 years, if not more, would often be endowed with sweeping generalizations of the sort that 'everything of human life is a philosophical practice' or it would often suffer from the dismissive attitude that 'there is no philosophical practice at all.' This paper moves beyond these extremes and avoids the shortcomings of both these perspectives. Secondly, scholars who attempt such a broader canvas may present the historical evolution of philosophical practice. Such an approach may suit a descriptive account articulated for a lengthy research article more than a presentation of this sort. Such an approach will suffer from inadequacy of material of the vast periods of history as well as an epistemological impossibility of comprehending and presenting every aspect of the evolution. Given the limitations of time, I am not resorting to this approach as well. Thirdly, contemporary perspectives of philosophical practice are the outcome of recent developments in widening and deepening the praxis of Philosophy to enrich its outlook on the everyday life of human beings. Searching for such perspectives in Classical and Medieval Indian traditions would be a misplaced attempt. I am, therefore, not trying to make such an attempt. To bring out a distinctive and selective picture of philosophical practice in India, this paper would relate philosophical practice to the broader perception of human life in the Indian tradition and further identify the shifts during various phases of Indian history that have contributed to the changes in philosophical practice. The paper further attempts to explicate the difference in the basic conceptualization of philosophical practice in various phases of Indian history such as *Vedic*, *Itihāsa-purānic*, and *Dārśanic*.

Keywords: *Vedic, Itihāsa, Purānic, Dārśanic, Philosophical practice , Indian tradition, Ṛta, Dharma*

§ I

In general, philosophical practice is rooted in the way the life of the people is conceptualized by the culture, which in turn, to some extent, plays a crucial role in regulating how life is viewed. This lens contributes majorly to the way philosophy is conceptualized and practiced. The development of the perception of life and philosophy is simultaneous and mutually effective. There is a variance in the conception of philosophy and its practice across cultures at different periods within a particular culture. This variance can be explained on the basis of the shifts as we look at life in various cultures. Therefore, in order to study variance in the philosophical practice, one must study the shifts in the

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perception of the life of that culture. In the present paper, I attempt to delineate three such shifts in the classical Indian tradition in order to explicate the variance of its philosophical practice. Before I go into this analysis in the next section, let me briefly discuss the variedness in the way 'philosophy' is understood to clarify the relation between philosophy and life.

Understanding 'what philosophy signifies' is not just limited to its academic and etymological explanation—in terms of love or quest for wisdom. In addition to this, philosophy has been understood variedly in terms of 'a way of life' (Pierre Hadot), 'a way of seeing/conceptualizing' (*darśana*), 'a life-changing and transformative tool', and 'a problem-solving device.' This variance clarifies that philosophy is not limited to a mere theoretical, epistemological or metaphysical enterprise; instead, it is rooted in life as human beings live it.

Philosophy helps us to 'be' in different ways on the basis of differences in our conceptualization of life. 'To be' is to 'to live.' To live is to act and react to the given other or the world. Through action and reaction human beings make choices and assert their existence to substantiate their 'being.' The 'being' and the 'world,' thus mutually affect each other, consequentially enriching the 'being.' The mutual effectiveness is an enterprise of co-creativity that results in consequent multidimensionality of the being.

The being and the other (it can be human or non-human other) co-create each other, thus contributing extensively to life's variance. Conscious and reflective participation in this co-creativity forms the core of philosophizing. In this particular sense, philosophy does not just comprise the theoretical aspects of human understanding; instead, it also endows practical and productive facets of existence. As is often stated, the concepts and categories with which people think and relate themselves—deeply affect their lives. Even in this sense, philosophy and its practice are two sides of the same coin.

§ II

Accepting the tenet that philosophical practice is rooted in the way life is conceptualized and understanding that it differs across cultures and even within the culture during various times, let us look at how life is conceptualized in the classical Indian tradition to understand the variance of the philosophical practice.

This section deals with the conception of human life as conceived in the classical Indian tradition. It argues that there is an overarching conception of life that encompasses various phases of classical Indian tradition. Within the extended period (more than 3000 years as it is often assumed), there were shifts in the orientation of life that we find in different phases in India. This section particularly articulates shifts in the conception of life among *Vedic*, *Itihāsa-purānic*, and *Dārśanic* (philosophical) phases of the tradition. I am not presenting these phases to be either temporally linear or exclusive of each other or as watertight compartments. I understand that these phases may be simultaneous and sometimes inclusive as well. Before going into these phases, let me first present an overarching framework of life that bestows on the Indian tradition as a unique and distinctive place.

As it is the case with any other tradition, Indian tradition also begins its quest for life with 'wonder.' Wondering about the prevalence of various natural elements and their relation to human beings contributes significantly to how life is conceptualized. Classical Indian tradition conceptualized life to be comprised of not just physical, but also psychological, spiritual, and cosmic perspectives as well. Human life is understood to be an interaction of psycho-physical-spiritual mechanism with that of the natural world and cosmic universe. Consequently, both sources and constituents of life are cognized to be physical, spiritual, and cosmic. This cognition has led to the people's distinct lived experiences that enriched the communities' thought and language. It need not be stressed that the lived experiences in this context are concrete experiences of the particular people.

This led to an understanding of life that is holistic, integrated, harmonious, and organic. In this light, each of the aspects of human life is to be integrated with the other in a balanced and organic way that moves beyond the binary contradictions, leading to perfection. What was stressed in this understanding is a form of communitarianism that gives necessary significance to the individual in terms of the *Vedic* conceptions such as coexistence (*sahavāsa*), cooperation (*sahakāra*), and enjoying together (*sahabhōga*).

Against the often-advocated misconception that Indian tradition is world negating, what was enunciated was actually the distinction between *sréyas* (good) and *préyās* (pleasurable) on one hand and *pravritti marga* (external progress path) and *nivritti marga* (internal progress path) on the other. While stressing the significance of the good (*sréyas*), the former distinction gives due importance to what is pleasurable (*préyās*) in the world as well. Similarly, the later distinction while explicating the importance of both the external and the internal progress of human life, stresses the importance of development (*abhyudaya*) of the worldly life as well. Both the options—good and pleasure, external and internal progress—are illuminated adequately for the individual to choose either of them as per his/her aptitude and dispositions.

In this way, a holistic, interdependent, organic, and harmonious conception of various aspects of human life such as physical, psychological, spiritual, and cosmic on one the hand, and good and pleasurable, internal and external progress on the other hand, was envisaged in the classical Indian tradition.

Having briefly mapped the conception of life in classical Indian tradition, let us explicate the variance in the three phases—*Vedic*, *Itihāsa-puranic*, and *Dārsanic*—to elucidate the difference of the philosophical practice that we can derive from the variance.

1. *Vedic* phase

The earliest phase of Indian tradition is understood to be the *Vedic*. The conception of the life in this phase can be found in the *Vedas* which are compiled as *Rg*, *Sama*, *Yajur*, and *Atharva*. Something unique to the conception of this phase's life is its orientation towards cosmic order called *Ṛta*. All other aspects of life, i.e., natural, biological and spiritual express themselves in being harmonious with the *Ṛta*. The *summum bonum* of life articulates itself in this harmony. The creative purpose of this highest good underpins human behavior. The social, moral and natural orders correlate themselves to perfect correspondence with the cosmic order, in this *Vedic* conception. Purushottama Bilimoria aptly states the significance of *Ṛta* in the following way:

> The s*ummum bonum*, however, expresses itself in the total harmony or homology of the cosmic and natural order characterized as *rta*: this highest good is the *telos*, the creative purpose and motivation that underpins human behavior. The prescribed pattern of social and moral order is thus conceived as a correlate—the perfect correspondence of the natural order. This is the totality of the ordered course of things, and therefore speaks, linguistically, i.e., in speech (*vacya*), to the truth of being or reality (*sat*) and hence underwrites the "Law" (or the "natural law"), transcendentally (*RgVeda* 1.123.9; IV.51.5; V.S; X.300.1.2). (Purushottama Bilimoria 2007, 20)

In this way, the homology of physical, social, moral, spiritual, and cosmic orders is stressed in the *Vedic* conception of life. However, the meaning of human actions is derived from their relation with the cosmic order as cognized in the form of *Ṛta*. Only those actions that are in accordance with the *Ṛta* were considered morally right.

> In this *Vedic* ethical system, one's actions are consistent with that which promotes the good so perceived, and one should desist from doing that which promotes or stimulates the bad so that the *ṛta* is not unduly disturbed. An act is therefore right if it conforms to this general principle, and an act is wrong if it contravenes it (and so is *anṛta*, or dis-order) (*RgVeda* X.87.11; X.125.5). Since to do what is right safeguards the good of all qua *ṛta* (the factual/descriptive order), it is assumed that it is more or less obligatory to do or perform the right acts (the "ought" or moral/prescriptive order). (Purushottam Bilimoria 2007, 21)

Thus, *Vedic* texts stressed that human life has to be in harmony with the cosmic order to be meaningful and moral. In addition to stressing this homology, *Vedas* addressed two crucial questions of human life: What is the right course of action (*karma kānda*)? What is the right knowledge (*Jnāna kānda*)? These two questions were also addressed in terms of the cosmic order. Right knowledge is knowing the homology of various aspects of life, and the right action is acting in accordance with the harmony ordered by the cosmic.

Knowledge of the self (*kō aham*? 'Who am I?') is envisaged to be fundamental in the enterprise of right knowledge. The question of what kind of knowledge is to be acquired is answered in terms of something rooted within the self. The inward journey is vital to gain the right knowledge, which will lead to the right action that would be align with the cosmic order that governs the social, moral, and natural spheres of human life, according to the *Vedas.*

Meaning of life and the method of inquiry are the essential components of philosophical practice. The *Vedas* present the meaning of life in terms of harmony with the cosmic order, and the method is presented in terms of an inward journey of the individual to gain self-knowledge. Self-reflectivity to understand 'who s/he is?' is the method that guides her/him to the right kind of knowledge that further conducts her/him to the right course of action.

In the *Vedic* context of philosophical practice, it can be drawn, the counselee and the counselor get united in the process of the inward journey of the seeker. The method of the inner journey for self-knowledge endowed with self-reflection leads the seeker to self-understanding that can further result in self-improvement. Various dialogues that we find in the *Vedic* texts, especially in the *Upanishads*—which provide the cream of the *Vedic* teachings being the concluding portions—envisage

the inward journey to be the method of philosophical practice to gain the self-knowledge. The method is further explained in terms of self-study (*svādhyāya*) that includes three steps: *sravana* (active listening), *manana* (active remembering), and *nidhidhyāsana* (actively meditating on the content of self-study).

To sum up, the meaning of life during the *Vedic* phase is cognized in terms of harmony with the cosmic order *Ṛta*, and the way to know it is by means of an inward journey. This presents a perspective of the *Vedic* phase of classical Indian tradition to be that of the seeker's inward journey in the process of which the seeker becomes the self-counselor.

2. *Itihāsa-purānic* phase

Having looked at the *Vedic* conception of life and its method of philosophical practice, let us now delve into the later *Vedic* notions of life. We have access to this subsequent perspective through the texts called *Itihāsa* (or *Epics)* and *Purānas* of classical Indian tradition. The *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahabhārata*, the two grand epics of India, provide a detailed conceptualization of life which was consolidated and corroborated by eighteen *purānas*. Klaus Klostermaier (2007, 59) observed the core of *Itihāsa-purānic* literature to be located somewhere during the seventh century BCE, or even earlier. This literature's significance can be derived from the fact that it was described by two principal *Upanishads*, *Chandogya* (7.1.2.) and *Brhadaranyaka* (2.4.10; 4.1.2), as the fifth *Veda.* This corpus of literature deals with various themes such as myths, geography, medicine, astronomy, charity, ethics, festivals, theosophy along with philosophy and *dharma* as it is to be practiced in everyday life. There are shifts in the focus from impersonal ultimate reality in the form of Brahman in the *Upanishads* to the personal God in the *Epics*.

Itihāsa-purānic literature, though derived broadly from the *Vedic* conception of life, altered its focus from the cosmic to the *dharmic* order. *Dharma* becomes prominent and replaces the significance of *Ṛta*, cosmic order, in this phase. While assessing the place of *Dharma*, Kane observes:

> 'Dharma,' it is to be noted, is an all-embracing concept and is perhaps unique to Indian thought. But the term is also rather diffuse as it has many and varying meanings, ranging from 'ordinance, usage, duty, right, justice, morality, virtue, religion, good works, function or characteristics' to 'norm,' 'righteousness,' 'truth' and 'law,' beside much else. (Kane, 1968, 1-2)

The Sanskrit word *dharma* is derived from the root *dhr*, which means: to form, support, sustain, maintain and uphold. It indicates something that maintains and regulates nature, society, and the individual. We can observe from the above that *dharma* takes over from the organic unity framework enshrined in *ṛta*. It brought down the meaning of life from being derived from the cosmic order to the more human and earthlier dimension by devising a comprehensive system of social and moral regulations. The focus of *dharma* is action (*karma*); i.e., that question of the right course of action. Unlike the cosmic consonance, what is being stressed is the *dharmic* order of the empirical everyday human life. To regulate empirical human action within its social, moral, and spiritual folds, various devices such as *purushārdhas* (goals of human life), *āśrama dharmās* (activities of four stages of life), *varna dharmas* (actions of four professions), and *sādharana dharmās* (universal principles of action) were invented. Through these normative structures, *dharma* provides a framework for social and moral actions of individuals. As observed by Purushottama Bilimoria:

> *Dharma* then provides a frame that, as it were, could flick through different pictures of what is ethically proper or desirable at any time. What gives coherence to the conception itself is perhaps its coveted appeal to the need to preserve the organic unity of being, to "make" justice where fairness is due, and to minimize the burden of *karma*, if not also to free the individual from its encumbrances. (2007)

What is enunciated through this law of *karma* rooted in *dharma* is that one has to face the consequences of one's actions, whether morally good or bad. This theory of *karma* doesn't prescribe determinism as it is often misunderstood. Instead, it partitions *karma* into s*ancita karma* (the sum of one's past actions) *prārabda karma* (the result of these past actions that have ripened in the present) and *āgami karma* (the result of present actions that will fructify in future). This partition not only makes the individual responsible for his actions, but also provides sufficient scope for the individual to change his future based on present decisions and choices.

The conception of life in this *Itihāsa-purānic* phase is in terms of a normative framework built around *dharma*. By replacing the *Vedic* conception of *ṛta*, *dharma* now manifested itself as a framework for the social and moral order of individual actions. The meaning of the life and actions of the individual that define the philosophical practice of the times are derivative of the conception of dharma that one follows. The meaning of life and the method of philosophical practice are ordained in terms of the framework of *dharmas* of the profession and stage of life. In this way, empirical and human relations were placed at the center of philosophical practice in this phase. The seeker here is not one who is seeking accordance with the cosmic order, rather the one who is pursuing empirical *dharmic* order. The method, unlike the *Vedic*, is less inward and more outward and relational. How one relates to the other through his actions was the crux of philosophical practice—the framework for this is the normative framework of the *dharma*. The purpose of the practice is brought close to empirical life in terms of problem-solving and self-improvement. The seeker and the counselor are not the same, as was the case with the *Vedic* phase. Instead, they are different and mostly from the various stages or professions of the *dharmic* framework. For instance, if you look at it from the pruview of *āśrama dharmas* you may observe the householder (*grihastha*) and the renunciant (*sanyāsi*) provide counseling to the student (*brahmacāri*) or the seeker.

Having looked at the uniqueness of the conception of life and its philosophical practice of the *Itihāsa-purānic* phase of classical Indian tradition, along with its deviation from that of the *Vedic* phase, let us now explore what may be called *Dārśanic* conception.

3. *Dārśanic* phase

Dārśanic phase is one that developed parallel to the *Vedic* and *Itihaāsa-purānic* phases, but with a unique and focused orientation towards life by questioning the existent and dominant notions of the conception of life and its implications. The term *darśana*, which means to see or to cognize the fundamental through the obvious, is often used to represent India's philosophical activity. Though there were other terms such as *anvikshiki*, *mata* and *tattva* etc., it is *darśana* that gained prominence in the contemporary period to represent Indian philosophical tradition.

What is unique to this phase is heterodoxy. It is not that the existent notions of orthodoxy were questioned by heterodoxy, rather even within both orthodoxy and heterodoxy heterogeneity pre-

vailed. Internal questionings and disagreements within both orthodoxy and heterodoxy made the philosophical discourse rich and vibrant. The argumentative Indian, presented by Amartya Sen (2005), is at its complete actualization during the *darśanic* phase. It was argued that *moksha* or liberation as one of the goals of human life, and life of renunciation as the part of stages of life, were contributions of this heterodoxy in Indian tradition. As observed rightly by Bilimoria, during this phase

> . . . asceticism, yoga, renunciation of social life-forms, and various kinds of esoteric practices had emerged, and these posed challenges to the orthodox system. Buddhism and Jainism created conditions, in large part, for these tendencies to emerge and flourish. The institution of renunciation (*sanyāsa*), based on the rejection of the social order and the affirmation of a more individualistic life-form, further undermines the orthodox *Brahmanic* hegemony of the normative. Yoga served the purpose of ascetic renunciation better than the ritualistic orthodoxy. (Bilimoria 2007, 30)

In this way, the *Darśanic* phase contributed to a deeper structural disquiet and questioning, specifically addressing the exclusion of the other entailed in the *Upanishadic* monism and detached morality of the epic ethics (specifically as it is found in *Bhagavadgita*). *Darśanic* heterodoxy has taken the previous conception of life and its corollary philosophical practice to a new epistemological and a theological critique (Bilimoria, 2007, 31).

Unlike the *Vedic* and *Itihāsa-purānic*, the *Darśanic* phase brought down the philosophical practice to its rational grounds from its orientation towards cosmic and *dharmic* orders. Heterodoxy played a crucial role in promoting questioning as a method of philosophical practice. Though questioning was a part of philosophizing in both *Upanishadic* and *Epic* traditions, it was only questioning for the sake of knowing. The seeker as a questioner, was passive in these traditions. This passive seeker transforms himself into an active contributor to the philosophical discourse in the *Darśanic* phase. Passive acceptance of authority was replaced by active interrogation of the established notions. They were not just questioned; instead, rejected if not satisfactory to the rationality of the practitioner/seeker. The seeker became an active contributor by going to the extent of proposing alternatives to the existent established conceptions.

The method of inquiry that was advocated for the practice of philosophy in this phase was both inward and outward. However, this inward journey is not limited to the one that is envisaged in *Vedic* or *Epic* phases; instead, it is distinct in the sense of its orientation towards the psychological aspects of the human self. Along with the cosmic and spiritual goals, psychological aspects of the self also gained prominence in this phase.

Conclusion

It is argued above that the conception of life largely determines the philosophical practice of the culture, which may not be homogenous at all times. To support this view, the image of life and the practice of philosophy as it is available in three phases of classical Indian tradition such as *Vedic*, *Itihāsa-purānic*, and *Darśanic* were discussed. The shifts in the perception of life from cosmic to empirical to rationalistic in these three phases were presented. The insights that can be drawn about the philosophical practice of these three phases in terms of the meaning of life and the method of

practice were presented along with the agent's place. The method of practice was not limited to just inward inquiry in *Itihāsa-puranic* and *Darśanic* conceptions, unlike that of the *Vedic* one. Similarly, the agent who was a seeker with the intent of knowing the self in the *Vedic* times transforms himself into the rational interrogator who is ready to reject the established views or even to propose alternatives.

Through the above discussion, I have tried to show how philosophical practice in India is culturally rooted through a study of the three phases of the classical Indian tradition. This helped us understand the varied conceptions of life, and the method of practice, and how the individual transforms in various phases.

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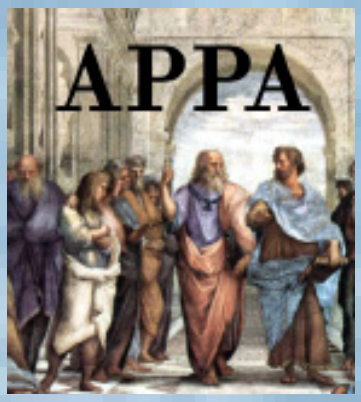
Balaganapathi Devarakonda is presently heading the Department of Philosophy at University of Delhi, Delhi. His research interests are focused on various aspects of Indian Philosophy, Philosophy of Religion and Social and Political Philosophy along with Philosophical Counseling. His recent publications include *Hinduism in Thailand: Its presence and Absence*, *Role of Guru as an interpreter of Dharma*, *Orientalist and Nationalist Writings of Indian Philosophy and History of Indian Philosophy: Analysis of Contemporary Understanding of the Classical through Colonial.* His book *Philosophical Doctrines of Andhakas: Exploring Early Buddhist Sects of Andhra* (2020) is being published by Springer Nature under Springer Briefs in Religious Studies series. South Asia Press is bringing out a new edition of *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes with a detailed introduction by Prof. Bala. He is presently working on a project titled "Yoga Consciousness in Mahabharata: The Ethical value for societal/political Wellbeing" (SPARC) and has completed research project Culture through the Labyrinth of Globalization: A Study of Popular Imaginations and Alternative narratives of Digital and non-Digital Telugu literature (2017-19).

Correspondence: balaganapathid@gmail.com



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Nemo Veritatem Regit
Nobody Governs Truth

Individualism vs Collectivism: A Debate Between Liberalism and Communitarianism

Dr. Reetu Jaiswal
Asstt. Prof., Deptt. of Philosophy
University of Delhi, Delhi
Email id: jaiswal.reetu@gmail.com

Abstract

The notion of individualism has been one of the important features of the liberal tradition. Liberal thinkers, such as John Locke, Immanuel Kant and John Rawls have promoted the rights and liberties of the individuals. In this paper I will primarily focus on Rawls' views and will attempt to discuss about the charges raised against the Rawlsian deontological position by the communitarian critics like AlasdaireMacIntyre, Michael Sandel and Charles Taylor. The communitarian critics have questioned the abstract and individualistic notion of the self on a number of issues.

Based on the tradition of the social contract theory, Rawls in his theory of justice as fairness presents the model of a liberal society which preserves the liberty and equality of its citizens and to protect the autonomy of the individuals it legitimatises the use of the political power in society. In other words, it provides the description of how a just and fair society must be arranged. In his seminal work A Theory of Justice, he has given priority to the right over the good. He propounds the two principles of justice which secures basic liberty, rights and equality of opportunity for the individuals.

Communitarianism primarily emphasises the importance of community in the social and political lives of human beings. It gives importance to the shared understandings of communities, public participation and a sense of solidarity and fraternity. Whereas the primary concerns of liberalism have been the autonomy and liberty of individuals and justice in society. Communitarians blame liberalism for neglecting the importance of community in the formation and development of an individual.

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Dr. Reetu Jaiswal,

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Introduction

Michael Sandel's book Liberalism and the Limits of Justice is a critique of a particular approach to moral and political philosophy that he calls "deontological liberalism." Sandel asserts that it is not possible for us to imagine ourselves being independent of all our attachments which constitute the kind of person we are. We are members of a society, members of a family and are associated with our nation, our people and these kinds of associations are based on some moral value. According to Sandel, the idea of a person, as it has been presented by Kant and Rawls, is highly individualistic and ignores the importance and role of the community, and social and historical circumstances in the formation of human nature. Human beings cannot be located in a totally isolated realm since their identity depends upon their various relations and roles in a society.

Sandel is right is asserting that our identity depends upon our attachments and obligations which define the person I am, but this obligation is only a sufficient condition for the construction of the self, not the necessary condition. A part of the self should be unencumbered in order to decide which obligation should be given more importance than the other ones. It is not only attachments and obligations that decide the person I am. Kymlicka has also pointed out that though we all inherit a few attachments and various roles, still we should be capable of questioning and revising those practices and duties which are constitutive of those relationships. According to Kymlicka, Sandel too has accepted that the self can re-examine its ends and adds that Sandel has failed to show why individuals should not be given the conditions appropriate to that re-examining, as an indispensable part of leading the best possible life. On the other hand, AlasdaireMacIntyrecriticises the liberal and the Enlightenment tradition for giving a very abstract, tradition-neutral, antecedently individuated, and emotivist notion of the self. and for failing to give the due importance to the notion of the good.

According to MacIntyre, the Enlightenment has presented a very mechanical notion of human being as an agent who does not have any particular conception of good, but follows his or her own rational will . Since there can be no universally accepted rational principle of morality, every person is allowed to legislate his or her own code of conduct following the abstract notion of the self and individual choice, freed from the contingencies of social and historical conditions.

To be rational is to participate and communicate in norm-governed social relationships and interactions of a particular institutionalised social order. MacIntyre holds: "Hence 'rational' is not a predicate to be applied to individuals qua individuals, but only to individuals qua participants in particular social orders embodying particular conceptions of rationality."

The modern self does not find its identity from the social roles that it adopts, but rather is able to adopt any role and any standpoint as it chooses.We are a part of already defined practices of a society and our roles and nature of the practice performed by us can determine what we should do and how well it is done. One cannot exercise a virtue only qua individual.

In his book, Dependent Rational AnimalsMacIntyre asserts that without understanding or taking into account the fact that human beings are dependent on others, only reason cannot provide the basis for morality. Enlightenment has overlooked this fact and that is why it failed. In the liberal tradition the self is "one that moves from sphere to sphere, compartmentalizing its attitudes". We are dependent on others because of our inadequacies, imperfection and flaws.

When MacIntyre argues in this way, he forgets that the Enlightenment Project too is a product of a particular historical circumstance related to the various parts of the world. It was a revolution against the domination of religious institutes over the authority of the state and the lives of the citizens. In that situation, the preservation of individual autonomy and liberty within the minimum interference of state became indispensable. Some of the liberal thinkers have given preference to the concept of right and some others have focused on the concept of good, but almost all of them have, in one way or the other, been determined to establish a just society in which everyone can exercise his or her own rational will, liberty and autonomy, including slaves and women. MacIntyre's rejection of the Enlightenment Project or the liberal tradition is insincere because it lacks a proper understanding of that tradition.

This whole debate could be understood by looking into the distinction between ontological and advocacy issues presented by Charles Taylor. He argues that ontological issue deals with the distinction between atomism and holism and advocacy issue deals with the distinction between individualism and collectivism. His contention is that the liberal thinkers have neglected this ontological distinction between atomism and holism and have mistakenly adhered to the position of atomist individualism. The position of holism, according to Taylor, can make the liberal position much more convincing. He gives arguments in support of this claim that even in a liberal state like America, people have the sense of patriotism which could be found in their

understanding of the American way of living. In an individualistic society we feel the sense of belongingness with the other members of the society and if the liberal tradition attempts to question that then Taylor finds it very unlikely that an example of such a society could be found and it could be viable in any way. Taylor argued against the liberal position that "men are self-sufficient outside of society". (Taylor 1985)

In this paper, I wish to argue that the liberal position of Rawls has been very much liberal towards the communitarian arguments. He is concerned with attaining justice in the society by securing the rights and liberties of the individuals. He has never said that the social and psychological contingencies do not influence an individual's life or views. He is just making an effort to establish such a social arrangement in which in the name of a common good of the society, individual's rights should not be sacrificed. While liberals may not have been arguing tat individuals can completely extricate themselves from their social context, the liberal valuation of choice still seemed to suggest an image of a subject who impinges his will on the world.

The liberal thinkers, in general, and Rawls, in particular, are not denying the individual's dependency on the social and historical context. It is the possibility of making an attempt to transgress that context.

Now I would like to consider the arguments mentioned by Taylor who asserts that the liberal thinkers would have to give appropriate value to the holistic approach because one can not live in an atomist way within a society. I wish to argue that I agree with Taylor that an individual cannot lead a life in an independent way as he or she is dependent on others for his or her existence. However, while living within a society, an individual's rights should also be protected to the extent where that individual could go against the common good of that society. This does not mean that this position is making an individual to live an atomist life. When one is arguing for his or her rights, this does not neglect the acceptance of one's dependance on others, but this only shows the possibility of considering one's rights in an independent way too. It is like opening the possibility of understanding an individual from an individual's point of view. It is to give enough liberty to change the equations of dependency, and social values. It is to think what could be the best way of living for an individual within a society. If the liberal position accepts this, it cannot accept the common good of the society to be the overarching value.

Liberal position is about giving preference to the individual's rights over the common good. It is not against all the associations. It is to give enough liberty to dissociate oneself from certain associations if found challenging the rights of an individual. This

is an idea of holism of the atomistic individuals where the individuals have more power than the members of a holist society.

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THE CONCEPT OF POWER: TAGORE AND FOUCAULT

Dr. Reetu Jaiswal

Department of Philosophy

University of Delhi

The concept of power is one of the most commonly used phenomena in the history of humanities. While in the Western-liberal societies, the discourse of power is generally associated with coercion and domination, in the latter half of the Twentieth Century, theorists of power tend to invoke the distinction between two broadly used expressions of power as *power over* and *power to*, discussed and presented by Robert A. Dahl.[1] Whereas the *power over is* understood in terms of *power as domination*, the *power to* is taken as *power as capacity.* The *power over* or *power as domination* model of power[2], largely has a negative connotation. The present paper is a study of the notion of power by the two great philosophers of the 20th century: Rabindranath Tagore and Michel Foucault.

Michel Foucault, one of the most influential thinkers in shaping understandings of power, defines power in both senses: repressive as well as productive. Foucault (1980) understands power as a relational force that permeates the entire social body, connecting all social groups in a web of mutual influence. According to him, power is everywhere diffused and embodied in discourse, knowledge and 'regimes of truth'.[3] As a relational force, power constructs social organization and hierarchy by producing discourses and truths, by imposing discipline and order, and by shaping human desires and subjectivities. In this context, Foucault sees power as simultaneously productive and repressive: a social body cannot function without it, despite its perennially oppressive manifestations. Power creates knowledge and forms subjects who are restricted as well as enabled by its omnipresent force. [4]

Power, according to Foucault, is not only coercive in the form of sovereign exercise of power, but is also disciplinary, manifested in the administrative systems and social services such as prisons, schools and hospitals. He mentioned about the mechanisms of surveillance in prisons, discipline in schools and systems for the administration and control of population, and promotion of norms for shaping human desires and subjectivities. Although, power as enablement gives the impression of *power to* model, but covertly it is based on *power over* model. The way *disciplinary power*, controls and affects the norms of the society and behaviour of people, they become so influential and embedded that they are beyond our perception, causing us to discipline ourselves without any coercion.

[1] Karlberg, Michael. (Spring/Summer 2005). "The Power of Discourse and the Discourse of Power: Pursuing Peace Through Discourse Intervention." *International Journal of Peace Studies.* pp. 1-25.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Foucault, M. (1991). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of a Prison*. London: Penguin.
[4] Ibid.

The concept of *power as domination* has also been a matter of significant discussion in Indian context. Rabindranath Tagore, a great poet, philosopher, novelist, and educationist, was a true humanist. He respected human values more than anything and believed that dehumanization and mechanization is the source of evil in any field. Influenced by his context, he criticized the British imperialism as brutal and inhuman as well as the Western concept of nation and nationalism as the organizations of power manifested in the form of domination and greed. On the other hand, he explored the spiritual power of love based on his humanism.

Rabindranath Tagore describes *power over* model, in the context of colonialism and imperialism, as inherently immoral and irrational. He criticizes the Western concept of nation and nationalism as it is based on *power over* or *power as domination* model. He asserts, "Power in all its forms is irrational; it is like the horse that drags the carriage blindfolded."[5] Against the notion of state as an institutionalized embodiment of power, he argues that imperialism is driven by the struggle for power and a desire for domination over other people's territory, culture and ways of life. This aspect of power causes very devastating effects for the world as it is run by greed of wealth and irrational material gains.

In *Creative Unity*, Tagore argues that powers cannot find their equilibrium in themselves. He argued:

> Power has to be made secure not only against power, but also against weakness; for there lies the peril of its losing balance. The weak are as great a danger for the strong as quicksand for an elephant. They do not assist progress because they do not resist; they only drag down. The people who grow accustomed to wield absolute power over others are apt to forget that by so doing they generate an unseen force which some day rends that power into pieces.[6]

He further argues:

> So long as the powers build a league on the foundation of their desire for safety, secure enjoyment of gains, consolidation of past injustice, and putting off the reparation of wrongs, while their fingers still wriggle for greed and reek of blood, rifts will appear in their union; and in future their conflicts will take greater force and magnitude. . . By different combinations it changes its shape and dimensions, but not its nature. This egoism is still held sacred, and made a religion; and such a religion, by a mere change of temple, and by new committees of priests, will never save mankind.[7]

Now I would like to discuss how these two thinkers have tried to question the then existing power structures by presenting the *power to* or *power as capacity* model. Foucault does not argue that we cannot get out of the power structure of the society and institutions. This model could be found in his views when he claims that we are freer than we think we are and we need to understand and resist against this domination and power. We have freedom and because of this whole disciplinary power structure we don't realize this.

In dealing with ethics, Foucault presents the notion of the self which will not accept these disciplinary arrangements and will follow those things which it finds to be the right. He is against any rule-oriented ethical norm or any other universally applicable moral principle. He argues that the self should constantly challenge these power structures and attempt to create space for themselves. He argues: "Perhaps I have insisted too much on the technology of domination and power. I am more and more interested in the interaction between oneself and others

[5] https://www.brainpickings.org/2013/01/30/tagore-gandhi-letters/

[6] Tagore, R. N. (2008). "Creative Unity". In *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, Vol 2. Sisir Kumar Das, (ed.). New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.

[7] Ibid.

and in the technologies of individual domination, the history of how an individual acts upon himself, in the technology of the self."[8]

However, this does not mean that we could exercise absolute freedom. We are not atomistic selves and we live in a society which has interdependent relationships and structures. Still we can contest these relationships and structures and constitute ourselves as active moral agents. In this reference he talks about the technology of the self and defines it as "those intentional and voluntary actions by which men not only set themselves rules of conduct, but also seek to transform themselves, to change themselves in their singular being."[9] It is by the process of self-formation and self-constraint that one makes oneself an ethical being and exercise freedom. It is essentially a non-humanist project because Foucault rejects the idea of an authentic, absolute self but rather champions an 'ethics of creativity' as opposed to an 'ethics of authenticity'.[10]

Our educational institutions also have disciplinary power structure which makes us believe that whatever is being taught to us is the right thing. Foucault argues that the teachers should teach the students how these power structures are working in their lives and how it is working for their domination. Things should not be accepted as uncontested and the only truth. Once the students realize this fact, they would be able to move out of that power structure and the domination. Through constant reflection they can make an effort to "endeavour to know how and to what extent it might be possible to think differently, instead of legitimating what is already known"[11]. In this way, only the real power of individuals could be exercised.

The *Power to* model could be understood by Tagore's views on humanism. In Tagore's humanism, inter-personal relationship plays a pivotal role. It is the understanding of human relationship in this form that is at the heart of all his writings. Human values such as love and service of mankind are the sole means to attain the all-pervasive *One*. In this inter-personal relationship, man considers the other as one with the self. The realization of *oneness* works at two levels: at one level it is the negation of one's self-centered inclination and on the other level it is the comprehension of love for others. An individual can achieve freedom not from alienation or the realization of abstract individuality, but "true freedom lies in the transcendence of mere being through creative becoming"[12]. According to Tagore, "the idea of the human freedom is the essential expression of universal nature of man which is not through the elimination of contradiction but through reconciliation in unity through a process of love that reveals the totality or completeness of human life"[13]. The outer self of man can be limited by material needs, but the inner self is not limited or constrained by any material need or by any particular caste, community or nation. It is the realization of this inner essence of the self, by means of liberating one's personal desires, by understanding one's social and moral obligations towards others and by sharing their feelings and burdens of life, which

[8] Foucault, M. (1988). "Truth, Power, Self: An Interview with Michel Foucault". In T*echnologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault.* L. H. Martin, H. Gutman, & P. Hutton (Eds.). pp. 9-15.

[9] Foucault, M. (1985). T*he History of Sexuality*, vol. 2: The Use of Pleasure. Harmondsworth: Penguin. pp.10-11.

[10] Crane, A., Knights, D. and Starkey, K. (2008) "The Conditions of Our Freedom: Foucault, Organization and Ethics". *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 18 (3). pp. 299-320

[11] Foucault, M. (1985). "Sexuality and Solitude". In *On Signs: A Semiotics Reader*, M. Blonsky (ed.) Oxford: Blackwell. pp. 9.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Tagore, R. N. (2008). "Personality". In *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore.* Vol 2, Sisir Kumar Das (ed.), New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi. p. 49

defines the true nature of man. In *Religion of Man*, Tagore opines that the truth of this World does not lie in materials, which are abstracts, savage and solitary, but in relatedness and relationship of things to the universe. The truth of this world is the expression of harmonious mutuality, but we are unable to look at that harmony and oneness of this world because we are "driven to distraction by pursuits of the fragmentary". It is when "some great revelation of beauty or surge of overwhelming love suddenly lifts us on to a high peak of experience, the world appears before us with its communication of the one"[14].

Tagore argues that when materials as materials are seen or used in isolation from this harmonious mutuality, they become destructive. The Western notion of Nation and Nationalism is driven by the feeling of material gain which is completely devoid of this understanding of mutuality and that is why it incurs destruction. Tagore's notion of nation and nationalism was largely influenced by the British colonial rule in India and the anti-colonial struggle for independence and also by his visit to Japan, China, Australia, Russia, etc. He perceived nationalism as a purely Western construct and warned against its disastrous effects. After being acquainted with the socio-political policies of the English in India, he found the nationalist approach of British colonialism to be impersonal, machine-like, scientific and abstract. It was based on the greed of wealth and power.

The true self could be realized by the *power to* or *power as capacity* model, the capacity to seek love and harmony in society. Tagore contends, "We must know that, as, through science and commerce, the realisation of the unity of the material world gives us power, so the realisation of the great spiritual Unity of Man alone can give us peace".[15] Productivity of power lies in the development of the feeling of love and enhancement of spirituality in the form of harmonious mutuality. This understanding of power is based on *power to* or *power as capacity* model.

According to Tagore, "Civilization must be judged and prized, not by the amount of power it has developed, but by how much it has evolved and given expression to, by its laws and institutions, the love of humanity."[16] Tagore works for one supreme cause, the union of all sections of humanity in sympathy and understanding, in truth and love.[17]

In the present world scenario, imbalance of power between nations, inequality of power distribution between various sections of society, and different power structures are the issues of contention. Every social and political problem is linked to inter-personal relationships between people. Unless we realize the living spirit of people, expressed through and inherent in social bonding, the struggle for power will never end. What we require is not the secure boundaries or strong laws, but the consciousness of solidarity, and realization of harmonious mutuality because although we are individuals, we are dependent on each other for our existence and hence social adjustments and cooperation based on love is the kind of relationship which must be developed and protected.

[14] Tagore, R. N. (1931). *Religion of Man*, London: Allen & Unwin. pp. 241
[15] Ibid
[16] Tagore, R. N. (1913). *Sadhana*, London: Macmillan. pp. 323
[17] Sharma, Arup Jyoti (June 2012). "Humanistic Philosophy of Tagore." *Kritike*. Vol 6(1). pp. 50-66.

In this way, we can see that both the thinkers have mentioned and the negative as well as the positive aspects of the notion of power and they have articulated in their own way how the *power to* model could sort out the challenges brought out by the *power over* model. However, whereas on the one hand, Tagore presents the humanistic view of the capacity model, Foucault deals with the post-structuralist view. Both of this views have very different approaches. One thinks that our knowledge should be developed in a way where we identify ourselves with others based on the feeling of love and harmony, the other believes in constant self-creation by criticising the available structures and question everything that could lead to any universalist or absolutist position, even if that is based on the notion of harmony and love. I wish to argue that the real knowledge will always be determined by one or the other values of power structures of the society. We cannot transcend this contingent truth about our existence. The finest of the humanistic values do imply some fixed and uncontested notions which might constraint the development of the self. However, we cannot deny the importance of these values which create a system and also a feeling of togetherness in the society. We cannot keep questioning everything every moment because in order to do that we need some kind of foundation and once we believe in that foundation we accept something to be absolutely given. In this case, the knowledge of the self as a free agent and a spiritual being should be reconciled in a way that while having the sense of togetherness and love towards other we should also be open to contest our notions and keep checking whether it is in accordance with the freedom of other selves or not. The power to model develops a capacity in us which should challenge the power over tendency. If this could be the case, we will be able to realize our true selves and also give further scope for others to do the same.

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NEW MEDIA AS THE FIFTH ESTATE

Dr. Reetu Jaiswal
Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, Delhi

The new media which is also understood as citizen journalism is considered to be the Fifth Estate of a democratic country. Unlike, other forms of estates, it emerged without having any form or a particular purpose, except to be a tool of communication on a larger scale. It would be a mistake on our part to equate the New Media with the traditional forms of media. Whenever we talk about any estate, it refers to a part of government which is independent and which has the fundamental duty of preserving the democratic spirit of the nation. The traditional media, although not directly and explicitly, is not independent of government. Unlike other forms of estates, the ethical responsibility of the traditional media is not that well-formed and it fluctuates as it is a profession as well as a business. On the other hand, the new media is independent of government and has no such defined norms or constraints applied to it. According to William Dutton (Dutton 2009) the Fifth Estate is not simply the blogging community, nor an extension of the media, but 'networked individuals' enabled by the Internet, i.e. social media, in ways that can hold the other estates accountable. It is well known that the new media has created a new awareness among people and has provided them with the tool to not only critique or praise governmental authorities and their acts, but to go against the traditional media whenever it digresses from its responsibilities. However, I have reservations against making the new media, an expansion and modification of the traditional media by saying it a new media or citizen journalism and trying to determine its principles on the basis of the traditional media. As has been argued by Stephen Ward that after the integration of traditional and citizen journalism, the integrated new media becomes layered and we need to have an ecumenical ethics for this media. He states, "The notion of a fifth estate, therefore, is not simply a technological or ideological category. It does not refer simply to journalists who use new media (e.g. blogosphere) nor does it refer only to alternate left-wing media. The fifth estate refers to those citizens and journalists interested in developing new forms of journalism and in reconstructing media ethics for an era of global and interactive media." (Ward 2011, 235)

It could not be a fifth estate, if one is not following the ecumenical ethics and along with critiquing the mainstream media, trying to enhance its reach to the global level, as has been mentioned by Ward (Ward 2011); or if one is not being a watchdog for watchdogs, i.e., mainstream media for their irresponsible behaviour as has been argued by Stephen D. Cooper (Cooper 2006); or if one is not engaging in "extra media activities" focusing on research, monitoring, reflection, and means of accountability which is intended to "subject the media themselves to scrutiny" as has been argued by Christians *et al* (Christians e*t al* 2009). If we consider the views of all these thinkers, it implies that the fifth estate has the responsibility of (a) being the watchdog of watchdogs, (b) enhance the reach of media to global level, (c) reaching to the level of every citizen capable of handling new technologies and having access to the internet, (d) doing (a), (b) and (c) with proper research, reflection and accountability. If this is an understanding of the fifth estate, why do we need to base it on the parameters of the traditional media? The new media is primarily meant for being a platform where people can share their views and concerns with others on a larger scale and within very less time. This does not limit actions of the fifth estate to being a watchdog of watchdogs only. It can directly do the work the traditional media is supposed to perform. When we limit its scope to the level of being a form of journalism, it becomes inconsistent with the meaning of being an estate. All the four estates, have their specifically defined roles and responsibilities. However, it is another matter what challenges they face in performing them and how responsible they are towards those objectives of their roles. Likewise the fifth estate's role and ethical norms should not be looked upon in terms of that of the traditional media. When we look at the New Media as a citizen journalism, we start comparing it with the traditional media and hence tend to set goals and ethics as per the conditions of the traditional media. If we analyze these two forms of media, we find that whereas the traditional media focuses on pre-publication verification, new media engages in post-publication interaction on social media platforms; whereas the traditional media has accountability to what they show and print, the new media, due to anonymity and airing one's personal views, hardly incurs any accountability; whereas the primary aim of the traditional media is to be truthful and not be carried away by any emotion and reactionary feeling regarding any information and then mislead people, the new media is usually biased, based on instant findings of something without giving any serious attention to the repercussions of imparting that information. The traditional media has a proper institutional structure and works like a profession and a business. On the other hand, it is very difficult to identify the structure of the new media and hence more difficult to apply any ethical responsibility to them. There are so many points of differences between these two and still solely on the basis of sharing

Rawls's Original Position: The Question of Gender-Inequality

Dr. Reetu Jaiswal
Assistant Professor

Department of Philosophy

University of Delhi

This paper is an attempt to examine John Rawls's works *A Theory of Justice* and *Political Liberalism* from a gendered perspective. His theory of justice and political conception of justice have been very influential in the contemporary social and political discourses. However, I found his principles of justice and the notion of original position to be inadequate in doing justice to the question of gender inequality. In this paper I will also assess Susan Okin's account of Rawls's position.

Following the social contract tradition, Rawls introduced a hypothetical notion of original position in which the representatives of people will choose the principles of justice to establish a just and fair society. To make this selection impartial, he propounds the notion of veil of ignorance which deprives the parties of certain kind of particular facts about them, e.g. about their "place in society, their class position or social status; their fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, their intelligence and strength, and the like. Nor, does anyone know his conception of the good, the particulars of his rational plan of life… the parties do not know the particular circumstances of their own society. That is, they do not know its economic or political situation, or the level of civilization and culture it has been able to achieve" (TJ, 137). They have no information as to which generation do they belong. Moreover, the parties are not allowed to know about the particular comprehensive doctrine of the person each represents. They are also unaware of their race, ethnic group, sex and gender. However, it has been taken for granted that they know the general facts about human society. They understand general human psychology and the workings of social institutions, political affairs and principles of economic theory.

Under given circumstances the parties, which according to Rawls are the heads of the family, in the original position will not be advantaged or disadvantaged by their natural fortunes or the contingency of social circumstances. Rawls ensures that for the parties in the original position, principles of justice will be the most preferable choice among other alternative principles (why is this so, is another issue which I am not going to deal with). The first principle of justice secures equal basic rights and liberties for all; and second principle ensures that social and economic

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A Feminist Assessment of Ayer's Verification Theory

Dr. Reetu Jaiswal
Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy
University of Delhi

-Dr. Puja Rai
Assistant Professor
Gautam Buddha Mahila College
Magadh University
Bihar

A. J. Ayer has been one of the canonical figures of logical positivism. His verification theory of meaning has contributed to a great extent to understand what can be true and what cannot be true. His contribution to logical positivism, emotivism and verification theory has been analyzed already. In this paper, I will deal with his verification theory of meaning and emotivist theory in detail, and then further will try to find out whether it could be justifiable and acceptable from the perspective of feminist epistemology or not.

One of the fundamental aims of Ayer is to find the purpose and method of philosophy. In his search, he started dealing with the meaning and verification of a proposition. According to him, there are two types of propositions: analytical and synthetic. Analytical propositions are a *priori* and tautological in nature. Such propositions are found generally in logic and mathematics. The propositions of Logic and Mathematics are tautologies because, according to him, "they are independent of experience in the sense that they do not owe their validity to empirical verification. We may come to discover them through an inductive process, but once we have apprehended them we see that they are necessarily true, that they hold good for every conceivable instance".[1] Analytical propositions do not give any new knowledge, for example, "an unmarried man is a bachelor" does not give any new information. On the other hand, synthetic propositions are those propositions which are empirical and could be verified. They are *aposteriori* and hence provide some new knowledge about the world through empirical knowledge. For example, "this car is red" gives a piece of information about the car.

[1] Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 100

He believes that all meaningful sentences are either analytic or synthetic. This distinction draws a conclusion about metaphysical statements that they are meaningless as they are neither analytic nor synthetic, and the purpose and method of philosophy are to reject such metaphysical statements. Gellner says that the ideal for philosophy of the Vienna Circle that produced the logical positivism was a unification of science, hoping thereby to produce a unified system of meaningful and valid knowledge[2]. Logical positivists tried to reduce philosophy to the level of empirical knowledge, and anything which was out of its frame was meaningless including morality, ethics and religious knowledge. Since metaphysics tries to explain what cannot be perceived or experienced by our senses, hence cannot be understood by us. Our senses have limitations, and anything that goes beyond that experience is meaningless, according to Ayer. Now, coming to the point of the meaningfulness of a statement, Ayer asserts, that any proposition will be meaningful if is based on some observations which could lead one to a proposition either being true or false. According to this criterion, "God is omniscient" becomes meaningless because it has no observable reality, and statements like these are pseudo-statements.

In this way, he tried to minimize the difference between philosophy and science and tried to reach the scientific level of objectivity.

Another distinction which Ayer makes is between the strong and weak sense of verifiability. Ayer comments: "A proposition is said to be verifiable, in the strong sense of the term, if and only if, its truth could be conclusively established in experience. But it is verifiable, in the weak sense, if it is possible for experience to render it probable".[3] A proposition will be strongly verifiable if it is verifiable in practice and is conclusively verifiable. In other words, if a proposition is verified by one's own sense-experience that "That man is bald" or "This car is red", then, it will be meaningful in a strong sense because it could be verified to be true or false.

On the other hand, a proposition will be verifiable in a weak sense if it is not yet verifiable in practice, but is verifiable in principle. In other words, if a proposition is not right now verifiable, but could be in the future, such as tomorrow, or after a few days. There should be a probability of having some observation that could have the relevance of deciding its truth or falsity. For example, "There is a life on Mars" is verifiable in a weaker sense because there is a possibility that one day scientists might be able to figure it out by some observation to be true or false. These propositions cannot be verified immediately "because we lack the practical means of placing ourselves in the situation where the relevant observations could be made"[4].

Generally, propositions are not directly verified and are dependent on the truth or empirical verification of another proposition which might in turn be dependent on some other true or empirically verified proposition. But this chain has to end somewhere and there must be at least one such proposition that is directly verified by observation of an empirical fact. Although initially Ayer had a doubt that there can be a possibility of any such proposition that could be conclusively verifiable, he later on declared that there can be such propositions, which are called 'basic propositions'.

[2] http://rcmss.com/2018/jggsda/A%20Critical%20Evaluation%20of%20Ayers%20Verification%20Principle.pdf

[3] Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 50

[4] Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 45.

Transmutation from epistemic to the linguistic premise

In this way, by explaining what can be verified and what cannot be verified, and how crucial is the role of empirical observation, he not only refuted metaphysics but also ethical and religious statements too. In order to reinforce the rejection of metaphysics, he transmuted from an epistemological premise to a linguistic premise. In order to investigate what is meaningful and what is not, he analyzed the distinction between meaningful and non-meaningful utterances as, according to him, not all utterances are meaningful. He examined the philosophical statements not only from an epistemological perspective but also from a linguistic perspective. According to Ayer, "literal meaning" is derived from "factual meaning". A statement is factually meaningful or true if it is empirically verifiable. Hence, if a statement is true then only it can have "literal meaning". In order to understand what factually meaningful means, it is imperative to deal with the concept of 'fact'.

Ayer refers to empirical facts when he refers to facts, and he refers to something that can be "factually observed" when he refers to empirical facts. According to him, the first directly observed object is "sense-data". Sense-data are the self-evident starting point of knowledge and they are not meant for further verification. A knower is directly aware of these sense-data by their sense experience. Ayer claims that whenever a person sees an object, he/she perceives sense-data and not the object directly as it is sense-data that is always directly perceived. Whenever we refer to sense-data, it is not necessary that we are referring to physical objects, but whenever we refer to physical objects, we necessarily refer to sense-data. The only significant relation between sense-data and material objects is that they refer to the same experience, but there can be no mutual entailment between them. These sense-data cannot be further reducible in another experience and are unanalyzable and basic. In order to avoid any confusion that might occur due to the term "exist", Ayer claims: ". . . it seems advisable always to speak of the "occurrence" of sense-contents and sense-experiences in preference to speaking of their "existence", and so to avoid the danger of treating sense-contents as if they were material things."[5]

The above-mentioned views of Ayer do not imply that he denies the existence of material things. Rather, he says that we have a belief that they exist and that when we are perceiving an object, like, a table, all of us are perceiving the same table. But actually, the truth is that we are experiencing our sense-data. He distinguishes between belief and knowledge, and when one becomes sure of any empirical observation of its being true or false, then only he or she has a knowledge. The occurrence of a particular "sense-datum can not be justified in terms of anything other than itself – being a self-evident "given", – whereas the knowledge of the properties of "material things" must be justified through the medium of sense-data."[6]

Sense-data is further put in linguistic statements. Language and sense-data both are "given". Ayer argues this on the conviction that language is a self-evident fact in any cultural pattern. This kind of argument has also been given by J. G. Herder[7], who believes that we can only modify the language and cannot create it. However, there is no direct connection between sense-data language and observable facts. This connection is rather conventional in the sense that a particular object has been given a particular name to refer to. There is no necessary connection between a matter and the language we use for it.

[5] Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 123
[6] Montague, *The Basic Elements of Philosophy of A. J. Ayer*, p. 20
[7] Barnard, *Herder's Social and Political Thought: From Enlightenment to Nationalism.*

Hence, Ayer does not believe that there can be any empirical evidence to account for the existence of substance. We can only have a sense-experience of an object which occurs, and not exists. Now, the question arises, if there are sense-data, there must be an experiencing self. Ayer does not believe in the metaphysical entity 'self', but holds that, "We know that a self, if it is not to be treated as a metaphysical entity must be held to be a logical construction out of sense-experiences."[8] This continuous awareness of a series of sense-data constitutes a sense-history, on the basis of which we think about an identity, its owner. This kind of understanding of the owner of the sense-experience or 'the self' fosters a subjective nature of empirical verification. How will then there will be a discussion of whose empirical experience is valid if there are contradictory or different experiences, like in the case of the perception of an elephant? Hence, this kind of knowledge reduces to subjectivism. This seems to be a problematic interpretation of Ayer's views as his views are not limited to the experience of sense-data only, but could be shared with others via language and are also verifiable. Hence, this is not subjective in nature but could be verifiable and shared with others. In case of conflict, the observation of any fact will be the determining factor.

The way Ayer has refuted metaphysics by reducing everything's knowledge to the level of verification theory of meaning, it promotes the meaninglessness of moral statements too. His position on morality is called emotivism which entails that moral statements are neither true nor false, they are mere expressions of emotions. For example, by saying that "stealing is wrong", one is merely expressing an emotion that he or she dislikes stealing, and expresses the ewe feeling towards that. It cannot be said to be true or false. For some people stealing might be right as that could help some poor people in their need, and hence they might feel okay about it. Since moral statements are expressions of emotions, that's why some moral disagreements cannot be resolved as there are no criteria to prove one true and the other one as false. For example, take the moral disagreement over homosexuality being wrong or right. Two different positions on this express the different feelings of people, and therefore the disagreement cannot be resolved. Moral disagreements are disagreements of facts.

Emotivism also explains how different cultures and different time periods can have different attitudes toward morality. Female foeticide could be acceptable in some cultures, and it could be heinous in other cultures. Hence, we cannot say which one of the approaches is right or wrong. But this attitude creates lots of issues, like that of moral relativism. We also believe that moral beliefs actually play a significant role in shaping any culture or society. We cannot just ignore their role by saying that they are mere expressions. There is a difference between saying "murder is wrong" and "watching tv is bad". We cannot put them in the same category as first can play a crucial role in deciding whether someone's life is important or not, whereas the latter is related to someone's wastage of time or weakening of eyes. Nevertheless, emotivism says that moral statements have only "emotive meaning". They have no literal meaning, like "ouch!", "ugh, God, what a day!"

If we believe in the verification principle of meaning, we will have to believe in emotivism too, but it seems too weird and that is why has been criticized by end number of thinkers as being devoid of moral truth, moral objectivity, and moral progress.

[8] Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 125

Feminist Analysis

In the previous section, I have illustrated Ayer's views on verification, the meaningfulness of a sentence, radical empiricism and emotivism, which are interrelated and influenced by each other. Before I start analyzing his position from the feminist perspective, let me make my position clear about what I mean by feminism. My idea of feminism is not limited to gender-based discrimination only, but is more inclusive, and tries to include all sorts of discrimination done in the name of race, caste, class or any other identity.

In this section, first of all, I would like to analyze the very purpose of philosophy. Ayer has presented the verification principle of meaning to refute metaphysics and to take philosophy closer to science. On the one hand, this approach gels well with the feminist objective, on the other hand, it has issues with that.

1. As far as refuting metaphysics is concerned, that connects well with the feminist approach. Feminist thinkers like Sally Haslanger[9], Marilyn Frye have questioned the mainstream metaphysics, as they discuss something which cannot be part of our sense experience. Whatever issues women or any gender face, they are largely based on their gender, social and cultural identity. Metaphysics transgresses that world and talks about the concepts like the self, world, and god, of which we cannot have any sense-experience. If we get stuck in these metaphysical questions, it would be arduous to resolve the issues faced by people due to their situatedness in this empirical world. Haslanger argues that the way the concept of self has been defined, that it is autonomous, rational and abstract, women and other gendered people will hardly be able to be that self, as women are mostly considered to be emotional, dependent and deeply engrained with their social and familial world.
2. The way we have constructed the idea of God, in the form of, generally, a He, is also androcentric, and generally, men have been the source of religious texts, and rules and regulations. In this world, finding some space for women and other genders becomes very challenging. Hence, when Ayer rejects the importance of metaphysics in Philosophy, I find it quite useful for feminist purposes because then, there will be no overwhelming metaphysical identity to make the treatment of someone inferior in comparison to others on these bases. What cannot be experienced by people through their sense experience, will be based on the dominant ideology, and that dominant ideology is patriarchy, which has construed the concepts of self and God in such a way that establishes the inferiority of some over others.
3. However, on the other hand, his fondness for science to attain a similar kind of objectivity and clarity has been in antagonism with Sandra Harding's[10] feminist standpoint theory, which establishes that science is very biased and androcentric as it has primarily been limited to white, bourgeoise and western males. Whereas, women, black people and other marginalized sections have been neglected and remained at the level of "outsiders within". The sort of objectivity science claims is actually based on the beliefs, preferences and perspectives of particular scientific groups, according to Thomas Kuhn[11]. In the construction of scientific theories, we consider only the context of justification, which means we try to find out on the basis of what pieces of evidence and observations any theory has been established, but we ignore the context of

[9] Haslanger, "Feminism in Metaphysics: Negotiating the Natural".
[10] Harding, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?*
[11] Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution.*

discovery, which refers to the question of what led the scientific community to work on a particular scientific investigation. Kuhn has elaborated this point to a great extent and applying the same thought Harding has argued that scientific theories extract a 'weak notion of objectivity', whereas we should work towards the 'strong notion of objectivity', which is not exclusive but tries to include the perspectives of the marginalized ones as well. It does not mean that all of them will have to necessarily be part of that group, but that their issues, their concerns should be affecting the choice of scientific research subjects.

Hence, Ayer's extreme keenness to attain a similar kind of scientific objectivity in the field of Philosophy will somehow harm another intention that his philosophical approach has tried to work on, namely, bringing the empirical approach in philosophy in such a way that it could be sensitive towards the experience of people, and do not impose any overarching idea based on a limited perspective.

4. Now, I will step towards his 'verification theory of meaning' that says that only those propositions are meaningful and are verifiable by empirical observation. This assertion is important for the purposes of feminism because this implies that in the construction of knowledge one's experience which comes out of one's situatedness in a particular context is very important. This kind of theory does not incur any gender discrimination, and the validity of one's knowledge comes from his or her observation and its truth and falsehood. In this way, if someone's perception or observation could be false, then that applies equally to all genders and does not discriminate among them. On the other hand, verifiability in the weak sense implies that those observations that are not verified now but do have a probability of being verified later on after getting enough support for that entail that nothing is fixed once and for all. Whatever knowledge we have today could be questioned later on and hence, saying that anything is 'naturally' established could be questioned. The 'Natural' and 'accepted as eternal' existence of anything prevents the progress of knowledge from one situation to another situation. Knowledge cannot be ascertained once and for all and flourishes with change in perception and circumstances. This happens even with scientific theory. Hence, it is important to give this weak verifiability of the proposition a serious consideration.
5. Ayer claims that whenever a person sees an object, he/she perceives sense-data and not the object directly as it is sense-data that is always directly perceived. Sense-data is further put in linguistic statements. There is no necessary connection between a matter and the language we use for it. This means that the language we use to refer to any object or person does not entail a necessary connection between them, but rather is an outcome of a cultural belief. Hence, when we call someone black or brown and associate that word with their being inferior race, that could be changed with the change in language. If we start using a different kind of language, we can change the way we behave with people. For example, when we call 'old people' 'senior citizens', or 'physically challenged people' as 'differently abled' that changes our attitude towards them too because even though we are getting the same sense-data, the language is changing our worldview. Hence, if we start calling 'wives' our 'partners' or 'friends', that might change the perception of people. We cannot create language, but we can modify it to establish a less discriminating world.
6. Another significant point that has been raised by Ayer is that we can only have the experience of the sense-data, but not any source of its base in the form of a substance. Sally Haslanger, a feminist critic, argues that if something is a substance, then there cannot be its opposite. For example, a horse is a substance, and it can only have a contradictory, non-horse, and not an opposite. Likewise, if the category man is substantial, its

opposite cannot be possible, but there can be only contradictory of it, like non-man. But, on the one hand, we cannot equate non-horse with anything, we can define non-men as women, and hence they become the opposite of men. This means that man is not a substance. The opposition of women in terms of men is based on certain qualities, like being emotional instead of rational, being dependent instead of independent, and being immanent (according to Simone de Beauvoir[12]) instead of transcendent. We need to challenge such notions to give women, the stature of a substance.

7. The last and most important point that I wish to raise is his belief in and rejection of moral statements. According to Ayer, since moral statements cannot be true or false, they are mere expressions, hence are meaningless. This assertion on the one hand supports the feminist agenda well, but on the other hand, creates some problems for them. Let us deal with the first point. If there is no morality or if morality becomes meaningless, then so many discriminations and suppressions done in the name of maintaining the moral order of society will be depleted. For example, just because a society considers homosexual relationships, abortion, and marital rape to be immoral, people should not suffer in their name. However, if there are no morals in a society, then there will be chaos. Hence, it is important to have some moral order, but that should be variable and not fixed for all, so that with the change in time and circumstances, people's problems could be accommodated in the moral order of a society.

   However, Ayer's other position on morality that moral statements are just expressions, and hence there cannot be any moral disagreement seems problematic. If moral statements are only expressions, like if X says "homosexuality is wrong" and Y says "homosexuality is right", Ayer would say that it is just their expressions and cannot be right or wrong. But in such a case, the lives of those people who are homosexuals will suffer without any serious discussion of their legal status. Moral discussions mostly lead us to social, legal and political changes, and if we ignore them entirely, then there will be no moral progress in society. Either we become indifferent to what one thinks or does about their moral values, and hence don't judge anyone's actions or identity on that basis, or we take them seriously and discuss whether any moral act is right or wrong. It seems in this situation, punishing someone for murder will become quite difficult because it could be the outcome of one's moral expression that murder in certain circumstances is right.

Conclusion

After examining Ayer's position from a feminist approach, I would like to conclude by saying that the way Ayer has presented his views has so many opportunities for feminist thinkers to resolve social and moral issues. It has been argued that Ayer's verification theory has been very questionable and criticized by various thinkers. However, I would like to rest my case by saying that if we analyze his views more closely it could be helpful in straightening out so many complications, which feminist thinkers reckon are difficult to face and settle.

[12] Beauvoir, *The Second Sex.*

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SUSAN OKIN'S ANALYSIS OF JUSTICE WITHIN THE SPHERE OF FAMILY

Shivani[1], Sujata Roy Abhijat[2], Shabeena[3]

Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, Rzg-49/7, 110041 Delhi, India

Abstract

This paper will present a brief account of Rousseau, Hume and Alan Bloom's view on family and justice along with Susan Okin's alarming view over the issue of justice in family who points out and criticizes the misogynistic elements in prevalent theories of justice and argues that unequal division of labour and naturalisation of female domination are the major causes for the hesitation to apply justice in families and she claims that family must be just because it is the most fundamental institution that can teach justice to children and adults. Okin elucidates the link between theory of justice and family while emphasizing the need to ensure a sense of distributive justice within the families. She argues that a supererogatory image of women and the "better than just "version of family cannot undermine and replace the need of justice within the families.

Keyword: Family, Feminism, Justice, Private Sphere, Public Sphere, Supererogatory Image

1.INTRODUCTION

The issue of 'justice' and 'family' is much discussed by the intellectualists from traditional to contemporary era, but what has been highly questionable is to recognise and establish a relation between these two notions. Feminist thinkers have criticised the vague conceptions of justice held by thinkers like Rousseau, Hume, Alan Bloom and many others who do not consider the family as a subject matter of justice. But these assumptions make us think that justice is demanded and ensured for whom? Why there is injustice in family despite the claims for global justice? Why injustice done to women remains unaddressed in much renowned theories of justice? Can there be just adult individuals if a child never learns justice within the family? Is it possible to achieve our goal of a just democratic Society without rectifying the injustice done to women within the families? This paper will present a brief account of Rousseau, Hume and Alan Bloom's view on family and justice along with Susan Okin's alarming view over the issue of justice in family who points out and criticizes the misogynistic elements in prevalent theories of justice and argues that unequal division of labour and naturalisation of female domination are the major causes for the hesitation to apply justice in families and she claims that family must be just because it is the most fundamental institution that can teach justice to children and adults. The idea of justice that is demanded for women in family is basically a form of social and distributive justice that can be defined as (the just allocation of goods, benefits, opportunities, resources, burdens and accountability within the families and societies).[1]

2.MALE THINKERS' VIEWS ON JUSTICE AND FAMILY

In order to explore the seriousness of this deeply rooted problem of inequality and injustice, it is important to shed light over some of the major arguments proposed by thinkers who are included in the list of great pioneers of social and political philosophy such as Jean Rousseau, David Hume, Michael Sandel, Alan Bloom and many others.

[1] Susan M. Okin, "Gender, Justice and Gender: an Unfinished Debate," *Fordham Law Review* 72 (2004): 1539-1540.

According to Rousseau, there is a difference in controlling and administering a family and a political society, he maintains that the former is needed to be founded upon the principles of justice whereas the latter is founded upon love. Unlike a political government, a father in a family needs to consult only to his heart to speculate what is right and wrong for the family.[2] This statement has two implications, first is that father is the head or controller of the family and second is that the idea of justice is not needed in a family set-up. Both these implications highlight a very serious issue of patriarchal ideology that often works to support the oppression of women and it shows Rousseau's unwillingness to question the inequality faced by women within the families. He further states that women can be barred from participating in the public sphere and they can be governed within the families without any detrimental effects on their well being and their husbands will be the representatives of the family.[3] It is clear that upholding the distinction between public and private realm is a major source of the exclusion, oppression and depression faced by women in both the spheres. This view ignores and undermines the individuality of women, Rousseau converts women into non individuals whose interests and existence is submerged with the existence and, interests of the male of the family who will be their representative in the public realm of society.

Another explanation of the view that defends the unsuitability of justice within the family is given by David Hume who uses the notion of "enlarged affections" to justify his view over the issue of justice and family. He maintains that family is a perfect example of enlarged affection, which basically means that a person is equally concern for oneself and his/her fellows. He believes that there is no division of possession and property between two spouses and hence there is no need for principles of justice within the family.[4] But Hume's vision of family relations is very far from reality he assumes that there is no division of possession between spouses, Okin has also pointed out that in practical affairs the possession that belongs to wife is automatically subsumed by husband but not vice versa hence Hume's view turns out to inappropriate when applied to family units. As J.S. Mill has also pointed out, he says "the two are called one person in law for the purpose of inferring that whatever is hers is his, but the parallel inference is never drawn that whatever is his is hers."[5] It seems that this law of covertures is merely a tool to oppress women and to devoid them of any rights and possession.

Hume's view on family is defended by Michael Sandel, he claims that there are certain spheres in society in which it is inappropriate to grant the primacy of justice as a virtue. Sandel is against the famous Rawlsian claim that "justice is the primary moral virtue" he tries to challenge the very idea of liberalism.[6]

A common bedrock assumption behind all these claims against the application of justice within the private realm is the supererogatory image of women and family relations, due to which they don't see any need for questioning these relations and evaluating them from the lens of justice. As asserted by Ruskin that "women are assumed to be enduringly incorruptly good, instinctively infallibly wise…, not for self development but for self renunciation."[7] It is taken for granted that wives will always be ready to sacrifice their own interests, aims and goals for the sake of their husbands.

Alan Bloom is one of the most noted antifeminist thinker who has rejected and undermined almost all arguments given by feminists to ensure equality and to vanish prejudice prevailing in the traditional division of labour between the male and female within the family, he gives a naturalist explanation and justification for the traditional setup of family. He blames feminism for the destruction of the prestigious thoughts and books of the great traditional thinkers and for undermining already besieged setups of family. He maintains that feminism is against the nature and natural laws because it challenges the very natural biological destiny of women and since men are excused and qualified as "selfish" and as having "unqualified concern," the family situation becomes worse when women cease to make unconditional sacrifice and ever enduring commitments. According to him serving her husband, attaining and practising motherhood is the ultimate destiny of women because it is her natural inclination to have children, so

[2] Susan M. Okin, *Justice, Gender and the Family* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), 26.
[3] Ibid., 26-27.
[4] Ibid., 27-28.
[5] Ibid., 30.
[6] Ibid., 27.
[7] Ibid., 31.

she must be fully responsible to bear and rear a child. It is to reach their destiny women need to charm men into marriages and therefore must take care of their husbands.[8] Bloom has declared that rearing and bearing children is the fate of women which is determined by nature but his claims are enforced by gendered patriarchal mindset rather than any logical and reasonable intellectual arguments because child rearing is a phase of female life but the whole idea of being a women does not revolve around bearing and rearing the children but it need not be imposed on women to restrict their liberty and opportunities.

Thinkers who have attempted to discuss about family structures often rest their theories on vague assumptions. As Rawls has asserted that "Family Institutions are Just" but a detailed analysis of family relations, family structures, gender, division of labour and inequality in the allocation of responsibilities and benefits remains unaddressed even in contemporary theories of justice.[9]

Susan Moller Okin has critically analysed these misogynistic in her various works, next section will provide a brief overview of her arguments.

3.OKIN'S VIEW ON FAMILY AND JUSTICE

Susan Okin is one of the great feminist thinkers who tremendously criticises the idea that justice is inappropriate as a virtue to be applied to family structures and she tried to locate the idea of justice as a central feature of just family and she criticises the very idea of naturalising the unequal division of labour prevailing within the families that uphold a patriarchal setup.

Okin elucidates the link between theory of justice and family while emphasizing the need to ensure a sense of distributive justice within the families. Okin argues that the allocation of social goods like paid work, financial resources, physical security, etc. are unjust and uneven. She further argues that a supererogatory image of women and the "better than just "version of family cannot undermine and replace the need of justice within the families. And since family is considered to be the primary school where individuals learn to behave justly, a sense of generosity alone is insufficient to develop a just and well ordered society.[10] Okin criticises the better than just version of family and self renunciation and supererogatory image of women because it does not allow them and others to question or criticize the pre-existing standards of family. Her criticisms are not confined to family only, she explores the deeply rooted other factors that create hindrance in ensuring equality and justice for women. In one of her article she says that (most of the women's rights are infringed within the domestic or private spheres of society and the religious, cultural and familial customs and norms are used to justify the violation of their rights, it makes us rethink the very notion of human right since it ignores women's right by not considering the violation of human right as a violation of human rights.[11]

Okin asserts how a balance can be maintained between these two kinds of virtues i.e., generosity and justice which are understood and presented by thinkers like Rousseau and Bloom to be contrary to each other. She says the moral primacy of justice is not a problematic notion for institution like family, if it is generally believed that family set ups generally operates in accordance with generosity, love and care but it doesn't deny the justice when it is needed and demanded by family members, specially women then it can be concluded that it is a better than just association but they are worse if deny and undermine the claims of justice in spite of operating in accordance with affection and generosity.[12] Okin tries to demarcate the just and worse structures of the family often blurred in the writings of male thinkers like Hume, Rousseau, Sandel, Bloom and many others. But it is difficult to recognise as a separate virtue for women since child bearing, child rearing, unpaid domestic work, self renunciation are regarded as the defining marks for women and often considered to be superior to justice within the domain of family.

Okin critically analysis the view of male thinkers and points out that either these thinkers try to ignore or get over simply the family structures and its mode of operation. In her book '*Justice, Gender and Family*,' she proposes that one of the central reason for resistance to

[8] Ibid., 34-35.
[9] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 490.
[10] Ibid., 31.
[11] Susan M. Okin, "Feminism, Women's Human Rights, and Cultural Differences," *Hypatia* 13 (1998): 32-33.
[12] Okin, *Justice, Gender and the Family*, 31-33.

apply the principles of justice within the family is the abstract and idealised perception about family association and women, she says the claims about inappropriateness of justice as a virtue for family rests on an abstract, mythical and idealised vision of the family and this abstractness is much far from reality. If abstract models are considered to be the subject matter of justice than it can be said that there is no need of justice in realistic and practical associations like family and society. Okin argues that in an ideal society even criminal justice might be regarded as unnecessary but it is not compatible with the society we live in.[13]

Okin argues, just as it is absurd to think of early without justice, it is Illogical to think of family without justice. She criticises the adherence to nature, lactation and reproductive biology in order to justify the restrictions made on women within the domestic spheres of society, these assumptions are not served by rational grounds and turn out to be ridiculous when analysed critically. She points out male thinkers often fuse child rearing with child bearing to justify the female domination but nursing and taking care of an infant is just a part of raising children and amendments in child caring and working clauses can make it possible for women both to breastfeeding feed their child and fathers to share the responsibilities of raising their child.[14] Emphasising the realistic nature of family associations, Okin further argues that it is not absurd, but necessary to think about an egalitarian family structure in order to build and develop a just society and adherence to nature is irrational because there is nothing in nature that resists males from participating in the nurturing of a child and she rejects Blooms assumption that man are selfish by nature due to which they won't participate in child rearing. Okin asks "since when did we shape public policies around people's fault? Our laws do not allow kleptomaniacs to shoplift, or those with a predilection for rape to rape? Why, then, should we allow fathers who refuse to share in the care of their children to abdicate their responsibilities? Why should we 1 allow the peculiar continuance of the contract that marriage has become, in which legal equality is assumed but actual inequality is assumed but actual inequality persists due to unjust decision of labour."[15] Okin rightly points out that unjust and unequal division of labour is the root cause of the ideology that prevents the notion of justice to enter within the domains of domestic spheres of life that operates in accordance with the principles of patriarchal mind-sets of people.

Okin agrees with John Rawls who talks about family in his theory of justice and acknowledges that family institutions have profound effects in shaping the goals and characters of an individual and also have long term effects on one's personality, but Okin is not fully satisfied with Rawls' vision because it depends on certain unexplained assumptions.[16] Rawls theory becomes more sustainable when he asserts that "Heads of Families" will be those who will reason their hypothetical situation of the original position. This statement loses its edge regarding women as commonly men are considered to be the "Heads" of the families. Again the role and responsibilities carried by women since ages is assumed to be outside the sphere of justice.[17]

She further says that the kind of upbringing a child gets largely determines his/her notion of justice in future as an adult, she asks how can a child learn a sense of justice that is needed to establish a just society if the primary and formative factors are not guided by the idea of justice? She also suggests that equal sharing of responsibility and role rather than unequal division in family can serve as a foundation for just society because in family one can "learn to be just" and a perspective of justice should be formed by a "shared understanding" among the members.[18] Okin has rightly asserted that family structures set the basic factors that form and develop ethical values and virtues in a child and it influence the present society and shapes the model of future society, therefore the family must be guided by a sense of justice and equality.

4.CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it is clear that although the notion of justice and family has always been a much discussed issue among the thinkers but they have tried to oversimplify the issue and did not consider the

[13] Ibid., 29.
[14] Ibid., 36.
[15] Ibid., 39-40.
[16] Susan M. Okin, "Political Liberalism, Justice, and Gender," *Ethics* 105 (1994): 23-43.
[17] Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 128.
[18] Okin, *Justice, Gender and the Family*, 17-18.

seriousness of the need to look and rectify the unjust family relations, either they undermine it or justify it behind the artificial laws of nature and by equating family relations with love, care and sacrifice in part of women. Okin is right in asserting that injustice done to women is a threat for the very idea of social justice and democracy.

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TRUTH, OBJECTIVITY AND JOURNALISM

Shivani[1], Sujata Roy Abhijat[2], Reetu Jaiswal[3]

Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, Maurice Nagar, 110007 Delhi, India

Abstract

There are variety of opinions and arguments to define truth and objectivity. Truth can be understood as related to reality, or depicting reality, or correspondence with facts and opposite of falsehood or misrepresentation of a thing or fact. Objectivity basically constitutes impartiality and universality. When these notions are discussed in the field of media ethics, it is basically understood as truthfulness and impartiality in the information disseminated by news media persons as news. Though these notions are important enough in a democratic media, these are not without questions and objections and these objections are very much influenced by the philosophical disagreement regarding the understanding of these notions. Media is a practical field, keeping the empirical attitude in mind, I will briefly explain the theory of truth that, in my opinion, provides criteria to determine whether a data presented as news is true or not.

Keyword: Journalism, Media, Objectivism, Realism, Subjectivism, Truth

"I tore myself away from the safe comfort of certainties through my love for truth ----and Truth
rewarded me." ~ Simone de Beauvoir

1.INTRODUCTION

Truth and objectivity are the notions which immediately strike one's mind when we discuss about the features, virtues and foundations of a democratic media. Democrat media is supposed to follow these two standards: truth and objectivity. The former deals with the true presentation of facts or information and the latter can be understood as the method which is to be applied in the act of presenting truth. Though, the field of media as a whole can be related to these notions, here, to confine the discussion, I would refer to the news media or journalism. Though, the concepts are important but usually important are the challenges, which are posted against the practice of objective truths in journalism which are influenced by the philosophical laymen's and journalists' arguments. There are questions like- is everything which is known as true in collecting news is presented as news? How much investigation should be enough to claim that the collected data is a complete truth? How to guarantee the complete truth of an event, where the data is collected by general public or witnesses? Many philosophical debates like – does the truth represent the whole reality? The belief in the idea of truth is subjective to individuals or objective in itself? Is the notion of truth free from social and cultural context? Further, can there be an opinion and interpretation free democratic journalism? Is journalism a mere impartial passive spectator of events?

It is important to understand that there is a difference between a just or fair interpretation and biased manipulation of events. It is argued that the western media tries to manipulate the truths about terrorism by portraying a particular group as terrorist who bent upon destroying everything that is dear to the 'liberal' West.[1] There are thinkers who have questioned the notion of truth and objectivity in itself. It is said 'truth doesn't mean just one thing.' Wolf suggests that judgments presented as universal purporting to tell us what is real are disabling particulars. Regarding the status of truth, she is very clear that values are socially produced and therefore liable to partiality.[2]

These questions can be very well applied in the field of journalism too. Considering these types of arguments, I would explain the notion of truth and objectivity and the

[1] Daya K. Thussu, "How media manipulates Truth about terrorism", *Economic and Political Weekly* 32 (1997): 264

[2] Jonathan Arac, " Truth", *Modern Language Association* 115 (2000): 1085-1087

challenges which are raised for practicing these notions in journalism and comment on the influence made by these challenges to ensure a democratic journalism.

2.TRUTH AND OBJECTIVITY IN PHILOSOPHY AND IN JOURNALISM

When we discuss about the philosophical analysis of the concepts of truth and objectivity, it turns out that these concept have been very important, elusive and debatable among the philosophers, from traditional to contemporary era. There are variety of opinions and arguments to define truth and objectivity. Truth can be understood as related to reality, or depicting reality, or correspondence with facts and opposite of falsehood or misrepresentation of a thing or fact. Objectivity basically constitutes impartiality and universality. When these notions are discussed in the field of media ethics, it is basically understood as truthfulness and impartiality in the information disseminated by news media persons as news. Though these notions are important enough in a democratic media, these are not without questions and objections and these objections are very much influenced by the philosophical disagreement regarding the understanding of these notions. The philosophical arguments can be understood as falling into these three forms of attitude:

- *Truth as a great and excellent practise.*
- *Indifference towards truth and falsehood.*
- *Abandonment of the idea of truth.*

As explained by Allen, philosopher's value par excellence is judged by the Truth. For Heraclitus, "Thinking well is the greatest excellence and wisdom: to act and speak what is true, perceiving things according to their nature". Plato says, "Of all things good, truth holds first place among gods and men alike". This evaluation of truth distinguishes the philosopher's kind of seriousness from poetry, theology and dogmatism and it has been woven into the western philosophy from Heraclitus and Hegel[3] . Further, an indifference that might be termed "sophistic" to the difference between the true and false belief is implicit in Protagoras' "Man is the measure of all thing". This statement appears to imply that there is no valuable difference between true and false in belief.[4] Last but not the least is Nietzsche's view on truth as he mentions the maiden part of 'Far off Good and Evil' to "The preconception of the Philosophers", all philosophers have spoken with respect hitherto about that famed candour", he questions the ethics of this will. It is possible that we desire truth but why not fairly untruth uncertainty and ignorance? Why is Platonic "enlightenment" superior to the credulity of myth? Why is truth, if not unconditionally, then generally preferred over its many opposites like error, lie, myth, etc.?[5] Though these arguments are very important and relevant philosophically, it appears ethically inappropriate to be indifferent or to abandon the idea of truth by a journalist because presenting and disseminating true information is the primary aim of news media. The notion of Heraclitus appears to be an ideal situation for news media persons but as an empirical exercise, it is also not free from exceptions as we'll discuss in the second section of this paper. Media is a practical field, keeping the empirical attitude in mind, I will briefly explain the theory of truth that, in my opinion, provides criteria to determine whether a data presented as news is true or not.

Correspondence Theory of Truth or Realism: it is based on the idea that the test of truth is uniformity with fact. According to the correspondence theory of truth, True beliefs "fit" with or it is, in fact, resemblance to the world, false beliefs do not have such agreement. In the quotidian lives, while appearing philosophical doubt common sense is not intertwined then we are all natural realists. To relying on a simple form of the realist perception of truth has been inclined by the practice of journalism which emphasizes the precise inspection of outermost events.[6] There are different versions of the realism theory available to us such as the transcendental realism of Plato, Aristotle's realism, common-sense realism and so on. Since the metaphysical versions are not very suitable to journalism, I agree that the common-sense realism suits best to the journalism, which is defined by Alston as "A statement, proposition, belief is true if and only if what the statement says to be the case actually is the case". What can be truer that

[3] Barry Allen, "Nietzsche's Question, What Good is Truth?" *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 9 (1992): 225
[4] Ibid., 225.
[5] Ibid., 228.
[6] Lee Wilkins and Clifford G. Christians, *The Handbook of Mass Media Ethics* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 72.

grass is green if it is the occurrence that grass is green?[7] As I said earlier, this 'cop on' form of correspondence can be applied in the field journalism to assure and verify the truthfulness of information disseminated to audiences. For example, if a news channel claims that the average no. of girls has increased by 50% in schools as the result of efforts made by a particular government this claim can be tested by verifying it with the data of actual attendance of students.

It is said that, to investigating what is truth in general the concept or property the question is parted by realist theories for knowing about what is true. Despite the varieties of realism, the essence of realism is that our beliefs are made true by an objective check on my beliefs. Since journalism is a practical craft covering ordinary events, journalists lean to suppose that a plain realism and set empiricism are ample to instruct their ventures.[8]

Now, the notion of Objectivity is an exceedingly complex and debatable issue in philosophy as well as in journalism. Many philosophers like Berkeley, Kant, Kierkegaard and many others were concerned with debate between Objectivism and Subjectivism. In the field of journalism, the latter can be understood as presenting information with an implied opinion and interpretation and the former as a presentation of facts without opinion and interpretation. Objectivity is traditionally regarded as a virtue of a democratic journalism but now, with an emergence of new media and citizen journalism the idea of objectivity has become considerably questionable and impractical. In journalism, Traditional Objectivity is nothing but idea that reporters ought to provide plain and impartial information. The idea can be summed up by an imperative to "stick to the facts" and to avoid "taking sides". One of the earliest known uses of journalism "objectivity" is presented by Charles G. Ross as: *"News writing is objective to the last degree in the sense that the writer is not allowed to "editorialize".*[9] Further it is maintained that Objectivity can be declared as a method for generating fresh, faultless, factual reports and better self sufficient non-manual journalists while going through growing scepticism about the press. Objective reporting, it was argued, was crucial to egalitarian democracies.[10] Turning towards the legal enforcement of objectivity in journalism as a formal practice which can be understood by these two laws of journalism, ASNE (Code of 1923) said that an objective report exceeding anything was "subversive of a fundamental principle of a profession." Impartiality meant a "clear distinction between news reports and expression of opinion." On the notion truth and objectivity the code for Sigma Delta Chi says (1926) "Truth is our ultimate goal", "objectivity in reporting the news is another goal, which serve as a mark of an experienced professional. It is the standard of performance towards which we strive."[11]

Therefore, it is clear that the practice of objectivity was introduced to demise the scepticism raised about the function of media to act as the watchdog over state authorities and to ensure that the news media is not acting as puppet of state authorities and other powerful groups, to ensure a democratic press. So, it cannot be denied that truth and objectivity are among the features which form the bedrock of an honest journalism. After understanding what is objectivity the next question is how it is to be practiced? Is this notion of objectivity practicable at all? Is there no need of opinion and expression in journalism? Is this curtailment of opinion not an infringement of freedom of expression? In order to shed light over these issues, in the next section, I am explaining the challenges faced by these perceptions of truth and objectivity.

3.CHALLENGES AND OBJECTIONS TO THE NOTION OF OBJECTIVITY AND TRUTH

It is argued that the journalists should present the true information in an objective manner but with the elusive nature the concept makes it difficult to be practised. In the contemporary world the rise of internet technology in the form of social media which has taken the face of citizen journalism is founded on concepts which are contrary to the idea of objectivity such as subjective interpretation, personal opinion and lack of professionalism. The basic arguments against these notions can be explained in these three arguments.

[7] Ibid., 72.
[8] Ibid., 72-73.
[9] Ibid., 73.
[10] Ibid., 75.
[11] Ibid., 73.

The postmodern philosophers have played a very important role in questioning the nature of objectivity and bringing out the hidden problems and implicit assumptions of the pre-established conception of objectivity. It is argued that all knowledge was "socially constructed". Rorty attacked a "Platonism" that held objective knowledge was a true reflection of nature. Lyotard and Baudrillard, the well known Post modernists interrogated the ideas of untied truth and philosophical "meta-narratives"-large historical narratives that establishes consciousness of human experience. Objectivity is sketched by Feminists as an efficacy of a patriarchal fraternity that "objectifies" women. Media scholars treat objectivity as the dogma of corporate media. Objectivity routines protected journalists from criticism.[12] These arguments make us rethink and reconsider the notion of truth and objectivity. For example, the arguments raised by feminists show that objectivity ignores the subjective bias and discriminations faced by women. This argument shows that by not considering the subjective details, it turns out to be insensitive towards humiliation and discrimination. Similar accusations can also be made within the field of journalism.

Besides these postmodernist and feminist objections, there are many journalism specific objections which question the practicability of objectivity. It is said that Objectivity expects a lot, as an intention for journalism and thus, objectivity is "folklore". It is possible that Objectivity can be unwanted because it compels writers to employ handicapped formats. Even outermost reporting of official facts is advocated by it. Readers with analysis and interpretation are not given by it. The other functions of the press such as commenting, campaigning, acting as public watchdog and forces a free press are snubbed by the Objectivity. *"A democracy is better by a diverse, opinionated press where all views compete in a market place of ideas."*[13]

It is true that the principle of objectivity deprives journalists from expressing their views. There are certain issues which demand sensitivity in order to disseminate the real problem, for e.g. Issues like racism, sexism, child labour, etc. Information relating them can be presented as bare facts but if personal opinions are also added to highlight the problem, it will do no harm, but will sensitize the issue more in society. Further interpretation cannot be rooted out from presenting news completely. It is the needed for common audiences who does know about the technicalities and consequences of these changes.What ethically matters here is that interpretation should be corrected and just, and not be misrepresentations of facts. Hence, accuracy and fairness should be the guiding factors of interpretation. It is debated that affairs are complicated and required to be explained and interpreted, Henry Luce, who founded 'Time' magazine in 1920s, dismissed objectivity: *"Show me a man who think he is objective and I'll show you a liar"*, he declared. More personal forms of media were produced by the emergence of T.V and radio where a strict objective style struggled.[14] This shows how it became difficult to survive with unimpressive objective presentation in a competitive market of media which gained profit by exploring personal forms of media.

News is no more the monopoly of professional journalists; the wide range of social media has taken the face of citizen journalism. In the final decade of the 20th century, further support to interpretive or opinion journalism was given by online journalism online journalism. Almost anyone was allowed with a computer to publish their thoughts, commentaries, or photos online with millions of participants by new media technology. The rise of the unprofessional or untrained "citizen journalist" and "blogger" make news media democratic and dedicate their service to the diversity of voices in the public spheres. The chief values of new media, however, were (and are) different from the main values of traditional journalism ethics..[15] The new media is the most important, interesting and visible challenge to the notion of objectivity but it does not mean that any of these forms of media is unimportant and should be ruled out completely but the sense of accuracy and fairness should be the guiding factors for both of them. Now, the idea of truth seems unquestionable and unobjectionable when we discuss about the media ethics, especially, news media ethics because presenting truth is the primary aim of journalists. But even this idea

[12] Ward, Stephen J. A. *Ethics and the Media: an Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 132-133

[13] Wilkins, Lee and Clifford G. Christians, *The Handbook of Mass Media Ethics*, 75.

[14] Ward, Stephen J.A. *Ethics and the Media: an Introduction*, 132.

[15] Wilkins, Lee and Clifford G. Christians, *The Handbook of Mass Media Ethics*, 76.

is not untouched by objections and exceptions. Sissela Bok has made a very important remark regarding the decision for presentation of truth in media. In favouring the need to respect veracity and to tell the truth, she rejects Kant's absolutist position against any lie. She acknowledges a lie can be warranted in some situations, especially "those where innocent lives are at stake, and where only a lie can deflect the danger." She uses the example of kidnapping to justify her arguments. But the question of whether one may lie and still be ethical is a topic for a different discussion, for which Bok provides some excellent insights.[16] Bok has pointed towards some exceptional cases where a lie can prevent the serious harm or damage done by a truth. This also points to an important dilemma often faced by journalists, i.e. whether to present everything as news they know about or to filter it? What is to be presented and how it is to be presented? How will the traditional news media compete with the new media? Can the profit seeking attitude by gaining TRPs can be kept aside while preparing for presenting news? For e.g. Even if a journalist knows some secrets of his/her state's strategies to ensure national security, it can be harmful to completely unveil these strategies in news, this makes the state vulnerable to more terrorist attacks and increases the level of insecurity. In cases like this, the rigorous attitude can be harmful, but these exceptional cases do not mean that journalists should not bother about truth telling and seeking true information. Truth was, is, and always will be among the primary aim of journalists to ensure a democratic journalism.

It is rightly pointed out by Gordon that this turns out to be a problem of fair, just and accurate decision making. He says, journalists and their editors get under considerable burden because of it, they feel burdened to determine which item of information is worthy enough to the public that, at least, justifies the risk of personal harm resulting from its publication. This can be considered a situational ethics issue, because it one's duty to carry the importance against the chances of harm. Further adding, it is important to know whether the information is so eminent to the topic that the story can't be released completely without this particular item.[17] In order to deal with these situational issues, Michael Kittross suggests the need to emphasize over the concepts of accuracy and fairness as more attainable than truth and objectivity.[18] In order to sort out this decision making problem, Stephen Ward has advanced the reanalysis in the form of pragmatic truth and pragmatic objectivity (or multidimensional objectivity). He says: "pragmatic truth provides a goal for active, interpretive inquiry, working through the meditation of conceptual schemes. The goal is true interpretations, or interpretations that comes as close to truth as possible. It is the result of successful enquiry by enquires employing their best available conceptual schemes to interpret the data. Pragmatic objectivity aims towards a more nuanced approach to truth and objectivity. It believes that journalistic interpretations can also be subjected to criteria of evaluation. It attempts to evaluate the many dimensions of a story with a plurality of evaluative criteria."[19]

4.CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude this paper by saying that the challenges and objections do not completely rule out the concept of truth and objectivity, but a reanalysis is needed in order to ensure a democratic and just media. There are other ethical ideas which must be there to guide the action of ethical and just media. As Kittross said, accuracy and fairness, and other ethical ideas like a sense of social justice, a sense of responsibility, all these ideas work together to deal with the decision making problems in a just and ethical manner. The development of citizen journalism also shows that mere abstract ideals of concepts like objectivity cannot survive: the ideals must be practical and the consideration of fairness, accuracy and justice must help to realise the ethical standards in a practical field like news media or journalism. Ward's idea of pragmatic objectivity and pragmatic truth considers the above arguments too because fairness and accuracy are modes of evaluation and both these conceptions can provide a reanalysis of the traditional model which can't be abandoned, but only redefined by media persons and other thinkers. I

[16] David A. Gordon et al., eds., *Controversies in Media Ethics* (New York: Addison - Wesley Longman Educational Publishers Inc., 1935), 73.
[17] Ibid., 78.
[18] Ibid., 72.
[19] Ward, Stephen J.A. *Ethics and the Media: an Introduction,* 146-153.

think considering the above arguments can develop a practical method to practice these abstract ideals to truth and objectivity.

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anushilana@gmail.com

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Hony. Editor

Mukul Raj Mehta

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION
FACULTY OF ARTS, BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY,
VARANASI-221005, INDIA

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NEED AND RELEVANCE OF ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY

Dr. Sujata Roy Abhijat, Assistant Professor
Shivani, Research Scholar
Department of Philosophy, Delhi University, Delhi

***T**he paper will follow descriptive and analytical methodology and fill the gap between the establish standards and empirical evidences about the environment status in North East India. The discussion will hand over an alternative that can help to change individual behavior and to encourage actions that are embedded with responsibilities towards nature. There are various visions regarding the concept of existence and survival of Environment Sustainability, but, this work will show that it's not mere a concept but a practice which is philosophically associated with the natural environment. Further, the implications of eco-spirituality on environment sustainability, through the act of individual and society, will be discussed and in the end, paper will be folded after giving a glimpse over the tribes and the traditions of North East India.*
Keywords: *Belief, Biodiversity, Eco-Spirituality, God, Tradition*

Introduction: Environment sustainability can be understood as using and managing the natural resources in a modus operandi that humans make a responsible use of natural resources keeping the future generations in mind. Despite the challenges like ineffective government policies, careless human behavior, money seeking tendency, privation, industrialization, lack of awareness, etc., there are different various ways that promote the environment sustainability. Eco spirituality is one of the most effective methods. This paper will explore the relation between eco spirituality and the environment status of North East India by referring to religious, spiritual and ethical aspects of humans as a means for practicing sustainability.

North East is certainly greenery rich area as compared to other states of India and the religious factors influence the behavior of these (North East) people by influencing their faiths and beliefs with concepts like 'supreme deity,' 'God' and its omnipresence and pantheistic approach in order to invoke responsibility and compassion towards environment. The ethical ideas act as a normative guide for acting responsibility towards environment and explore its practical significance with concepts like good, fairness, justice, duties and responsibilities.

The Concept of Existence and Survival: In ongoing contemporary world, environment sustainability is being comprehended as requisite as it could be, but before going into the details, it's important to understand what does this concept mean, it can be simply defined as sustainability of environment but this definition is not enough as there are various

visions regarding the view that what things are included in environment and sustainability still remains a buzzword among the academicians, multiple differing perspectives are the evidences for the contestable nature of this term. Sustainability can be generally understood as an umbrella term, a way of conceptualizing the urgency of teaching and learning how to propose persisting and healthy relations with others, including humans as well as non humans.[1] Further, it's said that the idea of sustainability implies goal and values in order to guide our actions that constitutes an impinging effect on humans and non human, i.e., natural environment, being human beings, cultural agents and citizens of this world. Hence, sustainability propels a critical reflection on human practices and their engagement with the natural and cultural world.[2]

It's also explored as a key to the model of a just world, emphasizing more compassionate, tolerant and responsible society that deals carefully and cautiously with the natural and human resources and prefers the optimization interests rather than maximization.[3] The concept of sustainability of environment isn't a new concept; it's deeply rooted in the philosophical arguments of thinkers like J. S. Mill, T.R. Malthus and many others who emphasize that natural environment must be prevented from boundless growth if we want to sustain or pressure human welfare before it is demolished. [4] The term environment covers all the parts of the nature that can or can't be accessed by humans. Natural environment is inclusive of all the facilities like air, water, soil, trees, fruits, vegetables and other sources that are necessary for the health, happiness and the very existence and survival of humans. So, the term 'Environment Sustainability' is not only a concept, but a practice concerned with how we deal and relate to the natural environment. Regardless of the debates and efforts of exploring the idea of sustainability, this notion is the central concern for the human existence. As light pointed out that environment sustainability or maintenance of the life support system is a precondition for human progress and to achieve other pillars of sustainability.[5]

This brings up the question why environment sustainability is so relevant in today's world? The answer is very obvious since the natural resources are finite and it's necessary for human we need to utilize resources in a sustainable manner. The constantly rising curve of the environment deterioration is evident of the fact that there is a casual relation between human actions and the status of environment. This degradation is caused by unrestricted pollution, various technological and developmental factors, ineffective governmental policies, greediness and profit seeking tendencies of humans, privatization, industrialization, CFCs and other harmful gases, lack of awareness and many other careless human behavior, these factors lead to severe detrimental effects

on environment like soil erosion, pollution, global warming, acid rain, harming biodiversity, etc. which highlight the urgency of sustainability.

There are, almost, more than three hundred definitions of sustainability and as noted earlier, varying arguments are raised because of varying meaning and conceptions of sustainability, Davies has outlined four assumptions that are guidelines for achieving and practicing sustainability:

-holistic planning and strategy making
-preservation of ecological process
-protection of heritage and biodiversity
-development that can be sustained for future years

These four principles corroborate with WCED's (1987: 43) definition of sustainability, according to which environment sustainability is "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".[6]

After the understanding the notion of environment sustainability, the next crucial question is how to achieve and sustain environment sustainability or what should be the effective criteria for practicing the same. The following section will explore how eco spirituality is meant to pursue and to achieve environment sustainability.

Eco-spirituality and its implications on environment sustainability: There are various ways of maintaining a sustainable environment such as technological ways, legal ways and certain social ways but in this paper, I will explore the idea of eco-spirituality as one of the most effective ways of environmental sustainability**.** A sense of eco-spirituality is essential among humans because it develops an attitude of sustaining, respecting and caring natural environment. This approach is an alternative to the materialistic approaches of sustainability, it has the ability to fill the gaps remained unfilled by materialistic approaches as it persuades the individual behavior that is the most basic and crucial component of society and its behavior towards environment.

Environmentalists define eco-spirituality as an aid that assists humans in experiencing 'the holy' in the natural environment and realizing their association as humans to all creation. It facilitates an intertwining of inner intuition and physical consciousness between the nature and humans by exploring the spiritual connection between the human beings and natural environment.[7] The link providing by the notion of eco-spirituality seems to be missing from legal and governmental policies, this doesn't mean that legal policies are worthless, but a sense of spirituality towards nature is beneficial for these policies also since it motivates individuals to support these policies. Eco-spiritual is not one dimensional approach but a multi

dimensional methodology that influences various spheres of life like ones ethical, spiritual, religious, theistic, a theistic and agnostic beliefs because it makes one realize that environmental crises can be dealt by regulating one's behavior and it's one's belief about the relationship between human and nature plays an important part in it.

'Sacredness' of the Earth and nature are the core concepts of eco-spirituality, the roots of these practices can be traced by the origin of humanity, and especially, in practices of indigenous people. With such prospective, the divinity or ultimate reality is not just the creator, but is, immanent in the creation itself. This realization of pervasiveness of the holy reality invokes a spiritually motivated action towards the environment crises like catastrophic disability of climate with an aim of sustainable propriety and justice for human and non human beings. This conception formulates religious imperatives and a desire for spiritual love and care for present and future environment and generations, for example, a spiritually motivated interpretation of a biblical genesis is that God has not given the absolute authority to humans over nature but assigns a spiritual duty to humanity in order to ensure actions of care and sustainable stewardship for the natural environment.[8]

There are various methods in which these spiritual and religious imperatives can be practiced and realized like deism, theism, pantheism and many others but the idea of pantheism serves the best spiritual motivation towards environmental sustainability because according to the concept, the ultimate reality is one with the nature, God is regarded as the creator as well as immanent in the creation, this pervasiveness is a source of respect and care for humans, treating environment with respect and care leads to sustainability of environment along with the respect and care. It also arouses a sense of fear in harming and unnecessarily wasting the natural resources, this twofold influence is necessary to ensure sustainability and environment in any means or methods of sustainability. The realization of immanence of God is very important as said by Luhrmann.

"There is no God, masculine, separate and transcendentally aloof, but rather an ancient divinity immanent in the world…the natural landscapes becomes a map for human feelings and aspiration, an environment for spiritual odyssey."[9]

Sustainability through spirituality is even more required in latter day's world because formal policies and limitations on the utilization of natural resources are necessary but not sufficient in promoting acts in favor of environment. It is argued that contemporary environmental policies and movements are guided by empirical science methods, data interpretations, reasoning and other materialistic sources; it's effective as far as it can go, but it's not able to go far enough, so, there is a need to

relate inner sense of care with the care of the environment as done by the indigenous people. This reunify of soul and soil facilitates value based actions and decisions towards environment. It's capable of rising above mere 'surface ecology' by promoting sustainability for deeper selves, future generations as well as for the entire ecosystem. [10]

The need to include the concept of spirituality for environment sustainability is not merely speculation of one's religious or spiritual beliefs but has never been the findings of many researchers and studies; this inclusion is an alternative that can help to change individual behavior and to encourage actions that are embedded with responsibilities towards nature. Individuals who inherit spirituality but are not associated with any religious groups can be inspired for critically examining their present attitude towards environment and it allows them to question the present attitude, assumptions and beliefs regarding environment through critical reflection and also helps in transforming the existing attitude towards nature. [11]

In one of their study Tolliver and Tisdell concluded that many individuals enhance their theoretical knowledge about environmental science but are not willing to make changes in their private life style for a more sustainable way of life and they argue that including spirituality in the learning curriculum helps in promoting more authentic learning for practicing the means of sustainability learned theoretically. They argue that the process of learning is more capable of transforming someone if it can be extended to one's whole self and Tisdell relates the notion of spirituality as a means for plausible transformation and paradigm shifts. [12]

Further, Haluza–Delly proposed that ignoring spiritual side results in ignoring the essential drives for social and personal changes. [13] Hence, it is clear the spirituality plays an important part in learning and authenticating whatever is learned, spirituality towards nature incites a motivational force in one's inner self and guides one towards more responsible actions and a more caring attitude towards nature, earth and all non human creatures.

In the next section, I will explain how this spiritual attitude towards nature embedded in the practices of north eastern people and how it can save us from environmental crises.

The Tribes and the Traditions in North East India: The North East Region of India includes seven states, namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. The whole region is known for its enriched biodiversity, heavy forests, a wide range of flora and fauna, sereneness of nature and eco –tourism. This North Easter Region of India is also the richest region in ethnics

and linguistics inhabited by high number of indigenous and tribal population, each of one having different culture, art, dance, lifestyles and music traditions. The natural beauty of the land and natural prosperity are the most distinguishing marks of North East India (N.E.I.). The other most notable part of N.E.I. is their religious and spiritual practices and its direct relation with nature and the devotion they practice towards nature. The source of motivation is similar to that of Indian Philosophy in which holistic relationship exist between human and nature which is manifested in various ways like symbolic, anthropomorphic, theomorphic while sometimes metaphors and myths are also used to make it explicit for the indigenous people of N.E.I., engaging in sacred & spiritual rituals and practices is a means to reflect a higher cosmic order, it's one of the multifaceted aspects of humans' intimacy with the nature, for instance, like other Indian traditions, the Naga tribes follow oral tradition visible in the folktales of the Ao, Chakhesang, Zeliang and other natives who explore the mythological and cosmological account of their source of origin and migration, agriculture, etc. through folktales. The Pochury tribe maintains continuity between nature, human and non human creatures. The natives of N.E.I. share a close affinity with nature and land, they practice as mutually agreed give and take policy towards nature, have great respect for the Earth and the support that is given by Earth, the indigenous communities have good knowledge about their ecosystem, and about methods by which nature and its resources can be used sustainably. The geographical character-sticks of N.E.I. can be marked as a hilly region that is endowed with deep forests and rich biodiversity that is inhabited by more than two hundred tribal groups. The apatani's community makes use of existing natural resources like bomboo, cane, pin, phragmites sp and castanopsis sp to ensure soil fertility and to check soil erosion, to foster different rice landraces and to follow pisciculture in coordination with nature.

There are many beliefs and festivals related to nature and agricultural activities like Losar, Langhen, Myokeen, Gumkum, Gumpka etc. The Sabo is a festival celebrated by the khowa tribe to ensure & increase the land's fertility, and for the good of the whole community. Praising of natural powers like moon, sun, earth, sky soil and water are common for the most communities of N.E.I., the Tagin tribes practice folk songs about the earth and water. The Wancho tribe worships and praises natural forces and celebrates the Oriya festival hoping for good harvest and health. Sungkhnu is the major festival of Zakhrings and is related to harvesting new grains. Bihu is one of the most famous harvesting festivals of North Eastern region and is celebrated in Assamm. The Kati-Bihu festival is celebrated by farmers to protect their

crops and often spin bomboos along with chanting different mantras; it's their belief that it would save their crops. The plant of Siju Cactus is a divine symbol for Kacharis and Sizu tree is planted by every household again Jatrasi and Tulsi, and worship it for their wellbeing as well as for nature. The Maraipuja is tribal festival that is celebrated with the belief that it would save them from natural calamities and fatal deseases. In Nagaland, the sangtam community believes in supernatural creator of the earth and benevolent spirits, hence, they feel sacredness towards nature. Nature worshipping is the main spiritual practice of Oraon tribe.

In North East, people's ethnic and religious beliefs are related to the flora and fauna of that region. The concept of 'Sacred Groves' is very important for indigenous communities, it exhibits the spiritual and sacred values they associate to biodiversity. Realizing the sacredness of nature makes one care about the life of nature and respect towards life giving and sustaining force of the earth. The maintaining of rich diversity of 'home gardens' in Assam that flows the principle of "conservation through use" is highly appreciated conservation strategy and an evidence for their cultural and ecological knowledge towards sustainability. The knowledge possessed by North Eastern people focuses not on extinguishing and exploiting of nature but in maintaining harmony between humans and the natural world. They combine the empirical characters of nature with the spiritual and sacred beliefs, and maintain that nature possess the potential to cure both physical and spiritual illness and to sustain human lives, therefore, it must be utilized by keeping the importance of sustainability in mind.[14]

For the Khasi tribe, respecting and protecting nature is a way of living, they believe that nature is sacred and precious gift of God; therefore, one should establish a sacred and caring communication with it. Mawrie says, 'a Khasi lives with nature and nature lives in her or him, nature doesn't live only alongside the Khasi and nurtures her/him but also in her/him teacher and inspirer, a khasi lives in nature and learns in its bossom.' For them, nature is an anthropomorphic symbol mother who takes care of her children. The practices like 'kari ki blei' (lands of God) and law Kyntang (Sacred Groves means keeping apart of land as sacred) explicit their spiritual towards natural resources like water, sun, earth, tree and forests. Barnes says for Khasis 'the sanctity of nature is an integral part of God's creation.[15]

It's clear that realizing the sacredness of nature and beliefs in the liveliness of nature are the major sources of motivation for the practices done by North Eastern people to protect nature and to make a sustainable use of nature because for them nature is the life giving force that ensures human survival with comfort. These beliefs are embedded

with an ethical obligation to sustain and conserve natural resources so that it can continue to bless the future generations.

Conclusion: From the above discussion it's concluded that one's spiritual attitude and sacred beliefs play an important part in activating one's behavior and these practices can be used for maintaining environment sustainability. The rich biodiversity of N.E.I. and their sacred beliefs associated with nature explore how an organic and living relationship can be established between human and nature like North Eastern people, if nature is seen as a gift to human that makes human life easier along with a responsibility to take care of this gift so that it can be promoted to future generations sustainability is possible and one's personal beliefs have the capability to fill the gaps remained by legal and formal policies because it motivates one's inner self to act according to one's beliefs.

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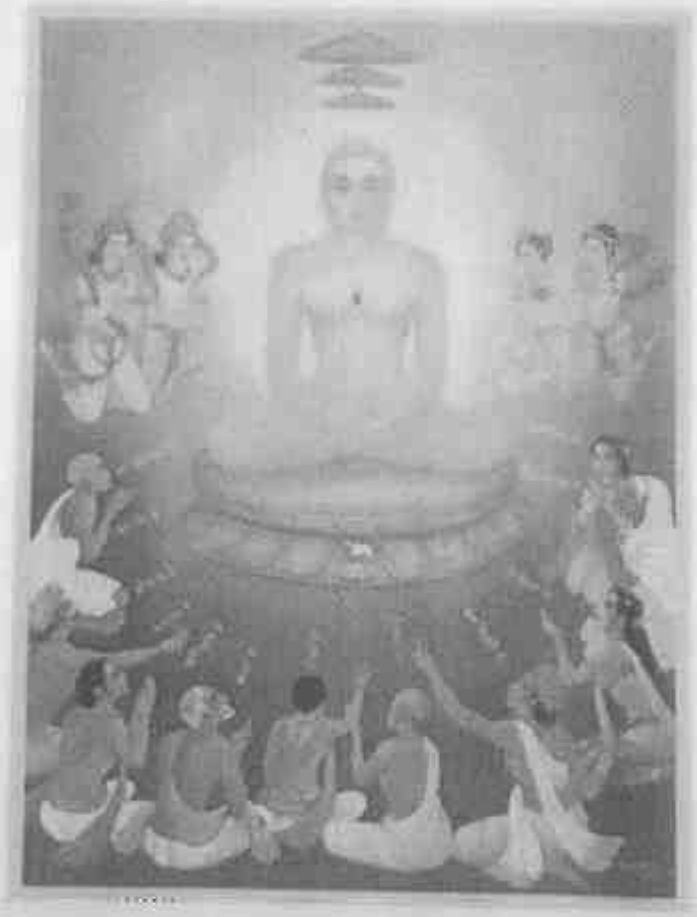

त्वामव्ययं विभुमचिन्त्यमसंख्यमाद्यं ब्रह्माणमीश्वरमनन्तमनंगकेतुम्।
योगीश्वरं विदितयोगमनेकमेकं ज्ञानस्वरूपममलं प्रवदन्ति सन्तः।।

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Established : 1937

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THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS: RELEVANCE OF JAINA COSMOLOGY & RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

-Dr Sujata Roy Abhijat

ABSTRACT:

The environmental crisis that we are facing in the present time, has drawn the attention of all mankind. The academia and the policy-makers have realized that the problem of this magnitude, will involve participation of religion and ethics to address the root cause of the problem. Religion is seen as an important cultural influence, that shapes and guides our attitudes and beliefs, which can promote or denounce ecologically responsible behavior. The study of religion with regard to ecology, will provide a new dimension in understanding cosmology, man-nature relationship, and human responsibility towards the whole. This paper aims at exploring the concepts of cosmology and ethics in Jainism and try to find if there are any ecological underpinnings. Jaina cosmology recognizes the existence of living beings throughout the world (the idea of interconnectedness), its ethics or code of conduct in form of Ahiṁsā or non-violence teaches compassion towards all life forms. The paper will explore if these teachings of Jaina cosmology and ethics provide a logical framework for the environmental ethics.

KEYWORDS: ecology, religion, cosmology, ethics, *jīva, ahiṁsā*, interconnectedness.

The world that we are living in presently is facing a substantial environmental upheaval. The problem manifests in climate change, ozone layer depletion, overpopulation, pollution, and deforestation. All these are mainly man-made and detrimental to the future of the planet. 'Environment' and 'Ecology' need to be understood with

a wider sensitivity wherein ecology expands its ambit to include philosophical thoughts and religious practices. The environment is defined as "the surroundings of any organism, including physical world and other organisms".[1] It consists of both man-made structures and natural environment. At a deeper level, the word ecology is derived of Greek "Oikos," meaning house, so ecology is understood as a study of the relationship between living organisms, including humans and their physical environment (the house). This brings us to the *central* concern and positioning of environmental ethics, which essentially tries to understand the complexities and scope of the environment. The focus on scientific, economic, political social factors is well understood, but philosophy and religious practices are pivotal. The paper considers the pioneers on this crucial intervention, followed by a discussion on the linkages of ecological crisis and the moral, spiritual crisis. The paper subsequently takes up the Jaina cosmological views, customs and speculates on Jaina religious thought as a possible response to the crisis we are faced with. In conclusion, arguments for a more holistic and inclusive policy and practice based on the Jaina approach to the interconnectedness of life-forms are advocated.

To put it in perspective, let's begin with the concerns being raised in the academic world. The work of Lynn Whyte is seminal to our understanding in *"The Historical Roots of Ecological Crisis"* (March 1967). Similarly, Garett Hardin's *"The tragedy of the Commons"* (December 1968) discussed the cause and effect of the destruction of common resources. Rachael Carson's in *"The Silent Spring,"* documented the manifest effects of the use of chemicals in industry and agriculture and its detrimental impact on the environment, espousing a biotic approach and limit use. Philosopher John Koller probed the many-sidedness theory of *"Anekānta"* as an antidote to machine-led development leading to environmental degradation. Nathmal Tatia, in a conference on Jaina and ecology in 1998, avowed vegetarianism, animal protection and a synoptic view advocating Jaina ethics to enact environmental values. Kristi Wiley also wrote on commonalities of moral considerations in

Jainism. Some authors like John Cort and Paul Dundas question if Jainism contains all environmentalism precepts and if it is context-specific? Is it that one traditional view is thrust upon the requirements of modern, secular west-driven agenda? Thomas Berry and David Abraham have highlighted the living process's dynamic aspects with sensitivity to life as espoused in Jainism. Berry argues that the world is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects" Daniel Maguire remarks, "If current trends continue, we will not."[2] Thus, we see that these views firmly establish the urgency and necessitate a firm determination to address the matter.

Let us now look at the linkages between the environmental crisis and the ethical, spiritual and moral underpinnings to address them broadly. Nature has suffered at the hands of humans due to exploitative activities, and this resonates with the view of the western world, which also blames the anthropocentric approach towards the environment as the root cause of the problem. According to Mary Evelyn Tucker, the environmental crisis 'is also a moral and a spiritual crisis,'. The environmental crisis of this complexity is undoubtedly on account of social, political and economic factors. Still, we cannot rule out "moral and spiritual crisis." Human beings are guided by the passions like greed, deceit, anger, pride; the idea of being superior makes them believe that with science and technology by their side, they can control nature. To address this 'moral and spiritual crisis,' we need a comprehensive understanding that human beings are a part of nature, and their life cycles are interconnected and dependent on the ecosystem. Therefore, re-examination of religion in the light of the present environmental crisis looks to be the way -ahead.

The need for an environmental ethics is required from the perspective of religions, as they offer us values, which guides and controls our behaviour. Mary Tucker and John Grim impress that religion can have both limiting and liberating effects[4]. They express that religion was dogmatic, intolerant and hierarchical in the limiting sense and liberating in the sense of inclusivity, justice and

compassion. It concerns both the otherworldly and this-worldly concerns into pursuits of affirming life on earth. Religious practices articulate our value system, which translates into socio-cultural behaviour. These play a cardinal role in shaping our attitudes and approaches towards other beings and the environment. All religions have talked about inclusivity, peace and brotherhood, so the role of religion should be and viewed in this light to assess if religion and development are antithetical.

The field of religion and ecology explores various religions as agents, assuming our change of attitudes and values towards the environment. It is not that religions have all the answers directly for the environmental problems we face, but the texts can be interpreted to achieve a holistic and sustainable future.

Religions put forward that the "Moral and Spiritual energy" required to cultivate our value. Religions have developed world views in the form of cosmologies, symbols, ethical teachings, and ritualistic practices that can motivate and evoke the energy to bring life-enhancing transformation; it will help us understand human-nature relationships in a new light. A lot of work is being done worldwide to explore this syncretic energy between ecology and religion presently amongst many faiths and religions.

JAINA COSMOLOGY

On the specific relevance and role of the Jaina religion of India, one would argue in favour of Michael Tobias, a writer and a filmmaker *'Ahimsā'* on the commonality between Environmental interests and the Jaina World view. We will now discuss how the teachings of Jaina (Cosmology) and the conduct of the ethics between humans and Nature are pertinent in comprehending their role in understanding the environment and its relevance today in resolving the present crisis.

Jainism is one of the oldest religions of the World. The word "Jina" means the "conqueror", i.e. one who has conquered his passions and desires. The Jaina cosmology inherits the concept of

Jīva, and ethics or the code of conduct is guided by cosmology and is divided into *Mahāvrata* and *Aṇuvrata*.

In Jaina cosmology, Universe has neither beginning nor end; the infinite continuous repetition of cosmic cycles happens. Jainas do not believe in creator and sustainer God as in Abrahamic religion[4]; they also reject the notion of Absolute as in Vedānta. There is an infinite continuous series of rotation or cosmic cycles.

Through their efforts, Tīrthaṅkars[6] are revered teachers who have attained liberation (kaivalya) and now rest on the top layer of land called *Siddhaloka*[7]. They attained this state by Right knowledge (Samyag Jñāna), Right faith (Samyag Darśana) and Right conduct (Samyag Cāritra). Except the Arihantas (ever perfect) who have dispelled the passions which provide the glue for *āśravas* and because of which souls are in karmic bondage, all souls go through a continuous cycle of birth and death. They are known as earth bodies, water bodies, fire bodies, wind bodies from insects to larger animals to human beings and finally the liberated ones.

The important concept of Jainism is in the theory of *Jīva*. "*Parasparopagraho Jīvānām*"[8] means "souls that render service to the another," that is, living beings are bound together by mutual support and interdependence. The Jaina cosmology places *Jīva* or the soul in each drop of rain, each particle of wind, even in microbial beings. Every part of nature is beaming with life and has a right to live. *Jīva* and *Ajīva*, the two-everlasting independent, uncreated, co-existing categories[9]. *Ajīva* has no consciousness[10]; five substances of *ajīva* are *dharma*, *adharma*, *ākāśa*, *pudgala* (matter) and *kāla*. *Pudgala* (matter) has form and is constituted by atoms (paramāṇu); it can be seen, heard, smell, and touched. *Jīva* (soul) has no form, but during its worldly activities aligned with body and becomes subject to karmic 'dust' *āśravas*. These *āśravas* are responsible for binding the soul to the present physical world until the karmic results bring about an impact to fall away like a ripe fruit. The Jaina evolution theory places all souls as equal but grades them based on the degree of sensory perception. The lowest form

of the physical body has only a sense of touch. Mahāvīra taught that one who has the rationality to understand this, should know that vegetation also has pain and souls. So, one who understands the merit of plants will have reverence for nature also other abiotic factors. Human beings who are high in gradation based on sensory organs with five senses also possess rationality and intuition (manas) and have a great moral responsibility in dealing with other species. This thrust of life and eternal coherence in which human beings have inescapable ethical responsibility has made the Jaina tradition pioneer in environmental protection.

Jaina Code of Conduct

In *Tattvārtha Sūtra* 7.1, the vows are described as "abstinence from violence, falsehood, stealing, carnality, and possessiveness"[11]. A vow is defined as "Self-imposed obligation as to what one ought to do and not do."[12] The obligations are to be followed in speech, thoughts and deed with commitment and careful observance at all times. Self-restraint is the key to these vows, and it shows both attached and detached connotations. Umāsvāti in *Tattvārtha Sūtra* 7.2 distinguishes between partial following and complete following of these vows, according to one's capability. The partial observance is called *Anuvarta*, and complete adherence is called *Mahāvrata*.

Ahimsā[13] or non-violence is pivotal and a solution for all conflict at the individual and collective domains. *Ahimsā* not only focuses on avoiding injury at the level of thought, speech, and actions, but the positive aspect focus on adhering to compassions for all, universal love and mutual; respect for co-existence. *Ahimsā* provides the basis for other vows namely truth (satya), non-stealing (asteya), celibacy (brahmacarya) and non-possession (aparigraha). Apart from these five central codes of conduct in *Tattvārtha Sūtra* 7.6, Umāsvāti mentions other virtues which one should develop "friendliness towards all living beings, delight in the distinction and honour of others, compassion for miserable, lovely creatures and equanimity towards vainglorious."[14] *Ahimsā* is the universal law, a rational maxim designed to govern all other actions and vows. Practicing

and cultivation of these virtues, which are seen as complementary and companionable, helping strengthening the vows.

"*Jain Declaration on Nature*" was presented to the Worldwide Fund for Nature in 1990 by L.M. Singhvi, where he has expanded on the Jaina philosophy for ecological learnings. It stated that fundamental teachings of Jainism stated in cosmology, ethical conducts, Jaina theory of metaphysics all provide the hallmark for holistic environmental protection. He states that Jaina teachings in form of *ahimsā* (non-violence), interdependence (parasparograhojīvānām), *anekāntavāda* (doctrine of manifold aspects), *Samyaktva* (equanimity), *Jiva-dayā* (compassion, empathy and charity) promotes universal friendliness and respect for other beings. *Samyaktva* means to have an attitude of giving and take and of live and let live. *Jiva-dayā* means caring and sharing with all living beings, to protect and to serve them. It advocates universal friendliness (maitrī), forgiveness (kṣamā) and fearlessness (abhaya). He emphasized on five vows of Jaina ethics, kindness to animals, vegetarianism, self-restraint, charity and avoiding wastage, all are non-violent life-style and advocate ecological harmony. It points out clearly that each *jīva* is to be seen as a 'gift of togetherness, accommodation and mutual assistance. Compassion and reverence towards all living beings and protection even for *ajiva*, service to others, all indicate a cooperative existence, security, friendliness and forgiveness. This understanding of interdependency, non-violence, compassion is essential from the perspective of an environmental ethics. Jainism is hylozoistic, i.e. holds that all matter has life, be it fire, water, soil, air; they not only support and sustain other lives but have a life of their own. The Jaina practice of *Ksamāyācana* seeking pardon both from known and unknown on living world further cements the idea of reverence and respect for all living beings.

The environment is multidimensional, complex of physical, chemical and biotic factors, exhibiting the myriad interconnectedness of living and non-living. The attempt to give a one-stop solution to this

complex issue environmental crisis cannot be an easy one. However, partisan and parochial approaches cannot alter the issue. 'Think locally and act globally' is a significant aphorism and the threat of danger to the planet is omnipresent. Thomas Berry, in his book 'The dream of the earth,' states that irresponsible human activities have altered the "chemistry of the planet". The concern to address the issue from local to regional to global level has remained a debatable topic. Religion working as a searchlight in this direction of ecology gives the support as moral and spiritual values to provide solutions to environmental issues. Nature is intrinsically valuable, and Jaina teachings of Non-absolutism of *Syādavāda* and *Anekāntavāda*, interconnectedness, *Ahimsa*, mutualism, *Samyaktva*, *Jiva-dayā*, *Pramoda* is all comprehensive teaching in this regard.

In conclusion, one can safely surmise that religions and ethical practices, specifically Jainism, are more than a moral precept. It teaches practical ways of mindfulness and self-control in our behaviour towards the environment. In the words of Margaret Thatcher, "No generation has a true hold on this earth. All we have is a life tenancy - with a full repeating lease."[15] Jainism blends in social activism, vegetarianism, animal welfare, meditation, promotion of peace, non-attachment, sharing of material resources with simplicity, non-possession (aparigraha). Berry opines that our dependence on integral functioning with surrounding communities was lost in the maze and speed of scientific and technological advances. This manipulation disrupted the entire complex of life systems. Our callous approach to the magnificent universe that supports and nurtures us has bruised the earth. Thomas Berry states "We have entered into a new phase of earth-human relation, wherein the human effectively has conquered nature. The submissive earth relies upon the human for its continuance."[16] One daresay that if ethical principles were followed in the true spirit of coexistence and our needs were addressed consciously, we would not have come to this pass. Where and how do we go from here is now the question we face as humankind. Perhaps, the Hindu belief that the whole world is a family - *'Vasudhaiva Kuṭumbakam'* finds resonance

here. Our strategic actions must include a conscious, deliberate policy rooted in our quintessential philosophical, moral fabric with principles of coexistence and tolerance at its core. One in which humans are not seen as rapacious, exploitative and exclusive but as people who use resources consciously, sustainably, and balance need and greed in a responsible, ethical manner. Thomas Berry's advocacy of a "new story" seeks us to reinhabit the earth with greater awareness of the fragile balance of life systems that may well have answers to our common concerns and future.

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3. Priya Ranjan Trivedi (ed.), *Ecology and Religion : An inter religious comparative study*, P. 21, Indian Institute of Ecology and Environment, New Delhi. Dr. Tucker is an Associate Professor of Religion of Bucknell University, Lewisburg, USA.
4. John Grim & Mary. E. Tucker, *Ecology and Religion*, 2014, P. 11.
5. Agustin Paniker, *Jainism : History, Society, Philosophy and Practice* (Delhi : Motilal Banarsidas Publishers, 2010), p. 24.
6. Tirthankara means the conqueror of the passions. Jainas describe about four passions-anger (krodha), pride (māna), deceit (māyā) and greed (lobha)- which are responsible for creating *karmas* and bind the soul to the matter (pudgala). It is due to the *karmas*, which are caused by the passions, that a soul acquires a particular body, is born in hellish realm or middle world or heavenly realm; born as a lower sensed organism or with higher number of senses as a human, animal depending on the *karmas* accrued.
7. Division of Cosmos into two main parts- *Loka* (world/universe) and *aloka* (non-world/non-universe). In *loka* there are different "sensed beings" means living beings with a different number of senses. *Jiva* and *Ajiva* part of *loka*.
8. *Tattvārtha Sutra* 5.21, Umāsvāti (English Translation *That which is*) by Nathmal Tatia, 2006).

10 L.M. Singhvi 221. *Appendix Jainism and Ecology*

11 *himsa-anrta-steya-brahmacarya-parigrahebhyo viratir vratam*

12 Nathmal Tatia, *Tattvārthasūtra: That which is*, p. 169.

13 *Mamsa Pramedhurmah. Mahabharata, Anusasanaparva*, Adhyaya 116

14 *Maitri-pramoda-karunya-madhyasthyani ca sattva-gunadhika-klisyamana-vinayesu*

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Department of Philosophy and Religion, B.H.U., Varanasi

The Suppression of Nature and Women: Locating the Debate in Eco-feminist Discourse

Dr. Sujata Roy Abhijat

Abstract

The important branch of environmental ethics studying the linkage between feminism and ecology is ecofeminism. It talks about the common strand of domination and patriarchy which subjugates both women and nature. In the first section of the paper, the common grounds of exploitations will be explored and views of some prominent eco-feminist thinkers will be looked into deeply. The second section will delve into modern development and globalization which are two intractably linked terms and natural outgrowth of capitalism. The ecofeminist sees a common thread of domination and exploitation between the condition of women's lives in patriarchal capitalism and exploitation of natural resources.

Keywords: ecofeminism, domination. modern development, globalization, patriarchal capitalism.

INTRODUCTION

Ecofeminism has its own prominence within the emerging field of environmental ethics, feminism and ecology. The quest in ecofeminism is to unravel the synergy between women's exploitation and profiteering from the environment. The prominent thinkers in this area believe that to understand the true essence of ecofeminism, one will have to explore the structure threadbare. All ecofeminist agrees that there are important connections between the domination of women and nature, but

they have divergent opinions about the kinds of typologies and interconnections. This naturally gives rise to "plurality of positions" within ecofeminism, akin to different views on feminism. Modern Development and globalization are two intractably linked terms and natural outgrowth of capitalism. Ecofeminist thinkers are critical of both as they believe that these are very reasons for environmental and social crises. The global trade and Industrial economic order has had a significant impact on women and the nature. We need to discern the effect of globalization through the lens of ecofeminist thinker, however limited, varied or contested it may be. We draw our arguments from the various situations of women in both north and south, and highlight the discrimination rendered out in stories of growth and economic development. I believe that the discourse around women and nature and the concerns highlighted by ecofeminists must find attention of the decision makers and policy planners for charting a equitable, inclusive and just road map for the future.

My attempt in this paper would be to first explore the views of prominent ecofeminists who agree that there is a common ground and connections between subjugation of women and domination of nature. The line adopted to understand these underpinnings could be based on different angles of history, culture, language, philosophy etc. The true essence of ecofeminism can only be defined after examining these various instances of ecofeminism. Karen Warren writes "just as there is not one version of feminism, there is also not one version of ecofeminism"[1]. We need to understand that ecofeminism stems

[1] Karen Warren, "Ecological Feminist Philosophers: An overview of the issue" Ecological Feminism, Routledge, 1994.

out of different schools of feminisms like Marxist liberal, radical and social feminism, ecofeminist positions are also varied and draws its strength from the multi-dimensional context. Secondly, I will attempt to evaluate the common ground for exploitation of nature on one hand in the name of patriarchal capitalism and the suppression of women in the name of the weaker sex on the other. This paper will further explore how capitalism and globalization impinges the lives of certain sections of society, despite overall growth of state.

The term "ecological feminism" was proposed by French feminist Francoise d' Eaubonne in 1974.This basically relates to environmental advocacy with feminist analysis. This was the period when second wave of feminism was gaining eminence. Second wave feminism was distinctly different from the first wave by drawing attention to issues of domestic violence, marital rape, sexuality, family work place, marital rights etc. Many academicians view the second wave feminism as also focusing on intra-feminism disputes. Ecofeminism one such social and academic movement came into prominence in mid 1970s and 1080s, focusing on the concerns of women & environment. Ecofeminism is both a social movement and theoretical discourse.

The feminist movement so far had failed to address the concerns of nature and it was observed that green movement also could not explain how exploitation of nature is a gendered issue. In 1975 in her book ***'New Women New Earth'***, theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether wrote:

> *Women must see that there can be no liberation for them and no solution to the ecological crisis within a society whose fundamental model of relationships continues to be one of domination. They must unite*

> *the demands of the women's movement with those of the ecological movement to envision a radical reshaping of the basic socio-economic relations and the underlying values of this society.* [2]

All ecofeminists have defined nature as a feminist issue, by proposing that same hierarchy of patriarchal domination that has domineered and devalued everything feminine, has extended this subjugation to environment. Environment is viewed as mere instrumental objects to be serving the needs of humans, and that the humans (male) have total control over nature. Ecofeminist aspire to change this aspect where relation between humans and nature should not be marked by plunder and androcentric/male centric behavior but rather by care, love, cooperation and inclusivity. Sheila Collins states that male dominated culture or patriarchy is supported by 4 interlocking pillars: sexism, racism, class exploitation and ecological destruction.

Warren explains how the western world's basic beliefs and value system is framed so as to explain, justify and maintain relationships of domination and subordination in general and men's domination of women in particular.

The most significant features of this framework are:

1. Value-hierarchical thinking, namely, "up-down" thinking, which places higher value, status, or prestige on what is "up" rather than on what is "down"

[2] Karen Warren, Ecofeminist Philosophy, A Western Perspective on What it is and Why it Matters, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000, p. xiii.

2. Value dualisms, that is, disjunctive pairs in which the disjuncts are

seen as oppositional (rather than as complementary) and exclusive (rather than as inclusive) and that place higher value (status, prestige) on one disjunct rather than the other (e.g., dualisms that give higher value or status to that which has historically been identified as "mind," "reason," and "male" than to that which has historically been identified as "body," "emotion," and "female")

3. Logic of domination, that is, a structure of argumentation that leads to a justification of subordination[3].

Adding further she explains that this hierarchical and dualistic mode of thinking has been detrimental both for nature and women. In this process women have been "naturalized" and nature has been "feminized", and oppression of both is interconnected. The traditional position of patriarchal society of associating women with nature is the root cause of naturism and sexism. Male's association with culture on contrary is considered supremacist. Warren refers to the unjustifiably dominated group as "others" both human others (such as people of colour, children, women etc.) and earth others (such as animal, forest, land, etc.).

Ynestra King expounds on this interlink and says connections of women and nature is 'bridge like position between nature and culture and has three possible directions of feminism'[4].

[3] Rosemarie Tong, Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction, Westview Press, 2009, p. 237.

[4] Rosemarie Tong, Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction, Westview Press, 2009, p. 243.

It could be to sever, reaffirm or transform the women nature connection. Post-modernist belief of King's implies that all forms of human oppression are rooted in dichotomous beliefs, that privilege one member over another (male over female, nature over culture, science over magic).

However, there could be a disagreement on positions whether these connections are potentially liberating or grounds for justifying the stereo types. There could be lot of disagreements regarding this amongst the ecofeminist. Therefore, we understand ecofeminism is an umbrella term and refers and accepts the 'plurality of positions.'

Warren discusses ten types of women – other human other-nature interconnections. It can be looked at historically, conceptually, empirically, socio-economic, linguistic, symbolic, literary, spiritual and religions, epistemological, political and ethical interconnections[5].

The second section of the paper will focus on the socio–economic connection deciphers the link between the materialistic and rapacious capitalism and how it is most prevalent model in most of the countries across globe. The consequences of capitalism then rightly have a wide looming effect, and has been aptly termed as globalization. Globalization is the process of interaction and integration among people, companies and government across and is a rather complex and multifaceted phenomenon, and considered by some as capitalist expansion. Antagonists of this view have criticized it along different lines of

[5] Karen Warren, Ecofeminist Philosophy, A Western Perspective on What it is and Why it matters, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000, p. 21.

natural sustainability, structural inequality, colonial or imperialistic ideology to name a few. Globalization especially affects the position of women and few problems discussed here are (i) Patriarchal capitalism, (ii) Damaging diversity, (iii) Feminization of poverty.

The ecofeminist sees a common thread of domination and exploitation between the condition of women's lives in patriarchal capitalism and exploitation of natural resources. Institution of patriarchal capitalism works on the systematic domination and exploitation of both women and natural resources.

They argue that gender is primary criteria for social organization and it's again the dichotomy between the production and reproduction that essentially defines capitalism. The understanding of capitalism is based on recognizing male labour as economically valued and productive and domestic female service as undervalued and is mainly looked as reproductive labor. Women's reproductive labor is in sync with nature and men's productive labor removed from it.

Ecofeminism is based on this edifice that patriarchy is responsible for domination of women, and western model of development is accountable for domination of nature, and these two are intrinsically linked. J. Sydee & S. Beder claim that these two are symptoms of same illness[6]. Vandana Shiva calls this model of development as 'maldevelopment'. Development as understood by the World today, liberated from the clutches of western hegemony, is capitalist accumulation, commercialization of economy, generation of 'surplus' and profits, emulation of

[6] J. Sydee and Sharon Beder, Ecofeminism and Globalism: A Critical Appraisal, Democracy and Nature, 7(2), July 2001, p. 2.

western style progress. This model of growth which was controlled by capitalism brought along with it dispossession and creation of poverty, exclusion of women, exploitation and degradation of nature, total annihilation of social knowledge and displacement of local people in this story of growth.

Shiva states that when countries like India are subjected to Super state run by international agencies like; IMF, World Bank, GATT, claiming to integrate India to globalizing world, it actually comes at cost of people removed from their land, subsumed by homogeneity and hegemony of patriarchal capitalist world. She actually raises a pertinent point in regard to development, she calls it continuation of colonialism. She borrows view of Gustavo Esteva, and states that "development is a permanent was waged by its promoters and suffered by its victims"[7].

Shiva and Maria Mies have emphasized that scientific and economic paradigms of western ideology of development is super-imposed on the third world market. The subsistence economies which granted veneration and respect to knowledge of women give way to the capitalist market. Women lose control over their land, their knowledge and local practices due to the domineering effect of capitalist market. Women and children are most severely affected by this, women also loose decision-making power, cash related status as these are passed on to men[8]. The traditional knowledge of women being relegated to background and

[7] Vandana Shiva, Staying Alive : Women, Ecology and Survival in India (New Delhi, Kalli for Women, 1988), p. 11.

[8] Sydee and Sharon Beder, Ecofeminism and Globalism: A Critical Appraisal, Democracy and Nature, 7(2), July 2001, p.

environmental degradation for further development as per western systems is further fallout.

Capitalism and globalization also lead to loss of diversity, due to massive commodification. Spiritual ecofeminist and environmental ethicist are critical of globalization as they find them as morally wrong. Globalization has been widely denounced as it acts like a "blanket culture and smothers all difference and diversity in a sea of homogeneity and sameness"[9]. Monocultures in agricultural produce Industrial products, gives a dominant status to the capitalist enterprise through a false construct of progress and prosperity wherein a particular dress, food, dance or language, possession is construed to be better over others existing chore. This pervasive and aggressive influence robs the cultures and life styles of its heritage, and beauty of diversity. Such imposition through commercial mass media creates a dominant world view which results in people feeling impoverished, deprived and lowly. This capitalist agenda gives access to greater markets, across geographies, cultures, and eventually more and more profits for the capitalist globalized giants (McDonalds, Mobiles, Walmarts, patented seeds to name a few). This greed and philosophy eventually lead to rampant destruction of resources of nature and disruption in ecological balance. No wonder, to an environmentalist and ecofeminist diversity is sacred and sacrosanct.

[9] Helena Norberg-Hodge, 'The March of the Monoculture', *The Ecologist*, Vol. 29, No. 2, (May/June 1999), pp. 194-7 and George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society: An Investigation into the Changing Character of Contemporary Social Life*, revised ed (Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press,1996).

Mary Mellor explains in detail how the poverty affects the people in general and specially the women. She mentions that women comprise majority of the poor in the total population. Pressures and demands due to poverty make women and nature as chief and available resources and are therefore exploited. Mellor has talked in detail about prostitution tourism and slavery in S.E. Asia and how women are resourced to slave as outworkers in sweatshops producing garments for affluent north. The labour experience of patriarchal capitalism, resourcing women as workers in sweatshop, as prostitutes, as "ultimate cash crop" are ultimate examples in the era of globalization[10].

CONCLUSION

Ecofeminism gives a very important theoretical framework to analyze and evaluate capitalism and globalization. But this cannot be the only tool to judge such an important economic process and academicians say that feminist angle can only be one of the myriad methods to evaluate it. They raise a pertinent issue that draw backs of green revolution did not discriminate between male and female farmers. Only a feminist socialism cannot be the value system to analyze economic methods and process, specialized institutions which could give details of market economy would be able to appraise the system better. Ecofeminism is also unable to address the problems of market economy in terms of globalization.

Ecofeminism holds its fort as it's a major paradigm shift from a modernist, comparative, dualistic and exploitative orientation to a holistic, nurturant and non-dualistic mode of

[10] Mellor, *Breaking the Boundaries,* pp. 171-174

thinking. It is pertinent as it points out to western mode of development as faulty and brings about an ecological stance which does not believe in exploitative methods of progress. The emphasis is on far more inclusive conception of ecology in which struggles of all section of society find equal support and resonance. It works on integration and inclusive agenda of concerns based on respect for diversity both in terms of nature and human beings and there are no sections of 'non-human others left on periphery. We have seen how the linkages of capitalist global agenda destroys cultures, natural resources and impacts the women. The alienation of people from resources due to impoverishment, loss of land, habitat, resource impacts the women most of all in all the societies and much more so in developing countries.

As proposed earlier, I believe ecofeminism as a discipline attempts a novel task of unifying the issues of feminism and ecology; making it a relevant field worth exploring in the present context where the gender rights and the rights of the environment are being recognized globally. In conclusion, the perspective we gain in the foregoing paragraphs is that ecofeminism addresses the concerns of ecology, embraces all the species of animals and plants, it celebrates inclusion and compassion as against exclusion and aggression, it gives the women equitable and just space in policy formulations and practice. Ecofeminism no doubt seeks correct the bothering of women and strengthens the position of women in political economy and socio- cultural matters. These interventions eventually will have significant positive and long-term impact for our sustenance and secure a safe future for us all.

Department of Philosophy,

University of Delhi.

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Deep Ecology and Gandhi : Philosophical Analysis

Dr. Sujata Roy Abhijat
Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy
Delhi University
Email: roysujata18@gmail.com

Abstract

The reflections of Gandhian ideas and philosophy have generally been seen in the context of the contemporary colonial struggle, but have remained a relevant touchstone to the human ethical values despite changing socio, economic and political norms. These thoughts, as enunciated in his writings, vastly derived the precepts of righteousness from the scriptures which transcended generational mores, and remained pertinent to not only the imminent national freedom struggle but also to the social engineering and economic development. The more significant question remains, whether a vast stream of thoughts aimed at the amelioration of a dystopian society can also be valued as a practical environmental doctrine, especially when the modern environment thought could assume a secular and independent place much later in time and consensus on sustainability and climate change could be a contentious issue between north and south. This paper is an attempt to study the core of Gandhian philosophy and see if it had any modern environmental ethical rumination. Mahatma may not have given the exact prescription of the sustainable mechanical process of a modern factory but has undoubtedly given a prescript for a developing society where sustainability remains germane to all walks of life. Gandhian thoughts are not removed from the modern environmental principles but are native to the truth made stark due to the ravaging ghost of developmen.

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This paper tends to analyze the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi, his philosophy and its relevance for the environment. The first section of the paper will study and analyze the aspects of Truth, Ahimsa and self-realization the core elements of his philosophy , the basis of all his moral groundings. The second section discusses the idea of self-realization of Gandhi and its impact on Arne Naess the ecologist, and his philosophy of deep ecology. The last section tries to study if these philosophies are practicable in dealing with the environment. It tries to see if there is a semblance between Gandhi's philosophy and deep ecology a much-discussed and successful model for the environment. It will explore if this new suggested doctrine can provide a solution to the present environmental crises . It will analyze whether his techniques can be a new guiding principle for environmentalism in the present world with the precept of acceptable universal theory.

The present world is on the precipice of an environmental crisis , and it becomes very important for human beings to arm themselves and fight this disaster , before it's too late. The humans will have to move beyond his greed , his desire, his selfish interest , to save the world from another cataclysmic event. The change or the paradigm shift for the betterment of the planet, should start from the change in the way we treat nature, and not view it just instrumentally . Our practices so far have been have concentrated on profit and plunder, market and material culture rather than.

The fundamentals on which our paradigm and policy need to find inspiration is Gandhian philosophy. It is in Gandhian life and practice that our perspective on development is relevant today. Gandhi's idea that "nature has enough to satisfy everyone's needs, but not to satisfy everyone's greed" became one line ethic to modern environmentalism. Gandhian ideology/ thoughts emerge from his actions as well as deep insights. His lifestyle serves us to understand our own perspectives and response towards the environment, Vandana Shiva, Madhav Gadgil, Anil Agarwal, Ramchandra Guha all acknowledge his pertinent contribution to the ecological ideas. Though Gandhi has himself never explicitly talked about ecology but there are scattered references to nature throughout his published work of 50,000 pages, highlighting the value and importance of it. He is often referred to as the "apostle of applied human ecology".

The first section of the paper will elucidate on the philosophical foundations of Gandhi , it will analyze the religious basis of ahimsa , self-realization and truth. This will help in determining whether the characteristic feature of these elements lay out a plausible way to develop a theory of nature.

Ahimsa: *Mokca* is the ultimate goal of spiritual life and Ahimsa is the spiritual tool to attain *mokca*. Gandhi says *ahimsa* is not within the reach of an average human being and one cannot jump the gun but has to move slowly towards the final destination i.e. *mokca* or self-realization.

For him, *ahimsa* is a universal duty and people should follow it. *Ahimsa* plays a major role in overpowering weaknesses like greed, fear and possessiveness with certain values like love, truthfulness and fearlessness. *Ahimsa* is seen as a way of life that assures social wellbeing, equality and equal respect for all religions (*Sarva-dharma sama bhava).*[1] *Mokca* or self-realization is the ultimate spiritual goal and *ahimsa* is the path by which we can attain *mokca*. *Ahimsa* is presented by Gandhi in an instrumentalist way. The actions done by us determine our death, rebirth and suffering in our present life and future life. Actions that are influenced by attachment, selfish desires prevent the self from attaining release from the cycle of rebirth and death. The doctrine of *ahimsa* motivates to do action with non-attachment, actions that are influenced by attachment lead to conflict and war. *BhagvadgVtā* states he who is satisfied with whatever comes by chance, who has passed beyond, the dualities of (pain, pleasure), who is free from jealously, who remains the same in success and failure, even when he acts, he is not bound.[2]

For him, in order to keep mind and senses under control, one must follow the path of *ahimsa*. The transmigration of the human soul is because the soul is imprisoned in the body which always looks for material and worldly pleasures. But the soul or self has the potentiality to release itself from the bondage of the body and attain *mokca* or self-realization as the ultimate goal of human existence. In order to attain *param purusartha,* one has to follow the principle of *ahimsa* with the full sense of practice (*abayas*) and detachment (*vairagya*) towards the end. He stressed on the purity of means and was against those who believed as long as the end is good, the means to achieve this end hardly matters.

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Self-realization

Self-realization or *moksa* transformed the life and thought process of Gandhi. The concept of self-realization was not a discovery by Gandhi it covers the entire religious and philosophical tradition of India. The concept of self-realization provides a meaning and direction to the life of humans. Gandhi in his autobiography uses the same concept in eight different ways.

Self-realization is the highest value and the ultimate goal of human existence. *Mokca, Mukti* or self-realization symbolizes the release from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Gandhi follows the *Advaitic* vision which holds that *atman* is one and is present in all. The *Atman* is unborn and traverses in the series of life, death and re-birth and is imperishable, infinite, continuous.

Gandhi draws a distinction between the Self and the self. The Self with an upper case is the higher Self and it is the perfect Self and the lower self is the one that is tied to the body and is stuck in the cycle of rebirth and death. For Gandhi lower self must go beyond the duality of body and self in order to achieve unity with the higher Self. Gandhi has given the path of self-realization in order to fight the battle and to engage the lower self with the higher Self. He conceives of the relationship between the higher Self and the lower self as:

> The slave can never conceive of his existence without the master. A person who has the name of another on his lips for twenty-four hours will forget himself in the latter. The *atman* (individual self) becomes the parmatman (brahman or universal self) in the same manner. The atman may be a ray of the parmatman but the ray of the sun is the sun itself. Apart from God, we have no existence at all. He who makes himself God's slave becomes one with God.[3]

In order to travel from the lower self to the higher Self-body is essential but the body should not get engaged in worldly pleasures. Gandhi says the body must engage itself in *Shrirum karma* to satisfy its basic needs in order to stay alive. Self-realization is the release of the soul from the state of attachment (*Sasaki*) and from its involvement with the world. He realizes that body is tempted by the desires and leads to bondage.

He says greed, fraud, lust, anger, domination, hatred are all forms of ego and in order to attain *mokca* one has to make an inner struggle in order to overcome the tendencies of the ego. He compares ego with violence and is an obstacle to attaining self-realization. When the ego becomes essential in the life of an individual then selfish interest dominates. Such a person dominates the need of others and engages

himself in satisfying his own desires. He is avoiding the welfare of the community and is becoming self-centered in satisfying his own wants through endless consumption.

The self-interest of individuals has led to violence, conflicts, war because individual today only aims at fulfilling their own desires. The environment is facing a lot of problems because the vision of man is becoming narrower and narrower. Humans think they have authority over things because of the abilities they possess, they are unique and rational but this does not justify them in exploiting nature. Gandhi says the duty of the human being is clearly not only to himself and to his fellow beings, but also to control his desire to acquire more and more.[4]

Thus Gandhi compares body with violence and self with non-violence. The body brings destruction because man is both good and evil. If he is able to control his urge for all the worldly pleasures, he can become good and can be considered as a *yogi* but if a man cannot control his passion for luxuries, it will lead to the destruction of nature

Truth

Truth and non-violence are the cardinal virtues of Gandhian philosophy. Gandhi's note concluding his autobiography "My Experiments with Truth" reads.

> My uniform experience has convinced me that there is no other God than Truth. And if every page of these chapters does not proclaim to the reader then the only means for the realization of Truth is Ahimsa. I shall deem all my labor in writing these chapters to have been in vain..... I can say with assurance as a result of all my experiments, that a perfect vision of Truth can only follow a complete realization of Ahimsa (CWMG 39:401).

Gandhi believed that, truth and non-violence are two sides of the same coin. Truth is unfolded through the practice of non-violence. He believes the truth is reality and reality is non-violent (truth=reality=non-violent). Gandhi's principle of Dharma is centered around the truth. To him, God is truth and truth is God. The life he admitted was an uncompromising search for truth. He divides Truth both as Absolute and Relative. Absolute Truth is eternal truth and relative truth is in contrast, it is a concrete truth. Through Bhakti and faith in Absolute Truth, one can link itself with the divine according to Gandhi's theory.

It would be so beautiful if all of us devote ourselves to Truth. Truth does not only mean abstention from lies or not just honesty is the best policy. It means we must rule our life by the law of Truth. Devotion to truth must be the sole aim of humans. Gandhi says

the path of ahimsa can lead one to the truth. Though Gandhi makes a distinction between the two but he implies Absolute Truth is the end and relative truth is the means.

Arne Naess on Deep Ecology

This section discusses Arne Naess's ideas of self-realization and ecology on the one hand and identifies similarities with Gandhi's notion of self-realization on the other hand.

Naess is famous for "deep ecology" which is also known as "transpersonal ecology" because he believed in enlarging human identity towards nature. There are a lot of common things between Naess and Gandhi as they both believe in identifying and improving self.

One cannot begin to talk about self-realization and identification unless one understands Deep ecology first. So I will explain Deep ecology first and following this, in my next subsection I will deal with Naess's ideas of self-realization and identification in relation to Gandhi.

Arne Naess the Norwegian philosopher of the twentieth century found the tradition "Deep Ecology". It maintains more of a psychological way of human beings towards nature. Deep ecology seeks for moral consideration as being a member of the nature and thus everyone in the nature should be considered in the same position. It means all the members whether humans or non-humans are equal and neither humans nor non-humans hold a superior or inferior value within the nature as all are placed equally.

Warwick fox describes deep ecology as a "total-field conception"[5] according to fox, a Deep ecology is a form of non-anthropocentric view that place humans as just a constituent members of the community. He gives intrinsic value to all living beings, where all the members of the community are on the same platform and thus deserve the same moral status. It means humans should not treat nature as a means in order to satisfy the non-vital needs. So according to deep ecology human value = Animal value = vegetation value = rocks have same values. It extends the idea of nature from human beings to other species. Having the same value brings the notion of equality that all beings both human and non-humans are considered morally.

> The idea that a human being is such an individual possessing a separate essence, Naess argues radically separates the human self from the rest of the world. Making such a separation not only leads to selfishness towards nature. As a counter to egoism at both the individual and species level, Naess proposes the adoption of an alternative relational "total-field image" of the world. According to this relationalism, organisms

> (human or otherwise) are best understood as "knots" in the bio-spherical net. The identity of a living thing is essentially constituted by its relations to other things in the world, especially its ecological relations to other living things. If people conceptualize themselves and the world in relational terms, the deep ecologists argue, then people will take better care of nature and the world in general.[6]

To clarify the concept, deep ecology considers every member of the nature as an aspect of a larger encompassing reality. The differentiation between entities dissolves when it comes to the possession of values. Deep ecology does not regard any individual or individual species as the center of value. Rather, it regards to value to all the members of the community. Deep ecologist claims that it is of no use to consider some aspects of the same reality as possessing moral value and others not. Neither does it make sense when an entity is being given more importance while not imparting the same attention to another entity when the value on the basis of which attention is being awarded is shared by all equally. The central point in deep ecology is that they consider non-human members to be in equal positions as the human members.

Arne Naess on Self-realization and Non-violence

It is clear from the above definition of deep ecology that Naess has endowed value to all entities in nature. He assigned intrinsic value to all the human and non-human members of the environment. His main concern is on the lifestyle which has been adopted by humans; it is destructive and humiliating because it affects the environment , he says one should work on high quality in life not high standards.

The aim of deep ecology is to change the destructive lifestyle as it is impacting the environment by transforming the individual self. Deep ecology is also known as Transpersonal Ecology. As fox states:

> Since [Naess's deep ecological] approach is one that involves the realization of a sense of self that extends beyond (or that is trans-) one's egoic, biographical, or personal sense of self, the clearest, most accurate, and most transformative term for this sense of deep ecology is, in my view, transpersonal ecology.[7]

Transpersonal ecology says, human beings are part of nature as other entities are but humans need to change their attitude towards nature and should not use nature as an object or as a means to make a profit. Nature should be identified as very self. The moment we identify that we are part of nature then it becomes a part of our identity. In other words, it can be explained as:

It is claimed that by subtracting your own self-centered and self-serving thoughts from the world you come to realize that "the other is none other than yourself: that the fundamental delusion of humanity is to suppose I am here and you are out there.[8]

Naess states that change in our attitude cannot be achieved by following rules and regulations alone because with administration comes elements such as force, manipulation, violence which makes humans aggravated and they feel restrictive and pressurized. This would not come with a positive outcome as people are being compelled through moral demands to assign equal value to nature. The actual care for nature comes with values.

The assigning of moral rules and conduct cannot change the perception of humans towards nature. Naess proposes an alternative and claims that we need to respect and care for nature through a process of identification. He says "from the identification process stems unity, and since the unity is of gestalt character, the wholeness is attained."[9] Identifying oneself with others involves enlarging of self. This process of identification leads to self-development. Though, people today are identified by material possessions and property but modern societies have promoted alienation. Naess insists on developing values among humans instead of a moral code of rules and laws. Values like care, trust, friendship, love, etc play a central role in determining relationships. It adds appropriate reciprocity to the list of values that are so significant in understanding human relationships with others.

The enlarged self which has been developed from a narrow self is now inclined towards generous acts of caring towards non-human members of the community. "We own nature together with our fellows."[10] Realizing the relationship with others leads to the growth from self-interest to selflessness. Naess states identifying the self with others is a replicative and an expansive process. As it takes a long time to teach a child that what is right and wrong for his self-development in a similar way identifying the self with others takes time. He states:

> From identifying with "one's nearest," higher unities are created: through circles of friends, local communities, tribes, compatriots, races, humanity, life and, ultimately, as articulated by religious and philosophic leaders, unity with the supreme whole, the "world" in a broader and deeper sense than usual.[11]

Naess makes a parallel statement that if one cannot identify self with the nature, then people can follow the moral rules and regulations. Like, we take the precept of Naess "not to harm living beings unnecessarily". If some people cannot

assign moral value and do not have an inclination then Naess asserts it is better if these people follow moral rules. As, rules can be a manifestation of cooperation, peace, and harmony.

Naess in "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement" makes the distinction between shallow and deep ecology as:

> "the 'shallow' ecological movement as one that fights pollution and resource depletion in order to preserve human health and affluence while the 'deep' ecological movement operates out of a deep-seated respect and even veneration for ways and forms of life, and accords them an equal right to live and blossom."[12]

He distinguishes between two moments shallow and deep ecology. Shallow ecology is "to purify the air and water and spread pollution more evenly"[13] as it is affecting the health of people. Whereas deep ecology concentrates on what is going on in the total ecosystem and calls for a high priority fight against the economic conditions and the technology responsible for producing the acid rain.[14] Shallow ecology deals with the problem of pollution without concentrating on how the pollution and environmental disaster came in the first place. Whereas deep ecology asks the questions like why and how did pollution affects the entire ecosystem, it concentrates on a new way that can change the lifestyle of humans so that nature can be protected.

Naess gave the basis of deep ecology but his eight principles were reformulated by him and his colleague George Sessions:[15]

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent worth). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantially smaller human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires a smaller human population.
5. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.
6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.

7. The ideological change will be mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between bigness and greatness.

8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes.

Beyond these eight principles of deep ecology, Naess has outlined his own form of deep ecology that he calls "Ecosophy T"; it allows the other versions of deep ecology and can be explained as:

> I call my philosophy "Ecosophy T", using the character T just to emphasize the other people in the movement would, if motivated to formulate their world view and general value priorities, arrive at different ecosophies: Ecosophy 'A', 'B',... 'Z'[16]

It includes the eight principles and gives two other elements which are self-realization and identification. These elements are connected to Gandhi's theory of Self-realization and identification. Like Gandhi, Naess accepts the fundamental principle "you shall never use any living being only as a means."[17] Like Gandhi, Naess forms his theory as "the person is not above or outside of nature... (But) is a part of creation going on."[18] The fact given is, naess ideas do not revolve around the humans. He treats humans as a part of the environment and not separate from other beings.

His ideas extend by bringing out the relation between human beings and animals. He states, the lifestyle humans have adopted led to the suffering of animals. The sense of desire, luxurious living directs humans to consume more resources which is a direct way is an exploitation. Perhaps, overconsumption will result in scarcity of resources and destruction of the habitat of other species. Naess states: "human beings have no right to reduce the richness or diversity except where it is necessary to satisfy vital needs".[19] The general feature of deep ecology is, it grants value to all beings. The interference of humans with nature has increased, they have been killing and exploiting resources for non-vital needs. The overconsumption has led to the extinction of species. In other words, Naess claims that the policies which emphasize on the standard of living rather than improving quality of life need to be improved. This argument of Naess is similar to Gandhi's adoption of simple life and opposition to luxurious living.

The stability of nature depends upon certain biological factors. The overconsumption and luxurious lifestyle have deteriorated the health of ecosystem. An unstable ecosystem can break easily. The rejection of material abundance and adopting a lifestyle that is simple is closer to Gandhi's form of ecology.

Self-realization and identification are the two elements of deep ecology. Though, Deep ecology may have many versions but self-realization and identification are the essences of deep ecology. The pioneer of ecosophy states, in order to prevent the environment from the entire crisis, all we need is self-realization. There are a certain environmentalists and ethicists who believed in changing principles and rules in order to protect nature but Naess, claimed all we need is self-realization and identification. Gandhi also used the same concept in order to protect living beings.

He states humans have evolved the unique personality to realize the self with non-humans. Once the self identifies itself with others, it changes the perception of humans and with love and care, they preserve the nature. In Naess's system of philosophy, the goal of self-realization and identification is to remove the ego and to develop a wider and deeper sense of self. He states: "when the egotism vanishes, something else grows, that ingredient of the person that tends to identify itself with God, with humanity, all that lives."[20]

In order to realize the self one needs to reduce the hedonistic approach and should follow the integrity principle which states everything is interconnected. If you harm anything, then you harm yourself. David Rothenberg has identified three features of self-realization:[21] firstly, self-realization does not mean self-centeredness because the individual self cannot be isolated from, as well as dissolved into the greater self. Secondly, Self-realization is a process of expanding oneself to realize that she is a part of nature and others' interests should be her own interest. Thirdly, since self-realization is an active condition, or a process, or a way of life, nobody can ever reach self-realization. Like *Nirvana* in Buddhism, Self-realization is unreachable, self-realization provides us a direction to move towards the self.

The process of identifying the self with others can only be practiced by interacting with others. For example: if we want to develop the self of a child, then we cannot do it in isolation, or parents of a child are not enough for the development of self. Instead, it requires the interaction of children with plants, animals, neighbors, fishes, seasons, and scenery. Though, it is a gradual and a slow process but the multiple sought of interaction develops cooperation, love and care in child.

Though one may question how does Naess defines self-realization in ecosophy and what are its characteristics? Naess states self-realization is a dynamic process that moves towards interconnectedness. But, when one separates itself from others and nature, a form of isolation is created from the world and from oneself. This isolation obstructs an individual from the realization of the self as it is a basic aspect in regarding one's self-development. It encourages unnecessary violence and harming others for non-vital needs.

Whereas identifying the self with others and nature includes the realization of the complete self. The perfect self-realization leads to the unselfishness and is beyond the sense of ego. It is unselfish because the individual's degree of self-realization is dependent on the others. Though, collective self-realization does not eliminate individual uniqueness. As Naess puts it: "the identification process leads deeper into nature as a whole, but also deeper into unique features of particular beings.

Gandhi had a strong influence on Naess. He derived the concept of self-realization after being influenced by Gandhi. John Nolt states: "he embarked on an academic study of Gandhi's ideas and developed his own environmental philosophy, which incorporated Gandhi's idea that moral maturation amounts to increasing identification with all that lives."[22] For Gandhi, the self-realization liberates atman from ego-driven desires and unites it with the higher Self.

Arne Naess's work on self-realization has been originated because of Gandhi. Naess in Gandhi and the Group conflict states:

> The rock-bottom foundation of the technique for achieving the power of non-violence is the belief in the essential oneness of all life. More than a few people, from their earliest youth, feel a basic unity with and of all the human beings they encounter, a unity that overrides all the differences and makes these appear superficial. Gandhi was one of these fortunate people.[23]

Naess and Gandhi both rely on the same notion of living a simple life. For them, ecocentric perceptive are important to the practice of non-violence because it induces humans to minimize their desires and stay in harmony with nature. The notion of identifying with others and natures as a whole, allows one to include genuine self-interest which is in the interest of all. Interconnectedness and identification help in developing an expanded sense of self, or self-realization which is necessary for maintaining the health of nature.

Gandhi's theory of self-realization, identification, interdependence, selfless service, sacrifice, cooperation, *RTA*, unity intimately contribute to an environmental ethic. These notions were examined on a secular basis, as they may be more likely to be accessible to people with different views and cultures. The attempt to find the similarity between Gandhi and Arne Naess got successful. As, the two environmental theories that very closely revolve around Gandhi have been adopted by Arne Naess in 'Ecosophy T': self-realization and identification. They both accept the fundamental principle of ecology that everything is interconnected and both foci on leading a simple life as a lifestyle which humans have adopted are harming the environment. The main focus of the philosophy given by both is identifying the self relates to other beings and to nature.

It was seen that the theories of both allow that nature can be the objects of ethical care, love and respect through the process of identification. According to Gandhi if an action is done by considering the welfare of all, then action is considered to be right. On this basis, the paper claims that with self-realization and identifying the self with others, humans can stay in harmony with nature. This establishes the possibility that granting value to nature underlies in the human conduct.

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UNDERSTANDING VIVEKANANDA'S 'UNIVERSAL RELIGION' IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIA'S PLURALISTIC ETHOS

Dear Dr Sujata Roy Abhijat,

UNDERSTANDING VIVEKANANDA'S 'UNIVERSAL RELIGION' IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIA'S PLURALISTIC ETHOS

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UNDERSTANDING VIVEKANANDA'S 'UNIVERSAL RELIGION' IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIA'S PLURALISTIC ETHOS

Dr Sujata Roy Abhijat
Assisstant Professor
Department of Philosophy
Delhi University.

India and its people have unique diversity in name of religion, cultural practices and tradition. Its socio-cultural and religious ethos is woven with diverse typologies; they express themselves differently through many languages, castes, creeds, cuisines, costumes and importantly faith and belief. What underlines its character is a spirit of mutual interest and tolerance .The people of India over the years have celebrated each of these differences, co-existed and absorbed the best from each other. What hence, defines the Indian pluralistic and secular ethos is mutual respect and tolerance of different religion and faith. The common belief in goodness of mankind truth, non-violence and peace amongst all beings underlines Indian values. Swami Vivekananda views on universal religion emphasizes on the equality of all religions and the amalgamation of positive values in the Indian context. The paper will examine the nature and the context in which they interact at ideological and practical level.

Let us discuss the varied contexts in which secularism is expressed in Western and Indian perspective. The word 'secular' is defined in new oxford illustrated Dictionary (1978) as that "which is concerned with the affairs of this world; not sacred, not monastic or ecclesiastical, temporal, profane, lay; skeptic to religious truth or opposed to religious education". Secularism in the west arose in the context of a conflict between church and the state as a sort of resolution in the form of separation of jurisdiction and power between the two. In western world it was desired that there should be a way forward on principles of secularism, which could free people from the tangles and controls of church. George Jacob Holyoake (1851), for the first time, coined the word "Secularism" and conceptualized it. Charles Bradlaugh (1833-1891) further elaborated its basic tenets and virtually agreed with Holyoke. These two thinkers gave a new connotations to aesthetic and materialistic perspective, also summarily rejected supernatural entities, like soul and God. Both of them gave to secularism a wholly materialistic and atheistic connotation thereby rejecting the existence of all

At political level , the western model of secularism means that religion and politics are separate from each other .In other words, politics does not enter in religious affairs and religion in political affairs .This also means that political mechanism cannot correct problem inside a religious group.

Secularism as understood in Indian context

When India got independence, we adopted this western concept as a 'basic Feature' of Indian polity and society. But unlike in the west, there has been no conflict between religion and the state. On the contrary, there was a happy symbiosis of the two in this country. Moreover, Indian mindset is religious basically. Indians are totally ruled by religion (it means rituals, religious beliefs of one's own religion in day-to-day life). Religion is a very cardinal point in Indian mind set.In a country where religious ethos is pre-dominant people live every moment of life with religious rituals, mythologies and prescriptions, It was just impossible to apply 'Secularism' in western sense .In India due to different religions being prominent,

it developed its own new idea of secularism. As per the Indian tradition, we modified it according to India's age-old philosophy as expanded in scriptures called Upanishads. The idea of secularism developed with times and this gave birth to secularism based on mutual respect and assimilation .Therefore it became 'Sarva Dharma Samabhāva' i.e. equal respect for all belief systems. Indian secularism is conceptually similar to Religious Pluralism. Dr. S. Radha Krishnan was one of the chief advocates of Indian spiritual Interpretation of secularism. Explaining this he says:

"Secularism, as here defined, is in accordance with the ancient religions tradition of India. It tries to build up a fellowship of believers, not by subordinating individual qualities to the group mind but by bringing them into harmony with each other .....it (secularism) does not mean irreligion or adhesion or even stress on material comforts…it means we respect all faiths and religion"(Radhakrishnan,1956,p-107)2

It is based on the belief that all religions are equally good. In a multi religious society, it tends to connect and link the barriers of diversity. Radha Krishnan puts it succintly, an extension of the principle of democracy to religion.

Indian Constitution, too, included many provisions which directly or indirectly are secular in Nature (of Indian Type). Though the word 'Secular' was introduced by 42nd amendment act, 1976, yet the spirit of secularism was already prevailed in many provisions of the constitution. Fundamental Rights especially Article. 14-16 and Article. 25-30 are categorical examples of it.

Religious Pluralism

Indian Secularism is the practical aspect of Religious Pluralism. If religious pluralism is epistemology, Indian Secularism can be taken as the practical or ethical aspect of religious pluralism. There can be differences of language, rituals or even of philosophies but such variations do not give one religion priority or superiority over other religion. It denies religious exclusive approach which makes a follower believe that only his or her religion is 'religion', all others are not valid enough to be considered as 'Religion'. Religious Pluralism also opposes 'religious Inclusive' approach which gives superior status to one's own religion and declares 'others' as qualitatively inferior.

Religious pluralism, as mainly proposed by John Hick, believes in 'Democracy of Religions' where every religion is given an equal status. Here by equality we do not mean dead equality but 'equally valuable truth despite variations in expression'. All religions are equally true in that sense.

Many models of religious pluralism have been offered by different thinkers. Indian Secularism also is a prominent model of religious pluralism.

Religious Pluralism or Indian Secularism : Present practices

Now, at this point we can analyze the practice of Religious Pluralism or of Secularism in India. Here, more emphasis has been given to its social aspect. Do people take other religions equally good and have equal respect for them? Has it really been successful in removing hatred for religious 'others' from society? Do we respect other religions in a similar way as we revere our own?

A brief introspection on these questions would reveal that, the practice of tolerance and respect for other religions is problematic. 'Children are thoroughly indoctrinated in their own religions by parents'. We don't have any faith in doctrines of other religions, and people of such mindset are easily exploited by some fanatic leaders.

"*while the aggressive elements among the leaders of the so-called minorities raise cries of alarm that India is fast degenerating into a Hindu country, their counterparts among the Hindus cry foul and accuse the Government of minorityism"3 (Madan,1997,p-255).*

We could not become secular in western sense because of our tradition but we could not become secular in our own sense, too, and that because of our mentality of not seeing any good in 'others'. In the words of Vivekananda;

"The tiger in us is only asleep; it is not dead. When opportunities come, it jumps up and, as of old, uses its claws and fangs. Apart from the swords, apart from material weapons, there are weapons still more terrible -contempt, social hatred, and social ostracism"4 (Vivekanand, 2006,p-364)

So we can say that secularism in Indian is maximally failure if not totally. Of course, there are some bright examples of communal harmony but majority of Indian mindset is too weak to be susceptible to communalism. While each religion does expound principle of peace, mutual respect of faith and tolerance what passes out as practice is contestations of the dogmas and ideological impositions of righteousness.

Beliefs and aberrations

We can find certain conceptual errors behind the weak application of 'religious Pluralism' and breakdown of secularism in Indian society. The real problem lies in ignorance at two levels - Incomplete knowledge of one's own religion and Ignorance of good elements in other religious sects.

According to Vivekananda, each religion can be understood as having three parts. First, there is the philosophy which presents the whole scope of that religion, setting forth its basic principles, the goal and the means of reaching it. The second part is mythology. It consists of stories relating to the lives of men, or of supernatural beings, and so forth. It is abstraction of philosophy concretized in the more and less imaginary lives of men and supernatural beings. The third part is the ritual. This is still more concrete and made up of forms and ceremonies, various physical attitudes, flowers and incense, and many other things, those appeals to the senses, which are basically rituals. Almost every religion of this world has these three in one or other forms. Some lay more stress on one some on another.

As far as , knowledge of one's own religion is concerned, mostly Indians are aware of basic rituals, beliefs and to some extent certain mythologies as well .A farmer in India might not have a degree nor even schooling but he would be well aware of basic rituals, myths or basic beliefs of his religion .He would be ready to go to the extent of making arguments to defend his religious beliefs .Every house in India is the training school for religious rituals and prayers , though without going into depth for finding reasons for them. And society unites in different groups in the name of these beliefs, rituals etc.

However, if we discover deeper, it becomes clear that we Indians have knowledge of our respective religions but only at surface level. From person to person there might be difference in their levels but if

we ask about basic philosophy or gist of any religion, rarely we find followers. '*If you asked people what they had learned or expressed through participation in such rituals, they would find the question rather strange. In most human groups people have all sorts of rituals but no good explanation of why they should be performed*'5(Boyer, 2002, pg-266). Here, Religion works only at emotional level, rational satisfaction is not seeked for.

The result of such mindset is two-fold in Indian society-communalism and lack of religiousness. Emotional people are always prone to exploitation by the clever one. People, who follow religion by emotions, are the first who attack the so called 'others' in society. How is it that instead of hearing its sweet music of harmony, we hear only strains of discords? Lot of religions of the world which have succumbed to these evils, have functioned in a way that they have changed its whole quality, the very fabric. Through the ages, dark evils have been perpetrated in human society in the name of religion. True, Religion has been a source of light, strength, hope and peace to mankind, but it is also an undeniable fact that, because of religion millions of men or women has to pass through unspeakable horrors, humiliation and sufferings. And behind these sufferings were those people who did not reach to even basic philosophy of their own respective religions. The reality is that without the deep embalming effect of philosophy any religion would find it difficult to survive or flourish .The other drawback attached with this 'surface-epistemology' of religion is that it denies the followers to learn the true essence of religion. The aim of any religion is to keep us united in the name of certain moral prescriptions .Rituals, mythologies work as conveyer, transmitter of this religious essence from one generation to others. Common man cannot reach the heights of any religion, beyond the traditional knowledge and rituals , these rituals and stories serve the great purpose to keep religion flourish .If we study great religions of the world, we find these external, concrete symbols have played very important role in spreading the religion from one part of the world to other. *'Through rituals , people perhaps grasp or express important messages about themselves, their relationship to each other and their connection with gods and spirits*'6 (Boyer,2002,p-266). In India , it can be observed easily that Hinduism is alive because of women and Islam because of men. The reason behind is that in Hinduism women and in Islam men follow rituals strictly. But religion is not all rituals or mythologies, when we give utter emphasis on these external symbols of religion we forget to pursue the real essence of it i.e. influx of religiousness in nature. Morality can be inculcated in nature through religion only when we can go deep inside it. Rituals or mythologies might bring unity or sometimes brotherhood but this would be only at surface level .When situation is opposite, this unity or moral behavior proves very fragile. True religion dawns in one's life only when he or she understands the core values of religion.

The other conceptual mistake behind the failure of Indian secularism is negative or neutral attitude towards 'other' religions. This problem is related to 'Religious Pluralism' as well. Like religious pluralism, Indian secularism, too, conceptually requires a positive mind-set for other religions. But how can this attitude be inculcated in the minds of people? Indian Secularism does not prescribe any practical path. Only by preaching nobody becomes liberal from religious point of view. In our lives we respect those with whom we feel the positive connection. Without knowing the good values in somebody how can we have respect for him? And if respect comes from outside, something superimposed, it can create at most religious toleration in society. 'Why should people practice toleration? 'Toleration' means that I think that you are wrong and I am just allowing you to co-exist', it's a negative term. But this 'forceful love' is inevitable in any society where people are not aware of good aspects of each other. And in the absence of knowledge of other paths of religion, generally religious leaders make absolute claims.

"*We have been like a company of people marching down a long valley, singing our own song, developing over the centuries our own stories and slogans, unaware that over the hills there is another valley, with another great company of people marching in the same direction, but with their own language and songs and stories and ideas; and over another hill yet another marching group -each ignorant of the existent of the others."7(Hick, 1982)*

Singing the song in the glory of our own religion only and seeing all truth in it, is the basic reason of religious fanaticism.The extremists or zealot commit commit all sin under the name of religion. Indian secularism requires a society where people have positive approach for 'others' religions and this would be possible only when we interact with each other's ,just to learn something good from them. Knowledge of positive, universal aspect of other religions is prerequisite condition for generating regards for them.

Vivekananda's Universal Method : A Perfect Approach

Now question is, do we have good elements in all religions? When asked "What is good in Islam?" Vivekananda replied—'If there was no good how could it live? The good alone lives. Muhammad was the prophet of equality, of Brotherhood of men' .The same answer can be given about all other religions. According toVivekananda, each of these different religions has excelled in one or other part of spirituality. There come ups and downs in every great religion but that soul of religion is never lost. 'Each religion as it were, takes up a part of the great Universal truth, and spends its whole force in embodying and typifying that part of the great truth".If one continues to work on these values no religion can be lost. We all should know about that ideal, that mission of other religions .

As hinted above, in Islam ideal for which almost all energy has been spent, in the eyes of Vivekananda, is 'Brotherhood'. Islam makes its followers all equal and it is peculiar excellence of this religion. There is no feeling of higher or lower, no feeling of Black and white. 'Once I accept Islam, every Muslim will receive me as his own brother.' And what Islam comes to preach to the world is practical brotherhood of all belonging to their faith. Here, there is no empty talk; they make it possible by their behaviors. Islam is the champion of equality; here everybody is equal irrespective of his/her status, caste, place of Birth. The only condition is being a Musalman. In a lecture delivered in a church of California Vivekananda said:

"*As soon as a man becomes a Mohammed , the whole of Islam receives him as a brother with open arms, without making any distinction, which no other religion does. If one of your American Indian becomes a Mohammedan, the Sultan of Turky would have no objection to dine with him....." 8 (Vivekananda, 2006, p-371)*

The central Idea in Christianity is 'purity of heart and Mind' by the means of 'Service of mankind'. Christ taught: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". Holiness or purity in man is that attitude in a man's spirit manifested in his thoughts, desires and actions, which make him, do only such things which he knows and believes to be God's will for him to do. To keep this spirit alive, Christians all over the world are always ready to bring themselves nearer to God by helping others. They open Charity hospitals, schools etc. for the welfare of humanity. In India, Contribution of Mother Teresa is an indelible part of our history? She became the mother of thousands of poor children and she took care of them with true

spirit of service. She did not hesitate in serving even leprosy patients. We should recollect that the Christians are, even in the darkest days, even in the most superstitious Christian Countries, works for betterment of mankind , by trying to help others, building hospitals, and so o, as this would help him on day of judgement. These values and sanctity help Christianity to flourish.

In the same way, Hindu's central idea lies in its spirituality. According to Swami Vivekananda, there is emphasis on defining, and practicing the spirituality through religion. They tried to define the ideal of soul so that no earthly touch might mar it. The spirit must be divine; and spirit understood as spirit must not be made into man. 'Renunciation and spirituality are the two great ideas of India, and it is because India clings to these ideas that all her mistakes count for so little'. Yes, in the name of religion, thousands of poor people are being exploited by high profile religious leaders, but all this happen because Hindu Mind is religious by nature and it is easy to make them fool in the name of religion. But this is the religion which gave one of the highest spiritual philosophies. Upanishads, Gita and many of the spiritual leaders are treasure of Hinduism. India was considered 'Vishwa Guru' in the field of religion and stood firm on its ground because of spirituality. Mediation or Yoga, still, is the propagator of Hindu Spirituality in the world. We can say, it is Ahimsa (Non-Violence) with Jainism, with Buddhism it is Dhyana (Meditation), with Sikhism it is great regard to Guru (teacher), and their entire activities move around these central Idea.

Here, we can safely conclude that each religion has contributed towards better understanding of and growth of true religious ethos. '*Each one represents a great truth; each religion represents a particular excellence something which is its soul'.* Compassion, mutual respect and peace are Universal beliefs which are emphasized by all major religions and finds place in the Universal religion of Swami Vivekananda. Perhaps, in present world such ideas and ideals find more resonance and relevance. Everybody should be benefited by these excellences; it is the beauty of the world that we have so many paths of spirituality and religion. Only by recognizing and respecting this diversity Indians will witness a true secularism of its own type. In the course of action for Indian Secularism, we need to focus on positive and universal aspect of others .Meaningful and acceptable secularism can only flourish if the narratives we choose empathize on common elements rather than on issues which there are contestation and ideological differences. The philosophies of Swami Vivekananda are real guide in bringing 'Indian Secularism' and 'Religious Pluralism' together in true sense.

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Authored by

Dr. Sujata Roy Abhijat
Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy
Delhi University

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Women and Art: Gender Perspective

Dr Sujata Roy Abhijat
Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy
Delhi University

Postal Address : Dr. Sujata Roy Abhijat
D-1 House No. 87, Rabindra Nagar
Near Lodhi Garden, New Delhi – 110003
Mobile No. : 9599600677
E-mail : roysujata18@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Objectification of women is a core conundrum of the academic enquiry in the field of Feminism. The field of art and aesthetics deals with the subject-object dualism which is fundamental for the discipline as it wouldn't exist without an artist (subject) and muse (object). Feminists believe that fine arts was a leisure activity in the beginning and those who were socially accepted to pursue this activity projected supposed universal truths about how it should be enjoyed, and in this process they created gender polarisation. Women were restricted in roles of virtuous wives and care givers. Their artistic ambitions were hindered and/or looked down upon. In this paper I would like to explore into the area of Feminist Aesthetics, the best way to question the groundwork of gender bias.

This paper also seeks answers to certain questions such as - Does a theory in Feminist Aesthetics exists? Can motherhood be a fundamental concept of a working theory in Feminist Aesthetics? In order to satisfactorily answer these questions, I would highlight the relation between the social traditions in the western world, discrimination against female artists, and its justifications found in the prevalent philosophical cultures of their respective periods that have sieved down the annals of history to cause hindrance in growth of women as creative beings even today.

Keywords : Feminist Aesthetics, Motherhood, Gender Binaries.

Objectification of women is a core issue of the academic enquiry in the field of Feminism. The field of art and aesthetics deals with the subject-object dualism, which is fundamental for the discipline as it would not exist without an artist (subject) and muse (object). Feminists believe that fine arts were a leisure activity in the beginning and those who were socially acceptable to pursue this activity projected supposed universal truths about how it should be enjoyed and in this process, they created gender polarisation. Women were restricted in roles of virtuous wives and caregivers. Their artistic ambitions were hindered and looked down upon. Therefore, I believe that an enquiry into the discipline of Feminist Aesthetics is the best way to question the groundwork of gender bias.

Women's absence in aesthetic theory in the history of philosophy has drawn the attention of feminists to dwell upon this matter. Contrary to expectations that women are associated with artistic expression, delicate sensibilities and softer emotions, women's exclusion in this field

is highly bewildering. It tends to be more noticeable as the age of enlightenment and period of renaissance saw the emergence of artists in all field, drawing huge patronage from European Royal families, wealthy patrons such as the house of Medici. Still, female artists were almost totally absent from the art scene. In this paper, an attempt has been made to unravel the riddle of the complete absence of women, traditionally believed to be bestowed with delicate sensibilities, from the creative faculty of the art. The paper also seeks to establish the linkage between feminist theory and aesthetics, and that it is a contradiction to the traditional aesthetics, which works on objectivity and universality.

THE ESSENCE OF MAN: REASON

The western tradition has always emphasized the primacy of reason, and a human being aims to transcend this embodiment with the help of reason or mind and assisted by a sound body under a disciplined physical regime. There are varieties of religious, cultural, academic, intellectual and virtual methods devised to assist the mind in surveillance of the body. However, for women, the truth has always been different. As agreed by Aristotle, though she is provided with rudimentary rational capacity (without authority), women's subordinate position leaves her with no option for liberation from the body. Her body and its predetermined capacities are her destiny. This has been brought out by Simone De Beauvoir in her text the Second Sex where she says the women's world is circumscribed and small and it is a state of immanence, unlike men who are essential, and transcendent. The women are the 'other' defined exclusively in opposition to men; men occupy the role of the self, the subject and women is the object. The European Enlightenment tradition has been, most of the favourite target of feminist critique. Plato, Aristotle Rousseau all are accused of having given an inferior status to women's interest, her feminine virtues. Modern moral philosophers have generally portrayed the domestic realm of women as an area outside economy; beyond justice and legitimate political regulation. Feminist philosophers have challenged this bifurcation of social life, and they claim that women's moral agency is denied by excluding women from the moral debate. Their contributions have also been denigrated by labelling it as women lack moral reason. Originally these claims were made by Aristotle but further elaborated upon by Hegel, Kant, Rousseau, Schopenhauer, Freud, and Nietzsche. Even religious philosophers like Augustine & Aquinas have questioned women's intellectual power and termed it as inferior. This gender distinction looks archaic

in today's world, but its metaphysical profundity and embedded prevalence, haunt women even now and has a bearing on her representation in the social realms.

Feminism as a way of thinking got its roots because we have seen how gender had already been construed as binary in social, economic, cultural, political spheres. Feminist attempt is to shed off the metaphysical status of gender and to accept it only as an analytic category like class or race. Feminist agree that gender is socially constructed but denies its universal determination. It brings out a novel feature that states that women bring experiences as subjects, a perspective that has been overlooked while establishing their epistemological worth. Feminist theory is based on women's myriad experiences, a plurality of positions and their background. It is this experiential reference that links feminist theory radically to aesthetics. Aesthetic as we know, is a paradigmatic representation of multiple, diverse, immediate and qualitatively diverse objects. The feminist aesthetic is a preamble / a prelude of feminist theory reflecting the diverse.

The emergence of feminist aesthetics had come around in the last thirty years when the influences of Feminism and another corollary feminist theory made a foray into other allied disciplines. This field is neither associated with advancing Feminism in the political sphere, nor does it carry the notion of especially female approach to aesthetics or aesthetic appreciation.

THE STANFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA DEFINES FEMINIST AESTHETICS AS -

"A field of a study identifying a set of perspectives that pursue certain questions about philosophical theories and assumptions regarding art and aesthetic categories."

The concept of Feminist aesthetics is polemical. Certain philosophers are satisfied with the phrase but, Peg Brand and Carolyn Korsmeyer call it a gendered approach to the philosophy of art which now includes myriad cognate concepts of race, sexuality, religion, class, and ethnicity. This approach, according to Rita Felski, links Feminism with aesthetics but does not edge on to a proposal stating that anything like a cohesive and mutually agreed-upon body of work can be strictly called feminist aesthetics. Hence, no one theory or codified core rudiments of feminist aesthetics have materialized. Further, more discrepancies creep in due to the vague understanding of the ever-evolving concept of "feminism.

In my opinion, feminist aesthetics is the understanding of the pattern in which gender is entwined in aesthetic theories of philosophy - how these interrelations weigh-in in the context of women's art education and practice, and to challenge the pre-established judgements - about what counted as an aesthetic object? Why were crafts like paper cutting, needlework, quilting, etc. not considered fine art? Furthermore, how disinterestedness applied to a heterosexual man gazing at the nude body of a voluptuous woman - became the bone of contention amongst feminist working in the field of art.

WOMEN'S ABSENCE FROM THE FIELD OF ART

If we look into the history of aesthetics, we find that since Plato's time and especially since the 18th century, there has been a prolonged exclusion of women from aesthetic theory. On close examination, one finds that there are different reasons for this prominent absence and it is intricately linked to various reasons the most important one being epistemology. The earliest theory of art in Greek times, affirms that art is imitation, Greek work is "mimesis". In the words of Christine Batterby, an artist of the Renaissance period was nothing but a "supreme copyist". The nation of art was derived from Plato's idea that pre-existent matter was shaped to create this world by Greek Gods. He was the Supreme creator and architect. Artist's job was to duplicate the motif of nature as designed by God. Divinity and religion were the tools of art. Women lacked reason – wit judgment, skill, by being born inferior. It accounted for their low epistemological standards and hence were kept out of the field.

The second limitation on women's contribution to aesthetics was an account of opportunities. Women were not provided with equal chances to whet their artistic skills. They were not allowed to study in academics except under tutelage of artist fathers or brothers, and above all, they were not allowed to script or paint all subjects, especially nude pictures. Women artists were to restrict their training and limit their artworks to landscape or still life, e.g. Proportion de Rossi. Lavinia Fontana. Sister Nellis in her painting of the Last supper, male characters were replaced by feminine facial features. History shows the records of arts created by men and we notice that women who had a limited access to work on different areas, their art form was basically a copy of pattern followed by males. Artemisia Gentileschis (1625-30) Sleeping Venus. Even the predated works in 350BC Praxiteles, Aphrodite of Knidas, a woman goddess was embodiment of female beauty. Her soft rounded flesh, bespeaks powers of sexuality. Three Graces of Renaissance period, the

Bath of Venus (1751) Francois Boucher characterized by blushing cheeks, red lips , pearly skin, ornamental flesh all hint at playful sexuality. Night (la Nuit) William Adolph Bougureau (1883) Avant garde Impressionists . here women is allegorized as night , a tamed temptress. Her hourglass figure suggests fecundity and sexuality. The model most commonly used in renaissance period is the body of non rational creature. It's a convenient for the male artist and his male audience that they gaze upon the female body for its appreciation and award themselves as true patron of arts.

Ironically even the activity of working, nurturing, bearing, rearing was thought to be an unconscious activity when performed by women but was a source of expression for men who deliberate upon it and express them in their work of art almost with the belief that Women lacked the sensibilities to express what they undergo.

The third limitation is on account of women being an object rather than a subject. The "male gage" is a descriptive method, especially to films (Maulvey 1985, 89). John Bergen's essay "Way of seeing women" describes how images of women are created to provide visual appeal to male. The male gaze is considered to be the rule, the normative because that is made to be understood as a vantage point and publicly sanctioned. Even the well-socialized women accept this. Any other perspective in comparisons will be a deviant an aberration.

Thinkers, especially Hilde Hein, have discussed the above three reasons for women's exclusion from the field.

Apart from these reasons, women's progress in aesthetic theorizing, I feel those could be a few more unknown obscure reasons. Firstly women are considered to achieve their ultimate through the idea of physical procreation. History holds testimony to the usage of childbirth, procreation as a metaphor for artistic creativity. The underlying principles of the mind-body dualism of western philosophy are seeded within this metaphor. The identity of women and her artistic and cognitive abilities are limited as against her intuitive and emotional sensibility.

Second I feel the compartmentalization and division of roles. The limitation of women's activity in the private sphere, her choices are limited; she does participate in crafts like stitching, sewing, knitting, quilting coping etc. This craft is traditionally devaluated and is never put to any economic value and promoted on a commercial scale to gain prominence.

Carolyn Korsmeyer calls this kind of contradistinction to female practices as "structural sexism". She points out "As the notion of fine art, in contrast with utilitarian arts, began to develop, more and more theorists maintained that the true value of art is purely aesthetic, that art is for beauty and for the aesthetic pleasure it furnishes."

Thirdly reason for their exclusion can be understood by, looking into the views of Anette Baier in her article 'The Need for more than Justice", where she states that justice so far developed by Kant & Rawls have managed to achieve recognition for people in terms of equal rights in matters of class oppression, Feminism to some extent, racism etc. However, Baier argues that justice, in itself, is not an adequate theory. It tends to overlook inequalities in a relationship, especially a parent-child relationship. Susan Okin also says that justice remains mute or silent when it comes to the rights of women within the family. So it has an unrealistic view of freedom of choice and ignores emotions like care and love. We understand the cardinal importance of these in the area of aesthetics and especially feminist aesthetics.

AESTHETICS OF NATURE AND WOMEN

Lately, even the universal issue of environment has been added by eco-feminist on different forums, and their contributions to work policy in getting things resolved in a manner that should have been long done are now being addressed. It is essential to look into it in today age of eco-crisis. Feminist philosophy has broached in this issue of aesthetics rather late; this hesitation can be on account of different reasons, one that feminist aesthetics itself is in the infancy stage. The feminist thinkers tried to analyze if the patriarchal mode of thinking not only interiorized women but extended to other class- of colour, animal, nature etc. This saw the birth of eco-feminism coined by Francoise d' Eanbonne in 1974. Briefly understanding it is a term applied to environmental advocacy with feminist analysis. Eco-feminism working on multi-dimensional approach finds expression in social, political, arts, literature, language, religion, philosophy etc. It is in this relation that we will briefly delve into the aesthetics of nature from an eco-feminist perspective. The western philosophical perspective on eco-feminism deals with conceptual issues like the concern of interconnection, between the unjustified domination of women ("other human others") on the one hand and also the unjustified domination of non-human nature. Eco-feminists

blames the "dualism", hierarchical thinking and logic of domination as the root cause of creating polar opposites male/female, mind/body, reason/emotion, human/animal, culture/ nature etc. This disjunct is seen as oppositional and exclusive with a higher status allotted to first in pair.

The link between eco-feminism and the aesthetics of nature highlights the fact that natural beauty has been excluded from the theory of aesthetics. The purpose of analyzing is to highlight that both woman and nature have traditionally been subordinated to male subjectivity and authority, both have been exploited and worked on the binaries created. This analysis will help us to rethink a woman's space in nature, particularly a woman's role in an aesthetic appreciation of nature. The eco-feminist approach works on the connection between woman and nature, and can be understood in a simple phrase "Naturalized woman and feminized nature". Kate Saper, in her book 'What is Nature', says the woman is naturalized because of her biological role of giving birth, becoming a mother and a source of life. Similarly, nature is also understood as a source of fertility, a source of sustenance, life-giver. The intertwinement between the female body and mother nature is exemplified rough sharing motherly features. We have discussed how women in the area of aesthetics are discouraged from pursuing this art. It is seen that for women who are undergoing the process, of creation is just an unconscious activity. However, men are blessed with divine reason to express it in any form of art, whereas women are considered to be incompetent knowers. Comparison of women's body and nature has been on since Plato's 'Timaeus' and Aristotle's 'On the generation of animals', nature was associated as objects of passivity got further strengthened by Descartes rationalism in Meditations. It did change in the romantic era of Shelley & Baron. But not much was accorded apart from the virtue of beauty and emotions.

Similarly, women are biologically closer to natural would than men, but are not allowed to express this in space and time.

The form of the mother is always revered nature is also deified as mother earth but the female, nature is always the object, the passive without the independence of its on expressions. The ideal would be to achieve a place for Feminism within the aesthetics of nature without social/nature divide.

CONCLUSION

Feminist aesthetics has traversed a long way, and there are visible stages in development, from the questioning of the recognition of great female artists to bring their work in public. However, Feminism cannot rest after having rejected the very foundations of aesthetics in traditional philosophy. The area needs to develop further by the twin approach of feminist aesthetics. It will be an analytical tool for a better understanding of feminist and aesthetic theory. Jane Duren, a feminist epistemologist who has done extensive weak on (Harding, Harstook, Bordo), says that "it is an upshot of our model that knowledge acquisition-epistemic justification is a context culture-related process. Its thereby very clear that it is pluralistic, different from a contextual, universal Cartesian model of knowledge. Feminism as a doctrine is often challenged as being anti-theoretical and as polemical. Feminism renounces the established monolithic view which is singular, totalizing and calls itself comprehensive. Similarly, feminist artist in aesthetics brings to table the experience of women as they are undergone by them, without universalizing. There is an inherent plurality by virtue of which both Feminism and aesthetics are conjoined and hence it also multidisciplinary. Traditionally we have observed that aesthetics has a peripheral role in western philosophy, where it restates the paradoxes of epistemology and metaphysics. This new pattern of feminist aesthetics folds new areas now paths for explorations by asking now questions, questioning the universals idea of knowledge. In the last analysis, therefore, our case for gender sensitivity, equity in the depiction of women in art and aesthetics is well established. While much has been said and done to address the issues and concerns raised above, we have a long road to success.

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Accountability of Media

Evidence from Kashmir and Casteism in India

Shivani and Sujata Roy Abhijat

Abstract

This article critically examines the role and representation of media, with a special emphasis on Indian media. India, being a culturally and religiously diverse country, is home to hyper-sensitivity when it comes to expressing something about one's religion and community. Accountability of media is one of the most important factors that help to flourish democracy. The article argues that freedom and responsibility are two sides of a media job and the media persons must contemplate and reflect on the way and consequences of their representation. The first section of the article presents a general status of media reporting when it comes to issues like Kashmir, communal conflicts, riots, and Casteism, etc. The second section will give an overview of the infamous Kashmir conflict and the status of untouchables in Indian society and media. The third part will explain two major forms of accountability needed to be stressed upon by any media system. The fourth section will discuss the philosophical relevance of the concept of freedom and accountability of media, followed by the need for self-reflection and contemplation by media persons to ensure accountability in their parts.

Media are a power that is capable of making and breaking public opinion about someone, something, and some event. A free media is the nerve of a pluralistic democratic society all over the world. But, in a culturally, communally, and religiously sensitive and diverse country like India, considering the

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immense power of media and its way of representing facts about socially sensitive issues like the Kashmir conflict, riots, Hindu-Muslim conflicts, the untouchables, and other religious or communal issues, it is important to ask: How ethical and accountable is Indian media in its acts and ways of action? Being regarded as the fourth pillar of Democracy and a watchdog of public and administrative actions, a democratic society demands Truth, Freedom, and most important, Accountability, on the part of media persons while covering and disseminating news among the masses. This paper will critically examine the accountability of Indian media when it comes to communal issues and reporting of sensitive areas like Kashmir and when it comes to dealing with the issues related to the backward classes of Hindu society. Further, it will discuss two major forms of accountability, lack of which, often leads to irresponsible behavior in India and throughout the world. Finally, this paper will provide the philosophical and practical relation and relevance of the responsibility, accountability, and self-reflection (or sensitivity, self-reflection, and sensationalization in media) in media in any democratic society.

In today's world of new media, it is much easier to convey information to the masses in a very short period. A lack of accountability in such a scenario can have catastrophic and violent outcomes. The mainstream media is liable to spread truth, especially in a sensitive state of India, like Kashmir, where the regional media is overpowered by the mainstream media; however, it is not the case most of the time. This is evident by the vast and sad history and present instances of communal violence among different communities. These clashes marked India as the fourth-worst communally sensitive nation in the world. The sensitivity to react, and at the same time, insensitivity of people to different ethnicity, communities, and religious faith exhibits itself in the form of riots and other forms of violence (Chakravorty, 2019).

When there is such violence between the two major religious communal groups, Hindus and Muslims, the media reporting is divided into two groups; one seems to favor the latter, while the other seems to support the former, and the media people present two different reports about the same incident. It becomes difficult for the audience to differentiate between fact and fabrication of fact. An accountable media is beyond the practice of favoritism; it should be informative and descriptive, rather than persuasive and directive, when it comes to representing communally sensitive issues. The demeaning behavior of media commits the Fallacy of Emotion, by appealing to and intimidating the emotions of the audience and by molding shreds of evidence as per convenience and need, resulting in more chaos in society. Despite being the most powerful element of democracy, more often media practices fail to recognize the enormous responsibility placed on its shoulders to ensure that the audience receives non-misrepresented data.

It is important to have a general idea of what the Kashmir conflict is, why Hindu-Muslim issues are considered as very sensitive in India, and why the

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accountability of media is important when printing or broadcasting a fact about it. The next section tries to explain this.

A Glimpse Over the History of the Kashmir Conflict

The insurgency of Kashmir is one of the longest-running and most critical conflicts in India; it arose during 1947 when India and Pakistan were parted after the independence from British rule. The partition relied on a religious basis; the region of Hindu majority was called India and Pakistan was envisioned as a Muslim majority province. The kings who were ruling a certain region had to choose to accede in either of the states. At that time the region of Kashmir came under a Hindu king, who delayed the decision to choose either India or Pakistan (Dixit, 2002). During the end of 1947, a Kashmir group got support from the Pakistan Army and rebelled against the king and the king approached the Prime Minister of India for help. Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru agreed to offer conditional military assistance only if the king would accede to India. When the conditions were met, the Indian army airlifted into Kashmir and the war lasted until 1949; on 1 January 1949 the United Nations declared a ceasefire between both countries. Since this war, the area captured by the Kashmir rebels and the Pakistan forces is called "Azad" (free) Kashmir by Pakistan and "Pakistan Occupied Kashmir" (PoK) by India. Further, the area under the province of India is called Jammu & Kashmir by India and "India-Occupied Kashmir" by Pakistan and the Kashmir rebellion groups (Schofield, 2003). The religious identity and affiliation was a major factor behind the issue that Kashmir should be a part of India or Pakistan. Pakistan argued concerning the Two Nation theory that being a Muslim majority region, Kashmir should be a part of Pakistan's territory. On the other hand, the leaders of India insisted that since India was founded as a pluralistic and multi-religious nation, any part of its territory cannot be separated, based on religious affiliation. It was also argued that since the king of Kashmir finally agreed to accede into India during the war, it is a part of India. This Kashmir issue further took a violent turn in the form of major wars in 1965, 1971, and 1999. The conflict took a major turn when a separatist movement arose in Kashmir, with an objective of self-rule, independent of both India and Pakistan, which led to brutal violence such as the civilian massacre of the minority religious group and mass rapes (Bali, 2014). This is a brief outline of the Kashmir conflict which created a catastrophic situation between India and Pakistan, and which took the lives of numerous innocent people and devastated the lives of many others.

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The Role of Media in the Kashmir Valley

The role of media is critical because it is the only source for common people to get to know about the events based on which they form a perception about something.

A study reveals that while reporting certain cases like Kashmir and Communal Riots, reporters abandon objectivity and are subjective in their reporting. For instance, certain Kashmir based reporters are subjectively reporting when it comes to defending security forces; they accuse Pakistan as the sponsor of separatism and other violence and employ hard language against New Delhi media. It shows how media is divided and serves the interest of the audience of their region. As in Hindu majority regions of Kashmir newspapers print pro-India and anti-freedom reports, whereas the newspapers in Muslim majority provinces write about anti-India and pro-freedom reports. And the senior journalists of both regions find this selective serving according to the readers' interest justifiable. The media actions in a tense and violence-prone area like Kashmir are determined by the political parties, which put media persons under various sorts of pressure and threats. The reporters struggle to indicate facts because the persons in power are not ready to hear the truth and journalists become mere scapegoats of power (Bali, 2014).

As spreading facts ensures awareness, spreading false rumors harms the audience. Media and newspapers of India are often charged with being a part of and fomenting and aggravating communal violence. In covering issues like communal violence, the media play a pivotal role in shaping opinions and spreading mass awareness. When it comes to ethnic or communal issues, most of the media serve the facts in a sensationalized manner intending to manipulate reality (Chakravorty, 2019).

Accuracy and accountability in media actions are what make media the fourth pillar of democracy and the link between the public and the government.

It is argued that while media become very active during the occurrence of a violent incident, such as riots and stone punt in Kashmir, to gain television rating points (TRPs) but their interest fades as the violence de-escalates; they see covering and spreading the news of these incidents as a "mission to be accomplished" or a business project to be completed. In following this strategy they ignore the responsibility of knowing and telling what happens to the victims of the incident. During this time, the media hold a social responsibility to facilitate effective communication, capable of overcoming the tension, and attempting to spread peace (Chakravorty, 2019).

Media are not free and fair in different parts of the world; for instance, it is claimed that media presentation of Kashmir issues are headed and decided by New Delhi, and the mainstream media either show only one side of the coin or represent an opposite picture of the scenario of huge loss in terms of mass

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shootouts and rapes. In Kashmir media is banned, to hide varying forms of the barbarism of security persons. Data show how media houses can express an event positively or negatively. A negative presentation or misrepresentation of facts in Kashmir as well as throughout the world demolishes the image of the place and its people as well (Lone, 2018). It is time that media play an active role in representing the issues and events; media actions should be free, fair, and accountable.

The most recent instances which show a divergence among various news channels include matters such as removing Article 370 from Kashmir by the Indian Government, passing the laws regarding CAA and NRC, and the riots in North-East Delhi over the issue of CAA and NRC.

Casteism and Media in India

The accountability of Indian media is questionable, not just when it comes to two different religions, but also among different classes, within one religion, Hinduism. A particular group of Indian society called the Untouchables or Dalits have been discriminated against and oppressed by the other so-called upper-class groups, since time immemorial. The media has emerged as one of the strongest representatives of common citizens; it has always depicted a questionable representation of the issues of certain communities that are considered to be Untouchables in Indian society. Here, the issue is not just exclusion of their problems, but their exclusion, discrimination, and oppression in representation as well as recruitment in journalism. This doctrine of untouchability is rooted in the Varna system, which divides Hindus into four varnas—Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra. These four groups are called Savarnas, and the individuals not covered in these categories are called Avarnas. The latter group and the fourth group of the Varna system are considered of low standing by the other three Savarna categories.

Different forms of social and economic discrimination against these groups is a not an uncommon social fact of Indian Society. Even today, in rural areas, they continue to perform defiling and stigmatized occupations that no other group prefers to do; they have to bear various physical and mental atrocities because of their occupation and designated lower role and status in the community. The practices have not completely vanished in urban India, but it is more subtle and sophisticated in its intensity (Kumar, 2009). This prejudice against these groups is also practiced in the field of media at various levels and in different forms. The media, particularly journalism, are not liberated from the clichés about the caste, class, religion, and region, with profit-making tendencies and attempts of the majority and powerful individuals of society. According to Ninian, the entry of casteism into the media and journalism profession divided journalists along the caste lines. The major incident that

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publicly influenced the caste-vs-government relations and media-vs-government relations as well is the Mandal Commission Report in the 1990s. That report aimed to assist and empower the socially and economically underprivileged Other Backward Classes (OBCs) by reserving seats in various educational institutions and government employment sectors. This report aroused protests and hatred between the upper and lower castes, and some upper-class protesters committed suicide to rebel against the report (Ninian, 2003). Such incidents demand the accountability of media persons to state the facts without expressing personal hatred toward any of the groups. The use of casteist angles and vocabularies in portraying a fact slants the actual event, resulting in favoritism for one's group and hatred towards the other among the audiences. When the credibility of a source is determined by its caste rather than facts, the objectivity in reporting vanishes from the platform of media; it results in hate speeches, fake news, false accusations, and sensationalization to increase profit margins (Murthy, 2008). There are different standpoints on the role of media during regional strife (Shaw, 2014; Sridhar, 2009), but it is an undeniable fact that media actions are "controversial" in such scenarios. Ninian and Chattarji (2013) argue that "media bias, ethics, and practices are not merely professional matters for journalists. Nor do they relate only to seemingly abstract concepts such as democracy and the public sphere," as its biased nature is visible at every domain of reporting in representing issues like caste atrocities, communal violence, religious conflicts, or social inequality. The marginalisation of the Untouchables of Indian communities is not limited to social exclusion but practiced as media exclusion as well.

Two Major Forms of Accountability

An overview of the status of media in the valley of Kashmir and media behavior towards the backward classes shows that the practice of irresponsible and unaccountable behavior can be conceptualized under two categories.

The first is structural accountability, the absence of which leads to unaccountable behavior of media which is influenced by the politically powerful individuals and a group of the country or state. This is very common in a place like Kashmir, which is always surrounded by political tensions. Another feature of this account is imposed on the owners of media sources and news channels. Structural unaccountability is a hierarchical phenomenon that usually flows from top to bottom, and guides the format of representation of any information spread among the masses.

The second is personal accountability; ignoring this form of accountability is very common by media persons due to personal beliefs or opinions about some group or event. Using media as a profit-making business is one of the major reasons for losing personal accountability, for instance, sensationalizing

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news for gaining higher TRPs. The second feature of this form is that it is not imposed externally or forcefully; rather it acts as a directive principle for media persons. It can be argued that the former is influenced by the latter.

The lack of any sense of accountability turns out to be fatal for the very aim of media in one of the largest democratic countries like India or in any other democratic country.

A Philosophical Outlook on Accountability of Media

There are theoretical, practical, and normative aspects of ethics, but it is not easy to bridge the gap between theory and practice when it comes to an ever-developing and expanding field of media. Media ethics is one of the most controversial and debatable issues of applied ethics. Ethics has to do with duty—duty to self and duty to others. It is private and personal, although it relates to obligations and duties to others. The discipline of media ethics is grounded in the normative foundation of ethical philosophy, primarily interested in dealing with issues like truth, objectivity, subjectivity, public welfare and interest, duties and rights of media persons, freedom representation, responsibility, and self-responsibility on the part of agents. Media covers a wide range of methods and technologies such as radio, TV, web, etc., that are used to disseminate information and to interact with the social world. The New Media, which is continuously evolving, provide the freedom to anyone of informing mass audiences about an event. In India, which is a country of diversity, with diverse religions, caste, class, and religion, even a single misrepresented fact is enough to act as fuel for communal violence.

Since media is a profession joined by individuals for earning a living, it is difficult to abridge the gap between ethics and profit, though it is not impossible to look at media from an ethical perspective. Media ethics is a sensitive issue as media is an inseparable feature of a democratic country and it bears direct relation with a governing body and citizens; hence, media persons always carry a peculiar sense of freedom as well as accountability.

It is impossible to imagine a democratic country that does not ensure freedom of expression to its citizens and the press or media. The writers, broadcasters, and journalists emphasize these operations in a nexus society and enable it to bring the democratic process into being. The journalists represent the fundamental right of freedom of expression on behalf of the people of a democratic society who are generally unaware of the political and public actions and intentions of government and other authorities. It is this relationship between journalists and the public, whose freedom they represent (along with their freedom of expression as a journalist), which is the basic reason of the obligation the journalists feel to exercise the freedom of expression in an ethical and accountable way. This genuineness and responsibility are demanded on

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the part of journalists because how they represent things is an important factor that influences, shapes, and breaks the audience's ideology and beliefs about any particular group, place, person, political party, event, etc.

What is important is to note the complementary sense of responsibility that is assigned to individuals since absolute freedom can lead to catastrophic effects that turn out to be dangerous for the citizens and the democracy itself. The concept of freedom is necessarily related to autonomy as well as responsibility and one of the possible demonstrations of this relation is that autonomy is the intrinsic human capacity and responsibility of how this freedom should be exercised, keeping morals and ethics in mind in relation with other individuals of society and for maintaining democracy. This helps to draw a line between democracy and tyranny in society. Since free media are a benchmark of a democratic society, this relation is to be kept in mind while collecting, editing, and disseminating the news by media persons.

Accountability and Self-Reflection

The co-existence of accountability and freedom maintains that any degree of increment in the status of human freedom is followed by a proportionate increment in responsibility because whenever ethical aspects of any action are considered, freedom raises the issue of responsibility. Freedom is of key value but so is responsibility. It can be said that someone is free to cry Fire in a crowded public place which can result in riots, panic, and terror, but is he or she morally right in doing so? The dual experience of freedom and personal responsibility are two sides of the same phenomena. Thomas Szasz argues that this relationship is like a double-edged sword; one is freedom and the other is obligation and since time immemorial humans have made efforts to maximize freedom and minimize responsibility to conquer other beings and things, accompanied by a desire to remove all constraints and hurdles that stop them from satisfying their demands (Johannesen, 1990). A media person needs to handle this double-edged sword of freedom and responsibility because both are two sides of their profession; freedom is needed to disseminate uncorrupted and un-manipulated data, guided by a sense of responsibility while doing so. For example, a media person needs to represent a murder story, but it does not mean that any religious or cultural community can be held responsible for it without any shred of evidence. One of the contexts in which the freedom of expression can be limited or questioned by a sense of responsibility is either by a polite request or by suggesting that the agents who enjoy free expression ought to carry and exercise ethical responsibility in whatever they express and how they choose to express it (Riordan, 2016).

The above argument is very important from the perspective of media ethics because how the freedom is exercised is the central concern of the

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responsibility on the part of journalists at various levels. For example, portraying a particular community as good or bad to attract the audience of the other group, or sensationalizing any event for the sake of TRPs, is highly contestable, or choosing to cover a star-studded event rather than pointing towards the deteriorated conditions of schools and hospitals is not responsible media behavior.

As claimed by Brown also, we must have some rational concerns for others' welfare in our society for their sake and not just to treat them as means to fulfill one's pursuit, narrow concerns, profit-seeking, or private projects. Without realizing this, it is not possible to convince others of any ethical behavior because someone's narrow interest will always restrict moral behavior (Brown, 1986). This responsibility towards others is well explained by Levinas, cited by Bauman, who says the creation of the meaning of the other and one's self gives rise to one's freedom and ethical freedom (Zygmunt, 1993). Referring to Levinas's ethics, it is argued that one cannot deny the other and the needs of the other because her very existence makes us ethically responsible, a notion that is undeniable and limitless (Knights & O'Leary, 2006).

The self-reflection demanded on the part of journalists can be understood as a critical reflection over the work done by them, and the means used by them from an ethical perspective. The core concern is enhancing the awareness of one's assumptions, values, and intentions embedded in practice, and the various social, cultural, and psychological forces shaping these assumptions and values. This concern is also emphasized by postmodern thinking that advocates a self-critical stance to go beyond subjective ideas and interests, engendering openness towards plurality and the inclusiveness of others (Hugman, 2003).

They can examine whether the means they are using and the data they are presenting is genuine or just a manipulation guided by self-interest or interest of a particular person, group, and community. The moral regulation should not be regarded as an obstacle in exercising free expression but as a positive force toward a free as well as moral expression. It is admitted that autonomy does not offer absolute protection to every expressive act nor point to other values that might justify restrictions on freedom of expression. This appears to be the strategy of Martin H. Radish who acknowledges that in certain situations "free speech interests must give way to a competing social interest" and for this reason some form of balance must be introduced (Peonidic, 1998).

This balance can be maintained by developing the capacity of moral thinking in the media persons. Self-regulation is an important tool that helps in establishing a moral society and a moral profession. All immoralities cannot be completely wiped out by passing laws; the continuing presence of immoralities and different social evils are the proof; hence, some effort on the individual's part is also necessary. All human beings have the capacity for moral thinking. Moral thinking can be both general and particular and this moral thinking is linked to experience (Lee & Christians, 2009). For instance, murder,

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generally, may be wrong for all but honesty cannot be a primary aim for every individual. The kinds of irresponsibility and unethical behavior that need to be regulated by a moral thinking capacity can be understood with the help of these examples of irresponsible media behavior. For instance, it is an unethical practice when a media person covers an event or act, say, a protest or a program, because of his or her interests. This is a discrimination against others who are also a part of it as well as a treacherous act from the point of audiences who depend on media for information. This discrimination is an unethical and irresponsible use of freedom of expression because it represents a biased attitude toward a particular group or person. This discrimination can be based on caste, class, religion, gender, and a social or financial status which is already a matter of ethical concern.

Further, when media is willingly expressing fake news or misrepresenting a person's image, praising or blaming a particular person just for the sake of personal beliefs or when media acts as a puppet in the hands of higher authorities and powerful persons who want to be portrayed in a good light, this is irresponsible behavior that is needed to be reflected upon from an ethical point of view. Audiences are necessarily influenced by media, so, it is their responsibility to make people aware of what is happening in the outside world and not to misguide them. Other debatable issues such as objectification and dehumanization of individuals, false advertisements, debates regarding discrimination based on gender and other factors, are instances of unethical and irresponsible media behavior. The sense of responsibility this paper is discussing is not a legal restriction that is to be imposed on citizens but the elimination of unethical performance of media persons using self-reflection. Responsibility in communication should, by definition, be an ethical rather than a legal concern and because meaningful ethics involves choices, people are free (and likely) to make some wrong decisions about what is or is not responsible communication (Gordon, 2006). Hence, a journalist's understanding of ethical performance is very important in acting responsibly in presenting data. The media should act on behalf of those who are oppressed rather than those who want to oppress.

However, the sense of responsibility does not ignore the importance of the freedom to express; when there is a freedom to express only then can we discuss whether it should be exercised ethically or unethically. The right for freedom of expression is nourished with a strong background formulated by great philosophers and thinkers. Mill's idea of liberty of expression can be summed up in the fourfold arguments presented by him in the second chapter of *On Liberty*. Mill argues:

> If any opinion is compelled to silence, that opinion, may, for aught we can certainly know, be true. To deny this is to assume our infallibility. Secondly, though the silenced opinion may be an error, it may ... contain a portion of truth; and since the general or prevailing opinion on any subject is rarely or

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never the whole truth, it is only by the collision of adverse opinions that the remainder of the truth has any chance of being supplied. Thirdly, even if the received opinion is not only true, but the whole truth; unless it is suffered to be, and is, vigorously and earnestly contested, it will, by most of those who receive it, be held in the manner of a prejudice, with little comprehension or feeling of its rational grounds. And not only this, but, fourthly, the meaning of the doctrine itself will be in danger of being lost or enfeebled, and deprived of its vital effect on the character and conduct: the dogma becoming a mere formal profession, inoperative for good, but cumbering the ground and preventing the growth of any real and heartfelt conviction [Mill, 1879].

Hence, Mill has provided us a fully-fledged account for emphasizing the need and importance of liberty of expression for individuals and press as well. The arguments given by Mill are not contradictory to the self-reflection of the media person when they are preparing for the representation of any data. This compatibility between freedom and responsibility is evident in the "harm principle" advanced by Mill. He argued that individual desires and realizations are the mirrors that truly reflect individual freedom but they should also exercise the responsibility of not harming others: "The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited; he must not make a nuisance of himself"; this should not be regarded as a disgrace of the right of freedom because freedom is grounded in a variety of situations (Knights & Leary, 2006).

Just like freedom, responsibility is also compatible with a democratic state and it will not harm freedom but will help to regulate freedom ethically, because there is no doubt that excess can lead to certain unethical consequences too.

There are situations when agents have to make immediate decisions and have to choose between two options, for instance, whether the identity of a rape victim should be revealed or be kept hidden in a conservative society? In case of extreme need what should be chosen, an unethical job or a moral ideology? How will an owner of a news channel balance the ethical expectations and moral obligations if TRPs is the sole way to survive in a competitive business world? Are there maxims capable of covering infinite events occurring worldwide and is it practically possible to apply these standards to every event? The contemplation of the relevance of freedom and their responsibility as the representatives of the common people and the authorities can help the media person to be accountable and honest with whatever information is offered.

Conclusion

The role of media in the representation of the Kashmir issue and the issue of oppressed groups of Indian Society shows that media presentation is mostly driven by the beliefs of the media person (the reporter, owner, or editor) and profit-seeking tendencies. From the philosophical analysis, it can be outlined

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that freedom and responsibility are not contradictory, but both are needed to ensure a free democratic and moral society. The basic question analyzed in this paper is whether it is justifiable to perform unethical deeds and irresponsible decisions by media persons behind the veil of a right of freedom of expression? And the answer is, NO, as media is one of the most influential tools of democracy. Its irresponsible, unethical and corrupted behavior can turn democracy into tyranny. In India, the pluralism of religions and communities is its uniqueness but it can have catastrophic effects, as the consequence of misrepresented and unaccountable media reporting. The long-lasting Kashmir conflict, Communal riots, and violence, exclusion, and misrepresentations of Dalits are its most common examples.

It's not possible to provide a universal law through which a media person can act every time, and in every situation, as they deal with varying issues in varying situations and because of it, any single normative theory is not sufficient as a moral guideline. Therefore, deontological, utilitarian, and virtue ethics theories a must to be evaluated by one's self-reflection in different contexts of acts and events; consideration of contexts through critical self-reflexivity overrules the rigidity of normative theories. This approach is more effective because it recognizes the importance of freedom and responsibility for media persons in a democratic society and absolute freedom may appear attractive enough but fail to qualify moral standards and to snub the ethical responsibility that is, certainly, harmful for other individuals in society.

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Shivani is a second year Ph.D. student (full time research scholar) in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Delhi, India. Her doctoral research investigates the study of the great thinker John Rawls and her research topic is "An Analysis of Contemporary Theories of Justice from the Feminist Perspective." Shivani holds a Master's in Philosophy from the University of Delhi. She was awarded NET-JRF by UGC (a mandatory exam for lectureship in India along with a monthly stipend for research). She takes a multidisciplinary approach that encompasses the fields of gender study, media ethics, intercultural ethics, and social and political perception of care and justice. She is a general member of The Aristotelian Society, UK, Royal Institute Philosophy, UK, & Yale University Art Gallery. Research Scholar, Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, RZG-49/7, Nihal Vihar, New Delhi—110041, India. <philshi05@gmail.com>.

Dr. Sujata Roy Abhijat's major areas of research include environmental ethics, social and political philosophy, feminist thought, and applied ethics. She is the former assistant director of Lucknow University from 2009 to 2012. She is the author of *Environment and Religion*. Assistant Professor; Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, Delhi, India. <roysujata18@gmail.com>.

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Implication of the Contribution of Prosody in Language Acquisition for Chomskyan Nativism

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Implications of the Contribution of Prosody in Language Acquisition for Chomskyan Nativism

R. M. Singh

Abstract

The detailed review of the literature related to language acquisition undertaken in the present article reveals that Chomskyans accord very little attention to the possible role that infant/children's environment may be playing in the realization of specific linguistic behavior. Nor do they seem to appreciate implications of the fact that the brain is fundamentally very different from all other organs of the body as changes in brain's structural, functional, and representational properties are significantly modulated by its engaged environment and plasticity. This oversight seems to be responsible for, at least to some extent, their inability to appreciate the fact that the effects of biological endowment on cognitive capacities including linguistic abilities are mediated through experience. In light of the empirical data discussed here, the Chomskyan claim that language acquisition does not depend on learning and basically requires triggering of certain language-specific mechanisms, appears quite problematic. Furthermore, the review of extensive research on the role of prosody in language acquisition as well as the changing nature of the significance of different cues with time further highlights the facilitative nature of such aspects in language acquisition. Consideration of all these facts tends to considerably strengthen the neuroconstructivist account as a more plausible and satisfactory approach for understanding the process of language acquisition than Chomskyan nativism.

1. Introduction

The detailed review of the literature related to language acquisition undertaken in the present article reveals that Chomskyans accord very little attention to the possible role that infant/children's environment may be playing in the realization of specific linguistic behavior. Nor do they seem to appreciate implications of the fact that the brain is fundamentally very different from all other organs

of the body as changes in brain's structural, functional, and representational properties are significantly modulated by its engaged environment and plasticity. This oversight seems to be responsible for, at least to some extent, their inability to appreciate the fact that the effects of biological endowment on cognitive capacities including linguistic abilities are mediated through experience. Chomskyans' appeal to the ill specified and scientifically untestable notion of triggering is a case in point. Also, what we know now about effects of genes on individual cognitive achievements are far too complex and indirect (Fisher, 2006, 291; Johnston & Edwards, 2002; Karmiloff-Smith, 2018, 267 & 278*f*.; Karmiloff-Smith, 2006, 15; Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith, 2002) and not as straightforward as has usually been assumed in the literature inspired by nativist inclinations (Gopnik & Crago, 1991; Pinker, 1994, 1997, 1999 & 2001; Frangiskakis *et al.,* 1996; Barkow, Cosmides, & Tooby, 1992; Duchaine, Cosmides, & Tooby, 2001). That is, the mapping from structure to function to behaviour is many-to-many as genes code for proteins and not cognitive subsystems (Li & Lindenberger, 2002, 761; Muller, 2002, 764). Also, there is significant literature that details modularizing effects of developmental processes that tends to support neuroconstructivist account of cognitive development (D'Souza & Karmiloff-Smith, 2016, Karmiloff-Smith & Johnson, 1991; Karmiloff-Smith, 1992; Elman *et al.,* 1996; Mareschal *et al.,* 2007; Quartz, 1993; Quartz & Sejnowski, 1997) rather than the static modularist outlook[1]. As has been pointed out by Karmiloff-Smith, the important question in this context is to ask whether "specific genes be invoked to map directly onto cognitive-level modules, and are cognitive-level modules prespecified or do they emerge gradually as the result of a process of modularization over developmental time?" (Karmiloff-Smith, 2006, 10).

In this regard, what appears important for settling issues surrounding relative influence of environment and genetic endowment in cracking the riddle of language is whether the influence of development on cognition is unidirectional or whether cognition also affects development thereby rendering the relationship bi-directional? Viewed from the perspective of neuroconstructivism, the developmental processes appear to be experience driven, emergent, involve complex interactions within the organism and the outside world at multiple levels (eg., genetic, neural, behavioral, cultural, ecological, etc.) as well as multiple timescales (D'Souza *et al.,* 2017, 593). And language acquisition is

no exception. The problem with Chomskyans is just not that they offer no psychologically plausible account of development but almost offer no account of development. Invocation of triggering is considered to settle all developmental issues for them. However, the matter of scientific testability of effects of triggering has not been addressed by them. Chomskyans seem to assume the truth of their hypothesis about triggering without proving it. Nor do they consider triggering to be in any way affected by the nature of the linguistic input. They also seem to grossly overestimate children's early linguistic competence (Lieven *et al.,* 1997; Tomasello, 2000 & 2003). Are Chomskyans therefore guilty of overlooking the complexity and messy nature of the reality of biological and cognitive processes? For attempting to answer such a question, the present article reviews the contribution of the role of prosody in language acquisition.

2. The Contribution of Prosody for Language Acquisition

One of the first and perhaps the most difficult task that new learners of a language face is of segmenting nearly continuous acoustic signal into linguistically relevant chunks. That the speech signal needs to be broken into smaller units for comprehension to be possible is beyond doubt. However, what possibly guides infants in this exercise has not been very clear and the issue is far from settled. It is in this context that researchers have tried to examine whether prosodic structure of a language (i.e., the interplay between four acoustic properties of the speech signal, namely, pitch, duration, rhythm, and intensity) provides any reliable clue about the syntactic structure of the language in question.

Mehler and Christophe (2000) and Mehler *et al.* (1996) report from their research on infants that "purely phonological information…directly gives information about syntax" (Mehler & Christophe, 2000, 900). They believe that "the way a language sounds gives information as to its abstract structure" (901). Their research on infants also shows how the perceptual responses of infants as young as two months old have undergone significant reorganization that predisposes them to filter out differences specific to foreign languages as irrelevant. According to the framework proposed by Mehler and colleagues, "babies discriminate languages on the basis of prosodic properties" (898). Their model successfully predicts that "infants should have most

difficulty discriminating languages having similar prosodic rhythmic properties" (898). Studies by Jusczyk and his colleagues have also documented how infants' sensitivity to regularities in their ambient language sound patterns is a marker of their having begun segmenting the speech signal (Jusczyk & Kemler Nelson, 1996).

As regards the factors that help infants in this exercise, infant directed speech (IDS) has been identified as one important factor that helps infants learn their language (Cristia, 2013; de Boer, 2012; Hohle, 2009; Mol *et al.,* 2017; Vallabha *et al*., 2007). The studies directed at examining the nature of IDS demonstrate that infant directed utterances are short, clearer and "highly biased toward repetitive lexical items and syntactic frames…[show]…exaggerated lengthening of vowel duration at clause boundaries" (Bernstein-Ratner, 1996, 143); the Type-Token Ratio of maternal speech is low; exhibit disproportional lengthening of content words over function words. Fisher and Tokura (1996) in their work aimed at analyzing IDS have also been able to identify many acoustic cues that "reveal robust correspondences between the sounds of utterances and their syntax" (359). The IDS in a way thus exaggerates certain distinctions and downplay others (Cristia, 2013). This helps in reshaping phonetic categories so as to have necessary repertoire in place for the mastery of the native language. The studies have also noted that infants prefer IDS over adult directed speech (Cooper & Aslin, 1990; Thiessen *et al.,* 2005). The role of IDS is also found to be changing over time as infants mature. Though the contribution of IDS is empirically testable, the nature of IDS has not been studied as thoroughly as is necessary (de Boer, 2012) nor value of many of its features appreciated or assessed owing in part to sustained rejection of its usefulness for language acquisition by Chomskyans. For instance, Neil Smith (1999) argues that motherese might be more of a hindrance than a facilitator in language acquisition. Chomsky also does not consider study of mother-child interaction to be of any consequence (Chomsky, 1984).

Despite such pronouncements by Chomskyans, the research aimed at investigating the role of prosody has made considerable progress. For instance, Peters' work (1997) has been quite successful in showing how the phonological structure of language facilitates acquisition of its morphological system. For example, the features that seem to guide children to break continuous speech into manageable chunks are frequency, and prosodic and locational

saliency. Children therefore first learn to speak only the salient syllables and subsequently fill-in the gaps. Considerable evidence is also available to show that there is considerable variation in attentional resources that children allocate to different aspects of the phonetic signal (Peters, 1997). Data from studies also shows that prosodic features of the linguistic input help infants direct attention at certain important aspects of linguistic signal that are helpful in mastering the syntax (Bryant & Barrett, 2007; Christiansen & Dale, 2001; Reali *et al.,* 2003; Peters & Stromqvist, 1996). Kelly's work (1996) also emphasizes the important role of phonological cues in learning the grammatical class of words. Several researchers in the area (for example, Bernstein-Ratner, 1986; Pye, 1983) thus argue that infant directed speech contains enough prosodic cues to facilitate bootstrapping into phrase structure. Morgan, Shi, and Allopena's (1996) work has for instance highlighted that linguistic input contains elements that are "sufficient to support induction of rudimentary grammatical categories closely corresponding to function words and content words" (280). Similarly, Jusczyk and his colleagues (1994 & 1996) through their series of penetrating studies over the years have shown that infants are able to make use of prosodic features of their native language for "recovering aspects of the syntactic organization of native language input" (Jusczyk & Kemler Nelson, 1996, 399). Locke also recognizes the role of motherese in highlighting clause boundaries in his extended review of literature on the topic (1993, 90f.) and thus help in acquisition of language (Falk, 2012, 319; Falk, 2009).

However, recognizing the role of prosody in language acquisition in no way commits one to the position that reliance on prosodic features of the speech signal is sufficient to acquire syntax. Such a contention is bound to be problematic because the relation between prosody and syntax is not one-to-one (Hirsh-Pasek, Tucker, & Golinkoff, 1996). Fisher and Tokura (1996), for instance, rightly recognize that prosodic structure provides only "a limited cue to syntax" (352). In the context of assessing the facilitative role of prosody in language acquisition, it is important not to overlook the essential point that most researchers interested in understanding the prosodic features of the speech signal have been trying to make. Their main concern in this exercise has been to highlight that paying attention to acoustic cues contained in the speech signal considerably reduces the level of difficulty involved in breaking the linguistic code for children. Moreover, exploitation

of prosodic features of the speech signal does not entail that language learning children cannot make use of other cues. This is a point well recognized in the field. Jusczyk and Kemler Nelson (1996), for instance, recognize that "prosodic markers are only one of a number of possible probabilistic sources of information that infants may rely on to recover the constituent structure of utterances" (406). So, it is not just one set of cues that is available to a language learner. Christophe *et al.* (1997) in their assessment of phonological bootstrapping hypothesis conclude that "the speech signal offers many cues to a language's structure, and that babies seem to be well equipped to process these cues" (608). Thus, researchers who believe that prosody serves as a reliable guide to gain access to syntax and that infants are in fact capable of utilizing such cues are in no way arguing that prosodic information is all that there is to speech.

3. The Dynamic Nature of Utilization of Cues

As opposed to the Chomskyan pronouncements, there is increasing recognition among researchers working on language acquisition of the fact that language acquisition requires exploitation of different cues and that significance of these cues changes with time (Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, 1996). This is in a way the thrust of "emergentist coalition model" advanced by Hollich *et al.,* (2000) as they endeavour to show when and how children utilize different cues for word learning (Hollich *et al.,* 2000; Hollich, Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, 1998). That is, the cues are neither created equal nor is their utilization fixed once and for all (Golinkoff, Hirsh-Pasek & Hollich, 1999). The relative weight of different cues varies with time. What is found to be taking place is a "probabilistic convergence of information from multiple sources" (Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, 1996, 6). The language learner is therefore not an unbiased learner, but a biased one who utilizes information from multiple sources. For instance, Bloom (2000) reports that while initially children are found to be intensely relying upon attentional mechanisms and associative learning, subsequently they are seen to be switching their emphasis to social-pragmatic cues and linguistic heuristics (126). All the cues are accordingly not accessed from the start as they cannot be capitalized upon at all times. This means that while one set of cues that are important at one stage of development may be subsequently replaced at another

stage by yet another set of cues that are more appropriate and useful in the changed circumstances. The child could therefore begin language acquisition with prosody and end up with syntax. The choice of cues is thus not a question of making categorical choices. The basic aim of the entire exercise is to have better and improved word learning tools in place. And all is well in so far as that is being achieved.

Hollich *et al.* (2000) are very forthright in their conclusions in this regard when they assert that "there is no single cue to word learning" (110). There are, however, other factors that have to be in place so that the infant is in a position to make use of the information contained in the speech signal. The information that begins to be exploited at a certain stage may have all along been there, but other factors might have hindered its utilization. Hirsh-Pasek, Tucker, and Golinkoff (1996) clearly recognize that there are multiple inputs at work and that all are available to the infant. They state that "It is not these inputs [from syntax, semantics, and prosody] that *become* available at different developmental times. Rather, the relative weight of these systems in the overall acquisition process are subject to developmental shift" (460, emphasis author's). There is indeed a marked shift in the weight given by children to different cues in the course of development as the results of various studies reveal. So, all that matters to children is their success in acquiring a language to communicate with and make their way in the world. It is not without significance that such a reading of word learning is also supported by the data reporting dramatic changes in infants' learning strategies over time. Not surprisingly, the need for recognizing the role of different cues available to the child for breaking the language barrier has been voiced with ever increasing frequency in the recent years.

It is in this context, as also to confirm that infants are in fact in a position to exploit different cues contained in the speech signal that researchers have of late also directed their attention at examining whether infants do in fact have cognitive resources to extract the necessary useful information from the speech. Such investigations are particularly important as they allow us to understand better how developmental events in non-linguistic domain(s) may be contributing to the perception of speech information. Investigations directed at identifying and discerning the role played by different factors at different times in developmental trajectory is in fact necessary for understanding the phenomena of language acquisition. Werker *et al.* (1996) in their work, for example,

recognize that without the knowledge of cognitive resources and speech perception biases that infants bring to bear upon their analysis of speech signal "we have no way of knowing just what information in the speech stream infants are perceiving, and we have no way of knowing just what functional linguistic task that information is serving" (443). A significant finding that these studies on language acquisition seem to establish is the need to change the common tendency of only focusing on the final results, the grammar of a fluent speaker in the present case, and begin paying equal attention to mechanisms responsible for bringing about such results. The other important lessons to take home from this research are: (i) that introduction of small biases in development can result in big differences in final outcomes; and (ii) that different constraints in word learning that we come to observe as infants' word learning progresses "are the product of developmental processes rather than the engines of that development" (Golinkoff, Hirsh-Pasek & Hollich, 1999)[2].

4. The Problematic Nature of Chomskyan Position

As opposed to some of these exciting developments in the field of language acquisition, Chomsky's talk of different languages in terms of "parametric differences" (Chomsky, 1975, 1981 & 1986) neither offers any information about how parameter setting actually takes place nor does it tell us anything about how infants come to crack the code of their ambient language. As pointed out by Mazuka (1996), this problem persists in the literature on the grammatical parameter setting approach because parameter setting requires a great deal of learning on the part of the child which the Chomskyan approach cannot permit without surrendering its central claim. Children for Chomskyans are supposed to be having knowledge of language that clearly appears beyond the means available to them at the time. The approach of parameter setting thus turns out to be paradoxical because "The Head Direction parameter is supposed to determine the order in which the head and its complement should appear in the language being acquired. But, for children to set this parameter, they must first find out which units are the heads and which are the compliments in the sentences they hear. If their linguistic skills are sophisticated enough to know which are heads and compliments, they will also know which order they come in. If they already know

which order the head and compliment come in sentences, there is no need to set the parameter" (Mazuka 1996, 326).

Though there are several explanations to account for why Chomskyans find themselves in such a situation, I have found the diagnosis offered by Allen and Seidenberg (1999) to be the most relevant in the present context. In their view, the competence-performance distinction and Chomskyan tendency to ignore aspects of linguistic performance are the reasons responsible for their failure to satisfactorily account for how infants acquire their first language. The Chomskyans, for these researchers, tend to overemphasize the complexity and uniqueness of language because they disregard performance aspects in their explanations of linguistic structure. Because they do not take into consideration important contribution of these factors, for Allen and Seidenberg, they have come to wrongly characterize "the nature of linguistic cognition in a fundamental way" (117). Furthermore, while Chomskyans ignore performance data in their characterization of linguistic structure, "the primary data on which [their]…approach relies -- grammaticality judgments -- are themselves performance data" (117). Similarly, Chomsky's arguments for undermining the role of linguistic input on the grounds that this helps us avoid combinatorial explosion in the absence of negative feedback necessary for language learning are found to be fallacious by Allen and Seidenberg as they find statistical and probabilistic aspects of language to be playing a facilitative role in language acquisition.

5. Evidence for Utilization of Statistical Features of the Input

The rigorous examination of statistical aspect of language input has been the focus of studies for long by scholars. In this context studies by Aslin, Saffran, Newport and their co-workers have been very significant for having directed specific attention to investigation of this aspect of the language input in a series of studies (Saffran, Aslin & Newport, 1996; Saffran, Newport & Aslin, 1996; Aslin, Saffran & Newport, 1998). Clearly recognizing that the role of innate and environmental factors is likely to be differentially played out in different aspects of language acquisition, Aslin *et al.* (1999) take up for detailed investigation one domain - word segmentation - where effects of learning are likely to be most pronounced. They begin their series of studies by first designing a

study for adults to test whether they are capable of segmenting a continuous stream of syllables into groups on the basis of the distributional characteristics of the input. The study demonstrated that just on the basis of 21 minutes of exposure the adults succeeded in the task. Since it is not clear whether children also have similar capacities or not, Saffran *et al.* (1997) designed and conducted an implicit learning task study on 7–8-year-olds and adult controls. The sample of syllables was the same and played for the same length of time as in the case of adults except that it was played while children were engaged in creating a colour drawing on a computer screen. The subjects were not asked to learn or pay any attention to the sounds being played out though they were told that some sounds would be playing in the background. On testing after 21 minutes of colouring both children and adult controls showed evidence for implicit learning. In a third study the exposure was doubled to 42 minutes by presenting the same material for two consecutive days and the performance of subjects was tested. The results show evidence of improved performance. These findings demonstrate that both adults and children can extract multisyllabic words from a continuous stream of sound solely on the basis of statistical information (Aslin *et al.*, 1999, 368). Aslin, Saffran and Newport (1999) also cite strong evidence to show that infants are attuned to the phonetic, prosodic, phonotactic, and biphone frequency properties of their native language (369).

In another study Saffran, Aslin and Newport (1996) tested the ability of 8-month-olds to discriminate words and non-words. The results "provide compelling evidence that 8-month-olds can group sequences of syllables based solely on their distributional properties" (Aslin *et al.*, 1999, 372). A further study was designed by Aslin and his co-workers to test whether 8-month-olds are merely capable of noting whether a syllable sequence is occurring in the sample or not, or are they also capable of performing more complex statistical tasks. The results showed that these infants are capable of performing more challenging statistical analysis of the input. Since this study did not rule out that infants' judgements were based on differences in syllable transitional probabilities and not syllable cooccurrence frequencies (Aslin *et al.*, 1999, 373), Aslin, Saffran and Newport (1998) undertook yet another study of 8-months-olds to determine the nature of computations that infants seem to be performing on the exposed input. The results of this new study "demonstrate that infants can rely solely on transitional probabilities to segment multisyllabic words from

fluent speech" (374). There is thus no doubt that infants just as young as 8-months-olds are capable of employing complex statistical and probabilistic strategies for language learning (Saffran, 2003; Saffran & Wilson, 2003). To further settle the issue of the nature of mechanisms utilized by infants to perform the just discussed learning tasks, yet another study was conducted by Saffran, Aslin and Newport (1996). This study was to determine whether the learning mechanisms that infants employed in several segmenting tasks are "specific to language acquisition" or domain general in nature "applicable to a broad range of distributional analyses of environmental input" (1996, 1928). The results of this study demonstrate that both adults and infants are capable of performing computations on linguistic as well as nonlinguistic material. Subsequently, a study by Mattys and Jusczyk (2001) on the role of phonotactic cues suggests that "9-month-olds use probabilistic phonotactics to segment speech into words and that high-probability between word clusters are interpreted as both word onsets and word offsets" (91). Moreover, Hauser, Newport and Aslin in one of their studies on segmentation of the speech stream demonstrate success in extending their earlier findings on adults, children, and infants to non-human primates (2001).

6. Concluding Remarks

The set of studies reviewed here thus not only show clear evidence of learning in word segmentation but also that word segmentation is achieved by capitalizing on "a more general statistical learning mechanism" (Aslin *et al.,* 1999, 377). This tends to support the view that mechanisms responsible for exploiting statistical regularities are not specifically designed for language but are domain general in nature (Saffran, 2002). In light of the empirical data presented here, the Chomskyan claim that language acquisition does not depend on learning and basically requires triggering of certain language-specific mechanisms appears quite problematic. Furthermore, the review of extensive research on the role of prosody in language acquisition as well as the changing nature of the significance of these factors with time further highlights the facilitative nature of these aspects in language acquisition. Consideration of all these facts tends to considerably strengthen the neuroconstructivist account as a more plausible and

satisfactory approach for understanding the process of language acquisition than Chomskyan nativism.

Notes:

[1] It needs to be noted that according to neuroconstructivists, modules are not innate but are outcome of "ontogenesis over developmental time, not its starting point" (Karmiloff-Smith, 2006, 11; Karmiloff-Smith & Johnson,1991, 566; Karmiloff-Smith, 1992; Karmiloff-Smith, Plunkett, Johnson, Elman, & Bates, 1998).
[2] Also see Elman *et al.,* 1996; Hollich *et al.,* 2000; Johnson, 1999; Karmiloff-Smith, 1998; Linda Smith, 1999.

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Associate Professor
Department of Philosophy
University of Delhi
New Delhi
rmsingh@philosophy.du.ac.in

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Department of Philosophy
University of Rajasthan, Jaipur
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Supervenience Physicalism and its Faltering Fortunes

Ravindra M. Singh

Abstract

In this article I examine the tumultuous journey of supervenience and identify reasons for philosophers' rapid gain as well as loss of interest in it. I begin by contextualising how supervenience catapulted into prominence, identifying two factors. The first concerned swift advances in the physical sciences, responsible for the metaphysical hegemony that physicalism came to enjoy amongst philosophers. Physicalism's reductionist portrayals, however, tended to rob the realm of the mental of all autonomy and causal efficacy. The second factor was the hope supervenience offered by granting autonomy and causal efficacy to the mental realm without surrendering the physicalist outlook. I argue that with the progress of debates about the viability of supervenience as a version of nonreductive physicalism, rigorous scrutiny of their position found theorists entangled in the arguments of their opponents. I show that their responses were successful to an extent, but only at the cost of losing sight of empirical considerations and embracing the reductionism against which it had arisen initially. I further discuss how even as rivals bettered themselves at incorporating empirical insights into their theorizations, supervenience theorists were lost in the nitty-gritty of extending the approach to all possible worlds as well as devising modal arguments in their favour. This proved detrimental for its growth. Even though former excitement about this approach cannot be restored, the article concludes by discussing what can still be retained from supervenience and some lessons that its loss of prominence offers for future theorizations in the field.

Keywords: Supervenience, Physicalism, Reductionism, Nonreductive physicalism

1. Introduction

Some rudimentary form of ideas resembling what subsequently came to be designated as supervenience thesis have been present in the philosophical literature from the early Greek period. But supervenience as we now know it emerged as a serious philosophical position only towards the second half of the 20th century. The reasons for its rise have been well documented but it may be worthwhile to relook at some of the main reasons that propelled supervenience to the centre of contemporary debates in the philosophy of mind and metaphysics. This may help us assess better, both, the positive contribution as well as the failings of the idea of supervenience. One of the factors, as elaborated in the next section, was the rise of physical sciences which had implications for all other approaches to knowledge as well. Some of the consequences of such a success made many scholars both within the physical sciences and other disciplines uncomfortable. This was because these developments tended to promote a very reductionistic picture where fundamental physics was treated as the final arbitrator of everything as it came to be increasingly viewed as a unified theory of everything. In

philosophy, this was celebrated in the form of physicalism which, in a very short period of time, came to occupy the enviable position of the only legitimate metaphysical position that any rationally minded person should hold.

Such an outlook, when applied to our understanding of the nature of mind, had very undesirable outcomes because reductionism regarding the mind rendered it totally inconsequential in human affairs. This was not only counterintuitive and at variance with our common sensical self-knowledge that harboured no doubts about the efficacy of the mental, but it also raised uncomfortable questions about the raison d'être for the mind and its biological carrier, the human brain. Why should an important organ, at least from the perspective of the bodily resources it naturally consumes, be there in the first place if its fountainhead, designated as the mind, was of no consequence in the world? It is against such troubling questions that the thesis of supervenience gained prominence. The idea of supervenience was easy to embrace as it allowed philosophers to not only grant reality to what came to be viewed as the problem of mental causation in philosophical jargon, but it also appeared achievable without surrendering the larger physicalist commitments. So, supervenience thesis, in short, granted some autonomy and causal efficacy to the mind without surrendering physicalist goals. In a way, philosophers could eat their cake and have it as well.

Soon enough, and much like other philosophical debates, many formulations of supervenience arose along with their supporters and opponents. This made many of those who were otherwise favourably aligned with the idea uncomfortable (eg., Lewis, 1986). While the initial motivation for the idea was to account for the worldly influences of the mind, soon, the thesis was expanded to include all possible worlds. Instead of adding anything tangible to the correlations between the physical and the mental as was expected, given the path breaking developments in allied areas like neurosciences and the cognitive sciences, supervenience theorists found themselves tangled in different modal arguments surrounding their favoured formulations of the supervenience thesis and could not deliver on their promises (Savellos & Yalcin, 1995; Grimes, 1988). Supervenience theorists' inclination to embrace reductive physicalism (eg., Kim, 2000) further tended to erode credibility of their efforts as it amounted to surrendering the initial objectives of their approach. This was the case because in its early formulations, supervenience was presented as a version of non-reductive physicalism (Davidson, 1970). Added to these were problems that different versions of physicalism soon threw up for supervenience theorists. This was inevitable as supervenience was also presented as a version of physicalism (Elpidorou, 2018). The dominant formulations of physicalism that tended to promote that everything nonphysical was "nothing over and above" the physical also did not find supervenience to be adequate for advancing their cause (eg., Wilson, 2005). This resulted in the supervenience thesis losing the interest of scholars working in, both, the fields of philosophy of mind and that of contemporary metaphysics.

This article aims to address the rapid prominence and equally fast loss of interest in supervenience amongst philosophers in this context. For this purpose, I focus on some questions such as: Was supervenience thesis really as significant an approach as it was made out to be by those who propounded it or did it lose its way in its short journey? If it lost its way, then are there any lessons that we can learn from this troubled journey for our current theorizations in the field? Is the supervenience thesis as incapable of contributing to physicalist goals as it is made out to be these days or is there

anything left of the thesis that we can still chew upon and profit from? It is important to explore these questions as the quick progress in the physical sciences, that initially provided the context for and made supervenience attractive, is still very much in place.

For meeting these and other allied goals, the present article is divided into seven sections, including the introduction and concluding remarks. In the first introductory section, I have provided the philosophical context that brought supervenience to prominence. Section two deals with the rise of physicalist monism in philosophy as the most viable metaphysical position that aims at providing the most comprehensive outlook about the world of existents. In section three, I provide the historical background of the supervenience thesis and how it was initially formulated. Section four deals with different prominent formulations of supervenience that proliferated during its hey days. Given the excessive emphasis on the viability of the supervenience thesis across all possible worlds and the excessive focus on modal arguments, I discuss the need to return to empirical considerations in section five. This is done so that we can appreciate the insights offered by supervenience theorists and how it is still possible to profit from the idea by anchoring it to nomological necessities. In section six, I dwell upon the nature of the physical as we encounter it in different formulations of physicalism. The last section of this article discusses the reasons that could possibly be responsible for the loss of interest in supervenience and how such mistakes need to be avoided if future philosophical arguments are to make significant progress.

2. The Rise of Physicalist Monism

In the recent decades, physicalism, meaning, everything that exists in the world is either physical or is metaphysically dependent on the physical, has come to acquire what Papineau has termed as the hegemony of physical sciences over other subjects (Papineau, 2007, p.3). He identifies writings of Feigl (1958), Smart (1959), Davidson (1963), Putnam (1960), Lewis (1966), Armstrong (1968), amongst others, as motivated by physicalist assumptions and contributing to its rise. Papineau also links the rise of physicalism with the decline of phenomenalism that flourished in the hey days of logical positivists (Papineau, 2007, p.6). He is also largely in agreement with McLaughlin (1992, p.89) who relates the rise of physicalism with the waning of interest in British emergentism (Papineau, 2007, p.36 n.20). But the main motivating factor for the rise of physicalism for Papineau has been acceptance of the thesis of "*completeness of physics*" (Papineau, 2007, p.7) by which he means the belief that all physical effects have physical causes. The physicalists take this to imply that that which has "a physical effect must itself be physical" (Papineau, 2007, p.7). This means that we don't have to leave the realm of the physical to account for anything that is apparently nonphysical in nature. Such a thesis leaves no room for anything nonphysical to have any effects on the physical. Support for this is clearly available from the above cited writings of scholars like, Smart (1959), Lewis (1966), Davidson (1970) and others. However, there is no one agreed upon interpretation amongst physicalists when it comes to the question of finding linkages between the physical and that which prima facie appears to be nonphysical.

From the above characterization, it is quite clear that physicalism promotes a monistic worldview wherein despite apparent surface variety between things, they all are the same, i.e., physical. The literature on physicalism not only asserts metaphysical dependence of everything nonphysical on the physical, but often the nonphysical is also viewed as "nothing over and above the physical" (Elpidorou, 2018, p.435; Wilson, 2005 & 2006, p. 63). If so looked at, physicalism appears to prescribe what kind of objects, properties, processes, phenomena, states of affairs, etc. can be treated as existents in the world. But there appears no conceptual or nomological necessity for believing that the nonphysical is nothing over and above the physical. Alternatively, we can also take physicalism to be aiming at "capturing the *underlying structure* of our world" without embracing the more extreme position that renders the nonphysical to be inconsequential (Elpidorou, 2018, p.436). Some scholars have fruitfully pursued such a possibility in the form of emergentism that denies both the extremes of reductionism and dualism. For an emergentist, all is not lost even with the failure of metaphysical supervenience as it does not preclude that the mental properties can still supervene on physical properties with nomological necessity (Silberstein, 2014, p.254). So, an emergentist can remain within the broad physicalist boundaries and still grant enough tangible role including causal efficacy to the mental (Bickle, 2007; Campbell & Bickhard, 2011; Humphreys, 2016; Silberstein, 2001, 2006 & 2014; Wilson, 2021).

In a way physicalism not only tells us about what all there is, but it also makes claims about how one set of things or processes arise from another kind of things and/or processes. Montero and Brown take it to mean that "all properties supervene on fundamental physical properties" (2017, p.1). This, however, does not entail that the physicalists treat the world to be flat in the sense of every existent being metaphysically on par with everything else. For physicalists some things are much more fundamental than the others. In their scheme of things, the physical nature of things is much more fundamental than the mental, chemical or the economic or the social. For them, everything is founded on and thus metaphysically dependent on the physical (Melnyk, 2003, 2014 & 2016). But satisfactory explication of this dependence has largely proved to be elusive even though there is no dearth of available interpretations. So, we have positions ranging from a variety of nonreductive stances to reductive and even eliminativist options (Campbell, 2015; Humphreys, 2016; Elpidorou, 2018; Wilson, 2021). As regards the details of the nature of the physical itself, the physicalists often tend to rely on what current or future physics would say on the matter (Melnyk, 1997 & 2003)[1]. But the articulation of realization relations in terms of current physics has been objected to by scholars within the physicalist fold as well as those who are not sympathetic to physicalism (Witmer, 2016, pp.1*f.* & 8). Kim, for instance, has objected on the grounds that any reliance on existing laws renders a certain sense of relativity to realization relations. The fear is that such an interpretation may not be able to secure "full metaphysical or logical/conceptual necessity" for our thesis (Kim, 2000, pp.23-24). From these differences, it is clear that when it comes to the explication of the dependence relationship between the founding and the founded or the physical and everything else, it is cashed out differently by different versions of physicalism. In the literature, we can in fact easily discern the articulation of this metaphysical dependency ranging from identity, nonreductive, supervenience, composition, truthmaking, and grounding (Elpidorou, 2018, pp.437 & 451)[2].

Elpidorou (2018) in his articulation of challenges that current physicalism faces identifies one of the most important vexing issues to be whether the nonphysical, though distinct, can be viewed as nothing over and above the physical. This is one issue on which all versions of physicalism seem to struggle to find a satisfactory resolution (Stoljar, 2021). Take, for instance, the reductive physicalist interpretation that has been attempted in the literature to establish fundamental nature of the physical vis-a-vis the nonphysical. The scholars favouring this version of physicalism first attempt to find a causal-functional role for the targeted nonphysical phenomena that is attempted to be reduced and then identify it with the physical state that serves such a role. The problem often encountered by such attempts is that even after finding physical phenomena that serve the causal-functional role in question, it is not established that the nonphysical things in question are nothing over and above the identified physical phenomena. Alternatively, the nonphysical can be viewed as distinct despite its metaphysical dependence on the physical (Elpidorou, 2018, p.438). As Hellman & Thompson have remarked, "the truth of physicalism is compatible with the utter absence of lawlike or even accidental generalized biconditionals connecting any number of predicates of the higher-level sciences with those of physics" (1975, p. 564). Another way to approach physicalism is to treat the physical to be more fundamental than the nonphysical. This creates a kind of asymmetric existential dependence of the nonphysical on the physical which some grounding scholars like Fine have found to be problematic (Fine, 1994a&b as cited in Elpidorou, 2018, p.438).

Another well elaborated and intensely debated version of physicalism that avoids reduction of the mental to the physical is wherein nonphysical properties are treated to be supervening on their base properties which are physical in nature. If interpreted in a nonreductive manner then it can ensure the distinctness of the nonphysical as well. When so articulated, differences in the nonphysical can be accounted for in terms of differences in the physical because no differences are possible in the supervenient properties without there being corresponding differences in the underlying base. That is, the supervenience relation can be talked of in terms of supervenient and subvenient properties. This intuition has been articulated in the form of supervenience thesis and has often been expressed in the form of a slogan, "there cannot be an A-difference without a B-difference" (McLaughlin & Bennett, 2021).[3] In their explication of the core idea of supervenience, McLaughlin and Bennett (2021) have attempted to describe it with the help an analogy with a perfect forgery. Such a forgery, if possible, would resemble the original in every respect to the smallest microphysical detail. When such a situation obtains then we can say that "The properties that the forgery is guaranteed to share with the original are those that supervene upon its microphysical properties" (McLaughlin & Bennett, 2021, p.1). As has been emphasized by McLaughlin and Bennett (2021), supervenience theorists do not articulate their position just in terms of what *"happens*" but preface their claim with a *"cannot"* qualifier giving "modal force" to their assertions. As they have pointed out: "Even when the modality is fixed …there are a number of distinct claims that might be expressed by the slogan" (2021, $1).

When it comes to the nature of supervenience relations, they are viewed to be realizable with varied kind of necessities depending upon the nature of the modal force invoked. These could range from the nomological to the metaphysical and/or logical. In the context of the widely held view that "the mental nomologically supervenes on the physical", it translates into

nomological impossibility of zombies for some and metaphysical possibility for others. Those who entertain possibility of zombies tend to take it to mean falsification of physicalism (Montero & Brown, 2017, p. 1). One such strand of thinking is inspired by Jackson's "knowledge argument" (Jackson, 1982 & 1986) that resists explanation of the experiential in terms of the physical. When it comes to the defence of the possibility of zombies, Chalmers (1996) in particular forcefully argues in favour of their metaphysical possibility. He considers such a move as resisting reduction of phenomenal properties to physical properties as some philosophers have tended to look at supervenience as a form of reduction (McLaughlin & Bennett, 2021, $ 3.1). Philosophers have invoked mereological intuitions to make sense of the idea of supervenience as well (McLaughlin & Bennett, 2021, $$ 3.2 & 3.4). Issues have also been raised about whether supervenience can be viewed as a form of entailment or not (McLaughlin & Bennett, 2021, $ 3.1).

However, supervenience thesis also comes in many varieties. For instance, we have supporters of both reductive and nonreductive interpretations as well as those who view supervenience in terms of mereological composition. But they all tend to run into difficulties when they are called upon to provide content to "nothing over and above" that has been invoked in the articulations of their respective positions (McLaughlin & Bennett, 2021, $ 3.4). In the case of mental's supervenience on the physical, this has resulted in difficulties that have come to be designated under the rubric of exclusion problem. Some philosophers have also argued in favour of global supervenience as opposed to weak and strong versions of individual supervenience. But even in the case of global supervenience difficulties seem to arise as supervening and subvening properties can be considered to be realized by different individuals (McLaughlin & Bennett, 2021, $ 4.3). Before getting into further details of the supervenience thesis and controversies surrounding them, let us first briefly look at the historical background of supervenience physicalism. This is significant because over time lack of satisfaction with the attempted solutions within the supervenience fold has resulted in alternative explanations (McLaughlin & Bennett, 2021, $ 3.5; Elpidorou, 2018).

3. The Historical Background of Supervenience

In so far as historical origins of supervenience are concerned, Grimes has suggested that we find the first appearance of the generic idea of supervenience in the works of Alexander of Aphrodisias from the second century of the Common Era (Grimes, 1995, pp.120-121 fn1). He further states that the verb "supervenio" was also used by Donatus in 1445 in his Latin translation of Alexander's *De Anima.* In these works, supervenience was talked about in the context of the nature of the soul as Alexander used the term to refer to a kind of vital force which is not reducible to the bodily constituents. The usage of supervenience was however not confined to the philosophers alone. In this regard, Kim cites first entry of the adjective "supervenient" in O.E.D. in 1594; of the verb "supervene" in 1647-48; and of noun "supervenience" in 1664 (Kim, 1990, p. 1). Returning to the philosophical literature, we find first use of this term again in Leibniz in the context of his theory of relations wherein he is treating relations to be supervening "on the intrinsic properties of their relata" (Kim, 1990, p. 5 & fn.10). Thereafter, there is no mention or discussion of supervenience for long. It is only in the beginning of the 20th century that we come across something like supervenience in Moore's description of moral naturalism

where he seems to think of intrinsic properties to be supervening over their "descriptive, nonrelative properties" (Kim, 1990, p. 6; Kim, 1984, p. 154; Moore, 1922/2014). The other strand of thinking where the term supervenience and related ideas were debated was in the context of British emergentism that flourished in the first quarter of the 20th century (Kim, 1990, pp.3-4 & fn5). In this regard, Morgan's discussion is particularly noteworthy as it comes very close to the way supervenience has come to be viewed in the contemporary philosophy of mind literature (Kim 1990, pp. 7-8; Morgan, 1923).[4] The emergentist literature was however largely forgotten by the second half of the 20th century when Hare first introduced the idea of supervenience in 1952 that comes quite close to our present-day discussions of it (Kim, 1984, p. 155; Kim, 1990, p. 3; Hare 1952). After Hare, it is Davidson's introduction of this concept in his landmark paper in 1970 that is largely responsible for reigniting the discussion on supervenience (Kim, 1990, p.4; Davidson 1970/2001).

Davidson introduced supervenience as articulation of his version of nonreductive physicalism in the context of the nature of the relationship between the mental and the physical as follows:

> Although the position I describe denies there are psychophysical laws, it is consistent with the view that mental characteristics are in some sense dependent, or supervenient, on physical characteristics. Such supervenience might be taken to mean that there cannot be two events alike in all physical respects but differing in some mental respect, or that an object cannot alter in some mental respect without altering in some physical respect (Davidson, 1970/2001, p. 176).

In this much quoted passage, Davidson seems to be arguing for supervenience of mental phenomena over physical phenomena without being reducible to the latter (Kim, 1990, p.8). Davidson's suggestion about the mind-body problem did not solve the vexed problem but it did offer some hope of accounting for the relationship (Kim, 2000, P.6). The nonreductive version of physicalism that Davidson offered in terms of his thesis of anomalous monism proposed that the mental properties be treated as supervening on their base properties which are physical in nature. This way of viewing the relationship is not reductionistic as it allowed supervenient properties to be multiply realized in their supervenience bases.[5] Davidson also self-interpreted his own articulation of the idea as a version of weak supervenience (Davidson, 1985, p.242 & 1993, p.4 fn4; Kim, 1984). This in a way ensured the distinctness of the realms of the physical and the mental as well (Kim, 2000, p. 8). However, there wasn't just any one settled way of articulating this distinctness. This resulted in flourishing of many versions of supervenience. The details of these efforts are discussed in the next section.

4. The Proliferation of Varieties of Supervenience

Horgan (1982) in his response to the initial discussions of the idea of supervenience that were largely restricted to the relationship between the physical and the mental contended that the concept of supervenience need not remain restricted to the relation between the mental and the physical but should be generalized. For him, "all characteristics of individuals in our world, and not just mental characteristics, are strongly dependent upon physico-chemical characteristics, and ultimately upon microphysical characteristics" (Horgan, 1982, p.31). He is also not in favour of keeping supervenience tied to

anomalous monism. This is the case because while all facts in the world are dependent upon microphysical worlds for him, some events may not be "identical with physiochemical events" (Horgan, 1982, p.31).

But a weak version of supervenience which was also endorsed by Hare (1984, p.4) has been criticized by Kim (1984, p.161). He has serious doubts about such a version achieving the intended goals because he believes that weak supervenience cannot deliver the kind of dependence of the mental on the physical that Davidson is aiming at in his essay (Kim, 1984, pp. 161-163 &167). The supposed lack of stability across possible worlds is one of the major reasons that Kim uses against weak supervenience (Kim, 1987, p.317; Kim, 1984, pp.161*f*.). Kim also entertains serious doubts about weak supervenience being capable of fulfilling goals of materialists (Kim, 1987 321, Kim, 1984, pp.163 & 171). Davidson's position has also come under intense criticism from those who have otherwise espoused weak supervenience (Hare, 1984, p.3; Hellman & Thompson, 1975 & 1977; Haugeland, 1982). Hellman & Thompson for instance find Davidson's anomalous monism to be problematic while defending nonreductive physicalism (1975, p. 552 fn. 3). Davidson's position is problematic because in their opinion "the irreducibility of mental or psychological terms to mathematical-physical terms is entirely compatible with such terms appearing jointly and essentially in psychophysical laws. Irreducibility does not exclude all psychophysical laws but rather only laws of certain logical forms" (Hellman & Thompson, 1977, p. 321). They further even make a stronger claim that: "In the absence of any psychophysical laws, it is quite obscure what non-question-begging appeal to standard interpretation of predicates would provide the needed exclusion of structures violating physical determination" (p.321).

In his explication of weak supervenience, Haugeland (1982) also finds both anomalous monism of Davidson and token-identity theory as advanced by Fodor (1974) to be unsatisfactory options. Haugeleand himself argues for physical monism in the form of weak supervenience but by opposing the possible alternatives of dualism and both type and token-identity theories (Haugeland, 1982, p.93). He finds Davidson's position to be unsatisfactory for various reasons. Firstly, Haugeland finds Davidson's usage of ordinary terms like "event" to be imprecise and equivocal. He further argues that contemporary physics does not deal with ordinary terms like events in the articulation of its position. The laws of physics do not deal with events though they may apply to them. Secondly, Davidson's proposal on supervenience has been presented in the form of token-identity theory which is not acceptable to Haugeland as, in his opinion, Davidson has failed to demonstrate the necessity of token-identity for supervenience (Haugeland, 1982, p. 102). Moreover, the weak supervenience that Davidson is attempting to advance does not require any recourse to any of the versions of identity theory. For Haugeland, the thesis of supervenience need not be defined in terms of identity thesis. Nor do our intuitions about the primacy of the physical in the sense of there being no differences in any domain without there being differences in the physical require recourse to even the weaker version of identity in terms of token-identity. He argues that the primacy of the physical does not require that physicalism be tied down to any individuals or domains as "it can be, so to speak, 'world-wide'" (Haugeland, 1982, p. 97). When applied to the domain of the mental it would mean that the mental need not be "'carved up' into individuals. The essential constraint is on sets of truths, without regard to how (or even whether) those truths are decomposed into properties of individuals" (Haugeland, 1982, p. 97). Haugeland finds even Kim (1978 & 1979) to be guilty of making similar mistakes in the statement of his

position on supervenience. But Haugeland believes that positions of Davidson and Kim can be rearticulated by removing all references to individuals. Supervenience can therefore be expressed without any recourse to token-identity thesis and does not entail it (Haugeland, 1982, p. 98). Haugeland's views on supervenience in the context of *possible* worlds wherein he sees no contradiction in granting the possibility of there being "some non-physical angels whose attitudes are discriminable in mental terms" (Haugeland, 1982, p. 99) has been found to be problematic and a sign of lingering hangover of Cartesian dualism by scholars working on supervenience (Teller, 1984). Teller considers Haugeland to be guilty of being guided by Cartesian logic of "the possibility of disembodied mental states" by entertaining the possibility of mentality endowed non-physical angels (Teller, 1984, p.158).

In light of criticisms levelled against Kim's earlier position on supervenience thesis, he has tended to accept some of the criticisms and has suggested that we look at supervenience in a way that there can be multiple ways to realize the same supervenient property. This does not disturb the larger physicalist intuition that differences in the nonphysical need to be accounted for in terms of differences in the physical because no differences are possible in the supervenient properties without there being corresponding differences in the underlying base. When articulated with respect to the mind-body relation, it means that there can be no mental difference without there being some corresponding physical differences. That is, if anything instantiates a physical property P then it necessarily also instantiates a corresponding mental property M. But this relation is multiply realizable in different physical systems if one is not a reductionist. As Kim has remarked, "one and the same mental property may have multiple physical bases: an instance of pain in a human may be grounded in one neural property, and another instance of pain, say in a reptile, may be grounded in another" (2000, p. 10).

The relation between the two realms, the mental and the physical, need not however be necessarily viewed as asymmetric in nature though supervenience can be so interpreted if one's metaphysical stance so demands. Kim's suggestion regarding accounting for metaphysical support for the mental is that we need to look for it somewhere else as "supervenience itself is not capable of supplying it" (Kim, 2000, p. 14). As it stands, it is possible to look at supervenience as a mere relation of covariance without invoking any kind of determination or metaphysical dependence of any one realm over the other.[6] Such a view of supervenience is best captured by Lewis when he succinctly states that "we have supervenience when there could be no difference of one sort without differences of another sort" (1986, p. 14; McLaughlin, 1995, pp. 22&23). This has often been expressed in the form of a slogan, "there cannot be an A-difference without a B-difference" (McLaughlin & Bennett, 2021).

Viewing supervenience in terms of covariance of properties is also compatible with how moral philosophers like Moore, Hare and others have looked at it (Kim, 1990, p. 8). Such a rendering of the supervenience thesis makes it compatible with a variety of otherwise opposed positions in philosophy of mind about the mind-body relation (Kim, 2000, pp. 12-13). So, supervenience first and foremost captures the common minimum ground when it comes to the nature of the mental by anchoring it on one or the other physical bodily processes that serve as its realizers. But no further explication about the particulars of such a necessary relation is largely attempted or considered obligatory as multiple nomological options are deemed possible.

Such an interpretation would mean that supervenience relation would only have the "the force of nomological necessity, not that of full metaphysical or logical/conceptual necessity" (Kim, 2000, p. 24). But as one of the longstanding proponents of supervenience thesis. Kim has changed his stance and come to claim that he is satisfied if supervenience "can be viewed as defining *minimal physicalism*" (Kim, 2000, p. 15). Supervenience, even if so modified, continues to be philosophically significant for him as it captures relations of dependence between the supervenient and subvenient realms. Summing up and extracting common elements from the diverse discussions of supervenience, Kim has identified three common components of what we could designate as the core of supervenience. These are: covariance,[7] dependency and nonreducibility (Kim, 1990, p.9; Savellos & Yalcin, 1995, p.2). Disregarding, for the time being, the varying interpretations of each of the above listed stances about supervenience and following Kim's suggestion, at the very minimal level we can state that by covariance is meant covariance of supervenient properties with their subvenient base; dependence means that supervenient properties are dependent on their base properties; and nonreducibility can be taken to mean the irreducibility of the supervenient on base properties (Kim, 1990, p. 9).

But there is no consensus in the literature as to how each one of these need to be explicated and multiple characterization of each are available. Some versions of covariance, for instance, are interpreted in a manner that also guarantee a dependency relation between the supervenient and the subvenient while others offer no such guarantee. The dependence relation is also interpreted either weakly or strongly meaning determination. More clarity would also be required as to what all goes into determining individual's supervenient property; whether it is just "individual's own lower-level properties and relations" or something even more distant is also involved and needs to be taken into consideration (Post, 1995, pp. 85 & 87). Similar is the situation with respect to the possibility of reduction of one domain to the other and the nature of the possible reduction. The other points of differences are concerning metaphysical versus ontic interpretations. Some other concerns include whether the thesis has modal force of being interpretable across all possible worlds or it is to be nomologically restricted. Supervenience is also sometime viewed as a general claim of a relation between two kinds of domains. Alternatively, it is taken as a relation "between specific supervenient properties and their base properties" (Kim, 1990, p.25). Kim in this regard is more of a proponent of what he calls "a kind of holism" that tends to view individual dependencies to be grounded in kinds (Kim, 1984, p. 167). When applied to the domains of the physical and mental, such a rendering of supervenience would mean that "the psychological states of the world, taken as a whole, are determined by its physical states taken as a whole, without requiring every psychological state of an individual to be determined by its physical states" (Kim, 1987, pp. 322-323)[8]. One of the motivations for looking at the physical in this extended sense is owing to the influence of Putnam (1975a) and Burge (1979) who powerfully argued that the contents of mental states can depend on factors external to subjects to whom such states are attributed (Kim, 1987, pp. 322 & 324). Scholars have also tended to adopt an in between stance avoiding both reductionism and dualism (Kim, 1990, p.16)[9]. Suffice it to state that there are enough scholars both in favour of as well as against each version of supervenience thesis and there is quite a wide spread proliferation of supervenience theses (Savellos & Yalcin, 1995, p.4).

This variety of opinions is so wide spread that it led Lewis to famously quip that there is an "unlovely proliferation of non-equivalent definitions…[and] a

plethora of unsatisfactory approximations and substitutes" surrounding supervenience (Lewis, 1986, p. 14).[10] The focus on modal arguments with their baggage of considerations about all possible worlds is in fact so excessive in the supervenience literature that it tends to give the impression as if existing nomological relations are largely inconsequential.[11] In these situations, it is not unreasonable to ask whether anything of substance has been contributed by supervenience theorists about actual relations between the physical and nonphysical (the mental for example) in the existing world. It is also not clear why in most discussions about what may be physically possible very little is added about what is actually the case. Would not such an attention to empirical facts have added to the force of arguments that are often pressed into service in discussions in the existing supervenience literature? And not everyone is very happy about such a state of affairs. As Teller has very ruefully remarked, "appeal to possible worlds is metaphysically extravagant" (1984, p. 143). Lewis has also suggested that supervenience thesis be restricted to "worlds devoid of alien natural properties" (1983, p. 364). This however in no way entails that the fictitious scenarios of possible worlds are irrelevant and nothing can be learnt from them. But from the actualist perspective which is most important in the context of mind-body debate in philosophy of mind, such an overemphasis tends to undermine the importance of first having a greater grip at explanations of things, processes and events in the world. And would not these involve reference to empirical details of such things and processes in the real world to settle matters one way or another. As Post has very explicitly remarked, "What can determine what in our world is often a matter of considerable empirical complexity, not to be settled by appeals to intuition from the comfortable depths of the philosopher's armchair" (1995. p. 78).

In the context of the raging controversies surrounding the relation between the physical and the mental that largely ignited the contemporary discussion on supervenience, such an overpowering preoccupation with the modal arguments seems to be a distraction from getting better grip over worldly empirical contingencies. These may perhaps turn out to be even more interesting and unique. Also, not every physicalist is worried if physicalism is viewed as "a contingent thesis" (Lewis, 1983, p. 362).[12] And why should something being contingently true be such a trifle matter? For Lewis, this may even be "a merit of our world that not all other worlds share" what is true of this world (1983, p. 362). The matters at hand are empirical and therefore require to be addressed empirically. Theorization can definitely go beyond facts but not by disregarding them. For instance, a theory about brain processes underlying mental states would definitely be very useful and a welcome step for moving forward in the debate about the nature of supervenience. Apart from everything else, it can help us ascertain the extent to which available evidence is adequate for settling issues between different alternative interpretations of available facts. One of the best examples to illustrate the point would be the lingering debate between identity theorists and functionalists within otherwise agreed upon physicalist commitments. How will we bring the available empirical evidence to bear upon this debate? Can such evidence be interpreted equivocally? Are both versions expressive of reductive aspirations (Freidman, 1975, p. 371) or do they need to be interpreted differently and why? As is obvious from Lewis's views, the need for bringing back the discussion to nomological considerations is undeniable. I take this up for discussion in the next section.

5. The Need to Return to the Nomological

From the above discussions about different versions of supervenience, it is quite clear that in the current discussions of supervenience the focus has largely remained on possible worlds. And if anything is said about worldly affairs then it is very little and almost an afterthought paying little heed to evolving nature of available empirical evidence from the physical sciences. Nor is any attention devoted to clarifying at what level of physical organization the arguments are pitched as if such considerations carry no importance. This not only hinders possible credibility for the attempted efforts, but we also don't move beyond considerations that are common place and often based on outdated facts. Borrowing from a related context, we need to remind ourselves that the important question in the scenario under consideration is not merely about "what is in principle possible but what is in fact the case" (Freidman, 1975, p. 368). Also, certain scenarios maybe entertainable on the grounds of logical consistency but that is not sufficient to ensure its possibility (Teller, 1984, pp. 151 & 155). Moreover, the arguments inspired by the logic of possibility have to deal with the spirit of Kantianism that has provided powerful arguments against any logic of possibility that sees in the actual merely accidental determinations (Kant, 1998, pp. 326-328) that have done no good to the cause of philosophy.

Let us look at a good example of how matters can be advanced on empirical consideration even when modal considerations are not ignored. According to an influential proposal on "Physicalist Materialism" put forward by Hellman & Thompson (1977), it has been suggested that we look at this thesis in terms of "the principle of Ontological Physicalism…[that] embraces everything there is" and "principle of Physical Determination" meaning that "Physical facts determine all facts" (p. 310). Of these the latter is taken to be comprised of "The principle of Physical Determination of Truth" meaning that "all the truths statable in the language of mathematical-physics fix all the truths statable in any language whatsoever" (p. 310) and "The principle of Physical Determination of Reference" meaning that "fixing the reference (extension) of the mathematical-physical terms fixes the reference of all terms" (p. 311). Both these determination principles are treated as independent and one does not imply the other. Also, "they are separately and jointly independent from Ontological Physicalism and from reductionism" (p. 311). None of these principles of determination "require that any non-physical terms be definable (even in the weak sense of accidental co-extensiveness) in physical terms" (p.311). Moreover, Physicalist Materialism for Hellman and Thompson is "empirical in character…[and] are supported inductively by scientific practice" (p. 311). Given the prevailing confusions in metaphysics when it comes to the articulation of physicalism, Hellman and Thompson, following Quine (1951), make extensive use of the distinction between ontological and ideological status of entities. They justify this because these "two types of status correspond to very different semantic relations" (p. 317). Of these, while the former "concerns into what extensions of ontological kind predicates the entity falls" (p. 317), the latter "concerns the semantic relation of expression…or more generally, the relation between the argument and the value of a universalizing function" (p. 317). When so viewed, it would mean that while "all entities have some ontological status…only universals have ideological status" (p. 317).

Let us now try applying this distinction to different kinds of attributes to see how, for instance, it can help us get out of at least some of the confusions

surrounding identity theory. According to Hellman & Thompson, the ideological status of an attribute is "given by specifying the kind of predicate which expresses it" (1977, pp. 317). For illustration, let us consider an example of "is in pain at t" (pp. 317-318). If this fact is coextensive with some complex physical predicate and we are attributing identity here, then according to Hellman & Thompson's proposal "[being in pain] is both a psychological and a physical attribute, that is it has both these statuses since it is *expressed* by both types of predicates" (p. 318). In their opinion we get into confusions when we designate an attribute, as is the case in our present example, as physical or mental without clarifying whether we are referring to the ontological status or ideological status of the example under consideration. If in our example the concern is about the ontological status, then the focus would be on "*objects possessing or exemplifying the property"*; and when the concern is about the ideological status, then the focus would be on "the *kind(s) of predicates…expressing the property*" (p. 318). Now when we apply this understanding to a situation where there is no lawlike coextension, as was the case in above example, between the psychological predicate and the physical predicate, then the attribute expressed would be "mental but not physical (ideologically), but…it is physical but not mental (ontologically) in virtue of being possessed solely by physical objects" (p. 318). Given their articulation of Ontological Physicalism as given above, Hellman and Thompson further assert that "every attribute is a mathematical-physical *entity*, but only those attributes are mathematical-physical *attributes* which are expressible by mathematical-physical predicates" (p. 318). Consider now a scenario wherein the truth of general physical reductionism is denied. In a situation like this, we would then have to believe, according to Hellman and Thompson, that "there are attributes which are mathematical-physical entities which are not mathematical-physical attributes" (p. 318). If so viewed, their thesis would mean that irreducibility of all psychological attributes is compatible with the ontological status of identity thesis. In their judgement, it is our failure to recognise such possibilities and confusion between ontological and ideological statuses of the case under consideration which are at the heart of much of the confusion surrounding discussions about mind-brain identity theory. They accordingly recommend embracing their position of Physicalist Materialism as it relieves

Psychophysical theorists of apparently opposed camps of burdens which they need not bear. Identity theorists inclined towards materialism need not search for a scheme which reduces, if only "in principle", all mental and psychological talk to physical talk. Nor need they take the desperate eliminationist line according to which the terms in question don't really refer at all. Ontological Physicalism is an identity theory without such requirements. Nor is reduction required in order to make clear sense of dependence (or what some have called "supervenience") of the mental and psychological on the physical. (Hellman & Thompson, 1977, p. 321).

The long and short of this discussion is that the force of nomological contingencies cannot be indefinitely wished away if the objective is to advance our understanding on the basis of empirically grounded facts. Philosophers have often tended to not adequately give credence to matter of fact considerations by terming them as contingent. However, what cannot be lost sight of is that existence of any life in general and human existence in particular is perhaps the most significant contingency which cannot be wished away and no discourse of any kind, whether this worldly or possible worldly, is possible without being firmly anchored in this contingency. The

supervenience in the context of nomological necessity, as McLaughlin & Bennett have pointed out, is to "be explained by appeal to laws of nature. It is in virtue of the Wiedemann-Franz Law that electrical conductivity supervenes with nomological necessity on thermal conductivity" (2021, $ 3.7).
This brings us back in the next section to the consideration of physicalist thesis of which supervenience is also a possible version. Such a discussion is attempted to assess the excesses that supervenience theorists succumbed to in articulation of their ideas and how it can be instructive for future efforts.

6. Dealing with the Physical in Physicalism

In the physicalism debates the nature of the physical itself is often left unarticulated. But for the debate to have clarity, it would be prudent to have at least some basic minimum clarity about what all physical includes. Though the discussion of supervenience thesis has largely been directed at explicating the nature of the relation between the nonphysical and the physical within the confines of physicalism, we have so far has not gone into much details of what exactly counts as the physical (Horgan 1984, p. 20; Petrie, 1987, pp.119 fn.1 & 129). In the literature and as was noted in the opening section of the present essay, we find that physicalism is often taken to mean that "everything is physical" or that there is "no difference without a physical difference" (Hellman & Thompson, 1975, p. 552 & 555; Lewis, 1983, p.362; Teller, 1986, p.71). This could also be read as, "for any nonphysical predicate, there is a physical predicate that makes all the distinctions it does" (Hellman & Thompson, 1975, p. 556 fn.8). The physicalists also tend to believe/assert in the truth of at least some non-relational or intrinsic properties while granting reality to some relational properties.
When it comes to explicating the nature of the physical, the prevalent practice has been to leave it as the assumed subject matter of physics. As Lewis states, it as "the thesis that physics…is a comprehensive theory of the world, complete as well as correct. The world is as physics says it is, and there's no more to say" (Lewis, 1983, p. 361). Some scholars in fact take a very narrow view of physics by including in the physical only that which is included in the completed physics.[13] This entails that all that is or is to count as physical on some future date is not cast in stone given the evolving nature of physics. But Kim finds such an approach to be problematic and without much basis. He recommends that apart from all micro-based properties and second order properties based on physical properties, "the physical domain must also include aggregates of basic particles, aggregates of these aggregates, and so on, without end; atoms, molecules, cells, tables, planets, computers, biological organisms, and all the rest must be, without question, part of the physical domain" (Kim, 2000, p. 113). This definitely leaves out certain archetypal mental properties like qualia out of the purview of the physical. How are they to be accounted for? For Kim, this requires making a hard choice between reductive physicalism and other options like epiphenomenalism, "mental irrealism" of the eliminativists, and dualism which he considers to be problematic.[14] It involves a hard choice because while reductive physicalism tends to undermine the distinctness of the mental by absorbing it within the physical, other options result in unacceptable consequences (Kim, 2000, pp. 118-120). Kim himself prefers the reductionist alternative as he finds it to be a better option than other available alternatives. He finds the alternatives of anomalous monism and nonreductive physicalism to be unconvincing options from the perspective of what he terms

"robust physicalism" (Kim, 2000, p. 120). But if this is what supervenience has to finally offer, then it seems to undermine the initial inspiration that was responsible for bringing supervenience to the attention of philosophers as a position that not only granted efficacy and centrality to the role of the mental in our lives but also attempted to integrate it within the larger physicalist thesis. However, we need not take Kim as having the last word on what supervenience can offer and there is enough that is still promising about the approach even if we disregard reductionist tendencies of Kim's version of supervenience.

7. Concluding Remarks

In the present context, it may be worthwhile to recollect that one of the concerns that significantly contributed to the physicalist debate has been the overwhelming desire of most scholars to find some way of accommodating the mind within the otherwise physical world while simultaneously securing for the mental realm some distinctness of its own. One of the prominent manners in which this distinctness got articulated amongst philosophers was in terms of securing causal efficacy of the mental or the problem of mental causation. This somewhat became imperative after the decline of identity theory that was inspired by the works of Feigl, Smart (1958) and Place (1956. Davidson's anomalous monism and Putnam's functionalist focus on multiple realizability can perhaps be also looked at as prominent earlier efforts to secure something distinctive for the mental without breaching broad physicalist assumptions. Through these debates it also became pertinent to inquire whether what we designate as mind refers to some natural kind or it is some kind of abstraction over the natural kinds.

As the discussion in the preceding sections (chiefly sections 4, 5 & 6) has attempted to show, all versions of supervenience have been criticised for not having delivered what was initially promised (Savellos & Yalcin, 1995, p. 9; Grimes, 1988, pp. 152 & 159). The believers of supervenience thesis have also been criticized for their inability to satisfactorily answer questions about the nature of metaphysical priority of the physical over the nonphysical. And these objections have been around with us for quite a while now (Elpidorou, 2018, p. 438; Horgan, 1993; Kim, 1993 & 2000; Wilson, 2005).

As McLaughlin & Bennett in their recent assessment/verdict have remarked:

> Supervenience gives us less than some philosophers have thought. Even logically or metaphysically necessary supervenience is compatible with there being no B-properties that entail any A-properties. Supervenience is not itself explanatory, and does not guarantee that the A-properties either reduce to, ontologically depend upon, or are grounded by the B-properties. It might provide a way to capture the thought that A-properties or facts are not a further ontological commitment over and above the B-properties or facts, but this is controversial. At heart, all a supervenience claim says is that A-properties covary with B-properties. Nevertheless…supervenience has a variety of philosophical uses (2021, $3.8).

The important question that future supporters of supervenience need to address is whether they would be satisfied with such a watered down/diminished role for supervenience. And the challenges that supervenience theorists need to address are many. For instance, Elpidorou (2018) has argued that for supervenience theorists, it is not just a question of securing "minimal physicalism" but a more critical concern is whether

supervenience is capable of securing metaphysical primacy of the physical over the nonphysical. For Elpidorou, supervenience is not capable of either providing an explanation for why supervenience relation holds nor can it demonstrate the metaphysical primacy of the physical as required by physicalist thesis (2018, p. 438). This perhaps is also one of the reasons that, over the years, grounding has been offered as an alternative option for accounting for the metaphysical dependence of the nonphysical on the physical (Fine, 1994a&b). Attractive as such an option may appear on the face of it, some very serious doubts have also been raised about the viability of any grounding relation to achieve what physicalists expect it to deliver (Wilson, 2014; Elpidorou, 2018, p.443).

On occasions, scholars have tended to view difficulties with supervenience thesis to be a proof of untenability of physicalism. In such a rendering, physicalism needed supervenience to make sense of different organisational hierarchies that we encounter in the world. But what happens when one argues like Montero and Brown against any such linkage of the truth of physicalism with supervenience of the mental on the physical (2017, p. 2)? As Montero and Brown have forcefully tended to argue, the truth of physicalism does not require supervenience to hold in a logically necessary manner for no contradiction is involved in believing in the truth of physicalism and non-acceptance of other higher-level features of the world. They see no problem in imagining that a world could exist in a fundamentally physical manner without coming into being of other usually observed organisational hierarchies in the world, for example, chemical bonding or minds. No such entailment is required (Montero & Brown, 2017, pp.3-4). For Montero and Brown, accordingly "the supervenience of mental properties on fundamental physical properties is not a necessary condition for physicalism" (2017, p. 5). Doesn't this rob supervenience thesis of one very important reason for our continued belief in its desirability? Even if we leave aside panpsychists who entertain serious doubts about the truth of physicalism, as an eliminativist or an emergentist one can still continue to believe in the truth of physicalism without needing any supervenience baggage. Montero and Brown therefore argue that "providing a basis for upward necessitation…is not the only way a domain can serve as an ontological basis for a world" (2017, p. 5). That is, no contradiction is involved between our belief in physics to be providing the ontological basis of the world and our denial that supervenience is necessary for the truth of physicalism. So, for Montero and Brown, "it is logically possible for our fundamental physical world to not give rise to the mental world" (2017, p. 6). And this is consistent with our belief in the truth of physicalism.

The other controversy in physicalism literature surrounds whether supervenience allows for independent variation of subvenient properties or not. In this regard also any consensus has proved to be elusive since, except identity theorists, other advocates of supervenience (eg., the functionalists) seem to allow such a variation as, for them, same mental states are realizable in a variety of physical bases. However, such a variation can be disallowed if we were to interpret supervenience within this worldly context and surrender our other possible worldly ambitions (Montero & Brown, 2017, p.8). Therefore, were the philosophers who extended necessity of supervenience thesis to all metaphysically and logically possible worlds guilty of not having worked out or foreseen implications of their own arguments? Was their enthusiasm in the first place as misplaced as it now appears to be in light of arguments advanced by philosophers in recent times? Was lack of empirical grounding of one's thinking responsible for such an oversight? And will everything be lost if

we surrender our metaphysical and logical impulses towards extension of supervenience thesis? Perhaps not. As Montero and Brown in their concluding remarks state, "physicalism should be seen more as a this-worldly principle that tells us what the actual world is like while leaving open whether there are logically or even metaphysically possible worlds that have such things as physics without chemistry or molecules without tables" (Montero & Brown, 2017, p.9).

In light of the above considerations that recognise both, the problematic nature of some philosophers over reliance on model arguments with their focus on securing truth of supervenience across all possible worlds on the one hand and some others' emphasis on the desirability of anchoring our cogitations on empirical facts about human nature on the other, future research in philosophy of mind may benefit considerably if these belated but hard-earned realizations are not lost sight of. It is all the more appreciable that adherence to such a sobering recognition is likely to further strengthen the appeal of physicalism as the most viable philosophical position and may also help restore the credibility of supervenience as a credible option that is still in the reckoning.

Notes:

[1] I am, however, side stepping here the controversies surrounding articulation of the physical in terms of current or future physics. The problematic nature of such a view was first flagged by Hempel (1969 & 1980) and has been followed up by others in the form of Hempel's Dilemma. For some of the rigorously argued physicalist responses to such a dilemma see, Melnyk, 1997 and Wilson, 2006. Regarding skeptical arguments against physicalism, it may be noted that while philosophers have generally been found to be concerned about the changing nature of physics, they seem to uncritically assume as if philosophy is timeless. That such assumptions are groundless can be easily seen from the manner philosophy has radically changed over time. Take, for instance, the changing fortunes of metaphysics even within the analytic tradition in the not so-distant past. It is quite fresh in our memory how logical empiricists had looked at metaphysics and how metaphysics is currently looked at.

[2] For a summary of issues requiring to be addressed by physicalists, see Melnyk (2020).

[3] Similar though was expressed when Lewis stated that "we have supervenience when [and only when] there could be no difference of one sort without differences of another sort" (1986, p. 14).

[4] McLaughlin considers Morgan's usage to be vernacular in nature and not technical like its contemporary usage in the philosophical literature (McLaughlin, 1995, p. 50 fn.3; McLaughlin & Bennett, 2021, $2.2).

[5] Lewis has however suggested that supervenience is broadly reductionistic in nature even of "a stripped-down" variety (1983, p. 358). As he very aptly states, "A supervenience thesis seems to capture what the cautious reductionist wishes to say" (1983, p. 358).

[6] This way at looking at supervenience would also shield the concept from some of the seriously damaging criticisms levelled by Grimes (1988).

[7] Lewis has alternatively expressed this as "a denial of independent variation" (1983, p.358).

[8] This is also one of the reasons for the attractiveness of the concept of global supervenience for Petrie (1987, pp.122, 124 & 129).

[9] Hellman and Thompson have however endeavoured to demonstrate that even the "strong form of reductionism is compatible with ontological dualism" (1975, p. 557). They further consider ontological physicalism to be "formally independent from reductionism" (p.561).

[10] In contrast, paradoxical though it may appear, Kim is both in favour of progressive domain specific local reductions (Kim, 1984, pp.173*f.*) and for also keeping an open mind in the matter and letting "one hundred supervenience concepts bloom" (Kim, 1990, p.23).

[11] The fact of excessive reliance on modal considerations has also been highlighted by McLaughlin (1995, pp. 18-19).

[12] Teller has attempted to provide powerful arguments against viewing materialism as a contingent thesis (1984, pp. *151ff*).

[13] See, Montero (1999) and Witmer (2016) for further discussion on this controversial topic. From these discussions it is not very clear as to how far philosophers have bothered themselves about

what physicists may have to say about ideal physics. The discussions most often appear to revolve around philosophers' versions of what ideal physics is rather than what physicists may have to say on the matter. But within philosophy circles Poland's (1994) characterizations has generally been found to be quite agreeable.

[14] McLaughlin who is otherwise considerably sympathetic to Kim's views on supervenience does not agree with him on the issue of reductionism (1995, p. 47). But McLaughlin still entertains the possibility that "nonreductive materialists and reductive materialists can agree that there is psychophysical supervenience of various varieties" (p. 48).

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Associate Professor
Department of Philosophy
University of Delhi
New Delhi
rmsingh@philosophy.du.ac.in

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THE MODULARITY DEBATE: ASSESSING THE CONSTRUCTIVIST/DEVELOPMENTALIST CHALLENGE

RM Singh*

1. INTRODUCTION

Some of the main questions that have been troubling philosophers, psychologists, and cognitive scientists alike for the last few decades are: What is the nature of human mind? Is there any difference between the "mind" of a robot and that of an intelligent scientist? Are human minds like a noisy parliament in which everyone competes with others to be heard (Dennett, 2001)? Are human minds nothing but thinking machines (Turing, 1950)? Does the notion of computation capture the essence of how our minds work (Searle, 1990; Dreyfus, 1992)? If yes, then what is the nature of these computations and mechanisms that subserve them (Pylyshyn, 1984; Flusberg & McClelland, 2014; Roberts, 2007)? It is the gamut of issues surrounding such questions that we need to situate very influential but equally controversial thesis of the modularity of mind that was first articulated by Jerry Fodor (1983). The proposal has elicited very extreme reactions ranging from extreme enthusiasm (Sperber 1994 & 2002; Pinker, 1998; Barrett, 2005; Barrett & Kurzban, 2006; Machery, 2007) to total rejection (Quartz, 1993 & 2002; Quartz & Sejnowski, 1997). Some other responses lie somewhere or the other between these two extremes (Karmiloff-Smith & Johnson, 1991; Karmiloff-Smith, 1992 & 1994; Elman et al., 1996). In my present essay, I wish to focus on constructivist/developmentalist response to the modularist proposal.

When we look at the work of constructivists and developmentalists, we find that one of the basic aims of their project has been to emphasise the distributed and interactive nature of cognition and mechanisms subserving such activities (Elman et al., 1996; Johnson, 1997; Karmiloff-Smith, 1998; Mareschal et al., 2007). They in fact have consistently raised many substantive issues affecting philosophy of mind and neuropsychology. It is perhaps also not out of place to acknowledge that these scholars have been at the forefront of offering critical evaluation of the wide spread idea of the "universal modular structure" of the cognitive system. They have also offered powerful arguments against static models of normal cognitive system that the modularist account of mind tends to legislate (Quartz & Sejnowski, 1997; Griffiths & Stotz, 2000; Grossberg, 2000 & 2019). Also, constructivists/developmentalists have also often accused their modularist opponents to be guilty of adhering to the "assumption of residual normality" (Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith, 2002a). Before undertaking an assessment of such responses, I want to begin my response by first highlighting confusions on the modularist side.

2. CONFUSIONS AND LACK OF CLARITY WITHIN THE MODULARIST CAMP

It is ironic that despite about four decades of intense debate over the nature and extent of modularity (Fodor, 1985, 1991, 1998, 2000 & 2005; Farah, 1994, Karmiloff-Smith, 1992 & 1994, Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith 2002a&b; Sperber 1994 & 2002; Pinker, 1998 & 2005; Carruthers, 2006; Coltheart 1999; Lyons 2001; Samuels 1998 & 2002; Elman et al., 1996; Robbins, 2017) there seems to be little clarity concerning even some fundamental issues, like, the nature of modules and how the modules let the information in[1]. Though modules are supposed to consult only what is in their proprietary database in producing a response (Fodor, 1983 & 2000), we still lack knowledge about such basic things as to what turns them on.

Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi

[1]In a way while there seems to be some truth in Fodor's lament (Fodor, 1998) that modularity has come to mean different things on different tongues (for instance, massive modularists, like, Pinker, Cosmides & Tooby, Machery among others), such an accusation does not apply to developmentalists like Karmiloff-Smith (1994).

Or, how, for instance, a module decides whether a particular input belongs to its proprietary domain or not[2]. The lack of any details about how modules are individuated has also not been addressed by modularists. Consequently, there is little clarity as to whether they are individuated at the level of entire faculty or by the representations that they process (Fodor 1983 & 1985; Jackendoff, 1997). Lack of information about how modular mechanisms produce output in a format that it becomes accessible to other modules and or central systems, or how modules communicate with each other or the central systems is also very glaring[3]. Hardly any one seems to know whether top-down processing is possible within modules or not.

Since so little is known about functioning of modules, I am not sure the extent to which acceptance or rejection of modular imagery will really have as wide spread repercussions as is usually made out to be by the modularists. What is even more surprising is the fact that very little has been done to address such issues by designing experiments that aim at gathering such details. As Fodor himself laments, "most of the discussion has been about whether there are modules and, if there are, whether they are innate. For better or worse, the point of view in the book [Fodor (2000] isn't the one that has guided research on these issue" (Fodor, 2000, personal communication). But who is to be blamed for such a state of affairs given the wide spread disdain amongst philosophers towards incorporation of findings of rigorous empirical work in their cogitations? Even more surprising fact is that even most neuropsychologists still tend to implicitly rely on the doctrine of modularity or what has come to be referred as the assumption of "residual normality" (Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith, 2002a). That such a grim situation should inspire some modularity enthusiasts to make extensive use of modularity thesis in their explanation of such complex human behaviours as language (Pinker, 1994), marriage, love, misplaced investment in bringing up of children and neglect of one's own parents (Pinker 1998), cheating (Cosmides & Tooby, 1992), religion, art appreciation or lack of it (Mithen, 1996) is quite unfortunate. If nothing else, loss of rigour through such attempts tends to bring a bad name to scholarly pronouncements.

3. THE DEVELOPMENTALIST CHALLENGES

One way, among others, to demonstrate the plausibility of modularist assumptions is to examine the influence of background information on perceptual processes. This can be attempted by testing how the former affects the computations performed by the latter. Provided of course that the background information in question falls outside the proprietary database of the module and is perceptual in nature[4]. In my view it is one of the chief merits of effort of constructivists/developmentalists is to face the modularist challenge by focusing on basic issues surrounding modularity. That they have been very successful in this endeavour is obvious not only from the wealth of data examined by them over the decades but soundness of their position/arguments has been demonstrated through results of computational models designed by them, models that have specifically aimed at bringing into sharp focus how modular structures could developmentally emerge without being innate. Such attempts pose a formidable challenge to the modularist orthodoxy when they direct their energies at inquiring whether the rest of the cognitive system would develop normally if some of its components are not allowed to develop normally? Or, what would happen if developmental processes were disturbed as in the case of developmental disorders? Would such unusual scenarios affect final outcome or end state?

In the context of controversies surrounding modularity, the basic problem appears to be that the modularity thesis has never been precisely formulated for it to be refuted (Lyons, 2001). For instance,

[2]For details of attempts by scholars who tend to make use of the concept of a 'module' in a relatively less strict manner, see, Pinker (1997/8; Cosmides & Tooby (1992), Sperber (2002) and Robbins (2017). For Fodor's critical response to these efforts, see, Fodor (2000).

[3]As the situation is already complicated enough, I have restrained myself from complicating it any further. Accordingly, discussion of issues like whether cognitive systems are endowed with 'interface modules' or not, though important enough in its own right, has not been taken up for consideration here (Jackendoff, 1997). Such a proposal is problematic because while the existence of such entities is usually justified on the ground that we need 'something' that affects translation operations between modules or modules and central systems, no ompelling ground have been provided for accepting the requirement of preservation of informational content through such translation operations This is problematic as contra interface modules, as we are used to understanding modules following Fodor (1983), are often thought of as not preserving informational content.

[4]See, Hunt (1985) for some details on context priming studies.

modularists have never specified necessary and sufficient conditions for modularity. Even evidence for violation of some of the central features like innateness, domain specificity, and informational encapsulation has not been of much help because modularists insist that to show the truth of "nonmodularity, you have to show that a capacity is affected by information that is external to the module by independent criteria" (Fodor 1985, p. 36). Also, modularists usually embrace some kind of nativism or the other in articulation of their position though all nativists are not strict modularists (Spelke & Newport, 1998). Now, the extent to which nativists agree in some of their sober moods with nonnativists (eg, Cowie, 1999) that nativism is a "largely negative doctrine" based on "notoriously vague and slippery" notions like triggering (Samuels 2002, pp. 248 & 247 n 21), one is at a loss to understand what to make of some of their larger claims.

Therefore, if modularists want their thesis to be taken seriously, then they have to clarify whether their thesis is applicable to a cognitive system, and if yes, then they are also required to explicate what it is for something to be a cognitive system. This is important as nonnativists have argued that functional discreteness of cognitive systems in no way entails acceptance of innateness, informational encapsulation or domain specificity (Lyons 2001). Also, there is considerable evidence to believe that the localisation of function could as well be resulting from competition between different neuronal groups than being genetically determined. A considerable number of prominent scholars have, for example, tried to successfully demonstrate how input itself could be serving as a kind of bias for functional specialisation (Edelman, 1987 & 1993; Jacobs 1999; Johnson, 1999; Neville, 1995; Sur, Pallas & Roe, 1990). As Lyons points out, "with the exception of neural localization, none of Fodor's nine diagnostic features are necessary conditions for system hood...there is nothing in the definition of cognitive systems that requires that they be innately specified, introspectively opaque, fast, or subject to characteristic breakdown" (Lyons 2001, p. 296).

In this regard, even if it is conceded to the modularists that no reduction of the mental to the physical has so far been realized or is not even in sight and we have to live with some kind of graded conception of reality where different resultant properties retain their functional autonomy without being reducible to the underlying base (Elpidorou, 2018; Melnyk, 2020; Stoljar, 2021), they still cannot indefinitely postpone giving answer to the question of how modular systems are individuated[5]. This is unavoidable because neural architecture is, by everyone's admission, the substrate in which modular systems are realized. Also, there seems to be no justifiable reason for pessimism concerning the science of nonmodular cognitive systems. There appears to be no principled objection to our continuance to look at the mind as a cognitive system that is implemented through "functionally isolable subsystems" (Shallice, 1984 & 1988) without accepting the modularity thesis. Such a possibility cannot be easily dismissed as the actual details of brain circuitry involved in different perceptual processes is largely plastic, interconnected, parallel and makes use of elaborate re-entrant pathways (Edelman, 1987; Grossberg, 2000 & 2019). It is very unlikely that such a substrate will not affect the nature of computations that such networks perform in subserving different cognitive tasks. Therefore, in so far as objective of advancing our knowledge of nature and cognitive capacities of living beings is concerned, designing of more and more powerful computational systems is likely to be of very little consequence.

This appears quite natural as all information is eventually represented through neuronal activity. As has been argued by many neuropsychologists, even the existence of "so-called pure syndromes" does not prove that a "cognitive system is modular in nature (Shallice, 1984 & 1988; Hinton & Shallice ,1991). Whatever we know about the nature of brain structure does not appear to rule out that the functional architecture cannot be interactive in which different systems are influenced in their activity by activation patterns of other connected neuronal networks. In fact, empirical facts about neuronal structures across different life forms favour quite the opposite. The issue that is yet to be settled in sufficient detail is thus more about the nature of influence. If modules can be thought to be resulting from developmental processes as has been argued for by developmentalists like Karmiloff-Smith,

[5]Here by supervenience, following Kim, |mean that "for each mental, biological, or other 'special' property M, there is a physical property P such that M must occur if P occurs". The supervenience thesis thus entails nomological dependence of M upon P (Kim, 2000, pp. 247 & 256).

Thomas and their other co-workers, then different cognitive systems may involve varying degree of encapsulation as a function of developmental processes (Karmiloff-Smith, 1994). However, this in no way amounts to vindication of the other extreme that argues for equipotentiality of the cortex (Quartz & Sejnowski,997). In this regard, Shallice's advice appears quite reasonable when he proposes that "cognition may involve more than Fodorian modules and equipotential systems" (1984, p. 246).

I consider it important to emphasize this point as given the acrimonious nature of the debate between modularists and developmentalists, arguments run the risk of being totally misunderstood might remain less effective if developmentalists are not careful the level at which they are pitching their arguments against what has been at the centre of modularist discourse[6]. Lack of such a clarification would also make it difficult to assess the extent to which their proposal affects modularity thesis. For instance, reflexes are ideal type examples of modular systems for Fodor. They are thought to be oblivious to our beliefs, interests, and life objectives. Given their proximal stimulus, they produce their effects. Similar is the case with perceptual illusions. Modulartsts explain these phenomena by taking recourse to restrictive availability of information to modules; modules by definition are supposed to consult only what is in their database to produce a response.

Though modularists treat reflexes to be ideal type cases for demonstration of their thesis (Fodor 1983 & 1985), evidence points to a very involved role for input in development of motor and sensory systems (Konczak et al., 1997; Pearson, 2000). For instance, maturation of walking and head bobbing behaviour is shown to be dependent on locomotor experience (Muir & Chu, 2002). Studies have also emphasised the dynamic nature of organisation of motor cortex as evidenced from large scale reorganisation of representational maps for movements in both humans and animals. Motor plasticity is also revealed through the ease with which new motor skills can be learned and retained in the form of automated skills. Pearson (2000) in his work, following studies by Durkovic & Damianopoulos (1986), has reported wide spread changes in reflex pathways following lesions in both humans and animals, whether they happen owing to accidents and/or in experimental settings (Whelan & Pearson, 1997; Pearson, 2000). In this regard, work of du Lac et al. (1995) is very noteworthy in providing evidence for learning and memory in the vestibulo-ocular reflex (VOR) pathways of the awake and behaving monkeys by identifying anatomical structures involved in learning in the VOR. Moreover, while activity-dependent reorganisation of cerebral cortex is well documented, there is substantial increase in evidence that points to marked reorganisation in subcortical structures, like, brainstem and thalamus as well (Jones 2000). McAllister, Katz & Lo (1999) in their review of literature likewise report studies that have identified specific neurotrophins as mediators of different forms of plasticity.

Notwithstanding such encouraging empirical findings, it may be more rewarding for the developmentalist alternative to systematically examine stock in trade examples that are all the time marshalled by the modularists in support of their thesis. For instance, how to deny the fact of persistence of visual illusions is not input driven? It would be interesting to see how developmentalists would account for such happenings within their proposed framework. If not anything, these issues have been at the centre of modularist discourse. Some clarifications may also be required as to what all is treated as being modularized and detailed trajectories of such processes. Are they referring to modularisation of perceptual mechanisms or cognitive systems[7]. This is important as modularity thesis in its strict formulations is more about perception than cognition (Fodor, 1985). As has been often pointed out by innatists, existence of innate and domain-specific knowledge does not entail existence of innate and domain-specific processing mechanisms (Samuels, 1998).

The other aspects of the modularist approach that have occupied developmentalists attention are their refutation modularists poverty of stimulus arguments and a particular version of modularity, namely,

[6] For the sake of readability and descriptive elegance, I have tended to include amongst modularits their over enthusiastic massive modularist followers as well. They are known in the literature under the umbrella terms of "new synthesis nativists" and/or "massive modularists". However, this convenience has been adopted only in contexts where commonality between these camps is more important than their familial quarrels vis-à-vis their common developmentalist opponents.

[7] Since modularity thesis is more concerned with perceptual mechanisms than higher cognition, developmentalist arguments would hold only to the extent to which modularity thesis is extended to cognitive systems.

massive modularity[8]. That Fodor as the real proponent of the modularist thesis does not approve of extension of his thesis to include higher cognitive processes is well known and is in itself a topic of very acrimonious debate within the modularist camp[9]. At the centre of the disputes between Fodor and his massive modularists opponents has been the problematic nature of simplistic gene-behaviour mappings that are implicitly presupposed by many massive modularist accounts (eg., Pinker, 1998; Cosmides & Tooby, 1992, 1995 & 1997; Sperber, 1994). Often this gets tagged on to the vagueness that surrounds the functioning of modules within modularist camp. For instance, even in the case of modular systems damage to a component does not entail that the behaviour of other components will not change. If damage to a module means change to its computational ability, then the change in its output is likely to affect input/output of other modules and hence behaviour. Even within some versions of modularist accounts, it is possible to believe that any damage to a subsystem can have cascading effect on performance of other systems. Because modularists have themselves for long argued that while modules are insensitive in their operations to those of others and work on their own, this fact, for them, cannot be taken to mean that the output of modules cannot be affected by action of others. The damage to a module can affect both computations and function performed by a module in question. Also, computations may remain intact though behaviour may change due to changes in the input (Grodzinsky & Hader, 1994).

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the context of the modularist thesis examined in the present essay, it appears that the developmentalists are justified in focusing on the problematic nature of the assumptions about the nature of cognitive systems that most neuropsychological accounts seem to unquestioningly assume the thesis of "residual normality". But the important question that both modularists and developmentalist have to face is to answer whether functional nonmodularity entails anatomical nonmodularity. And if yes, then how is the former instantiated? After all it is not easy to establish that the distributed nature of neuronal implementations is inconsistent with computational modularity (Chater & Oaksford, 1990; Oaksford & Chater, 1991; Oaksford, 1994). Accordingly, the alternative of developmental modularization as articulated by Thomas, Karmiloff-Smith and their co-workers (Karmiloff-Smith, 1992; Karmiloff-Smith, Scerif, & Thomas, 2002; Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith, 2002a&b; Dekker & Karmiloff-Smith, 2010; D'Souza & Karmiloff-Smith 2016) can serve its intended purpose only after the nature of relation between cognition and neural substrate that subserves cognition is settled because cognitive systems are describable at different levels of abstraction (Marr, 1982; Farah, 1994). In my opinion a great deal of confusion in neuropsychology seems to result from neuropsychologists' tendency to constantly shift between neural and cognitive levels of description in their explanations. This seems to result from their uncritical acceptance of the fairly widespread structure-function correspondences in the brain, a fact that often misleads many researchers in their theorisations by implicitly supposing as if these correspondences are one-to-one and direct.

As opposed to modularist accounts, the developmentalists seem to entail a kind of many-to-many mapping across different levels. It appears to me that the damaged components are likely to affect behaviour of nondamaged ones whether the imagery that we use in our explanations is of modular systems or of the connectionist variety, a fact reiterated by Semenza when he points out that the "nondamaged components of the architecture continue to function as they did before damage does not follow from the modularity assumption…[as] under the modularity assumption, the working of nondamaged modules may undergo considerable modification" (Semenza, 1994, p. 80). If this is possible without giving up modularity thesis, then Thomas, Karmiloff-Smith and their co-workers' charge that their opponents mistakenly believe that despite damage to a particular component the nondamaged parts of the system may still be thought to work normally (the hypothesis of "residual

[8] However, for a more recent and detailed rehearsal of poverty of stimulus arguments and the kind of challenge that such arguments pose to developmentalist approaches, see, Laurence & Margolis (2001), Pullum & Scholz (2002) and Scholz & Pullum (2002).

[9] For a detailed critique of such an approach from within the modularist camp, see, Fodor (2005, 2000 & 1998) and Pinker (2005). In fact, Fodor may even be in agreement with some developmentalists in believing that the mapping between genes and cognition are many-to-many, see, Fodor (2000, Chs 4&5) for details. At the other end of the spectrum, clubbing together modularists like Fodor with other neuropsychologists like Shallice amounts to overlooking subtle but important differences in their approach.

normality") would not hold at least in some cases. It is however not clear to me what these alluded to changes could eventually turned out to be. Are the changes computational, algorithmic, or implementational? In my opinion, the details in each case are likely to have wild variations. More so when we keep in mind large-scale redundancies in the brain.

Also, the contribution of environment cannot ever be eliminated, but can merely be changed from one that is species typical (Johnston, 1988, p. 622). As has been often emphasised by interactionists, like, Bateson (1979), Gottleib (2003), and Oyama (2000) among others, all behaviour arises as a consequence of dynamic "interactions within and between the organism and its environment" (Johnston, 1988, p. 624). So, the interaction is always between organism and the environment and not between genes and the environment. What is inherited is not merely genes but "gene products, hormones, patterns of neural activity, nutrients, anatomical structures (both neural and nonneural), physical variables (such as temperature, salinity, ph, and gravity), self-produced stimulation, sensory experience, social interactions [, etc.]" (Johnston, 1988, p. 625). Given such a scenario, the influence of genes is not the only influence that we have to deal with in our theorisations, As Johnston & Edwards (2002) point out, "genes appear as one among many contributors to a complex network of interactions" (p. 26). As researchers like Schaffner and Lewontin have asserted, "The relation between genes and organism is 'many-to-many'" and extremely indirect (Schaffner 1998, p. 212; Lewontin, 1995; Karmiloff-Smith, 2006). In a scenario like this and given developmentalists' emphasis on developmental modularisation, they may not be averse to acceptance of the existence of modules that are assembled by building upon certain 'inherent' biases. That is, a scenario in which perceptual illusions and reflexes would fall at one end of the spectrum, higher cognitive processes like belief fixation would fall at the other extreme. However, whether this would entail end of the road for the modularist camp is hard to ascertain. But it is beyond doubt that their approach has suffered considerable damage given the accumulation of evidence against their intuitions.

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THE PROBLEMATIC NATURE OF CHOMSKYAN APPROACH TO LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

R.M.SINGH*

1. THE DEBATE ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

My purpose in this paper is to examine the debate between Chomsky (and his followers) and his opponents which largely includes developmentalists and constructivists. As is well known, Chomskyans have tended to argue that the innate structure is most important in deciding the outcome of developmental processes. The environmental input, for them, is nothing more than a mere 'trigger' to kick-start the innate mechanisms responsible for the developmental outcomes[1]. One of the reasons, among others, for this preference is that an 'unconstrained learner' – the learner who is not biased in any way either in favour or against any probable solution to the given problem - cannot arrive at the right kind of solution within realistic time constraints. That is, s/he is not able to take a step towards the solution of the problem in the normally expected time frame (Gold, 1967; Laurence & Margolis ,2001). The developmentalists and their constructivist cousins, on the contrary, consider environment to be playing a crucial role. In so far as the outcome of developmental processes is concerned neither the Chomskyans consider these to be entirely resulting from innate mechanisms nor do their opponents consider everything to be resulting from environmental influences. Researchers belonging to both the camps recognize the role of innate mechanisms as well as the environmental inputs. That is, none of the groups holds an exclusive and exhaustive position with respect to the two -- the innate mechanisms and the environmental factors. What still distinguishes them and fuels the controversy is 'the extent of control', and the importance that each group is willing to grant to *any one* of these two factors (Karmiloff & Karmiloff-Smith, 2001)[2]. The controversy, therefore, has boiled down to the relative influence of environment and genetic endowment on developmental processes or to specifying the process by which any such account may actually work: mechanisms, representations, learning algorithms, constraints, biological processes that deliver the constraints.

In the case of language acquisition, it is for instance argued by the Chomskyans that since children can muster their ambient language with 'little effort', it is only appropriate to assume the existence of some innate language acquisition device. This is clearly reflected in Chomsky's likening of language acquisition to the growth of bodily organs (Chomsky, 1975). But for the opponents of Chomskyans (i.e., developmentalists and constructivists), this is hardly an acceptable solution. According to them, the problem would remain unresolved unless Chomskyans "specify exactly what is innate and how the innate ability allows the child to parse words from any of the thousands of languages to which she might be exposed as her native tongue" (Kuczaj, 1999, p. 134). The Chomskyan claim appears unreasonable as taking five years to learn syntax can hardly be treated as swift.

In this regard, Chomsky and his followers perpetually appear guilty of arguing by analogy but never constructing the analogy itself. The brain is fundamentally different from all other organs in that it is an informational device rather than biochemical regulator or biomechanical effector.

* Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, Email: rmsingh@philosophy.du.ac.in

[1] The notion of 'trigger' over the decades in Chomskyan oeuvre has however largely remained very vague lacking in any scientifically testable content.

[2] The problem at times is also referred to be concerning "the quality and richness of innate structure" (Laurence & Margolis (2001, p. 219).

This has been well documented in the area of cortical development where the debate is usually articulated in terms of *protomap* (e.g. Rakic, 1988) vs *protocortex* (e.g. O'Leary, 1989). That is, while Chomskyans lay emphasis on maturational factors, the developmentalists argue for a more 'involved role' for the environmental input (Huttenlocher & Dabholkar, 1997; Johnson, 1999). On the nativist view the brain matures and reaches the stage of 'steady state' primarily with the passage of time. Time, therefore, is the most crucial factor in the development and growth of brain cells and its other structures.

For the developmentalist, on the contrary, the brain structures emerge not just with the passage of time or ageing process but through an interaction between the developmental processes and the environment in which they are set. The far-reaching effects of the environment on brain development and resultant representational plasticity as well as changes to the germ cell epigenome have also been well documented by researchers emphasizing thereby on the gene-environment dynamism rather than unidirectional influence of genes on the phenotype (Bale, 2015, Bidleman *et al.,* 2014, Bidleman & Alain, 2015, Yusa *et al.,* 2011). The developmentalists therefore argue that calling some phenomenon innate in no way constitutes its explanation. For them, the products of development are epigenetic in nature. That is, the outcome of developmental processes is probabilistic rather than being predetermined. The developmentalists consider it more appropriate to articulate their position in terms of *coaction* of gene-environment rather than their interaction (Gottlieb, 2003 & 2007, Dupre, 2014). Consequently, they treat effects of genes to be indirect[3].

The picture of developmental processes that emerges from the developmentalist camp is the one in which "genes appear as one among many contributors to a complex network of interaction" (Johnston & Edwards, 2002, p. 26). The mapping from structure to function to behaviour, for the developmentalists, is many-to-many (Li & Lindenberger, 2002). In their view, the role of learning, for example, is clearly demonstrable in brain development. This is considered to be evident from the findings of studies on activity-dependent synaptogenesis. One of the important findings of these studies in the present context is their discovery of how a living system develops the capacity for modifying its computational architecture as a function of its involvement in a particular problem space. The organism's environment is not passive but engaged, i.e., specified by the organism's proactive engagement, querying, and results in playing a very significant role in the construction of new representations. The existence of a strong correlation between increases in structural complexity vis-à-vis increases in representational power tends to substantiate the truth of this interpretation. For the developmentalists and their constructivist cousins, the environment and the nature of input (i.e., experience) thus shape the very nature of the processing mechanisms and affect the direction of developmental processes in profound ways (Elman *et al.,* 1996; Karmiloff & Karmiloff-Smith, 2001; Quartz, 1993; Quartz & Sejnowski, 1997; Plunkett & Schafer, 1999; Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith, 2003). That is, the genes and the environment are thought to be "interacting and inseparable shapers of development" (Lewontin, 1995, 72; Dupre, 2014, p. 3).

A further impetus to the developmentalist approach in terms of enhancing our understanding of human cognition is provided by studies of atypical cognitive development. Recently, through a series of studies including connectionist modelling, Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith (2002a&b; 2003) have argued that Chomskyans, keeping in line with their larger theoretical orientation, have tended to unquestionably adhere to what they have come to term the "assumption of *Residual Normality*" (Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith, 2002a, p. 729) -- the thesis that some fault or malfunctioning of some components of the system would still leave the rest

[3] For a detailed discussion of the mediating role of different factors affecting genetic activity and behaviour, see, Johnston & Edwards (20002).

of the system intact[4]. For Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith, such a move glosses over the fact that the mapping from some genetic deficit(s) to resultant behavioural impairment(s) is far too complicated and not as straightforward as is usually assumed by the Chomskyans. For them, the characteristics of development and of cortical gene expression both currently appear to mitigate against highly domain-specific outcomes in adulthood. It appears that for the time being we have to content ourselves with this because at the current stage of our knowledge it is not possible to pin point with any degree of finality any gene that can be treated as responsible for later cognitive and/or behavioural deficits (Karmiloff-Smith, Scerif & Thomas, 2002a). Despite some confusion about the very meaning of innateness (Griffiths, 2002), even a cursory look at the mechanisms subserving cognition reveals interconnectivity between different brain regions as well as neuronal groups to be the hallmark of brain anatomy. And this interconnectivity appears to be more of a distinguishing feature of brain functioning than modular compartmentalization. The evidence for representational plasticity even in the case of adults as evidenced from the study of accidental cases is also too strong to be ignored without being dogmatic (Ramchandran, 1999).

The developmentalists have therefore tended to argue that the proponents of the static picture of cognitive system (read Chomskyans and modularists) tend to overlook the fact as to how certain gene level abnormalities may change the performance of low-level processing mechanisms. These changes are not considered to be limited to changes in the processing mechanisms alone but may also involve changes even in their computational role and abilities. It is also considered possible that they may have a cascading effect so as to make the organism opt for an alternate developmental trajectory. These changes, however, are not a mere higher-level tinkering with the normal adult system (Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith, 2003). It is argued that the cascading effects of genetic/low-level deficits/malfunctioning on other functional components are usually lost sight of by the Chomskyans. That the effects of low level atypicalities can be 'knock-on', qualitative and/or quantitative only complicates the situation further. It is by keeping in view such difficulties with the Chomskyan picture of human cognition that the developmentalists have proposed that the structures in representational systems be taken to be emerging as a consequence of "the system's dynamic interactions with its environment" (Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith, 2003, p. 647). In my opinion the recognition of this complexity combined with the realisation that genetic changes/deficits can result in "wide spread atypicalities across cognitive domains" has considerably strengthened the theory of human cognition proposed by the developmentalist alternative over nativist and modularist renderings of these processes (Thomas & Karmiloff-Smith, 2003, pp. 648-49). The debate between Chomskyans and developmentalists is thus not just about the interaction between innate factors and the experiential and environmental input. It is about the exact nature of this interaction (Elman *et al.*,1996; Aslin, Saffran and Newport, 1999).

It appears to me that improvement in our understanding of this interaction, besides giving us a better insight into the functioning of different cognitive mechanisms would also result in giving a more precise meaning to innateness. For example, the future research in this area can help us to identify and fix the role of postulated innateness. That is, whether it operates at the level of capacities, or at the level of the mechanisms involved in realizing such capacities of the organism in question, or knowledge/representations that the organism is usually thought to be endowed with. In the case of language, for instance, the controversy usually boils down to whether the knowledge of grammar is some kind of biological endowment or result of

[4] That is, Chomskyans hold on to the static model of cognitive development. That they further use it to advance a modular picture of the cognitive system is yet another important issue that can be explored in its own right. In this static picture, the modularity is seen not to be resulting from developmental processes but viewed as an integral part of our innate cognitive system.

developmental activity. The controversy between the Chomskyans and the developmentalists is in a way about the direction of the influence of the maturational factors and the influence that the environment has on resultant cognitive structure. It is in fact not clear whether development and learning are separate things, rather than points on a multi-dimensional continuum of adaptive change.

But Chomskyans still require a developmental account, though may be a more constrained one. It is this missing component that is problematic about their theories. Its absence encourages the idea that Chomskyans are not providing an explanation but adopting a tactic that serves to block further explanation: 'here are the primitives I wish to include in my theory, for which I need no explanation'. The point is, even though different fields (psychology, neuroscience, biology) can be studied independently, it does not mean that they are independent. Primitives in psychological theories of development have to be consistent with what biological development can deliver. Perhaps worse than that, when other researchers do try and implement the aspects of Chomskyan proposals that appear obvious and simple (e.g., triggering), it turns out they don't work or are far more complex in practice.

Though the assessment of the usefulness of the continued engagement with nativist-developmentalist debate varies from extreme rejection (Pinker, 1998) to its profound usefulness (Spelke & Newport, 1998), there appears to be very little hope of ending the controversy in near future. This is especially so because our knowledge of cognitive systems and other allied areas has reached a stage where each of the positions appears to be empirically testable. In a way the debate is no longer confined to 'empty' philosophical arguments (for example, between rationalists and empiricists), but is aimed at determining the precise nature of interplay between these two sets of factors (i.e., the innate and the environmental). Instead of looking at the phenomenon of language acquisition, for example, in a dichotomous manner (i.e., nature vs nurture), the focus of researchers is now shifting to investigating the nature of processes involved in language acquisition. The linguists and psycholinguists these days increasingly appear motivated to unravel how some of the domain specific characteristics of many of the brain regions responsible for handling linguistic tasks could be a function of experience.

In the present essay an attempt has been made to assess the status of Chomskyan position in the context of language acquisition. There are several reasons for limiting the exercise to language acquisition alone. Firstly, the early experiences in the process of language acquisition may have long lasting consequences on human cognition as it may be colouring subsequent cognitive capacities. The effects that the process of language acquisition may have on our subsequent behaviour cannot thus be ruled out a priori. Secondly, language acquisition is one area of research where the "nature-nurture debate plays itself out with perhaps no greater fury than in the area of language acquisition" (Aslin, Saffran, & Newport, 1999, p. 361). Before assessing and taking sides in the debate let me begin by first giving a brief description of the Chomskyan thesis about language acquisition.

2. CHOMSKYAN THESIS ABOUT LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

While dealing with the topic of nativist thesis about language, it is important to take into consideration the larger understanding of the mind/brain that nativists in general and Chomsky and his followers in particular rely upon in the articulation of their position on what they consider to be the nature of language (Jenkins, 2004). Chomsky, for instance, believes that the sensory input and resultant behaviour cannot be studied without taking into consideration

the mind/brain states. Mind/brain for him is a representational device which is postulated to be endowed with some resources of its own (Chomsky, 1993). The sensory inputs undoubtedly have a role to play in our perception of the world but we perceive the world in ways that we actually do, not just because our senses receive a certain kind of input, but because in some important sense the output is "a consequence of the organizing activity of the mind" (Chomsky, 1993, p. 515). That is, we always perceive things in terms of concepts that we are endowed with. In the case of language, the significant question is: "What is the system of knowledge incorporated in the mind/brain of a person who speaks and understands a particular language?" (p. 517). Chomsky's answer is: "a system of knowledge incorporated in the mind/brain" (p. 517). And by a 'system of knowledge' he means s "a rule system of some sort" and its knowledge is "knowledge of this rule system" (p. 527). These rules form mental representations and govern our linguistic behavior. But language is a system of rules whose initial state is "genetically determined" because of which "the class of attainable languages" (pp. 519 & 522) is restricted. This is supported by the fact that though there is infinite number of possible rules and hence possible class of languages, in reality the number of actual human languages is relatively very small (Hornstein & Lightfoot, 1981). As Chomsky says: "[While] there are too many possible rule systems…there are only finitely many languages" (1993, p. 528-529).

Such a restriction on the number and variety of languages is accounted for by the thesis of initial state which is "a genetically determined species character" (Chomsky, 1980, p. 38; Piattelli-Palmarini, 1980). It is a state that is "prior to experience" and "fixed for the species". It is owing to certain properties of the initial state (for example, specified subject condition) that the range of hypotheses that a learner is likely to entertain in transition from the initial state to the steady state (i.e., the grammar of a mature adult) is severely restricted. The hypothesized knowledge of language that such an initial state is endowed with is termed as Universal Grammar (UG) by Chomsky and refers to "that aspect of linguistic competence which is due to the human genetic endowment" (Jackendoff, 1983, p. 8). UG, as hypothesized by Chomsky, is "a highly structured and restrictive system of principles with certain open parameters" (Chomsky 1980, p. 38). Because of such a restrictive mechanism at work the possible variety of languages is limited by rules of universal grammar. It outlines rules that universally hold for all natural languages. It is because of restrictions imposed by UG that children don't have to "evaluate the full range of grammars that would be logically possible" (White, 1981, p. 242). UG restricts the range of possible hypotheses that a language learner can entertain. It provides a basis for learning without itself being learnt (Jackendoff, 1997, p. 6). That is, children never try out "structure-independent hypothesis" but are "constrained to work within the framework of structure-dependency" (White, 1981, p. 243). However, the UG rules are "not learned, but…[are] part of the conditions for language learning" (Chomsky, 1975, p.33). "We do not really learn language; rather grammar grows in the mind. We may think of Universal Grammar as…the genetic program, the schematism that permits the range of possible realizations that are the possible human languages" (Chomsky, 1980, p. 134 & p. 234). As regards the question why languages differ from each other, Chomskyans believe that "the 'equations' linking sound and meaning allow of several equally good solutions…[That the] conditions imposed by the general architecture of the mind/brain…can be met in various ways" (Smith, 1999, pp. 123-124). In the vocabulary of the principles and parameters theory, this means that we have a possible humanly attainable language "for each arrangement of switch settings" (Chomsky, 1993, p. 529).

As for the enigma of 'the probable ease' with which children seem to acquire the language of their primary care givers, Chomsky believes that children are born with the knowledge of language, i.e., knowledge of a system of rules[5]. But what is initially lacking is the maturation

[5] However, unless we have a scientific way to measure the supposed 'ease' in infants and young children, this

of other mechanisms (attention and memory for example) that "bring principles of universal grammar into operation on some regular schedule in a manner to be described and accounted for in a genetic theory" (Chomsky, 1993, pp. 530-531). The contribution of genetic factors is very important in Chomsky's scheme of things because for him universal grammar or "the initial state of the language faculty determines possible rules and modes of interaction" (p. 527). It is because of such a restrictive role of UG in making the options available that despite the impoverished and unstructured nature of the input, the language learning can proceed. That is, "the knowledge acquired in language acquisition far outstrips the information that is available in the environment" (Laurence & Margolis, 2001, p. 221). One of the implications of such a restrictive role of UG is that it in many ways limits the possible contribution of experience. The role of experience is limited in the sense that children's exposure to language(s) merely brings the input to the critical point where the use of innate knowledge becomes possible. Its function is to account for the transition from the initial state to the steady state.

But the contribution of experiential input in not totally neglected as the transition from "the initial state to the steady state of mature knowledge is, to some extent, data-driven… The environment determines how the options left unspecified by the initial state of the language faculty are fixed, yielding different languages" (Chomsky, 1993, p. 519)[6]. As White clearly remarks, "a priori principles cannot be apparent unless one has data that are relevant to them" (White, 1981, p. 246)[7] This is because the task of structure-preservation does not make much sense in the absence of relevant triggering experience[8]. So, the grammar that we postulate the child to be working with has to be appropriate for the data available to the child. Such a rendering of the structure-experience relation has far reaching consequences. For instance, if children are thought to be constructing their 'working' grammar that is appropriate for the data that they are exposed to, then they would not only be working with different grammars at different stages of life but even their perception of data will be changing with time[9]. As White states: "Despite apparently similar *input* data at different stages, the child's *intake* actually varies… The child's perception of the data is different from the adult's. The grammar that he comes up with will be optimal for his own perception of the data, *i.e.* the relevant triggering experience" (White, 1981, pp. 247-248). While on the face of it such a reading of language acquisition in terms of "data-driven" grammars may give an impression as if experience has been given prominent role than is usually allowed by the Chomskyans, this is in reality not the case. What is emphasized by such a reading is not the role of the input, but the actual intake of the child. So, simplifying of the input to the child is not be of any consequence for the Chomskyans. As White very forcefully argues: "…the fact that the speech that mothers address to children is different from the speech they address to adults does not mean that it is better for language learning" (White, 1981, p. 271 n.5)[10]. Consequently, there will be different optimal grammars for different stages and we cannot speak in terms of simpler and/or complex inputs[11].

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doesn't mean anything significant.

[6] For Chomsky, this in no way means that children are merely born with some simple principles the details of which are filled later in life. For him, there appears to be adequate evidence to suggest that children "select very complex rule systems and systematically…avoid much simpler ones" (1993, p. 528).

[7] Nothing is however said about how relevance is tested by the system.

[8] But can triggering as a concept be deployed so readily as if everyone knows how it works. It's an assumption that learning will be fast and rely little on the structure of the input, but not a mechanism of learning that has been demonstrated to work.

[9] This of course largely applies to 'stages' before steady state is reached.

[10] This is a hypothesis to be tested, not a fact to assume. Either way, needs to be evaluated in terms of explicit learning mechanisms.

[11] Scholars not belonging to the Chomskyan tradition have however not found such arguments to be convincing. Apart from the burgeoning literature on the role of child-directed speech, the researchers have also highlighted

So, while Chomsky and other linguists working in the generative grammar tradition do rely on presentation of "appropriate data" (Chomsky, 1993, p. 513) for language learning to be possible, the role of linguistic input is treated as very limited in nature. It can merely "trigger" or "fine tune" what is otherwise an "internally controlled process". The language faculty develops "in accordance with fixed genetic instructions" for Chomsky (1980, p. 32 & pp. 39-40; 1981). That is, the process of language acquisition is deterministic in nature. It is acquired by "a process of selection of a rule system of an appropriate sort on the basis of direct evidence. Experience yields an inventory of rules" (Chomsky, 1993, p. 527). This means that though the nature of the environment is not treated as totally irrelevant, its importance is considerably downplayed. The reason for such a downplaying of the role of input and acceptance of the thesis of innate knowledge seems to be the evidence for the existence of some definite knowledge. In this context Chomsky cites the behaviour of the slave boy in Plato's *Meno* as evidence. The Chomskyans feel compelled to postulate innate linguistic knowledge in the form of universal grammar because, for them, the resultant effects in terms of the mastery of language of one's primary care givers go far beyond the input; because children can master a complex system like language with very little effort in a very short period of time. Expressed otherwise, the existence of an innate mechanism is considered necessary because of children's fragmentary and impoverished experience, and the intricate nature of the knowledge of language that they come to be endowed with (Hornstein & Lightfoot, 1981; Clahsen, 1996). That is, children end up knowing much more than they have been taught. For Chomskyans, the stimulus is too impoverished to explain the ability that humans come to have[12]. The linguistic input "fails to provide the data needed to induce many principles and generalizations manifested by the mature state" (Lightfoot, 1991, p. 3).

The other reason that seems to guide Chomskyans in their postulation of innate knowledge is the lack of negative data (Hornstein & Lightfoot, 1981; Smith, 1999). The support for this comes from children's lack of information about ungrammaticality of sentences. That the children of immigrant parents who have poor knowledge of the language of the country to which they have migrated develop normal grammar is often cited as important enough evidence to demonstrate the truth of Chomskyan thesis (Crain & Lillo-Martin, 1999; Lightfoot, 1991)[13]. For these and other related reasons, learning of a language is treated as "something that happens to the child, without awareness for the most part" (Chomsky, 1993, p. 521). In Neil Smith's words, "everything the infant needs to find out about the language it is exposed to is already innately specified; all it needs to do is make the right choices from the items listed" (1999, p. 44). If so viewed, acquisition of language turns out to be selecting of a particular rule system by children; a kind of "setting of switches"; of determining the position of switches for one's language; "of choosing among a set of pre-specified possibilities… fixing of parameters" (Smith, 1999, p. 118 & p. 123; Chomsky, 1993, p. 528)[14]. That is, experience with a language merely triggers pre-specified options. It helps the child "discover the local realization of universally specified principles and parameters" (Karmiloff & Karmiloff-Smith, 2001, p. 5). Such a setting of switches is, however, no mean task in the sense of its repercussions later in

the causal role of iconicity on children's language development (Perry *et al.,* 2021).

[12] For Culicover (1999), however, "our inability to imagine how something can be learned is not sufficient for us to conclude that it is wired in. Nor can it be a matter of stipulation that certain things that are plausibly not learned are a matter of innate syntactic knowledge rather than being a projection of the requirement of some other type of representation, e.g. semantic" (p. 11).

[13] Yet another factor that seems to motivate Chomskyans in the direction of postulation of a "special design"/ mechanism for language is that the language faculty, for them, constitutes "a separate module" (Smith, 1999, p. 19).

[14] Culicover (1999) has, however, offered powerful arguments against Principles and Parameters Theory by pointing out that explanation of linguistic variation in terms of variation in parameter values does not amount to an explanation of how the parameters are actually set.

life as a "slight change in switch settings can yield complex and varied phenomenal consequences" (Chomsky, 1993, p. 528). Chomsky's principles and parameters theory thus advances a conception of universal grammar that postulates "an invariant network and an associated set of switches" (p. 523). While the former (invariant network) is something that all humans are born with, the latter (setting of switches) requires some linguistic exposure to get going.

3. THE CHALLENGES BEFORE CHOMSKY AND HIS FOLLOWERS

Given this distinction between invariant core and controlled variation at the periphery, several issues arise that need to be looked into. The first concerns identification of aspects of grammar that require more/less elaborate triggering experience in conformity with principles and parameters theory. Since UG is part and parcel of our genetic endowment, it is expected that core rules of grammar would not require very elaborate triggering experience. Following this logic, the triggering experience in the case of non-core rules would have to be more elaborate and the suggested movement within this category has to be from least marked rules to most marked ones. This means that while least marked rules would be the easiest and first to be acquired, the most marked ones would be the hardest and last to be acquired. Related to these is the issue of whether children embark on grammatical development with adult-like linguistic competence. That answers to these issues are far from satisfactory is clear from the controversies within the nativist camp as exemplified by two approaches within the generative grammar tradition, namely, the full competence hypothesis, and lexical learning hypothesis (Clahsen, Eisenbeiss & Penke, 1996). Moreover, support and reasons for embracing a position that grants availability of adult-like syntactic structure to children are rather negative in nature (Tomasello, 2000, p. 235). Acceptance of this thesis is considered to protect the advocates of this position from difficulties surrounding learnability theory[15]. It is children's lack of maturation of some other cognitive capacities that is supposed to account for their initial lack of productivity and not availability or non-availability of grammatical knowledge. In what follows, an attempt is made to assess the extent to which many of the claims made by Chomskyans are tenable in light of ongoing empirical research.

In the context of language acquisition, work of Patricia Kuhl and her coworkers on infants has been particularly noteworthy as it has attempted to develop a perspective that addresses the nativist-developmentalist controversy by showing how language input is not a mere trigger but radically modifies perceptual mechanisms (Kuhl, 2000 & 2004, Ramírez *et al*., 2017). In fact, many of her studies are very self-consciously directed at demonstrating how linguistic input "goes beyond setting the parameters of prespecified options" (Kuhl, 2000, p. 101). Kuhl's strategy has been to study infants who are just hours old to document linguistic sensitivities that they are born with so that we can determine which of their capacities are innate. She has then followed up the development of infants raised in different linguistic environments to determine how infants' experiences with a particular language influence the very nature of their perceptual mechanisms required for processing language of their primary caregivers. That is, how infants' perceptual abilities "begin to diverge as a function of experience with a particular language" (Kuhl, 2000, p. 100). What is interesting about Kuhl's results is the extent to which infants' very early experiences are found to colour their perceptual abilities for life (Kuhl, 2004). Her findings are striking because they demonstrate how the nature of our perceptual

[15] We may recall here the Chomskyan belief that no plausible learning theory exists that has "significant empirical support" (Chomsky, 1975, p. 20). Also see, Atkinson (1996) and Poeppel & Wexler (1993).

abilities is an outcome that comes into being more as a result of developmental processes rather than being their cause (Kuhl, 2000 & 2004, Ramírez *et al*., 2017).

In this context, the data made available by researchers adopting socio-pragmatic approach also appears quite significant in the sense that it also tends to challenge the Chomskyan assumption that children are endowed with adult-like linguistic competence. For instance, studies reviewed by Tomasello and his coworkers tend to go against Chomskyan claims because they entail that children use many cognitive strategies that are not specific to learning of language (Ibbotson & Tomasello, 2016). The Chomskyans have also been found to have grossly overestimated children's early linguistic competence (Goldberg, 2006, Ibbotson *et al.*, 2012, Ibbotson & Tomasello, 2016, Tomasello, 2000). Tomasello's review of data shows that "young children's early language is more concrete and item-based" than is usually admitted by the Chomskyans (2000, p. 211 & p. 237). What young children initially learn are individual constructions. If some pattern is discernible in adult usage of such constructions, then children make abstractions and tend to organize them in a hierarchical fashion. For Tomasello, the acquisition of language is largely usage based and the continuity in this process is continuity of learning and abstraction rather than that of linguistic structures. Young children's constructions are not found to display any evidence that young children possess "abstract syntactic competence characteristic of older children and adults" (Tomasello, 2000, p. 247 & p. 210). For him, "a large part of the task of language acquisition must be accomplished by means of some form of social or imitative learning" (Tomasello, 2000, p. 237).

The other shortcoming with Chomskyan account that Tomasello points out is Chomskyans' inability to provide any details of how young children go "about linking up item-specific linguistic knowledge with universal grammar… The problem is how children link their universal grammar – in whatever form that may exist – to the particular language they are learning" (Tomasello, 2000, p. 232). In this regard, Tomasello cites Slobin's (1997a&b) work that points to considerable variability across languages and poses insurmountable difficulties for the Chomskyan proposal that hypothesizes existence of innate linking rules. Similarly, to test the differing approaches of Chomskyans and constructivists (Chomsky, 2005, Tomasello, 2000) to language acquisition, Gervain *et al.* (2008) investigated eight month old Japanese and Italian infants in their study[16]. The primary focus of their study was to ascertain "whether young learners have a prelexical representation of the distribution of functors and content words in their native language" (Gervain *et al.*, 2008, p. 67). This was significant as Japanese and Italian have opposite word orders. Given this fact about these languages, it was possible to test Chomskyan and constructivist intuitions. The study demonstrated infants' language specific sensitivity to exposed language input that tends to strengthen the developmentalist alternative.

In Tomasello's (2000) opinion, Chomskyans have no satisfactory answer to "the question of how the language learning child might link up the linguistic items and structures she is learning locally with the hypothesized innate universal grammar" (p. 235). Their proposal is also found to make wrong predictions about how certain structures are acquired within a language (p. 234). Yet another difficulty with the Chomskyan proposal, that has recently come to be highlighted by linguists from both within the nativist tradition and those opposed to it, is its inability to explain many aspects of linguistic competence that cannot be wished away as idiosyncratic. What the Chomskyan proposal is supposed to be good at is explaining certain "core" aspects of grammar leaving out vast areas "consigned to the periphery" (Tomasello, 2000, p. 236; Culicover, 1999; CulIcover & Jakendoff, 1999). Of late, the issue of core vs periphery has come to be increasingly probed because there seems to be no consensus about

[16] Also see, Gervain, de la Cruz-Pavía & Gerken (2020).

exactly where core ends and the periphery begins. Nor is there any agreement concerning the breadth of the periphery. Culicover and Jackendoff have termed these difficulties as two dogmas of the generative grammar tradition, namely, "shun the periphery", and "mirror semantics and covert syntax" (1999, pp. 543-545).

According to the first Chomskyan dogma only the most general and universal aspects of grammar that require minimum possible reference to language specific details are worth looking into since these alone are likely to be revealing about "the human capacity for language" (p. 543). This thrust of the generative grammar tradition has been reflected in the works of its leading advocates. It tends to concentrate more and more on most general aspects by ignoring idiosyncratic and language specific features. For Culicover & Jackendoff, such an understanding of syntax is too "narrow" as "an empirically adequate syntactic theory should be able to account for the full range of phenomena that actually exist in natural language" (p. 544). Such a demand does not appear all that out of place if we keep in view the fact that the generative tradition, by its own admission, aims at understanding how children acquire language. The idiosyncratic features of different languages accordingly also need to be accounted for as young children acquire such aspects of grammar of their ambient language as much as other more general ones. A theory of language is expected to account for not only the mastery of the general and universal aspects of language but also acquisition of the non-universal, the exceptional and the idiosyncratic. Human language faculty has to be such that it is capable of handling the universal as well as what is idiosyncratic (Culicover, 1999; Culicover & Jackendoff, 1999)[17]. Moreover, as Culicover has rightly remarked, "the hard cases for the theory are the marginal and the exceptional ones, not the general ones" (Culicover, 1999, p. vi). The second dogma of the Chomskyan tradition is taken to consist in seeking "some non surface (or covert) level of syntactic structure that directly encodes structural aspects of meaning" (Culicover & Jackendoff 1999, p. 544). The problem with such an approach, as pointed out by Culicover & Jackendoff (1999), is that it fails to satisfactorily explain many mismatches between syntactic and semantic structures. In this regard, the *conditional correlative* (CC) constructions in English are cited as the obvious examples of such a syntax-semantics mismatch (p. 551). These constructions are problematic because while they exhibit various characteristics that cannot be regarded as part of "core grammar", they are still learnt. (p. 569).

To overcome such difficulties Culicover & Jackendoff (1999) offer an alternative perspective that is able to explain better such mismatches. According to them, different languages are distinct ways of expressing invariant aspects of innate conceptual structures that are common to all humans. "[S]yntactic structure" accordingly "has its own autonomous properties and…the syntactic structure of a sentence corresponds only partially to its semantic structure" (p. 544). This is possible because, for them, syntactic structures are projections of conceptual structures without there being any one-to-one mapping between these two levels of representations. This means that insofar as syntactic structures are projections of the invariant aspects of conceptual structures, they are likely to exhibit commonality across languages (Jackendoff 1992 & 1997). They are a kind of default assumptions. But correspondence between invariant aspects of conceptual structure and their projections into syntactic structures is not all that is there to these structures. The mapping between non-invariant aspects of conceptual structure and syntactic structure is likely to be "more or less arbitrary" and is reflected in idiosyncratic features of different languages (Culicover & Jackendoff, 1999, p. 568). So, those aspects of syntactic structure that are not projections of invariant conceptual structure are likely to be "autonomous and unpredictable" (p. 568). That is, universality of

[17] Culicover in fact entertains the possibility that there may be two learning mechanisms, one for setting of parameters and the other for learning of idiosyncratic and exceptional constructions (1999, p. 15-16).

syntactic structures is only part of the story and not whole of it as is wrongly supposed by the generative grammar tradition. The latter thus appear to be guilty of reducing "all aspects of syntax to…[the] default situation" (p. 568). For Culicover & Jackendoff (1999), CC constructions are an example of how 'periphery' is not reducible to the 'core'. As opposed to the generative grammar tradition, Culicover & Jackendoff (1999) and Jackendoff (1992 & 1997) argue that the nature of the periphery and the problems that its existence poses as well as mismatch between syntax and semantics need to be carefully looked into as there is ample evidence for both of these[18].

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The preceding review of research undertaken in this essay in the context of acquisition of language by humans tends to considerably strengthen the developmentalist alternative vis-à-vis strict Chomskyan approach to the topic. Chomsky and his followers are found to be wanting in demonstrating how infants and young children come to link innate knowledge of grammar that they are postulated to be inheriting as part of their genetic endowment with the language of their primary caregivers. They are also found to be lacking in satisfactorily explaining how these language learners come to learn many idiosyncratic and non-core aspects of language. The lack of consensus about the boundary between the supposed core & invariant aspects and peripheral & idiosyncratic ones and the possible breadth of the latter seem to further weaken the Chomskyan proposal. As was pointed out in the preceding paragraphs, mastery of language specific features of one's ambient language is as much a part of human linguistic behaviour as those of more general and universal ones. The young children acquire such aspects of grammar of their ambient language as much as other more general aspects of grammar. A theory of language is expected to explain not only the mastery of the general and universal aspects of language but also acquisition of the non-universal, the exceptional and the idiosyncratic. Human language faculty has to be such that it is capable of handling the universal as well as what is idiosyncratic.

Furthermore, the review of literature focused on investigating the role of different perceptual mechanisms and biases that language learners bring to bear upon the task of language learning suggests that many perceptual abilities diverge as a function of experience with a particular language than being innate as postulated by Chomskyans. Consideration of all these factors necessitates that we recognise the role of developmental processes themselves as the key for deepening our understanding of the phenomena of language acquisition. This line of thinking is further strengthened by the empirical data from the developmentalist camp including studies of atypical cognitive development that tends to suggest that the gene-cognitive behaviour mappings are many-to-many and are turning out to be much more complicated and indirect than was initially supposed by the Chomskyans. In my opinion the recognition of the role of developmental processes in unravelling the riddle of language acquisition also has far reaching implications for the nativist-developmentalist debate in general and is likely to result in better articulation of the focus of future discourse. In the long run this may not only result in giving a more precise meaning to innateness and thus address the chief concerns of both Chomskyans and the developmentalists, but may also help us understand better how different developmental processes orchestrate their all too baffling outcomes.

[18] Jackendoff, for instance, clearly argues for this when he states that "syntactic categories do not correspond one to one with conceptual categories…[; that] the mapping from conceptual category to syntactic category is many-to-many " (Jackendoff, 1997, p. 33-34).

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THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIVE FACTORS FOR ACQUISITION OF LANGUAGE AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR CHOMSKYAN NATIVISM

RM Singh*

ABSTRACT

The present article aims at assessing the role of different communicative factors for their critical role in language acquisition and their implication for Chomskyan nativism. When it comes to Chomskyan position on the question of language acquisition, it is found that they largely tend to legitimize their own position on the basis of imputing non-existent and indefensible positions to their opponents. The vast amount of literature that is reviewed in the present essay has however failed to find evidence for anti-nativists holding any such extreme views. What the anti-nativist theorists (often referred to as developmentalists/ constructivists/ neuro-constructivists, etc.) are generally found to be doing is articulation of their position in terms of constraints and role of experience with linguistic input that facilitate and restrict definite species-specific cognitive achievements rather than swearing by Lockean belief in human mind as a tabula rasa. Such a reasoning can hardly be thought of as the guiding spirit of researchers whose work is discussed and reviewed here. Therefore, Chomskyan nativism is not the only available position when it comes to explaining language acquisition by humans as there is a vast middle ground that falls between the extremes of Lockean tabula rasa approach and Chomskyan nativism. It is one of the endeavors of the present essay to direct our attention to this middle ground and demonstrate this to be more of a viable alternative to the other two extreme positions of radical empiricism and Chomskyan nativism.

1. EVIDENCE AGAINST AUTONOMY OF GRAMMAR

The belief in the proposal of innateness of Universal Grammar and the dedicated nature of a processing device for its implementation has undoubtedly been most dear to Chomskyans (Chomsky, 1975, 1980, 1993; Piattelli-Palmarini, 1980; Laurence & Margolis, 2001). However, in recent years this proposal has come under sustained attack from researchers concerned with the issues of investigating the nature of innateness and brain plasticity (Elman et al. 1996; Johnson 1997 & 1999) as well as those working in the broad area of language acquisition (D'Souza & Karmiloff-Smith, 2016; Elman et al., 1996; Ibbotson & Tomasello, 2016; Karmiloff-Smith & Johnson, 1991; Karmiloff-Smith, 1992; Mareschal et al., 2007; Quartz, 1993; Quartz & Sejnowski, 1997). In the context of the present paper, the work of Bates and her colleagues is particularly important for being in the forefront in challenging both the autonomy of grammar from other aspects of language as well as the existence of a dedicated grammar processing device. The series of studies and reviews by Bates and her colleagues (Bates & Goodman 1997 & 1999) show that many characteristic features of language are explainable without postulation of any dedicated device for the purpose of acquisition and representation of grammar and the lexicon. The evidence for this comes from two sources: (i) a strong form of lexicalism entailing that grammar and the lexicon are handled by same set of mechanisms; and (ii) the fact that mechanisms responsible for processing grammar and the lexicon are not dedicated for language use alone. Many of these tasks are accomplished by domain-general mechanisms whose operations extend beyond language processing (Karmiloff-Smith, 2006; Saffran, 2002). Many researchers have reported through several studies of normally developing and language handicapped children that demonstrate strong dependence of grammar on the vocabulary size (Bates & Goodman 1997 & 1999; Dekker & Karmiloff-Smith 2010; D'Souza et al.2017; Tomasello 2000a). The nature of this dependence of early grammar on the vocabulary size has been found to be "so strong and the nonlinear shape of this function is so regular that it approaches the status of a psychological law" (Bates & Goodman 1999, 51).

One way to test Bates and Goodman's hypothesis is to see whether grammar development proceeds at a normal rate even in children with abnormally high or low vocabulary size for their age. If this is found to be happening in a correlated way as predicted by the hypothesis, then there would be reason to believe that grammar and lexicon are implemented by distinct modules with their distinct time schedule for maturing. Thal and her co-workers (Thal et al. 1997 & 1996) as part of a larger project examined this issue and their results could show no dissociation between grammar and vocabulary.

*Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, Email: rmsingh@philosophy.du.ac.in

And as expected, grammar development appeared to be closely tied to the lexicon even in the case of children with very low or exceptionally high vocabulary scores.

The other damaging evidence against Chomskyan approach comes from children's early focal lesions. If grammar and the lexicon are implemented by distinct neural mechanisms, then it is not unreasonable to expect that children with congenital injury to left frontal region including Broca's area will show delays in processing of grammar and children with damage to their left posterior regions including Wernicke's area will show delay in lexical processing. Bates and Goodman in their extensive review of the literature on the topic (1999), however, report that they could find no evidence to support such a conjecture. No evidence is available for any dissociation between grammar and the lexicon even from children diagnosed with Williams syndrome[1]. But Bates and Goodman do not rule out that "a modular distinction between grammar and the lexicon may emerge at a later point in development, in accordance with the processes of *modularization*" (53, emphasis author's). Such an outcome would, however, be more of an effect of development rather than its cause (Karmiloff-Smith 1992 & 1998). There is thus "no evidence for the claim that grammar and the lexicon are mediated by separate, dedicated, domain-specific neural systems" (Bates & Goodman 1999, 71). Studies by Rollins & Snow (1998), Tomasello (2000 & 2003), Yont *et al.* (2003) further extend the findings of Bates and her colleagues. These studies show that pragmatic factors, like engagement in joint attention, function as a kind of precondition for making progress in grammar. So, contra Chomskyan expectations, progress in grammar is not only tied to developments in the lexical domain but to pragmatic skills as well[2]. The results of studies by other researchers are also supportive of the view that the quality of children's social and linguistic environment also affects language acquisition (Ginsborg 2006; Letts *et al.* 2013; Pan *et al.* 2005; Snow 1999; Yont *et al.* 2003). Snow also cites evidence indicating that recognition of and responsiveness to children's communicative intents are helpful in language acquisition (1999, 267).

The review of data on children's vocabulary size as reported by Snow (1999) and Hoff-Ginsberg & Tardiff (1995) is also very revealing in the sense that it highlights strong correlation between children's vocabulary size and the socio-economic and educational background of children's families. The data clearly reveals that lack of child directed talk language (Cristia, 2013; de Boer, 2012; Hohle, 2009; Mol et al., 2017; Vallabha et al., 2007) as well as lack of socio-economic and educational resources severely affect vocabulary size of children Ginsborg (2006; Letts *et al.* 2013; Hoff 2003). Since lack of resources is responsible for impoverished nature of linguistic input in terms of both quantity and quality, Arriaga *et al.* (1998) studied their effect on children's performance on the sentence complexity scale. The results demonstrate that children coming from socio-economic and educationally impoverished environments show either a delay or some deficit in grammar. By suggesting that significant social-class differences affect linguistic capacities including mastery of grammatical complexity these findings pose considerable difficulties for the Chomskyan view that postulates grammar as an independent and innately driven biological mechanism. The results are troublesome because they highlight variation in grammatical complexity as a function of both quantity and quality of input. Snow's conclusion, derived from an extended review of the literature[3], that "language environments that limit opportunities for vocabulary development also limit opportunities for grammatical development" (1999, 272) also does not seem to augur well for the Chomskyan claim that development of grammar follows its own time schedule and is not affected by the nature of linguistic input.

[1] The dissociation observed in samples from children suffering from Down Syndrome and Specific Language Impairment are accountable on other grounds. See Bates & Goodman (1999, 61f.) and D'Souza *et al.* 2017 for details.

[2] In this context it is necessary not to overlook the fact that Snow and her co-workers do not deny the role of child's developing cognitive capacities about the knowledge of the world or the role of syntax at later stages. Their basic intent is to delineate the role of child's early reliance on "pragmatic bootstrapping" (Snow 1999, 266).

[3] It is significant to note that Snow's data also includes samples from single parent families as well as households who live in social isolation for some reason or the other. That such conditions would affect the richness of knowledge of language is to be expected and data confirms this hunch.

2. FINDINGS FROM CROSS-LINGUISTIC RESEARCH

In the cross-linguistic context, one of the strategies used by researchers to examine the Chomskyan claim has been to follow the path of linguistic development across different languages. It has been useful to follow this direction of research as early work on English speaking children, for example, had led many researchers to believe in the existence of some innate constraints that guide children's decisions about which meanings to encode (e.g., Markman 1990). The important finding in this context has been that while English speaking children do show considerable pre-disposition to acquire nouns before verbs, data from Korean (Bowerman & Choi 2001; Choi 1997 & 2000; Kim 1997) and Mandarin-Chinese (Tardif 1996) speaking children show a verb spurt before their first noun spurt. In the present context the important thing to note is the fact that these differences correlate very well with language specific and socio-cultural input factors. For example, studies by Choi & Gopnik (1995) and Gopnik & Choi (1995) show that while American English-speaking mothers in their sample produced more object nouns than verbs in their interaction with children, the situation was reversed in the case of Korean speaking mothers. Significantly enough this difference in input correlates well with the differences in acquisition of nouns and verbs by children from these two linguistically distinct environments[4]. Other studies by Choi & Bowerman (1991) and Choi (1997) show that from very early age children's semantic categorization is being shaped by the language specific system they are exposed to. In their studies, children from two different linguistic groups were found to differ systematically in their early syntactic and semantic structure with differences reflecting language specific patterns of the adult language.

The other significant finding of Choi's work is that "children's spatial expressions are organized according to language-specific grammatical principles virtually from the beginning of language development" (Choi 1997, 63). Levinson's (2001) work also extends these findings and shows how there is a "substantial variation in the semantic parameters employed in languages for spatial description" (573). For example, Levinson's review of spatial description across languages shows that there is a high level of "variation in the fundamental kinds of coordinate system employed" (576) in different languages. Levinson's findings are very significant as they link the observed variation with the language used to describe spatial relations. Studies by Choi and her co-workers have further reinforced these findings (Choi, 2006; Gollera *et al.*, 2020; Yun & Choi, 2018). Work by Tomasello (1992, 1999, 2001 & 2003) and Akhtar (2001) also shows that children first pick up words for things and/or events that are most salient in their learning environment. Their studies show that children begin their linguistic journey wherein their early utterances are limited and their linguistic constructions are item based. Children's behaviour does display occasional use of complex syntactic structures but these are limited to patterns that are most heard by them from adults surrounding them. That is, children's early syntactic structures are data driven and mastery of syntax is a gradual process. Other scholars have also argued that language can be acquired without the hypothesized biological endowment surrounding Chomskyan proposals and acquisition of language is guided by "exposure to exemplars" (Culicover & Nowak 2003, 4 & 41). Givon (1999) in his review of empirical data on grammatical relations also finds numerous cross and intra linguistic variations and finds Chomskyans to be guilty of ignoring massive empirical data coming from cross-linguistic contexts as well as from single language contexts. From the review of large-scale data, Givon finds, contra Chomskyan claims, "rules of grammar" to be functioning much like "prototype-based categories" (102).

3. EVIDENCE FOR THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIVE FACTORS

As far as the role of communicative factors is concerned, the undermining of communicative function of language by Chomskyans is legendry (Chomsky, 1995, 2005 & 2010; Lightfoot, 1991; Anderson,

[4] For the controversies surrounding these findings the reader may consult Dromi (1999) and Bowerman & Levinson (2001). In the context of this controversy between nouns vs verbs, Kuczaj (1999), folowing Nelson (1995), seems to make an important point while suggesting that it may not be very appropriate to work with the nouns vs verbs distinction in so far as the question of speech of very young children is concerned. He rightly points out that "Rather than arguing about whether young children find it easier to learn nouns or verbs, it seems more important to remember that young children's early words are based on aspects of the world that they can directly experience, regardless of whether the words are nouns, verbs, or adjectives" (143).

2012). Given their extreme pronouncements on the topic, it appears very problematic to suppose that resource starved evolution would allocate considerable brain resources when language was to play no evolutionary role for communication; something which is so essential for survival of a species that has largely flourished living in socially complex groups called human societies? This becomes even more intriguing and unacceptable when we recall that leave aside visual, vocal and use of different body parts for communication with conspecifics by higher animals, there is even very intricate and widespread use of chemical signals for communication even amongst lower animals as it helps in survival of those species. Can we ever stop marveling at the intricate waggle dance movements used by honeybees for communication purposes? Regular symbiotic communication relationships between unrelated species have also not been uncommon. Let us look at the research that has been specifically directed to assess the role of communicative factors.

Locke (1993) in his review of literature on language acquisition argues that infants do not set out to acquire the knowledge of language but have a deep biological need to interact emotionally with the people who love and take care of them. The sounds are thus not the only thing that infants confront in their immediate environment. What they confront are animated bodies involved in transmitting all kinds of signals to each other and the infant. He contends that infants are not likely to learn language without an orientation to the cues by people to communicate with each other[5]. Locke cites several studies that examine and confirm the positive role of physical cues associated with faces and voices. For example, Mulford (1983 & 1988) reports from an extensive examination of the role of vision on children's initial vocabulary that sighted infants are more likely to attempt words that contain labial consonants relative to non-labials as compared to visually challenged infants.

Based on his research on primate and human cognition, Tomasello and his colleagues have also underlined the importance of pragmatic understanding in language acquisition (Tomasello 1998; Carpenter *et al.* 1998; Baldwin & Tomasello 1998). Carpenter *et al.* (1998), and Tomasello (1999) report children's engagement in joint attentional behaviours and perspective taking involving treating of others as an intentional agent like the self as a pre-requisite for language learning. Similarly, Nelson (1995), and Baldwin & Tomasello (1998) report extensive evidence for utilization of social cues for word learning in children of about two years of age. Evidence for the role of engagement in joint attention for lexical acquisition also comes from studies by Tomasello *et al.* (1996). Studies by Hollich *et al.* (2000) also demonstrate children's progress in language learning to be correlated with their gradual shift from their own perspective to accommodation and taking into account of others' intentions (26 & 103). Tomasello (1999) in particular reports individuals with autism to be specifically lacking in this ability. This to an extent, for him, explains why autistic children perform so poorly on linguistic tasks. For Tomasello, about half the autistic children do not learn any language "presumably because they do not understand the communicative intentions of others in the species-typical manner" (1999, 133). From extensive studies, his findings are that "early in ontogeny individual human beings learn to use their species-universal cognitive, social-cognitive, and cultural learning abilities to comprehend and acquire the linguistic constructions their particular cultures have created over historical time by processes of sociogenesis" (135).

Further support for the role of communicative factors in language acquisition comes from the work of Catherine Snow. For Snow, children's early words neither express semantics nor are they syntactic but express children's intention to reach out to others and communicate. Her studies show that children's first words as well as their early word combinations are result of children's attempt to express their communicative intents, expressive of their desire to be part of social interactions (1999, 265). A study by Snow *et al.* (1996) also shows strong correlation between engagement in joint attention and syntactic development. Yet another study (Rollins & Snow 1998) aimed at assessing the effects of pragmatic skills demonstrated engagement in joint attention as a "prerequisite to the development of productive syntax" (670). More importantly, Rollins & Snow (1998) by including data on six individuals with autism from "a truly longitudinal perspective" show how the past research on

[5]Also see works by Tomasello, Snow and their co-workers for further investigations of these effects (Snow 1999; Tomasello & Akhtar 1995; Tomasello 2000b; Yont *et al.* 2003).

individuals with autism was "biased by a modular competency-based model" (670). The clinical observation that individuals with neurodevelopmental disorders (eg., Down syndrome, fragile X syndrome, Williams syndrome, etc.) display lack of attentional disengagement and that it could be resulting in problems in language development has also been further reiterated in recent studies by D'Souza *et al.* (2020). It is significant that Snow (1999) could successfully "predict children's grammatical status at later ages from frequency of participation in the communicative exchanges of social participation and of regulating attention, for normally developing children and for children with autism" (266).

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The review of extensive literature presented here tends to support considerable critical role for different communicative factors in language acquisition. The empirical research reviewed here also undermines the autonomy of grammar thesis that is so central of nativist claims of Chomskyans. The literature presented here also undermines Chomskyan contention that non-nativists hold extreme views. As opposed to the caricatured versions by Chomskyans of their opponents, non-nativistic are found to be articulating their views in terms of different constraints at play and infants/children's extensive utilization of different pragmatic cues rather than advancing any simplistic and radical empiricist thesis. This has serious implications for Chomskyan nativism as critical examination of the literature presented here demonstrates Chomskyan nativism to be not a viable position when it comes to explaining language acquisition by humans. The literature on how different languages employ and shape different attentional resources further emphasizes how domain specific knowledge of language could be emerging from mechanisms that are not domain specific to begin with. This further strengthens viability of non-nativist intuitions about language acquisition and renders Chomskyan nativism to be an untenable position.

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